

Spring 2011

## Zephyr: The Twelfth Issue

Zephyr Faculty Advisor  
*University of New England*

Angelena Pepe  
*University of New England*

Constance Glynn  
*University of New England*

Rachel Audibert  
*University of New England*

Cassandra Britton  
*University of New England*

*See next page for additional authors*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://dune.une.edu/zephyr>

 Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#), [Interdisciplinary Arts and Media Commons](#), and the [Photography Commons](#)

---

### Preferred Citation

Faculty Advisor, Zephyr; Pepe, Angelena; Glynn, Constance; Audibert, Rachel; Britton, Cassandra; Carter, Laura; Kalioras, Elena; Koller, Jocelyn; Lyman, Samantha; Mroz, April; and Yu, Wang, "Zephyr: The Twelfth Issue" (2011). *Zephyr*. 12.  
<http://dune.une.edu/zephyr/12>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Works at DUNE: DigitalUNE. It has been accepted for inclusion in Zephyr by an authorized administrator of DUNE: DigitalUNE. For more information, please contact [bkenyon@une.edu](mailto:bkenyon@une.edu).

---

**Creator**

Zephyr Faculty Advisor, Angelena Pepe, Constance Glynn, Rachel Audibert, Cassandra Britton, Laura Carter, Elena Kalioras, Jocelyn Koller, Samantha Lyman, April Mroz, and Wang Yu

ZEPHYR

12<sup>th</sup> issue  
spring 2011

the university  
of new england's  
journal of  
artistic  
expression

ZEPHYR

the twelfth issue · spring 2011



## STAFF

*editor-in-chief* Angelena Pepe  
*junior editor* Constance Glynn  
*faculty advisor* Susan McHugh, PhD  
*clerical assistant* Elaine Brouillette

## EDITORIAL BOARD

Rachel Audibert · Cassandra Britton · Laura Carter  
· Elena Kalioras · Jocelyn Koller · Samantha Lyman · April Mroz · Wang Yu

*design & typography* Angelena Pepe & Constance Glynn  
*printed by* Penmor Lithographers, Lewiston  
*cover photograph by* Drew Ramsay, *Zephyr* - Cow Moose  
*dramsay@une.edu*



This magazine is printed entirely on recycled paper.

*Zephyr* has been published since 1999 by an organization of students at the University of New England in Maine. If you should like information about the magazine, including details on how to submit your artwork, please e-mail Dr Susan McHugh at [smchugh@une.edu](mailto:smchugh@une.edu) or write to her in care of the University of New England, 11 Hills Beach Road, Biddeford, Maine 04005.

Welcome, wild North-easter!  
Shame it is to see  
Odes to every Zephyr;  
Ne'er a verse to thee.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

# ZEPHYR

THE TWELFTH ISSUE / SPRING 2011

*the university of new england's journal of artistic expression*

Letter from the Editor 5

## WRITTEN

Hymnal	6	<i>Neville Wilson</i>
Ashes To Dust	9	<i>Daneille Cropley</i>
Life's Wake	10	<i>Haven Lindsey</i>
More Questions Still	13	<i>Laura Carter</i>
The Gift Of Pain	14	<i>Haven Lindsey</i>
Inside Out	16	<i>Hannah B. Rothermel</i>
An Unfamiliar Hue Of Gold	18	<i>Laura Carter</i>
Unwanted Lessons...	20	<i>Laura Carter</i>
Oh, How Easy It Is...	24	<i>Shea Stebakker</i>
Promise	27	<i>Leslie Ricker</i>
The Transitions...	29	<i>Laura Carter</i>
Winter's Promise	30	<i>Hannah B. Rothermel</i>
The Band	32	<i>Jocelyn Koller</i>
Bonding The Stone	38	<i>Leslie Ricker</i>
Destiny	42	<i>Courtney MacLeod</i>
The Madman Inside	44	<i>Bradley Moser</i>
A Fable...	47	<i>John D. Daugherty</i>
The Moose	48	<i>Jocelyn Koller</i>
Asleep	53	<i>Courtney MacLeod</i>
Profound Clichés	54	<i>Travis Smith</i>
Life's Lesson	56	<i>Courtney MacLeod</i>
A Letter...	60	<i>John D. Daugherty</i>
Being Social Beings	70	<i>Travis Smith</i>
Day Dreamer	73	<i>Courtney MacLeod</i>
Gloomy Gardens	75	<i>Courtney MacLeod</i>
Eighty-Four Thousand...	76	<i>Kayla Wheeler</i>
Soul Food	78	<i>Rich Burns</i>
Pity	82	<i>Danielle Cropley</i>
Hard To Say	83	<i>Kayla Wheeler</i>
Underneath It All	86	<i>Danielle Cropley</i>

Car	88	<i>Steve Byrd</i>
Our Path Is Endless	96	<i>Kayla Wheeler</i>
Here	100	<i>Danielle Cropley</i>
Skies Of Escape	101	<i>Courtney MacLeod</i>
Mother's Nature	102	<i>Ashley Plante</i>
The Disease	105	<i>Danielle Cropley</i>
Visiting My Father...	107	<i>Ashley Plante</i>
The River Is My Anchor	108	<i>Sean Walley</i>
The Phrase....	114	<i>Kayla Wheeler</i>
Act Of Awareness	119	<i>Courtney MacLeod</i>
Promise	120	<i>Laura Carter</i>
Orchard Of Oysters	122	<i>Courtney MacLeod</i>

### IMAGES

Evergreen Cemetary	8	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>	Sunbathing	57	<i>Jenna Crovo</i>
Louisville Steamer	11	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>	Sea Star	58	<i>Julia Keane</i>
Diving Seaweed	13	<i>Jenna Crovo</i>	The Lion	59	<i>Jenna Crovo</i>
Lightbulb Light Show	15	<i>Drew Ramsay</i>	BirchNorth Rustico	67	<i>Mik Morrisey</i>
Wildflower	17	<i>Drew Ramsay</i>	Waiting In Vain	68	<i>Chloe Crettien</i>
Bumblebee	19	<i>Drew Ramsay</i>	Benny	69	<i>Julia Keane</i>
Convent Spire	22	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>	Big Ben	72	<i>Jenna Crovo</i>
Balloon Fest	23	<i>Mik Morrisey</i>	Escape	74	<i>Ron Ramsay</i>
Snagged	25	<i>Nancy Rankin</i>	Ferris Wheel	81	<i>Shelby Lynn Braese</i>
Acadia Dormers	26	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>	Another Fall	87	<i>Ron Ramsay</i>
Norwegian Swamp	28	<i>Dolores Wallpaperpaste</i>	Old Glory	95	<i>Ron Ramsay</i>
Spigot Shadow	31	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>	Graveyard	99	<i>Mik Morrisey</i>
Twister In The Sky	37	<i>Nancy Rankin</i>	Gulfport Beach	104	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>
Sand Beach	39	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>	Oslo Street	106	<i>Dolores Wallpaperpaste</i>
Feeders	40	<i>Mik Morrisey</i>	Scenic Bridge	112	<i>Drew Ramsay</i>
Sand Beach Woods	41	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>	Chimney Pond	113	<i>Drew Ramsay</i>
Twisty Tree	43	<i>Julia Keane</i>	Winter Grass	117	<i>Nancy Rankin</i>
Lightning	46	<i>Mik Morrisey</i>	Backyard Neighbor	118	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>
Bull Moose	51	<i>Drew Ramsay</i>	Clouds Rolling In	121	<i>Nancy Rankin</i>
Ladder	52	<i>Mik Morrisey</i>	St. Petersburg Marina	123	<i>Paul T. Burlin</i>
Oslo Opera House	55	<i>Dolores Wallpaperpaste</i>	Dolphin	124	<i>Jenna Crovo</i>





# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Angelena Pepe

This publication makes my third and final edition as *Zephyr's* Editor-in-Chief. It has been a great three years as Editor and truly an inspiration.

Please join me in welcoming a new face to *Zephyr*, our Junior Editor - Constance Glynn! I look forward to the production of fantastic, new editions under her lead next year!

We dedicate this edition of *Zephyr* to one of our contributors, Neville Wilson. He dictated a special poem that he wished to be published in our magazine three days before he died and he left it for his family to give to us. We hope that his contribution will inspire you all.

Thanks for reading! I hope you enjoy this year's *Zephyr*!

*"It is not just what you say, but how you say it."*

## Hymnal

Neville Wilson

March 23, 1936 - October 21, 2010

It's hard to know how to die  
the suddenness  
the age  
the plans that lie before you  
the carnage that strikes suddenly  
the cruelty  
An accident  
there can be no saving  
the kindness the lies before us.  
and we don't know it exists  
The sunshine overwhelms.

If only one could treasure  
in actuality and in factuality  
the Golden Brick of the Sistene Chapel  
The way we take in love, and don't know until it's gone,  
and know the crumbling.  
How lucky we are  
the trivality of the water flowing metaphor  
even the wealth of music and literature and art  
and yet the despair  
for everything is no tears  
though it is hard to hold and say it is true.  
All we seem to have is the dailyness of things  
the facination with sexuality  
and what we can do with that  
except love it and enjoy and praise genius far beyond our own?

For what can we do  
how the alternative is emptiness  
and we must know in our hearts  
that there must be something  
the emptiness walking down the street  
with something intangible

beyond posturing and challenge

If only one could grasp  
redness of the leaf, and know it in the hand  
turning to yellow, to green.  
The kiss, ripening like fruit  
the yearning where there is no beginning and no end  
hence the hope  
the constancy in spite of pain  
the delicacy of brocade, and the time flowing through the fingers.

This is no testament  
just a wondering at the majesty of the Universe  
and the joy we can give to others  
and the wonder of it all  
and the way that history has made magic of life.

It's hard to know how to die  
for we are all poets  
and writing poetry is a kind of going home  
that we all do individually and together  
often written in haste  
we don't know we're going there, or where we are going.  
Let us gather under the trees  
and sing our songs as we may  
in pleasure and pain  
that is all we have.



## Ashes to Dust

Danielle Cropley

Ashes to ashes and dust to dust,  
The present just passes us and love fades to lust.

Attempts to failures and dreams to nightmares,  
The seconds just engulf us and truths fade to dares.

Glances to glances and tears to tears,  
The future just escapes us and hopes fade to fears.

Perfection to rejection and mindful to mindless,  
The hours just ignore us and first fades to second best.

Temper to temper and head to head,  
The past just erases us and living fades to dead.

Strength to weakness and knowing to mystery,  
The minutes just surround us and stories fade to history.

## Life's Wake

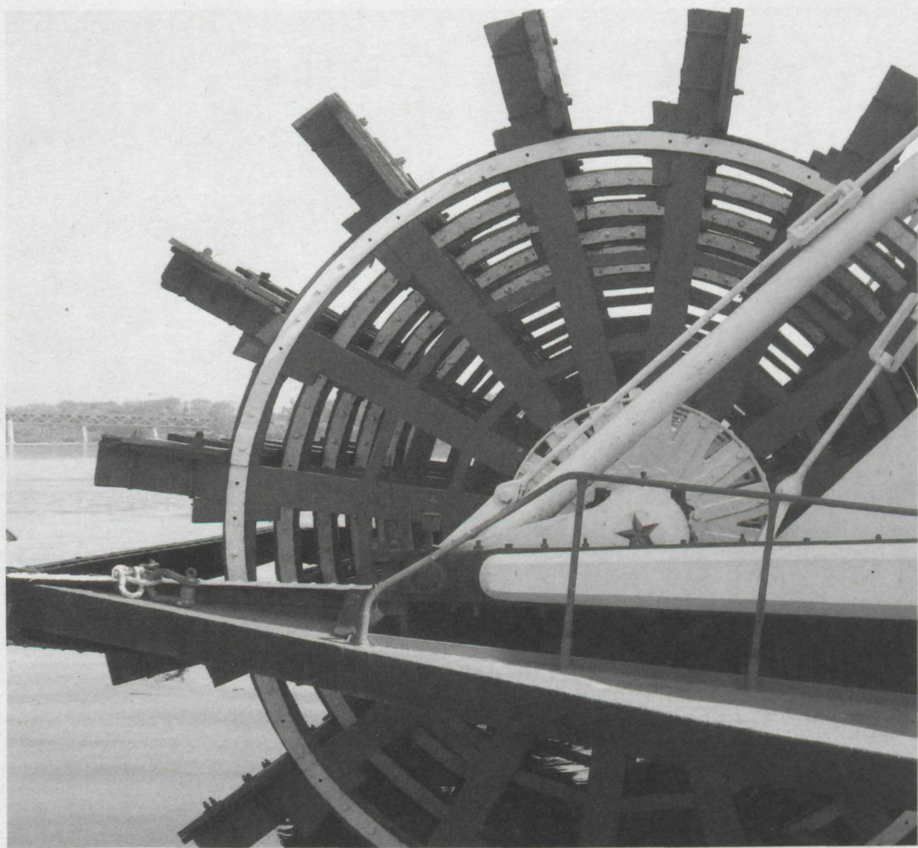
Haven Lindsey

Ever stop to think  
about your life's wake?

As you go through your day  
do you give, do you take?

Like ripples on water  
and echoes in air,

everything altered,  
because you were there.







## More Questions Still

Laura Carter

I am hungry

For a truth

That no one will speak

Thirsty

For a reason

That no one will give

Craving

For excuses

Willing to explain

Why it is

What it is

And what that even means

## **The Gift of Pain**

Haven Lindsey

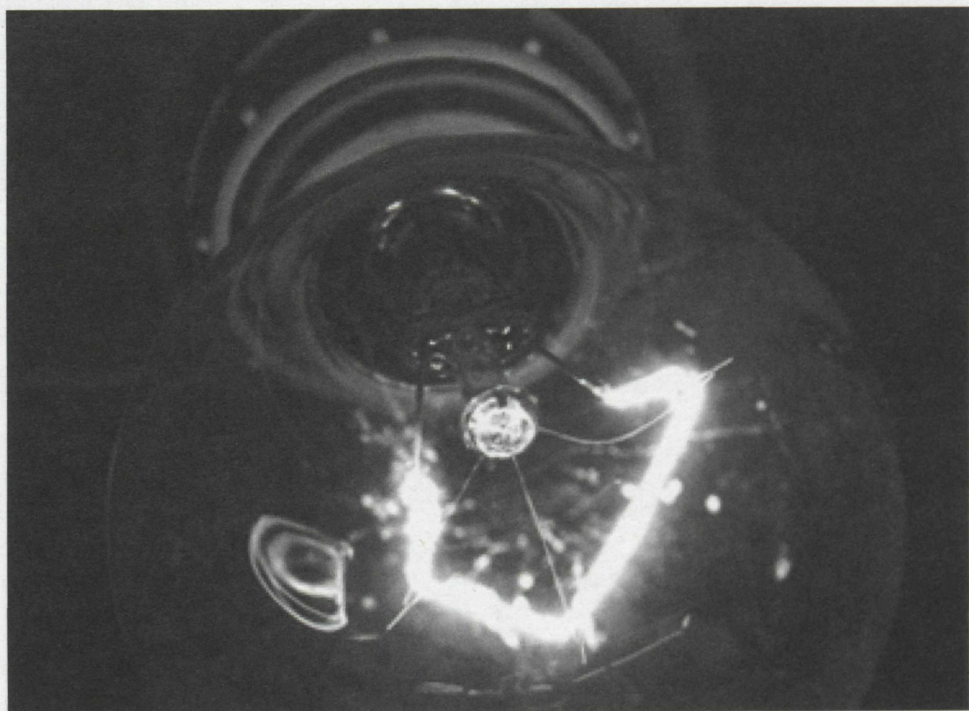
Go through darkness  
to recognize light.

Cope with sadness  
to feel others' plight.

Close off your feelings  
for a preconceived gain  
and you will never distinguish  
pleasure from pain.

Open your heart  
strong yet weak;  
only then will you find the peace that you seek.

Honor yourself  
as authentic and strong  
you'll see your conviction  
was there all along.



## Inside Out

Hannah B. Rothermel

I swear,  
she grows still more beautiful  
with the years.

"The most beautiful stones  
have been tossed by the wind,  
washed by the waters,  
and polished to brilliance  
by Life's strongest storms."

She, a most beautiful stone;  
a rock, really.  
Where does her beauty come from?  
How does she do it?

We're all born beauty-full.  
each a gift of creation, yet  
Life brings out that beauty.

But how does she do it,  
tossed by the wind,  
washed by the waters and Life's strongest storms?

I know:  
She wears her inside  
out.



## An Unfamiliar Hue of Gold

Laura Carter

You are an unfamiliar hue of gold  
Like a combination of red  
And orange  
You glow  
Like the sun  
But there is something exceptional  
And different  
About your way  
You are an unfamiliar hue of gold  
And I wish  
I could capture it  
On a palette  
And paint  
What you're made of  
Across the sky  
Show the world how simply  
Beautiful  
You are  
On the inside  
And just by looking at it  
The skyline  
They would know  
That you are lovely  
In every imaginable way  
And that I love you  
For what you are  
An unfamiliar hue of gold



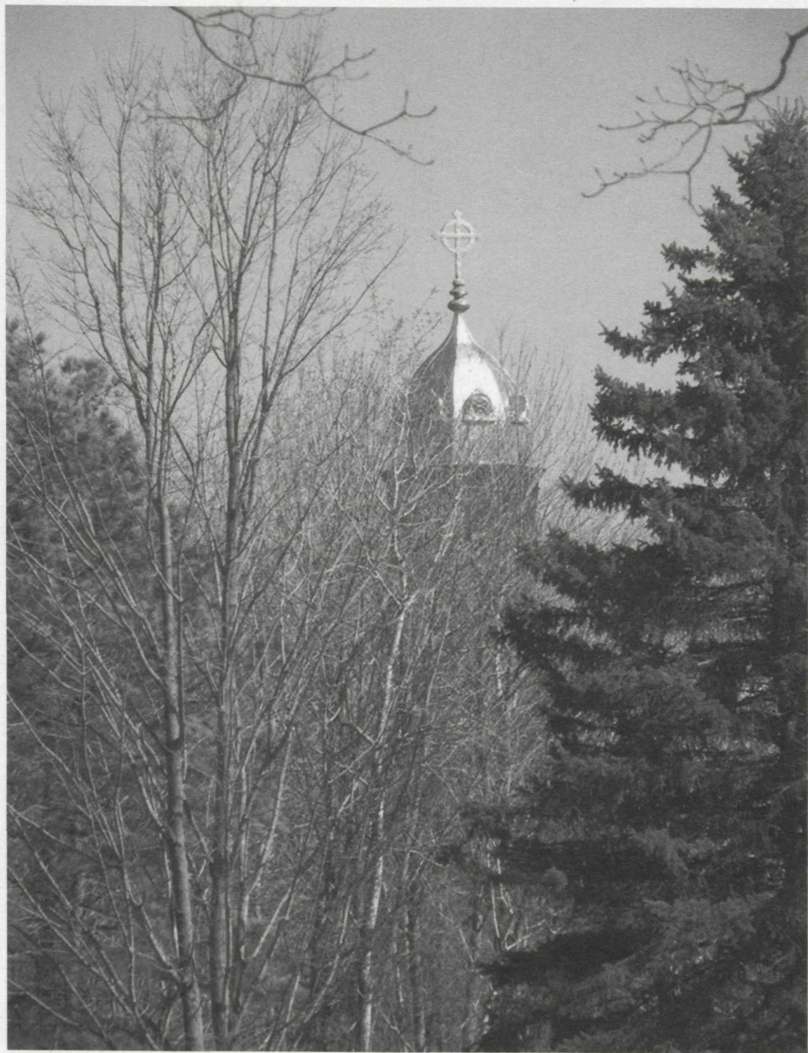
## Unwanted Lessons Forcefully Learned

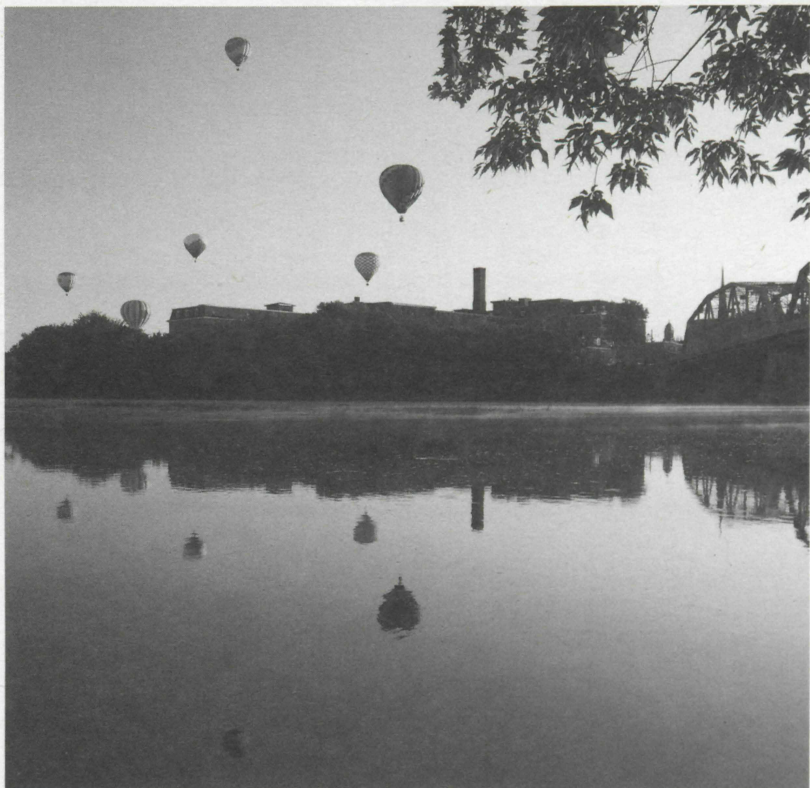
Laura Carter

Heavy hearts  
And broken fists  
True love does not wait  
You said that everything  
Was going to be okay  
And I am a fool  
For believing anything  
That those lying lips would say  
I know tragedy  
Better than the Greeks  
My phone didn't ring  
For weeks  
Four weeks  
And I crumpled  
And crumbled  
Into this heap  
A mess  
Self destructive  
Willing to leap  
Into any direction  
Nearest to traffic  
A self-proclaimed "frogger"  
My actions were drastic  
And suddenly back in my life  
You appeared  
As if nothing had happened  
But you shaved of your beard  
And nothing was right  
Everything's backwards  
I couldn't handle anything  
Not the sound of your laughter  
Or the sound of your shows  
Not even the way you would falsely accuse  
No life preservers  
Or safety boats  
I needed to jump ship and learn how to cope  
Because it was time



Despite everything  
I needed to be free  
Father Time could not take back  
All the bad  
You've done to me  
Wounded  
Severely  
As if it were my job  
Where was my courage?  
Be it small or large  
Nothing like the present  
At least that's what I'm told  
Every second I stayed longer  
I felt myself grow old  
It should have been finished  
It should have been done  
But my heart was heavy  
And slowed me down  
Concrete chest  
Lead feet  
There was no running  
Inescapable fact  
Stuck  
In a pit of tar  
I loved you  
But how did I let it get that far?  
And I'm sorry  
Not to you  
But to my former self  
For putting all of my needs  
On a far and distant shelf  
I was ruined on the inside  
From the very start  
Never do I care to see you  
Let's forever stay apart  
You were the "jack of all trades"  
But lying was your key  
Stay and remain  
Far, far away from me





## Oh, How Easy It Is For Someone To Lie

Shea Stebakker

I met him at a worn-down diner, the building awkwardly tossed onto the side of a dirty road, sticking out like a one-legged seagull. I walked in and spied him standing there, hips sprawled against the chipped counter, his worn blue uniform shirt draped over thin shoulders. He never once greeted me, his face was stoned in a permanent expression of apathy, and he gave me the wrong order – it was then that I knew I was in love. 2:00pm, every week day, I could be found clung to the peeling dingy walls, waiting for his shift to end. He slammed the doors away, strutting out, a criminal released from a maximum security prison due to a paid bail. His bright hazel eyes, mischief planted behind each one, caught my modest browns, and my heart would explode every time. He liked to run a hand through his careless chestnut hair and listen to Coldplay. He sang “Yellow” to me before giving me our first kiss. I thought my lungs would never know the pleasure of oxygen after that. He would lace his fingers between mine and brush my hair aside, cradling me next to his heart, all the while telling me how special – how important – I was to him. “Every star,” he said, “Is a count for the love that lies in my heart for you.” Each day that he sauntered my direction led to a deeper exploration of us, until finally our destination ended in his bed. He whispered to my ear, lulling me into complacency, and we came together like two raging solar flares. The very world was shocked at how right two entities could be for one another. I was attached, clinging to his hand, vowing to forever remain the front seat passenger of his corroded Honda. But I couldn’t keep this wonderful feeling to myself. How rude of me would it be to keep the pleasures of companionship a secret? I went to my best friend’s house, ready to tell her the amazing things I was blessed to have everyday – his soft hair, the ensnaring eyes, the power his voice had to calm you, a cobra with a riveting stare shared only with the juiciest rabbit. It was almost like he was standing in front of me – in fact, there he was, under her awning – staring into my deep blue eyes... wait. My eyes weren’t blue. But my best friend’s were, and I watched as he sang that song meant for us, and shared a kiss with lips that weren’t mine.





## Promise

Leslie Ricker

snow stutters down

morning wind starts

fall's passing

piles of brittle brown push into corners,  
night is white upon the lawn,  
morning's waiting for a weak sun  
to melt these weary frosts

questions-focus? appreciation? fidelity?

doubt arises with dawn,  
last evening's fine feeling's gone,  
funny how feelings depart

"promises break hearts"





## The Transitions of the Seasons

Laura Carter

I pull on my dress  
Over pale shoulders  
Slip on my shoes  
Over pale feet  
I look in the mirror  
And take it all in  
Reflection something  
New  
Something unused to  
These shoulders  
Were once brown  
Kissed by the summer sun  
But that has faded  
Now  
Winter's just begun  
And I breathe in  
Deeply  
Ready to go  
I don't now where  
I'm going  
But I may need a coat  
Because beyond the mirrors  
And beyond the room  
Harsh winds blow  
Cruel

## Winter's Promise

Hannah B. Rothermel

Rest.

Listen.

Be still.

Be patient.

Be hope-full.

Be thought-full.

Look outside.

Look inside.

Pay attention.

Take time.

Dream.

Remain patient.

Remain hope-full.

And you'll find,

once again,

Your Spring will come.



## The Band

Jocelyn Koller

Slowly, forcefully, he pulled the band off his finger and set it on the wooden table with a definitive clink.

A sudden, harsh, metal banging swam through the room. In procession, three young girls came running through a peeling doorframe, each carrying a kitchen utensil. A scramble of sneakers and bare toes on hardwood and happy laughing-screaming disturbed the solid quiet in which the ring had spoken earlier. The first, clearly the leader, was brunette--her dark, thick hair was messy in a way that indicated it hadn't seen a brush or a bath in a few days. Earlier it had been pulled into a halfhearted pony tail, but now a pink flowered scrunchie encircled the girl's wrist instead, allowing the brown hair to fall at random over her shoulders and back. She carried the big, tin pot they used to cook spaghetti and struck it with the wooden spoon they used to stir the sauce.

The next, younger by some visible but undistinguishable amount, had wavy and thin, dirty blonde hair. She had big, Bambi eyes that were a sea-glass shade of green. Her mouth, the only closed one in the room, was small and pink. She marched instead of ran, her pants a little too short for her ankles and her arms a little too skinny for her attitude. Her instrument of choice was the colander. It was pulled over her head, like a perforated army helmet, and she was tapping it lightly with the measuring spoons. This created a full, intentional drumming sound that reminded him of hail on a frozen lake.

The last was clearly the youngest. She was holding the metal tongs down by her side, as if too tired to hold them up and pinch them together to make them click anymore. She ran haphazardly, squeezing the corner of a yellow blanket in her other palm, trailing it behind her. The blanket was frayed at the edges and stained odd colors in a few places. It was clear by her extremely slow pace that she wanted to approach the man at the table, but also clear that she would not without permission. As the other two left the room--the eldest leading the way, because it was clear to her that she was now in charge--the blonde one lingered around. She brushed the floor with her blanket until she was sure that each piece of floor had been thoroughly dusted. When still no words were

spoken, she moved slowly out of the door opposite the one they had come through and proceeded to join her sisters.

The man at the table had not looked at the children at first. In their frenzy, he felt that they were not demanding his attention but rather merely letting him know they were still present. Until the last and smallest girl had procrastinated leaving, he was sure they would all pass by without communication. When Lucy, her blonde curls clearly identifiable in his peripheral vision, had stalled in the space next to him, he realized she had been watching him. Feeling nervous about this, he decided to get up.

The phone rang from its place on the kitchen wall. Deciding not to answer it, he moved toward the bedroom in attempt to silence its puncturing ring. He opened his mouth to comment about the absurdity of calling someone during the middle of a work-day ("Don't these people have better things to do?"), but then realized that no one was listening.

The answering machine picked up the call. A cheerful voice shouted from the kitchen:

"Hello, you've reached Lindsey..."

"aaaaannnd Molly!"

"AND SOHPIE!!!"

"and Lucy..."

"And Matt. We're not here right now, but leave a message and we'll get back to you."

At the sound of his own voice, he jumped. Standing in the bedroom, he wasn't sure if he heard the actual words of the message or just knew them well enough to know what was being said. What he did hear, could hear, was the happiness. It bounced through the kitchen walls, down the hallways, through the open bedroom door. He cringed at the sound of it, embarrassed by the goofiness, afraid the girls could hear it and would giggle.

To cover his discomfort, he began fidgeting with the pile of papers on the nightstand. He picked up one with many full, thick, dull-looking paragraphs and skimmed it--the words made him furrow

his eyebrows together. He moved it to the top of the dresser. He took a bottle of water from the top of the dresser and moved it to the nightstand. He was trying not to listen to the voice on the answering machine; he recognized the scolding tone.

"Matthew," she was saying, "The girls should be at dance class! What are you doing to them? It is your responsibility to remember this stuff, and I swear to God I am not going to call you every hour to tell you what to do with them. I mean, I'm busy, and I of course was in the middle of something when the dance studio called to say 'Oh, guess what, your kids aren't here, are they coming?' and of course it's MY problem..."

He ran to the kitchen to shut off the machine. On the way, he discovered Molly, Sophie, and Lucy sitting quietly at the wooden table. Molly was seated facing the voice from the answering machine. She was staring intently in the direction of the noise, but her face was smooth. She didn't knit her eyebrows in concern or confusion; she didn't turn her lips down. Her eyes were transfixed on the kitchen door, but they were not open wide in shock or fear. They were simply open. She didn't look at him when he entered the room. Sophie was sitting near the window, her dirty blonde hair reflecting the light from the afternoon, and the picture threw him abruptly into a memory: dirty blonde hair, messy, wavy, still; reflecting morning light from a nearby window, moving, brushing his face. He sat down in an open chair.

Next to him, Lucy was laying her head down on the table. The chair she sat in was too big for her. She could barely reach the table, but still had her blanket situated on it so that it provided her a pillow. She was sucking on her thumb, but he knew she didn't really suck her thumb anymore. She was facing him, staring at his eyes. He looked back for a long time, searching for some sign of his genes in her face. The green eyes were not his, nor was the blonde hair or the small, rounded nose. He pushed his eyebrows together, moving them down over his eyes like a reflex, wishing for something.

Lucy, her head still tilted to one side, curled the very corner of her mouth up at him. He recognized this motion, and mirrored her. He felt a kind of solidarity with her, his youngest and last daughter. She laughed then, and burst into a full smile. The sound gave him goosebumps.

Clink. Molly had picked up the ring he had left on the table earlier. She now placed it back on the table, causing him to whip his head to look at her, and Lucy to stop laughing. Molly was staring down at the gold band. She was not smiling.

The answering machine had stopped, ending with a final threat: "I mean it Matthew!" He had meant to stop it before the girls heard, but had clearly missed his chance. Now the four of them sat at the table in the afternoon sun that was slowly turning gold. They had dropped their kitchen instruments at random throughout the room; in addition, there were socks, coloring books, a hairbrush and three abandoned dolls on the floor. He looked out into the hall where three clean, organized backpacks sat all in a row. They looked out of place in the messiness.

"Are we going to dance class?" Sophie asked, still looking out the window. He was surprised by her voice.

"Do you want to go?" He tried to be kind and calm, although he knew they had missed almost all of their class by now. He knew how much they loved getting dressed up in their skirts and leotards—he hated himself for depriving them of that. And yet, he thought about the hassle of getting the girls ready and out the door. He thought of all the people out on the sidewalk, the ten-minute walk to get to the studio, having to sit in the waiting room with all the mothers until the girls came rushing back out, walking all the way back home. It was all such a hassle.

"I just wanted to put on my dress, Daddy." Sophie looked at him when she said it, turning her lips down slightly. Then she went back to looking out the window.

Molly was still looking at the ring. She had her hand cupped over where it was set on the table, as if it were a small frog about to jump up and away. He thought about taking it from her, but pictured a temper tantrum following. He thought of the jewelry box Lindsey had taken just the day before; there would be only a clean rectangle in the dust where it had been. Then he realized.

Leaving the room, he could feel the girls' eyes on him. He went to the bedroom and pulled open the top drawer of the dresser. After a few minutes of searching, he retrieved a small box. It had been well hidden in a pair of Christmas socks he had never worn for the fact that they had Santas patterned on them. He took the velvet box he found and lifted the lid. Inside was a thin, gold chain with only a simple pendent hanging from it: a cursive L. He took the necklace from the box, holding it tightly in his sweating hand. The box shut with an abrasive snap that rang in his ears as he walked from the room.

"Molly." He was patient. She looked at him, but did not move her hand from the ring. He held up the fist that was closed around the golden chain, and she looked at him curiously.

"Would you like to put the ring on this so you can wear it for me?" He asked her quietly.

She didn't answer at first, being the kind of girl who wanted to make sure she was actually getting what she was being offered. Her face showed signs of maturity he was sure her age could not allow. Finally, she moved her hand from the ring.

"Yes," she said, "but who will wear Mommy's?"





## **Bonding the Stone**

Leslie Ricker

a flash of Eden  
before the storm began  
before the sea ran  
away from its former shore

a sparkle in the Milky Way  
after creation calls  
after heaven falls  
from the sky  
to dust on an earthy floor

religion and stardust,  
marrow and bone,  
true stones wait for weight  
then are gathered  
each alone







## Destiny

Courtney MacLeod

You will be brilliant, but disturbed  
Left impregnated with a desire  
To be drawn so squarely firm  
In the pencil-formed depiction  
Of a life worth striving for  
A compilation of success, so inaccurately seen  
Of those robotic running records  
Skipping oh so frequently

Does it calm you, to no end,  
Longing for the dream?  
What they tell you what to be  
Oh how dare they, now you see?  
It strips you, cheating time  
And all originality

Be fooled not by frozen smiles  
So quick to be beguiled  
Masking much beneath the fringe  
Where empty faces fade in grim

They will push to morph your plan  
In a flow which feeds the whole  
Losing sight of inner self  
Locked, shackled in your role

Now be bold but ever shrewd  
Life is messy, lacking ease  
Take guard of this disease  
And note its subtleties

Put your finger on the pulse  
So your creative mind aligns  
And may your life beat to the tune  
Of that which you define



## The Madman Inside

Bradley Moser

The madman inside;  
He's quite peculiar.  
A conversationalist indeed,  
Although one-sided.

The ideas he spews fascinate me.  
He can argue a good point,  
But two seconds later speak insanity.  
His research is flawed, his references invalid.  
My eyebrow cocks and my brow furls.  
He's quite insistent, and now my stomach is on board.  
Roiling, broiling, churning, burning.  
Twisted in a knot and tied tight.  
Story after story, the fiction of a novelist.  
The horror of King and the drama of Austen.

The madman inside:  
Where does he hail from?  
Who sent the invite?  
An unexpected and unwelcome guest...  
For so many years!  
He showed up one day and never left.  
Since then he's had his hammer in my china shop.  
His swing is pinpoint, devasing.

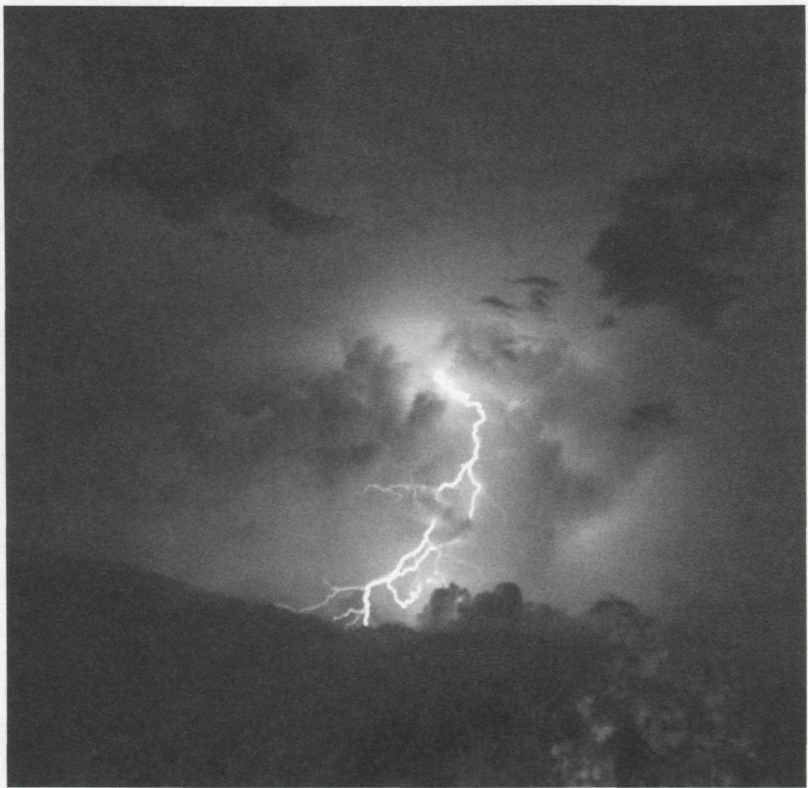


One moment I am minding my own business.  
The next, a vase shatters,  
My life halts,  
And I'm locked in combat.

The madman inside;  
He demands that I reason with him,  
That I spend my time convincing him of Truth.  
But really, he's not interested in Truth.  
Else he'd have found it by now.  
Breathed in that Truth and returned to the ether from which he came.  
Then I would be left alone.

Alone.  
Alone with myself,  
And the Universe,  
And God.  
The sweetest Aloneness.  
So quiet quiet quiet. Love.  
Everything would flow and I would BE.

Until then I'll have to put up with that madman's lousy jokes.  
One day, though, one day...I'll have the last laugh.



## **A Fable Or Not To Be Recited Before A Mirror**

John D. Daugherty

She was Siamese.  
Men are like dogs  
Though not so faithful  
Yet infinitely more  
Capable and deserving  
Of punishment.  
And though all seemed  
Well, to their surprise  
Upon the reflection of it  
Perhaps when scraping  
The offending stubble  
Or after when gazing  
Upon the smoothed crags  
Made thus compliant  
They find them  
Selves always left in her  
Cattitude clawed  
And bleeding.  
And like quoth the black  
Snake, Ravenmore  
She would but  
Say, it is my Nature.

## The Moose

Jocelyn Koller

It was twilight, and my wife and I were traveling to my mother-in-law's house. It was the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and the day had passed like many days in Maine--cold, windy, misty. My wife and I had each worked a half day, tossed clothes and toothbrushes into our overnight bags, and set out for the hour drive to Gorham, where Karen's parents live. We had left around four o'clock, as the darkness of the afternoon began turning from rainy-gray to nighttime black.

"Will your brother be there?" I asked Karen, glancing toward the passenger seat.

"Yes," she said, continuing to look down at the novel she was reading by the light of the flip-up mirror on the visor. I turned my gaze back to the road.

"How was your day at work?" I said.

"Fine," she said, "How was yours?"

"Well, Kenny was out so I had to take his clients," I started, looking over at her. She was still focused on the book. "So I took them to see this property over near the old house," I continued.

"That's nice," she said. "Did they buy it?"

"It's looking good," I said, although buying property is not like buying shoes or a dress.

I readjusted myself in my seat, stretching out my legs. We were about twenty minutes in now, driving through heavy woods. The trees made the darkening air look thicker, as though it were populated by spirits.

"Is that the book Larry's wife gave you? The one about the woman who grows up in a poor family?" I asked.

"Charlotte gave it to me. It's about the benefits of becoming a vegetarian," she said.

A thick film of misty rain was forming on the windshield. Bored, I tried to see how long I could go without turning on the wipers. I followed the curves in the road by memory. I felt my way along the road through my foot on the gas pedal. We took one turn slowly, the next slightly faster. We were gathering speed. My wife looked up from her book about vegetarians.

"Would you turn on the wipers already?" she said.

"Sure," I said, and swished them once.

I looked hard at the road in front of me. It was like seeing everything for the first time! I liked the sensation. Raindrops and flecks of dirt again slowly began to block my vision.

"Turn the damned wipers on!" Karen shouted. And I did.

The sky was getting darker and we were about thirty minutes in now. I had stayed the night at Karen's mom's house before; it was always the same. A hard bed, barely any sleep, and an army of relatives to face in the morning.

"Will your brother be there?" I asked.

"Jake, are you serious?" she shouted.

"What?"

"Just drive for Christ's sake."

"I am driving."

"You're pissing me off is what you're doing."

"Jesus Karen. I'm driving us to your mom's house. What the hell more do you want from me?"

"I want you to---Jake!" My name was a whispered shout. Looking at her, I saw her flick her hand frantically at the windshield. Automatically, I stepped on the brakes. Looking ahead, I saw. It was a moose, about six and a half feet tall, dark brown, with antlers the size of my upper body.

Upon hitting the brake, I'd set the car into a fishtail. We spun only once, the sturdy tires of our Subaru clinging to the ground underneath a large oak. Our car had crossed the other side of the road, spun, and stopped just before the tree. The moose had disappeared.

My foot still pressed hard to the brake, I looked around the car frantically. We had not hit anything, as far as I could tell. I looked over at Karen in the passenger's seat. She had jerked forward during the spin, hitting her head on the flipped-down visor, which had removed it from its track. Now the little battery-powered light from the internal mirror was shining up at us from the floor.

"Karen, are you okay?" I asked.

"Fine," she said, but her voice reminded me of crackling-thin ice coating a puddle in November.

"Let me get a good look at you," I said, and pressed on a ceiling light. She turned in her seat to face me, blinking at the light. Her face looked okay, and it didn't seem as though she'd hurt any other part of her body. She had a small red brush burn in the space between her eyebrows.

"Does anything hurt?" I asked.

"No," she said.

I ran my hands over her cheek. She jumped, and I realized my hands were freezing. I rubbed them together and blew some hot air into them. Then I returned to her face. She looked at me blankly, unsure of what I was doing. I searched her features for some kind of injury, some kind of change. I couldn't find one except the small red spot.

"You have a brush burn, just there," I said, gently inching toward the spot with my finger.

"Oh," she said, touching it with her own hand. "It feels okay."

"Good," I said. Our hands met on her forehead.

I put the car in park and got out to check the exterior. My breath instantly turned to mist. I felt around the dark, avoiding being blinded by the headlights. Everything looked fine. There was no sign of the moose. I wandered across to the other side of the road, allowing my eyes to adjust to the darkness. By a bright moon and the remnants of light left by the Subaru's headlights, I found the place where the moose had been. I found one footprint, the size of my wife's knee, in a muddy bank next to the road. I returned to the car.

My wife was sitting normally. She had been watching me.

"What did you see?" she asked.

"There was a moose," I said, feeling the warmth of the car. I shut the door and put the car back in drive. Karen grabbed my hand while it was on the shifter. We spent the rest of the drive in silence.







## Asleep

Courtney MacLeod

Do you know what dying feels like?  
It wakes you from a slumber of incalculable hours  
And it robs you like a rose amongst the plainest of flowers  
Though you bud within the bosom  
Toward the loftier of lights  
Your bones become a burden as they ache throughout the night

This life was lack of luster  
So dimly shining on tomorrow  
As the reaper steals your soul  
For what remains is fully hollow

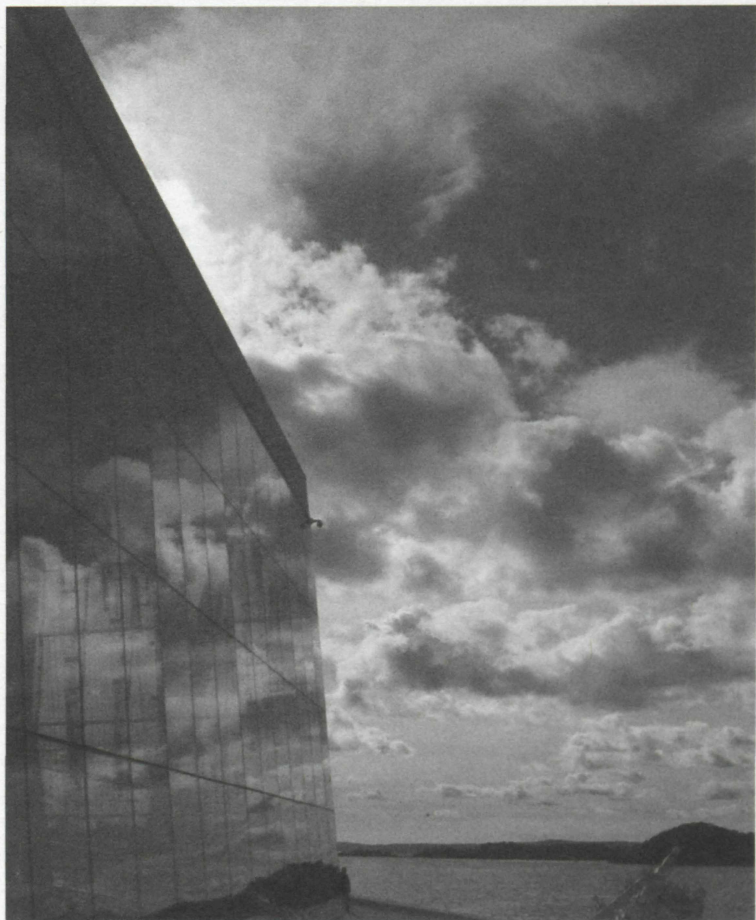
To be filled by way of knowing  
That it never really sleeps  
And as dawn is edging nearer as the darkness slowly creeps

A relief rests up ahead  
Fearing nothing but the dread  
Of the stillness that becomes you  
When desire's finally dead.

## Profound Clichés

Travis Smith

I've wanted to say something profound,  
But tired clichés are all I have found.  
Without your love to guide my way,  
There isn't much I'm fit to say.  
My heart is broken on your behalf,  
And all that you can do is laugh,  
So take this thread as you take your leave  
And stitch it snugly to my sleeve.  
It's beyond repair, as though you'd care,  
And people now will stop and stare  
And wonder how I came to be  
So sorrowful and slovenly.  
With your distractions, you won't dwell  
On how you've turned my life to hell,  
And when you slither back to me  
To heal me metaphorically,  
The fool I am won't stand and scoff  
Or even turn and write you off,  
I'll likely listen eagerly  
And take you back complacently.



## Life's Lesson

Courtney MacLeod

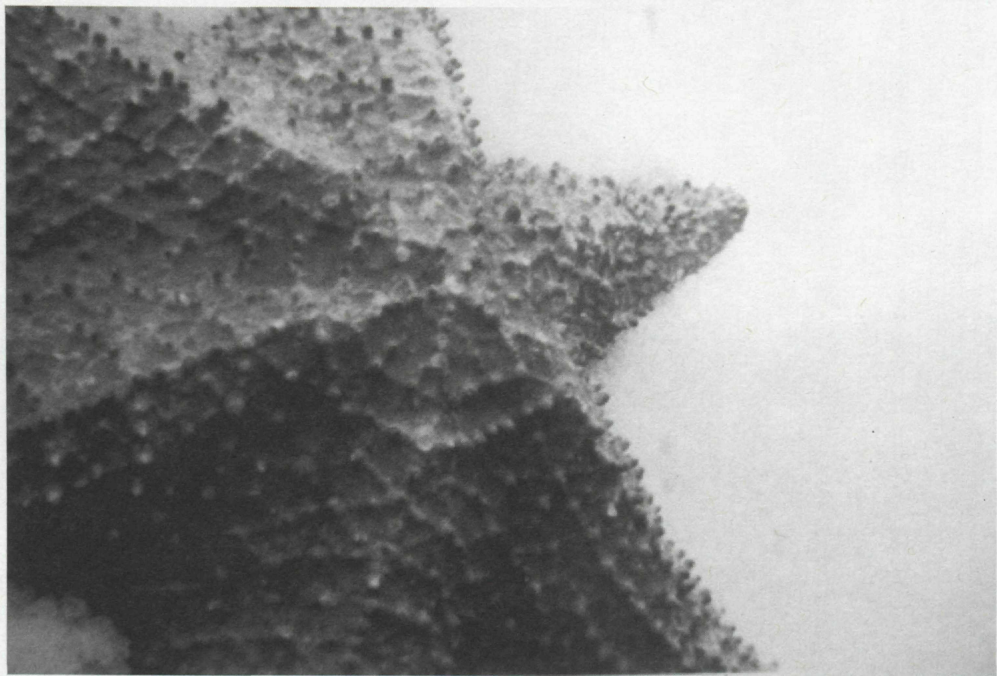
Intelligence escapes us  
If our brilliance but eludes us  
The disconnect will serve us  
To that end we long for more

The solitude of rapture  
From a boiling point increased  
We've now no need to suffer  
As the noxious test hath ceased

Emulsify my weathering  
Brought only from the cold  
Of hardened timing in a freeze  
To turn the age of old

Look not below my splendor  
For sinking with each day  
To rise above the altitude  
And linger but to stay







## A LETTER TO MY NIECES & NEPHEWS

John D. Daugherty

Dear Children,

As you know, I have no children of my own, so anything I have the impulse to pass along for preservation or for the enlightenment and/or entertainment of future generations will have to be through you, the offspring of my brother and sisters. None of you can possibly picture what your great-great Grandma Lude's farm was like. Things there are so "developed" now, thanks to the greed of certain of her children, that the place is totally unrecognizable, so I will attempt to describe it as best I can from memory—I was just a kid the last time I saw it the way it was, you know—so you will have some kind of place setting for the strange story I want to tell you.

You all know where your Uncle Larry's house is, with my Dad's little trailer park on the opposite side of the road. Just past there is a fork in the road. The way to the right leads out to where Grandma Lude's house was once located. Of course, it was merely a dirt road in those days, and the fields were empty, once planted in winter wheat. One passed a ruined spring house before coming around the last sweeping turn by the old barn and mill house and, finally, to the old farmhouse itself.

The house jutted out from the hillside like the prow of a ship. It was in some ways the typical farmhouse: white clapboards, a dark roof, and green trim. A cellar was underneath, and a long set of steps led up to the front porch. Lattices on either side of the steps concealed the underside of the house and the door to the dirt-floor cellar. There was a straight-backed wooden bench against the wall and three or four wooden rockers on the front porch. My earliest memories of the place usually have Uncle Jim and Uncle John sitting there rocking.

One door, at the right, led into the kitchen. Another door, in the center, opened into the dining room. Finally, a third door, at the left, led up a few steps into the parlor, a room that was rarely used. A narrow, twisting staircase led upstairs from right next to the door opening from the parlor to the centrally-located dining room.

Grandma Lude's own bedroom was downstairs; one door to her room was right by the steps leading up, another door from her room opened directly into the parlor. I can't recall ever being in her room.



There were, I think, a couple of large bedrooms upstairs, and I seem to remember being up there once when I was really little, but I can't remember those rooms at all.

The most time I ever spent there, in the parlor, was later on when Uncle Jim was really sick. They set up a bed for him in the parlor, so that was where we went to visit him. On the wall, there was a picture I've remembered well—and I've seen it many times since, in Germany, when I was in the Army, and in Guatemala, in a marketplace, so it must have been an internationally popular one at some time. Two small, fair-skinned, blond children, a little boy and a little girl, probably a brother-sister pair, are crossing a rickety-looking foot-bridge over a raging torrent of flood water. A guardian angel, complete with halo, hovers above and behind, watching over and protecting them, evidently. I have since learned that the title of this picture is "The Guardian Angel," but I do not know the artist's name.

The kitchen is what I remember best. Grandma Lude always wanted to feed any visitor, even if it were only some toast and home-made peach preserves; I embarrassed Mother once when we went over there right after we'd had dinner, and I still managed to eat half-a-loaf of bread with jam. There was a huge old rectangular table to the left. A wooden bench against the wall was where we kids usually sat. Adults sat in wooden chairs around the other sides of the table. Against the right wall was a huge iron cookstove—I think it burned coal, and a rather small kitchen sink—the old kind which had its drainboard as an integral part. Over the sink was a shelf. One of the things I liked best at Grandma Lude's was a little witch-house weather-predictor Grandma Lude kept there along with some other knick-knacks.

Over by the front wall to the left of the door was a big, old, wooden cabinet, the kind of thing that was called a "kitchen cabinet" in the days before the sort of "built-in" cabinetry we take for granted in kitchens today came into vogue. It had two wide doors at the bottom, a wide drawer above them, and then a small counter space above the drawer; there was a built-in breadbox and a sort of swing-out bin for flour, and, finally, two doors above. Strangely, the refrigerator, a late addition to this house, was not in the kitchen; it was in the dining room, which was never, at least to my knowledge, actually ever used as a dining room, where there was some space for it against the front wall next to the door to the porch. Since one of Grandma Lude's main sources of income was selling eggs from her hen house, which was right beside the main house, the refrigerator was used mainly for storing eggs.

The greater part of the dining room was occupied by a big round oak pedestal table set directly in the center of the room. In the summer, Grandma Lude usually kept a big old crock of sliced cucumbers and onions in vinegar there; this was an old-time summer treat.

Finally, in the middle of the back wall of the kitchen was the back door which opened onto a long, low back porch that was maybe one step above ground level. A truly huge apple orchard was out back, along with grape arbors and a few old smaller sheds or outbuildings of some sort. A large, rusty-but-working hand pump stood atop an old grey wooden platform just across from the back door, although running water, courtesy of an electric pump, probably located in one of the little buildings out back, had been piped into the house to the kitchen sink faucets at some point before my time.

In earlier times, the farm was a complete one, but, gradually, following Grandpa Lude's death, in 1929, such crops as corn and wheat dwindled, and what few fields continued to be cultivated were given over to such crops as strawberries, one of the mainstays, and blackberries. Grapes, white grapes, were another major source of such cash as Grandma had available. She used to pay us kids from thereabouts a penny a carton for picking grapes and strawberries.

Grandpa Lude, whose name was Harmon, was, according to the stories I've been told, a remarkable and brilliant man. He was a blacksmith, and was skilled enough at iron-mongery to make all his own tools. He fabricated mills from scratch and did all the grinding and flour making and cornmeal making for all the farmers for many miles around. He also ran a large cider press and made cider, not only from the apples produced in his own orchards, but for many others as well. He had a team of six, perfectly matched white mules and ran a freight-wagon line to the river-boat docks in Charleston, on the Kanawha river, and he built a stage and a sort of amphitheater in a clearing in the woods nearby where he occasionally staged a variety of presentations. Early in the 1900's, he imported a large gasoline engine, an industrial-strength one-cylinder contraption, from Michigan or Wisconsin—somewhere in the Midwest—and devised a complex system of power take-offs, belts, pulleys, and gears, and mechanized his smithy, his machine-shop, and all the mills, and presses. Evidently, he was regarded as something of a wizard by his neighbors. My father could barely remember Harmon, but always thought of him as the smartest man he had ever met. None of Harmon's own children proved capable of maintaining his various enterprises, nor his machinery, and, by the time I could see what was left, it was no longer capable of operation. More than twenty years after his death, when I was a little child prowling the barns and outbuildings, he remained a ghostly presence. "What's this?" I'd ask, and the answer was always, "Grandpa Lude'd know."

The apple orchard was very old. I have never seen such big old apple trees anywhere else. In the late autumn, all the friends, relatives, and in-laws from all over would congregate at Grandma Lude's to pick the apples, and the women would gather round the back porch and core and peel and slice them—Grandma Lude had some really interesting old machines that would do the coring while you turned a crank—and boil them down in huge old cast-iron kettles over wood fires outdoors, constantly stirring with giant wooden ladles, to make apple butter. I can tell you very truthfully you'll never have apple butter as good as that! This old-time way of making apple butter was too labor-intensive and time-consuming to continue on into today's fast-paced and impatient world, more's the pity.

Also out back was a big old grey wood post. Whenever I was there to visit when I was a small child, Grandma Lude would give me a hammer and a big wooden box—it was green and had a handle on it—full of nails and let me pound nails into the post. I loved it. I always looked forward to visiting there so I could do that.

Another thing I liked to do there was walk down the path around the other side of the chicken coop and on down the hill into the hollow where there was a spring. I remember the first time Mama Daugherty, my grandmother, your great grandmother, who was Grandma Lude's eldest child, took me down there—I was so surprised there was such a spot so near, yet so hidden. There were some flat rocks where you could stand to look into the water, and there were always some green frogs hopping around there, and you could watch the tadpoles swimming at seeming random in the little pool. But since there were supposed to be copperheads about, I didn't often get to go down there by myself. I never did see a copperhead, but once, about half-way down to the spring, a big, black racer snake slithered across the path in front of me and startled me so badly I ran back up to the house.

Originally, as I recall, the outhouse was out that way, but, at some point during the late 1950's, my Dad and some of the other relatives put a bathroom in the house for Grandma Lude. They built it onto the back, opening off the dining room that was never used as a dining room, taking part of what had been the back porch for it.

Grandma had originally been a Thaxton. Her brothers, John and Jim, either lived there or were often around when I was young; I remember Uncle John as a big red-faced man usually wearing hunting clothes and carrying a shotgun. Uncle Jim often sat on the front porch with a rifle and picked off groundhogs up on the hill. Once he almost took a shot at one of my little cousins, Joey Lude, mistaking him for a groundhog. After that, he didn't sit there shooting any more. Uncle Jim had been

a coal miner and had, I think, black lung disease. I remember going up to Belle to see him with my family once when he was sick. Uncle John had died some years before, then Uncle Jim. Finally, the old-time era passed; I believe it was in 1961, and Grandma Lude died, too.

Then began the long, drawn out hassle between the various of her children concerning the land and how best to make money from it. The crowded, noisy, and traffic-ridden result of their handiwork is apparent today—and none of them lived long enough to have made it all that worthwhile.

This place that I've always thought of as wonderful, that I have tried to describe for you, to give you some idea of what it felt like to be there, Grandma Lude's house, was the setting for one of the strangest experiences I have ever had.

It happened ten years later. I was in the Army; it was early 1971, at the height of the Viet Nam war. I was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, where I worked at the "Transfer Point" as a Personnel Records Specialist. It was my job to interview personnel who were separating from active duty and to prepare their Forms DD-214. The DD-Form-214 is the single most important official document summarizing the major points of a given person's service record. I dealt exclusively with enlisted personnel—anyone from grizzled veterans with hashmarks clear down their sleeves retiring after 30 years of Honorable service to sullen men in chains, under armed guard and receiving Dishonorable or Undesirable Discharges.

One morning, I received orders to report in two weeks to Fort Ord, California, for transit to the Republic of South Viet Nam, where I was to be assigned to a unit the name of which I no longer recall. I wasn't even allowed leave to visit home before departure for Fort Ord. Beginning that night, I started having a most peculiar repeating dream. In this dream, I was a German soldier. What was really strange was that the dream occurred in German. I even thought in German. I'd had four years of German in college, but I was never very good at it. This just goes to show you that you do, indeed, remember everything you experience—you just don't always know how to access it very well, at least not consciously.

Remember that Lude is a German name. According to what my Grandma, Mama Daugherty, said was written in the old family Bible, which was in German, the Ludes came to this country about two hundred years ago, first as mercenary soldiers in the pay of the British during the Revolutionary War, then, after the War, as settlers in eastern Pennsylvania, some of whom later drifted south into what became West Virginia. I later visited the town of Lude, in the Taunus mountains, near Frankfurt, Germany, that year, and saw the old tumble-down castle our ancestors had once inhabited. At that time, it was a small-scale

tourist attraction, and goats were grazing on the ruins, but, more than two hundred years before, the family that lived there were the "lords" of the village, minor barons, and the family name was Von Lude, which, in German, simply means "from Lude."

At any rate, in my dream, I'm a German soldier, and it is near the end of World War II. The Americans are coming like the wrath of God, and we know, at last, what our leaders have tried in vain to conceal from us: that we are losing this war. Though we are good Germans and obey our leaders as we should, as we think is only right and proper, there is not one of us present who does not also believe that we somehow deserve what is happening. The more thoughtfully Christian among us see God's hand in the defeat of the Reich.

We are at Grandma Lude's house, but, somehow, it is in Germany. Something evil, something involving twisted, mutated things in glass jars and hard-faced men in white lab coats is taking place in the old farmhouse. We are the guards. We are lined up out in front of the house. A burly sergeant is coming down the line, counting us off. In German, he is saying, "One, two, three—(ein, zwei, drei) you're going to die—one, two, three—you're going to die." Always a quick study, I had already counted ahead and discovered that, just as I more or less expected, I was a "three." I would be one of the third of us left behind to make a token resistance against the Americans at this place; the rest would retreat before the Americans arrived.

As a good German soldier, I saw nothing wrong with this, but merely accepted it with quiet resignation. This was perhaps the most amazing thing about this dream, to experience, as if it were natural and real, a sort of point of view, a way of thinking, that was truly foreign to me, and yet to not find it so. All the while, we heard distant explosions, and the sounds of engines getting ever closer. The others piled into a big Mercedes military truck and left, and we who remained found cover. I found myself crouching under the front porch with the barrel of my bolt-action Mauser projecting through the lattice work.

First, there began an artillery barrage. The big barn, the well-house, the old mill house, the grape arbors—all were blown to smithereens before my eyes. It was like being in an automobile accident—time seemed to slow down to allow the eye to see details that, in real time, were too quick to notice. I could see little shards of glass, nails, splinters of old wood spinning and tumbling through the air; I could see the separate facets of the bits of flying glass, could see the light glinting from them, the reflections of the entire incredible scene repeated on each separate facet.

And just as the barrage reached a cataclysmic crescendo, and it seemed as if everything, and all of us would be blasted to oblivion as the line of explosions marched deliberately and inexorably closer and closer to the house—it stopped.

A tremendous, deafening silence fell over the scene like a blanket. Nothing remained before me but smoldering ruins and the old dirt road.

This sudden quiet was broken by the rumbling of motors coming closer. There was, I could see, a whole line of olive green American Army vehicles, each with a big white star on its side, creeping along the old dirt road, but racing out in front of them all, the first to come to the house, was a Jeep full of American commandos wearing glossy, black leather jackets and chromium-plated helmets.

They were all carrying shiny, new Thompson submachine-guns, just like the ones we'd all seen in the American gangster movies that had been so popular before the war. I thought (in German of course), "To hell with this," and threw down my rifle and carefully walked out with my hands raised high above my head. The Americans, big brown-eyed men, paid no attention to me, but rushed right past me as if I weren't even there and raced up the front stairs. The door collapsed before them with a crash. There was the stutter of submachine-gun fire and the sound of breaking glass.

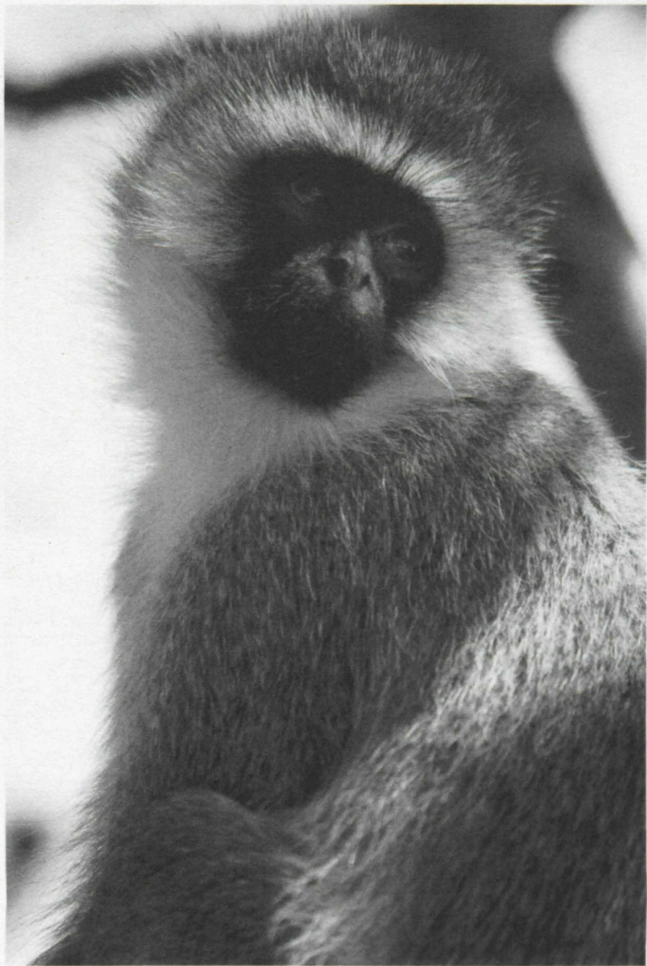
It was at this point that I would always, and without fail, awaken. If I awoke before this point, and managed to finally get back to sleep, the dream would pick up wherever it had left off and cycle through to the sound of breaking glass. At that point, when I awoke, I might lie awake for a while, or I might get up and walk around. In any case, when I did get back to sleep, and strangely enough, I always did, the dream would start again, at the beginning, with us lined up in front of the old farmhouse, with the sergeant counting us off, and continue on, with or without interruptions, straight through to the sound of breaking glass.

This dream repeated over and over and over, again and again each night. This went on for seven nights, and, on the morning following the seventh night, I received new orders, to take thirty days leave, then report to Fort Jackson, South Carolina for transport to West Germany.

After that, I never had the dream again. I cannot begin to explain this experience, but it is, I believe, and I think you'll agree, certainly an interesting one.

Sincerely,  
your Uncle John









## Being Social Beings

Travis Smith

Why should I go out and socialize  
And try to look good in some stranger's eyes  
When relationships are all based on lies  
And dying alone is the ultimate prize?

As a species evolved to the top of the chain  
You'd expect we'd subject ourselves not to this pain.  
All the time that we've lost with so little to gain  
Is an inconsequential application of brains.

Our reputations alone, of vital import,  
Drive us each to illogic, leave us forced to consort.  
All our drives and emotions and things of the sort  
Are powered by egos and unthinking cohorts.

So our time is lost, and our energy's squandered  
Finding new venues to mindlessly maunder,  
New stories and concepts to endlessly launder,  
New vain situations to listlessly ponder.

All the friends who betray us and lovers who cheat  
Leave us beaten and broken, yet still we repeat,  
And we think of acquaintances we're forced to greet  
When we're rolling our eyes at the strangers we meet.

So why would I want to socialize  
And buy into everyone else's lies?  
Love's an illusion, and friends are disguised.  
I won't reproduce; the world will survive.



## Day Dreamer

Courtney MacLeod

The greener side of paradise  
Oft' shaded by the mind  
To conceal the golden conquest  
All greed will aim to find

A paradox for hungry eyes  
To chase a prize hidden so well  
To the concept quells the passion  
As the treasure dreams do swell

You float inflated up upon  
A raft of sailing hope  
In search of islands' answers  
To survive, we strive to cope

For living with a longing  
Of a dream to never be  
As reality submerges  
The right to heaven's key.



## Gloomy Gardens

Courtney MacLeod

Through parades of purple parachutes  
The pain will cease, disguised  
For petals peel the layers back  
Wherein your pollen hides

It spreads, bewildered out upon  
The cities' scented glow  
A nurture dust to bring from life  
The happiness in stow

It stems from sublimation  
Of a right from birth to grow  
Encased in absoluton  
To the roots we need not know

It blooms from bud to bosom  
Under rays of blissful heat  
Where the garden fills the absence  
Of a fate we need not meet

A candy coated reminiscence  
Is all that now remains  
Of a parade to desolation  
It leaves but purple stains

## **Eighty-Four Thousand Five-Hundred Thirty-One and Twenty-Four**

Kayla Wheeler

It is difficult to say  
Exactly what's going on now

Have we found justice, Mother?  
Is our world now a better place?  
Because your back is still mangled  
and I still apply ten layers of makeup everyday  
and contemplate money like an hour glass

The question backed by paranoia,  
when will it run out?  
Time or money first?  
The two are inverses,  
both have to go at some point,  
and one can't live without the other  
like a food chain, yes,  
time and money are like a food chain  
and people are at the bottom

I am still a fatherless child,  
you are still a single parent,  
half of our family is dead  
or wants to be so what has  
truly changed?



We're not healthier or better,  
we're older,  
time hasn't swallowed us whole  
like we know it wants to  
but that's all we've truly accomplished

Everything else we've stumbled upon,  
like what we think is love,  
or a home,  
or just a really good Strawberry-Rhubarb pie –  
we've stumbled upon it

An accident,  
everything has been an accident  
that's just happened to turn out

We are alive aren't we?

## Soul Food

Rich Burns

The scent of fresh manure lingered like a dense cloud surrounding the plantation. Looking to the south, fields of fluffy cotton stretched all the way to the horizon. To the east stood acres upon acres of green pasture occupied by hundreds of grazing beef cattle. I walked up the steps into the morning room of the large farmhouse. As I did, a variety of hungry livestock greeted me from out in the barn. I made my way toward the door, almost tripping over a rotund cat that seemed to roll from out of nowhere. As I was about to knock, a rooster sounded off, casuing me to flail like a crash test dummy. I took a moment to recover, turning around to wipe the sweat that poured down my face. When I turned back around there was a man standing in the doorway.

"What do ya want, Boy?" He said in a raspy southern drawl.

I couldn't respond. My voice was lodged in my throat like a wad of Bazooka gum. Eyes behind thick horn-rimmed glasses pierced me with that distinct look I recalled so well, that look similar to when you catch a wiff of something unpleasant and you discover there's something nasty on the bottom of your shoe. The Man was on the better end of fifty, his face weathered from countless hours of manual labor under a cruel Georgia sun. He wore his usual attire: a dusty Stetson, tucked in flannel shirt, old faded Wranglers, and steel-toed boots. A tumor of tobacco bulged from his lower lip. He continued to glare at me through lenses that saw only darkness.

"Well, Boy, what the hell do ya want?" he blurted, as if he was annoyed.

I reached into my throat and yanked it out.

"Sir, I'd like to ask you something."

The Man's magnified eyes widened, that signature look intensified.

"Boy, this better be worth my time."

The following words that flew out of my mouth hit the man like a sledgehammer:

"Sir...May I have permission to marry your daughter?"

The words actually struck the man because he suddenly became animated and was thrown back a couple feet. In slow motion, his head flew back and the lump of chewing tobacco ejected from his lip, tumbling though the air several times before it hit the floor in front of my sneakers. He

finally recovered and stood there, panting, gawking at me in disbelief. Through all this, the Stetson somehow managed to stay on his head.

I predicted my girlfriend's father would have a negative reaction upon me asking for his daughter's hand in marriage, but I didn't quite expect this. He should have expected it sooner or later; after all, Susie and I had been inseparable for almost five years. I recalled our first date like it was yesterday. On that day, I met the man that stood before me for the first time.

I arrived at that very farmhouse around six o'clock on that humid mid-July evening. It was my first time at the estate, and, I'm not going to lie, I was slightly nervous. My home was Atlanta so the auras I perceived on an operating plantation were alien to me. I remember standing at the door preparing to knock when it suddenly swung open. Before me stood The Man, in what I would come to know as his usual attire, an over-packed lip of tobacco making him look like a calling bullfrog. That I-just-stepped-in-something-nasty look arrived immediately upon his face.

"Good evening, Sir. I'm here to pick up Susie for a date," I said politely.

The look on his face somehow grew more disgusted.

"Are ya now, Boy?" The Man sneered. "Where you takin' my daughter?"

"Sir, I'd like to take her out for some good soul food and then perhaps a movie. I'll make sure she's home at a decent hour."

Upon the mentioning of soul food, The Man's face twisted into a snarl. At that instant I knew why he looked at me in such distaste, and why he would continue to do so over the years. As I realized this, Susie burst through the door and wrapped her arms around me. She was a typical southern beauty: long blonde hair, blue eyes, and a Deep South accent. She wore a white sundress that would have made any man do a double take.

"Alright, Daddy, we're leavin'," Susie said, pulling my hand outside.

"Hey Boy, make sure she's home by ten!" The Man yelled.

"Yes, sir!" I yelled back.

We went on our date to the soul food restaurant and had an amazing meal of fried chicken, fried okra, and fried green tomatoes, all of which we washed down with crisp Georgia sweet tea. For dessert, we had fried vanilla ice cream. Susie claimed it was the best meal she'd ever had. I agreed. After dinner, we saw a movie at the drive-in, and at the end, we both agreed that it was absolutely horrible. It may sound cliché, but at the end of the night, I knew that I would most likely ask this

girl to marry me one day, and unfortunately I also knew that her father would never approve of me.

When I finally realized I was daydreaming, The Man was standing less than two feet in front of me, white knuckles at his sides. He glared at me behind those thick glasses, glasses that magnified his discrimination against the color of my skin. A network of veins had sprouted in his forehead allowing me to see the sporadic pulse of his heartbeat. Spittle and specks of Copenhagen surrounded two clenched rows of yellow teeth. At that moment, I knew he would most likely strike me, so I closed my eyes and reminded myself of how much I loved his daughter.

"Boy," said The Man, "look at me when I talk to you."

I looked up to see The Man standing there with tears trickling down his wrinkled face. The fists that were clenched a moment ago were now folded in front of him.

"I know I treated you poorly over the years and I'm sorry," The Man admitted. "Ya see, my Daddy raised me to believe that we're supposed to stick to our own kind. I realize now that times are changin', and that a man's worth is not measured by his skin color, but by the good things he does in his life. I've seen you take care of my daughter over the years and I know she's very fond of you. I want my daughter to be happy."

I stood there shocked and speechless, staring into nothing.

"Well, Boy, say somethin'! You have m permission to marry Susie!" blurted The Man.

Without a reason or a word, I turned around. walked out of the morning room, down the stairs, and into the blazing Georgia heat. I didn't stop walking until I got to my car.



## Pity

Danielle Cropley

Blood-boiling, foot-stomping rage has arrived;  
Those who did something or nothing better all hide.  
Wall-punching, jaw-clenching anger will erupt;  
Those who say all or naught better not interrupt.  
Fist-making, head-pounding fury is emerging;  
Those who are in or out of the way better start diverging.

Eye-watering, body-trembling anxiety has increased;  
Those who saw Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde better fear the beast.  
Pulse-racing, stomach-churning pain will arise;  
Those who claim acuity or stupidity better not advise.  
Thought-racing, word-stuttering perplexity is pending;  
Those who are staring or ignoring better start pretending.

Time-stopping, jaw-dropping disbelief has been rendered;  
Those who were shielded or unarmed better all surrender.  
Tear-jerking, heart-aching astonishment will shock;  
Those who question honesty or deceit better not talk.  
Rumor-starting, life-changing pity is maturing;  
Those who are friends or enemies better start enduring.

## Hard To Say

Kayla Wheeler

I deserve things,  
not things like pretty hair, clothes, or cars  
things like, "Good job", and "well done",  
a friend once told me,  
"They'll spend more on the way it looks  
than the quality of the product,"  
she was describing a building but I knew  
she was really talking about people

But people are buildings,  
they stand  
they fall  
they're ugly  
they're pretty,  
inside or out;  
it doesn't matter

I was also told that  
everything comes out in the wash,  
which is true  
but it isn't for bleach or Sharpie  
because the world isn't  
black or white  
it's grey,

like the color  
of my eyes when I  
was born  
but now they're dirt brown

Do you see what the world has done to me?

My mouth runs faster than my brain  
and I spit black tape everywhere  
until I have successfully dictated  
my own mind

My mother told me, "There are  
bigger things out there for you"  
and I believed her but I always  
slow down three minutes before  
the end of a race –  
but it doesn't matter where you  
finish in a marathon as long as you  
keep going

But that's what's wrong  
with the world –  
we're all Energizer Bunnies  
moving to the same ridiculous drumming

It doesn't even sound like a heartbeat anymore

More like a hummingbird  
which can move backward,



but we can't

The average family wastes  
five-hundred dollars worth of food a year,  
one-hundred thousand American teens  
bring a gun to school every day

When we should be feeling ashamed  
we spray our plants,  
when we should be forgiving  
we drop bombs,  
when we should be talking to  
our twelve year old daughters  
we inject their veins  
with birth control

I rip,  
I tear,  
I spill these truths,  
but I remain a single soul  
believing  
that I deserve something

Who else thinks they've got it figured out?

## Underneath It All

Danielle Cropley

Unspoken controversy proliferates with time;  
Germinating like bacteria, you must have seen the signs.  
Golden silence camouflages the actuality;  
Fogging the senses, you have crossed into mental obscurity.

Unfair misinterpretation antagonizes the fury;  
Migrating like birds, you must have heard the worry.  
Gilded armor protects with good intent;  
Blocking the synapses, you have faded into resentment.

Unjustified incompetence infects with entirety;  
Gambling like cardsharps, you must have felt the anxiety.  
Meretricious fables breach the contract;  
Clouding the judgment, you have subsequently cracked.

Unknown diffidence pilfers the innocence;  
Robbing like thieves, you must have smelled the annoyance.  
Decorated fantasies allude to science fiction;  
Daming the flow, you have enunciated without diction.

Unwed bridegrooms elope with waywardness;  
Escaping like prisoners, you must have tasted the abrasiveness.  
Ornate trademarks assemble the commonality;  
Freezing the cycle, you have caused friend fatality.



## Car

Steve Byrd

Car: that great American icon of freedom. We see it every day on TV: the open road straight to heaven at 100 miles per hour – and beyond. From our teenage years onward, the desire to have our own, personal icon of freedom drives us: drives us to school, drives us to work, drives us to debt, drives us crazy, and, in the end, drives us to the grave. How did we get to this point? Must we, should we, have this icon of freedom?

For some reason (which I do not have time to investigate), before we can use any icon of freedom, we must obtain a license, complete with a long number no one can remember, a smiley face, a hair color, a height (approximate), a weight (which goes up and up), and whether or not we would like to hand over our vital organs to some stranger that may need them (sure, why not? Live free or die, and then hand over our organs when we're done). But wait, I forgot something: we have to pass a test – two tests, actually. If we fail one that means we're not allowed to exercise our freedom to use an icon of freedom.

Next is a freedom registration card that must be renewed every year. And we must visit the guardians of freedom to register our icon of freedom, and send them our money every year, too. Now we have an official freedom card and freedom registration card to operate our icon of freedom. Next we must pay a freedom fixer to ensure that our icon of freedom is fully functional. He then puts a sticker in the windshield of our icon of freedom, which we have to renew every year, too. Now we must insure our icon of freedom with a freedom policy that promises to be the cheapest freedom that money can buy. And we send them our money every year, too. Can we go now?

Not yet. Now what? Now our icon of freedom needs fuel. Unlike our bodies, which need to consume a diet of proteins, carbohydrates and fats, our icon of freedom drinks only unleaded gasoline – and lots of it. But why can't it drink something else? How about water? Sorry, but there is no alternative for our icon of freedom. That's all it can and ever will drink. And we send them our money – lots and lots of our money –, too. Can we go now?

Ah... the open road at last ...all alone all alone all alone... "All the lonely people, where do they all come from?" God damn this traffic sucks. Where r u? OMG. But it wasn't my fault. Stop yelling at me. I would never do anything like that. Can you please stop yelling at me?

How did this all get so screwed up? Aren't we just doing what the TV said? Now we have to visit the freedom fixer again. This one is a tough guy named Joey, who talks like dis and dat, and has a big poster of a woman in a cut-off t-shirt holding a big, shiny tool. Nice wrench. Can you fix my icon of freedom, or should we dial up cupcake there? What's that going to cost? Are you kidding? This freedom business is getting out of hand here, Joey. Why don't you just take this icon of freedom away? It simply costs too much to have. How did this all get so screwed up?

...

We need to realize that we are not free in this country: Rousseau always returns to remind us from time to time. More to the point, our freedom to move around in this country is enslaved to the car, which many – if not most – people in this country are, in fact, forced to own. This is no exaggeration: many people simply would not be able to get to work without their cars. No work, no salary, etc. And this fact has had a very corrosive effect on our political and economic freedom, not to mention our societal makeup and social relations with one another.

We all know about the "oily politicians" who have their palms greased by the oil industry: those infamous petrodollars, domestic and foreign, poured into campaign coffers to ensure we buy cars, buy unleaded gasoline, buy car insurance, spend our taxes on roads, highways and driveways, stop lights, snow removal, enormous parking lots, and then maintenance to all that. Not to mention the amount of tax dollars used for paying for police officers, patrol cars and their high tech equipment, and fueling their cars, too. All modern urban planning, in short, is based on the needs of the car, not the needs of the people. Ironically, none of this type of spending is ever labeled as "socialism" by our politicians: in fact, if there is something everyone agrees on in Washington D.C., it is that we have to spend our tax dollars on road infrastructure and making sure there is affordable gasoline at the pump for every single man, woman and child in this country. Just imagine if the same priorities were applied to education or health care – that, of course, would then be denounced as the evils of socialism that will rot and

destroy our democracy. We can't go there; to the gas station, where we find cheap, unleaded gasoline courtesy of the Saudi royal family, we can and must go.

We often hear the expression "dependence on foreign oil," or George W. Bush's famous phrase "addicted to oil." While these expressions are indeed accurate, I find them sanitized, even somewhat misleading. What we have instead is a dependence on – or addiction to – the personal car. This dependence, or addiction, has created a Matrix-like world in which we are all plugged into an economic system that is non-democratic, non-negotiable, and potentially very dangerous. Instead of dependence or addiction, perhaps we should be talking about a form of "economic dictatorship," or even an "economic totalitarianism," in which American citizens have exactly one choice for transportation: a personal, unleaded gasoline-powered car. In reality, the only choice we have is \$3.50 here or \$3.50 across the street for a gallon of unleaded gasoline. There is virtually no public option, and an alternative fuel at the pump is, for all intents and purposes, non-existent. Lining up behind this form of dictatorship or totalitarianism are armies of insurance companies, who employ robotic bureaucrats whose job is to collect as much money and pay out the least amount possible in damages. Note that Americans who drive a car must by law spend part of their salary on insurance. In short, we must this, we must that... in lay terms, "dictatorship."

Furthermore, this economic dictatorship of the personal car drives our foreign policy: namely, wars and military operations in the Middle East. "Terrorism," of course, is a great excuse – just like "communism" was during the Cold War – for maintaining an imperial-like foreign policy. Simply put, countries don't pour trillions of dollars into military operations into a region for the sake of defeating an "-ism." (Similarly, the Spaniards didn't carry out the conquests of the Americas simply for the sake of converting souls for Christ.) So the oil must keep flowing efficiently so that regular, hard-working Americans can get to work, get to school, and, most importantly, get to the shopping mall. Ask yourself: Would we have military bases all over the Middle East if there were no oil there? Would we have truly invaded Iraq if its most important economic exports were wheat and barley? Today, the largest U.S. "embassy" (read: "military base") in the world is located in none other than Baghdad. Is that merely a coincidence given that Iraq has the second largest reserves of oil in the world? It isn't: in fact, since World War II, foreign policy planners of the United States government have recognized the Middle East as "a prize" that must be controlled by U.S. and British

oil companies. This policy is essentially not debated by our politicians, but is instead accepted as a law of nature. So I ask again: How is this not a form of economic dictatorship?

Furthermore, I believe we have a form of "car socialism" in this country. Basically our cities are designed and built to cater to cars, not to people. Rather than pour our tax dollars into providing better schools with higher paid teachers and affordable health care for all, we make sure our cars can get us to the banks and stores, where oftentimes a convenient drive-through is located. Moreover, following the economic crisis of 2008, Main Street was not bailed out (typically no drive-throughs on Main Street businesses), but the U.S. auto industry was. Even the federal government's investment in the bailout went primarily to infrastructure spending – renovating roads and so forth – because that would not receive any criticism as "socialism." That is, spending on human infrastructure is an unnecessary form of "Big Government" that it is seen as "welfare" or "socialism" or "communism," but spending on transportation infrastructure is necessary and good because it keeps our cars moving efficiently. Just look at how many acres of land we have converted into roads and more roads, and for parking lots and more parking lots. At the same time, spending on education, and other services designed for what Sly Stone called "everyday people," are taking cuts in local and state budgets. Bob Marley once sang of a "Concrete Jungle" that we are living in – one in which we do not have chains around our feet but are not free. Is this indeed becoming a reality?

...

What is striking to me is how the American people have wholeheartedly conformed to this type of economic dictatorship. While peoples' intentions are no doubt good, or perhaps naive, many that I have met – honest, hardworking "everyday people" no doubt – simply cannot comprehend why anyone would not want to own car in this country. My wife, for example, is from Brazil and never had any intentions of ever driving or even owning a car in her life. Why? Well, in Brazil they have a decent public transportation system in even the most remote areas of the country. One can easily live his/her entire life there without the need of a car. That's not to say that people don't own cars – many do – but they are not a necessity like in the U.S. (European citizens are no different. And, in fact, they have some of the best public transportation systems of the world.) And those who do own cars in Brazil actually have an alternative fuel that they can buy at any pump: sugarcane ethanol, homegrown in Brazil. Those that

don't like ethanol can choose to buy cars that consume unleaded gasoline, also from Brazil. In other words, Brazilians actually have a choice in the type of fuel they want to use, and, most importantly, if they want to buy a car in the first place. Furthermore, Brazil today is entirely independent of foreign energy resources, something that is merely lofty rhetoric in the U.S. Yes, all of Brazil's fuel needs are pumped or grown in Brazil. This is a country still with enormous socioeconomic problems that need serious attention, but is decades ahead of the U.S. in terms of transportation and energy policy.

And what about the car's effect on Americans' health? Americans today are the heaviest, most obese we've ever been in our history. According to a National Public Radio report on 12/03/2010, 46% of Americans are obese – that's almost one in two Americans. This creates an enormous strain on our health care system, particularly in treating diseases such as Type II diabetes from youth onward. Is the car directly responsible for this? Of course not: our diets and lack of exercise are largely to blame. But since we have become so accustomed to using the car to move ourselves around anywhere we go, and, to a certain extent, spend a great part of our lives in the car, is it any wonder why we have become so fat? Just imagine if we spent the same amount of time walking instead of riding in our cars?

And what about our sense of community? Along side the television, and other gadgets like the computer and cellphones, the car, I would argue, has significantly undermined our sense of community and solidarity. We see and interact with each other more from behind our steering wheels than face to face. We are even bringing along our dogs for the ride, probably because we are so lonely. Unfortunately, all of this feeds into this myth of the "rugged American": that omniscient, omnipotent Übermensch who needs no one but himself to achieve and master greatness. But people cannot survive without other people. In fact, we would not even be able to acquire language, which is indispensable for our survival, without interacting with other people. With people sitting alone in machines there is no human contact, no meaningful interaction; there is only constant movement of machines. Interestingly, people are often talking on their cellphones, even texting one other – again, using machines. No doubt there is a desire there for people to interact with other people. But, then, why have we constructed a society that is so divorced from people, so controlled by machines? Think about it: our cars, our computers, our televisions, our microwaves, our cellphones, our i-Pods, etc. Most of us could not fathom living without these machines. Yet human beings have done so successfully for tens of thousands of years. More odd is that we tend to think that life today is so much better than in the past. But is that so?



What if we took these machines away? What would we do? I don't have the answers to these questions, of course, but my guess is that we would have to interact with one another much more. Who is to say that that would be a bad thing for our communities, for our society, even for our democracy? Yes, these machines are there to help us, to make life a little more comfortable. But when machines dominate and control our lives, I believe we become somewhat dehumanized: less personable, less imaginative, less creative, less unique ... and, yes, more controlled, less free.

Lastly, on a more somber note, there is the number of fatalities and disfiguring injuries that occur in this country from car accidents. The number of vehicular fatalities in this country is roughly 40,000 deaths a year; a similar figure occurs in Brazil. Just for some comparison, during the Vietnam War there were an estimated 58,000 American casualties. Today, this war is seen as a tragic mistake that needlessly cost the lives of many young Americans and Vietnamese (estimates of Vietnamese casualties range in the several hundreds of thousands to four million!). Ironically, the estimated 40,000 vehicular fatalities per year in this country are never seen as something "tragic" or "unnecessary." And guess what the number one cause of death is among young people in the United States: car accidents. Anyone who knows a family that has lost a member in a car accident knows what an extremely tragic and traumatic experience it is. But, again, this is a risk, I believe, we are forced to take, not necessarily want to. As casualties are accepted as a consequence of war, so, too, are vehicular fatalities as a consequence of using our icons of freedom. Just as a thought experiment: if 40,000 Americans died in plane crashes in a single year, do you think people would be doing much flying?

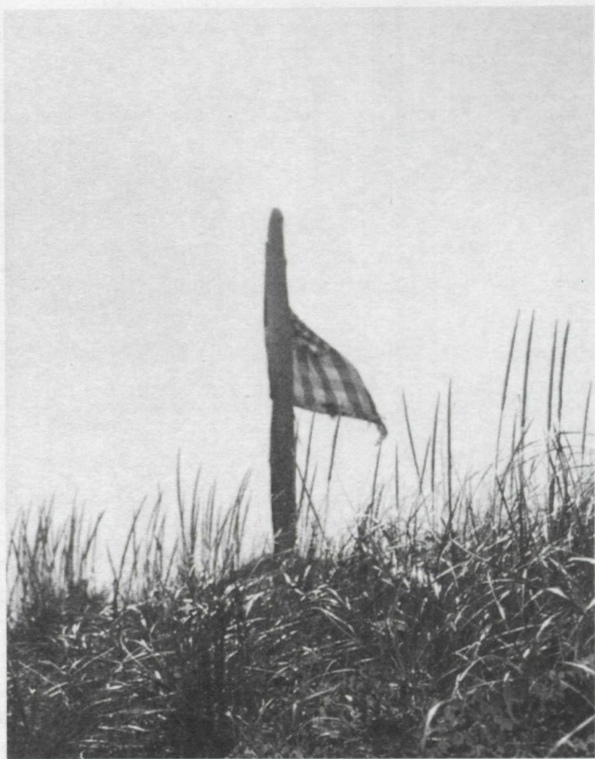
...

So where do we go from here? Of course, it is easy to rant about this "economic dictatorship" and the ills of the car toward our health and society, but some ideas must come forth. The car certainly is not going to suddenly disappear. But we cannot bury our heads in the sand and pretend that cheap gas will be available to us forever. Nonrenewable resources are, by definition, subject to end. Anyone who has seen the movie "The Road Warrior" knows what such a dystopian society could potentially look like. Not to mention the potential environmental catastrophe that could ensue if we do not change our current ways, as has already happened in the Gulf of Mexico with the BP oil spill. So renewable energy needs to be one solution. If we can put astronauts on the moon, then renewable alternatives do not seem like a

daunting task. Plus, Brazil has shown us the way on this. But finding politicians in this country who are not bought out by the oil cartels is a bit like trying to find an honest mechanic: sure, there are some, just not many.

And, while renewable fuel is one solution we need to be looking at, most importantly is the remaking of our communities. Not that we are going to return to the 19th century any time soon, but there needs to be an effort put into restructuring our communities for everyday people. An emphasis on a local business culture – including, especially, the growing and selling of food from community gardens – needs to be taken seriously and not merely as bumper-sticker politics. A 21st-century public transportation system needs to be a priority, including the promotion of walking or biking of reasonable distances, and allowing employees to work from home. Such a restructured community not only saves fuel, and allows people to walk for basic needs and services, but also promotes health, which would in turn take a strain off of our health care system, and, most importantly, promote community solidarity.

All this begins, of course, with democracy – rule by the everyday people –, who share and tend to each other's common interests: that is, "we the people."



## **Our Path Is Endless**

Kayla Wheeler

You  
are breath.  
Entering and exiting,  
expanding and  
contracting  
what encases my heart.  
Body crashes into soul,  
you are the spirit in me who  
knows me better than  
I know myself

I need you,  
your short legs and  
smooth skin  
calmly invite my touch

Your unusually small hands  
gently flail as you speak,  
and I watch them more  
than I listen,  
for they have just as much to tell  
and know more about me than  
they should

Your soft ears  
and wide mouth –  
two places

I like to grace with kisses

or stealthily attack  
when I think you  
least expect it –  
like when you are driving  
or sleeping  
and especially  
When you say,  
“I know how you’re nuts,”  
as if I am a spoiled,  
uncontrollable child

You and I are  
not the candle,  
but the wax –  
melting, pooling into  
itself and spilling over  
the rim

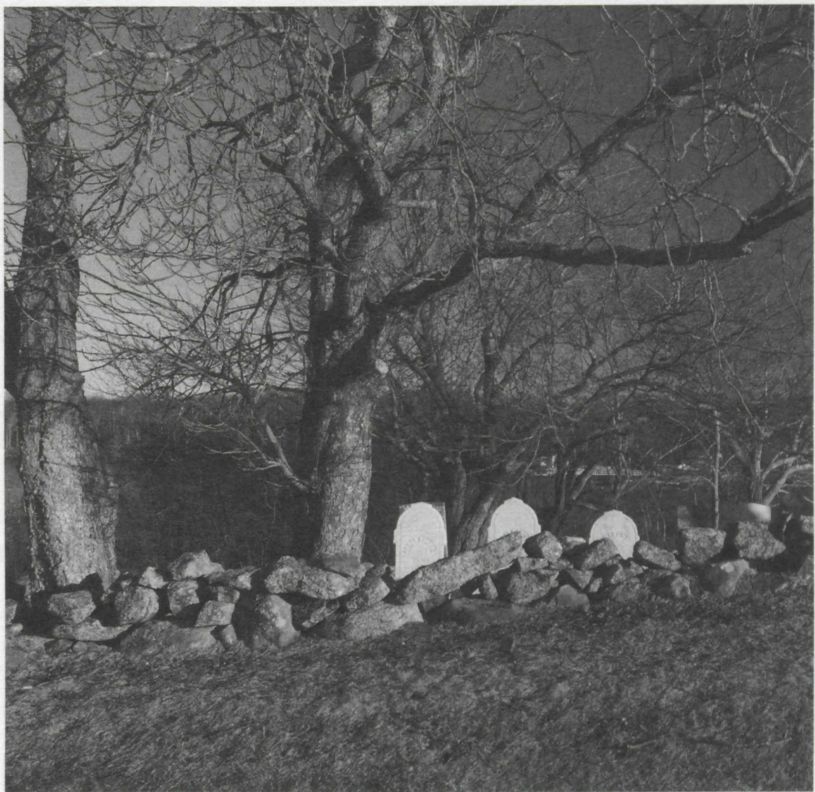
Remember when we watched  
the sun slowly rise  
behind the lighthouse as  
the morning fog danced  
a waltz across the ocean?  
Or when you carved our  
parent-given initials into  
that old oak tree like  
school children would?

Those images –  
those faded moments in time

have manifested themselves deep  
in my heart and  
have grown into a feeling,  
an untouchable wonder that  
always leads and  
connects me to you

Our map is delicately laid out,  
my love,  
and is as blank and  
white as the first New England  
snow

Our path is endless,  
and so are we.



## Here

Danielle Cropley

It is here, at this place that I must stand.  
My heart is closing, my eyes are fixed, my mind stifled.

It is here, at this point, that I cannot contain.  
My words are coming, my thoughts are mixed, my pain unleashed.

It is here, at this moment that I do tell.  
My feelings are conflicted; my soul is heard, my being revealed.

It is here, at this standstill, that I change everything.  
My heart has stopped, my words have ceased, my feelings now known.

Will you forgive me now?



## Skies of Escape

Courtney MacLeod

When will this paradoxical equation we call life  
Compute in lack of calculated moments known in strife  
Are there more than stories ending in short dash  
When a comma breaks the sentence that would needless finish rash  
Are we a mere succession of minutes into hours  
Breath remaining steady as we bloom from bud to flowers  
I have heard that planes will often fly off course  
Pulled back into balance by their operating force  
And the tulip toppled paradise  
Will color life's whole sky lit  
As the engine soars above us guided by its pilot  
Are there places that you travel when you sit in lonesome mind  
Where the destination often seems too hard to find?  
You will go there in due time when you regain your health  
Which ensues when you will realize that you need to know thyself

## Mother's Nature

Ashley Plante

"Between every two pines is a doorway to a new world." -John Muir

Your scent lingers in the sharp Autumn air  
 Night kisses the blushing Sky goodbye  
 When the Moon rises gracefully  
 And the clouds become but a memory  
 Withering at its finest.

Before the dark came, you  
 stood, erect like the tail of a peacock  
 Flirting with the human eye  
 "Don't pick it for then it will die!"  
 Sooner rather than later.

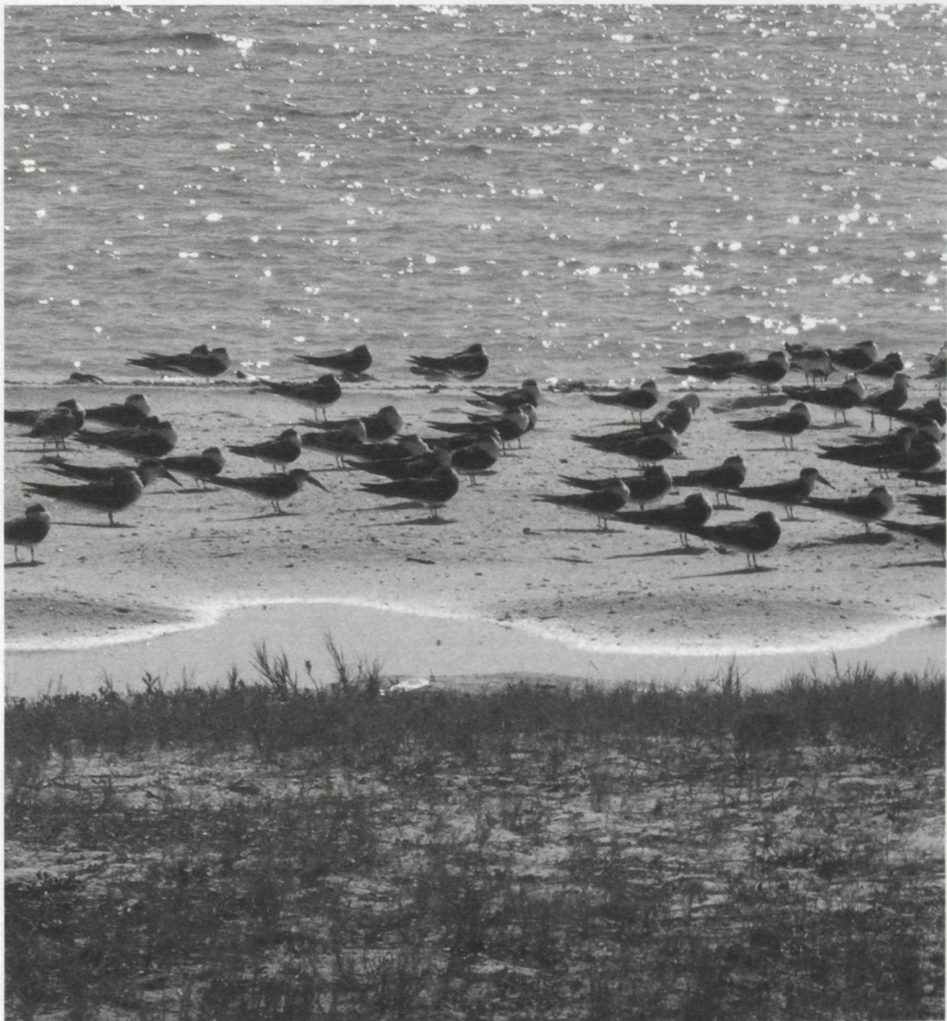
Thousands of you stand tall and  
 collectively wave,  
 side to side,  
 inhale,  
                   exale,  
 inhale,  
                   exale  
 Your petals elegantly fall

Daunting snow flies against  
 your precious petiole parts  
 Swallowing your limbs

from seed to soul  
You stand numb.

We are oblivious to  
this silent smothering  
Until Sun awakens and  
Rays diffuse the flurry to

Commence blossoms.



## The Disease

Daniele Cropley

Dazed and confused in this mix of gray and haziness.  
Lost and discontent in this sense of blue and craziness.

Suspended in midair, hanging in a permanent dysfunction.  
Slowly breaking down, twitching like a system malfunction.

Adored and hated in this act of falling in and out.  
Ashamed and prided in this blend of whispers and shouts.

Chilling out in space, waiting in an undying hesitation.  
Quickly hitting the ground, talking like an unheard creation.

Wanted and wasted in this place of picking and choosing.  
Optimistic and senseless in this feeling of winning and losing.

Holding on inside, begging in a series of pleas.  
Unwillingly needing you, paining like an incurable disease.



## Visiting My Father: Attleboro, Massachusetts

Ashley Plante

When I go home,  
I am welcomed with a medium sized watermelon Del lemonade and a warm home-cooked meal.

We exchange hugs and smiles then you ask me how college life is

as if you knew my good friends  
Lack of sleep and high caffeinated beverages, or of the circus act I'm in. I'm on the high-wire, taking one foot at a time, balancing for all I'm worth.

as if you could see  
what college has transformed me into and not what the brochure, websites, or tour guides tell you.

as if you understood what the \$40,000 a year bill included:  
hello three hour labs, dreaded night classes, make yourself comfortable dust on my old hobbies, goodbye free time

Going to college is like an Acela Express train  
traveling 150 miles per hour and carrying tons of cargo. As you make stops along the way, your burdens get unloaded and you choose where you get off.

## The River is My Anchor

Sean Walley

Over time the significance of the place you live develops into a sense of familiarity, belonging, caring and understanding that intertwines with your life experiences. The actual description of a place goes way beyond sharing the distinctive qualities of a place; it contributes to establishing the identity and spirit of the people who live there. In so doing, the significance of place creates an integral and inseparable connection to understanding our personal identity. For my entire life I have grown up in very large Federal style house that sits next to the tidal York River in the town of York, Maine, surrounded by 18 acres of the "Walley Woods," as we like to call them. I have walked through the woods up my long driveway with the pine needles under my feet just about to the water's edge every day of my childhood after getting off the school bus. My twin brother and sisters and I had many adventures in the woods and on the river while getting to know the patterns of the wildlife we thought of as our neighbors. All the memories of my life are connected with my home and our land. Even when inside the house, every room has walls of floor-to-ceiling windows facing the ever-present York River, so the river and the many 40-foot trees have become very much a part of my environmental landscape, one that never really leaves me. All in all, this landscape represents the quiet comfort of home and family and has become an almost sacred place where I have spent my entire childhood. By feeling how much I belong to this special place, I know it has greatly contributed to the very essence of my identity.

It is obvious to see how the significance of place establishes our sense of belonging. Looking back, I can remember making paths in the woods with my brother, riding our ATV's, building tree houses, fighting the current in our canoes, helping my mom plant what seemed like a million tulip bulbs every fall, always being surprised when they bloomed everywhere in the spring, but most of all I remember all the wildlife and animals. We've made mangers for the deer that live amongst the woods and put out salt licks for them, built birdhouses for the many different birds, rescued baby abandoned squirrels, dealt with roaming coy dogs, delighted with the occasional surprise splash of a seal as it jumped above the river surface and even once was shocked to find a moose staring us down in the field. But the most significant advantage of living on a large property was the freedom it extended as to how many dogs we could own.



If I were to be completely honest and approximate my situation, my life would not speak, it would bark. You might say I live in a zoo. We have at present count 15 dogs; often we have more. We raise therapy dogs and also produce quite a few litters each year. I have been helping care for the dogs my whole life. Since the death of my father in 2005, I have taken on more responsibility caring for the dogs. Every day my tasks include walking, feeding, exercising, and training them. I always schedule time to care for the dogs. These chores must get done every single day with no exceptions. Living under the same roof with so many animals has taught me a lot about responsibility, the importance of being observant and paying attention to details, and time management. These responsibilities have given me a direction and purpose and provided me with useful guidelines. Call our family crazy, but this environment in which I have been raised has influenced me as a person and student. I attach the same level of responsibility and conscientious commitment into completing homework on time, living a healthy lifestyle, and taking care of my family as I do taking care of the dogs. I have learnt that like the tedious task of training a dog, getting better at something does not happen overnight; it is an activity I must repeat and repeat well in order to see any improvement. Likewise with academics, I won't excel as a student if I only do the required reading sometimes. It takes weeks and months of honest studying to become an excellent student. As I mature, I realize that my character strengths did not spur from nowhere. In fact, they came from an extremely loud home environment filled with way too many dogs barking.

In August before my freshman year of high school, my father died suddenly of a massive coronary. He was never sick and the unexpectedness of it all was almost impossible to fathom. Needless to say the shock was overwhelming for my entire family. We had a private service to honor him at our house outside on the veranda overlooking the York River. The day of his funeral the clouds looked the way they often do as if you could playfully bounce from one to another. Everything, the glistening river, the breeze making music out of the leaves in the trees, the birds singing, the perfect temperature: all added to the surreal truth that it was the day of my Dad's funeral. The water mirrored the reflection of the sky and rippled perfectly while crashing against the glistening slate rocks; it was as if heaven was in the river's reflection. I was so struck that despite our profound sadness it was a beautiful day complete with the splendor of our unspoiled natural surroundings.

It was the beginning of a "me" I didn't feel I really knew. It was an awkward and unfamiliar feeling. Somehow the river provided me with some familiar balance. All I know is that I grew up almost

instantly the day he died. His death had altered me. Not necessarily in a bad way, just I was no longer whatever I had been before. My ability to survive this difficult and traumatic situation was not easy, and there were no short cuts to avoid the emotional hurt and pain involved. Somehow through it all, the river remained constant, reminding me that we both were still here and life goes on. Over time, I watched bad storms unexpectedly impact the land, but the river remained constant, constantly flowing in and out with the tide, always changing, but always remaining the same. The river seems to have an air of equanimity, always appearing calm. Perhaps my daily proximity to the river, always experiencing its equanimity rubbed off on me a little. The ability to maintain one's composure, even during great sadness, to be able to remain calm and level-headed under stress provided me with much needed clarity of judgment when the circumstances required it most. This impression absolutely helped me to survive. Whether inside or out, I always felt the river speaking to me and I believe as a result it helped make me stronger or perhaps just a little wiser. Learning how to cope with whatever life unexpectedly throws in my direction has given me a perspective of what is truly of value.

To really tell you about myself, you have to look below the surface of what everyone actually sees. My journey so far has been like the weather: sometimes bright and sunny and sometimes quite stormy. I have undergone heart surgery, struggled with a learning disability, and survived my father's untimely sudden death. It takes time to recover from the unpleasant things that happen to you. Like the weather and seasons, some days have been easy and others more difficult, some happy, some sad. I've learned to appreciate all of them because they are the journey of my life. I will always be in awe of the natural beauty the York River and its natural landscape because it has inspired me through tough times and has ultimately time and time again renewed me. The York River has come to offer me reassurance and a sense of peace. I will always appreciate the peaceful memory of this place that I love and call home.

On many evenings, everyone in my family comes home and is in the kitchen. We all make dinner together while listening to a new CD one of us has made. My brother is always laughing and playing with the dogs. Everyone makes fun of how tall he is becoming. My one sister has designated herself as the one to set the table for all of us. Mom is always preparing something for dinner. It is not that the kitchen is crowded, rather that there is a great deal of activity going on at the same time. Tonight the basketball game is on the television. My sisters are singing along with their new CD. Everyone's talking and standing around our marble island counter top eating snacks. I notice

the smell of garlic and onions sautéing on the stove. The kitchen is warm from the roast cooking in the oven and smells great. Even our dogs seem to enjoy the aroma and are patiently waiting for dinner. It is dark outside and the lamps around the room give off a cozy light. The stained glass hanging light over the island spotlights my family members. The light over the dining table highlights the table beautifully set waiting for us to sit down for dinner. My Mom has managed to hug each of us while she makes sure everything is ready for dinner. I can see the river out the window from the moon's reflection, constantly moving and glistening, winking at me, reminding me that life goes on. I know the river has helped me..... In our kitchen over time, we have all laughed and cried. Tonight we are all here and happy.





## The Phrase That Changed My Life

Kayla Wheeler

I was staying in an old lodge  
with some friends when I first  
heard it –  
the phrase that would forever  
change the way I thought  
about things

We were all sitting around a  
tiny table,  
and to an outsider it would  
have looked like we were talking about  
something serious like  
a funeral or an affair,  
but we were really just talking about life

And that's when I heard it, the  
words took flight from  
the old poet's mouth and  
crashed to the ground like  
a sack of bricks  
I swear to God every person  
renting a room in that barn  
was struck silent by the  
gunshot that came from the  
old poet's mouth

"Writing is the best revenge"

Writing is the best revenge,  
and at the click of her tongue  
I was alive,  
the seed inside of me  
burst with buds  
but I was silent  
and contemplated those  
words for the rest of the evening

Who was the old poet  
speaking to?  
the devoted teacher  
who's passion got her nothing  
but laid off,  
or the starving artist with  
cancer  
who never got the god damned chance  
she deserved,  
or the girl in the corner  
dying for someone to just listen?

That old poet laughed  
after she said it  
but the subject of conversation  
remained the same while  
everyone in the room had this  
"Ah-ha!" moment,  
pondering in our minds,  
"So that's what it is..."

My pen began to move

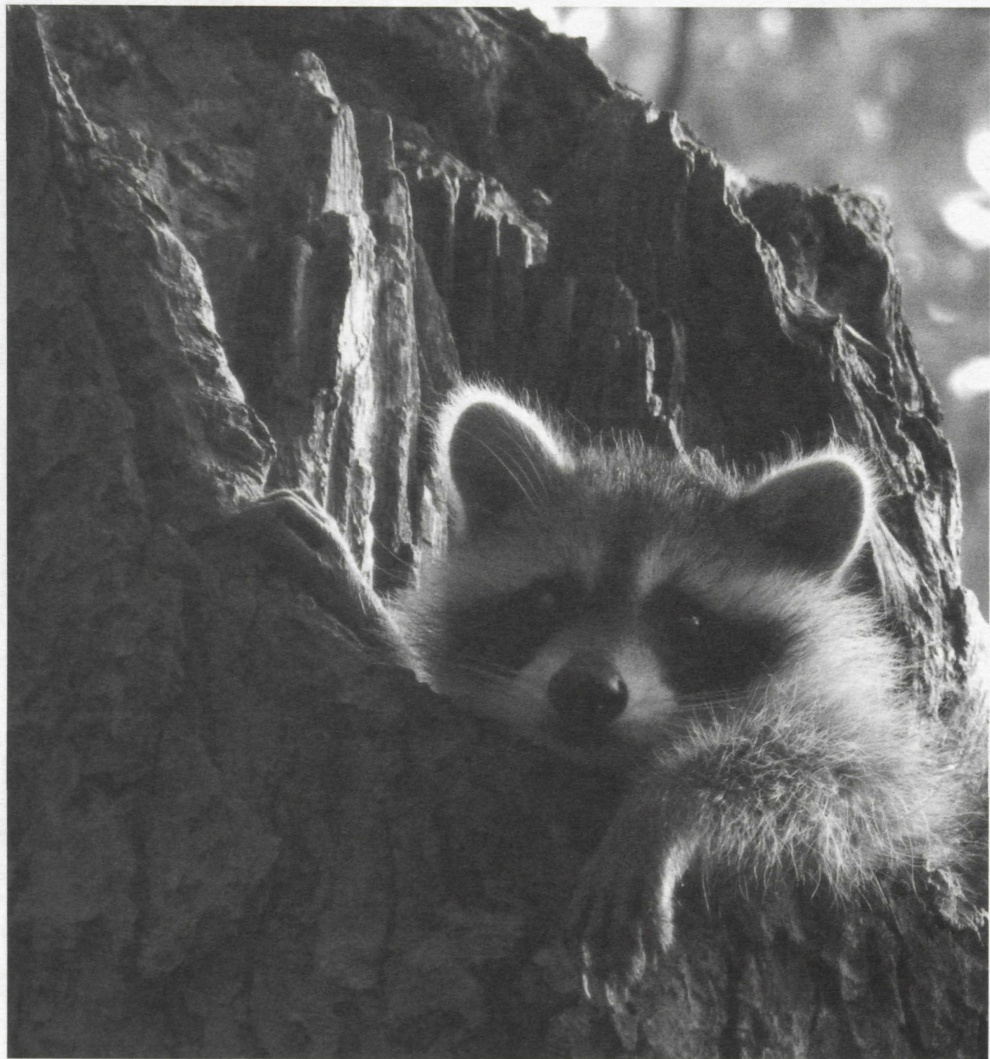
on its own  
and the ink of my thoughts  
stained the paper like  
blood from a fresh wound  
and I loved that I couldn't be stitched –  
this type of bleeding was  
a masked antidote,  
the paradox was that the  
more I bled the more  
relief I was given  
I did not want a Band Aid,  
not that it would have worked, anyway.  
you can't cover up cuts like these

This revenge was a therapy  
that I could not avoid,  
that old poet  
handed me a syringe that night  
and within seconds I became an addict

Here's to constructed release  
and getting the last word in.  
So grab your pens  
because everyone knows  
if it's not in writing,  
it didn't happen







## Act of Awareness

Courtney MacLeod

Impaled upon a dull drawn dream  
Where pencils pierce the page to scream  
On drought filled pallets, rains in store  
To want for nothing, long for more

What lurks behind the brink held tight  
Just levies leaking ever slow  
A silhouette left traced by light  
To flood the portrait down below

A bigger burden now conceived  
The bleeding ink on canvas speeds  
In blueprint cities now submerged  
It brings to life the dreams once purged

## Promise

Laura Carter

You laugh at my pen  
Say that nothing will come from it  
But great things  
Will emerge  
Are waiting  
For as long as I will be living  
I will be writing  
And breathing  
Life  
Into words on the page  
For as long as I will be living  
I will be creating  
Because the ink in my tool  
Is ceaseless  
For as long as I will be living  
I will be dedicating  
All that I do  
To doubters everywhere  
Just like you



## Orchard of Oysters

Courtney MacLeod

There lies a pearl beneath the surface  
It hangs suspended within the confines of time  
By which brilliance aches rise  
Through shadowed slits traced sublime  
And but exposed it longs to be  
More for wonder, less to see  
Compared in contrast there it hides  
Nestled nicely upon pillows of youth  
Where flaws long forgotten  
And perfection meets truth

I coaxed it softly, calling its name  
Ever cautious I tempt it  
To expel this cruel game  
But it's buried so fiercely, thus trapped  
Behind layers of shell it remains  
Shining for only the blind and the sane  
Its purpose is bejeweled, though preferred to be plain







## Thanks To Our Patrons

Zephyr would not exist were it not for the generous contribution of its friends. Those who contributed financially to this issue are listed below.

Done-Rite Company  
Ron and Lisa Koller  
Shirley Koller  
Jaime Hylton

Special thanks also to:

Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences  
Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Dean of Students  
Undergraduate Student Government Association









ZEPHYR  
the twelfth issue · spring 2011



[www.une.edu/zephyr](http://www.une.edu/zephyr)