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Morehead State University

Morehead, Kentucky

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We of the Inscape editorial board
would like to thank the Kentucky
Arts Commission for the Graphic
Design Award recently conferred
on Inscape.

so naked for immortal work
his shoulders marched against the dark

c.c. cummings

Editorial Board

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The staff of Inscape would like to offer its apologies to Doris Ludwick, whose name was omitted from the list of Editorial Board members in the previous issue.

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Photograph

David Murray

CIRCLES

I was a small child when I saw my first circle
There was this gravel that used to live in my shoe
One day it grew tired of residing in a size 3 split-level Buster Brown
shoe like all the other gravels lived in
So Mr. Gravel kindly informed me he was making a change of residence
(Gave me a story about a job out in a Kansas Quarry Company--said the
climate suited him better in the Midwest)

I took his notice of leaving
And politely dropped him into the nearest mudpuddle
That's when the magic all began
Circles around circles and circles
Tracing each other--then making their own paths
Then disappearing into the thick black mud below
Diamonds danced upon the water
And midget ripples tasted my toes
I stood like a mountain size sunflower, swallowing the reflections that
were bounced up to my mouth
When the blind circles collided below

I walked away wondering if the gravel really did have a job out in a
Kansas Quarry Company
And if he knew what beautiful lines he had drawn in the water as he fell
out of my life

Nowadays I'm not so small
But I spend a lot of time
Looking for gravels to drop in the water
Then tracing their graceful movements into the creases of my mind
Curled around my circles that curl me around your circles that curl you
around her circles
Until we all disappear into the thick black mud below

Bear

SENIORITY

Spring tumbles unseen
Like a curling petal
To a place below
Where green is sovereign
And all who kneel there
Bow rain-drenched heads
To their latest master.

Breath like fire,
Arms that clutch
And encircle neighbors
In a humid headlock.
A lazy landlord
Neglects the plumbing
As summer rules fiercely.

Young and creative,
The artist arrives
Tinting the landscape,
Rouging the cheeks,
Blushing the faces,
Humming a madrigal
Under his chilly breath.

Ancient and wise,
The tired old gentleman
Walks on his bone limbs
That crack and complain,
Sprinkles his sleep dust,
Crackles his crisp laugh
That silences all.

Roberta Webster

His feet are
 Dirty and
 His toes
 Not completely
 Clean
 His Nails
 Soiled Too.
 His hair
 Unkempt
 His voice
 Not always
 Clear,
 TB you know,
 And his legs
 Ulcers
 Run often--
 The Needle Marks
 Show
 Sometimes,
 When
 His shirt
 Gets
 Pulled up.
 His breath
 Not like a
 Rose just
 Fills lungs
 And doesn't
 Cause
 Love to
 Bloom
 But you should
 Hear him
 Talk about
 God!

THE BACK DOOR

Twisted, knarled and hard
 the wood rests for a while,
 bathes itself with saltwater
 Then leaves by its way
 of entrance,
 the back door ocean.

Happy

Mike Green



Woodblock

Nancy Sue Gayheart

QUIET DESPERATION

(First Prize:
Inscape Short Story Contest)

It was an average-looking boarding room, a cube that measured about fifteen feet by fifteen feet by fifteen feet honeycombed in a rectangular 'for men only' hotel with approximately one hundred other rooms. Building blocks all supporting each other, but at the same time apart, separated by thin walls. The walls of this room were either a dull green or grey color, it didn't really matter. There was no rug on the semi-varnished floor. Also visible in the room was a bureau with a Bible on it and a bed that creaked whenever anybody who used it moved. On top of the night table that sat next to the bed was a paper basket full of fried chicken and a clock whose dial read one-thirty. A picture of either Lincoln or Kennedy, it didn't really matter, hung on one of the walls and a transistor radio that played an endless cycle of song, news bulletin, commercial, song, news bulletin, commercial sat on the sill of the only window of the room.

A man lay on the bed, being careful not to move suddenly lest he hear an irritating 'creak' sound, and ate the chicken. The song cycle of the radio was playing and he thought of the songs he had written. All of them were unpublished and stashed away in the drawer of the bureau.

"At least as good as this Goddamn song!" he said aloud. Then he got up and opened a bureau drawer.

"Songs, poetry, plays--absurd and straight, short stories, and a novel. All rejected because of the narrow what-will-sell mind of the publisher!" he said while opening another bureau drawer. "Well, they'll get published." He lifted a rifle out of the drawer. "When I become famous." The gun clicked loudly when he cocked it. "Then the quiet desperation will be over."

"And the parade is coming right along," the news bulletin on the radio said. "It's approaching Fifteenth and Vine."

"Four blocks," he said as he set down the rifle. "It won't be long now."

There was a bottle in the bureau drawer labeled "Tiger Rose Red Wine--59¢." The man grimaced and ran his hand through his hair after taking a big swallow of the wine. Then he carried the bottle and listened to the 'creak, creak' sound as he carelessly plopped himself onto the bed. He thought of the many nights he had spent in this dreary room, the neon sign that continually blinked in front of his window, and the sheets that were cold every night. Those times when he had racked his brain for hours waiting for, as Hemingway put it, "the juices to flow." On his writing nights, the ash trays were filled with cigarette butts except when he wrote the novel, then he smoked a pipe. He gulped the wine and felt the burning liquid flow down his throat.

"The times haven't been all bad," he thought. "I have written quite a few manuscripts. But each one takes a little bit from you until there is nothing left in your body but gristle and contempt. Contempt for the publishers serving the incompetent public. Printing the bad writing and ignoring the good."

"Here we are at Eleventh and Vine," the radio said.

"They're here!" the man exclaimed. He threw down his wine and grabbed the rifle from the drawer. In a matter of seconds, he was set at the window with his sights upon the man in the middle of the parade, who was sitting in the back of a convertible and waving to the cheering spectators lining the streets.

A moment later, he squeezed the trigger and heard the shot echo for what seemed like five minutes but was really a second. He watched as the waving man fell and complete confusion erupted like a volcano around the car. Some people screamed and others fainted, a man in a black suit leaped upon the fallen man, and policemen began scurrying through the crowd. While watching the excitement, the man in the room knocked the radio off the sill with his elbow and as it fell two stories he could hear it faintly say, "Our President's been shot."

The man in the room carelessly dropped the rifle and creaked loudly onto the bed. The wine bottle was lying on the covers surrounded by a red stain. "Much like the President," he thought. He picked up the bottle and gulped down what was left inside. The room was quiet and, contrasted to the turmoil below, it seemed like an island sitting serenely in the middle of a raging sea.

"I wonder how long it will take them to find me?" he thought. "And arrest me and sentence me and, ultimately, publish my manuscripts..." He felt the grease around the chicken and decided not to eat it. "Who would have thought that my life would end in all this controversy? Me, Jack Ramsey, Mister Average for twenty-six years. My name should have been John Doe. The signatures on all those falsely-signed travellers checks and insurance policies even look like mine. I probably even have average fingerprints...Imagine if assassins did television advertisements. I could see myself on the screen, with a pipe in my mouth, saying, 'Use this rat poison. It kills them dead!' Or perhaps I could look sincerely at the average American housewife

and say: "Do you know how to get rid of blood stains?"

He picked up his rifle and cocked it. "Should I give myself up peacefully when they come or perhaps engage in a dramatic shoot-out?" He aimed the gun, then put it down. "I wish I hadn't dropped the radio. I'd like to hear the history I'm making. Those bastards are probably saying it was a Communist plot or something. The goddamn Commies get credit for everything...I shouldn't have stayed up so late last night but I had to finish the novel before today." He wondered if his boss had missed him at work and was glad that there was no phone in the room. "Just what I need is that bastard calling me now."

Creak, creak. He moved suddenly to get under the covers of the bed. "I wish they'd hurry. I'm getting very sleepy." He caressed his pillow and shut his eyes.

When he opened his eyes the first thing he noticed was the clock. It was eight o'clock. He wiped some of the sleep from his eyes and looked at the window.

"It's daylight!" he shouted. "It can't be daylight at eight o'clock!"

Blankets and covers fell to the floor and the bed creaked loudly as he jumped up to look out the window. It was indeed light out and the street was empty except for a paperboy gliding along on his bike. There was no parade and no dead President. The street was no different than any other street.

"I couldn't have dreamed all that!" He picked up his rifle. "It has been fired." He looked at the window sill. "And the radio is gone."

The man quickly got dressed and walked down to the street. "Nothing." He looked around the empty street. "The radio has even been swept away."

He walked about two blocks down the street, then turned into Buzzard's Bar. Buzzard's was neither a classy bar nor a dive. It had a clean-looking mahogany bar with a smiling young lady behind it and the walls were panelled in knotty pine. He sat down on a bar stool and thought, "How you doing, Elvis Presley?" as he looked at the man sitting next to him. This man really did resemble Elvis with his long side burns and ducks ass haircut.

The pretty barmaid was shaking a canister and Jack watched, as most of the other men at the bar did, while her round breasts teased the ruffle of the low-cut gypsy-style blouse that she wore. The breasts were soft and dimply and he could not understand how her flimsy blouse stopped one of them from plopping out. When she finished shaking she smiled and asked him what he wanted.

"I'll take a beer," Jack said. Then he looked over at Elvis and said, "Did you hear anything about a killing that occurred last night?"

"Yeah," Elvis said. "I think they caught the guy in a movie house or something."

Jack's eyes widened and he stared blankly ahead. The barmaid placed a bottle of beer and a glass on the bar.

"That will be forty-five cents."

He paid her, then quickly poured some beer into the glass. The bubbly foam rose rapidly and challenged the rim, but Jack sipped the beer before it could overflow. After gulping it down, he looked at Elvis and said, "Th-that man they caught...are they sure he's the one?"

"Well, he had the same kind of gun that killed the President," Elvis said. "I'd say that's enough proof."

Jack finished his beer and when the barmaid served him another one, he asked her to turn on the television that was inserted in the wall behind the bar. She stood on a chair and flicked the volume button. The television hissed for a second or two until it warmed up and showed three small children crying.

"These are the President's children," the announcer said.

Jack thought about how he didn't really want the President dead, he just wanted his own works published. He had nothing against the man, and how sad those children looked. Just before he began to cry with the children he caught himself. "Gristle and contempt, eh," he thought. "Art is more important than that man. He would have probably done the same thing to me if I had stood in his way to becoming President." Jack felt better after thinking this and he finished his second beer. He ordered another beer and even bought Elvis one. Elvis nodded his head and held out his hand. "My name's Jim Michaels," he said. "What's your's."

"Jack." They shook hands. "Jack Ramsey."

"How about a game of darts?"

"Sure," Jack said and as they walked across the bar to the dartboard he grinned that a man who should so clearly be named Elvis was named Jim. But that was his name and Jim picked the darts out of a tray that was hanging on the wall between the

dartboard and a fly swatter. The dartboard had many pin-size punctures in it and bits and pieces of fly carcasses were wedged haphazardly in the grooves of the heel-shaped end of the fly swatter.

Jim threw four practice darts at the board, then, as Jack pulled them out, he rolled up the sleeve on his right arm. On his bicep, emblazoned in red and blue, was a tattooed panther perched above the word "Jim." After Jack threw his practice darts, Jim pulled them out of the board and handed Jack one. "Shoot bullseye for the game?"

"Alright," Jack said. He stood with his heel to a line on the floor and aimed the dart. He flicked his wrist and the dart made a "plunk" sound as it stuck in the board about an inch from the bullseye.

Jim stepped up to the line and stared at the bullseye. As he slowly pumped his arm towards the board, Jack noticed that the panther on Jim's bicep had a subtle motion of its own. Quietly violent and wild, but at the same time contained. Jim's arm pumped once quickly and his dart hit the board about two inches from the bullseye. "Your game," he said to Jack.

Jack paused for a moment, then said, "Let's play two, three, seven. Four no count for six."

Jim nodded approvingly and pulled the darts from the board. He stood at the line and concentrated on the number two wedge of the pie-like design on the board.

The dart plunked into the wedge for three points. His second dart missed and his third dart hit the number seven wedge for one point. "Just made it," Jim said. Jack smiled and they both paused to sip some beer.

"What do you think of that guy who shot the President?" Jack said.

" I think he's the lowest scum of the earth," Jim said and clenched his fist. "The President was alright and that guy who shot him was scum. If it were up to me, he'd be dead now...without a trial."

When Jack had entered Buzzard's he had been indifferent to whether or not he got caught, but now he was very glad the police hadn't picked him up. He began to think that possibly he had done the wrong thing. After finishing his beer, Jack smiled at Jim and stepped up to the line on the floor. He aimed the first dart well and it stuck in the three-point section of the number two wedge. The second dart barely missed the number three wedge and the third dart missed the entire board by two feet. Jack stood at the line with his mouth open.

"What the hell happened?" Jim asked. "You threw the first two darts pretty well."

Jack stepped back from the line and said, "I-I don't know." Actually, Jack did know what happened. While throwing the third dart, the sudden realization hit him that if he didn't get arrested for killing the President, his writing would not get published. He sipped from his glass of beer and tried to appear as calm as possible. Jim put his heel on the line and concentrated on the number two wedge of the dartboard. Jack was about to shout that he had killed the President, but he lost all nerve when he noticed the subtle motion of the panther on Jim's bicep. He pictured Jim beating him to a pulp and then the rest of the people in the bar stomping him to death.

"J-Jim," Jack said, "I just remembered, I got to do something. I'll see you later."

Jack unconsciously waved and suddenly he found himself back on the street. He headed towards a nearby package shop and bought a pint of whiskey which he took to an adjacent alley and drank in five minutes. When he walked out of the alley to the sidewalk he noticed that his surroundings were calm. None of the confusion that had existed a day earlier was present. Slowly and deliberately, with a slight sway, he walked down the sidewalk towards the murder scene. Everything had been swept up. There was no confetti, no blood stains, no empty coffee cups, and no transistor radio.

On the way home he passed the package store and again, bought a pint of whiskey. He walked on for a few blocks with the brown paper bag tucked under his arm until he arrived at his boarding house. Closing the door behind him, he set the bag with the whiskey in it on the night table and creaked onto the bed. The clock's hands were both on six and he looked at the setting sun.

"It's getting dark," Jack said. "A President's dead and here I sit unpublished and completely sober."

Jack got up and took some of his songs from a bureau drawer, grabbing his whiskey on the way back to the bed. The cap of the whiskey was secured tightly but he finally opened it and took a big gulp from the bottle. He paged through his songs until he stopped at one that he liked. "Here's one," he said aloud. The title read I Am Here Waiting for Godot. "Why wouldn't some rock group want to perform it? It's got a message, a beat and I'd rush out to buy it." He took another sip from the brown paper bag, then said, "I guess that's what

I'm doing, is waiting for Godot." Jack turned some more pages and stopped at another song, titled Release Me Please. His fingers snapped and he began to hum the melody. "Catchy," he thought. "How could a publisher resist it?" He sipped the whiskey. "But they did. Three of the son of a bitches. Perhaps if I could write a love song."

Suddenly, he fell forward and lay with his head pointed downward over the side of the bed and his mouth stretched wide open. A few seconds later, he gagged loudly and everything that he had eaten and drank that day came up. He continued gagging as though he were going to spit up his heart next, but eventually he stopped. He looked down at the puddle of half digested liquor and food. The smell of it penetrated his nostrils and he reeled back on his bed and shut his eyes.

At approximately nine o'clock, Jack was awakened by a loud knock on the door.

"Open up! We're police officers!"

"Y-yes," Jack said, "I'll come peacefully."

He cursed as he stepped in the puddle of puke that he had forgotten about, then he opened the door. "He's the one," the policeman said as he pointed towards the gun.

"Yes," Jack said. "I admit it."

"Couldn't even buy your own whiskey. You had to kill some old wino for it."

"What!" Jack said. "I wouldn't kill just any old wino. I killed the President!"

"Sure," one of the policemen said. "We caught that guy yesterday."

I'm telling you," Jack said, "I killed the President!"

But he saw that the policemen didn't believe him and he tried to step over the bed to jump out the window. Everything went black after one of the policemen hit him over the head with a gun handle. When Jack opened his eyes the first thing he saw was a guard peering at him through a set of cold steel bars.

"They still don't think that I killed the President, do they?"

"No," the guard said. "You killed that wino in the alley. We've caught the man who killed the President and he has admitted it. We also have solid evidence pointing to that man."

"But I killed him...to have my manuscripts published," Jack insisted. "Do you believe me now?"

"No," the guard said.

Jack and the guard stared at each other for a few seconds. Jack rubbed the large welt on the top of his head. The cell was grey and cold and Jack imagined how Jonah must have felt inside of that whale.

"The manuscripts," Jack said. "Did they find the manuscripts?"

"Do you mean those papers in the bureau drawer?"

"Yes."

"We looked them over and found nothing relevant to your case. We threw them away with the rest of your things."

Jack stared at the guard and the same contempt came back that he had had for the publishers. He screamed loudly for as long as his lungs would allow and when he stopped screaming the guard was gone and he was alone in his cell.

The guard was in the next room drinking beer and playing checkers with another guard. They sat at a table out of sight of the prisoners and gambled a quarter for each game of checkers they played.

"Your move, Chet," the guard who hadn't visited Jack said.

Chet made his move, the other guard grinned and jumped his checker.

"Damn prisoners gettin' your attention," Chet mumbled.

After about fifteen minutes of playing checkers and drinking beer, the guards heard a gentle 'thump' sound coming from the area where the cells were located.

"See," Chet said to the other guard, "they're doing it again. A man can't even play checkers without those damn prisoners bothering him."

The thumping noise stopped.

"Well, they aren't bothering you now," the other guard said.

Chet moved one of his checkers and, again, the other guard jumped him. Meanwhile, the thumping noise resumed.

"I can't concentrate with all the Goddamn noise!" Chet said.

The other guard lighted a cigarette for Chet, then they smoked together and talked until the thumping noise stopped and a sound like a sack of potatoes hitting the ground came from the cell block.

"I guess I'd better check the bastards," Chet said.

He got up and walked down the aisle, looking into the cells on both sides. Everything was normal until he came to Jack's cell. Jack was lying on the

floor with a huge gash in the top of his head. Blood was all over the floor and all over Jack's head and the words "quiet desperation" were written in blood on one of the walls of the cell.

I've never seen anything like it," Chet said calmly to the other guard. "Apparently the man rammed his head into the cell wall until he died. I never heard of anyone killing himself that way."

Two days later, Jack was buried and Chet cursed as he cleaned the cell and scrubbed the "quiet desperation" off of the wall.

John Nichols



Ophelia

Selfpreelegy

the Waters came.
and there were those who said that i had never lived,
seen and forgotten far places:
the silver sighing on the stones of the stormless sea
the gold dying in the West eternally.
and some said because i had never known
a multitude of fevered fireless Faces
that turned dull senseless lips unto my own,
i had never loved.
fools or sages, it is the same.
i hear the tolling of a distant Bell,
the Shore looms closser...
still i am not sad
to have spent this little time, this life, with you.

FAOI

WISTERIA

Lines chalk on elfin face:
Slash for mouth,
Blotch for eye,
Sketching her is no artist's game.
Hard to see-these lines
That draw her in,
That pencil steel-and gray
In corners that could be
Warm and brown
If given sprinkles of a gold
Near-passed away
And hard to find at dime stores.
China face--
Whose crystalline edges threaten
To shatter at any
Budge or push of time...
Or invasion of smiles
Would tear and rend
Her blotches, slash:
Her elfin face
In chalk.

Roberta Webster

She danced
And pranced
In her new white dress
While around her
Her sisters all flew
Flying
Playing
On the wind
She glides to earth,
One more flake
Of Snow.

Jeff Greene
George Rogers Clarke High School

"OF MONASTIC LIFE"

*My life is not this steep hour
in which you see me hurry so.
I am a tree before my background,
I am but one of my many mouths
and that one first to close itself.*

*I am the still space between two tones
that only poorly become one to the other known:
for the sound, Death, wants raise of pitch--*

*But in the dark interval they reconcile,
both trembling.*

And the song flows on in beauty.

Rainer Maria Rilke

from The Book of Hours

translated by:

*d. jaehne
Paros, Greece*

THIS PARK

The cold sting of wind upon my face is not the only thing stinging my body. As I sit on this wooden bench, still moist from last night's dew, I see this park as never before.

The day is bleak and dull with low-lying gray clouds drooping with all their weight upon this place beneath. No birds, save a lonely sparrow, have flown past for quite some time.

And this time there is no creature alive in this place. Even the once-live leaves have now fallen to death beneath. And although they wistfully, sullenly move in the air, they are as still as the brown hard ground beneath.

Three months ago this park moved and danced with people laughing, singing, bringing together joys and memories with one another. And now that is all there is; memories.

But in this dry, dark asylum how can we expect dying memories to live?

Julie Sargent

DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU SEEM TO BE

*I like you
But what are you like
You're not like salamanders
Or peanut butter
Something ... something like a morning
The very first morning that ever was
I can just imagine the bossy old oceans ceasing their pushing and being amazed
And all the land looking up open-mouthed
To watch you being born--all pink and runny
There you were cresting the mountains with your cloudy head
And rubbing lavender in between the breaks in the sky
Then spreading your sweet lips into a smile
Suddenly a silly yellow sun popped out of your throat
And with a soft pink blush
You slipped out of sight*

Bear

*but my eyes
watch the pattern
of the trees against
a distantly silver sky
and the rain falls
on my imagination.*

Joyce

FOR NEIL

Arthur

*Removed from Camelot
Wears the tinged romantic crown
And sighs
At castles burning.*

Arthur

*Wielding electric sword,
Strums the strings in rhythm
And cries
For someone turning.*

Arthur

*By another name
Loses Guinevere again
To knights
In patchwork bluejeans.*

Arthur

*Weaving his kingdom
Out of parts of perished dreams
And songs
Of castles burning.*

Roberta Webster

DRAFTY

A belly's large and bosom's full of sun
Slap back on slabs of stone - someone's around?
Pain pulling from a womb, a child is mine
So pretty boy you know you are the one
I love you so you're precious - mighty fine

Come
Down
With
Me
Embrace
The
Steady
Ground

He took their physical -- passed on
They shaved his head -- a uniformed frown
Up sun, up soldier, march in time
Each one the same straight face, straight gun
Grenades, torpedoes, tanks, and mines

Come
Down
With
Me
Embrace
The
Steady
Ground

John Nichols



Etching

Carole Winters

SPANISH DANCER

As in the hand a sulfurmatch, white,
before it comes to flame, streaks licking tongues
to all sides--: thus in the circle
of close viewers, hastily, bright and hot
her round dance begins to spread itself in licks and bites.
And suddenly it is flame, total-once and for-all.

With a look she lights her ahir
and turns her whole dress, all at once
with daring art, into this fire's fire
from which, like snakes who shock,
her naked arms strike out, awake
and snapping higher.

And then: as though the fire has become too slim for her,
she takes it all together and throws it off,
masterfully, with an insolent mocking move
and looks down: it lies there, raving on the floor
and sill it flames and does not give in--

Yet conquering, certain and with a sweet
greeting smile she raises her face
and stomps it out with small firm feet.

Rainer Maria Rilke

from New Poems

translated by:

d. jaehne
Paros, Greece

(A Modern Parable)

Once there was a poor poet who lived on water and potatoes in a dingy attic room. The poet was a philosopher and a friend to man and beast. One night as he sat awake with hunger he noticed a small grey mouse sitting in the corner nibbling upon a small scrap of potato peeling. Instead of attempting to harm the little mouse, the poet smiled and said,

"Little brother, we share poverty together."

The next night there was a second mouse nibbling potatoes with the first and the poet watched them and said,

"Little sister, life is too short for arguments."

The next night there was a third mouse with the second and first, all nibbling potatoes, and the poet said,

"Little mother, you are tiny to me as I am to God."

The next night there was a fourth mouse with the third and second and first, all nibbling potatoes, and the poet said,

"Little father, we both must provide for our own."

The next night there was a fifth mouse with the fourth and third and second and first, all nibbling potatoes, and the poet said,

"Little cousin, to be without fear is a joy from Heaven."

The next night there was a sixth mouse with the fifth and fourth and third and second and first, all nibbling potatoes, and the poet said,

"Little grandmother, there is great pride in creating generations."

The next night, there was a seventh mouse with the sixth and fifth and fourth and third and second and first, all nibbling potatoes, and the poet said,

"Damn it, now there are seven mice eating all my potatoes."

And cursing he threw his boots, and his books, and his hat, and his candlestick, and his notebook, and his ink pen and his firewood at the escaping mice.

THE MORAL OF THIS STORY IS:

After the sixth mouse, philosophy dies.

Doris Marie

Just Away

The minutes pull their heavy weight around the quicksand face of the clock
I think of this morning when you came striding the street
With the fog of your own breath hanging about your head
I think of the night ago
When I was cradled between the sheets and your long arms...
You played patterns on my back
It's so hard to wait when you're only minutes away

Like two children lost on a barebacked beach
We dig holes in the sand
Searching for clams and other small sea wonders on our own
But it never seems to occur to us to reach inside each other
My hand knows every crease and curve of your skin
But our secrets of how we came to stand and to fear are kept
Well protected behind our smiles
It's so hard not to touch when you're just inches away

Bear

Friend --

Ten years ago I wrote you poems--
Stark naked and laughable to be sure!

Now, properly, one seeks imagery--
Mud and fluff metaphors
To nestle one's ever featherless,
Wild-eyed, open-mouthed hopes.

Keffi

HE'S A COUNTRY MAN

Now as we tune in on our man of the hour,

He's walkin' down the road, whistlin'

Wild Wood Flower.

He's got patches in his pants and holes

in his shoes.

He's flat broke, but that ain't nothin' new.

He's that country talkin', bouncy walkin' man.

Right here in Kentucky's hills,

thats where he belongs.

He likes to drink his 'shine,

and he lives on country songs.

Hand him a harmonica, and listen to it sing.

And he plays a funky jaw harp,

in the key of coil spring.

He's that country talkin', bouncy walkin' man.

C.D. Prater



Hinton Hatchery

Robert Broughton

I read a poem about a poet who
planted nine bean rows. He was visited
by

seed-sellers
fertilizers
weed-killers
bug-stompers
row-howers
rain-makers
and a representative from
Farmers Magazine.

He asked them in
for a dish of beans,
and he left them in the kitchen there
arguing on

seed-selling
fertilizing
weed-killing
bug-stomping
row-howing
rain-making
and the low subscription rates for
Farmers Magazine,

and now he is sitting among
nine bean rows;
he
contemplates

curled tendrils
slow ripeness
and the blissful scent of
green.

M. Carl

TUESDAY MORNING

(Second Prize:
Inscape Short Story Contest)

Tuesday morning.

Is there anything more nothing than Tuesday morning? It's not the first, the last, nor even the middle of the week. Just ol' nowhere Tuesday.

I don't have any coffee and my cigarette is tearing at my throat like broken glass. This room reeks of empty morning smells. Molded smoke hangs like cobwebs in the corners and the clothes. Even the flowers have wilted on the wallpaper. They smiled at me yesterday-- little blue grins that made me giggle. Oh God, why am I alive in the midst of all these funerals.

I need some light. I'll just pull the curtains apart. Listen to them rip. It hurts to let in the day.

Where's my robe? I can't even find my name much less a damn bathrobe I never use. I used to never be cold. Guess I'll crawl up here on this heater and watch the world on the other side of my window. Here I am like a bird caught inside a glass box. Like a baby green plant, I can feel my head reaching for what little of the sparce sunshine I can siphon from the gray clouds. We used to watch the funny games others played on the outside of our glass. I wonder if you've joined into any of their recreational activities now. I hope you change the rules. The law don't seem to be quite fair. Oh my man where did you go? Only a few hours back but really a lifetime away, I held you and brought you sweet dreams all the way from California. I gave you free trips to the corner and back and a ticket to see my mind...in time. I know the fragrance of our loving. The saltsweat taste of us is still wet on my lips. The world you laid in my arms was honeysuckle sweet and so full of our smiling. The wings you planted on my back with each stroke of your hand dissolved as you slipped out a crack in the dawn. You called me angel. What am I now? Empty.

You're such a big man. I could feel the mountains in your shoulders and the rivers rush from your mouth. I guess my world got too small for you. It feels too large for me without you. This is a giant's house and I'm sitting here feeling an awful lot like an elf. I'm waiting on a doll house heater for a man the size of my dreams to till all the useless space around me --inside me. The distance to the door is miles and miles away. I suppose I'll just stay here small in my

window until I join the dust on the sill.

Oh Jesus, Tuesday morning and the life outside my window is an old, old movie that I've seen too many times before. It's in black and white and foreverly the same. I remember the first time I saw you. I was watching this same old movie and then there you came rounding the corner and shooting technicolor into the world. You painted all my skies blue. The wind had your hair in an uproar and your coat flying like a battle flag behind your back. You looked like the Colorado River must feel. That's been a year ago now. One sweet year away from this window. Today I'm living in all those moments I should have said what I never said. I meant to tell you I love you before you slipped that good-bye into my hand. Tomorrow will be Tuesday and the next day will be Tuesday and I'll live one endless gray nowhere Tuesday until I learn how to crash my crazy head through this glass prison and tie on a pair of those wings you left scattered about the house. I'll come flying into the colors of what you tried to show me.

But today is Tuesday and I've got a lifetime of Tuesdays before this movie will be over.

Bear



Photograph

Bill Hinds

THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING

A switch was on
but now flicked off
and with it went the light,
night
is lonely without stars
or mars for
cinder blocks
and cement walls
make my cell
while etched on
one side
'Napoleon was here'
Blankness
fear
the blanket
is on
the floor...
chestnut
hair her
notebooks had
unpublished poems
in them fermenting
My Head Ached!
liquidlookinglips framed
by chestnut hair her
i walked to my room
Darkness
the setting sun
Blankness
fear
the blanket
is on
the floor...

John Nichols

CRY

Sometimes I'd like to cry.

Movies and books stir my emotions.

I wonder why?

I'd like to cry now

But the tears won't come,

Even if I wrinkle my brow.

Miss Suez Early

George Rogers Clark High School
Winchester, Kentucky

A LOVE POEM

When Love came,
It wasn't strange
Or deeply sentimental
It came like Age,
Stage by stage.
My joy was incidental.

Donna Johnson

RAINFALL

*Like old friends in time,
Love flows somewhere, thrown in the wind
Caught in soundless space by tenured stars
Who've heard silent thoughts of saddened men
Crying for lost brothers
Shrouding the night sky,
For mourning.*

Gary Schultz

PROTECT

your mind

with the

BEAUTY

coveting

your eyes.

Karen Maloy



- my clock (and Bill "Radio" Boyd)
held together by a rubber band after
the ~~car~~ car's knuckled it off and
broke it.

SUPERSTARS

The basketball star stood on the line
and fondled the ball
and looked at the rim
the shot swished in
applause filled the hall
and the crowd thought he was so fine
A soldier was attacked
and shrapnelled in the arm
a medic wrapped him up
and professionally cleaned his cut
the soldier was saved from further harm
and no one even clapped.

John Nichols

Death comes silently, to the clam

And all that is the clam

Fades back

Into the elements

Only the shell remains

To remind you

That life had

once been.

Joyce

NOSE

*The Nose is an ambivalent appendage
very useful in breathing*

But a nuisance when full of a flu

*On some it blends in nicely
adding symmetry to their appearance*

*Others have various shaped
beaks
bills
bulbs
and spears*

*It is a sensitive organ
which can become rather troublesome
when flattened
by some obstinate roustabout*

MUD

(First Prize:
Inscape Essay Contest)

Mud is perhaps the only thing more common than money nowadays. It is also worth about as much. It comes in all shapes and sizes, ranging from enough to hang up that new 1972 Mustang you don't own to the tiny speck on the toe of your left shoe; your ROTC instructor eyes disapprovingly the speck you obtained cutting across an unpaved parking lot, two construction sites, and a clay quarry to get to class on time. Mud has no pride; recognizes no social barriers. It is utterly indiscriminating and passively endeavors to put everyone on an equally grimy level.

Mud has many different colors and textures. Doers of evil deeds may already be aware that the moist soil of a certain notorious elevated regions of our fair county is all too recognizable to experienced eyes. Also, mud has the unfortunate characteristic of being able to contain (while apparently hiding) all sorts of bits and pieces of man-made articles, some of which tend to be of a most compromising nature.

Mud was long used to make sun-dried bricks by the Indians of the South-west. Such bricks tend to be too soft for modern campus uses however, and have long been discarded in favor of pieces of concrete. Mud-balls, too, have fallen into disrepute, as they tend to only enrage the enemy without doing appreciable physical damage. They have their uses though, and one in the back of your room mate's only dress coat while he is on the way to take your steady to the Prom can be immensely effective. (If your safety is improperly prepared for it can also be immensely fatal.)

Mud in the wrong place can be very embarrassing. An A student I once knew, a rather absent-minded (some of his professors expressed it a bit more emphatically) fellow, once was served a home cooked soil sample by his girl. Half way through the meal he bit into a rock, glanced up and noted his date wasn't eating. He didn't say anything, but she, being a nice type, told him only ten minutes later. He remained unfazed until he remembered where he had collected the sample.

But ah, mud, how could we ever do without it? What other substance could possibly find its way to the tops of our cars (boots, bicycles), the bottoms of our coats (hats, pants) and the middle of our twenty page research papers? Chewing gum, perhaps.

Fred Brown



Photograph

David Murray

Just A Few Words On The Results Of Ignoring What You're Needing

The 10:10 train pulled out before I did
The alarm woke from its sleepless nightmare screaming
Then went back to softly ticking away minutes of dreams
And so did I
If I had shook the sleep out of my head
And the warm covers from my bed
I could have caught the unheard thought that you slipped into the waste can
As your shadow went gliding across the floor
Then you were outside the door
The life in the midst of your magic was flowing into everything
That had forgotten or been forgotten
A Midas touch in reverse
Things cold were turning warm like the earth turning to face the sun
Tired of her night
But I stayed in the wall of my darkness
Unaware of the present
You'd been wanting to give me
You and your elusive wings you fly on
Making all the difference in those you passover
Angel--holding the gift of freedom
And all the while I found the lies of an evasive sleep
Dreams with plastic faces --
More appealing
Than the sweet truth you were waiting (when you've never waited before)
To give to my unknowing mind

I didn't see your secrets till you had flown too high for me to touch them
To touch you
Me and my castles made of imitation sand
Built in a world of crumpled sheets
And refrains that forget to repeat
I could be riding the clouds with you
But instead I lay hiding in my fantasy
With my wings locked on my chest
I see sometimes meshed in between the blues of the rainbow
More often I just see me sketched in the tears on my pillow

Bear

MONUMENT TO THE SUN GOD GROWING

I'm witnessing a god in growth.
The design weaves coffee brown and gold
Before my eyes,
Mingling toast with sunflower
To form a sun-glazed marvel mass
That smells of summer
Warm and sweet.
If the world should tomorrow freeze
Still, he would glow
Like an amber lamp.
Eyes, like coals,
Spark the tender inner flame:
The fire of his dreams,
The unquenched fire of his love
That burns unworshipped.

Roberta Webster

UNDER MY MASK

Why am I so scared
Of the innocent, beautiful pleasures of life?

Why do I shy away
From letting someone look deeper inside?

Why am I afraid to "touch"
Or reach out to the one whom I love?

Why does snow turn into slush?

Lloyd Sphar
George Rogers Clarke High School
Winchester, Kentucky

Lines Inspired by a Painting in a Display

*The human conflict deftly dramatized
I ken in you, sweet maid of innocence,
Clutching your diadems, blooms highly prized,
Seized near to pathos, late revealed by chance:*

*The mouldered headstone hidden in the grass
By god-like brush. The sore and vanished hands
Of this your kindred sister, perhaps did pass
Upon this hill as you, and pluck at stands*

*Of meadow-ornament. Time is importent
To pale your sunrise cheeks or dye your red
To silver, or to see your maid-hood rent:
You will remain alert, the other dead.*

*No fissure will unwall her narrow room,
No saints appear in your brief, art-spread skies,
No transcendental drama will resume--
Your mortal not be altered, hers not rise.*

*Your starred eyes search for non-existent worlds
With depthless ambiguity in their glance:
Do they betray beneath your fiery curls
A comprehension or an ignorance?*

*Yet still your look of sad serenity
Is too, immutable, and does inscribe
Upon my thought the doubtful destiny--
The shaded someday of our dreaming tribe.*

Samuel L. Bevard

