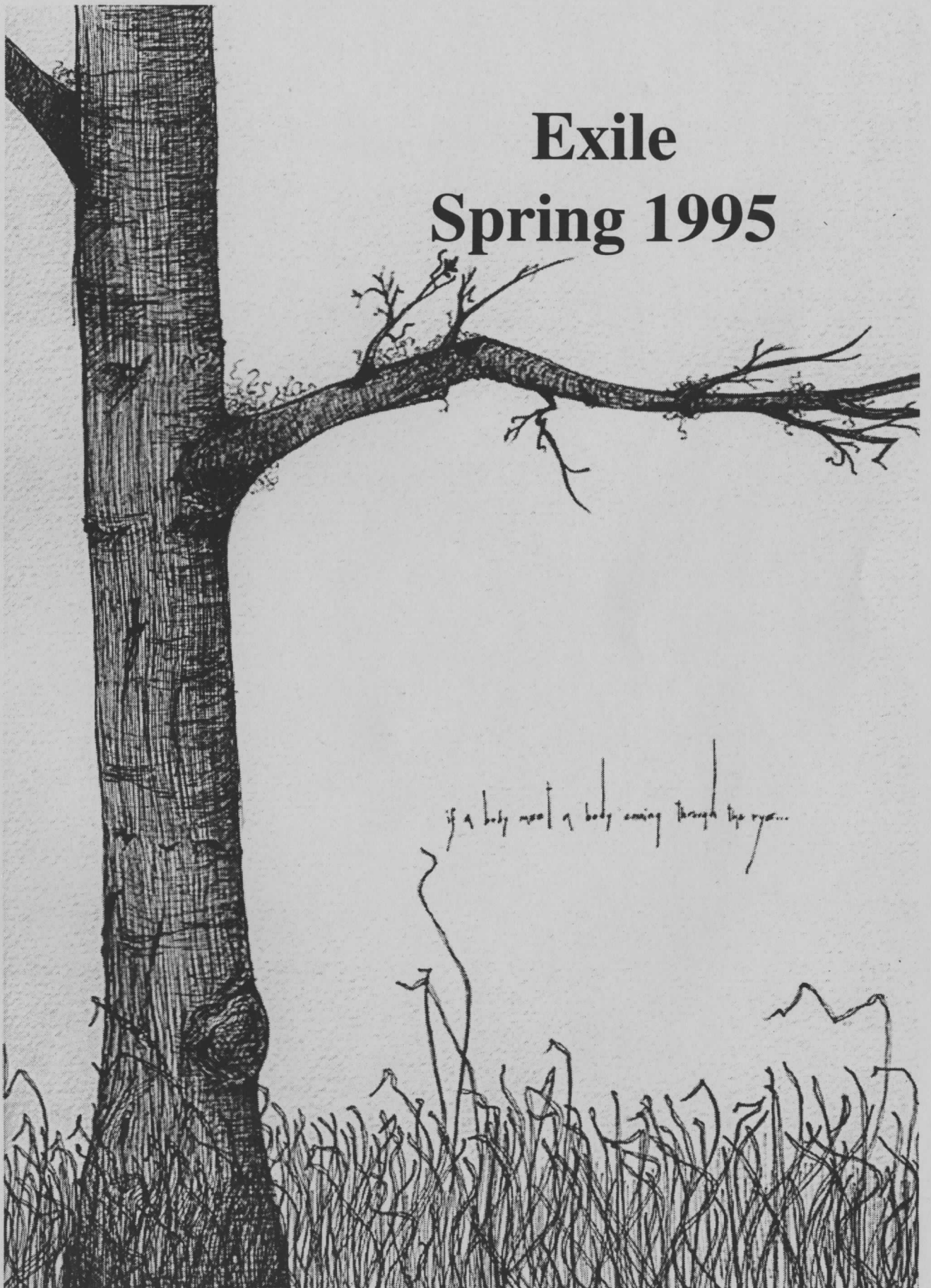


Exile

Spring 1995



Exile

Denison University's Literary and Art Magazine

39th Year

You of the finer sense,
Broken against false knowledge,
You who can know at first hand,
Hated, shut in, mistrusted

Take thought:
I have weathered the storm,
I have beaten out my exile

-Ezra Pound



Table of Contents

Cover Art	Elisa Gargarella '95 - quote from J.D. Salinger's <u>Catcher in the Rye</u>	
untitled	Aileen Jones '97	i
<i>Girl</i>	Colin Bossen '98	1
<i>sun</i>	Alex Blazer '96	2
<i>Shifting</i>	Alex Blazer '96	2
<i>The Fish</i>	Sarah Ramsey '95	3
<i>New Woman</i>	Lisa Stillman '95	4
<i>Why</i>	Lelei Jennings '95	5
<i>Camel Cafe</i>	Jeremy Aufrance '95	5
<i>Jenny</i>	Lizzy Loud '95	6
<i>Beautiful Dreamer</i>	Melissa Bostrom '96	7
<i>Rising</i>	Lizzy Loud '95	12
<i>Pinsetter</i>	Jeremy Aufrance '95	13
<i>A Greater Distance</i>	Jeff Boon '95	14
<i>Shiho</i>	Jeff Boon '95	15
<i>Sub-stance</i>	Alex Blazer '96	15
<i>Sisters</i>	Gretchen Hambley '96	16
<i>Anne Sexton</i>	Allison Lemieux '96	17
<i>The Holy Grail...</i>	Ed Shim '95	17
untitled	Liz Bolyard '96	18
23	Keith Chapman '95	18
<i>Bang, Zoom!</i>	Victoria Lyall '96	19
<i>Gabe and Me</i>	Heather Trabert '97	20
<i>Tornado Summer</i>	Liz Bolyard '96	21
<i>Nude</i>	Elisa Gargarella '95	21
<i>Why I can't tell short stories</i>	Colin Bossen '98	22
<i>america</i>	Lynn Tramonte '98	24
<i>Upon Being Asked...</i>	Matt Makman '96	24
<i>Being Azra</i>	Lynn Tramonte '98	25
<i>Mystic Truths</i>	Adrienne Binni '95	27
<i>King's Court</i>	Elisa Gargarella '95	27
<i>Incense</i>	Erin Lott '96	28
<i>Sunday Morning...</i>	Lisa Stillman '95	33
untitled	Elisa Gargarella '95	33
<i>Quien no ha visto...</i>	Adrienne Binni '95	34
<i>The Space Between Us</i>	Allison Lemieux '95	35
<i>Searching for the Bermuda...</i>	Victoria Lyall '96	35
untitled	Man Chhoa '96	36
<i>The Hunted</i>	J. Murdoch Matheson '96	37

Girl

He knows that the next time he sees her will be in a coffin.
Remembers back to when he was 14 or 15
the first time they met
she was a wild wild one
blonde hair big black boots and body piercing
before they were fashionable
something of a nympho
but not a slut
In his world there is a distinctive difference
he is not sure what it is,
only that it exists
Sluts are cheerleaders and rich girls.

Rumor has it that she is now a prostitute
on Cass Corridor
lives in her car
with two gray kittens
shoots up twice a day
smokes crack at night
had forty year old boyfriend fiancé pimp

She no longer returns his phone calls or letters.

Eight months ago An old friend of his tried to pry her off
bought her food: fresh greens, orange juice, every day
he left for the summer
now he blames himself

His friend and he sit in a basement
glass or plastic globes painted with iridescent colors surround them
suspended from the ceiling they talk about old times when ,

it was fun
he was younger than the rest of them
by a good two years

now it's almost over
just out of high school he wonders why there aren't more suicides
he wishes there were
that way the pain would be brief
none of this lingering wondering lingering
no false hope for recovery

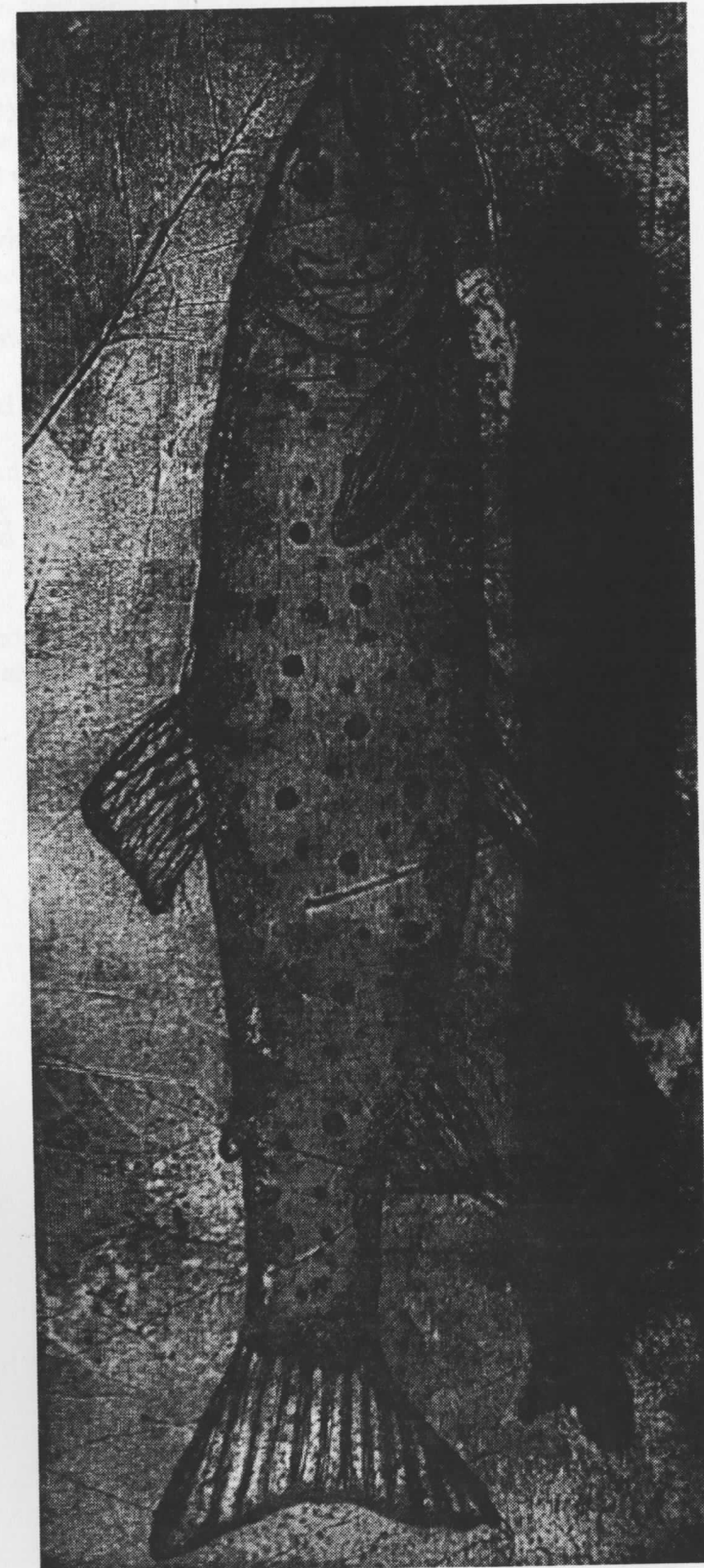
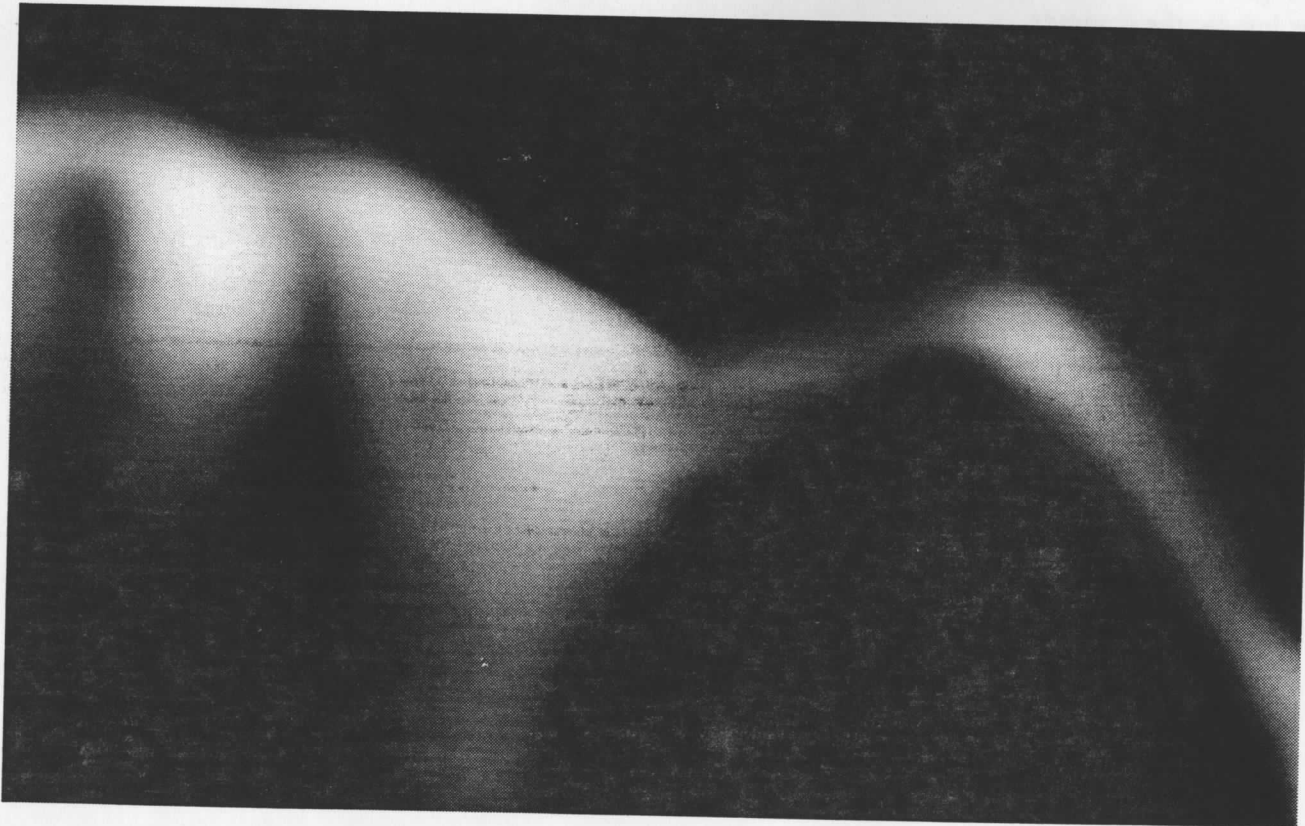
the poet hates his friends

-Colin Bossen '98

sun

her eye sees the sun
 her instincts tell her
 that the sun is good
 so she revels in it
 until she burns
 the solar ache is cosmic
 pleasure pain
 her appreciation of aestheticism
 yearns for the perfect form
 while her sense of humanity
 screams for that certain feel
 she questions the sun's power
 its relationship with her self
 its hold over her body
 its effect on her mind
 next time she will be more careful
 but tonight she dances by moonlight

-Alex Blazer '96



New Woman

She moves quickly
through the subway,
a dark woolen scarf
tucked around her thin neck,
black bag snug under her elbow.

Beneath eyebrows
tidy from arch to taper,
shadows blend, as muted
silver as the steel
step underfoot.

Her foot clad
in heeled suede
clops the stair
like a wood mallet
to a low chime.

Cuffed pant legs
swish ankle to ankle,
sleeves rustle
like the brittle leaves
brushing the gutter.

Her blank dark eye
reflects the stark
drear of the city
as she emerges
into the crowd.

The many faces
around her are only
odd shapes of vacancy
in the dismal blur.
She sees none of them.

Staring ahead,
blind in the rush,
only her own rhythm
is familiar to her:
rustle, clop, swish.

-Lisa Stillman '95

Why

How proud you were when they handed him over,
fresh from the womb, unfolded into your palms.
You wished his newborn wrinkles would flatten
into your own image, his eyes open in your color.
The clay you had always wanted to mold
lay wet and fragile in your crusted hands.

He belonged to her only when his mouth lay on her nipple.
He was not her project, was never her son.
You claimed him as your own creation,
your singular accomplishment.

And days and years passed before she again gave birth.
This time to a daughter.
But your hands were already wet with clay
and you couldn't hold her.
There wasn't room for two between your sculpting palms.

Now they stand together.
A son and a daughter wondering why.
Why you wouldn't let go and why you never held on.

-Lelei Jennings '95

Camel Cafe

The man in the corner of the coffee shop
has no index finger on his left hand,
so he holds the Camel
between the ring and middle.
He flips the bicycle playing cards slowly,
waiting for a black nine
to fill the space next to his ten of hearts.

In the ashtray A lipstick-ringed Camel
looks so old and unwanted

in the ashes
of today's second pack...
as if he'd brought it along.
He turns every third card,
biding time with the smoke.

The chrome mug reflects his face,
worn deep with sandstorms and age.
Swallowing hard from his coffee,
massages the back of his neck
with his twisted left hand.
He removes the solitary cigarette
from the ashtray and stands.

-Jeremy Aufrance '95



Beautiful Dreamer

-Melissa Bostrom '96

Jack eased his elbow into a leaning position on the ledge of Adrian's desk. He tried to keep control, but it was beyond his strength not to watch her every motion. Slyly, scanning first for other eyes aimed her way, she mailed a smile his way. Kind of a delayed delivery, like...well, like book rate. After all, he could turn the pages of that smile: *Last night's tremble hasn't left, the hungover angle of your hat brings out the blue in your eyes, what time can we try it for the first time all over again?* He hadn't found The End yet; he wouldn't for another week at least. Jack was smitten. He would return to his room to sink into his springless junkpile couch, contemplating everlasting love. Well, at least until Beavis and Butthead appeared as visions before him. Even then, some image would float up to devour his attention—the fragrance of her flowery shampoo, the gleam of Crimson Creme toenails, the addictive feel of her... (of her what? A blush brightened Lara's cheeks with the shame of inexperience.) Well, of her. And he would be seized with the animal urge to immortalize his indelible love in dot matrix format, stanza upon stanza of neatly uniform poetry: for Jack was a Casanova of the computer age.

"I'm sorry, Lara. I didn't hear your answer to the question."

"Well um could you repeat the question please? I'm not sure I understood it..."

Her blood-red cheeks verged on sunburn now. Darn! It was the second time this week, too. She peeled her glazed eyes away from Jack and quivered her attention forward. Dr. Archy would definitely want to talk to her after class. He would, of course, ask nicely: "Lara, do you have a minute?" But still... Even "damn" would not be such a bad word to use, considering the situation.

Lara hated these conferences. Although the profs always tried to make them informal, she itched through every one. She couldn't help it; she was allergic to this sort of thing. Really, if she could barely speak audibly to students like Adrian and Jack, how the heck was she supposed to sit through confrontations with authority figures?

She still had a leprous-looking scar behind her left ear from scratching the hives so hard that time in the third grade, when she'd stood daydreaming out in the hall so long that she had completely missed gym class. Maybe no one would have noticed if they hadn't played baseball with water balloons that day, but her conspicuous dryness had ensured her doom. At least she'd never been much of a troublemaker, so nobody really thought she was doing anything wrong. In fact, it was one of the few times anybody noticed she was gone. Teachers always forgot she was there.

"Lara, do you have a note from your mother?"

"Um what for? The field trip?" she would hazard.

"Weren't you absent yesterday?"

"No, I was here all day..." with as much protest as she could stir up.

Oh, dear. And now she was doing it again. She could feel the steely stare of Archy's icy eyeballs on her. She had to concentrate. Had to concentrate. Hadta concentrate.

Billy's baseball cap had slipped down just level with his eyelids. He had dried out a little now,

his socks no longer oozing into his shoes. One last remnant of a stubborn blue balloon fell from his damp jeans. But his eyelashes, Susie strained to see, were still charmingly dripping. Those black-brown eyes had seen it all. Had seen her all, last summer, playing doctor. But they'd been only children then. Now everything had been transformed. Susie could see the light of her destiny, beckoning, pulling her forward. Pulling her forward with Billy's arms wrapped securely around her waist, caught in an everlasting embrace. She could picture the faces of their families, glowing with joy as they watched her stately walk toward the altar—and Billy. The mothers would weep their mascara away, sending it streaming down over-rouged cheeks into bleeding lipstick. They'd wipe the painted faces away with Papas' hankies, while the men hugged and tried to hide tears of their own. And Susie could rejoice, for she wouldn't even have to sacrifice her name to the ceremony—her name, that uniting force that had brought them together through Thanksgivings and Easters for so long, would remain the same as always. Their children, she imagined, would be cherubs with chubby cheeks and plump little legs and tiny pink mouths to call out for their mama. Happy tears welled as she listened for their dainty cries.

The scrape of desk legs against the dingy formica returned Lara to the less magnificent present. Her stomach plunged as she looked out the door into the dark hallway which inevitably led to the dreaded lair. She plucked her bookbag from the floor and hoisted it to her shoulder halfheartedly. She ordered her jellied knees forward.

Cramped into a corner of the designated "student" chair in Archy's over-air-conditioned office, Lara couldn't help scratching. His comfortable stride into the room did nothing to soothe her.

"I hope you know, Lara, that you're not in trouble here."

"Oh I'm sure" escaped faintly, but she couldn't help feeling that she was being set up.

"I'm just a little concerned about your class participation. You know, twenty percent of your grade is determined by it. I just want to give you the benefit of the doubt since I get the impression you don't really feel, well, secure speaking in front of everybody. You're hardly alone, you know. My wife was a lot like you. Still is, in fact. I remember when she was young like you. She would just sit..."

But by now Lara had blended into the beige upholstery.

His wife—her name Mona, she imagined—would have waited all her life for a man like Archy. Dr. William Archy. Bill, maybe. Bill and Mona. Mona and Bill. Mona had carefully scripted that magical phrase across the top of every notebook page. She must have been a student in one of his classes, Lara decided. Back when he was young and smart and maybe even sexy, somewhere between the grind of grad school and the glory of his doctorate. Mona's eyes could barely focus on her notes for watching him strut across the room, back and forth, strong strides to match the confident bass of his brilliant—but barely heard—lectures. It was a miracle dreamy Mona learned a single name or date from that political science class. But she had never expected reality to fulfill her fantasy. That early summer afternoon the air was choked with the scent of freshly-mowed grass and the burning smell of sunning skin. The warmth of his tiny office enveloped them with a heat that couldn't be escaped with

open windows. Her fluttering heart said the meeting had meaning far beyond the excuse of celebrating her final exam grade. The magnetism of those soft grey eyes was something her spirit couldn't escape. When his powerful arms captured her pliant body, she knew with a knowledge that had no logic that this was the man who would be hers forever.

"...and now that all the kids are gone, she's got to get back out there. You know what I mean?"

Lara nodded, helplessly hoping it was the right gesture. She suspected it didn't really matter since Archy wasn't seeing her anyway.

"Well, I didn't mean to take up so much of your time with my boring history. I always want my students to participate in class, but I understand that some of them may need a smaller audience, so just make sure you come talk to me individually to keep your grade up. After all, it's hardly fair to penalize someone for their personality."

A weak "thank you" was all she could manage on the way out the door to freedom. She stumbled home for some Benadryl to stop the fiery rash on her knees. The itch overwhelmed all other sensation and blinded her to her path. She shuffled over the sidewalk she knew (thank God) by memory, weaving into grass when she sensed the approach of another person. But somehow her radar failed her as another body bruised hers.

"Omi...I'm sorry. I really am."

"No it's all um me. I should have been paying..."

"No it's just that I wasn't..."

Neither of them had yet looked up. Lara realized with a surge of panic that with eyes aimed downward he could see her flaming knees.

"What uh happened to you?"

"Well, um...just a, well, a rash, you know."

"Oh, well, um, that's too bad."

"Yeah, well, you know, thanks. For your um concern."

"No problem, you know..."

Lara was on the verge of vowing everlasting nundom if God would just release her from this Inquisition. She could see Sister Mary Poppins tripping merrily down the abbey steps right into the path of the shriveled Mother Superior. But Sister Mary, with her fresh-scrubbed face and restless feet hidden beneath crisp layers of black, would be undaunted in her mission. The ruggedly handsome priest who waited for her with a knowing smile would sweep her away into his castle deep in a wooded valley. Well, maybe not sweep her away. In her condition, she shouldn't be subjected to any jerky movements. But the baby would be their redemption, even as it had been their condemnation. Their little family would live on love alone.

Silence slapped her into reality. The torturous talking was over; the stranger was fumbling along his way. Lara could feel her body again—aflame. Now a Benadryl bath was the only thing that could help her: her entire body had been invaded by the rash—creeping under her fingernails, climbing down her throat, clawing into her ears. Yet in her agonized rush home, she was compelled to turn

around (just for an instant, she promised) to find a face to match the voice and shoes she could now identify anywhere. And her dancing heart leapt into a death-defying standstill: the swimming pools of his liquid blue eyes locked with hers for a moment so fleeting Lara couldn't be sure it hadn't been an illusion. As she pirouetted, she thrilled to the echo of his sneeze in time with hers. She flew towards home.

Ah, but surely a man like this already had a beloved, a betrothed. The two would spend endless hours in hushed harmony, interrupted only by the occasional snuffle or wheeze. The wind would swirl crunchy leaves over the hillside to compensate for the silent conversation, sprinkling dust wherever they flew. A picnic of sugar-free Kool-Aid, all-natural applesauce and tuna salad sans mayo was all their allergies would allow, but they devoured the meal as if it would be their last together: wanting to savor each delicate nibble, but afraid that they would somehow thwart the spell that allowed these hours of ecstasy. And as the afternoon drew to a close, they would share their remaining kleenex and watch the sunset through watery eyes, huddled with only the warmth of the converted tablecloth and the dripping heat of their bodies to keep them alive. Absentminded hands would finger the soil after rubbing runny noses, leaving them moist and sticky with dirt. As the sun dipped beyond their sight, his hands would clasp hers and their lips would brush for an enchanted moment until her head rested on his shoulder and she rasped into dreamland.

The movement on her digital clock face made Lara glance up toward her dresser. Her nap had left her only two hours to prepare for the magical sixty minutes that awaited, the hour when dreams could take shape on a screen for all to see. She swept through her closet for a suitable frock. The green one, she decided, with the hair bow to match. Emerald flats and Mama's prized pearls would complete the effect.

With the dress securely buttoned down the back and the sash knotted into the bow she'd given herself a headache checking in the mirror, Lara hoped she looked ready. If the brooklets of perspiration didn't drown her, that is. She had tried dousing herself with perfume, but her eyes puffed and her throat tickled so violently that she had no choice but to re-shower and start over.

Face powdered, teeth scoured, tissues securely stuck up her left sleeve, she slid down the stairs toward the lobby. Her clumsy shoes only tripped her once on the way, and a lurch for the railing saved her from headlong disaster. She could hear the announcer's deep voice bellow "Previously..." and her heart thumped so wildly she feared she would burst a button. There was something in the atmosphere, some taste in the air that told her tonight's would be a very special episode.

She dodged threatening eyes and slipped to the back of the room. Gracefully tucking her skirts beneath her, she sat on the very end of the four-cushion couch in the darkest corner of the lounge. Usually she had it to herself, but tonight she was destined to share it with a stranger. A furtive glance told her only that his pulled-down hat shaded his identity, so she returned her focus to the television. After a few commercials of sweaty anticipation, there they were.

Kelly and Brandon's arms wrapped around each other like leafy vines coiling trees. Kelly leaned back slightly, sunk her gaze deep into his eyes, and smiled from her soul upward. Her childhood had been so sad, so stressed, so adult. Now she could finally have a love all her own, one who'd carry

her away to crisp waves crashing the beach, sand castles crumbling to the tide, nights of passion contained only by a sleeping bag. Moonlight would gambol over their bodies like a blessing for the future.

But wait. The flashing screen showed them fighting. This couldn't be happening—Kelly and Brandon had to stay together, after Brenda and Dylan and Claire and all the rest. Their love was as perfect as their skin! The screen blazed white again and Lara suddenly sensed movement at the other end of the couch. In the brief glare, she recognized the face beneath the shadows: it was *him!* Her stomach pitched with the lurch of potential love in her very own life. And what was this? She could see his body scooting snakelike the length of the couch. Lara's palms groped for the dry comfort of the upholstery. With each commercial break he came a cushion closer until his hand threatened her own. She could sense without watching the coil and spring of the classic yawn-and-stretch going on beside her—too many hours endured with the television as her sole companion had taught her that. As Kelly and Dylan warmly embraced, pricks of frozen fingers crawled over Lara's neck. The creeping rash followed as her body quivered in fright. She could smell the strongly-Scoped breath far too close, and in the black flash between the fadeout and the obnoxious commercial, she had to taste it too. His tongue pierced her defenseless lips and she choked back the gag reflex with a desperate cough. As her face struggled to return to its original shape after a valiant battle with his suction, he loped out of the room, leaving her with only the suggestion of eyebrows raised and a stream of drool snaking down her face.

A cloud of tears blurred her way as she fumbled her way out of the lounge. She could hear the eyes turning her way, feel the shake of the laughter in the room, but she could survive this humiliation. They didn't know. They couldn't understand. They could never be like her. Lara gripped the handrails, white knuckles strained, and held on for dear life as she pulled herself upstairs.

For once she let the door slam like a slap. She ripped the dress away and wadded it onto the floor. The elegant shoes she hurled at the wall, but their force barely made an impression. Her angry fingers, still reaching, went for the pearls but came away crippled by her crying. She crawled her way into down and wound into fetal position. Hugging her long-loved Raggedy Andy, she was free to soak her pillow. She momentarily mused that the tears were too many to be her own; surely heaven itself was weeping with her.

Too bad Andy couldn't commiserate: he had a happy home shelved with Raggedy Ann. The twosome had been inseparable since the day they'd met. Once, years ago, Lara had awakened to fiery whispers under a curtain of darkness. As her eyes adjusted, they focused on the shimmering glass display case, reflecting headlights in the night. Before her straining fingers could locate spectacles, her ears uncovered fuzzy moaning. Ann's blazing orange hair glowed across the room, and Lara's fingers halted in their reach, retreated, and pulled the covers up to her chin.

Theirs, she knew, was a bond that would last beyond their seams and stuffing, that endured out of reach of the regular senses. Theirs was a love that lived only in dreams. And so Lara sank into sleep.



Pinsetter

he has filed his teeth down to fangs
 and when he chomps they clang
 he is the hole puncher
 plastic bowls near the front door
 where his mother makes him drink
 dollar bills marked in sequence
 he hangs his children from a hook
 and taunts them with cake
 he drags his briefcase to work
 taking the red-line commuter
 the bags are held to bosoms
 tight white knuckles on the subway
 he smiles at a little girl
 she doesn't see the spikes
 where his tongue should be
 her mother pulls her closer
 because she sees the hook in his pocket
 the girl is america's princess
 she will be on television
 sooner than they had thought
 at the dentist the girl cringes
 the cavities are appalling
 she leaps and retreats to the cloakroom
 and he swings from nowhere
 to break her jaw
 with a forearm to the chin
 so she will grow up pretty
 he saves his best hook for her
 and puts the silvery pins
 all in a row

-Jeremy Aufrance '95

A Greater Distance

I caught a train for Grand Island
Nebraska and arrived unholy
on an empty winter midnight.

Having leaned on dimestore brandy
for twelve, maybe sixteen hours,
I was drunk to kill regret, drunk

to make the endless gray cornfields
blur and disappear, then desperate
for coffee and a hot shower.

In my knapsack, two flannel shirts,
a pair of corduroys, and stacks
of notebooks bound with copper wire.

I used a Sallinger novel
to wipe a month of public grime
from one of the station benches—

ticket stubs, some wasted condoms,
and a sagging hunk of Spearmint.
As I searched for a cigarette,

a woman sat down beside me,
wearing last night's lipstick
and real pearls. She was elegant

in the absence of laughter. She
took out a book of love poems
written seventy years ago

by a dying dairy farmer
accustomed to tragedy. Soon
The Depression would be banging

at his doorstep. And this woman,
elegant now in the absence of tears,
read on without noticing me.

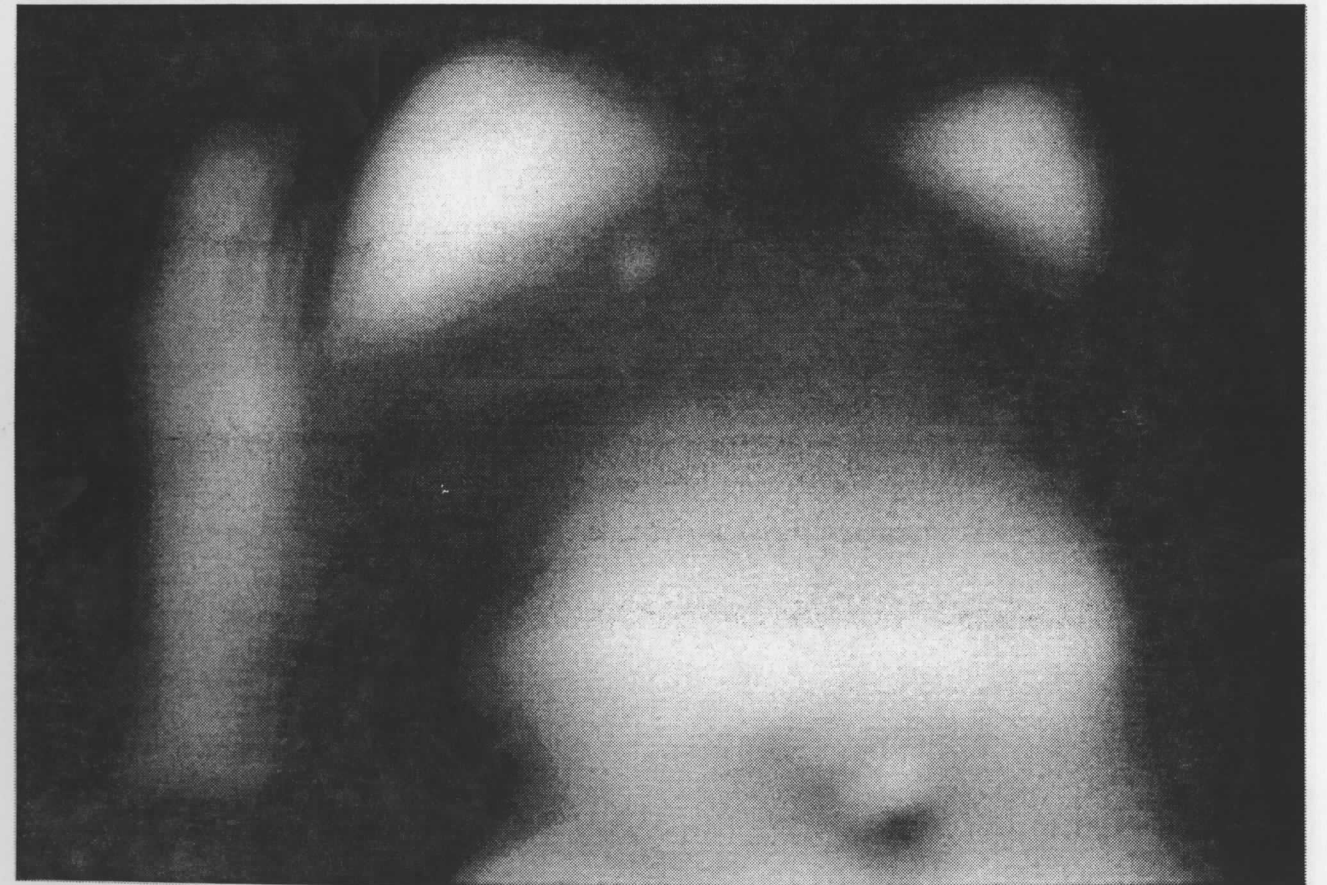
-Jeff Boon '95

Shiho

She paints the night in a scripture of stars,
cloaked in the folds of a black velvet dress.
I stir the idiot winds from afar
as I steal, wine-sure, one furtive caress.
Mount Fuji scars the eastern horizon
and scatters the sunset red in the sky,
changeless through time and delightfully vain—
the girl and the mountain, deaf to the cries
that carry the lovers in dharma's cup.
With springtime beckoning, I reminisce:
have I transcended or only climbed up?
Words can't relate to a starry canvas.

And then I saw the Shiho's paper-thin fan;
She holds Fuji in the palm of her hand.

-Jeff Boon '95





Anne Sexton

how will I know it's you
 if you fail to light a cigarette
 between sneer and cackle,
 a poet's pause, and your heels on the wood?
 how will you alert the others,
 the prick of a spindle
 or a shadowed wall, a postcard
 from Boston and a vacant couch?

oh god, anne, your color is fading
 why did you not fight them off,
 see them as tumor and tooth
 and time for drink, tickets
 yellowed in their hands?
 they jaded you like words
 meaning nothing to you
 anne, all perfume and performance.

how did you know
 sauntering off stage at the end
 to skip the curtsy, clapping hands
 strangling you—no more, no more
 madness on the critic's couch.
 you were that kind: too lanky
 and long for proneness; for
 posterity, then, a kiss to the palm.

-Allison Lemieux '96

The Holy Grail Ain't Nothin' But a Battered Tin Cup

This morning my beard became an animal that
 tore into my chin. I had to kill it with
 A razor dipped in an ointment of honey and
 bile.

A foggy-eyed drunk asks me, "Have you seen my
 mind, I seemed to have lost it." He searches
 the ground on hands and knees.

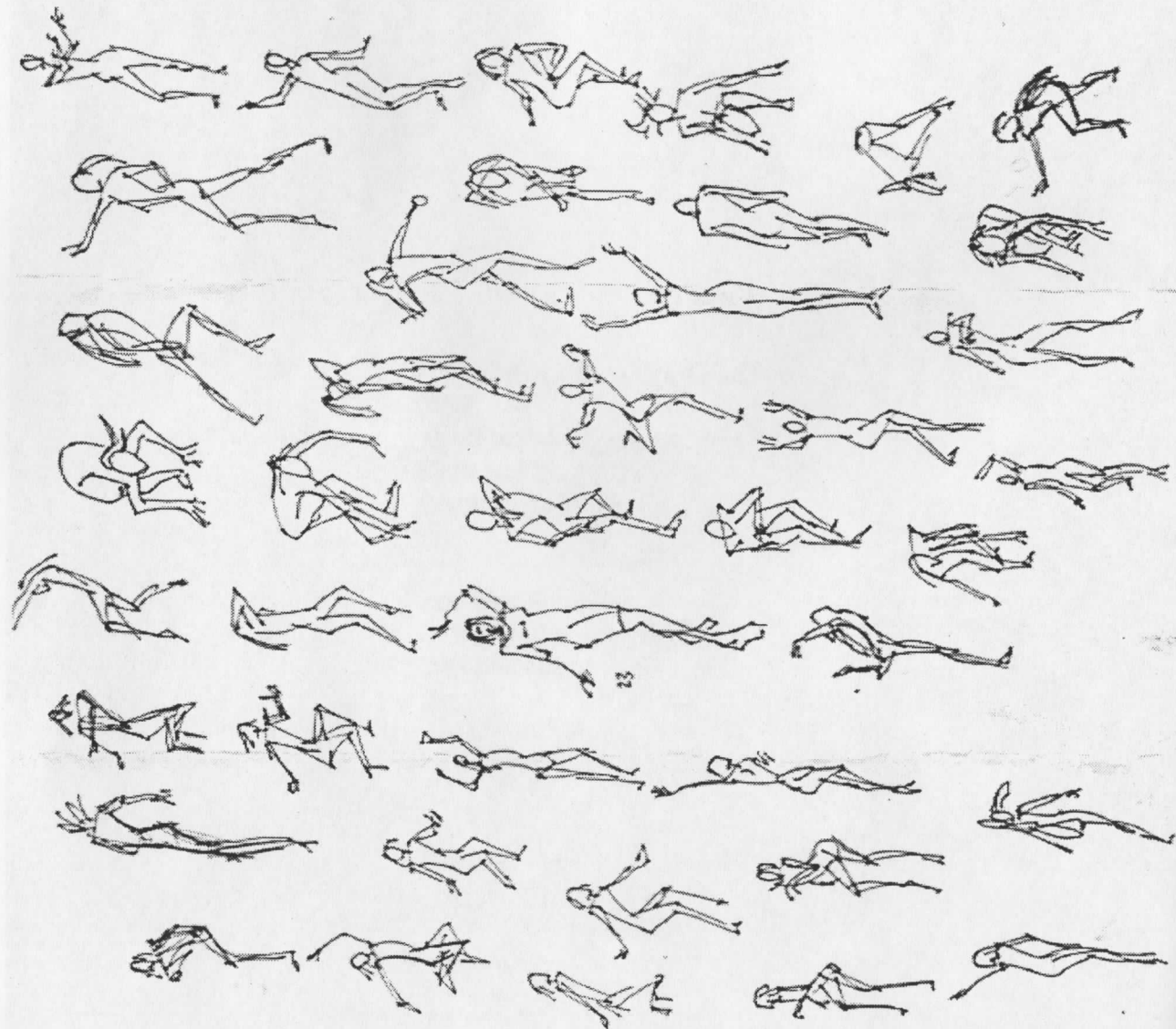
The street lamps drone in An insect language.
 The sky divides like a cell and lightning id
 silver on the backs of my hands.

When I die, Mozart's "Requiem" will stroke
 my ears with raven wings and thunderheads.
 The skull will rocket from my head into a
 bleeding nova.

-Ed Shim '95

freak daddy jump on your board and ride
 half pike turn ollie away from life
 dime bag fourth and elm rolling in the park
 stone burner token hit score a tab tonite
 stuck wrench new bearings rat bone wheels
 falling leaves drained pools kidney perfect ride
 striped shirts flannel shirts duct taped chucks
 S4 monte 42 levi's jacked up held up rolling
 to the job fotomat parking lot low wage drudge
 time clock punched out *good times* on the tube
 hit the betty for a fix 2 a.m. ride
 through the park in the pool build a quarter
 by the bed roll out ride the pipe light
 the pipe and fly - just enough to get by

-Liz Bolyard '96



Bang, Zoom!

Consider a move *
 To the moon
 Take only the necessities
 Your argyle socks and mint mouthwash
 Leave your 44 magnum
 But take the black leather and Velcro holster,
 to hold up your pants
 I'll feed the dog while you're gone
 You can take my fish, he's guaranteed to sleep
 The entire way
 I just finished patching up your space suit
 And found that polyester matches nicely
 With that other material
 NASA provides
 Your rocket is fully supplied with your favorites,
 Mashed potatoes and medium rare steaks
 I'm afraid no alcohol is allowed
 But I snuck a little Jim Beam
 In the glove compartment
 Your oxygen supply shouldn't run out
 But if it does use those extra tanks
 Left over from
 Little Billy's birthday party
 Go on then,
 Blast off to your new home.
 If only for a while
 And never forget that it was me
 Who got you there.

*Consider A Move - title from a poem by Michael Ryan

-Victoria Lyall '96

Gabe and Me**I**

We in a restaurant
 The Family. Me, you
 Tony, Ellen, and Mom.
 Our family.
 You screamin' about my birthday
 though it ain't - why you do that?
 -my little sister sixteen-
 I was sixteen a week ago
 You know it but you don't care.
 -hey I said she sixteen!-
 you screamin' to the other people.
 You tip back my chair
 and kiss me.
 People look, oh, they look.
 But they just people eatin'
 You screamin' happy birthday
 I was embarrassed
 but I admire you so
 I say nothin'

II

oh god. then I come home.
 Not even our home,
 our step-dad's home; the bastard.
 -committed suicide last night-
 I was on a trip last night
 you couldn't come, had to work
 so you said.
 We Howled.
 me and mom
 fell to the floor a-screamin'
 Ripping pieces out of the carpet
 shredding our hands till we say jewels of blood
 my insides would explode soon,
 my whole heart.

III

Not many years behind us - we pretty young
 but we have to learn.
 have to survive - the streets - are tough
 You lead me around
 You making jokes
 teachin' everyone to laugh
 You have that wild smile
 and those eyes
 they supposed to be blue but they always red.
 you convincing me that
 you not what I think you are.
 You mean to my friend.
 You makin' me laugh though.
 I tryin' to be mad.
 'cuz you mean to my friend
 But you my brother.
 - Heather Trabert '96

tornado summer

So many nights that summer
 you both slept in the hallway
 while i listened
 for sirens. for the drains
 to start sucking before
 the funnel passed.

I crouched in the hallway
 the safety zone in a tin trap
 home with a flashlight
 in one hand and a transistor
 in the other while your father
 watched the sky from the porch

coming in for coffee
 occasionally during an all night
 vigil. his nerves taut.
 Oklahoma was declared a disaster area
 that summer - the summer of choking
 dust and bloodshot eyes.

Now you flinch at the sirens
 eight hundred or maybe even a thousand
 miles away. and i know why.
 i didn't think you were old
 enough to remember, but i guess
 some things go deeper than memory.

Your father drove beside
 a tornado for miles
 one day. he said it looked
 single-minded - as single-minded
 as air and earth could seem.

Why didn't he tape it?
 you asked me not realizing
 there was a time before camcorders.
 and i saw. for the first time
 the difference in my sons
 children of two decades.

But you slept there in the hallway
 together that summer in the dry heat
 you can't recall. Sometimes your brother
 reached for you instinctively in his sleep
 watching you even as I did.

-Liz Bolyard '96



Why I can't tell short stories

I

Total Bliss ecstasy mixed pulsing throbbing beat
Collides head on with drug induced love turned real.
In snow storm ice slush gray black blizzard
while tall slender no hair dancer whips around making drug deals
and I sit on a dirty white towel talking to strange girls ("snorting thing) about nothing
or watch friend since before birth puke and freak out then groove
all under sleet and love idea.

II

Other time (real time) crashed car
attack by fat red necks in dirty blue sweat pants oozing blood and oil
who sit smoke and attempt to solve their financial problems
with our greenbacks

Girl with long brown hair (driver) goes temporarily insane
several times
once when car (not ours) skids into ditch (red brake lights cause panic)
in front of her us

III

Still hear pulsing beat
even when I sit in Detroit bus terminal
Remodeled since last time
weekend after Heidi Parsons and I dug stained glass
pouring red orange blue beauty on an old oak staircase
Talk about Kafka's eyebrow trick
and watch somebody's hair turn bright orange
smell up the whole place

IV

She (driver)cried at JC Towing shit hole
While white trash spirit of the death of America laughed at her
and Elmo the recently named no name junk yard cat purred

Still happy, I think back to last night before last
I realize life is meaningless good
throw your life away while having fun
as long as love happiness fills in the recipe.

V

Never saw so many people so happy
Bliss played into the picture love again
can't forget that chemical called love

VI

Gone through hell hell and heaven over and over again
Eight hours here
Car breaks down
Eight or more bus rides back
I smiled hummed ate M&M's the entire time

VII

Now there is a black girl
with streaked blonde hair
singing to herself
I don't even mind

VIII

Afterwards last night
I crashed hard
Slept so long so pure it felt so good
even though I was on the floor
in an old friend's room

IX

Get high on the dance floor
Get high on the dance floor
Whirl squirm trip skip spin bop
until the hallucinations come
Trees floating over forests tiles sunsets aurora borealis
red blue green yellow primary vibrations
swirl around
As something close to god
passes through

X

I'm sitting on dirty gray carpet playing cards
trying to put more into this
Maybe I should say more about all the crazy people
Able could sell God hell and the Devil heaven
the girl with elmo the muppet
Ecstasy the beautiful rush followed by paranoia
and touching rubbing people in the dark with neon hand cream and black lights
House with silver beads
enough enough
it's all over

-Colin Bossen '98

we found america in a dusty grunt-stop diner with
chipped orange plastic-topped stools And loaded ash
trays hidden there among the wayside stations and
truckstops, lost in the whistle of transportation
always on the MOVE, never forward, always sideways, or
home (back)—full speed weary and teary-eyed exhaust
fumes diffuse into the waffle-house where everyone
screams out “halloo!” and 14-year old high school
drop-out waitresses purse their lips with pink lipstick
smeared eyeliner “what special do ya want” gum-chewers,
they’re always gum-chewers you can bet your cigarettes,
your bottom dollar, if it ain’t already gone.

-Lynn Tramonte '98

Upon Being Asked Why I Seem To Stare Into The Carpet So

I'm not the only one who feels this way
ask any writer who doesn't
or cannot for whatever reason
write anymore
and every one of them will look away
off into the distance of some crowded room
or down into the worn carpet
as though contemplating its wear
and I'll tell you why-
you see sometimes after putting the pencil down
and leaving it there for whatever reason
it gets difficult to fight off the urge
to gouge it into your arm
once you pick it up again if
it doesn't seem to be doing much of anything else
and even worse
being unable to resolve
what exactly should be done
with poetry
maybe it only makes sense
that so many can't shake the feeling
that at the heart of new pencils
and blank white pages lie only
fine clean points
and sharp new edges.

-Matt Makman '96

Being Azra

—Lynn Tramonte '98

I must tell you, first, that my bike does not make good noises. It's not a ten-speed or even a three-speed. It goes one speed up a hill and faster down. My bike doesn't whir or click like a ten or a three speed. It's a plain, old, rusty brown color which I don't think is the original color, but I don't remember 'cause I've had this bike forever, since I was seven. And now I'm thirteen and I still ride this plain, old, rusty brown bike which I think had a racing stripe once. Oh—I don't have a name for it either. It's just “bike.”

And my hair is not it's natural color. It used to be a wonderful, crazy shade of nothing and stuck out in little frizzies and I was forever trying to straighten it. It tried ironing it and blow-drying it and I even used that stuff the black ladies use—Dark N' Lovely—but it fried my hair even more until it looked like one of Auntie's scouring pads. Auntie Evelyn scolded me harshly for stooping so low to use the black lady hair stuff. I said why would I stoop so low, a minute ago you said I was acting high and mighty. She slapped a birch stick across my knuckles, but I recovered.

Whenever April came, which wasn't often, we would sit around sipping iced tea with lemon and brainstorm as to what to do about my hair. We decided it would look most becoming if we added some color to it. So we went to this hair coloring place that was a lot dirtier than the one Auntie Evelyn usually takes me to if we're going some place like a wedding.

So we got my hair dyed, but the lady left the dye in too long and now my hair is this really neat shade of purple! I think it's keen but Auntie Evelyn, predictably, doesn't like it. The roots have decided to grow out and now I have two-tone hair.

School was boring, so I quit. One day I just said I'm not going and I didn't go. Besides, I read all the books they were reading three years ago. Auntie Evelyn thought the idea of quitting school an utter disgrace until she told everyone I was so smart I was a genius and regular school was too easy for me so she had to tutor me at home. This isn't entirely untrue, but mostly Auntie just gives me a few books to read but I don't 'cause they're all about dumb girls who want Roger and Ned to take them to dances.

I like my name: Azra Blue. Auntie Evelyn doesn't even acknowledge my real name, she just calls me Christina. I don't feel “Christian-like.” Azra Blue is the only name for me, April says, and she is right. Azra was my father's name, even though I am a girl. I don't know what his name is now. I don't know where his home is now, either.

Sometimes Auntie Evelyn takes me aside and asks me how my journey with Christ is coming. I tell her I don't know 'cause I don't know what she means. Is it a sin to go to church if you don't believe? I can't make myself walk with Jesus, but Auntie Evelyn sure can make me go to church most times. Maybe I might try riding my bike with Jesus some time, but only if he can keep up 'cause I am pretty fast. But I prefer riding alone. In fact, I prefer being alone.

I don't have any friends at all. I don't like anyone well enough to call them my friend. Well there's April, but she is supposed to be my mother. But she's not around too much.

Auntie Evelyn says Jesus is my friend. I never wanted that! How can I be friends with someone I don't even know is there for sure?

Sometimes I say, "O.K. God, if you're there, make this happen." Like make April come over right this second. Or make Auntie take her hair net off before dinner is ready. Just give me a sign. Sometimes this happens, sometimes this doesn't. And always I don't know what to think.

The house that I live in is very elegant and is cool in the summers and toasty in the winters, nice in between, and is full of expensive junk. But it is not my house and I should feel so fortunate to live in it and I should pray to the Lord Jesus Above that when I get my house and my husband that I live half as comfortably as I do now. But the only time I am really comfortable is when I'm on my bike, and I don't pray to anyone and I don't want a husband, anyway.

I am an only, lonely child and I live with my Auntie Evelyn and her husband Uncle Thomas whom I think must be a homosexual or something 'cause he's never touched her. I know this for an absolute fact 'cause I overheard Auntie and April talking once when April was visiting from the trailer park. Auntie said that the best thing 'bout Uncle Thomas is that his strict Christian upbringing offered little tolerance of sex other than for "propagation." But Auntie didn't sound ecstatic or anything. They have no kids of their own.

Once Auntie took me to this big, fancy store called "Macy's." I was so bored so I started playing hide-n-seek in the clothes racks with this cute little kid. Auntie got very red-hot and marched me out the door, almost losing her ugly purse and exclaiming things about me not acting like a young lady. I must seem very young to her 'cause she's real old, no—ancient, and I am thirteen and I feel about sixty.

I'm tired of life with Auntie and her silent but deadly husband Thomas. I do not belong in their sphere.

So now I'm packing a few things in an old red bandanna like the do in the movies. I've got my notebook and pen and my heart necklace and my copy of On the Road by Jack Kerouac. I'm off to try to find April whom I think is in Tennessee or Tuscarawas county or someplace like that and maybe she'll tell me where my father is. Maybe he's really some big rock star like Jim Morrison or John Lennon and his name is not Azra Blue. I'll be rich and famous and called "the long lost daughter" in all the newspapers and Auntie Evelyn will read about me in the Lifestyle section and she won't worry. Maybe I'll come back for a celebrity visit and sign autographs and maybe, just maybe, I'll let Auntie Evelyn say that she knew me when.

Mystic Truths

She touched my forehead with thin fingertips, so callused and chapped, that the intricate beauty of honey colored henna, the delicate pattern of Fatima, translating to love and luck, took me by surprise.

She had trained them to feel like butterflies, fluttering over my eyelids, my own hands, my belly, searching for the truth, the answers, seeping like osmosis through her palms to ultimately reach her soul.

Through dark orange and red horseshoe windows those hands had beckoned towards the smell of mint tea, while she spoke in a language my ears couldn't perceive, and enveloped me in what is the unseen heart of Morocco.

Upon ending, she brokenly muttered her quiet tale about me in my own native tongue as *I* then caressed *her* hands, explaining that I knew of the tattooed punishment for adultery and pleaded with her to recount her tragic story.

She looked at me then as if she truly could read my life—past, present, and future—smiled, and touched those beautiful, ancient hands to my heart, speaking longingly of beauty and a love so strong, it was obvious my meaning had been lost on her.

-Adrienne Binni '95



Incense

—Erin Lott '96

I never told you why I lived in a trailer park for three years. But then again, I didn't tell you much when we were dating. Do I get to call it dating, yet? Even though we never went out on a public date. Or is the "break up" still too fresh in our (my) minds that I have to still be realistic? I can't fantasize about what I really wanted it to be, can I? Anyway, I guess that I didn't tell you much when we were sleeping together. God, that sounds so harsh.

I lived in a trailer park back in '88 because I lost my job as the clerk at Citco. I stopped making \$189 a week (after taxes), and I started making \$80 a week in unemployment.

But I don't think that matters, does it? It wouldn't have bothered you. Had you known, I guess you'd have told me that it was my growing experience, my shadow of reality that came into the light.

You've never lost a job.

But why should you? You're college-educated. What is it? A Ph.D. in Lyric Poetry. You work as an associate professor at Colorado University. Tenure track is what you called it. For seven years now. You have a resume. And you made pots. (When I could probably only make lumpy ashtrays if I tried.) You glazed them green and purple. Most people would probably leave them dishwasher gray. You wrote poems. Rich, deep, erotic poems that I read only to feel stupid. Me. The one who lived in the lime green trailer on the East end of Mack's Trailer Lot. Thirty-four Sparrow Road. I never felt like a sparrow there.

Ethan saved me. You wouldn't have.

My name means oak tree in Hebrew. Ayla. Funny, I always liked my name when I was a child. Emily, my best friend in second grade, wanted to change hers. Something elusive, she said. Cassandra. Or cultured. Lydia. But I liked Ayla. Still do. Rooted. Old. Firm. Wise.

I looked up your name, Bethany. It means powerful. In Hebrew, of course. We've always had that connection. We have it even now. Even now that you're gone.

You know, oak trees die. Power lingers. Sad, isn't it?

My mother called me yesterday on the 14th. You know her effect on me. She's 63 years old, and she's buying a red Miata. Convertible, she said. As you can imagine, this has disturbed me, so I am dusting, organizing, cleaning, vacuuming.

My empty apartment doesn't have room for her Miata. My empty, empty apartment is too small for me and my mother's Miata.

The bag needs to be changed in the vacuum. The bags are in the hall closet where you left them. You slid them onto the third shelf next to the brand new package of eight rolls of toilet paper. Now one roll is left and a layer of dust has accumulated on top of the vacuum bags.

I brush my hand over the plastic, let the dust leave its film on my hands. You are part of that

dust. Your hand slid the package into its place and left a trace of itself behind. If I believed in karma, yours would be lingering here. Royal purple. Highlighted with forest green. But I don't believe in that. And I move the package onto the second shelf and make a mental note to buy more toilet paper.

After changing the vacuum bag and sweeping the olive carpeting in the living room (which never shows dirt, which is rather practical because I never vacuum unless my mother calls), I make my bed.

Ethan had wanted to buy me a frame. He asked me how I could call a mattress on the floor a bed. But I like it. You never seemed to mind. I had our (your) favorite pillows lining the wall. You remember the ones, I'm sure you do. The green throw pillows stuffed with goose feathers. There were three of them. With fringe at each corner, like the end of a rope. I used to braid the strands over and over. And unbraid them. And back up again while we laid in bed. You never minded lying in bed all day. In the summer, you said it helped you relax. And you didn't have to go to Boulder to teach freshman composition or 20th-century American Poetry or The Poet and Practice. In the summer, you kept your own schedule, entwined, naked, smooth, long with mine.

In the summer Ethan was in Utah, so it was never a problem for me.

By the way, I threw those pillows away.

My mother's name means divine good in Welsh. Glenda. She likes to think that it means divine grace. Or recipient of divine grace. She also reminds me that Glenda was the good witch in the Wizard of Oz. She says the good witch was young and beautiful—just the way my mother intends to stay. She scoots around in her '94 Miata like she were my age. My Taurus barely scoots.

Ethan didn't want his girlfriend living in a trailer. He saved me from Mack, the trailer park owner, a balding man of 46, pot belly, round-wired rim glasses, a left earlobe that was unattached, a right lobe that was attached, who always faintly smelled of sweat and Cuban cigars. After Ethan packed my belongings and whisked me away to my palace—a one bedroom apartment, complete with shag carpet and a bathroom faucet that only pours out cold water, he asked me why I didn't tell my mother where I had lived for three years.

I told him that she knew I lived at 34 Sparrow Lane. She didn't know that it was a trailer park.

I told him it was a complicated story.

He wanted to know why I never asked her for money. Pride, I said.

You would never have asked me that question.

But then again, you wouldn't have let Ethan save you.

Ethan called me again last night. This also has disturbed me. I feel the need to clean everything in the house. Every 14th he calls me to see if I have enough rent money for next month. I should be used to it now. It's been happening for four months now. Calling me adds a rhythm, a pulse, a beat to his already ordered life. I try not to disturb him too much anymore. He'll pay my rent, if I ask, I know it. But to ask for money would be too much for me to do to our "relationship"

as friends now. He might take it as a sign that I wanted to sleep with him again. He confuses love with sex, and sex with love.

You taught me the platonic power of an orgasm. You taught me that an orgasm achieved solely for your own gratification can be liberating.

Ethan's name is ironic. It means "firm." In Hebrew. Even he connects with us in origins. Yet Ethan is only firm on his commitment to protecting the frail. The sparrows. The trees. Me. If only Ethan would be as firm when protecting himself.

Did you know that Ethan is a second grade teacher at Lyons Elementary school? You're both teachers. And I'm just a learner.

Funny, I had so much to learn from the two of you. And you both had such different lessons to teach.

I have finally finished with the living room and the bedroom. I insert a stick of sandalwood incense into the clay holder (gray) that I made (lumpy) that sits on the top of my dresser. The smell starts slow; the smoke filtering the room. It makes me think of you.

You know this story. But I like to tell it anyway. That month I was selling t-shirts (tie dyed: indigo, chestnut, maize colored cotton in schizophrenic swirls, nothing grounded) in Louis's T-Shirt Shop complete with concrete blocks stacked to make walls. "T-SHIRTS \$10" was painted across the front of the store in red balloon letters, calling you inside to an incense fogged haven.

You already had been in the store twice that week. No one needs t-shirts three times a week. I thought that you were attracted to Louis. Almost everyone was, but me. I have to work with him everyday.

You unfolded t-shirts and folded them back up. You rolled each bead of the necklaces between your thumb and index finger, searching for the connection back to the earth because each bead was natural. Louis accepted no imitations. You held an ivory and blue baja up to your small frame and looked in the mirror. You meandered with three neo-hippie teenagers through the shop.

I perched on the bar stool at the front counter flipping the Lyons Lions Club pen over and through my fingers. The heady smell of sandalwood incense filtered into my nose and mouth. I tasted its smoke on the tips of my teeth. I watched you and aimlessly looked out the window that had SALE ON JEWELRY painted on it.

You slipped a tie-dyed t-shirt and a strand green and yellow beads onto the counter. You asked for three sticks of sandalwood incense and a bottle of vanilla body lotion. And you smiled at me.

I had never meant to start sleeping with you. But it was summer. Ethan was in Salt Lake City, and he had just called to say he would be moving out to Montana that week. He was going to be a wrangler at Mountain Sky Dude Ranch. Give tours of the area on horseback, he said. He liked the pound of the horse beneath him. He liked to know that he was in control of the animal. His auburn curly hair would be pushed back into his cowboy hat, gathering sweat around the edges. His leather boots

would be firm but covered in dirt and shit and stink. And he would smell faintly of horse hair and sweat. All day and night. The soft smell of manure would linger on him even after he showered. And the smell of the mountains and the valleys and the plains wouldn't leave him. Take care, he said. He'd be home in two months. In August. It's December. I still haven't let him back in.

Bethany, you ate dinner at my house when you were hungry. You called me when you wanted to hear my voice from Boulder. You stopped by the t-shirt store when you wanted to see me or buy more incense. None of these things you did very often. You didn't need to. I learned not to expect your arrival. And every time I stopped looking for you, you came, or you called.

But I was attracted to you. At first, it scared me. I thought about how *abnormal* it was for me to be attracted to another woman. Everything inside of me said that it wasn't natural.

But isn't it natural for an oak tree to want power? Don't they go hand in hand? Haven't you ever heard of "the powerful old, oak tree?"

No one would know, I told myself. Not even Ethan.

Yesterday, when my mother told me she's buying a new Miata, she also told me that she's coming to see me. My mother, old enough to have grand-children if I ever let her, wants to come visit her only child. She wants us to be friends.

I spray Endust on my old underwear that I use as a dust cloth and wipe fingerprints from the bathroom door. She doesn't know that Ethan and I aren't seeing each other anymore. She wants to have dinner with us. She wants us to be married. Her 31 year-old daughter is an old maid in her eyes. She reminds me that my biological clock is ticking. But the metronome of my fertility calms me while it agitates my mother. She thinks that Ethan would make a good husband — educated, intelligent, sensitive, supportive and, most importantly, financially stable. All the adjectives I once used to sell him to my mother. Now she uses them to sell him back to me.

She wouldn't approve of my having seen you. I guess it's best that you took that position at Dartmouth College as visiting instructor. How long is it? Yes, two years. You said two years was too long to be faithful. New Hampshire was too far away from Colorado. You sat, smooth, shaven legs crossed, in the rocking chair in the living room. Your eyes looked right at me as I stirred the marinara sauce on the stove with a wooden spoon. I added more mushrooms and searched for the oregano on the shelf.

This was to be our last dinner together. Ethan was due home at 10:35 the next morning. I would have to pick him up from the airport. Him and his backpack and the smell of horses.

I didn't say anything to you, so you uncrossed your legs and stood. You strolled into the kitchen and pulled down the dishes from the cupboards and set the table. You lit a stick of jasmine incense, and it layered the apartment and mingled with the garlic, oregano and basil.

I scrub the dishes that have dried egg-yolk on them. I have left them in the sink too long. There is no one here to remind me that I need to wash them. The SOS pad foams pink all over my

hands, and the smell of steel wool burns my nose. I raise a dripping hand to the window sill and turn on the transistor radio that sits there. I have deliberately stopped listening to classical music and country because of you. You had said classical music had a feeling like poetry. An unsayable emotion that could only be described through experience. Country, you said, was your vice. I only listen to classic rock now.

You leaving was convenient. You were due to fly out of Denver on Friday. You had three more days. I wouldn't ever have to tell Ethan. He would never know what I had done, and we could resume right where we had left off and nothing would change. But I never even intended to tell Ethan had you stayed.

That last night, for one moment, I stopped having sex with you. And for one moment I started to make love to you. It confused me. and it scared me. and I didn't know anymore. I still don't. And in the morning, you brushed your hand across my black hair while I pretended to be asleep. I still remember the tips of your fingers on my ear. You still smooth my hair in my sleep.

You woke me up. Told me good-bye. Without remorse. Without sadness. Very brief. But with a smile. You weren't callous. But it was to the point. And when you said "see ya later," you lied. You left your key on the kitchen table.

Three hours later, I shuffled to my closet and lifted a pair of crumpled jeans from the floor. I slipped a t-shirt over my head without a bra and found my car keys. Me and the Taurus, just the two of us, drove to the airport to pick up Ethan. Firm, firm Ethan. Here to protect the frail.

My mother has scheduled a cruise. She called me an hour ago. Instead of spending Christmas here, she will be in the Greek Isles. She said that she only had a few more years to be young. She invited me to go, but I said that I couldn't find the time. Dust is accumulating again. It settles softly back onto the furniture. But I can hear it shifting its weight around my apartment.

When Ethan entered the apartment, four months ago, he asked me why I never cleaned it. I looked at him and didn't say a word. The car ride home had already been bad enough. The tension in the front seats was terrible. Ethan had immediately repositioned himself in the driver's seat and started the car. I said hello. He said hello. And then we stopped talking. For the entire hour and a half ride throughout the still mountains from Denver to Lyon, everything I thought related back to you. When we finally got home and he asked me why I didn't clean the apartment, I said that I had been really busy.

He laughed, his head thrown back. Ayla, he said, I know your hours at the t-shirt shop. And then the laugh stopped. Suddenly. And he asked if I had found someone else.

My shoulders dropped, but I looked him in the face. Yes, I said, but it's over.

I tried, Bethany, I really did. Even though I found his body attractive, it didn't fit mine like it used to. His smell was too animalistic. His smile were too forced. His words were too smooth. He was stale.

Firm, but stale.

Sunday Morning in the Backlands

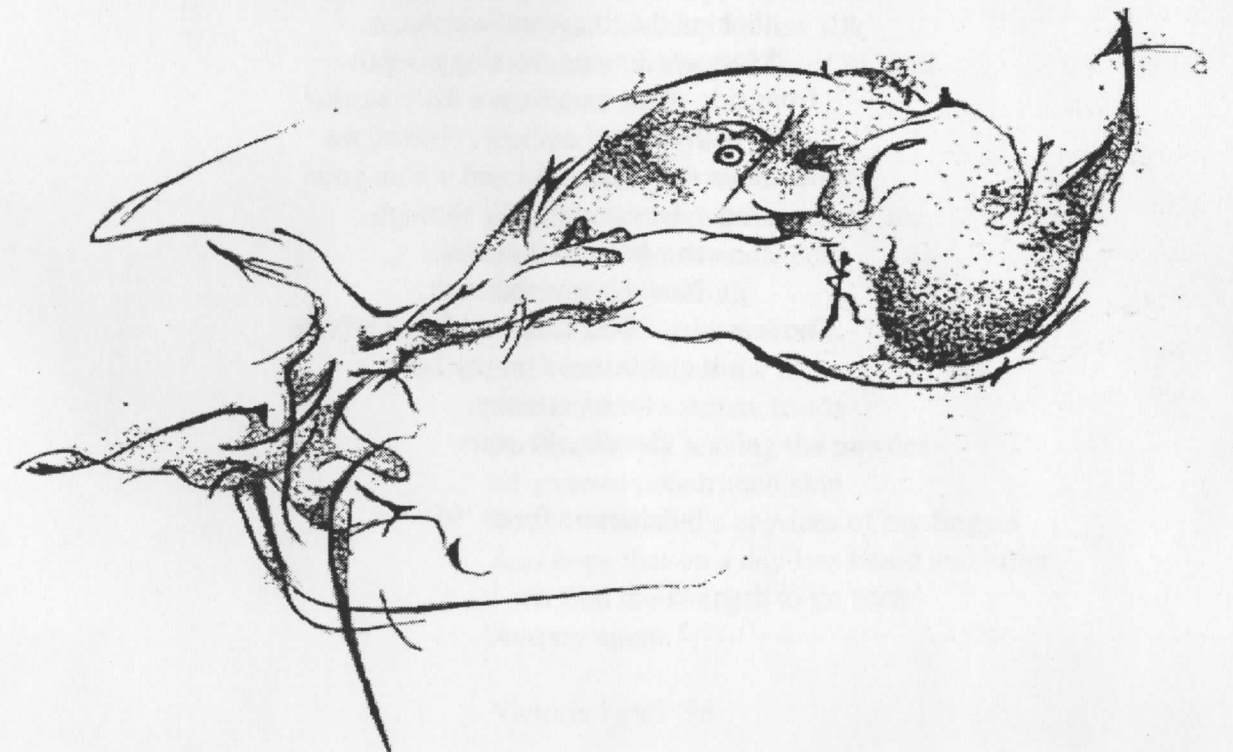
Here is everything you will need.
The pastel haze of morning
lies damp on your breathing skin.
Cool odor of gum, sweet elixir
cleanses, awakens the senses.

Here the red kangaroos thrive.
Like deer in these autumn fields
they stand, fragile, strong
in their tawny coats, awaiting
nothing, wanting for no one.

Here the sky is split open.
Crimson rosellas, parrots,
bold cockatoos, lift silence
into song, brilliant bodies
penetrating the blue.

Here the world is more than you believed.
You can drink from the ground
a liquid like you've never known,
cold and clear as moonlight,
stark and pure as God.

-Lisa Stillman '95



*"Quien no ha visto Sevilla,
No ha visto maravilla."*

Mosaic majesty, stretching up
to touch cotton ball clouds, too thin
to restrain the summer sun, floating
in *un cielo azul*.

Every site is a story, the smiles
and laughter legendary.

Dark, beautiful women in polka dot dresses
ride horses behind *machista* men
in wide brim hats and scarlet scarves.
Barefoot children fly kites
by a river flowing silent to the sea.

I walk your streets each day, watching
and listening, my eyes wide
with wonder at the orange trees
in winter, bursting with life.

The smell of the fragile *azahar*
permeates the blossoming spring.

You are a peninsular paradise pushed
beyond the Pyrenees. Some have forgotten you
and your strength, while others
hold your beauty and determination
in the highest realms of adoration.

The Europeans call you crude and lazy,
behind the times and worthless.

Mustached men who sing *piropos*
from side street bars before daily *siestas*
join with revered ancient celebrations
to create this image. I lived within your
boundaries and broke through
that barrier of naiveté.

Now I know the truth.

The legends of Don Juan and Don Quixote
are emblazoned on my heart
for an eternity.

Sevilla. Te amo.

-Adrienne Binni '95

The Space Between Us

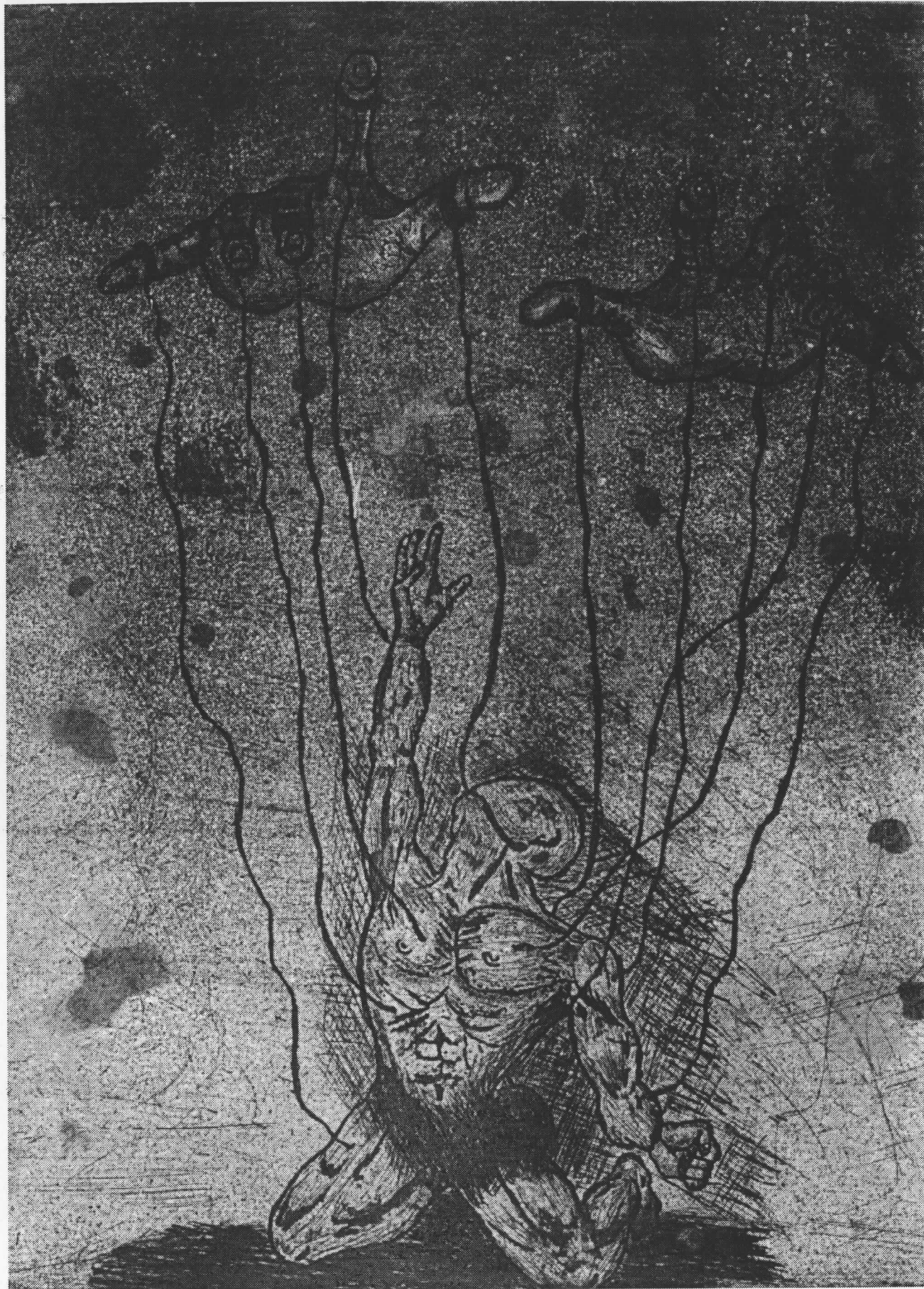
Something is here between us:
A bad poem of darkness, a shrunken song,
Innocence and an empty vase.
You couldn't touch me if you tried,
Bringing the space, demons waiting for the toll
And me, begging you to cross. Tangled we find ourselves,
Tangled and bound before we reach the impasse
By some ancient dream, the dream never spoken of
Until it twists around our ankles, a beggar's child
That leaves us dumb with guilt. Only now
Do we feed it, offer it our skin as clothing.
And blood, running cold from our bodies,
Drips from its greedy lips, the sustenance
We search for, only to sacrifice it here,
Empty our pockets and let our dying pass.

-Allison Lemieux '96

Searching For The Bermuda Triangle

On the afternoon of a dry and tasteless day
I walk toward an unknown beach
Corroded lawn chairs, empty sun block bottles
lye in a waves chant, untouched and stale
A motion from the foamed friend
My feet on burlap, My fingers
Emerged in damp hollow silk
I awoke with the prickle of its chill
As I bent down
To introduce myself.
I stood there confused about
My direction, my passage, my sea
This sea of pine needle cold
Fighting for warmth
I could smell the sweetness
But could not find the nectar
Of the juice in waters hands
So I turn away leaving the powder
Of crushed conch shell skin
To fall beneath the crevices of my fingers
And hope that on a day less bland and bitter
I can find the strength to go back
And try again.

Victoria Lyall '96



The Hunted

— J. Murdoch Matheson '96

"Will you just come down from there. Please!"

"No. I couldn't possibly. I must stay here until the hunt is over."

"Oh, for cryin' out loud! Felix, come out here and get your father."

"Damn it! Janet!" He squatted in the tree and surveyed the terrain surrounding him. "They are coming my dear. I'm certain they will be here very soon."

"Oh, no. Look, the neighbors are going to notice in a minute. Honey, please get down from there."

"I think I see one of them now."

"A sasquatch?"

"No, my sweet I'm afraid those are out of season."

"Oh, my, I mean to say. In the name of all that is holy. What are you hunting now?"

"Imps! Imps I tell you! And they are fruitful. Today will be a good Hunt!"

"Felix!"

My father hasn't been the same since the fall season. In three months it will be a full year that he's been like this, and we are entering another scorching Arizona summer. My father's name is Reginald, but everyone has always called him Pinky. He was once a great Hollywood stuntman in his younger years. That's where he met mom. She was a nurse's assistant and spent her time cleaning up on the sets as her ticket into fame and fortune. Father was the best in the business, but due to the lack of respect he had for his body he spent most of his time in bandages. It turned out that mom was the one cleaning his wounds so I suspect the two of them found a little magic in *Tinsel Town*. They moved out here to Juniper 'cause mom's sister got her a job as an Avon lady. Dad made his green hunting mountain lions in the northern hills, and selling their hides to those who make a wrong turn and pass through our world.

I have a brother named Elvis. He spends most of his time sharing stories and drinks with former football pals down town at Uncle Ed's Saloon. He makes his money working the grounds at the high school he never graduated from, and living up to the reputation he built for himself. My sister, his twin, works two jobs, one out at the stables and the other wiping up tables at Ed's. We like havin' her there, to keep an eye on Elvis. My parents named her Elvira.

I finish up at the high school in a week and plan to take on full time at the stables where my sister and I have been working since before she graduated. This all rests on whether or not I have to baby-sit my father.

"Hey Man. Where'd you find that shirt?" I stepped out on to creaking wooden boards of our front porch and cleared the sweat from my forehead. Mother, with a helpless expression, held out her hand to me, then went inside to test out new products on herself. "Hey, I say. How'd you get

that flashy-

"Hey you say!"

"That's right Pinky, I say hey."

"Go inside boy. I, ah, I . . . I don't want you gettin' hurt out here."

"Aaahh, c'mon. Nobody's hurtin' anybody out here. . . but mom, mom doesn't like it much when you do this stuff to her. You here me up there, Pinky? Mom wants you to stop, and ah, and so do I."

"Let's go, you little demon bastards, I'm waitin' for ya'!"

"What's the hunt today?" He was silent and I couldn't see his face, just his silhouette, squatting, staring, hunting. "Do you remember?"

"Imps."

"Well, tell me about 'em."

Irritated, he turned to me. "Why don't you go inside and bring out some beer. Some crackers too they like crackers."

"It's too hot for beer. Come down, we'll have a cigarette and talk about it. C'mon down from there, dad."

He stared at me a minute, than looked out across the dry dirty fields around us. Like an orangutan he stretched out his arms and dangled from a branch. Dropping himself on the dusty hard ground and rubbing his stomach, he walked towards the house. "Time to see the Captain."

"Crunch?"

"You got it, boy. Captain Crunch!"

The doctor gave us no solid explanation for why he started acting the way he did. When it all started he woke up mother in her sleep with a pistol to her head whispering. . . *The big game season is comin'. We're all gonna' have to fight. The big game hunt is on its way. We're the big game.* Mother had packed her bags the day after that, but when she called her mom my grandmother swore it had something to do with where dad came from, and insisted that mom stand by her man. Dad's ancestors came from Tasmania, and mom's mom says that Criminals and lunatics come from Australia, so that satisfied all of us for a reasonable answer. Dad never threatened her after that but he hasn't been the same since.

Dad crunched away as I tapped a pack of Lucky Strikes on the cutting board. I pulled out a plate full of cold pizza and slid them over to him, slurping the sweet milk remaining in his cereal bowl he glared at me with one eye. "Do you go to school?"

"Ditched."

"What'd ya' tell 'em?" He snatched a cigarette from the table and clinched it between his lips.

"Do you work?" I said.

"Ditched," said he with a jeering smile, then waved a flame in front of his face.

"What do you tell them?"

"I tell 'em my boy needs me at home."

"Oh, you shifty old man. You got them beat don't ya'?"

"There are more important things to tend to lad." With two fingers he picked his sunglasses out of his pocket, and secured them about his face. "Lets take a ride. Fetch the keys, I'm drivin'."

"I'm drivin the car Pinky." I stabbed what I had left of my cigarette in to the cold pizza on the table blew smoke from my mouth and nose.

When I stepped outside he was sitting shotgun and tugging on another cigarette. I swung the keys around with my index finger and smiled at him. The car was a 1969 Oldsmobile convertible, banana yellow and V-8 engine that roared like a lion. Dad had the stereo loud, and tapped his hand on top of the windshield to the beat of rock and roll music. I laughed and hopped over the driver door and into the seat.

"Felix! Don't you go near town!" Mom stuck her plastic face out of the window, and shook her finger.

I stomped on the gas pedal and we held our hands up in a cloud of dust.

We motored across the dirty red country roads that seemed to lead to nowhere. Dad ran his hand over his head, and sweaty oil slicked back his hair. I drove fast because I knew he liked it that way.

"It's Weird I say."

"What's that Pinky?"

"Well, like they say-"

"Who say?"

"Well, I was gettin' to that." He paused and looked at me. "They always call sunglasses, a pair of sunglasses. Now, to the best a' my knowledge this is one object." He held his Ray Bans out from his face with a curious look, than returned them to his dark weathered face and waited for me to respond.

"I hear your music Pinky. It's like a pair a' boxer shorts, or blue jeans or somethin' right?"

"Atta' boy." He muttered. He stayed quiet a moment and looked around at the country, then sang to a song that was on the radio. *Wild Horses* by the Rolling Stones. Then he turned to me. "Where are we going?"

"I thought we'd get on a horse. Go see Elvira. Maybe get out to along the Big Chino. When's the last time you went to the river?"

"Aaah! Those damn Mexicans at the stables hate my guts."

"They don't even speak English."

"They don't have to."

"Look, we won't even see 'em. We'll just show up and ride. It's a good way to meet the day."

"Aaah, 's too hot."

"Too hot! Shoot Pinky, you got a Hawaiian shirt on. You're dressed for the outdoors on a day like today, man."

"This is my camouflage!"

"Is not! You're dressed for a damn Fantasy Island episode."

"Watch it--"

"Eh, bossth, de plain, de plain bossth!"

"Shut it, boy."

We passed over the old wooden bridge that crossed over a dry river path and led us down to the ranch. When we pulled up Elvira was hosing down a dirty white pony and did not finish when she noticed the car. I left dad alone so I could go talk to her.

"Vi'--"

"What's he doing here."

"C'mon Vi', he'll be okay. I'm gonna' stay with him the whole time. I just think he needs to get out is all."

"This is just like the last time Felix. He took off for the whole damn day and I was makin' excuses for a lost stallion. It almost cost me my job and it isn't gonna' get *you* a job here any quicker either."

"We wouldn't even know *how* to ride if it weren't for him. You owe it to him now."

"I do not. That Mexican--"

"Pablo."

"Yeah. He still wants to press charges for when he got put in a head lock."

"Sleeper hold."

"What ever."

"The sooner you get us two horses the sooner we let you do your job. C'mon, help us out."

"Okay, but you get to help me tonight."

"With what?"

"Big E."

"Fuck that."

She cocked an eye at me and held away two bridles.

"I'll do it." I shook my head and started to help her with the horses when a short and skinny Mexican man came charging into the stables.

"El hombre esta enferma en la cabeza. Esta loco!"

"What's the matter Chewy. Que paso? Digame!" Elvira was holding him by his shoulders trying to shake him to his senses.

He kept pointing his finger outside and whining hysterically, "Mi hermano, mi hermano!"

I ran to the door and saw dad with both arms curled up and fists clenched swaying his head from side to side. Chewy's brother Eduardo was scampering around the car, stirring up dust and

dodging occasional jabs delivered by my father.

"Come here, you little greaser. Don't run away from me now. I'm gonna' wax ya', ya' little bean eaten' weasel."

"Hey! Knock it off." I bear hugged my father from behind.

"This little sucker's tryin' to squeeze an inch in on me somewhere." Dad was furious with dust and sweat sticking to his red face. His fists still clenched he jerked his head in all directions and prepared to defend himself.

"Eduardo, ven aqui." Elvira stood with Chewy and Eduardo went to them. She spoke silently with them and they left shaking their heads at my father and me, got in a pick up truck and drove away for lunch.

We still got the horses and dad and I rode up into the Juniper mountains to a cliff overlooking the Big Chino river. Dad liked to take Elvis and myself there when we were younger. It had been years since I had been there, and I loved being back. Mom never came out here. She did not like going on dad's adventures. She'd complain about the heat, the faint sound of a rattlesnake, or a hawk's cry in the clear blue sky. It was Elvis who loved the river. When Elvis was a small child, Dad would harness him to his back and hunt mountain lions. He took all three of us to the mountains when we were young so that we could learn about horses, and hunting, but it was Elvis who lost interest.

The cliffs were overwhelming to the eye. The steep rock walls stood like towers over the serenity of the dirt and the slow trickle of waters below. We tied up our horses and threw rocks, shattering the still surface below. Dad smashed up his shoulder so many times that he throws like a girl. I laughed but did not say anything. Neither of us said anything for a long time.

"Pinky."

"Hmm."

"How come you hunt Imps today, but you set traps for big-foot last week?"

"Ya' know I got an uncle who caught one a' those hairy monsters--"

"Yeah, ya' told me that story. I want to know about the Imps. What are the hunting seasons? How come you never go out after mountain lions any more?"

"Felix."

"Yes." It was the first time he used my name in seven and a half months.

"Hunting seasons change like the wind and the weather. And there's no one man, can predict it. You see, when a man hunts, it doesn't have to do with where he crouches or how he baits his prey. It's got to do with a fourth dimension of things. There's a flow of all nature that we human beings are completely blind to. If we don't pick up on it, than we become the easy prey. We become the hunted. A good hunter doesn't hunt when the laws tell him to. A good hunter is always lookin' for the kill. Nature has its ways, boy, and it is that way that we must follow, because it will direct us to a path of divine strength, and survival."

I said nothing.

"We ride," he said and swung himself upon his horse.

Elvira came home in the early evening where she had an hour off before going to work at Uncle Ed's. I spent the late afternoon wrestling with dad so I could tire him out before dinner. Mom liked to put him to bed as early as possible. I fixed him some pork chops and a baked potato, then set him in front of the television so that mom could deal with him when she got back from painting everyone's faces. I left with Elvira.

We entered Uncle Ed's. Blanketed with a thick smoke and distorted by country western music, Elvis was anchored at the end of the bar with four empty Budweisers keeping his company. Overrun with locals, dart competitions, the exchange of crumpled cash on the pool tables, and loud continuous rumpus. Here, everyone told a lie.

"Hey big E." I straddled the stool next to him and dropped both elbows on the bar holding my hands together. "Long time no see."

"Hey, hey, Felix the cat, where you been all my life." He reached out and took a cigarette that I offered him.

"Home." I smiled.

"How's Pinky doin'? Okay?" He held up his finger and stopped me before I could respond.

"Yo! Charley, can you get a beer here for my little brother?"

"I'm not servin' any minors," the bartender responded from the other end of the bar.

"Wha . . . hey . . . he can drink it."

Still the answer was no as the man named Charley shook his head.

"Aw'right, I want two beers then give me two." Amazingly enough, they slid two more Budweiser bottles to my big brother. He opened them and put one in front of me. "There, now you don't look like such a little pansy ass."

"Oh, you drive me ape you big Gorilla."

Empty bottles collected around him like corpses that he killed and as we moved late into the evening he had constructed a cemetery. Elvira never cleaned up his area of the bar. Things had gone as I thought for most of the time. I listened to him talk about the victory over Junction City. Then the seven sacks against the Sun Devils of Gold Water High. Fists pounding on the tables, cheers, and high-five's all around, then someone got brave.

A tall and fat man silenced the room when he emerged from the haze. "Hey Dove. Why don't you quit gettin' drunk here and go home and baby-sit your old man? Leave your little brother here. He deserves the night off."

Elvira was clearing a table behind the fat man who said it. "Why don't you go stick a cactus up your ass." She walked around to Elvis and me.

"Well, I don't think so sweaty. I think I was talkin' to the king over there. Elvis, Why don't you quit braggin' and gettin drunk and go look after that loony father of yours."

"Mr. I don't think I know you."

"Well, does it matter?"

"Wha . . .?" Elvis muttered.

"Is he a wacky bird or isn't he?" The tubby man laughed at the three of us and encouraged the rest of the bar to join in. "Coo coo, coo coo." He laughed harder.

Blood boiled with in me as I looked around at their sick faces. I smashed my bottle on the table. The shattered bottle turned a switch in Elvis and like a leopard he sprung at the man. He clinched the man's fat cheeks with both hands and swung him around with a furious roar.

When we returned home and I washed the blood from my hands it was only then that I found the glass lodged under my thumb. Until then I had just assumed it was the blood of the fat man. The same blood that Elvis was covered in. I had never seen Elvis 'curb' anyone before, although I had heard that he used to do it. He beat the tar out of that fat man. He beat him silly. Then I watched Elvis drag the unconscious body out the door of Ed's and into the street. Like a dead fish he yanked open that man's mouth and dragged him to the curb. He looked like a fat old beached whale that Elvis had gone out and caught. Elvis propped that man's mouth around cement of the curb, left foot on the sidewalk, hand on the parking meter, he stomped his right foot to the back of the fat man's head. knocked out molars.

Elvira cleaned Elvis' knuckles and dug the glass out of my hand, and the three of us sat in the kitchen as if we knew we had to wait for something. It was good to see Elvis in the house again, it had been months since he'd been there. Once dad had left his senses, Elvis moved away. I smiled at the two of them and we drank milk that Elvira poured for us. I smiled until I saw the blue and red lights flashing down the driveway. We moved very little until the officer pounded on the door. Elvis dropped his head and stared into an empty glass of milk.

"May I help you, sir?"

"Is this the household of a Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Dove?"

"Yessir'."

"Is there an Elvis Dove on the premises at this time?"

"Ah, we . . . ah-"

"I'm Elvis Dove." Elvis walked up behind me and rested his hand on my arm."

"Elvis, It seems the sheriff Clifton picked his younger brother out of a pool of blood outside of Uncle Ed's Saloon."

"Is 'at right?"

"Yeah, yeah that's what happened so he's the sheriff's brother from out a' town, and well . . . he's layin' in critical condition they say, and the Sheriff is plenty pissed off about it. Doctor says that he may never be the same again."

"Well, I hope not, 'cause he sure was an asshole." Elvis moved me out of the way and

walked out the front door. The police man put handcuffs on him right in front of us on the old creaky front porch.

When I got up the next morning dad wasn't in the tree. He had not yet come out of his room after hearing that Elvis had gone to jail and there was not a sound to let me know that he was in there. There was Captain Crunch all over the kitchen counter and for the first time mom made coffee. She sat on the sofa surrounded by Kleenex balls crying her make up off. Black mascara smudged down her cheeks, and it looked like *she* had been beaten up. She had the day off and without her car she was stranded at home with me unless I could get away in the banana Oldsmobile.

"How could you let this happen?" She moaned.

"Me let this happen? I did everything I could do. Maybe I could get a leash and collar for big E. Then some beef jerky treats for him too. Then, when he's a really good boy, I could give him a shot of Wild Turkey, to ease his rage."

"You're not being fair to me."

"What! Aah damn it," coffee spilled down my wounded hand. "You want me to look after big E and I did. You want me to look after dad and I do. I don't even have time to look after me. I'm not being fair to you? You're not fair to yourself."

"Oh, the horror of it all!"

Just then the door upstairs slammed and dad strutted down the stairs.

"What on god's good green earth are you going to do now," exclaimed mother, holding her head up with her hands.

He was wearing a baby blue cowboy uniform that he wore as a double for an old Lone Ranger episode shot about sixty miles north of Juniper. He had a double holster loaded with two Colt 45. pistols. The suit was tight in most places and stretched and ripped at the seams. He pulled down on the dusty white stunt-double Stetson, then drew his pistols.

"The big game hunt has begun!" He shouted. "I'm goin' into town and I'm not comin' back with out my son. I'm going hunting. You listen to nature, boy, it'll hold your hand and walk with you all the way down the path." He spun his pistols on his fingers and into his holster. He winked at me and took bow-legged steps out the front door.

"Mom, shut your mouth or you're gonna' catch some flies in there."

"You think this is funny? He's gonna' get himself killed."

"How's he gonna' get to town when I got the-" I reached in my pocket for the keys to the banana convertible. At that moment I heard the engine roar and out the window I watched the dust fly. "Pinky!"

He was shot six times by Juniper police officers, taking one of them with him. He staggered out of the station that he had just blazed into and his lifeless body dropped in the sunshine. His blood ran rivers down the steps and into the street on that early summer morning. No one stopped when they saw who it was.

Editorial Board

Editorial decisions are shared equally among the editorial board.
Tricia L. Huhn, Editor in Chief

Poetry

Lisa Antonille '95

Alex Blazer '96

Liz Bolyard '96

Lelei Jennings '95

Alli Lemieux '96

Lisa Stillman '95*

Beth Widmaier '95

Fiction

Amanda Aschinger '96

Liz Bumer '95

Tara Delaney '95

Erin Lott '96*

Lizzie Loud '95

Elena Rudy '97

Kristen Schoenen '95

Art

Alex Blazer '96

Lizzie Loud '95*

*Indicates the head of the separate committees.