



**75 SOUNDINGS ANNIVERSARY MAGAZINE**

# 75th Soundings Anniversary Magazine

A Literary Magazine

--Special Edition--

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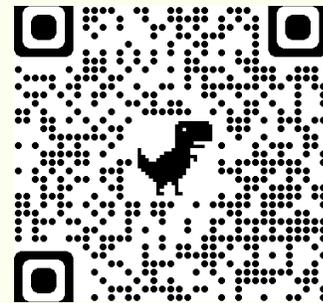


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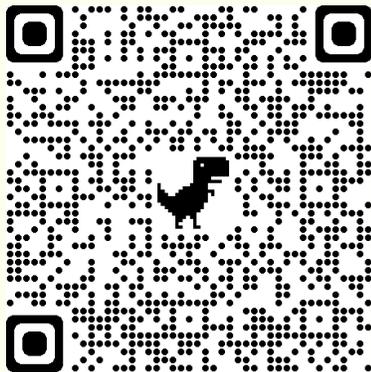
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## Mission Statement

Soundings is a student run creative literary magazine published every year that celebrates student expression at Staples High School. One of the oldest extracurricular clubs at Staples, Soundings seeks to compile student-made work, both written and visual, and in doing so, highlight voices typically overlooked in the high school community.

## Selection Process: Special Edition

Soundings selected the pieces featured in this magazine by delegating certain staff members to groups of years, where they selected pieces they believed were unique and timely.



## How To Join Soundings

The QR code on the left links to a google form that can be used for joining Soundings. For more information, go the page on our website entitled “Become a Member.”

# Publication History

Staples High School founded its literary magazine entitled Soundings--a name that references "making noise"--in 1947. Some notable past contributors include Fred Hollister, who was the first editor of the magazine when it was created, Jane Yolen, who published her first book at 22 and has since gone on to author and edit 280 books, and Mark Kramer, who had a long career in the writing field and continues to help others with their writing even in retirement.

There have been dozens of such contributors throughout the years, and even hundreds more writers and artists, that have found a place to express themselves within Soundings.

## Letter from the Editors

Soundings, as a literary magazine, has gone through a lot. In its seventy-five years of running, Soundings has come close to failing, but has always been reanimated by the creative soul of the Staples community. Having no funding from the Board of Education anymore, Soundings has survived through the tireless effort of its members and community, through donations, through fundraisers, and through the desire for students to have a creative outlet. Recently, Soundings has lost publicity within the school, but with the work of the community and the desire for a creative outlet that enhances the student voice, Soundings will not be going away any time soon. This special magazine, marking a great milestone in the incredible journey of Soundings, documents that sometimes tempestuous history of Soundings and the decades of hidden creativity behind the Staples student community. We hope you enjoy reading the priceless student work featured in this special edition of the Soundings magazine!

To Timari Rivera, you will  
always be in our hearts.

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Unfortunately, despite the hard work of the Staples Library and the Editorial Team, Soundings editions from 1973, 1990, and 2006 could not be located. If you or anyone you know has these editions, please email one of our editors or our faculty advisor.

## Artwork Featured on Cover

Listed in reading (left right) formation.

### First Row:

"Dreaming," Isabella Berg (2020)  
"Neon Skeleton," Anne Machata (2020)  
"Growth," Maggie Epstein (2015)  
"Westport Ocean House," Josh Gang (1999)  
"Photograph," Julie Bernstein (1995)

### Second Row:

"My Cat," Betty Bishop (1975)  
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"Baby," Josh Gang (1998)  
"A-Ok," Olivia Pace (2019)

### Third Row:

"Remember," Mariella Alderucci (2018)  
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"That Fall Vibe," Alex Didelot (2018)

### Fourth Row:

[Head with Rose], Diane Miles (1962)  
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"Flower Girl," Sydney Meserve (2016)

### Fifth Row:

"Color Cascade," Zoe Simonte (2021)  
"Railroad," Kevin Johnson (1974)  
"Flowers Fix a Broken Piece," Lynnea Moskowitz (2021)

### Encore

by Russell Freedman, '47

The blinding heat of an atom bomb  
Turned sand to fused green glass  
As from the desert in New Mexico  
Rose a mushrooming mass.

Elsewhere on the silent desert,  
Men dug into the ground,  
Archaeologists seeking lost cultures,  
And this is what they found—

Mouldering remnants lying there,  
Fragments of a civilization,  
Which, eight thousand years ago,  
Had been a thriving nation.

They came to other layers . . .  
At present, all they know  
Is that herdsmen used to live there  
Countless years ago.

And as the archaeologists dug,  
They reached one final mass:  
Under the herdsmen's culture—  
Nothing but fused green glass.



Ric von Schmidt, '49

## Comments On Education

by Jean McCormick, '47

With the advent of the atomic bomb and the possibility of a united world, it becomes more and more obvious that present standards of education in America must be revised. If the average American is expected to become a citizen of the world, his education must be improved. Since the higher education of most of our population ends with the twelfth grade, why not give the high school student the opportunity of a broader general education?

At present, sex and religion, two vital factors in the growth of any child, are studiously ignored in the curriculum of most high schools. The ban on religion is especially noticeable in science classes. As soon as a subject under discussion, say the evolution of man, raises questions concerning science and religion, the whole matter is dropped—completely. A course in religion which would cover the chief cults of the world and explain their basic principles would be a vast step toward religious tolerance.

During my twelve years of schooling the only mention of sex occurred in biology—where we learned how worms and frogs reproduce. Everyone admits the existence of sex; some people claim it is the ruling impulse in life—at any rate, why not give it a wholesome explanation? Why not introduce courses in which all problems related to this subject could be discussed?

Another failing of high schools lies

in the absence of courses in philosophy. Plato and Aristotle are mentioned, but never investigated. An actual course in philosophy would hardly be necessary if mathematics, history and science were taught with a broader significance. Students too often are instructed as though each subject were bounded by fences. "Everything is relative," cry the great thinkers of the world, but their thoughts are usually lost in the maze that we call "modern education".

Politics, another tabu, is evaded by most high school teachers. Students are given little or no opportunity to discuss the justification of the Civil War, or of any war; the merits of America's foreign policy; or other vitally important problems. Textbooks are sometimes biased or inadequate.

High school English has lamentable failings also. Many high schools, including our own, do not offer speech and journalism courses as part of the curriculum. Drill on basic skills is frequently dropped after the seventh grade. Sometimes, instead of developing appreciation and comprehension, literature courses emphasize background so much that their content can hardly be distinguished from that of a history course.

The subject of education in America has been argued for too many years! The time is here for action, if young people are to be taught to think more intelligently!

1947

# Sherlock Combs

by Dave Rodgers, '49

Two twenty-two, Fakir Street, London, England, was peaceful and serene. The atmosphere gave little forewarning of the impending complications which would soon surround and engulf its occupants.

The amiable Doctor Rotson was reclining on the davenport, fast in the arms of Morpheus. His companion, the famous and all-wondrous Sherlock Combs, manipulated his priceless Stradivarius with dexterity and ingenuity. As he subconsciously terminated complex trigonometry and calculus problems, his huge feet beat out the tempo of the "Flight of the Earthworm," concerto in Drumm Major. His immense hooked nose, set in the center of the finely cut features of his narrow face, inhaled the fragrant and mellow tobacco smoke.

Suddenly, without warning, he gave a start, his eyes wide open and his elongated, muscular body tense with apprehension. He had detected a tinge of perfume, mixed with the pipe smoke—had quickly deduced its source and type by methods known only to the master sleuth himself. (This is because the author can't figure out how he did it.)

He awakened the sleeping Rotson and told him of the expected visit of a female client, who promptly appeared, handed Combs a letter and as swiftly departed. The note said: "I will murder Sir Hubert Downdike, the famous explorer, at twelve o'clock." It was signed "Professor Mariarty."

The billowing walrus mustache that perched pontifically on Sir Hubert Downdike's lip wavered nervously as that marked man was told of his

threatened demise. The victim was quick to drop his darts and cricket club in order to swallow a spot of tea—followed of course by an ale chaser and lime bitters.

In his nervous haste, he spilled some of the tea on Sherlock's coat. (The reader is asked to remember this, please, because such infinitesimal factors are usually of great value and importance later. Thank you.) Combs and Rotson followed Sir Hubert into his spitorium, lined with cuspidors set on a floor of flagstone (there were also some sliced limes as air wick); his purple and green checkered waistcoat matched his yellow ascot, which was nicely set off by his red spats.

At precisely twelve o'clock Sir Hubert Downdike fell dead—before the very eyes of Combs and the doctor. Combs seemed to take this catastrophe as a matter of course, but Rotson was highly astonished. (It will be noticed here that the good doctor is always astonished. But Combs? Never!)

"Combs, couldn't you have prevented his death?" asked Rotson. (There we go. Rotson has started asking silly questions—just for the benefit of the ignorant reader, who would otherwise be kept in the dark.)

"Yes, Rotson, I could have," replied the great man.

"Then, why didn't you?" queried the doctor. (Not again?)

"Because, without a corpse, we wouldn't have a case." (Touche. That

will hold the inquisitive doctor—and the reader. At this point in the story the master sleuth knows all the answers, but he tells no one about them, maybe because he wants to leave some for Rotson's silly questions at the finale.)

Sherlock picked up Sir Hubert's monocle and subjected it to various and rigorous tests, both chemical and otherwise. (None of these do any good, but the reader will be disappointed if Combs doesn't make them.)

Finding nothing of importance on the monocle, save a tiny hole, the great man prepared to hunt down the slayer. After about an hour of the doctor's questions, the master mind exclaimed, "Oh, how naive of me! Why didn't I realize that he was killed by something shot through this tiny hole!"

Now starts the familiar chase—just like the old movies.

Sherlock hired a bloodhound out of thin air and trailed an invisible track over mountains, oceans, and deserts, till he came before a huge, haunted house on a foggy street. (Why are all such houses and hangouts for criminals on foggy streets?)

He and Rotson surreptitiously entered a large room. Just after they were inside, a steel panel fell across the front door, and bars dropped in front of the windows. They were trapped! How could they have been so stupid? (Many people would love to tell them.)

This is an old, familiar situation with the two companions, who manage to get trapped and escape in every episode.

"I've got you now, Combs," screeched a hideous voice from a secret hiding place. "You'll never get out alive!"

"Egad, Combs, we are done for now. He's setting fire to the house!" The doctor is always the first to give up. But does Combs ever give up? Never!

"Have no fear. Sherlock is here," spoke Combs in a reserved voice. "We

will escape and capture the infamous Mariarty." (All the readers already know this.)

"But how, Combs? How?" quavered Rotson, bursting out in tears and going into frightened convulsions.

Sherlock answered him not, but set bravely to his work without showing the least bit of emotion. (What a man, what a man!)

The smoke was closing thick around them and Rotson was about to pass out when the wondrous detective hit upon the solution.

"Step back, Rotson," he commanded, and so saying, he cut two patches from his coat and placed them upon the wall. Seconds later there was a large explosion—and the companions walked out of the house through the hole in the wall.

They found themselves confronted by the sinister and crafty Professor Mariarty, who held a gun leveled at them. At this point, the great, all-wondrous Sherlock pulled his own gun and fired, knocking Mariarty's weapon from his hand (Lone Ranger style); then he shot him between the eyes. But Mariarty still made his escape, disappearing into the fog.

"Why did you let him escape?" asked the doctor. (Here we go again.)

"If I hadn't, I wouldn't have any arch enemy, and you know that without an arch enemy, a detective is no good."

"But how did you make that explosion?"

"Ho, ho!" laughed the great man (just to keep you in suspense).

"How?" persisted Rotson (like an Indian).

"You remember the two spots of tea that Sir Hubert dropped on my coat? Well, I cut them out and put them on the wall, side by side. See?"

"No!"

"Don't you get it? Tea and tea—T N T!"



Joan Volk, '48

T  
N  
T

1949

# The Lavender Cry

by Donald Magner, '50

Your home-bound steps scatter the daily dusk;  
Yet the graying shades remain passive;  
Beyond search fog beams, lamps of remoter dreams.

Buried are the fathoms of melted age,  
For now there is the cry —  
    Lavender . . . fair lavender  
    Sweet Lavender . . .  
        Who'll buy sweet lavender?  
    Lavender . . . lavender . . .

Each curl of petal greets shab-genteel streets,  
Children of templed metropolis energy.  
And the city always hangs just below the horizon.

I feel its chordal grasp,  
    in the masonry mass,  
    in the rendering crescendo.

    Lavender . . . Lavender  
    Sweet lavender . . .

Echoes of the bounded moons  
And shade-shut eyes . . .

# Atlas of an Age

(As seen on Fifth Avenue)

by Donald Magner, '50

Down the soft sift of rain  
Search idioms of light,  
Sparing Atlas the weight of night.

Bronze to his soul and beyond,  
His world is cleansed within its symmetry.

Our world has washed exteriors,  
And prized marble masses sigh,

“Clean without —  
Within is nothing  
to be seen,  
to be known,  
to be remembered.”

But his world is pure within its symmetry.  
Mock and laugh can his bronze,  
Mock the passage of human machines.  
He does not like their chant to rain —  
Or the roll of step-echo between his towers.

His bronze is free in mold,  
To mock the temple, cross the cross —

Atlas of an Age.

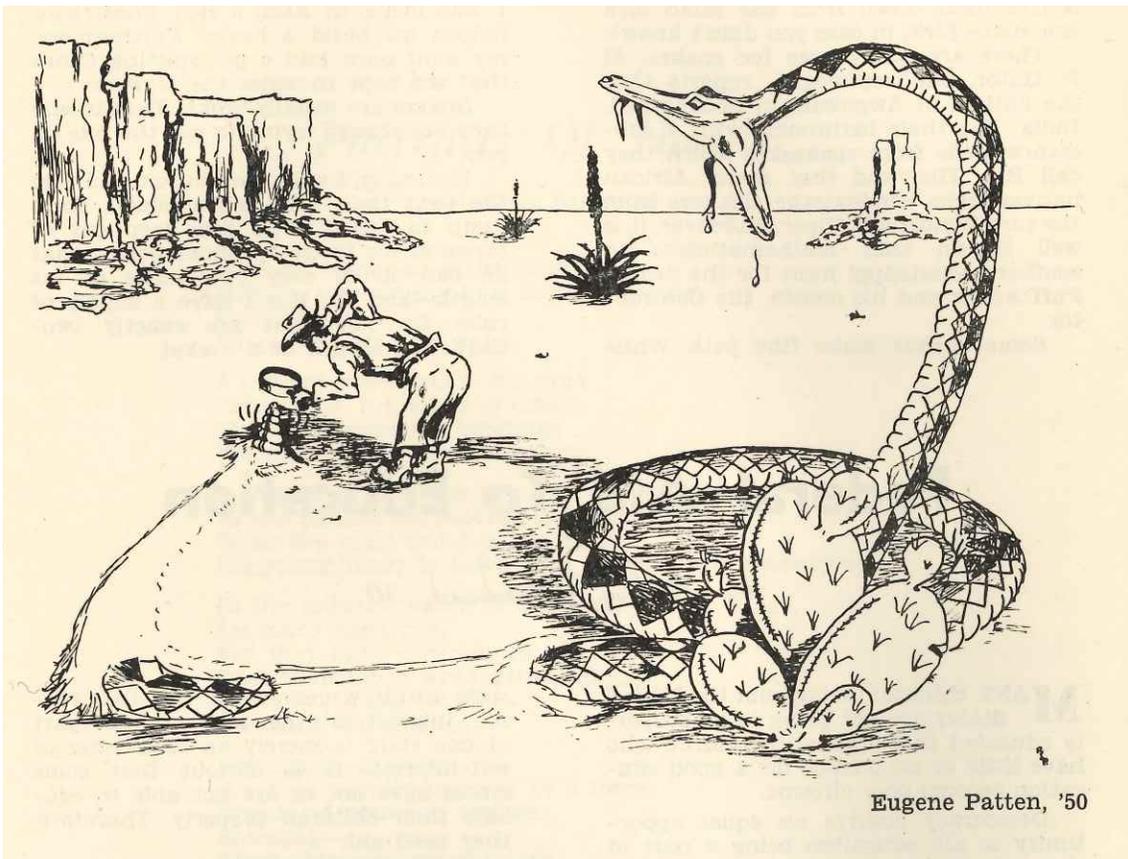
# To Infinity

by Barry Carson, '51

I have been falling, falling for centuries  
Through ghostly, black clouds,  
Tortured endlessly by recurring visions of slaughter, heartbreak, and anguish  
Which I imposed upon my brethren.  
My great, dark and evil ship of deadly commitments  
Has at last been sunk upon the barren reefs of Hades;  
And my rank soul, proud and haughty,  
Has been washed to the shores of everlasting torture and repentance.

Always, always I am followed, ever further down the path of eternity,  
Forever pursued by four hideous horsemen,  
Draped in the colour of my deeds.  
I am clothed in the royal finery of my house.  
But my crown is of ponderous weight;  
It sears and crushes my head at every step,  
Which I take in purple boots of lead.  
My greatest plague lies not in these malignant curses;  
It is in the form of a gigantic sword,  
Steeped in crimson from point to handle,  
Forever wedged in the grip of my right hand.  
Could it be possible  
That, as reward for my violent labours,  
This formidable and endless hell has been created to accommodate my rancid soul?

Infinity — what a strange word to comprehend—  
Yet I have chosen to be punished unmercifully  
For infinity.



Eugene Patten, '50

1950

# Magnificent Depression

by Gill Odum, '52

**E**ARLY morning smog drifted through the open window of Morgan's hotel apartment. A few valiant rays of sunshine found their way in and flashed across Morgan's tired face. His eyelids fluttered as he slowly came awake. Morgan focused his weary eyes on the window; there seemed to be something moving about out there, out there on the ledge. As he sat up in bed, his hangover reminded him of the night before, and he realized that he still had on his suit.

There came more sounds from outside. Morgan rose stiffly, walked over to the window, and peered into the smog. The window of the next apartment was opened wide, and a woman stood on the ledge staring absently into the dismal fog.

Morgan cleared his throat. "Nice morning, eh?"

The woman turned and stared crazily at him. "I'm going to jump," she said flatly.

Morgan's face showed mild interest. "Why?" he asked. There was a long silence. "Are you bored with life?" prompted Morgan.

"That's one of the reasons," came the reply.

"What else seems to be bothering you, besides being bored?" he queried.

"My husband walked out on me," came the reply. "I'm alone and I hate the world, hate living, hate it, I tell you!" The woman's eyes were round and glossy. She swayed dizzily, and she looked as though she were going to jump.

"Wait, don't jump yet," said Morgan. The woman still swayed a bit but seemed to sober up just a little.

Morgan went on casually, "So you're alone, eh? So am I; so are a lot of people in the world. And if you think you have troubles, just look at me!"

"Your husband didn't walk out on you," said the woman hysterically.

"Listen," continued Morgan, "I've had three wives, who all walked out on me, and I'm still paying alimony for two. Not only that," he went on, "I have ulcers; my doctor says I'm an alcoholic; I owe six months' rent on this lousy apartment; and now my third wife is trying to sue me for alimony."

"You do have troubles!" gasped the woman.

"Sure," agreed Morgan. "I'm a physical, mental and moral wreck!" He looked at the woman. Her big, round eyes stared at him mistily. Morgan thought he saw a touch of pity in her stare.

"Cheer up," said Morgan. "Life isn't so bad. You just have to know how to enjoy it." Morgan was feeling a trifle philosophical now. "I have a philosophy," he went on in an intimate tone. "Eat, drink, and be merry. If you do enough drinking you won't have to worry about the merry part. That'll come naturally.

And eating can be fun too, if you don't let it interfere with the drinking."

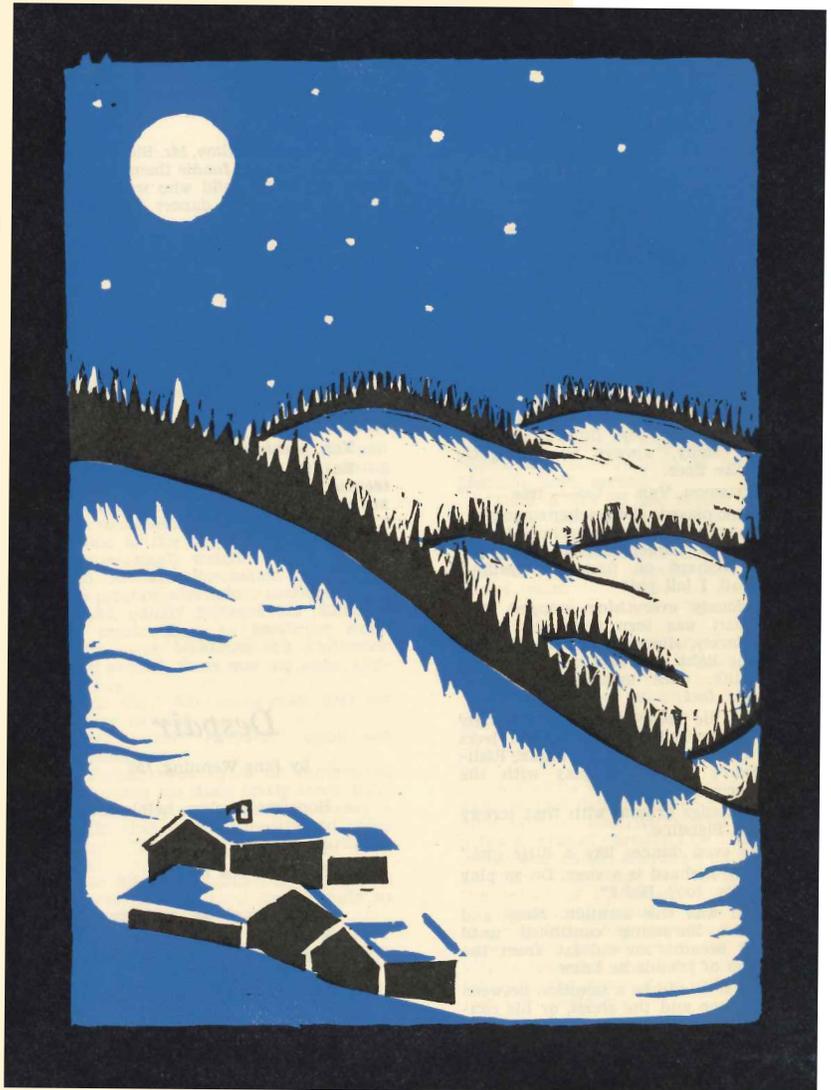
Morgan looked at the woman again. She seemed to be paying attention; he wondered if she were taking him seriously. Eat, drink and be merry, Morgan thought. That was a laugh. He thought that he'd probably done more drinking in his life than eating and being merry . . . his thoughts were interrupted by the piercing ring of an alarm clock.

"Excuse me a minute," said Morgan. He walked over to the bedside table and shut off the alarm. He lit a cigarette and walked back to the window. The woman was gone!

He peered farther out, but she wasn't anywhere on the ledge. Then he noticed that her window was closed. Oh well . . .

Morgan stepped out on the ledge and into the smog. He stood there gazing absently into the thick haze.

Anyone watching him might have noticed his round, glossy stare, and that he swayed a little, swayed . . .



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6  
5  
1

## Our Drinking Fountains

by Anthony Lampert, '53

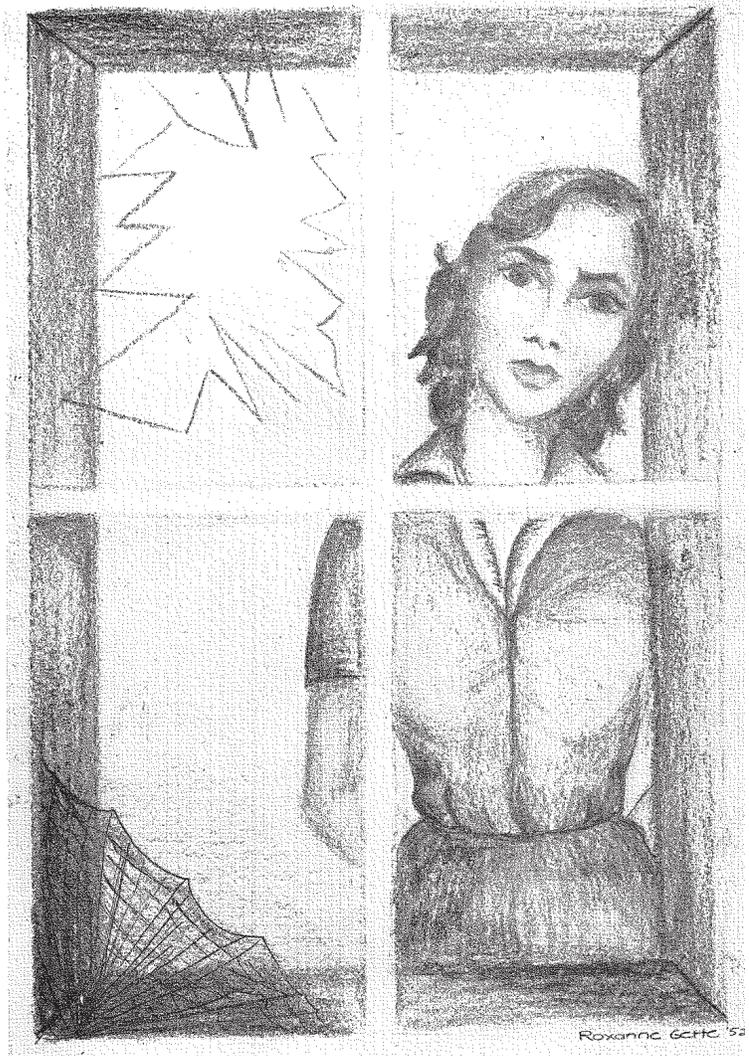
**P**ERHAPS fashioned for pygmies are the drinking fountains in our school. How anyone could design a building and place fountains at such a height is beyond my comprehension; yet we must grin and bear the situation or else die of thirst.

Research during the past ten years has revealed that a student, when not unduly bored in class, consumes one-half pint of water per school day. This figure naturally excludes lunchroom indulgences and water utilized in pistols and such. According to recent studies, the average scholar drinks his one-half pint quota in three visits to the fountain. Since there are approximately 87,000 student attendance days in Staples, this comprises a grand total of 262,500 fountain visits per school year.

Drinking at our fountains can be compared to forcing a giraffe, which has to bend down to the ground normally, to drink from the bottom of a ten-foot pit. As giraffes are expensive, we will use only one in this analogy. Thus consider: Would you, as an average American, stand by idly whilst a poor giraffe is forced to take 262,500 drinks per school year from the bottom of a ten-foot pit?

Before you answer this question someone may retort that **one** student makes only 525 fountain trips per school year. But I repeat, giraffes are expensive (what this country needs is a cheap giraffe), and it is beyond the scope of this paper to employ 500 giraffes to drink out of ten-foot pits 525 times a school year.

However, there is not much that can be done about this situation; so, as soon as I have finished rubbing oil of winter-green into my giraffe's neck, I will continue.



Since we must all have a drink, on the average of three a day, the solution is to find a comfortable drinking posture. The most common way to drink is to bend over and assume the "right angle attack." Unfortunately, this maneuver exposes portions of the hindquarters to one's slap-happy friends. And let us think of the poor girls who must bend to gurgle under the watchful eyes of the fountain loiterers. Why, no male in the school is up to date until he has viewed some of the newest sipping beauties.

Another method is the "two-shin kneel," its only fault being that several addicts of this method have been known to have their legs amputated by the people waiting in line behind them. A compromise now available is the "deep knee-bend" method in which the drinker proceeds to maintain a straight spine while quenching his thirst. This manner is quite close to being successful; occasionally, though, a deep-kneer, due to pressure from behind, finds his knees wedged underneath the fountain and is unable to extract himself. His only course then is to huddle up into an unobtrusive ball at the base of the fountain until the line has finished.

Of course, the best and most cowardly approach is to purchase a collapsible drinking cup; but then, why not buy a canteen? Oh, **VIVE LE SPORT ACQUATIQUE.**

1952

## *The Sugar Cookie*

by Barbara Simons, '54

"That will be all," the young man said,  
As he flicked the butler away  
With his hand.

And then the young man in the  
Red-cushioned chair,  
With his feet on a footstool,  
Sought something to amuse him.

"I'll write a great epic poem,"  
Thought he,  
As he sat in the chair with his legs outstretched.  
"It will be of the great human struggle,"  
Thought he,  
As he slowly sucked on a sugar cookie.

"It will be of the sweating, toiling masses,"

Thought he,  
As he picked a small crumb off his vest,  
"Of war, and the sweat and dirt and grit,"  
Thought he,  
As he damned a stain on his silk robe.

"Of death and things that will wring peoples'  
hearts,"  
Thought he,  
As he tapped cigar ashes to the floor.

He smiled as the thought mushroomed in his  
mind —  
"I'll write poems like that great poet  
(What's his name?)"  
Thought he,  
As he stretched and saw new paths to glory.

# 1953



Nancy Grondona, '53

# Life Is Beautiful

by Norman White, '55

I AM in a two-day box. The box is filling, but not with water. At the top of the box is a cone, and at the top of the cone is a hole eight inches too small for me to crawl through. A door opens near the top of the cone and more requests slide down the chute in the form of twelve-inch cubes.

The first of today's cubes is marked A, A for essay. The next, marked with an S, speaks up and says, "Two algebra assignments." The third, an A cube, asks, "Spanish report due today. Where is yours, Norman?" A B cube hits me on the head and screams, "Your American History notebook is due today!" The fifth, an E cube, bounces twice and Jack states, "Norman, you take charge of the smoking violators today." An O cube: "Norm, will you fix my carb?" Another B cube opens and says, "I'm sorry, Norm, I would like to have you today. Thursday is too late."

I step on a yesterday's D cube and it again asks, "Have you forgotten that you are chairman of the Publicity Committee?" "I'll take the picture tomorrow," answers the speaker in the wall, stating my yesterday's words. A double D cube asks, "Hey, how about a ride to Greens Farms again today?" M cube: "Don't forget your haircut today, Norm." Another B cube asks, "Will you take some pictures for me?"

More cubes slide down the chute to ask and reply and state and scream: "Hey Norm babe, how about a ride home?" "Oh, I just missed my bus. Won't you — do you suppose — oh, I knew you would." "Take my picture!" "Take my picture!" "Norm, got any ignition wire?" "Norm, about those fender skirts —." "Is tonight okay?" "Remember your swimming lesson today." "Where are your chemistry and English books, and your Spanish dictionary?" "Are you going to the County Assembly, Norman?" "Norm, lend me your algebra book." "Where were you seventh period, Norman?" "I hope your essay won't be too much trouble, Norman."

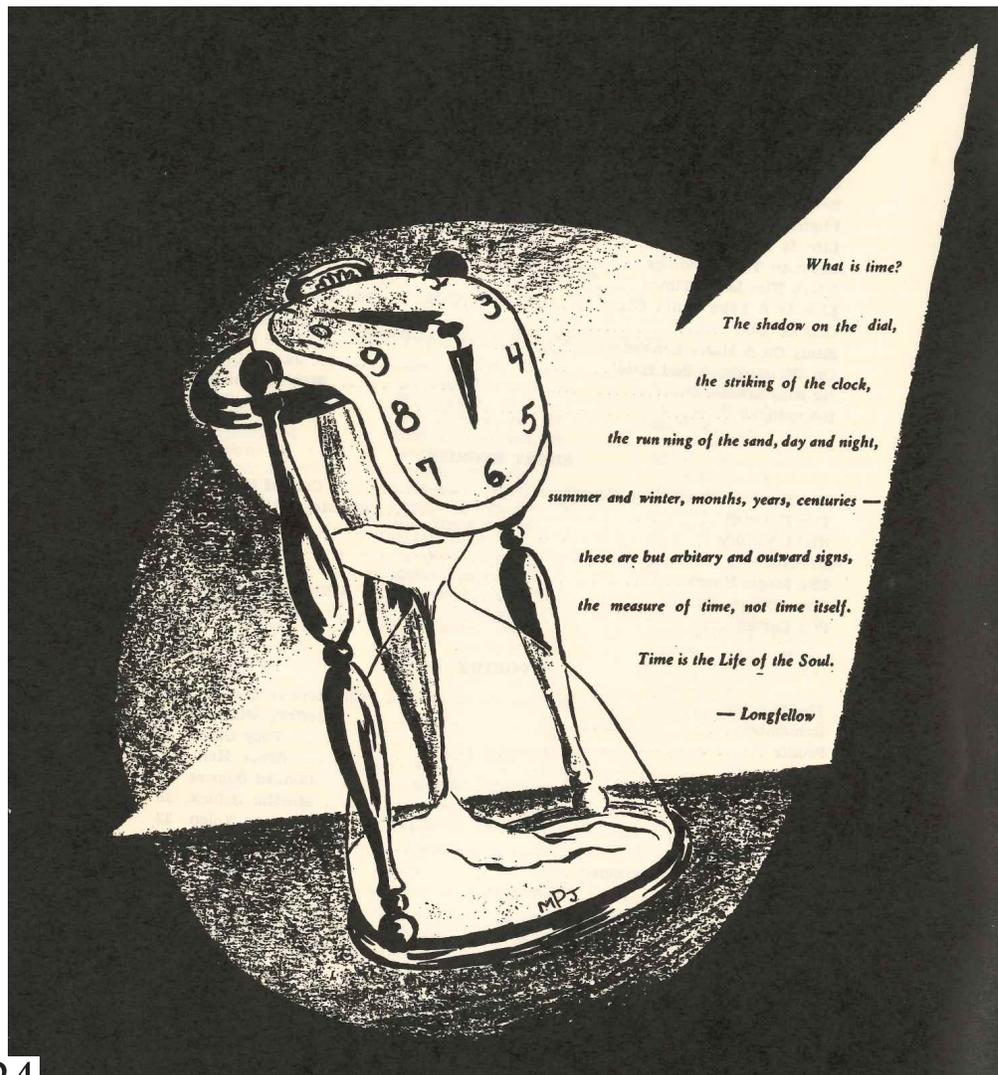
GETTING through the hole in the cone was not as simple as spelling "open sesame" with the blocks. It was also necessary to make a stairway of the blocks and to kick in the wall speaker to gain egress of the paper cone. You may ask, "What were your activities, Norman, after leaving the paper cone at 2:52?"

What followed is now history. Failing to report to seventh period, I completed American History for cube B. Then, meeting square O in the halls, I went downtown and bought a carburetor part and fixed his car. Arriving in school at dismissal, I took five pictures and then

consulted Miss A concerning *las problemas de la clase de Espanol*. I made a telephone call and postponed my job for one day, moving the next day's job to the following day. Then I changed Thursday's activities to Wednesday night. I checked for lost books at the office and then proceeded to investigate the "smoking detentions." No one was there. I thought I would suggest a dollars and cents fine for violators of the smoking rule. I headed for town and

a haircut. During the haircut, I decided to attend the Junior Prom and the County Assembly. Afterwards I drove Miss G home, and upon arrival at my home I prepared to pound out an essay.

I finished the rough draft before dinner and asked myself, "Could the squares that spelled out 'open sesame' also spell out 'Life is beautiful?'"



1954



Sheila Dickinson, '56

*Actually, though, my sisters are very kind.  
They show me only once in a while who is boss.*



Jean Garlick, '56

# 1955



Lena Van, '57

1956

## *Lullaby*

by Penny Ingram, '58

Close thine eyes  
 And dream awhile  
 Of happy times  
 Now passed away,  
 And then awake  
 And, with a smile,  
 Meet the world today.

## *The Snow Fell*

by Eileen Gregory, '57

The snow fell  
 Silently,  
 Covering the filth of man.  
 The snow fell  
 Silently,  
 Covering the pain of sorrow.  
 The snow fell  
 Silently,  
 Covering the blackness of hatred.  
 The snow fell —  
 But it will melt.

# 1957

## *Winter Poems For Cathy, Who Is Eight*

by Suzanne Church, '58

1

The leaves are ancient, placid monks,  
Garbed in brown linen, with brown and crinkled skins,  
Moving slightly, softly, crisply,  
Each clinging tightly to his staff.

2

The yellow steps of light  
Slip on the hard white ice,  
Then pause by the whiskery twigs of a bush  
That lies, like a sleeping kitten, in the snow.

3

The little withered alden-stump  
Sits quiet, hunched, above the stream,  
Clutching brown moss to warm its hands,  
Gathering ivy more closely to its feet,  
Wrapped in a white, thick shawl.

4

You are one with the world.  
The rich, warm, living earth is your eyes,  
And the deepest, most silent parts  
Of the dark night sky are your eyes also.

You move lightly, delicately,  
And so do the ghosts and shadows of the starlight.

Your smile is gay and broad,  
And calls of warm, dusty grass in summertime,  
Or the soft, pleasant lights in a stream.



## *Verdict For A Victorian*

by Robert Cuneo, '57

Withered structure  
With your blotchy snatches of old cathedrals  
And those unconscious Grecian pillars,  
Hear your street's decree:  
Piercing the soft slumber of this day,  
You must learn to reform your courtly garb,  
Or you will cease to be.

# Tweed Empire

by Ross Drake, '58

**WE ARE** living today in a miniature, entirely artificial world dominated by a mysterious and compelling force known simply as "tweed." At one time tweed merely signified an English fabric with a devoutly conservative connotation; now it is a way of life, a rigid philosophy demanding complete servitude and a groveling submission to the guiding force. Being tweed is a fashion, almost a cult, and demands the greatest concentration. Its budget must be inexhaustible since its standards are ever-changing and show a strong resistance to that curse of society, stability. It requires a certain but not an insurmountable degree of maturity since too early exposure to "tweed" often results in a later inability to grasp the wondrous and complex mysteries of the movement. Mere knowledge of the existence of tweed is not enough. In order to realize fully its miracle one must love as well as know tweed.

Tweed is not a simple hobby, but requires the fullest attention and the utmost devotion. It is a full-time occupation and cannot be considered a novel sidelight. A tweed must possess a basic knowledge of the vernacular which first reveals the true devotee to the outside world. The key word in the spoken tweed is "nice." "Nice" may be applied to every aspect of tweed and to be effective must be accentuated with a rising inflection indicating a grasp of the tweed ideal. To illustrate a life of tweed, the goal of millions and the principle put into practice, let us regard a day in the life of a common tweed, the life-blood of the movement.

7:00 Rises as clock radio gently seeps the tweed anthem.

7:05 Breaks clock radio.

7:30 Eats small breakfast in order to preserve the gray, emaciated expression. This avoids contrast with sweater.

8:00 Stagers outside, moves to tweed car. Tweed car has no paint, no hood, no reliability and no room.

8:25 Arrives at school, moves silently into tweed parking lot. Takes two sophomores on the fender. Custodian slides quietly out of sight beneath rear wheel. Tweed receives standing ovation from the adoring multitudes lining the steps. His tweed equals, "Clutch," "Throttle," "Spots," "Exhaust," "Filthy Charlie," and the irrepressible "Crankshaft" ignore him.

Cruises into homeroom fashionably late. Fashionably skips first period. (First period is unacceptable to vast majority of practicing tweeds.)

Enters first tweed class. Mumbles "nice each other" at gray-headed pedagogue. Sits with reluctance.

Tries to leave class but is restrained. Screams "nice existentialist novel" to keep English teacher happy. This maneuver fails as book under discussion is TOM SAWYER.

10:32 Moves to next and even tweedier class. While in halls is heard to utter scores of crushing remarks such as "nice eyebrows," "nice national background," etc. Is recognized and cut down by responding ranks from other tweeds present.

11:28 Summoned to office to explain previous day's tweed activities. Refuses as point of honor.

11:32 Suspended.

11:32 Roams corridors indiscriminately making presence felt.

12:41 Receives daily proctor slip. Charge — vagrancy. Walks languorously past teachers' table in cafeteria. Whispers aside "nice eating habits."

12:41 Adjourns to the tweed kingdom of Chemistry. Takes part in acid fight which results in the maiming of tweed friend. Shows tweed sympathy. Laughs.

1:37 Attends meeting of high tweeds on steps of school. Several tweeds perform. Others are calmly disdainful and appreciative at once.

2:33 Tweeds run riot as restrictions are removed.

2:45 Journeys to tweed outpost in town. Greets other tweeds with casual and brotherly indifference.

3:30 Drags, is cool.

4:30 Throws apples at police cars. Driver's license suspended. His life is now in almost total suspension.

5:30 Departs toward home.

6:00 Devours tweed sandwich.

6:30 Arrives once more at tweed headquarters.

7:30 Attends official meeting of Tweed Club. Revels in atmosphere of social altitude. Sits listlessly regarding other tweeds. Period of self-elevation.

10:30 Springs to feet. Lifts one hand. "Tweed," he says. Leaves.

11:00—Wanders in haze. (Tweed haze created 1:00 by tweed and worldly indulgences.)

2:00 Deposited at home. (Common tweed receives one demerit for arriving home under own power.)

This airtight schedule makes it evident that in order to be an edifying tweed, a boon to his fellows, a tweed must never deviate. His lot is not a happy one, but his load is lightened by the gratitude of an adoring world.

1958

# Outmoded

by Judith Hand, '60

In this age, nothing's done by hand.  
Machines mow lawns and plow up land.  
They answer questions, shine our shoes,  
Slenderize us, put out news.  
It's all a part of the Master Plan—  
Nothing's man-made now save man.



Joy McCarthy, '59

# 1959

## Horati Carmina Ode XIII

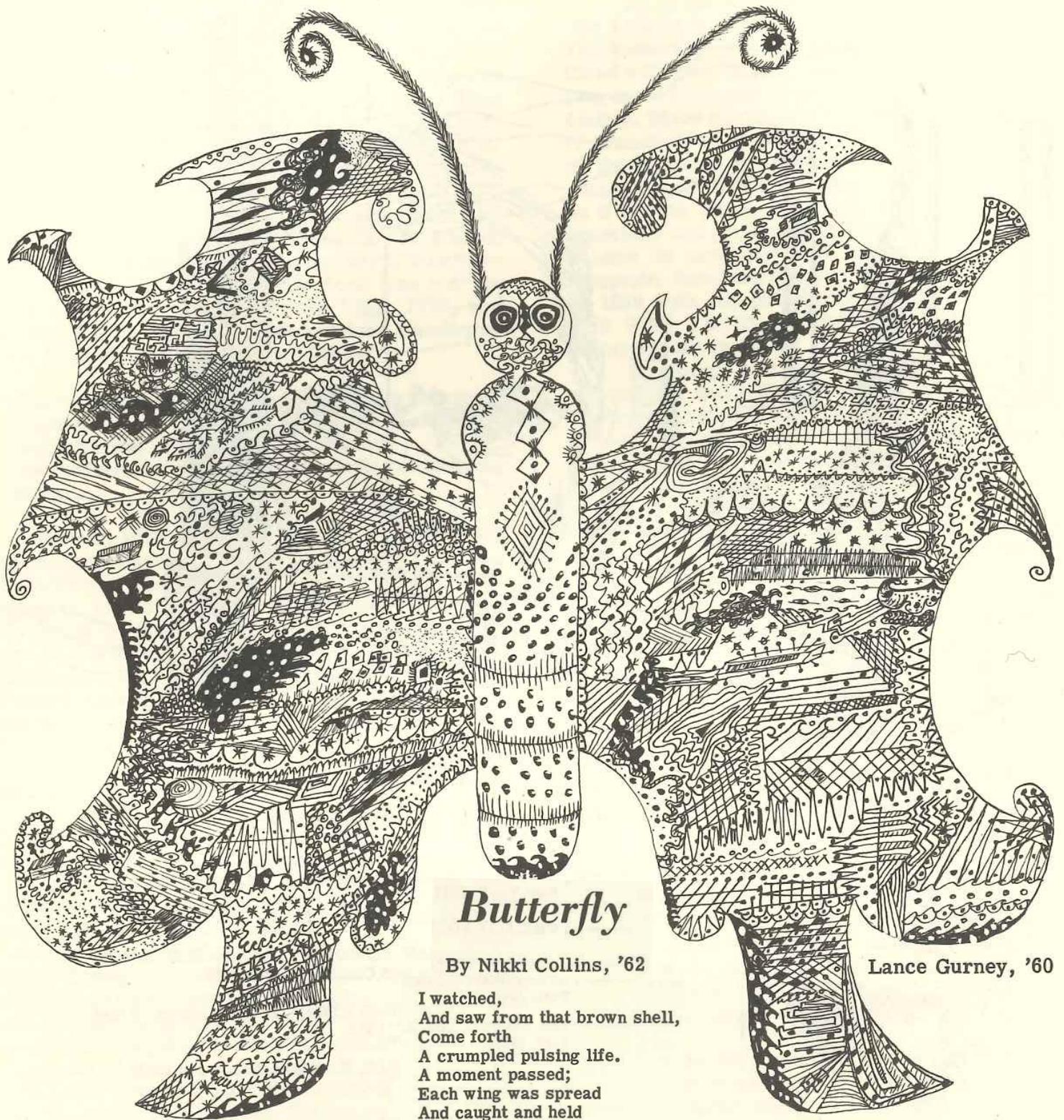
Translated by

Constance Whitman, '59

Oh! when Telephus' rosy neck,  
Handsome Telephus' smooth arms you admire, desire,  
Fickle Lydia, then, my poor  
Burning heart swells with love cruelly caged, enraged.  
Then nor color nor thought, though once  
Sure, resides where it ought; onto my cheek a lone  
Tear slides—suddenly pain's betrayed:  
Deep-scarred soul is now plain, ling'ring, devoured by love.

Stung am I if a quarrel, made  
Rude by wine, left your pure shoulders, so mild, defiled,  
Or impetuous gallant pressed  
Passion's kiss on your lips, signing his tooth—rash youth!  
Should you take my advice, you'd not  
Wish that love at his price—barb'rously injured sweet  
Kiss—which Venus imbues with great  
Share of nectar she brews, heavenly sweetened kiss.

Blessed thrice over: lovers whom  
Ties inseverable hold fast in their love and whom  
Love, by bitter laments untouched,  
Ne'er shall tear apart more quick than, at last, the tomb.



## *Butterfly*

By Nikki Collins, '62

Lance Gurney, '60

I watched,  
And saw from that brown shell,  
Come forth  
A crumpled pulsing life.  
A moment passed;  
Each wing was spread  
And caught and held  
The sun's own prism—  
Velvet wings  
Floated through the sky.

# 1960

# When I Was A Child

*"When I was a child, I thought as a child. . . ."*  
1 Corinthians 13:11

by Susan Ogilvy, '61

JONATHAN SCRATCHED HIS knee. Must be poison ivy, he thought. He could hear his mother scolding, "Not poison ivy again! Jonathan Pickering, I absolutely forbid you to enter that forest again. Father doesn't allow it, you know . . . not with all those shanties on the other side of the forest. You can't tell who will be roaming around these days . . . not any more indeed. And you know how bad you get poison ivy . . ." Gee, what a sourpuss, scorned Jonathan. As if I can't take care of myself. I'm only the tallest boy in the sixth grade!

Jonathan loved to sit here and dream and just imagine anything. He could pretend he was king of this huge forest. The birds and scampering animals were his noble subjects; the stately pines were his royal court. The damp moss he sat upon transformed into a velvet, majestic throne.

I wish I lived during the King Arthur days, Jonathan dreamed. I'd kill a million dragons.

Jonathan scratched his knee again. Gosh, when is Sammy coming? He never makes me wait this long.

Jonathan loved Sammy. He loved him as he loved his scotty before he died. Nothing else was as precious as all that.

He remembered when he had first met Sammy. It was here, right here, in the woods. Jonathan had been looking for rocks to use as mountains for his diorama in science. Sammy had just been standing there.

Jonathan said, "Oh! Hello!!"

"Ain't you skeered of me?" Sammy asked.

"Of course not. Why--"

"You should be skeered of me. That's what my pa told me. All you folks should be skeered of me."

"Gee, I'm not scared of anything much. What's your name?"

"Sammy." Then the boy grinned.

What adventures the two boys had had since then . . . fishing and exploring and games and laughing. Oh! Sammy could be so funny. He had the most comical giggle. The boys could get those fits of giggles and go on and on all afternoon. Sammy was brave, too. One time they were chasing a rabbit. Sammy stumbled and fell on the edge of a sharp rock. He scraped his leg real bad. Jonathan knew it hurt Sammy, but Sammy didn't even cry. He just limped down to the river and washed it. The water turned red and looked awful. But still, Sammy didn't cry. He just said, "I gotta go Jon'than. See ya tomorra." The next day Sammy was all bandaged up. That was the day they built the tree fort.

It was almost too late to play today. It was getting dark. Jonathan worried about his friend. Sammy was usually the first to come. I hope nothing happened, thought Jonathan.

And then it occurred to Jonathan how little he knew about Sammy. I wonder where he lives? he thought. I wonder what his last name is?

But then Jonathan realized that that just wasn't important. His whole leg itched now.

It was nearly dark. Mother will be mad, thought Jonathan. It was then he saw Sammy coming up the hill. He was running.

Jonathan waved. "Hi, Sammy! Hi, Sammy! Boy, I waited forever . . . Hey, what's the matter?"

Sammy was out of breath. He paused for a minute to catch his breath. He had something to say.

"Jon'than . . . I can't come to play with you any more. I can't because we're movin'. Pa and all of us. We're leavin' for good. We're leavin' tonight."

Jonathan was shocked.

But before he had a chance to speak, Sammy said, "You gotta get home. Yer ma will be aworrin.' Go now. Go, Jon'than."

Jonathan couldn't move. No. Not Sammy. He couldn't lose his Sammy.

Sammy pushed him. "Go. Go. I wanna stay and feel the forest fer a minute."

Jonathan obediently turned to go. He slowly walked down the hill. He felt chilled and he shivered at the cold touch of the evening grass.

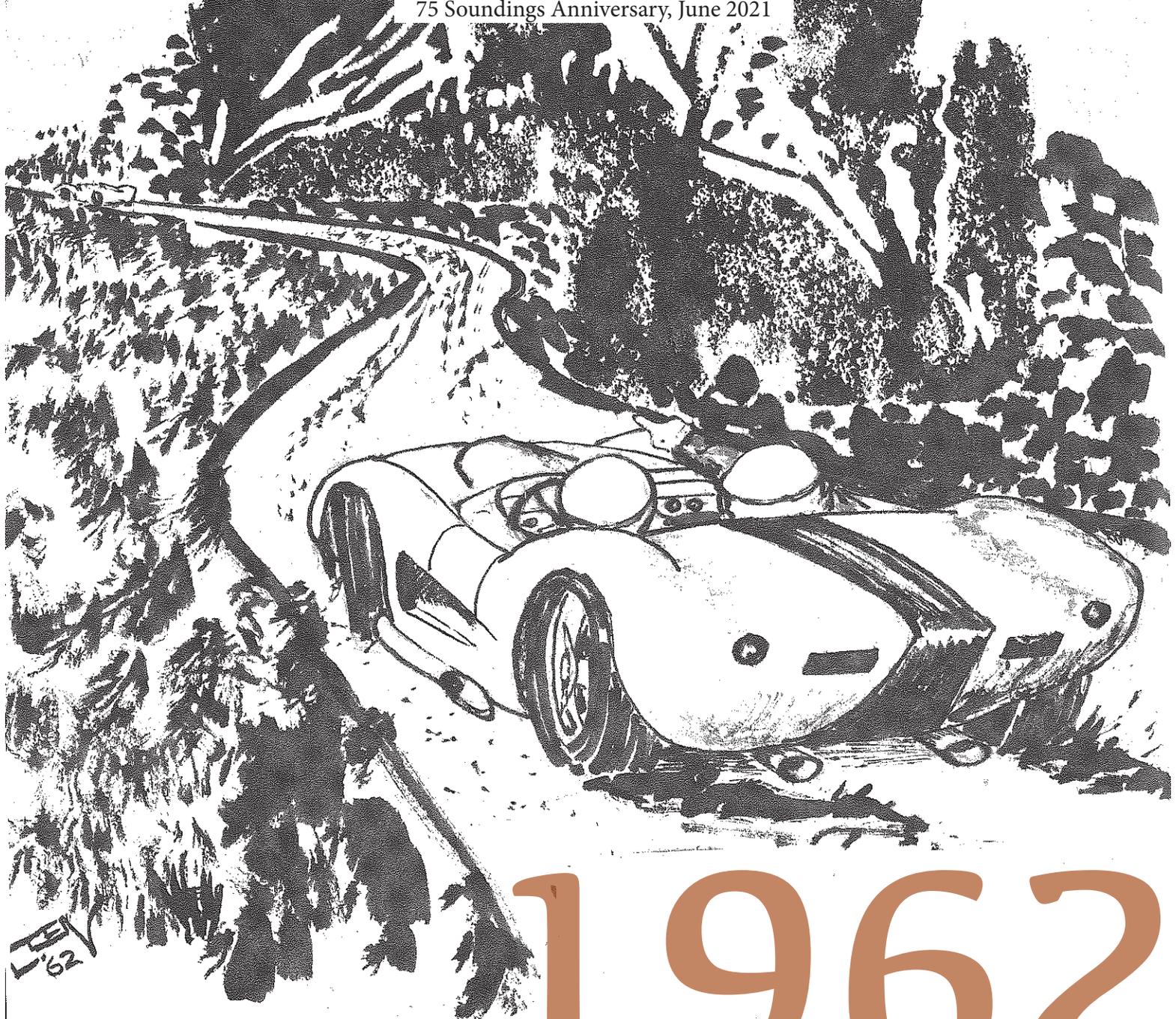
Suddenly Sammy ran up to him. He blurted, "Good-by. Jon'than."

And then he leaned over and kissed Jonathan. "Good-by, friend," he whispered.

Jonathan walked down the hill out of the forest to his home. He turned once back to look at Sammy. There Sammy stood, watching him. Jonathan saw his small silhouette against the huge forest. The forest was dark, but the bright moon cast its light on Sammy. And Jonathan saw on Sammy's face, a tear rolling down his cheek. Down. Down. It glistened in the moonlight against Sammy's black face. Then the clouds moved and all was dark.



THESE



COEN '62

Robert Coen, '62

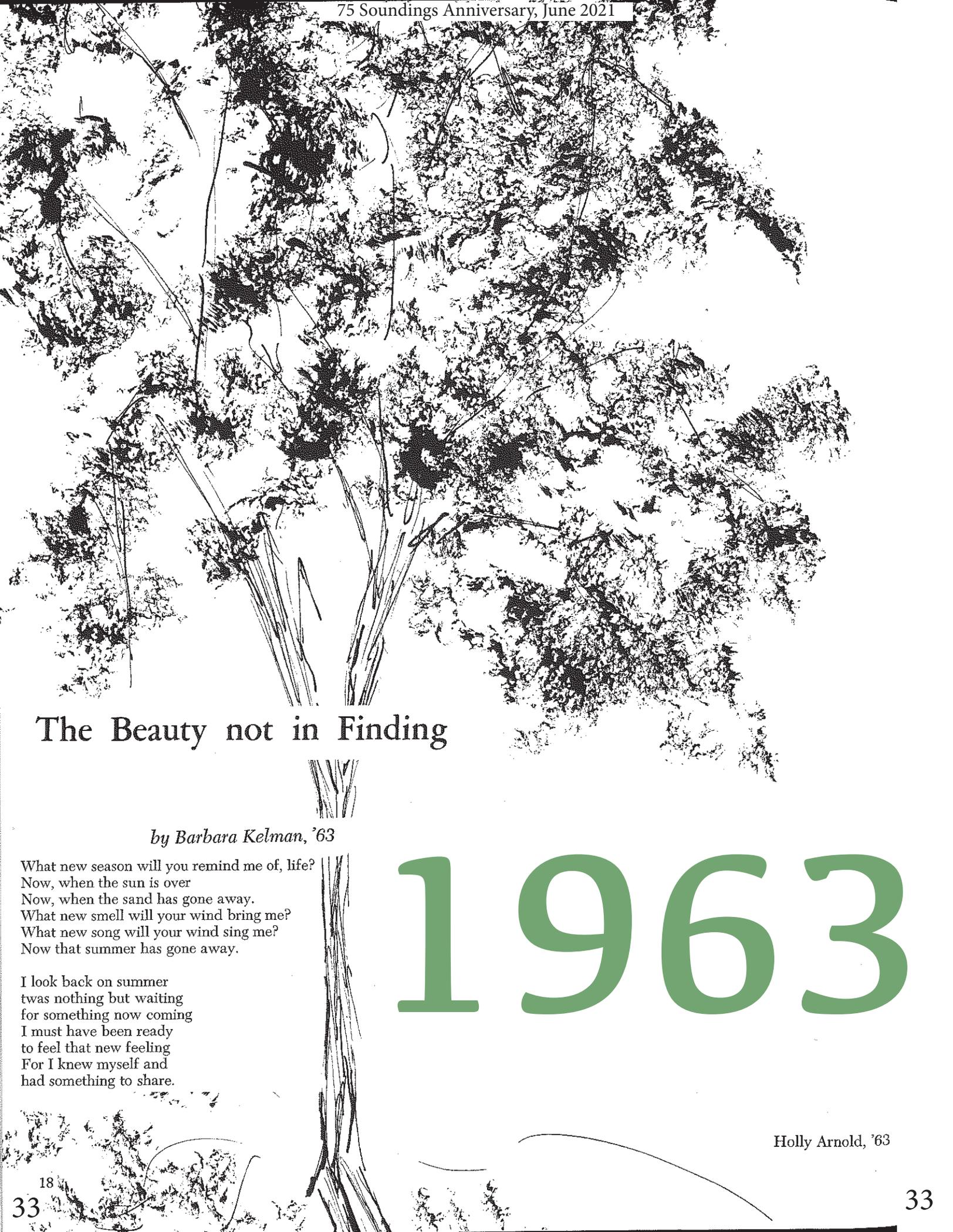
# 1962

## Signs And Symbols

REVOLUTIONS ARE USUALLY associated with our heroic past and with the fiery present of other countries. Evolutions are as far-reaching but are much quieter processes, with changes in manners and mores occurring almost imperceptibly. For example, the automobile, once considered a luxurious oddity but now thought of as a necessity, has created a mobile society. Our geographic horizons have become correspondingly narrow. Highways run the length and breadth of America, connecting town and city and affording greater travelling ease and opportunity. But such has been our progress that walking has become an almost obsolete pastime. Air and future space travel insure even greater mobility, promising more knowledge of our immediate surroundings and the world around us.

Gone, too, are the days of the family retainer, the faithful servant of yesteryear. But labor-saving devices have largely eliminated the drudgery of housework. The friendly neighborhood grocery store has given way to the garish, efficient supermarket. The "do-it-yourselfers" have replaced the handy man, but enlarged the first-aid kit. Television has altered our reading habits, giving aid and comfort to insomniacs, if not to the movie industry.

Thus, scientific advances have made the world of modern man highly mechanized and increasingly leisure-filled. But the more time we have, the more frenzied is our compulsion to fill the heavy-hanging hours. Effort, compatible with socio-economic background, is directed at finding outlets for relaxation.



## The Beauty not in Finding

*by Barbara Kelman, '63*

What new season will you remind me of, life?  
Now, when the sun is over  
Now, when the sand has gone away.  
What new smell will your wind bring me?  
What new song will your wind sing me?  
Now that summer has gone away.

I look back on summer  
twas nothing but waiting  
for something now coming  
I must have been ready  
to feel that new feeling  
For I knew myself and  
had something to share.

# 1963

Holly Arnold, '63

# 1964

## For Some Haven

by Debbie Carrow

The circling swallow,  
Vital heretic that dares to fly  
And angels defy,  
Heeds not the steeple bells'  
Heave and roll, their thundering toll;  
As but a warning:  
Either lay low,  
Or fly.



# 1965

STUDY

*by Michael Sweeney*

## The Traveler

Study  
Sixteen-forty pages  
Skim in depth  
Two-six point four words in ink  
No more no less  
Problems nine through ninety-nine hurry  
But mean what you say.



Anne Lyons, '65

# Song of Ráche-le

I am the second daughter of my mother  
(And that can be said of no other.)

Her beauty is hers, yet I have mine.

Her tears, they come rarely but stay for long  
While my cheeks are wet with every tomorrow's sun  
— laughingly drying when all is done.

Her wisdom, it is the earth's own  
While mine belongs to the unknown  
— fleetingly coming and hardly shown.

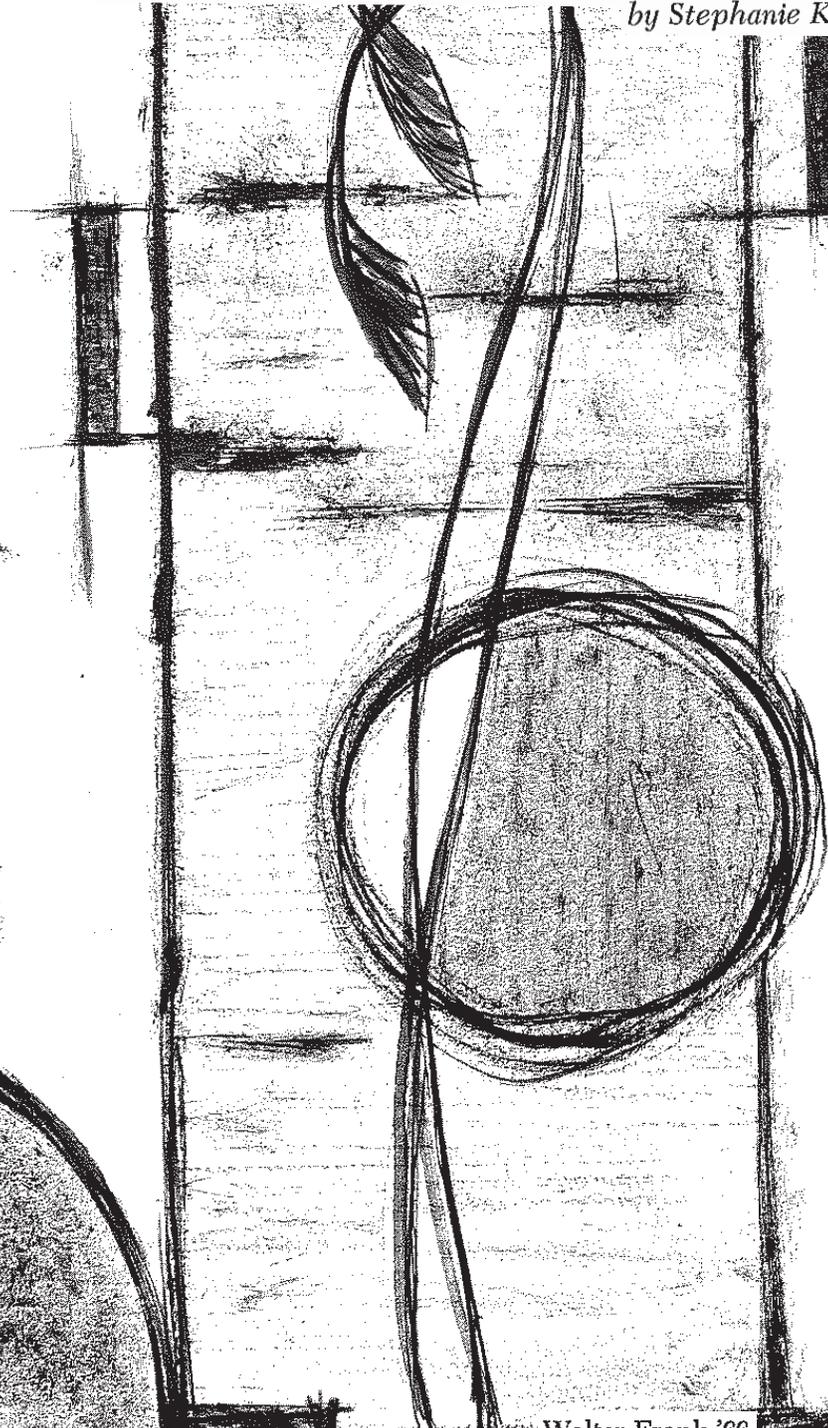
I am the second daughter of my mother  
(And that can be said of no other.)

Hers are the seeds but the flower blooms  
On thee  
and

me — promising fertility.

*by Stephanie Katz*

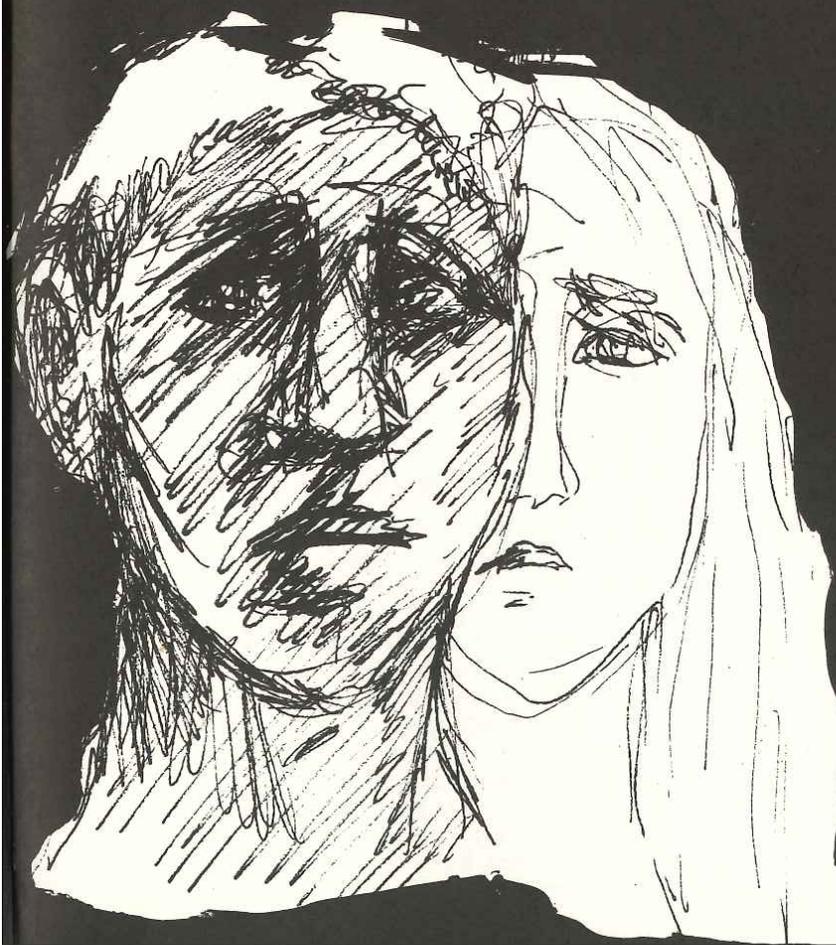
1966





## “In White America”

Hands stop perspiring. And my throat, it's getting tight. I can't cough when I'm up there. If I croak out my first line I've ruined the mood. Judy is just as frightened as I am — more so. This is her first time. To stand there all alone with nobody to help. There are so many people around and their voices keep intruding. I must forget them. I must remember me. Picture Mother in the kitchen. What kind of a mother? Different than my own. She is a soft world and warm, scolds protects and loves. She is worried. I want to comfort her. Vicky is down the aisle, excited, beside me. No, Vicky, don't talk to me. I must be very calm and sure. It is hard to be



her. Yet, I am. Our lives are different but we are the same. In a while there is no difference. Father. He smokes a pipe. Not like my own father, different. This father is thin, arms that dangle, large hands, sharp angles and long. His shoulders have bent forward. He is a gentle man. Life has not made him bitter, but he no longer stands so tall. The audience is settling down now. My heart is beating so fast. Judy — very beautiful, quiet and delicate. My hand finds hers and comfort. Why am I scared? It is just getting on a stage and telling a story. I want to do it well. I want the people out there in the darkness to understand that I am a real person, and what happens to me is real.

It is beginning. Up onto the separate stage, that juts out into the audience. Judy is speaking. I can't listen to her. Focus on her. I'm very stiff outside but inside I am afraid. I know what is going to happen. Judy is finished. The light finds me. Blinds me. Erases the people with blackness. It begins.

I'm happy and excited about my adventure. There is mother then father. I see them and tell the blackness who and what they are. These are not words from a page. They are my own. Born within me. Now I am out of my home where I'm safe and loved. I am alone. One against all these people. I don't want to hurt them, why are they looking so cruel. I must not be afraid, but I am. They are screaming at me. Why? Please, God, help me. Make me strong. It will be over soon, I'll find safety soon. I just have to keep walking forward. Then their smell of salt and stale tobacco will be gone. Here I am. I've made it. I kept my head high. They didn't hurt me. I'm all right. Now the guards will let me in.

NO — no, he's not moving. There must be some mistake. Please, I've come so far. Maybe he's not the right one. This guard here . . . No no no no . . . They're not going to let me through. I'm all alone. Won't someone help me? No, they're all hate. Why are they hating me? Why? I've got to get out of here. All by myself. I'm not going to let them hurt me. I musn't cry. Oh please don't hate me. Why do you want me to die? They're all around, so close, so hot. It's dirt — an acrid smell. I feel so sick inside, . . . The bench. I am still alone. They are here all crowded up around me. Tears stop. I must not let them make me cry. Then a man sitting beside me. He is white. His arm around me warm and soft — comforting sounds. Ugly hating shrieks are not so loud. The bus . . . Mother? Oh mother it was so awful. I'm all right, but please just hold me. Make me feel safe again. Let me cry in your arms. And I do cry. It won't hold in any longer. Peter talks, he is the White Man. I go off stage. The tears won't stop. I sob and don't try to hold in the trembling. The tears for myself, the Negro girl, and the horrible mob that wanted to kill me. I'm backstage, Chris is with me and comforts. People who love me and care. But back on stage I was so frightened — so alone. ■

Joan Goodman '68

# 1968

1969



elizabeth hughes

# The Music Box

dandelion christ  
 threadbare sprawled  
 with indian sandals  
 blue  
 jeans  
 and dandelion toes  
 as dandelion grows  
 from your navel.  
 sweet jesus  
 lovest thou not the bitter weed?

by jill coykendall



SCOTT WALLANT

# 1970

## PERFECT PUNT

Dan Milberg

In September he found out he could punt. He did not like football. He did not like sports of any kind, but he could punt. Thirty, forty, fifty yards. A tight, high spiral.

When school came he was seduced by the football team. He did not like to be tackled, but as a kicker he would be relatively safe.

On the first day of practice he went down to the gym. He was issued all the protection needed when playing with odd-shaped pigskins. He did not know how to put the pads on. The others were pieces of meat covered with cloth, leather, and sweat. He did not want to ask them for help, so he put the pads on wrong.

They went out, meat jostling meat. His pads chafed him all over and made him irritable. After half an hour of calisthenics the chafing was the only thing on his mind; little white flashes each time he moved.

Now it came time to punt. Number 77 threw him the ball. He moved back, took several strides and connected. With a 'slap' the ball moved up in a clean, tight spiral.

It was Saturday of the game. He went down to the gym, now subtly different on the weekend. He took time putting on his pads but they were not right this time either. He started to sweat.

Game time. The team hustled out to the field. The band played 'Destroyers', the team song. Not too many people were there. It was drizzling. The band played 'The Star-Spangled Banner'. His pads hurt.

They put him in for a routine kick. The field was slimy. He heard the count loud and clear. He caught the ball and moved back. Suddenly the line broke and two pieces of meat were bearing down on him. They hit him hard, knocking the air out of him. The little white flashes went green, then black. With his body in the slime he felt sure he would die.

# 1971

The country was not beautiful. There was sagebrush as far as Nick could see and the road was narrow. Every once in a while there was a grease spot on the road where a car had run over a rattlesnake. There were dead jackrabbits too, and once he saw an antelope.

Nick looked out over the gray-green desert to the two buttes to the east. He liked the buttes. They reminded him of a woman's breasts. He liked a lot of things about the desert. But he was happy when he entered the valley at the other side of the desert. It was hot in the valley, but cooler than on the desert and there were trees. Nick drove by the two service stations and saloon that were the town of Arco. Arco was there because the railroad had been built there--and for no other reason. Now the railroad was gone. Once a week an engine and a caboose ran through the valley to pick up the mail and a few traveling salesmen.

Nick decided to stop at the general store. He would be fishing for at least a week and he would need some supplies. He bought some coffee, sugar, flour, and milk. He saw that they had some beef jerky so he bought a pound of that. As he left the store he sucked on a piece of the jerky. You couldn't chew it; it was too tough for chewing. It had a dry peppery taste.

Nick got into his car and left Arco. The spot where he wanted to camp was fifteen miles ahead. It was right by the river and it was surrounded by cottonwood trees. In June the cotton drifted off the trees and covered the ground with a yellowish down like dust kittens. The camp was at the narrowest spot in the valley. The river clung to the low foothills to the west while the Sawtooth Mountains jutted out from the east to within two miles of the river. Nick remembered the way the Sawtooth looked in the late afternoon when the sun shone on them. The gorge across from the camp would be red with indigo shadows.

Nick turned off onto a dirt road. His car

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## The Big Lost River

pushed off great puffs of dust behind him. The camp was on a ranch, but the owner didn't mind people fishing on his land. Nick came to the gate to the ranch. He got out of the car and opened the gate. He was careful not to catch his shirt on the barbed wire. He drove the car through and then he reclosed the gate.

As he drove by the house he saw that it was deserted. But he could see a herd of black angus in the pasture and the barnyard smelled of fresh manure. He had to open another gate. This one was made of wood and was very heavy.

Beyond the gate the road became two tire tracks. No cars had been here for a long time. Nick could barely make out the way.

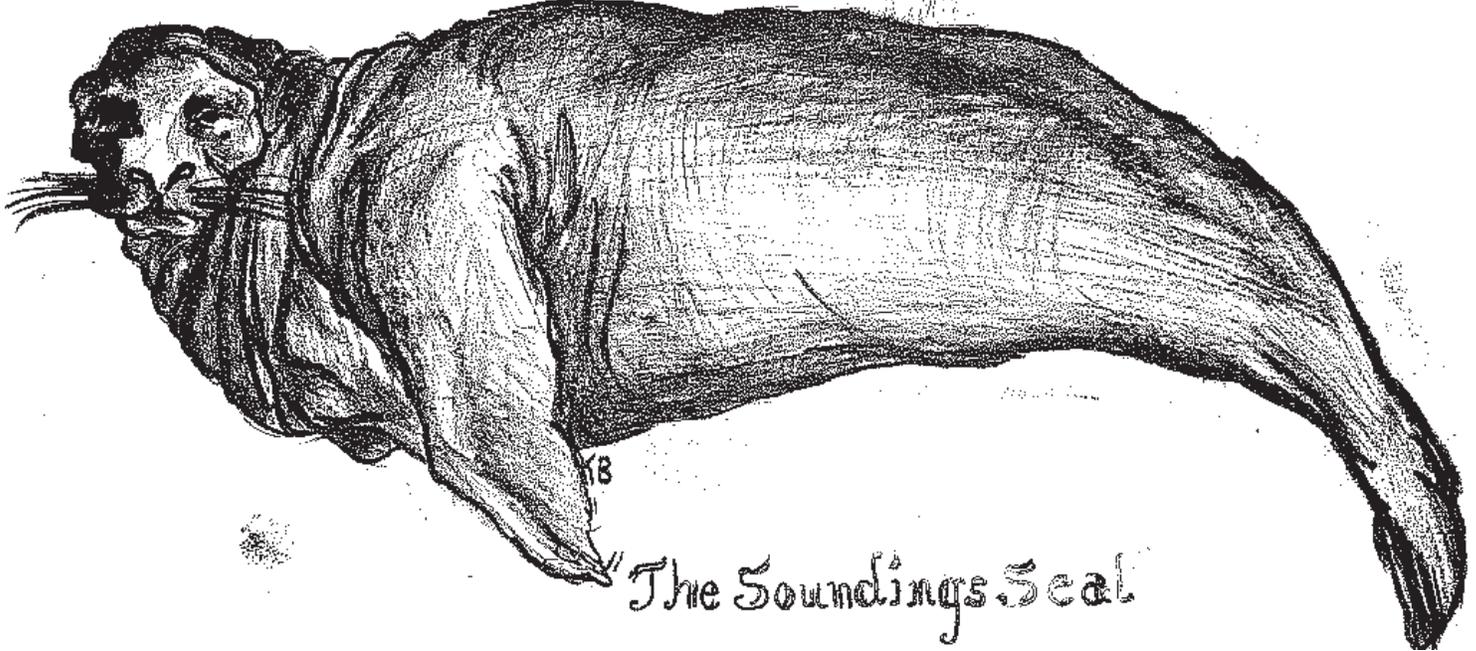
Nick turned towards the cottonwoods that marked the camp. There was no road now, but he was driving across a pasture so it was easy going. He drove through a gap in the trees into a small clearing and stopped the car.

The air was cool and he could see the mountains through the trees. A breeze came up and he could hear the rustling of the leaves combine with the sounds of the river. He decided to go fishing. He would set up camp later.

He opened the car door and got out his fish pole and tackle box. He checked the night-crawlers he had bought before he left. They were fat and lively and the loam they were in was cool and moist. He selected several of the best ones and put them in the bait can he had strapped to his waist. He considered taking some salmon eggs also, but decided it was too late in the season. Night-crawlers would be a rare treat for trout with the river as low as it was. Maybe this evening they would be hitting flies. He really preferred fly-fishing, but he didn't want to wait until evening to fish. Now he would use bait.

His fish pole was in a leather case. He unzipped the case and took the pole out. It was bamboo and was a very good pole. He had no trouble telling the bottom from a bite with this pole. Slowly, he pieced the pole together, making sure that the ferrets fit tightly. He decided to use his hand reel. He attached the reel to the pole and threaded seven-

17



pound test line through the eyelets. Then he tied ten feet of invisible leader with a size eight hook and two sinkers onto the line.

He didn't want to waste any more time so he left his hip boots in the car and headed towards the river. It was late afternoon and the sunlight reflected glaringly off the water. Each ripple was a tiny sun that blinded Nick. He walked along the river until he came to one of his favorite holes. It was on the outside of a bend in the river and had a mud bottom cooled by the shade of some willow trees. But it wasn't very deep so there would be no big rainbow trout there. There would only be the little brown trout. The big trout could wait, there was plenty of time and the brownies tasted very good and he was hungry.

Nick grabbed one of the night-crawlers and tore it in half. He hooked it several times onto the hook. Some of the orange insides oozed out on his hand. He wiped it on his pants and then he cast the line out to the edge of the swifter water. The line got caught in the eddy and came back and settled in the green water of the hole. Below, the worm came down in front of a trout sleeping on the bottom. The trout smelled the worm through his sleep and realized that he was hungry. With a flick of his tail he came forward and took the worm into his mouth. As



he began to chew a terrible pain shot up through his upper jaw and out his left eye. The hook had grazed his brain and he was almost dead. But he ran with it anyway. He had to do anything to get rid of the pain.

Nick felt the trout head up stream with the hook. Like most small trout this one fought very hard but Nick knew he had him hooked very well. He reeled the fish up to the grassy bank and lifted it out of the water. It was a brownie, about eight inches long. Its belly was white and its sides were a brown-gray with darker speckles. He removed the hook and laid the fish on the bank beside him. It flopped around

for several minutes but Nick did not kill it with a stone. He let it suffocate.

Nick caught four more fish and decided to go back to camp. He was hungry and it was almost dark. He had never put on a fly. It had been too nice sitting on the bank to move. He cleaned the fish, slitting open their bellies from the anus up so that the guts came out when he pulled off the lower jaw, and washed the blood away from the the spinal column. The flesh was firm and pink and would taste good. The fish were all small so he put them in his pockets and picked up firewood as he walked back to camp.

It was almost completely dark when he got back to camp so he put up the tent before he started a fire. He had forgotten a lantern. It was a small pup tent. After the tent was up he unrolled his sleeping bag and put it in the tent. Then he built a small cooking fire with the wood he had collected. He greased the frying pan with butter and dipped the fish in flour and put them into the frying pan. He made some coffee too. The coffee was very strong and it tasted good with the fish. He ate all five trout. When he was finished he buried the bones and tails so no skunks would smell them and come prowling during the night. After his meal he was very tired, but it was too early to go to bed. He stared into the fire until it died down to a few embers. Then he went into the woods and urinated. He came back, took his clothes off and went into the tent. He left the tent flaps up but he closed the mosquito net. The fire still gave off some heat.

He was very tired but he could not get to sleep. He lay in his sleeping bag a long time and listened to the wind whistle down the gorge across from the camp. You could hear the wind coming long before it arrived. When it did come it moved the leaves of the cottonwoods. He suddenly remembered the name of the river, the Big Lost River. He remembered why it was called that. It wound down through this valley and out into the desert and disappeared. No one knew where it came up again or if it came up again.



*Carter Conde*

# Pancakes for a Soul

i talked to the big boss of life  
 the other day and asked about the strife  
 in the world and all  
 and he said, man get on the ball  
 your eggs are burnin'  
 and them burgers need turnin'  
 are you out of your mind,  
 we ain't got the time  
 to talk of life.  
 like where can that dude go  
 with pancakes for a soul?

i got hold of a waitress  
 and talked of inner space  
 about life and its lies  
 and she yelled, man where are my french fries  
 with a snarl on her lips  
 she complained about her tips  
 about the money she was needing  
 and the people i was sposed to be feeding  
 like where can that chick go  
 with pancakes for a soul?

the other day i seen an old friend  
 and he said to me, like this is the end  
 i'm so broke and haven't eaten in three days  
 so man, what do you say?  
 i looked at him and said sorry, but we got rules  
 maybe made by fools  
 but if to break one i was inspired  
 i would find myself quickly fired  
 so he went away.  
 like where can i go  
 with pancakes for a soul?

by

Kevin Gralley



bacon of life

billy the cook told me  
 to cook that bacon easy  
 so it'll keep a long time  
 and i asked him, man  
 how long will you keep  
 out in the air of Life  
 if you don't breathe  
 free and true and feel  
 the warm earth and green grass  
 below your feet?  
 man, that dude looked at  
 me an said i was  
 out of my mine  
 he must have been  
 cooked too long

# 1972



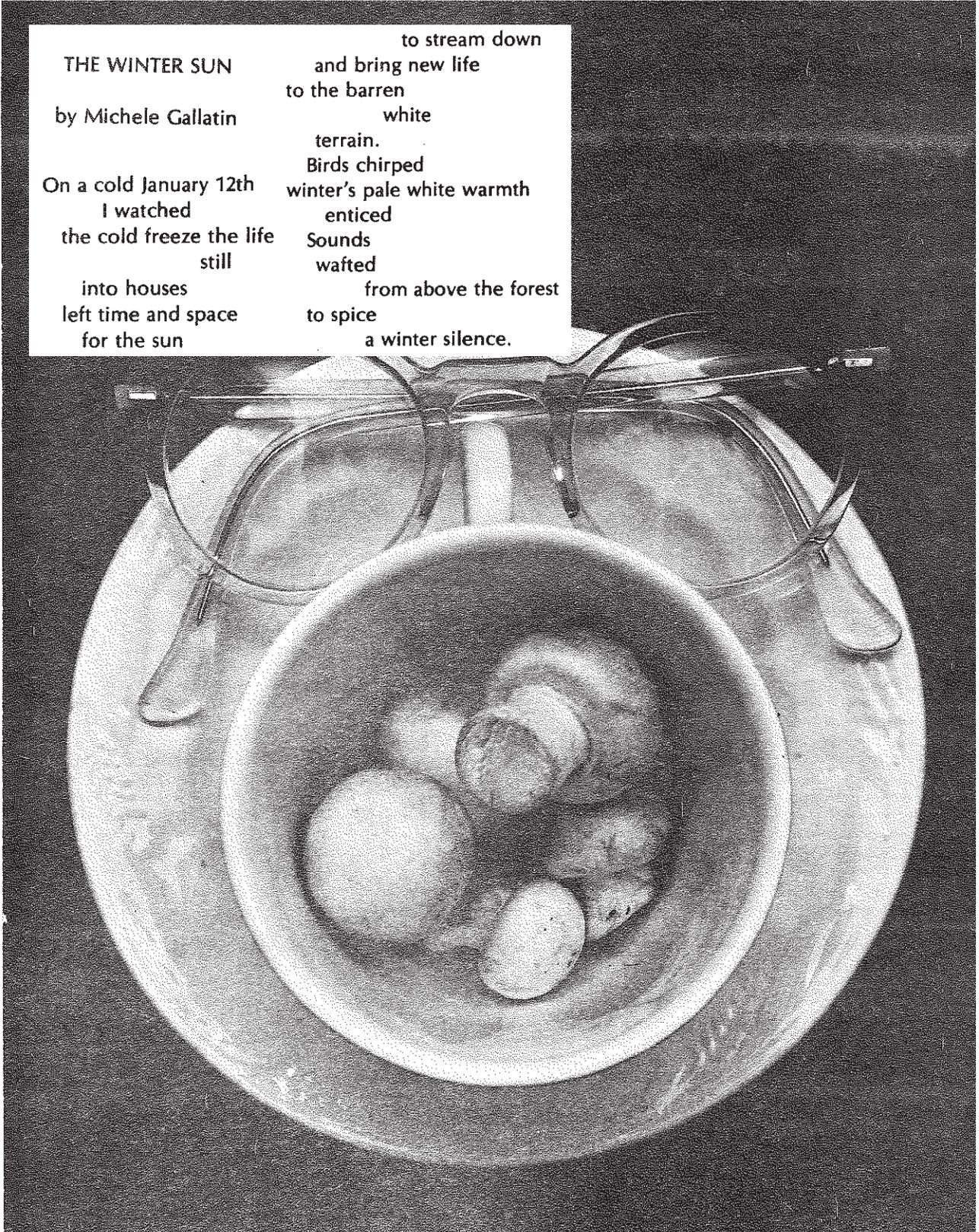
# 1974

## THE WINTER SUN

by Michele Gallatin

On a cold January 12th  
I watched  
the cold freeze the life  
still  
into houses  
left time and space  
for the sun

to stream down  
and bring new life  
to the barren  
white  
terrain.  
Birds chirped  
winter's pale white warmth  
enticed  
Sounds  
wafted  
from above the forest  
to spice  
a winter silence.



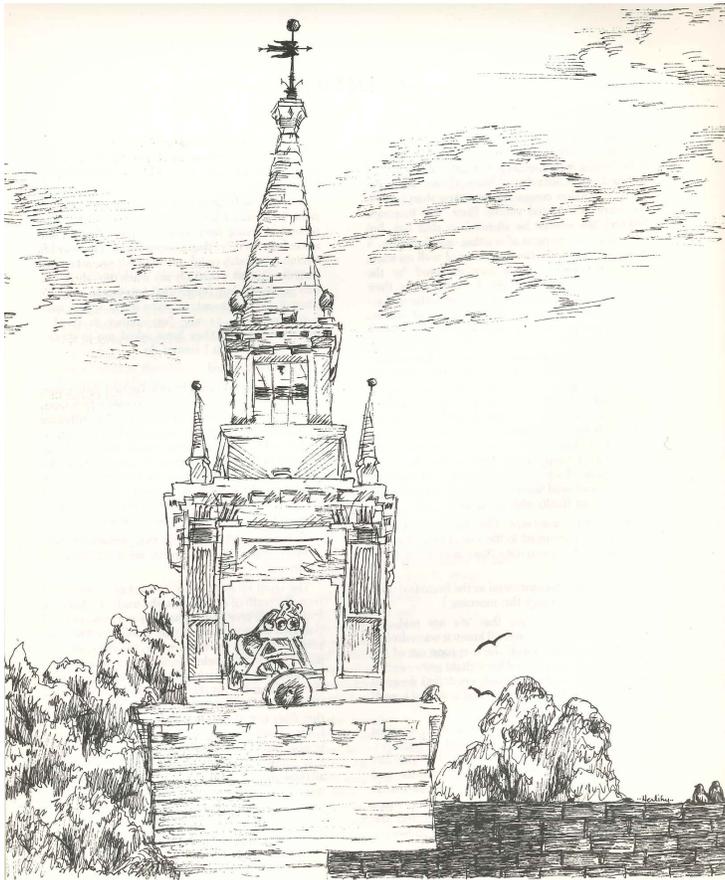
## AUDITION

I wait alone on the bare wood floor. They have handed me a book which I wish not to have, yet must hold, feeling its immediacy, its solidity in a world of watered colors, sounds and faces. My feet are so far away, red nylon covered, contrasting sharply with the worn and muted yellow floor. The incessant buzzing talk cannot be silenced or shut out, but penetrates my moment of waiting, my aloneness. A moment away from the long lines of well meaning voiceless strangers. Each face distorted by the curved mirror of my eyes. I cannot bear their kindness, their meatloaf casserole and coffee-pot action. I walk through the door to a line of endless waiting smiles, each greeting me with the same crude attempt to comfort the agony which is in itself oddly comforting. I cannot tell them of their failure, of their success. When I cry they curse themselves for creating new grief; for extracting from my smile and pretended strength a wrung face, a hidden weakness. We leave the church and I walk up the brick walk with even clicking footsteps. We have no tears for anything just now, and I stop to receive the blind hugs, to support the sorrow they bear me, bearing none of my own. I stand on that worn, sunny red brick and hold them all in a circle, and through their tears am finally able to smile.

But they have gone now. They have forgotten me where I stand wrapped in the velvet curtain (stage left) and in this anonymity there is comfort to be found.

(Moments are reconstituted as the breakfast juice that jolted my stomach this morning.)

Sarah whispers in joy that 'it's not real, too wonderful — pinch me and I'll know it was a dream'



— And through the pinch she is sprung out of her dream to find it istruer, and her delight grows until it becomes large and rainbowed, crystallized deep inside. She shrieks into laughter, and is sure of herself at last

I sent her flowers last year, yellow roses. My poor friend, there had been what's called "a tragedy". When I'd seen her in school I wanted to give her some comfort, but there were only words, and words cannot help being empty. Her grief had made her thin, her face had grown taut and pale, perhaps ethereal, and I could say nothing, only feel the penetrating emptiness, a void across the hallway.

Now I have yellow roses of my own.

They have asked me to give to this play, to this jumble of words, a meaning, a life, to set it within the present.

It is useless to point out that there is no present right now, that I have forced each moment, each second of living from future to past. The present never lasts for more than a second or so. This way life becomes bearably quick, pacing itself against a slow, long drawn past. I can only say when thoughts come into my head, "my father died two weeks ago." To place it in the present, to place death within each living moment, to say "my father is dead..." becomes murder. They have asked me to do this thing, the one thing I cannot do.

My name is called.

For a moment I stand frozen. Inside I shrink, turn away; my mind shaping flimsy excuses a tremulous voice whispers "I can't." Outside I smile, stiffening the corners of my mouth, baring my teeth. No one is frightened by this that seems strange. To me this has become the ugliest distortion of a human face, the most terrible grimace. They are too far away, they cannot see. I cannot look at them, at that panel of judgement. The words and definitions that I have listened to for so long make less and less sense.

"What we are looking for is that element of truth, of inner action. These elements are what make our art an art."

The truth of their art is so foreign, so removed from the truth of my illusion, the truth of what I am living. I will give them what they are looking for, I will give them more than that. I will give them my younger brother emerging white, too surprised and dazed to cry; my uncle, strong, sitting quietly in the church choking on the Lord's Prayer; I will give them the sobs that fought their way out of my body for hours and hours, the racking, grating, hoarse anguish that does not diminish; I will give them my father lying so still, so quietly, sandwiched in the white muslin, his hair brushed, his formal bow tie, and the thin white pucker above his collar. I will give them all these things, all the truth and action they may ever want ... all the anguish and sorrow in the thin disguise of southern-accented comedy. But that is all I will give them, that is all I can give them, there are things that matter more.

# 1976

After all, he had creation in his grasp, and now, was just sitting. Sitting on the Edge of Eternity. *John Travers*

## THE DISEASE

Oh No!  
I'm sick again.  
I have a disease:  
The disease of men.

I was bound to get it;  
It's nothing new.  
I think I've had it  
More than the flu.

It infects your eyes first,  
Spreads to the heart.  
If it gets to your brain,  
It can tear your mind apart.

It poisons you with love,  
Makes your heart flutter,  
Ties your stomach in knots,  
Turns you to butter,  
Makes you weak in the knees,  
Adds a twinkle to your eye,  
Takes your feet off the ground,  
Puts your head in the sky.

It strangely affects  
All normal emotions  
And fills your head  
With outlandish notions.

If your friends are alarmed  
By your behavior outrageous,  
Tell them not to worry;  
It's very contagious.

*Becky Frey*



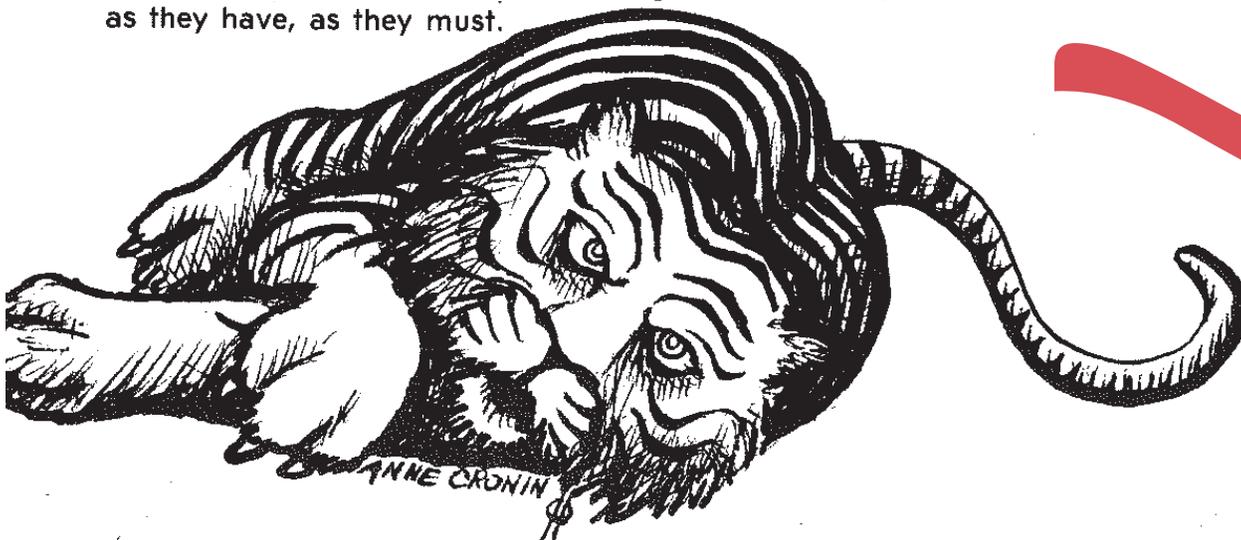
# Bitter Trail of Retreat by Larry Brahm

Trees rattle their branches among themselves,  
making splintering sounds as they break under weight of ice  
and force of wind.  
Light pours forth upon the cedar limbs,  
illuminating moss-like leaves and red knotted trunks.  
The powdery snow, a white apparition,  
drifts as desert sands.

Unshod, glassy-eyed ponies stagger forth.  
The old people ride, their legs too weak to support them.  
Faded blankets shroud their frail bodies,  
an unavailing protection from bitter January winds.  
Faces seared by summer sun,  
creased from winter frost,  
peer from beneath these threadbare wrappings.  
Faces that tell of many warm springs,  
and many hard winters.  
They tell of strength, dominance and defeat,  
of days of peace and freedom  
now sought only in the wayward wind.  
The exhausted horses prod onward, emaciated dogs at their feet,  
insecure upon the icy trail.

The young ones follow, fatigued and bitter,  
bare feet lacerated by ice, bleed upon the trail.  
The blood reezes immediately and becomes a crimson stain  
that will remain till spring.  
They breathe frosty breath upon numb hands,  
many fingers will be lost this winter  
(The horses whine)  
Unconquered eyes tear from the cold.  
In desperation they look upward  
into the great undisturbed blue.  
If the sky were sound; a chime would ring forever.  
Such is its clearness today.

They trek onward,  
fearing the trail behind.  
(The dogs sniff and air cautiously)  
They will never return to reservation life.  
The white man's way is not theirs —  
not was it meant to be.  
These are people of the earth.  
Their lands are gone.  
They retain only their solidarity and willingness to survive;  
as they have, as they must.



1977

**HOW I WONDER . . .***by Sue Bentley*

One dark, cold night a young girl slipped out of her bed, down the stairs, through the door and out of the house. Once outside, moonlight danced about her, shining in her dark eyes and transforming her blonde hair into a pale silver mane. As she scurried down the street, a breeze caught her nightgown and fluttered it around her legs.

She hurried along through the town, past the houses where her neighbors lay sleeping, over the old bridge across the river, down a country road until she came to a drive. At the end of the drive stood a farmhouse, as dark and silent as the night itself. She heard the shuffle of footsteps coming toward her and smiled. The shuffle stopped for a moment, then continued joined by her own small footsteps. They reached a crossroad and stopped.

From both sides of the girls children came. From the right, a tiny dark-haired girl came with her brothers, two soft and beautiful boys. And from the left, four girls, all small and lovely, came silently up to the others. Everyone hesitated, waiting, then moved on down the road when a blond boy stepped out in the distance. He joined them and they continued down the road. Up ahead now, to the right, they could see a clump of trees. Smiling softly to themselves, the children began to pick up their pace and quickly entered the woods. They ran then, faster and faster until they stood in a clearing. Silently, they came together in a circle and joined hands.

The moon shone brightly on the children as they stood with eyes closed and lips parted, visions of pure, almost holy beauty. And finally, slowly, it came.

A soft, ever so faint singing could be heard. A song sung by a thousand voices yet not half so loud as a whisper. In the center of the circle a light appeared and as it grew stronger the children ceased to breathe, their blood was stilled. . . . When a figure finally appeared within the misty glow and all mortality was gone from the children, they began to float slowly upward. The song ended.

In its place came howling winds and pouring rains. The storm lasted all the next day, clearing only after night had fallen. Because of this, it was impossible to send out a search party for the local children reported missing that morning. And it washed away all traces of their visit to the woods, washed everything down into the river, out to the ocean. No one even noticed the ten small brand-new stars scattered across the night sky. . . .

**IMPRESSIONS***by L. P. Howell*

I saw a face—a person there—Another pair of eyes  
That glanced at mine as we rushed on through.  
And in that beat I sensed a warmth—  
A deep emotion that comes but once.

Illusions of that moment lost when we saw  
Through the faces and touched each other—  
Touched through the veil of contentions that shrouded us.

Protected us from being close lest that closeness  
should lead us to discover something hidden  
Some precious secret—revealing what we  
Feared might be the worst hidden deep  
within ourselves.

How long will we let the fear overpower the  
Longing to reach out? the longing to let go?  
For a while, no doubt.  
For we are not ready.  
At least not now, not yet.

8791

## The Temporal Philosopher

Jim Grenady

The steps kneeling below the precinct house are oiled by a falling fog of snow. None of it sticks. The man approaches, unsure and awkward. His feet busy themselves deciding how many *stairs* to take in one stride. What he really wants to do is run each and every step on all fours. But, you see, he has lost the worn green carpet steps he knew for wet concrete.

He is also worrying over his left fist. A pocket coats the hand like old layers of white paint found on nailed open shutters and sticky window frames. None of the hand is visible. All you can see is a bulge. A bulge that is the womb for both hand and gun in mutual sweat.

He steps up to the platform, to the podium, and onto the pulpit. The microphone anticipates him with a whine of pain.

"It's about time I started," he lead off with a joke. It was a laugh to be choked on, quietly.

"And it's about time for yor all to drop dead. Only this 'distinguished' body would have either the resources of the perverse interest to push back into time. You sent me to be the metaphysician serving your hypochondria. You! (crescendo) You dared (with pointed accusatory finger) to test if I would be the pawn of fate or the chess master of History! But instead I found what you are." (A pregnant silence only electricity can provide).

"I came back to the way it all was. But it then had one too many philosophers. I was just one minor flaw in a duplication of everything. And I can not get back to the original! All of you are here, and all of the pain is here also. And it is not even important. You are things, and I can only cry for myself." He had stepped back from the mike, so that the last line was inaudible.

The sergeant tried to be very busy. The philosopher did not mind being ignored. He had time. But the the policeman noted what he was and reacted per specification, with:

"Yes, father, what can we do for you."

The philosopher-priest held up the gun. And the *hand* will decide what to do with it.

The Day of Judging



1979

# 1980



James McArthur

## For Kenny

Once upon a time

We were together.

We never ate grapes on windless summer days  
or climbed trees  
or played games.

We fought bloody battles;

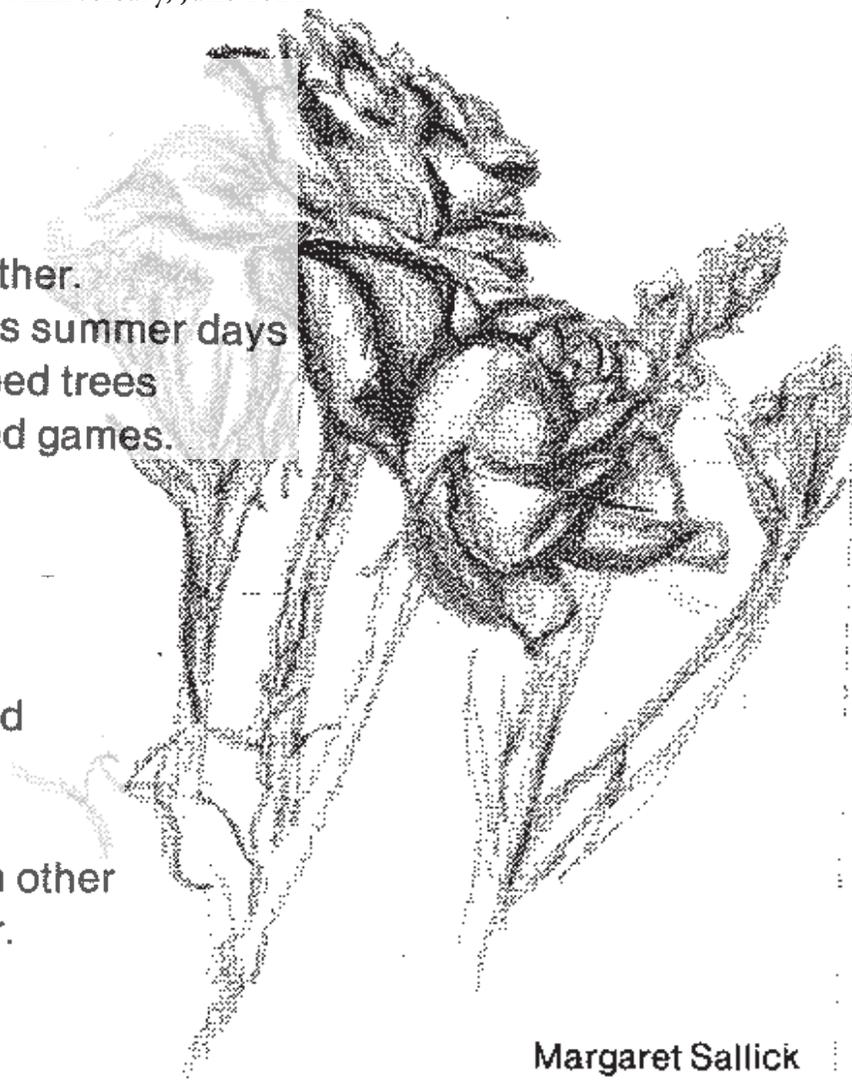
feet fights

wrestling matches and

we broke our parents bed.

Their anger made us cry

and blame each other  
and fight harder.



Margaret Sallick

# 1981

Now,

you are miles and days

gone.

No longer a tear between us.

frozen and dispersed in crystal blue

distance.

Once upon a time,

together was nothing and

We didn't know.

Julie Noel

# 1982

## A Piece of Life

The man was so preoccupied with tending his garden that he did not notice his son standing beside him. His hands, worn from years of hard work, were surprisingly gentle as they patted the dirt around the fragile plants. Filled with pride, he surveyed his work. Everything had been planted with care, and his favorite red chrysanthemums bloomed, tall and proud, among the other flowers. Tending the garden always made the man feel at peace with himself. He would kneel on the damp earth to mold and shape his work so dear to him. Often, when he returned from a long, hard day of toiling in the rice fields, the man's body ached and he felt that familiar tiredness overtaking his entire being. Yet, once he knelt to tend his garden, the weariness and pain disappeared. His mind cleared of all troubling thoughts, he worked for hours, only quitting when darkness took over and he could no longer see. Today was just another day as he tended the garden.

The man looked up. His son stood looking at him with questioning eyes. He is too young, the father thought to himself, too young to understand the meaning of life. Always asking questions, wanting to know the reason for living. My son does not yet realize that the answer is that there is no answer. We are, only because we are. That is karma— what happens will happen: we are born, we live, and then we must die. My boy does not yet know these truths, but some day he will and then he will be a man. He is a good boy, eager for knowledge and quick to learn. All these thoughts floated through the father's mind, as he knelt on the hard ground looking up at his son. He stood up, and smiled down at the boy.

"What is it you would like?" the man asked.

Almost shyly the boy looked up at his father. "I would like a piece of earth," he said quietly. Thoughtfully, the father studied his son, wondering what had prompted his desire in the young boy. "I would like some place to grow beautiful plants, as you do," the boy added impulsively. "A place of my own. I want—" He stopped, suddenly embarrassed at his outburst of emotion. He turned away from his father.

"Hmmm . . .," the man pondered, still thoughtful as he gazed at his son. He turned to scan the small yard, most of which was covered by his own garden. A small patch near the house had once been used to grow vegetables, by his own father, but had been abandoned and forgotten long ago. The surviving plants

and weeds had grown, interwoven with one another. The man walked toward the small patch of earth, the boy following close behind. He motioned to the patch of land, offering it to his son. "Here is a piece of earth. It needs to be cleared and the soil, turned. Hard work, perhaps, but with love and care someone could make it beautiful."

The boy beamed eagerly. A rush of words tumbled out of his mouth as he turned to his father. "I can make flowers grow and live. I'll work hard and make it beautiful. I'll—" Once again he stopped suddenly, realizing his impulsiveness and outward display of emotion. Self-consciously, he looked at his father. "Thank you," he said softly.

His father just nodded and walked away, back to his own piece of earth.

At once the boy began working at his garden. Laboriously, he pulled up the weeds and cleared the unwanted plants from the earth. He turned the soil until it became a rich, dark color, free from rocks and other impurities. By the time the boy had finished, darkness was setting in, and in the dusk he stood back to view his work. There were no plants yet, and his body was tired, but it ached with satisfaction. He turned as his father came to stand beside him. Glancing at his son's work, the man nodded and began walking toward the house, the boy following, but not without glancing back with solemn pride.

The next day, the boy came out of the house, and to his surprise, found a row of recently uprooted plants in his new garden. The boy smiled knowingly to himself and glanced at his father, kneeling in his own garden. Sensing his son's gaze, the father lifted his head, nodded and returned to his work. The boy bent down, carefully examining his new plants: flowers of all kinds, and among them one of his father's red chrysanthemum plants. Lightheartedly he busied himself, digging and planting. Careful not to break any fragile stems, he packed dirt around the roots. When it came time to plant the chrysanthemum, the boy placed it proudly in the center of the garden. He surveyed his work admiringly, happy with his accomplishment. This small piece of earth was his own, and this knowledge alone, filled the boy with pride.

From then on, father and son could be seen almost daily, tending their gardens. Each knelt in the dirt; digging, packing, weeding. One had hands worn from hard work, stained and wrinkled from time, the other, smooth, unmarked hands; yet unexposed to the ways and hardships of life. Both found a sense of tranquility in their labor of love and pride in the beauty they were creating.

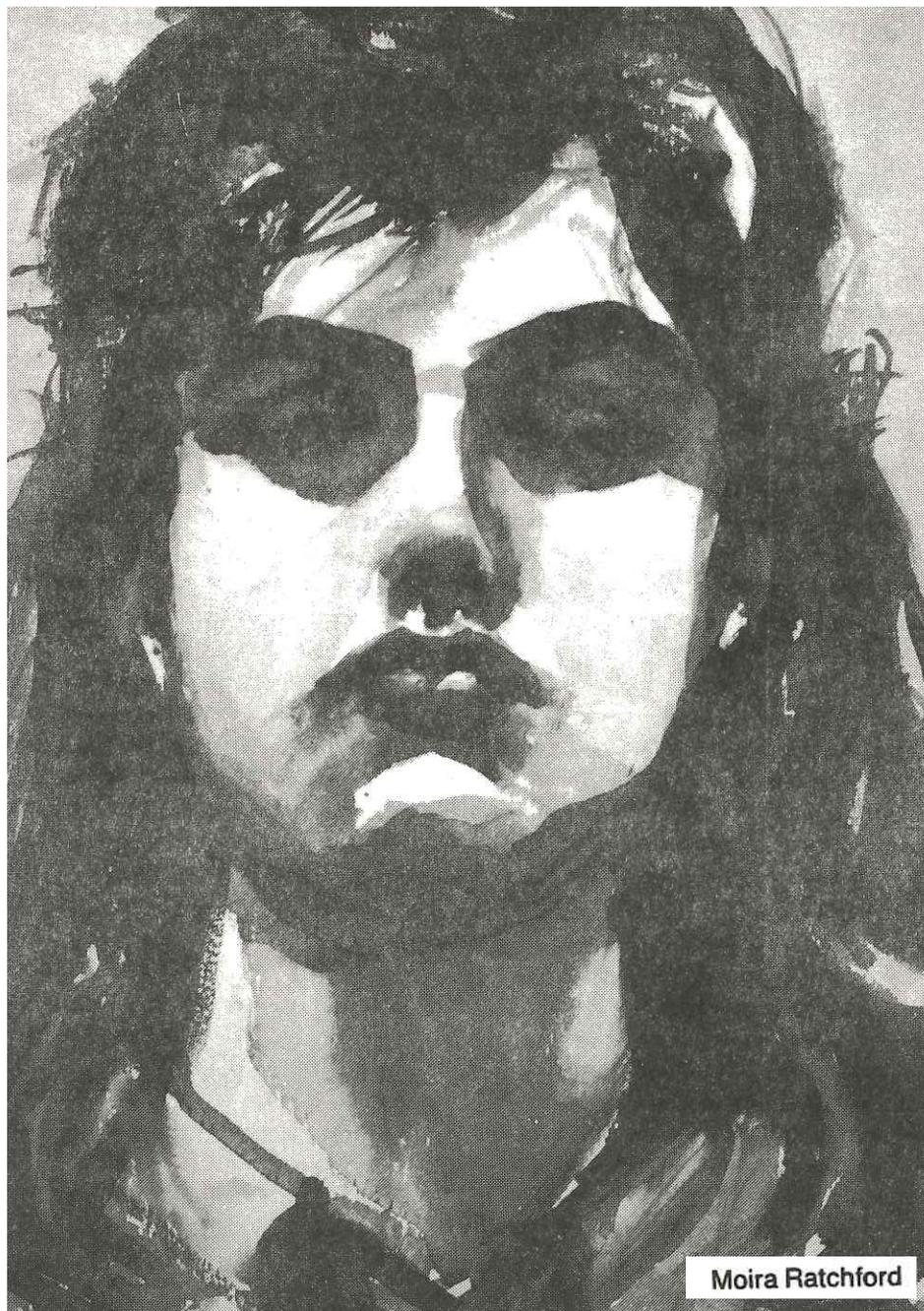
One day, the man looked up and watched his son, bent over, engrossed in his work. It seemed to him that his son grew and flourished with the flowers. The father observed that the boy was learning of death and of birth as plants died and buds opened up into flowers. He saw in his son the beginnings of a man, someone who took pride in his work, and had the ability to express beauty. The father was glad because he knew his own time on earth was short and he yearned to see the boy become a man.

Darkness was creeping around him and the man pulled himself away from his thoughts. He turned to look at his own garden, and examined his favorite chrysanthemum. Lately it hadn't been doing well, and the man knew it would soon die. Like himself, it had become withered with age, ready to break in the wind. He closed his eyes for a moment, trying to forget the pain in his body and the weariness he could no longer escape. He opened his eyes and the boy was standing beside him. No longer did the father need to look down at his growing son, and their eyes met. Then the boy looked at the chrysanthemum, and his father offered an answer to the unasked question: "Is it karma that one must die to be reborn again. Death is not the end, but a new beginning." He smiled kindly at his son. "One always continues to live."

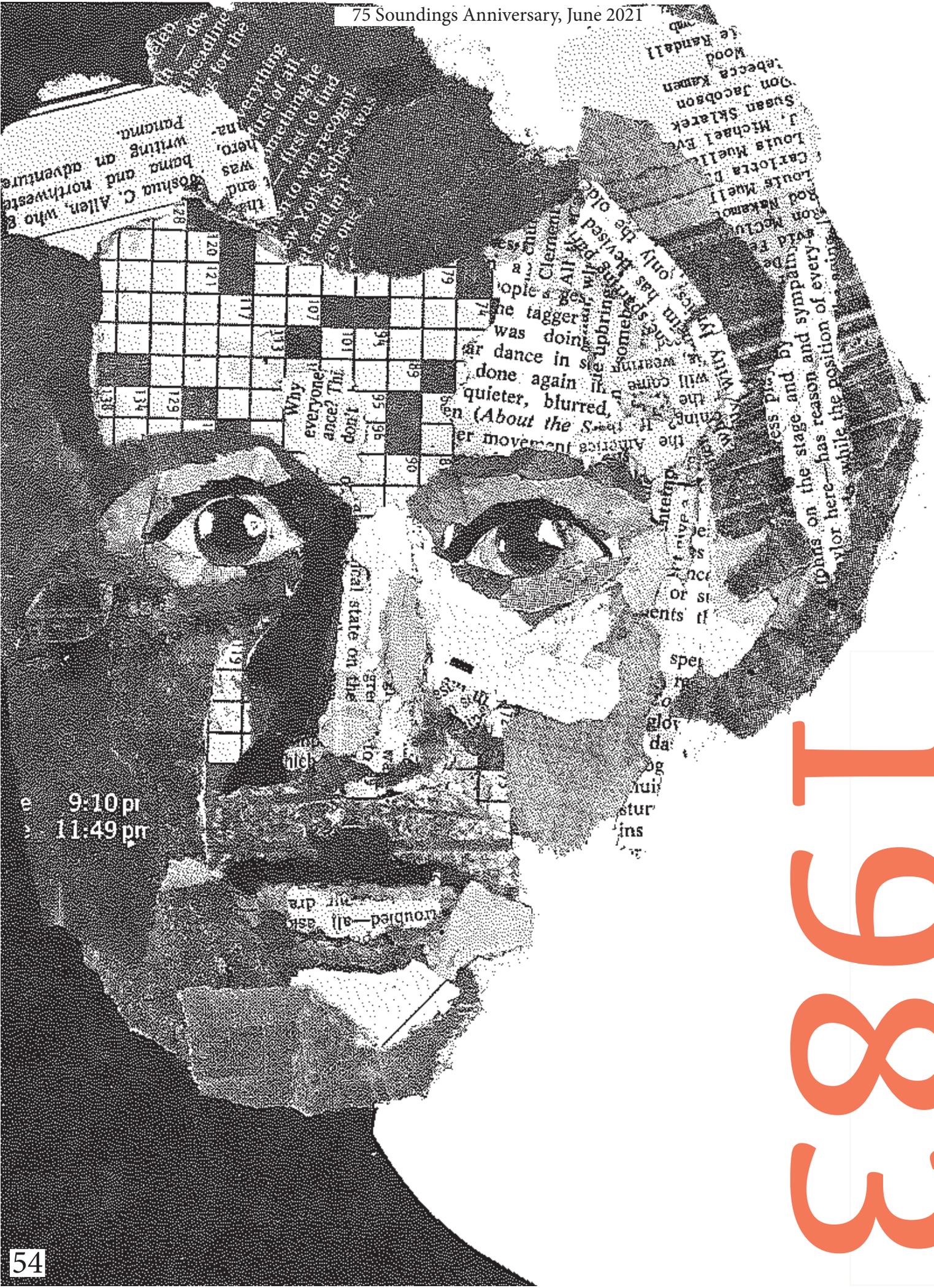
"Yes," the boy said, thoughtfully. "But ..." He looked at his father's face, realizing for the first time that it was lined with age. He turned away and glanced at his own garden. In the center among the other flowers, the chrysanthemums were startlingly red and alive. The boy began to understand what his father was trying to tell him. A strange feeling came over him as he and his father walked slowly to the house, side by side.

One day the boy came out of the house. He looked tired and walked slowly. He continued past his garden, only glancing at it for a moment. The flowers were blooming brightly, although there were weeds among them. He headed toward the large garden and stopped. Weeds had come up in many places here, too, and the plants were growing wildly, as though forgotten and unattended for some time. The boy thought how dreary it all seemed as he looked at the dead chrysanthemums. Then something caught his eye, and he knelt down beside the withered plant. A red flower was beginning to push its way out of a green bud, and into the world. The boy smiled knowingly and began pulling up the weeds.

Sue Kastriner



Moira Ratchford



e 9:10 pm  
e 11:49 pm

# 1983

# Whitewash

It snowed over the weekend, and the white powder blew in through the open windows, coating the insides of the house. It drifted with the strong winds, blanketing the furniture, piling up against doors, walls, appliances, and the body.

The body lay silent on the bed. Through the thin layer of snow, the blue lips and chalky white face were visible. A small bottle of pills lay empty on the table.

When he was alive, his name had been Josh Holt.

Three weeks ago, as a sophomore in college, Josh had, for the first time in many years, thought about his own death. He was at a party, and was talking with a friend about a mutual acquaintance who had killed himself. They talked about the immense effect the suicide had on the family and friends of the boy. They talked about what it would be like to slowly slip into oblivion. They talked about how their family and friends would react if they killed themselves.

For many days after that, Josh had thought about all the people he knew, weeping at his funeral. His parents crying over him, his friends talking about how they should have seen the signs, and his sister placing his picture on her desk.

Josh talked again with the friend about suicide. No longer under the effect of drink, and the strange atmosphere of a few evenings before, the friend said that yes, suicide did have some sort of romantic appeal to him, but it was basically an amazingly stupid thing to do. Josh had told the friend that he agreed, but he still thought constantly about his own death.

The more Josh thought about it though, the more he liked it. The idea of death itself did not appeal to him. He enjoyed life, for the most part. He loved the *idea* of suicide, the romance of it. He knew of all the writers and artists who had killed themselves because they were too sensitive and too great to stand life, and the people who would think that of him.

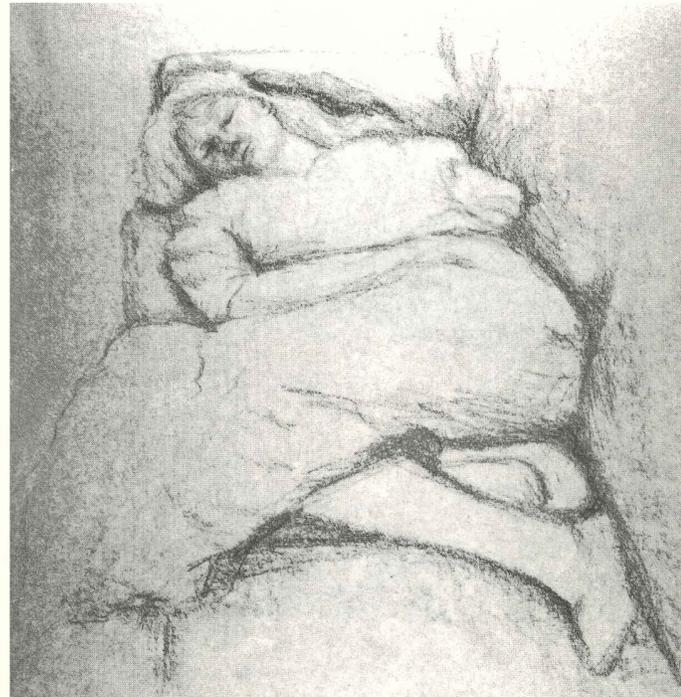
Four days later, when he was alone in his house, Josh decided. He took his old asthma medicine from the medicine cabinet, lay down on his bed, and, loving himself and hating himself, swallowed a fist-full of pills.

The pills would take hours to complete the job, and by that time, Josh's sister, who was supposed to arrive in thirty minutes, would have discovered him and saved him. Josh knew this, not totally consciously, but he knew it very well. But she hadn't come home on time, and by the time he realized that she was not going to arrive, he was too far gone to do anything about it. As he died, his face showed no sign of his turmoil and fear.

When the ambulance arrived to take him to the morgue, the attendants found that the snow had frozen him to the bed. During the struggle to remove him, his face lost its serene expression, and changed to one of pained distortion.

Benjamin Dulchin

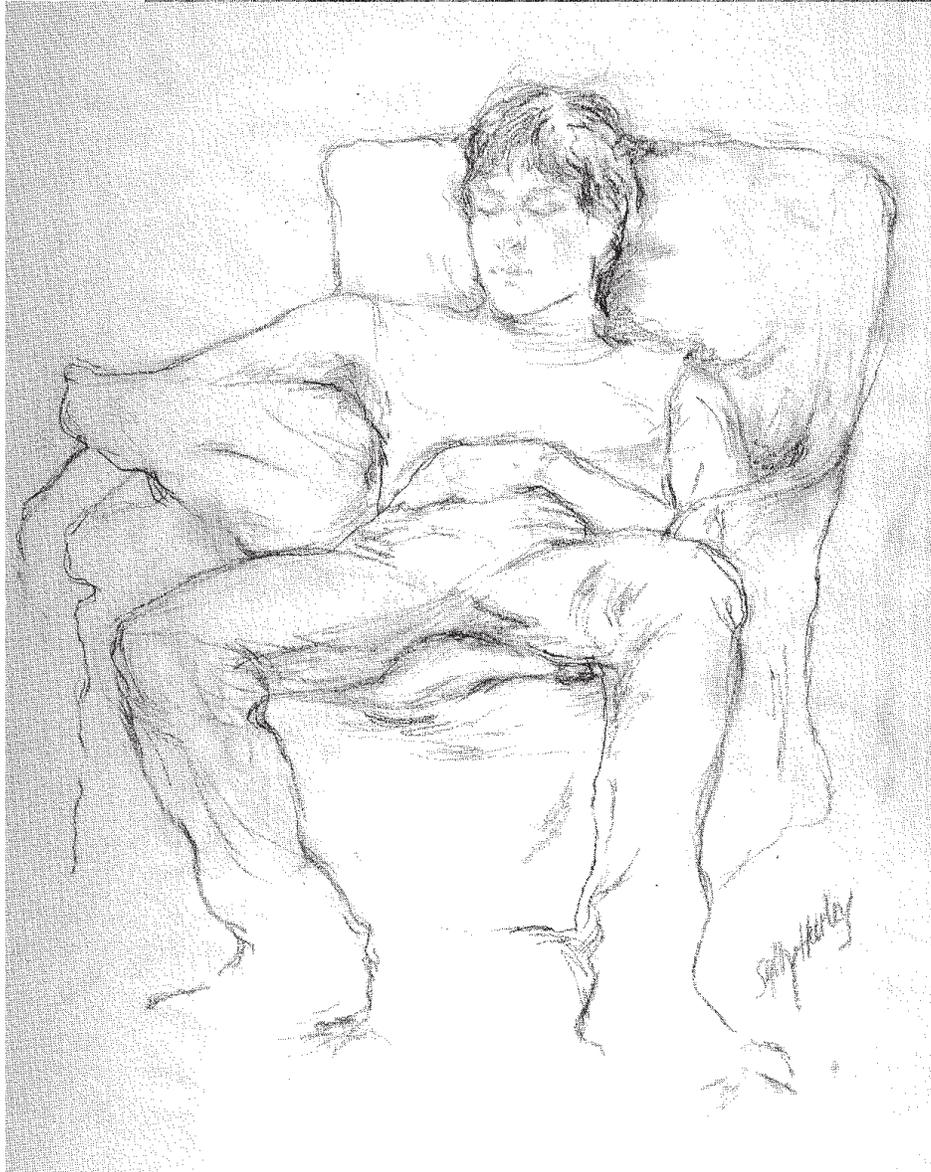
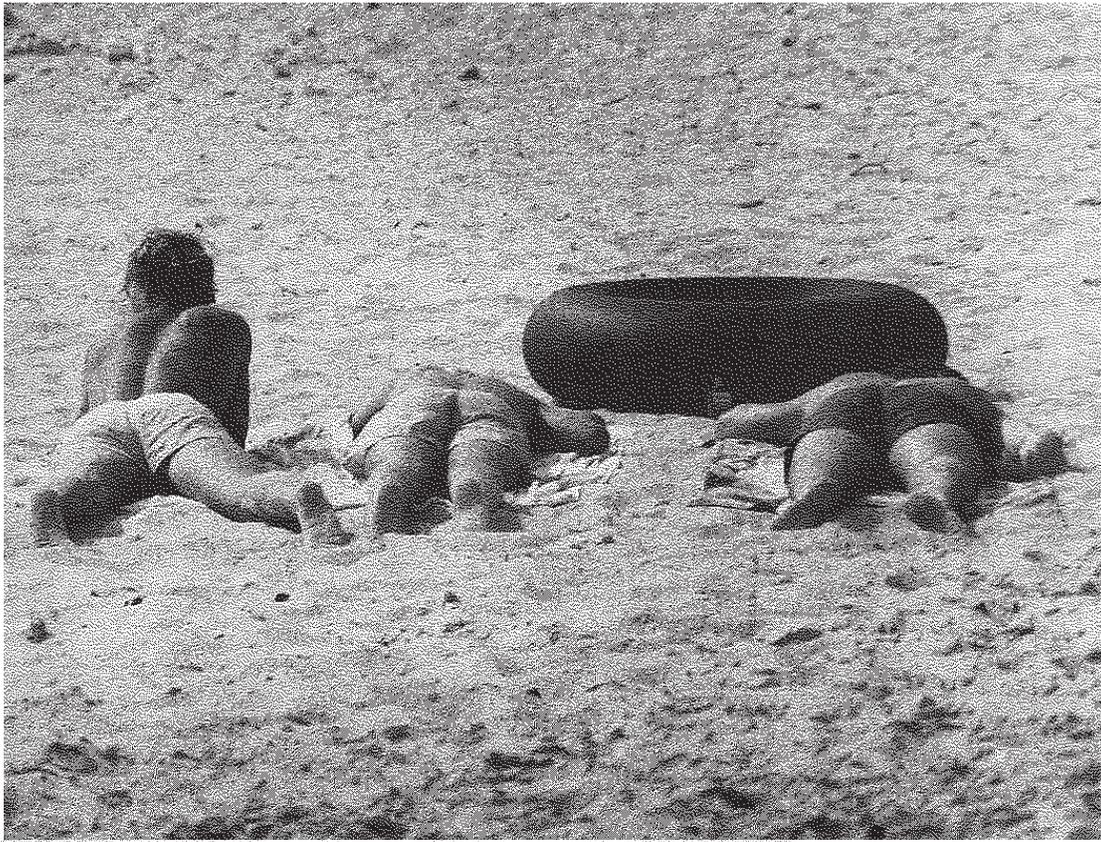
1984



## picking berries

her sleek hands pierced by thorns  
 cringed crushing the fruit  
 she squeezed the juice into her mouth  
 soaking her lips red  
 and laughed at the blood on her fingers

Dina Rubin



1985

## drifting with the power of black

The day's darkness lay heavily on her. The library was cold and quiet and dim. Then Nikki's thin voice rose from the depths of her armchair in a tone of petulant accusation.

"Why are you so far away these days? You're not with me; you're so far away."

Grey light through charcoal clouds tried to illuminate the windowed alcove where the girls sat in labored, studious silence. Through a web of overgrown hair Nikki watched a shadow spread through the room, forming a sharp line between herself and Beth in their secluded corner, and leaving Beth untouched in a wan silver glow. Just like her to keep all the light to herself. That's what she's doing these days. I'm here, so close, with all this darkness all about, and she keeps moving away. Keeps all the brightness within. All her warmth — she used to radiate it (everyone said so) — and now I can't get a smile — at least not a *real* one. Her goodness has gone inside, away from me. *My* Beth is so far away. Nikki spoke louder.

"Why are you so far away?"

Beth sighed and smiled indulgently at her friend. With smooth hands she closed her book and arranged cozy-stockinged feet under her blue-jeaned thigh.

"You're projecting that, Nik," she said evenly. "I'm right where I've always been with you — I love you, you know that. I feel like you've drifted away from me and you don't know why — that's why you think I've gone. I'm worried about you. Something's been bothering you lately; why don't you tell me what's really on your mind?"

Patronizing, therapeutic; that smile, that tone. Nikki made no reply. She's being goddamned therapeutic again, and after she's drifted so far from me. She still thinks she knows me, everything about me, understands my dark side. Well, she doesn't see it very well. Why doesn't she see I'm *all* dark side now? Why won't she share some of that light?

Nikki's black pupils shone crazily from sunken, mauve encircled eyes. She surveyed her blond friend, adorable in soft, clear pastels; a cashmere sweater — her hands firm and supple, her fingernails shimmering shell-pink ovals. Beth smiled quizzically at Nikki's unnerving gaze, then disapprovingly as Nikki dug a battered pack of cigarettes from her cavernous pocket.

The upholstery felt like burlap against Nikki's bare feet and calves; she crouched into the ash and oatmeal plaid fabric and huddled her shoulders like a frightened animal. She was a pointed little girl — her knees abrupt white shocks from under her long chambray skirt; lank black hair obscuring elfin ears and chin. She smoked frantically, and pulled her father's huge grey shetland closer about her narrow frame. Her thin tiny hands were deathly pale; they fluttered, pushed the hair from her face, then — pulled it back again; finally came to rest tensely on her lap.

Outside the icy window, the campus experienced late autumn; wind stinging and razor-edge cold. Nikki watched as the last leaves fell from the trees and swirled along the ground. Why does everyone hate the autumn? The thin bared branches were dark against the paler sky. Why see the trees as menacing skeletons? There is beauty in their simplicity, like the beauty in death itself. It's so clean and sparing, so naked and true. Without all that green confusion and clutter.

"Nikki, where are you?" Beth sounded anxious but mellow, her voice rich and warm. Laughter. "See what I mean, you've drifted away again. I thought we were going to talk about what's been on your mind."

The wind screamed around the old stone building and Nikki shivered. Beth is still warm, but this draft ... it feels as though this autumn has taken root in my gut. Autumn — all those leaves drifting, drifting away. But — Autumn is ... good? ... The wind is cleansing. Tell Beth how bad the drifting is, how frightening — Winter, how good when it's all clean and the leaves are blown far, far away. But the black; how can I tell her about the darkness? *She's* so far away. *It is* Beth; or is it me? She says I'm drifting. I am drifting but if I go too far it'll be so dark I won't see her at all. She's already so far away. *She's* gone away. She's so warm. And so light. How can she still be warm summer-glow while I am here — with this darkness, all about; this window, doing its best to keep the cold out; and three bright fluorescent tubes buzzing, buzzing to banish the dark — black seeps, in through cracks through chasms tunnels into my brain and sieves into my eyes and drops like screens of black gauze but not gauze, they crash (lightly, thud) falling slowly, descend, so everything gets gradually greyer darker ebony-night even in the bright of day.

'Nikki!'

Nikki turned her nervous dark eyes hesitantly to meet Beth's anxious gaze. Beth's eyes were honey-gold and soft, but they deepened to chocolate, earth-brown, and then endless pools of ebony, night-black. Nikki felt her friend's firm fingers grip her narrow wrist and Beth's voice fell like shattering icicles on her eardrums. But she, Nikki, was drifting away in the pool, in the pit; surging grey and black depths enveloping her, sucking her down. Drifting and dark. Cold. Cold and drifting and dark. She reached skinny arms and bony fingers, like the clean sharp angles of the winter trees, towards the sky, but the sky answered with the spinning charcoal clouds as thick as the currents that closed in on her, suffocating her, consuming her. No!



and the delicate thud of the heavy gauze and blacker and blacker and blacker and black and she yielded to the swirling eddies and felt herself helpless, helpless; drifting, drifting: drifting with the power of black.

# 1987

## Welcome to Tomorrow

Plastic children ...  
In their styrofoam boxes,  
With their machine-pressed smiles.  
Take them out,  
Wind them up,  
And watch them  
Socialize ...

**Matthew Taylor Raffety**



## Fragments of a Shattered Mirror



You stand before the mirror,  
 Red, shiny lipstick, you apply.  
 The curve of your lips pouting.  
 I watch you,  
 Amazed by your grace,  
 You emanate beauty,  
 Carol.

And now I sit across from you,  
 At Edy's, eating nothing,  
 This is when  
 you show me  
 what I have never seen  
 before.  
 I see a fragment of a shattered mirror,  
 That fragment catches pain.  
 I never knew you knew pain  
 you hid it well  
 I knew pain  
 I never saw it reflected when I gazed at you.  
 And as you shattered,  
 Right before me,  
 The broken bits fell on your wrists.  
 I could not ask about those marks.  
 Once again,  
 you showed me  
 what I had never seen before.

And now that mirror hangs on your wall,  
 Fragments that reflect a true image.  
 You stand before the mirror,  
 Red, shiny lipstick you take off  
 The curve of your lips frowning  
 I watch you  
 Amazed at your depth,  
 The hurt  
 apparent in your eyes.

There are gaps between the fragments,  
 With my love,  
 I hope they fill.

**Diane Goodman**

## with a mother's patience

i want you to laugh at  
 the poems i write,  
 desecrate the idols i worship,  
 twist inside-out the  
 thoughts i entertain, raze  
 the emotional shelters  
 i've built, strip me  
 of the lies i'm dressed in,  
 break all of my make-  
 beliefs;  
 and when you find my  
 infant-soul, whimpering and  
 crawling on all fours,  
 i want you to smile  
 and wait for me  
 to walk beside you

**Peter Danbury**

# 1988

# 1989

## painting in a pale blue

i haven't a memory of all things past  
(the story of my father's fathers), though  
it should have been my birthright ...

that night  
i threw tradition out the passenger's window  
(along with the wine bottle we had drained)  
that night  
the wind blew through us

what was it you said upon realizing i loved you?  
words i could be  
falling asleep with, now that you are gone,  
words i could be meditating on ...

no, i haven't a history  
hidden in my desk drawer,  
safe and within reach —  
rather i am left with letters,  
photographs and such,  
landmarks on the road behind, beyond  
that fork where the weeping willows stood,  
where we momentarily parked the car,  
the bats like Arab women mourning,  
the moonlight painting in a pale blue,  
our fragile breath

withering downwind ...



# 1991

## Lost

He speaks to me in furious whispers  
from across the room  
His eyes reflect the iridescent fluidity  
of a bubble's lonely glow  
I see all the colors of an oil slick melting  
on a hot summer highway  
But I cannot see my reflection in his eyes  
among the changing colors  
And I cannot hear his voice

Michelle Pinto

## love poem

Ease the pain with WEZN  
"love songs 'til midnight"  
(that could be ours)

Stuck behind a green chevy  
that stops at yellow lights  
(and forget about you)

I swerve too fast  
accelerate around the corner  
out of sight

If you would ride with me  
I'd drive like an old woman

Jennifer Rich



## Last Crossroads



Walking briskly along the highway, gravel and shards of glass crunch beneath my feet as I continue on. Occasionally a cool breeze carrying swirls of dust blows across my face, causing me to squint sharply against the sight of the dry earth.

Shortly, I come to a high point in the road, from which I can look downhill at the rubble of another town. A road sign that stands lonely at a crossroads announces the next town, yet another lost cause, and I stop for a second to ponder the fate of this town, and the many others I had passed.

"Whaddya think yer doin'?" a gruff voice pierces the rising swirls of dust. I turn slowly about to meet the gaze of a disheveled vagabond sitting by the side of the road. Not anxious to make the acquaintance of this man, I begin to walk along the road again.

The man rises to his feet and quickly comes to my side.

"Ever been ta the crossroads?" the man asks me.

"Not familiar with the area," I say, continuing along the road.

"Well, here it is now," the man proudly announced, as if his scruffy person were important in this vast desolation.

Thinking that the town that I am now heading for does not look promising in its dark rubble, I turn west toward the dusty colors of the evening sky, and follow the crossroads.

"Crossroads is choices," the man calls out from behind me. "Choices all the time."

"Hafta go somewhere," I say, feeling very minute as the thickening grayness of the evening closes in around me.

I began, "I'll just..."-

"Choices all the time," the man cuts in in a monotone. "Choices all the time."

I turn about quickly to see that the man has cut his own throat, and was now at his knees, arms dropped straight to his sides, and he drops a knife as he stares straight ahead, down the road, at a group of houses whose windows are beginning to light up as the evening light fades.

I turn back to where the man was, only to see no one is there, only the knife he had cut himself with, lying in the road as a few grains of sand blow aimlessly around it. I pick up the knife and inspect it.

"West at the crossroads," is engraved on the side. Curious, I walk back the short distance to the ominous crossroads signpost and stand for a second.

A person begins to appear, walking from where I earlier came, gravel crunching underfoot, and slightly obscured by the devilwinds of dust. The person seems familiar in stature, and his clothes were fairly worn, I can see as he approaches.

Curious as to why this lonely traveler seems so familiar, I speak.

"Ever been to the crossroads?" I ask him.

"Not familiar with the area," he tells me flatly.

"That's where you're now," I tell him.

The man turns west at the crossroads, and walks toward the last glimmer of sunlight on the horizon. He is saying something to me, but I can't hear him. The swirling dust, the fading twilight, and the gravel crunching under my feet obscure all my thoughts. Feeling the knife in my pocket, I begin speaking.

"Choices all the time, choices all the time..."

-Joe Dochtermann

NEST

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A JUNIOR

6:45 A.M.---The alarm goes off, playing one of those songs you absolutely hate. With effort, you muster enough energy to throw your radio across the room. Your sleep for five more minutes -- or until your parents literally drag you out of bed. "This is not the way to start a day," you mutter to yourself. But it is the beginning of a typical day in the life of a high school junior.

You're awake for only five minutes when you're faced with one of the biggest problems of the day: what to wear! After standing in front of the closet for ten to fifteen minutes, you finally decide on an outfit. Depending on your taste or style, this could be anything from Nikes and college sweats, to Gap jeans and your father's buttoned-down Polo, to Barney's pants and pearls.

7:00 A.M.--- You have your outfit. Now you ponder the big question: "Do I have time to take a shower?" By the time you decide that you really should, you realize that you don't have time. To replace the shower, you use a whole can of deodorant spray and half a bottle of perfume. You run a brush through your hair once and gather up your unfinished Chem homework.

7:30 A.M.--- You're still in our bedroom when you realize you only have ten minutes until you have to be in English class. As you sprint through the kitchen and grab your lunch, your mother asks "What about breakfast?" Breakfast, what's that??? you wonder, heading through the playroom to the garage.

7:35 A.M.--- You're in your car, half a mile from the school heading up North Avenue. The cop directing traffic lets all the people leave the school driveway before he lets your line in. You're sure that he does this because he knows that you and all the others in line are going to be late. You bear a great "animosity" toward him. ( You learned that word in your 3-hour S.A.T. class last week.)

He finally lets your line go. You quickly pull your 50-foot brown station wagon into a space right next to a 1993 fire-engine-red Porsche. You do the 100-yard dash from your car to your first period class -- Making sure to wave to Jeff, the cop -- and get there just as the bell rings. ( You're shocked that the bells are actually working today.) You sit down in your chair just in time to take an English exam.

8:40 A.M.--- You drag yourself to your next class, trying to forget the test you just took -- and most likely failed. You flop down into a chair in your next class..... and take a Math test.

9:45 A.M.---Third period class...guess what? TEST. That awful song you heard this morning keeps going through your head.

10:45 A.M.--- It's finally lunch-time. YEA!!! You decide you really should wake up early enough to eat breakfast, especially since your stomach growled all through last period. (Yea, right! You've been saying that all year.) You then realize you have lab lunch. Doesn't it seem like you have lab lunch every day? After finding that your lunch has been mutilated by a 9000 page History book, you make a pit stop at the cafeteria to buy a cookie and a Snaple. You see some friends and talk through your five-minute passing time. You hear the bell ( wow, twice in one day!) and sprint through the courtyard.

The teacher asks for your unfinished homework. Every student has an excuse: "But 90210 had a special 2-hour show last night!", "My mother made me take my little sister to the Spin Doctors' concert last night!", "I did it, but I must have left it in someone else's car, 'cause I just couldn't find it this morning!"

You take a quiz and then do a lab project that never seems to come out right. You have to do it over and, of course, aren't finished when the class is over (no bell this time). You quickly copy someone else's results and race to your next class.

12:25 P.M.---You have gym, but are skipping it because of an appointment with your guidance counselor. You plan your senior schedule. You end up with no free periods! All your life you've waited for your senior year, or really "senior slump", and now you aren't going to have any free periods!

Now, it's time for the college search. You tell your guidance counselor what size school you would prefer, what area of the country it should be located in, what you want to study in college, and what your S.A.T. scores will probably be. He punches it all into the computer, and a big "NO MATCH" shows up on the screen. You start to cry -- no college wants you! You change one thing, and you get a print-out of 357 schools. You imagine visiting all of these schools with your parents and start to cry again.

1:30 P.M.---It's finally last period. Of course, it's your foreign language--one of the many classes you are totally lost in. Your teacher enters the room and speaks for the entire 55 minutes in some native tongue. You think about first period and how long ago that was. You stare out the window and drift into a deep, deep trance. The bell finally rings. YEA!

2:25 P.M.---You go to the cafeteria to find your friends.

2:30 P.M.---You head back to the classroom for a junior rep meeting or Key Club meeting or "Soundings" meeting---all those things that look so good on your college application.

3:15 P.M.---You slowly trudge to your car and either A) go home to fall asleep, or B) go to your part-time job.

7:00 P.M.---Your parents come home from work and ask about your day. You start to tell them , but by the time you get done with your list of complaints, you realize they're long gone.

7:15 P.M.--- Dinner!! You spend the entire time listening to your father planning your April vacation: The College Tour. You'll be hitting fifteen colleges in ten states in five days. Your mom gives you sample Math problems from the S.A.T.'s.

8:00 P.M.---By now you've started your homework. It won't be a complete night without five phone calls from friends who are worried that they aren't going to be asked to the prom. You study for tomorrow's three tests and work on your never-ending research paper until 12:30 A.M..

1:00 A.M.---You finally go to bed, to wake up seven hours later by that same annoying song that's been going through your head all day.

Isn't life swell? And everyone says that your junior year is the most important in your high school career!

## *One Last Cigar*

*Evening was just a breath away as the sun slowly slipped beneath the golden horizon. The persistent Nantucket breezes blew, full of our fragrant cigar smoke. Chris and I often fished together on the island and met again in the evening to discuss the events of the day. We walked on the soft sand, listening to the pounding surf. That same surf had hidden fish from us that morning. We recounted the events of the last dew days, coaxing each other into sharing stories. Chris and I had many to tell. We told story after story, laughing and smoking our cigars.*

*The night was growing as we decided to find our way home. We walked up to the dry soil that bordered the sand dunes, looking for a path. We did not find one. I turned to Chris with a grin on my face, to find him smiling as well. This was all the beginning to a new adventure, leaving the cottage was proving easier than returning. We took to the beach again, thinking that we would merely backtrack. The tide must have read our mind, for it had erased our footprints. We walked back through the nighttime breeze, which made the moon dance on the surface of the water. For as far as the eye could see, diamond shapes sparkled brilliantly from the water. We walked on and on down that beach. Chris and I were carefree, our only problem was being lost.*

*As it turned out we followed the beach and finally found our way home. Exhausted after our long walk, we fell right to sleep. Just the thought of our cigars and the endless beach make me laugh again. We were two young men without a care in the world, playing the summer away on a beautiful island.*

*Summer gradually disappeared, and the regimen of school returned. Less and less time remained free for the both of us, and as a result we began to lose touch. This change happened unnoticed, for we were both involved with other activities. Chris and I reached a point where we just accepted each other's absence.*

*Time in any form would not change anything, for I have hardly seen Chris even with our empty schedules. I believe we would still agree with each other as we used to. I am sad when I realize we might never get the chance to know each other again. We both seem to forget about boats and fish.*

*The beach and surf now seem like a gravestone to our friendship. A time that is neatly washed away. However, a trace still lingers, like our footsteps, that I hope have not yet disappeared. It would be great to go fishing with Chris again. Just to smoke one last cigar.*

# 1994

*Todd Champagne*

# Poem

The smell of freshly cut grass invades my nose as I roll around in the green splendor.

Running and jumping, my sister disrupts the neat pile of raked leaves beside me.

I rush to pile the leaves up again so I may leap, as she did, and bury myself in the pleasures of autumn.

As I lie in the pile of fallen leaves, a cool wind blows by, and reminds me that soon the leaves will be gone, and the cold, wet snow will take its place.

Racing down the steep hill with slick plastic underneath, I direct myself for the artificial incline at the bottom so I may take off and land with even greater speed.

On the way down I feel the cold air blow on my face, but that feeling is overcome by excitement during the terrific descent.

The laboring children that are climbing up the hill to the left and right of me are just blurs as I fly past them on my red carpet of fire.

At the end of my journey, the warm taste of blood fills my mouth as I look around and find myself sprawled out on the cold snow with my cheap plastic sled upsidedown and fifty feet away.

I am pulled out of my bed at what seems to be dawn, To put on my striped uniform and new leather cleats.

Running across the street, dodging cars, I run into the dugout as the first pitch is thrown.

The start of the season has arrived, and I will spend the next month and a half in a whole different world of suicide squeezes and three-run home runs.

The clock on the wall reads ten o'clock and I know the liberties of summer are only a few hours away.

I drift off, dreaming of diving into clear pools and sitting on warm sand.

I dream of driving in the big Cadillac with top down and can almost feel the warm breezes that accompany the big sedan.

Most of all I dream of sleeping until noon and walking barefoot on the grass, and experiencing my first rays of sunlight for the day as I swing on the tire hanging from the tree in my front yard.

Willie Thompson

# 1995



Aditi Chandra

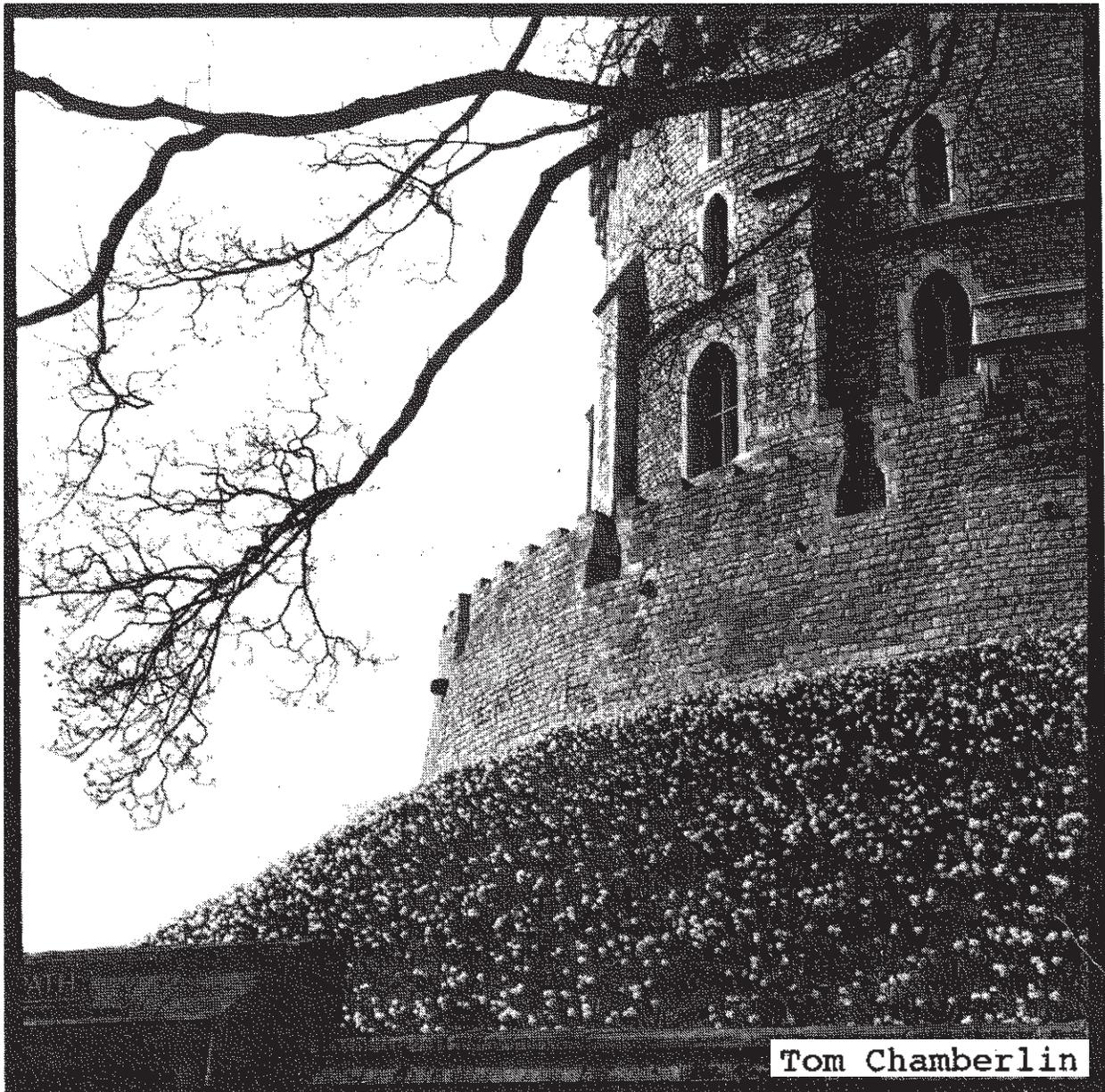
Untitled

Steam leaks through the grate,  
obscuring the lights of the  
24-hour grocery across the street.  
They walk hand in hand,  
Long strides across the  
Cracking concrete carpet.  
Feet moving in perfect synchronization,  
heads bent to catch the other's  
whispered word.  
Silent eyes observe,  
the quiet night witnesses  
their moment.

The bright city lights blur  
into an abstract melting watercolor,  
and all of the world is only  
their two faces.  
His fingers close a little tighter around hers,  
and she looks up into his  
smiling eyes.  
For a moment an eternal gaze,  
timeless and unending,  
Broken as a cab honks  
angrily at  
the lovers in the street.

Michelle Sarrat

1996



Tom Chamberlin

# Mastication

1

Mastication on a plate,  
Safe in public, can't it wait?  
Mastication's not that rude,  
But the word is misconstrued.

Hair on palms? Who told you that?  
Mastication makes you fat.  
Gotta gotta chew the food,  
But the word is misconstrued.

Masticate,  
It feels great,  
Misconstrue,  
Countersue,  
Sinful, wicked, dissolute?  
Just don't dribble on your suit.

Mastication,  
Construction,  
True elation,  
Alienation,  
Regulation?  
Great temptation.  
Ostentation,  
Mastication!

2

Vitiated acts of haste,  
Masticating for the taste.  
Thespians? They do it, too,  
But the word is misconstrued.

Had a donut just last night,  
Masticated ev'ry bite.  
Never swallow 'til you've chewed,  
But the word is misconstrued.

Masticate,  
Extricate,  
Vitalize,  
Ostracize,

Titillate,  
Just can't wait,  
'Til it's time to masticate.

Mastication,  
Nauseation,  
Inflammation,  
Fascination,  
Is the cake done?  
Agitation,  
Expectation,  
Mastication!

3

Use a fork and not your hand,  
Boiled, shrink wrapped, in a can,  
Call it evil, call it rude,  
But the word is misconstrued.

1967

Mouths begin to salivate,  
All the popes did masticate,  
They can do it, so can you,  
But the word is misconstrued.

Masticate,  
Have no date,  
Come on guys,  
Exercise,  
Lick the butter off your plate,  
Aren't you glad you masticate?

Mastication,  
Cultivation,  
Gastric juices,  
Many uses,  
Saccharidal ululation,  
Oh, the joys of mastication!

4

Salted fries, with ketchup, too,  
Monkeys do it at the zoo,  
Slobber, burp, bite, cut, spoon, chew,  
But the word is misconstrued.

Masticating bread's amazin',  
Twice as pleasin' when it's raisin,  
People even do it nude,  
Could be why it's misconstrued.

Masticate,  
Pizza's late,  
Greasy lips,  
Leave a tip,  
Many souls are filled with hate,  
Not the one who masticate.

Mastication,  
Connotation,  
Detrimental,  
Love the lentil,  
Indecision,  
What to do?  
Stuff it in and chew.

Eric Jordan  
Josh Saulle



Jason Polayes

# Steel Sky

The sky was orange and the black billow of smoke reached into the sky, its bulbous fingers grasping and grasping. The Sheriff found some matches. Matches were in the little box with the swan on it. Uncle Percy smoked cigars. I liked the smell. Mama said get that stink out of here. I liked the smell. Ruth got herself in trouble. Mama said get that girl out of here. Ruth went to school at Fairbanks, she liked to pick flowers on the way. Sometimes I came down to go with her. We pick flowers and look at the clouds. Ruth says some clouds look like people dancing in the sky, other ones are dragons and pieces of fruit. The house was gone. Mama said “nothing left but the mailbox”. She lets me go to get the letters. Once one was for me. Mama said “Angel, give it here I’ll read it to you.” “Happy Birthday Angel” she said. Ruth gave me a card too, with a little pin that said four. It was cold now, we had to leave. The new black field was shiny and it fizzled, sizzled and crackled. Mama lifted me up into the truck. My pajamas were dirty, the purple flowers almost gone. Mama’s face was dirty too. Like she sprinkled pepper all over it. Her pink sweater was crumpled under her arm and the remains from a tablecloth fell from her hand. I shivered. My jaws ached from the cold and my bare feet were purple. In the summer Ruth takes me swimming at the water hole, in the water it’s nice, but once you’re out, every inch of your body tightens and little bumps pop up like a plucked hen. Soon Mama came with Ruth and told her to get in the truck. Then the sheriff came and talked to mama, said he was sorry, and what a bad year its been with papa and now this. Mama said “thank you” and she pulled the cord on her robe tighter. She climbed into the truck and drove. The sun was coming up alongside the road and the telephone poles stood strong against the horizon. We drove on out of town. Then Mama stopped at the church. At Christmas time we came all together, wearing our new gloves. Ruth had a muff, soft like a rabbit foot. Mama got out and walked into the Church yard. The sun was brighter now and there were flowers by some graves. Mama stopped at the small one in the middle. I had been there before. Ruth didn’t talk the last time. Soon Mama was back. I looked up, she was crying, gray tears ran down her cheek. We drove on. A steel sky was overhead.

Maeve Mullally

# 1998

# Insomniac

## Erin Dobrich

75 Soundings Anniversary, June 2021

I am an insomniac. My waltz begins in the stillness of the deep night, that airless calm that is jarred only briefly by wind-rufflings and ever-distant trains.

I lie coldly and darkly in my bed. I soak up the blackness the way poolside flagstones soak up the sun, storing it and radiating it into cool dusk. During the day I leak what is, to others, a vague and unrecognizable aura; it is an aura of nights spent staring wide-eyed at the air, dry-mouthed starshine nights of restless thoughts and racing heartbeat. I would not lose these nights for anything; they are a part of me.

And so I have plenty of time to think. I'm not sure if this is a good thing or a bad thing.

The thoughts that chase each other through my mind these nights are mostly scraps of memory, ghostly and pale. Vignettes, I suppose you would call them, although in my mind's eye I see them as wraiths, like frail, frayed pieces of virgin silk faintly imprinted with faces. Perhaps this is because they haunt me. I do not agree that memory is the "bliss of solitude."

For the paranoiac hours between midnight and dawn stilt my brain (which is, I might add, already far too prone to leave me dining with old demons.) I find myself doomed to ponder nightlong, my mind racing needlessly like a wiry rodent spinning its fetid wheel. This is the first stage; the manic dithering of the brain while the body tries to convince it to rest.

I remember my first sleepless night. I huddled under my covers for hours, then got up and crossed the room to curl in an armchair. The backs of my thighs warmed my frozen toes. The room was warped with pitch-black shadow and dappled moonlight, and I sat till dawn sipping tepid water for a blue plastic teacup. I was five years old.

I must confess I feel somewhat lost in this world. My friends are always telling me I should have been born a part of the Beat generation, prone to motorcycles and manic expression. I lie tangled in age-old quandaries, confused by my own struggle to decipher myself. I long to have been born before everything was expected, before all the good ideas were taken. When brooding introspection and black depression made you cool. I wish there were an Exodus I could make, an original journey that would mean something without being tacky and cliché. Today's world seems both jaded and tirelessly boring to me.

"Of all the things I've lost, I miss my mind the most." Ozzy Osborne is running through my mind. He bit off the head of a bat, but not on purpose.

Insomnia is the foundation of insanity, a hazy malaise, dusky and clouded as sea glass. Sort of sneak preview, if you will. The body aches with fatigue; the brain is like a rotting fruit — sore, swollen, and ready to split. This dreamland is bloody and haint-ridden. Here on these dark ground I think I glimpse others in the fog. I can almost imagine us meeting, all of us. A collection of souls who lust after slumber, all with the same reddened eyes and dawnshot minds, cracked and strained with the efforts of sleeplessness. I truly believe in the hidden connections, matching vibrations that hum from the bodies of kindred spirits.

I dream open eyed of a past love, and his dark eyes and skin are recreated in the stenciled gloom of the white ceiling.

The only peace I get is from the brief trips outside. I slip downstairs and crack the door, the stealth itself as much of an anodyne as the sweet nicotine I breathe with the chill and damp of these sweaty, tortured nights. The stars, and the anaesthetic fluorescence of the street lights, mix and intoxicate me, and lead me to believe in a false and balanced reality. But when the drug wears off and I head back in, a stumbling weariness asphyxiates me. This is the second stage; an exhaustion so soul-deep you beg to die with all your heart.

You wait, bleeding, for faint touches of gray in the sky. They promise you the dawn will not be long in coming.



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## I Like to Think of My Mother

I like to think of my mother.

My Asian-American mother with a flour stained apron,  
who has a limp and knotted hands from a bug  
carried by a deer through the woods and into our garden  
who by luck of the draw  
chance fortune and fate  
who in one second one step one bite  
has been snatched of her physical strength,  
her youth,  
and who nevertheless goes on, and defies  
the disease that makes her perpetually tired  
and denies the tears mourning the pain her body feels.

And she could cry  
but she never does  
and she never utters a complaint  
never lets down  
never lets it get the best of her spirit,  
because then she is in control.  
She can triumph.

I like  
to think of her.  
I like to think of her especially  
when I think of the problem of  
gun control.

The legal answer  
to the problem of gun control  
is 51 votes in the Senate.  
Agreement, consent  
that the law that helped our ancestors,  
our forefathers win  
the revolution, beat back the redcoats  
is now outdated  
archaic  
today the right to bear arms,  
our right to protect ourselves,  
being equal to guns in homes in suburban neighborhoods,  
in the bottom of dad's dresser drawer,  
behind his Sunday socks,  
next to the spare car keys,  
waiting to be discovered  
by the curious eight year old boy  
who watches his favorite superhero on TV,

wielding guns against the enemy.

I like to think of the head of the NRA  
who stand up for the guns in society,  
in our towns, our homes,  
the right to bear arms,  
our right to protect ourselves  
against that villainous figure who  
haunts our dreams, our fears,  
who snatches the valuables from homes,  
a wedding ring, a savings bond that  
was on the bedside table next to a picture of Matthew,  
Mattie  
on his first day of kindergarten,  
who does not know that in the next 12 hours  
his blond hair blue eyed doll faced son  
will find the real villain,  
the cold metal in the back of dad's drawer  
that steals not the valuables from our homes,  
but the jewels from our lives.  
our children.  
Our pride and joy. The future.  
And when I think of the head of the NRA  
who is not yet mourning, and the 2nd Amendment,  
and the problem of gun control, I like to  
think of my mother,  
and her flour covered apron.

And then sometimes  
I think of the head of the NRA  
and other men,  
who trust the law  
who raise defense for the law,  
who unquestionably support the law,  
read the law,  
know the law by heart,  
but who don't really see the law,  
and who are blind to the errors  
and tragedy caused by the law,  
who cannot link a gun  
in the bottom drawer of the dresser to  
the dead eight year old to the father  
who one minute,  
one second before  
never doubted that his 45  
automatic was not the answer

# 2000

to their safety, their protection,  
our protection,  
who marched last week in a rally  
chanting  
"uphold the 2nd Amendment"  
who in doing so mocked  
the five digit statistics categorized

“deaths by gunshot wound”  
through indifference.  
Not me, I’m careful, it’s hidden,  
not a chance  
a needle in a haystack,  
diamond in the rough,  
one in a zillion, no,  
one in a billion zillion.  
Them, not me.  
I want them to see it is not them or they,  
but us who is hurt.  
That that child could be your child,  
our child, my child.  
It is all of us  
who when that shot is fired  
loses a child.  
I want them to think of my mother  
and remember,  
remember she is crippled by chance,  
by probabilities that she couldn’t escape  
and she goes on  
and she goes on to comfort others  
and she never pities herself  
and she wants people to know she cares  
with her needle and thread  
her flour and eggs  
she creates magic  
magic that can brighten a day  
and she gives this gift to others  
and she is determined  
and she never expels energy through complaints  
because that wasted effort  
could make something happen,  
touch someone who needs to know people care.  
I want the government, our representatives, and  
our neighbors in the NRA to see reality and take action.  
I am tired wanting them to draw  
connections between the guns  
and the nameless numbers that  
was once somebody’s Mattie.  
I want them to be sad.  
I want them to feel sadness and lamentation now  
as I have felt admiration for someone  
who believes in making a change and  
in strength of spirit and  
I want them  
to know  
that there is always a time  
there is always a time when your number comes up

when luck runs out, the tables turn, chance prevails,  
there is always a time when what was “their problem”  
is ours,  
when should’ve and could’ve  
come too late  
when regrets break the heart  
there is always a time  
for things to hit home  
and that time  
is closer than you think.

Lillian Preston

Modeled after the poem, “I like to think of Harriet Tubman”  
by Susan Griffin.

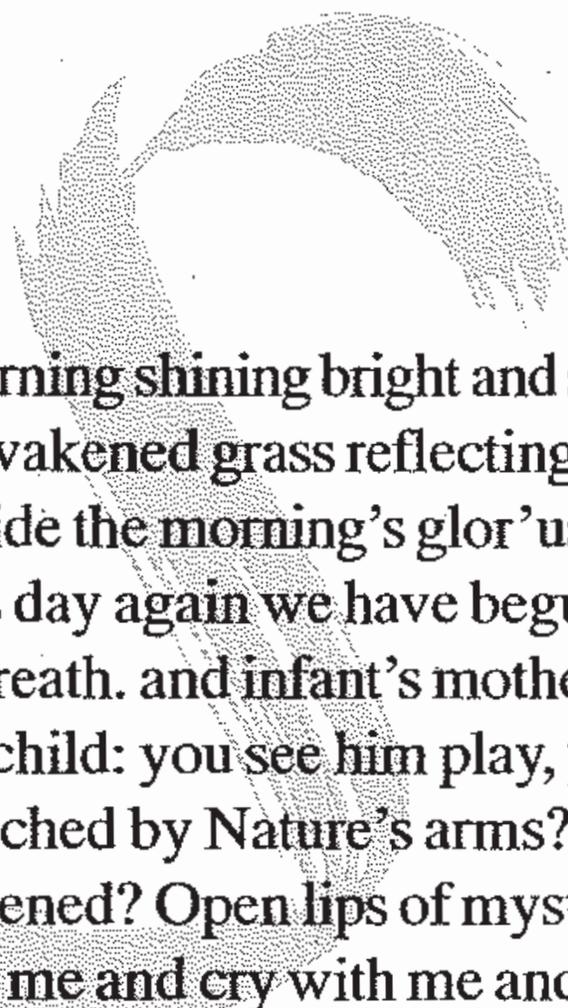


Beth Kasden

*The Sun This Morning*

By Jason Burger

2001



The sun this morning shining bright and strong.  
The dew on wakened grass reflecting sun  
And birds provide the morning's glor'us song,  
And on this day again we have begun.  
New day, fresh breath. and infant's mother's milk  
Now watch the child: you see him play, you see  
His skin get scratched by Nature's arms? It's silk,  
What's happened? Open lips of mystery.  
Now run with me and cry with me and hide  
Under the child's blanket tent were great  
Imaginations questions those who've lied  
And explore insane honesties of fate.  
The merry-go-round goes around again  
And will continue to until the end

## Love-lost

Ben Angus Samuel

A man stood upon a railroad bridge in northern Alabama, looking down into the swift waters forty feet below. He moved to the edge and watched as the water tore around the rocks. His head was as empty as the look in his eyes, save for one nagging thought, "Am I high enough?"

He removed his tattered windbreaker and threw it skywards watching the vicious wind carry it away. He looked up at the clouds expecting gray skies and foreboding rain on the horizon. He found only a single cirrus watching silently from above.

He sat down and pulled off his shoes. They had been an unexpected find in a Salvation Army somewhere just outside the Louisiana border. He was impressed at their condition and how they'd held up after countless miles of endless walking. Endless walking? No. For now he had reached his destination. And although he was nowhere he wasn't going any further.

He let his legs hang over the edge and dangle off the bridge watching as they swayed backwards with the wind. He looked at his feet and past them to the water. The current seemed to have slowed and appeared calm and still.

He took one of his shoes and held it over the ledge by the laces. He let them slip through his fingers and watched its plummeting descent to his destiny. It took a good ten seconds for it to breach the waters' surface. Thirty-six years to reach this point and a mere ten seconds to end it.

The wind shuddered past his ear. "It'll be cold," it said. "So cold you won't be able to move".

The man ignored the voices. He was already numb and doubted the fall, the leap followed by the fall, would hurt much if at all. The wind changed directions and his legs were pushed forward and away from the bridge and towards the intent skies hiding the end of the river.

"You're high enough," The wind provoked. "What's left to wait for?"

The man stood up again and reached into his pocket. One last time he removed the weary photograph and stared deeply into her eyes and he thought of everything he could and would never have. He thought of the note he left sticking from under her door. He told her to take care of herself. He told her goodbye. And her told her to never lose faith in things she couldn't see. But he never signed it.

"This is for her," he said. But he was not standing atop a railroad bridge for anyone but himself. And the missing part of himself he had lost when he fell in love with her. He was the embodiment of true love and the warning of its self-defeating devotion. He had fallen for her like suicide and now he would fall one last time.

# 2002

# 2003

## *Grass Stains*

Steph Kranes

The parking lot  
through a rectangular window, downward

he winks unforgettably  
and touches my face with soft fingertips.

in the morning chill,  
I remember how it felt to sense him asking.

“Come outside  
and run on my fields...  
I’ll tie your shoes and won’t let you fall”

but each bell curve  
makes my heart quake  
with needless frustration

The upset  
Of being strung on an anonymous wheel  
crowds my space—  
like worthless precedents  
and hungry stomachs.

# *Secret Silence*

## Laura Fletcher

I'm a sad person who has no one to talk to  
And everyday I go on this way,  
Keeping the pain to myself  
Watching my life wash away.

I can never tell my secrets  
For they are all I have  
To keep me from the truth.  
Once I tell someone they become more real.  
Secrets are who I am.

When I see you I feel my heart ripping away  
So many things I want to tell you,  
But none of them can I say.  
In silent torture I live on  
Hoping that one day I might gather the  
courage to speak.

Through sorrow's ever present grip I feel for  
you  
Needing the protection you give  
Hope can only save me for so long.  
Maybe in the future, soon,  
You can hold me strong.

2004

## 2005

*Last Day*

Alex Goldstein

She gently brushed the sand with her fingers, raking through the tiny granules as if they were strands of silky hair. She dragged her hand across the smooth, toasty surface, back and forth, back and forth, allowing the texture of the sand to lull her into a soothing rhythm. Back and forth, back and forth, her palm swept across the grains, both coarse and soft at the same time. She used the tip of her finger to etch out her name in the velvety sea of coffee-colored specks and sat back to admire her handiwork. The name glared up at her from the sand, a pattern of deep crevices that created an illegible secret message. She promptly swiped her arm across the letters, watching them disintegrate into clumps and then simply disappear; how easily her name disappeared, how fragile the sand was. She dug a hole with her big toe, disrupting the ocean of sand that surrounded her, and slid her foot into the dark damp cave she had created. The moist granules irritated the thin, delicate skin of her foot, so she began to tap it furiously, ruining her tunnel and allowing the sand to run down the sides of her ankles, tracing her veins. She wished she could bury her body beneath the ground and live in her own secret den of soggy sand, breathing and eating and being the sand, the wetness, the grittiness of it. Never again would she see the sun, only sand, endless moist granules times infinity – she would never be able to count them all, even if she lived forever.

She glanced up suddenly, shielding her eyes with a small, delicate hand, and stared out at the ocean, a never-ending blanket of aquamarine studded with shreds of sunlight. It pulsed and vibrated with life, it embodied life, the rolling waves and the creamy foam floating at the surface like buttery-sweet bubbles in a glass of milk. She could almost see the bright fish weaving in and out of secret caves and coral reefs, singing fish songs to each other in their slippery seaweed beds at night.

She imagined little crabs skittering across the ocean floor, digging holes for themselves with sharpened claws, and starfish suctioning themselves to the sides of rocks. She knew there were mermaids – she just knew it. She imagined them as beautiful girls with sparkling hair that floated behind them as they slid gracefully through the crystal water, gently flapping their diamond tails like fish. They would wear necklaces made of shells and brush each others beautiful hair with pieces of coral, their tinkling laughs echoing through the sea. But what she hated was the jellyfish. The squishy, venomous, translucent jelly fish, so ugly, she thought. Why didn't they have color? She could see right through them, they were so pale and fragile, and she hated it. Fragility frightened her. She did not want to go as a jellyfish, translucent and weak and ugly; she wanted to go as a mermaid with wavy long hair and a laugh like wind chimes tinkling in a gentle wind.

She turned her head to the left and looked far and wide, across the simmering sand. A thirty-year old man stood barefoot in the sunlight wearing khaki shorts and a t-shirt. He was playing with his baby daughter, tossing her up in the air and catching her, throwing back his head and exerting a loud, throaty chuckle as she squealed with glee. The child wore a yellow sundress that swayed in the ocean breeze as she giggled, her chubby legs kicking with delight at her father's antics. Her eyes were glittering pools of blue that splashed as she laughed, rainbow arches against a luminous sky. The child was flooded with life; it coursed through her veins, it was written on her cheeks and on her yellow sundress swaying in the breeze. The child did not know about anything other than that moment; she did not know past or future, she only knew now. To her, there was no concept of life and death, of endless grains of sand and infinite oceans and the difference between seeing the sun and not seeing the sun. All she knew was her father throwing her up in the air, always being there to catch her, and her yellow sundress.

*Life as a House*  
Caitlin Frank

I was built on a solid foundation.  
For years I stood with pride but now, slouch as a distortion of  
something that once was.  
My attic is full of hollow memories of someone once known,  
but now forgotten.  
No one lives inside.  
My only inhabitants are the lost dreams, dust and dead hopes  
that haunt the halls.

I lock the door and keep the opaque windows shut  
No one wants to come in.  
No one will ever break through.  
Everyone only cares about what is on the outside, what  
appears to be.  
No one can see that on the inside, I am decorated beautifully.

I am deteriorating.  
I was once strong, strong enough that not even the Big Bad  
Wolf or the winds of change could knock me down.  
I was once strong but now I am unsure of the trembling floor  
beneath me and the ceiling caving in above me.  
No one can look past my appearance.  
No one can see that I am more than rotting wood and rusting  
pipes.

So I tilt, tipping as the walls that once echoed with laughter,  
now crumble around me.  
So I sink into the earth as the weeds and the overgrown grass  
consume me,  
but I am not finished.

2007

## *The Bass* Scott Infusino

# 2008

I had played the alto saxophone for two years and was already sick of it. The smelly reeds, the cacophony of the sixth grade band; it all disgusted me; having already giving up the violin, I was a bit unsure of what instrument would fit me.

“So what should I play?” I asked my best friend Jacob as we sat in the bus, teetering to its motion.

“Play the bass. It’s awesome!”

“No,” replied Robert, “the cello is so much cooler.”

“No, the bass is cooler. It’s lower, bigger, and so much more fun to play.”

Jacob had never played the cello, but for the purpose of argument, the bass was much cooler. For a sixth grader, Jacob had pulled off a good enough argument to convince me to join him in the bass section.

Little did I know that a beast lay within the instrument that I called the bass—practicing. A year after that bus ride with Jacob, I was at a private lesson playing *Tempo di Polacca*. My teacher noticed my poor intonation and phrasing, and had me repeat a certain measure over and over again. The expression on his face reminded me of the first time I tried wasabi, thinking it was delicious candy.

“You must practice this on your own. Play this spot over and over again,” my teacher insisted, pointing to a cluster of sixteenth notes. He maintained a tone serious enough to let me know that I needed to work, yet friendly enough to ensure that I have fun with it. He took my bass and bow and played the exact spot with perfect intonation and phrasing. When he had finished, I could see the indentations of the strings on his fingers, intensely calloused from years of playing. He gave me scales, arpeggios, etudes, and exercises to work on. As a seventh grader, I did not like the idea of doing more work than I had to, and would rather have been playing *The Legend of Zelda*. At the time, I did not see the point in practicing things that weren’t my solo pieces. Despite my reluctance, I followed my bass teacher’s instructions.

At first I hated practicing all of the arpeggios, etudes, and exercises. It seemed like a hopeless cause. But then I saw the light: my bass teacher showed me how all solo pieces are simply different patterns of scales and arpeggios, and that the exercises immersed me in their patterns. His insight inspired me to practice with an unparalleled ferocity and eagerness, reaping remarkable results.

## *Expectations*

Rebecca Goldstein

“N\*\*\*\*\*! Go back to Africa!”

Marcus shrunk in the driver’s seat of his beat-up Volvo. His lower lip quivered as the white fist came flying at his face. He turned his head to the right to avoid the punch, but was not quick enough. The dark and the light collided and there was a small spurt of bright red blood.

“Move!” spat the white man as Marcus gently raised his own hand to his lip to feel the extent of the blood. He looked up into the blue eyes of the white man. He shook his head as the white man spit at Marcus’s car and walked away.

The white man got into his car, revved his engine, and sped out of the gas station parking lot as I drove in.

I was sitting in the back of Ambulance 601 as we turned into the Cumberland Farms gas station; we were responding to a call for an assault.

Working as an Emergency Medical Technician every week on the ambulance in Westport, Connecticut—a fairly small, predominately white town outside of Manhattan known for its lack of true scandal—I expected to encounter broken arms, people with chest pain, people who are having difficulty breathing, car accidents, and other basic incidents that might require medical intervention. I did not, however, expect to see a hate crime.

Opening 601’s back doors, I climbed out of the ambulance to find a slim, wrinkled African American man leaning weakly against his green Volvo, talking with a group of three policemen. The man talked nervously and the police wrote vigorously on their notepads.

I walked over to them, my own notepad in hand, and I began to copy down the patient’s information. Our patient, Marcus, was a sixty-seven year old man who lived in Norwalk—a nearby city—with no pertinent medical history. Marcus informed us that he had been pulling up to get gas at the pump before picking up his grandson at summer camp. Once he stopped his car at the pump, a Caucasian truck driver stormed up to Marcus’s car, insisting that Marcus move away from the pump so that he—the white man—could fill up first.

Perhaps it was naïve of me not to acknowledge the possibility of a hate crime in Westport. Perhaps I should have suspected racism as a reason for assault—even in Westport—and perhaps I should have realized that racism could penetrate the walls of Westport’s privileged bubble. Instead, I should have known—as I know now—that each time I step out of the doors of 601, I am about to learn something new. I had been taught in my two years of training to make splints, use a defibrillator, give and

instruct CPR, and assess a patient. I had been taught to control my emotions on the scene of a call and to comfort patients and their loved ones. I had, however, never been taught to confront racism or a victim of a hate crime firsthand. It’s the things that we are not taught in class—the things we have to learn through our own experience—that make the job worthwhile.

Working on the ambulance, you never know what you are about to encounter. So, I have learned to be ready for the unexpected. EMS has prepared me for anything.

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*Untitled*  
Annie Wilens

It's funny how fast things shatter, humorous how fast everything breaks

One moment you're holding a frame, the next you're surrounded by glass and it all aches

Everyone tries to pick up the pieces, but that only results in bloody fingers

Yes the pain will eventually go away, but the scars will forever linger

I remember the day that table of cards collapsed, and everything went tumbling down

It was when my eye first caught his, the moment my perfect life was turned around

Yes, it all started as amazing as a dream, with smiles and hanging out continuously

Life was just terrific, nobody who knew about this miraculous friendship could disagree

But the first fight we had, that was when the cracks in the concrete began to appear

When I started to beg and plead for forgiveness, every single word sincere

He accepted the apology eventually, but only after making it clear he were in charge

Now things differed, but the problems were only clear under a microscope, enlarged

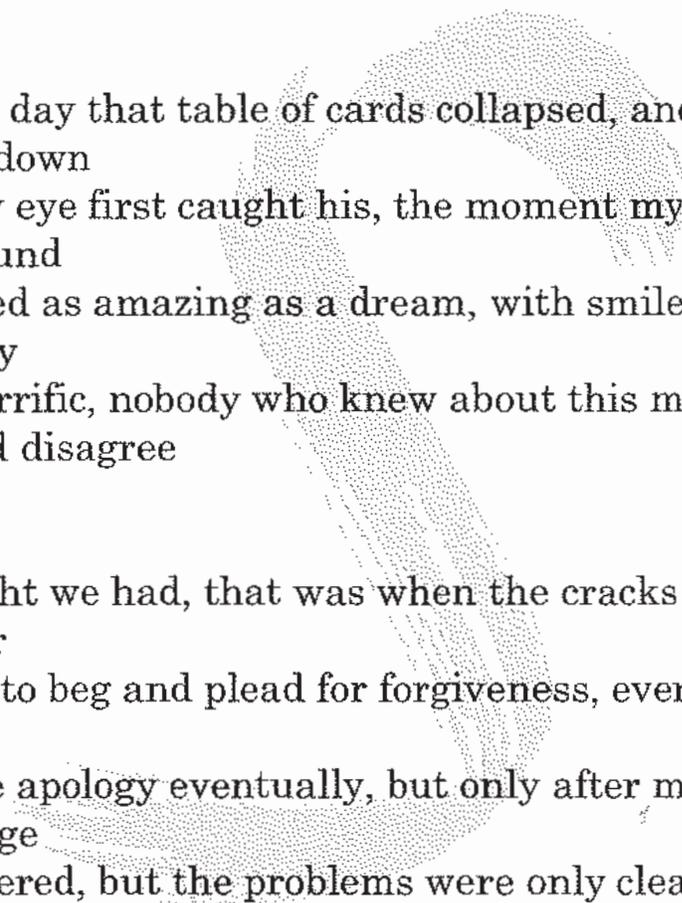
The world had become bi-polar, seeming good or bad only depending on his mood

But I continued to persevere, believing eventually it would end, our secret feud

Eventually I realized that nothing would ever change, that we were stuck in neutral

Maybe because he couldn't let me into his heart completely, it's inner compartments full

2021



# *Trees*

## James Ludy

A tree grows in the forest,  
Young and small.  
A sapling among giants,  
Strong, leafy and tall.  
Time passes slowly,  
The giants die.

With newfound access to sunlight,  
The young tree climbs toward the sky.  
Its branches grow longer,  
Its leaves block the sun.  
Now the small sapling,  
Has become the giant one.  
Like a malevolent demon,  
It stops others from growing.  
The shade of its leaves,  
Kill young trees, an omen.  
How ironic it is then,  
That this new verdant tyrant,  
Would be felled by a sapling,  
Tiny and quiet.

It knew who to call for, the new elder gods,  
To purge the giant from the forest,  
And let in the sun.

The tiny tree called and the gods it did summon,  
Who came to the forest with chainsaws and axes.  
The cruel tree was felled by these weapons of steel,  
But it fell with a vengeance,  
And killed the small sapling,  
One last act of defiance.

But the foolish young gods became drunk with their power,  
They kept cutting and burning,  
Sending all trees to hell.

They murdered, they slaughtered, with no trace of care,  
Until the forest was silent.  
There was nothing there.

The grand trees of oak, of ash and of pine, were carted away,  
Like the dead and the dying.

All creatures departed, no matter their size, and the plants ceased  
their growing,  
Under the harsh open sky.  
The gods then departed leaving nothing behind,  
Save a sun scorched valley,  
Barren, and dry.

2021

## *The Big, Looping Curveball*

Ryder Chasin

I like every one of the pitches laced into the 216 stitches on a baseball. I like the ones that float up to the plate and dance back and forth, and I like the ones that make a batter bend backwards when the ball finishes its flight by curving down through the center of home plate. I like the ones that shoot out of a pitcher's hand like a watermelon seed slips between two fingers pressed tightly together, the ones that run just too far inside and leave a grimace on a batter's face and a bruise on their back, and I even like the ones that make the air look thick, clumsily waltzing flatly down the middle until the barrel of a wood bat strikes down on the leather surface, and all that's left to see is a white dot ascending into the sky.

But there's nothing I like more than a big, looping two-strike curveball—one that gyrates tightly off the tip of the fingers. One that, in its final stride at eye-level, makes a final dive down towards the dirt and, with diligent lust, powers the batter to swing over it, leaving the end of his barrel three inches away from the ball as it drops down onto the plate, kicking up dirt behind its seams.

A typical batter is accustomed to a straight, plain fastball—little movement, manageable speed.

However, it wasn't until the spring of seventh grade that I started pitching, just a year after I had picked up baseball. At the time, I was a novice; I could only throw what to all pitchers comes standard: the straight, plain fastball.

I enjoyed moderate success, but by the fall of eighth grade I had moved from the kiddy field to the big field, taking with me an additional 15 feet between the mound and the plate. My straight, plain fastball was being hit straight out of the park.

Before too long I was getting on myself about throwing other pitches—developing a changeup, a slider. Maybe even a big, looping curveball.

So I took that motivation and I worked, hard. Every day for hours I would venture into my front yard and throw against the pitch-back, trying desperately to master the art of release points and pressurized grips. In the coldest months I would throw with my down jacket and snow-boots on, praying each night that the ground not be covered in snow the next morning. I didn't let myself go a minute without thinking of learning the curveball, even if it meant going to sleep with a baseball pressed in my hand. Before spring came around, I had already added the pitch to my arsenal.

The pitch unique to me, that big, looping curveball, quickly became common misfortune for batters across Fairfield County. It added to my arsenal advantage, my resource repertoire.

Sentiment was all my straight, plain fastball had left, while my big, looping curveball was well on its way to reaching its apex.

2012

## *Tasting the Waters* Sami Bautista

The water shrank back from my eager toes as I chased after the receding tide. It was a game of tag that I would always win, yet I still found enjoyment in the pursuit. As I caught it, the cold water licked my ankles. A droplet from my youthful splashing snaked down my face and pooled on my bottom lip. With the tip of my tongue, I tasted the salt and smiled.

In my ever-changing world, the ocean is my single entity of consistency, an interesting paradox given that the ocean varies everyday. I find comfort in the predictability of its fluctuating nature. Currents overlap, tides rise, and waves crash, inevitably allowing its waters to touch the shores of every landmass on Earth. Thus, islands become the epitome of connectivity.

Almost every place I have lived in has been water-locked: Hong Kong, Singapore, and the Philippines were all island homes. However, being on an island never meant isolation, but rather integration. The surrounding water became a conduit that kept me tied to everyone I left behind.

I was always the new kid. My father's work unavoidably uprooted our family each year. Just as I would anchor myself to a home, I would be hauled from the sand and moored somewhere else. But I adapted to my new environments. Instead of fixing myself to the sand, I fixed myself to the currents.

From as early as pre-school, each fall I had to learn to navigate the uncharted waters of unfamiliar faces. Yet my efforts paid off, as I became adept at forging new friendships. I came to understand that open-mindedness and positivity brought about tranquil seas. Not until fourth

grade did I return from summer vacation and experience something alien: going into the next grade and already having friends. It seemed like the waters had quieted and my reflection had steadied.

Unfortunately, it was just the deceptive calm that occurs before a storm. My parents separated soon after and my dad moved back to Singapore. I remained in Connecticut, thankfully close to the soothing waters of Long Island Sound. Once again my world had shifted, and I found myself being shaped by the tumultuous tides.

It was a struggle. Empty silence hummed in my ears. The place where the timbre of his voice was missing could not be filled. He was a dad-shaped hole in our home. I was lost. But as I learned to cope, I realized that we were connected by the very water that separated us. Rather than acting as a barrier, the ocean was serving as a bridge.

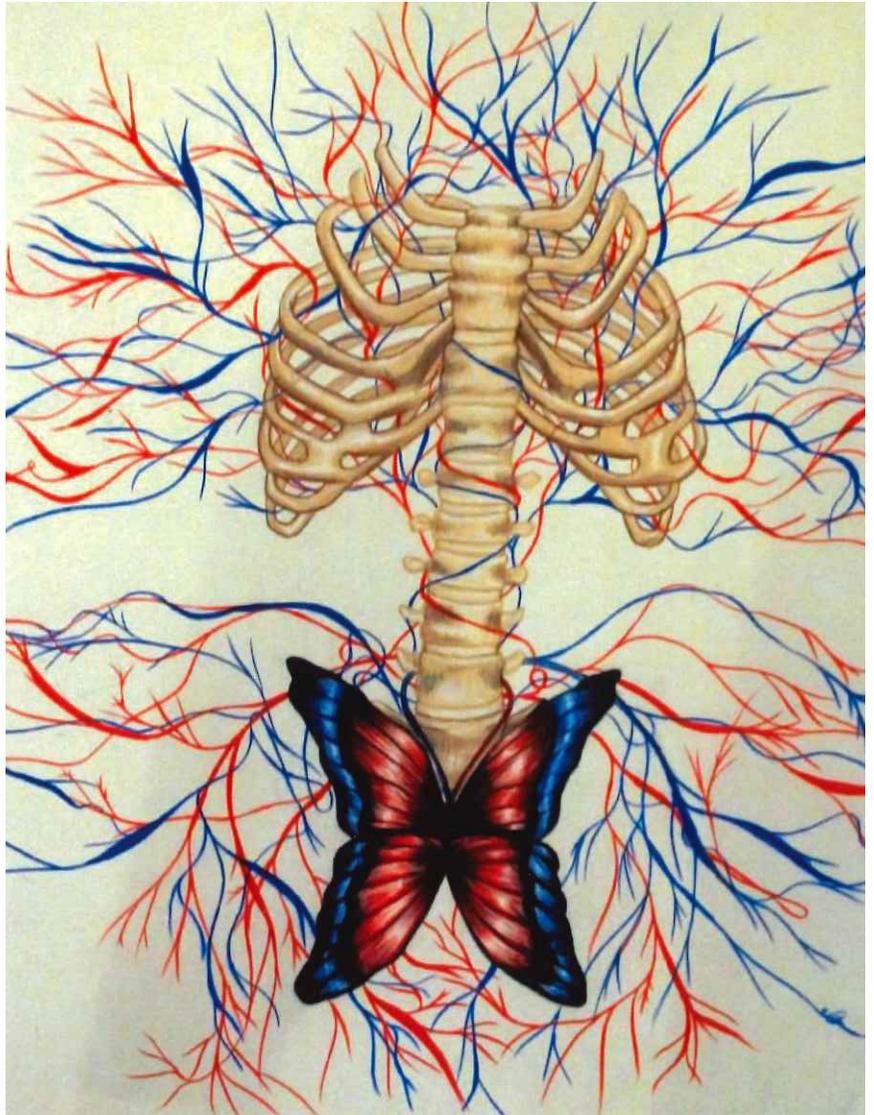
He lives near the ocean, I reminded myself. He can feel the same water that I can feel. The ocean can carry his presence to me and my presence to him. With that, he was no longer an absence but an omnipresent figure. I drew strength from this feeling and stepped up into the role he could no longer fulfill. I helped my mom, assisting with household chores and driving my siblings to their extracurricular activities. It wasn't a burden. I gained a sense of importance. Everything was all right.

Some of the changes I experienced in my childhood were unpleasant but essential nonetheless. And while I don't know what changes will lie along the horizon, I welcome the voyage. Because sometimes it is necessary to be thrown into the water in order to learn how to swim.

# 2013

# Untitled

Emma Rhoads



# Melt

Emma Moskovitz

**T**he world around me is plastic.  
Candy colored.  
Shiny.  
Fake.

The plastic people  
glowing and smooth  
perfect.  
But it is only an illusion,  
a clever trick preformed by the man behind a curtain,  
or a computer.  
Fueled by the death of individuality:  
be like her, dress like him, say what they say.  
Like a hamster in a wheel  
perpetually chasing the unachievable.  
They glide through life  
like dolls on a conveyor belt.  
Shopping for their personality,  
like one would for groceries.  
A new car.  
A new body.  
A new life.  
Building a shell of plastic possessions  
with their plastic cards.

# 2014

# Ease My Worried Mind from Fear

Bridget van Dorsten and Noa Wind

Ease my worried mind from fear.  
The weight I bear also relies on you.  
My eyes reopen, my vision is clear.

I waited and searched far and near  
to find a purpose, what to do.  
Ease my worried mind from fear.

I've loved and lost friends so dear  
but people change, don't stay true.  
My eyes reopen and my vision is clear.

In this great world we seem so mere,  
several billion humans live here too.  
Ease my worried mind from fear.

I take in a fresh breath of air,  
then try to make this life brand new.  
My eyes reopen and my vision is clear.

Without your love, I feel so bare;  
for everything I am, I must thank you.  
Ease my worried mind from fear.  
My eyes reopen and my vision is clear.



Golden Ocean  
Caroline O'Kane

2015

# THE SCREEN

## JULIA SCHORR

The vapid updates fill her screen as she scrolls down, aimlessly searching for validation, for a pat on the back. Quantifying her popularity by the amount of followers that approve of her

illusion. Meticulously picking out her photo filter, the screen to the reality that her followers judge. And she keeps searching for her standing on the popularity charts, wishing she could go back

to a time when her back wasn't hunched over and her phone wasn't refreshing her popularity rank. When her window was the only screen she looked at, and she was searching for flowers instead of followers.

But now gaining followers is the only way to gain back her self-esteem. Each moment searching for the opportunity to flaunt her grand superiority on her tiny screen, all the while knowing that popularity doesn't measure her value. Popularity measures her dependency on followers, her need to document her life on a screen. But she still cannot back away. She remains entranced by her phone, and the searching

continues. And the searching does not stop until popularity becomes an obsolete word, until her realization that followers will not be the ones to put her back together when the screen

shatters. But for today, she keeps searching for followers, wanting to believe that popularity will help her back up, that her insecurities cannot be seen through the screen.



## KASSIDY GREER



# 2016

## BYE BYE BLUE EYES

Colleen Brockwell

The white room echoed with different voices and different problems. Giant windows were placed in front of the waiting section; the sun blinded others around. People came in who didn't have actual problems, but just needed a trained professional to talk them through it. This room was used for problems: life altering, traumatizing problems that may or may not drive you crazy. While he had a reason to be there, others did not. Everyone stared down at the grey carpeted floor as they waited for their name to be called; next, and next, and next.

He sat there in his navy sweatshirt, that he wore everyday. His finger poked through the sleeve and wore it as a glove, focusing his pale blue eyes on the ground like he always did. He fidgeted his fingers as he tightly pressed all the parts of his body closely together on the undeveloped cushioned chair. He hated the way he could feel everyone staring at him, expecting him to look up and look back at them.

He was used to coming twice a week, but he only went because his mother made him. But the hour he spent in there, he did not talk, because no one would ever get what happened to him. This place was supposed to be a safe zone, but he never felt more trapped.

He closed his eyes, drifting into a quiet mental state. He could hear the splash of his father bleaching his white clothes, getting rid of the painful red that he had caused on his shirt earlier that day. He could hear his father yelling and the vibrating pains that went across his body as he was hit. The way the toxins fell across his face into his blue eyes, forever ruining his new t-shirt his mom just bought him. The screams of his mother begging for his father to stop as she saw the contaminated water being poured onto his weak body. His mother hopelessly crying. He was used to the punches and the blows, but that pain was like nothing he ever felt.

Chills went down his leg as someone sat down next him. He didn't bother to look up, but he could feel it staring at him. It was a girl based on the light way she sat down next to him and the rose smell that flowed off of her. He stared back down at his feet, right as it lightly, grabbed his arm, forcing him to shift his head up. She looked into his eyes as he only looked at her right shoulder, seeing only the obscure shapes of her body. Not looking into people's eyes was something he was used to.

"How are you?"

No response. He then remembered that rose smell as it passed through his brain and dug up a memory. He knew her. He could feel her overwhelming presence and felt like he needed to say something.

"I'm okay. How about you?"

He heard her move on her chair.

Her voice cracked. "Good."

He remembered the way she walked with her backpack swung across her right shoulder and the way she would open her locker, a couple down from his. He remembers the way an awkward smile would run across her face when they made eye contact for no more than a second. Remembering the way she made him feel. Alive.

He could see the way she looked a year ago. She always wore her hair in a braid, leaving a few strands out. Her dirty white converse and her ripped jeans. He thought about how different she must look now; maybe her hair was cut different, or she has rings laminated on her fingers. He could only imagine.

He will always remember how he felt knowing he could never look in her eyes again. The way the yellow circulated around her pupils, as a meadow of green sprung to the ends, as if they were trying to escape. She was the first and last person that will ever make him feel that way.

Blood shot eyes and the smell of the chlorine in his nose; the endless, unforgetful pain, that forced him to never see the emeralds printed on her face.

Someone else walked out into the room.

"Mason, come on in"

He got up as his name was called.

She grabbed for his hand and missed.

He stood up and reached for the black pole on his left side, that guided him into the other room.

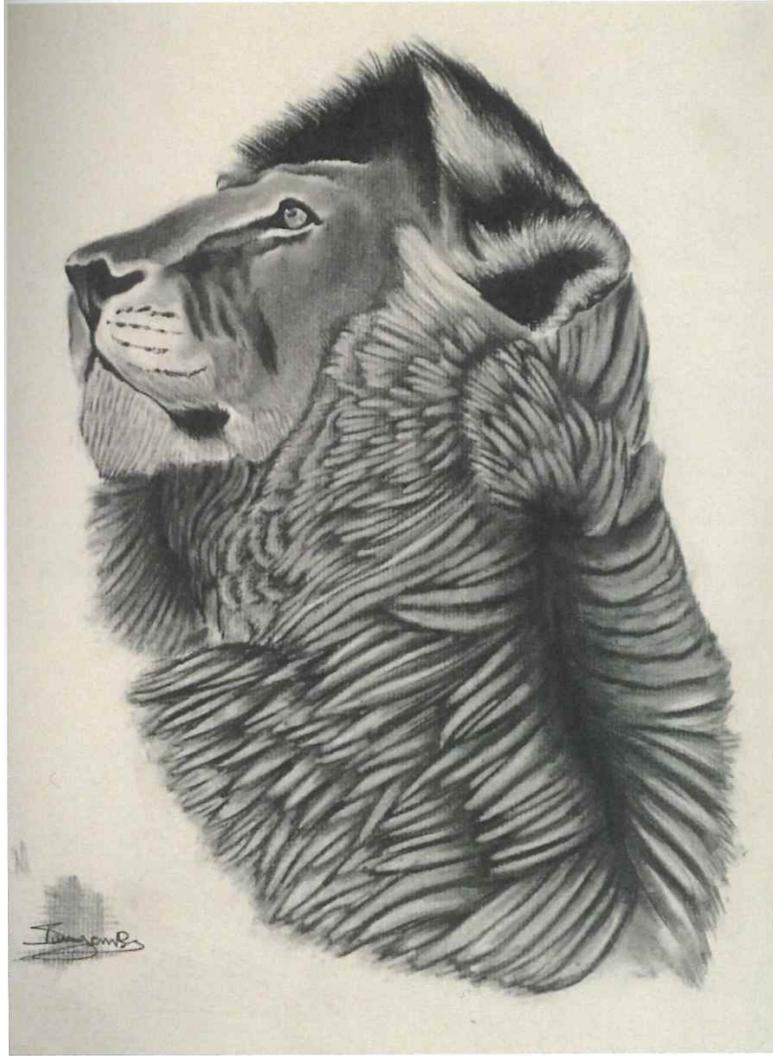


## HEAD ABOVE WATER

Alexandra McMahon

2017

# 2018



**LION**  
Imogen Barnes



**ENCHANTED NIGHT**  
Sofia Abrams Rivera

# WHY WRITE A POEM?

MICHAEL THOMPSON

Why would I write a poem  
About something not important to me?

When there are so many objects  
close to my heart  
And so many people  
Always on my mind

Why toil away at my desk  
into the night  
Only to produce something  
so empty.  
So meaningless.  
Forgettable.

The empty box of waterproof markers  
under my desk  
The dull, yet sharp ends  
of a toothpick  
The frayed sleeves of the jacket  
hiding in my closet

I tease these ideas like ugly ducklings  
But I am the fool  
Because these useless things  
Now have a poem of mine.



# BIKES AND FLOWERS

MORGAN LENONCE

# 2019

## *Lest We Forget, Alexa Scully*

I never thought I'd be anywhere near here again. I wrote it off as a haunted land, a place of restless spirits still trying to find their way home. Saying it feels weird to be back here is an understatement. I can still see the shells tearing up the earth, I can still hear the screams and moans of men in agony. It's all still here, fresh in my mind despite the years that have passed since I was last here.

It's changed so much. Where all the mud and dirt used to lay, there's now a beautiful green field, like emeralds dusting the earth. Tiny blue flowers grow in patches everywhere, the same as the uniforms of all the men who used to stand beside me.

I can see the dips in the ground where the trenches used to be, now just little shallow lines in the ground. They, too, are covered in grass, as if to cover up all the mud and death that lays underneath. It's odd, how for all of the destruction this war brought, the land was still able to claim back what it lost. If only the same can be said for all of the people who survived.

I limp over to the patch of cornflowers and awkwardly kneel down, plucking a few of the little blue flowers. I know these are sacred, but I won't ruin their meaning. I push myself back up, wobbling as I try to regain my balance. I take a deep breath before walking away from the little patch of flowers.

I walk up to the graveyard, greeted by row upon row of unmarked white crosses. I don't know which one belongs to Georges and which to Felix. I doubt I'll ever really know. Still, I picked one out as the one I'll set the flowers down at. It doesn't matter if it's the grave of our friend or not. I'll gladly pay my respects to anyone who lays under that cross, and all of the other crosses in this country. They're all fallen heroes. Fallen friends.

Once I get to the cross, I kneel down and place the little bouquet of cornflowers I picked. I slowly get back up and stand in silence. Tears quietly streak down my face. I know I'll never see Georges and Felix again, but I also know that they'd be happy to finally rest. It's the least they deserve. It's the least everyone in this cemetery deserves. The fighting might have felt pointless, but they changed the world, whether they knew it or not. Now, they get to rest.

"Thank you, both of you. For everything. I'll see you next year." I turn around and, with a heavy heart, leave. I promise to do my best to keep the memory of all the people who fought and sacrificed their lives for this war alive. Lest we forget.

2020

*embedded insanity, Jaiyana Khan*

pools of ink

pour across an acre

of asphalt,

hugging the surface

with layers

of felt,

seeping into the cracks

of the sidewalk

that borders insanity.

-

the name of a place

containing a fragrant miasma

that clings to the

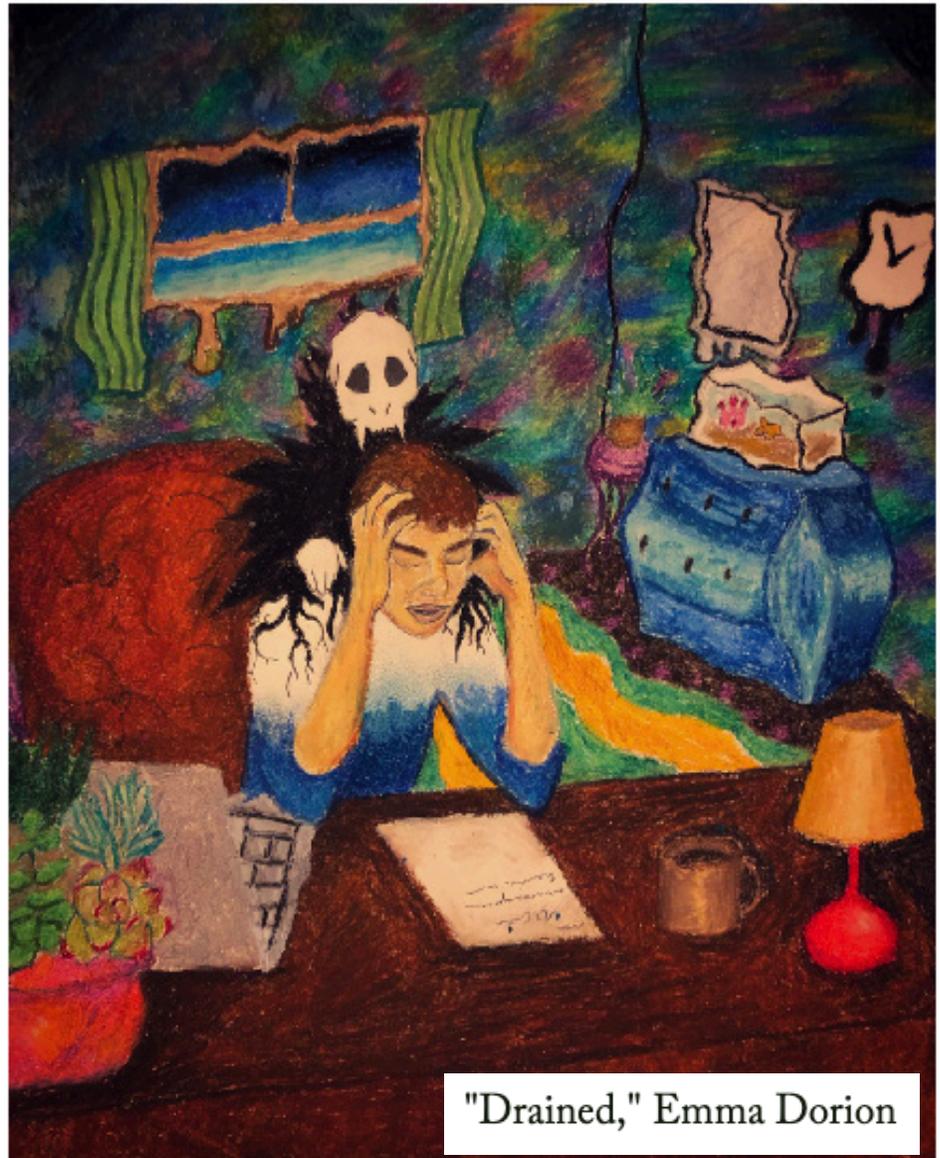
repulsion

lacing your blood,

drawing it closer

to an unwarranted flood

of lunacy.



# An Eternal October

**Lucy Dockter '23**

At last, the day arrives.

A day when it is acceptable to gorge oneself on Twix  
and Snickers,  
a day when it is acceptable to dress one's dog up as a  
hotdog.

Vampires, princesses, and superheroes line the streets,  
stopping at every porch to beg for a morsel of candy.

As they skip door-to-door,  
I stay hidden in my house,  
Unable to face the small children and their expectant  
baskets.

I turn every light off.  
My car is moved to be back,  
out of view.  
No one comes down my driveway.

I stay locked up, until the night is over.  
Until, I am sure every child  
lost all energy and complained about frostbite on  
their hands  
Finally, I could go to bed,  
without facing the dread of small children.

Morning eventually arrives,  
carrying a fresh start with it.  
With a sigh of relief,  
I turn the page of my calendar.  
November would bring a time of family and friends,  
all eating and laughing together once again.

However, I find something most peculiar.  
I check with the date on my phone.  
This cannot be.  
How could this be possible?  
It reads: "October 32."  
There is no such date!  
And yet,  
here it is.

NOVEMBER



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# Colophon

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cover

Futura used for title on cover, table  
of contents

Kefa used for years

Minion Pro used for page numbers,  
headers, footers, table of contents  
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