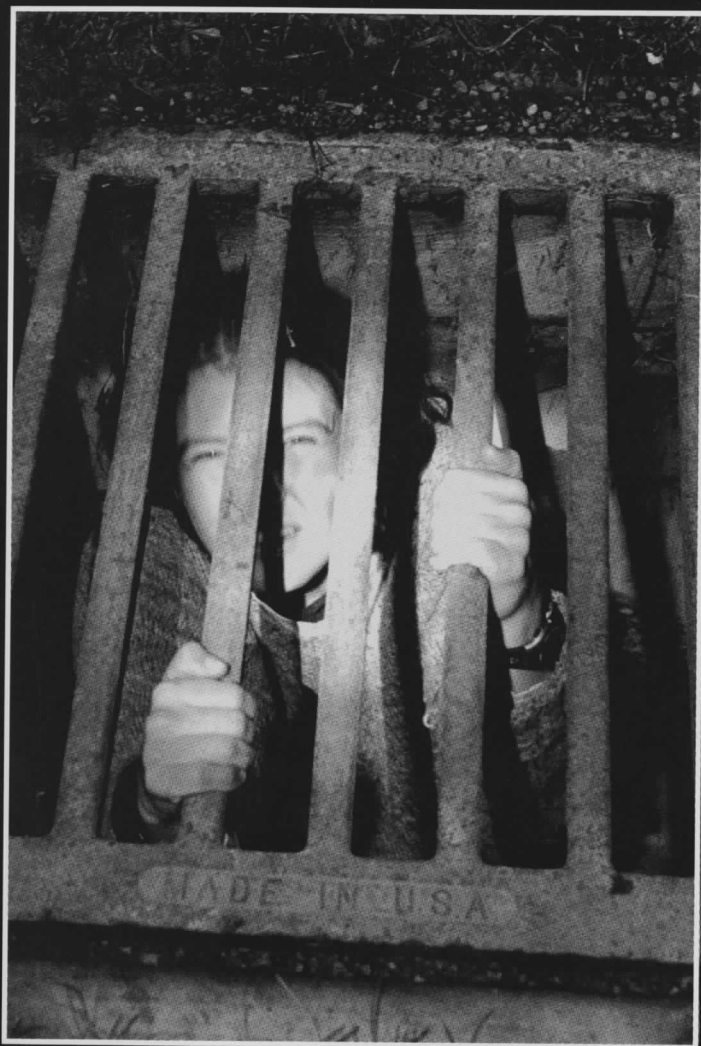


Exile

Fall 2002



Exile

**Denison University's
Literary and Art Magazine**

**47th Year
Fall Issue**

Table of Contents

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

Title Page.....	3
<i>Epigraph</i> , Ezra Pound.....	5
Table of Contents.....	7
Contributors' Notes.....	62
Editorial Board.....	64

Art

<i>Hidden</i> , Elizabeth Averbeck '04.....	8
<i>Untitled</i> , Laura Cannon '05.....	10
<i>Untitled</i> , Matt Messmer '06.....	16
<i>Hierve el agua</i> , Emily Stenken '03.....	18
<i>A Late One</i> , Sarah R. Smith '03.....	27
<i>Between the Lines</i> , Gregory Holden '03.....	30
<i>Carwash</i> , Gregory Holden '03.....	40
<i>Untitled</i> , Laura Cannon '05.....	42
<i>Flowers in Her Hair</i> , Gregory Holden '03.....	53
<i>Untitled Forrest</i> , Jessica Kramer '03.....	56

Poetry

<i>What the Dead Had Grown</i> , Steve Kovach '03.....	9
<i>European Affairs</i> , Ginna Fuselier '03.....	17
<i>Combing the Everglades</i> , Scott Barsotti '03.....	28
<i>Persecution</i> , Steve Kovach '03.....	41
<i>A few coins in a styrofoam cup</i> , Miranda Bodfish '05.....	54

Fiction

<i>Here's to Mary</i> , Katie Mannel '05.....	11
<i>The Game of Right</i> , Bradley Prefling '03.....	19
<i>The Interview</i> , Nicole Bennett '04.....	31
<i>Jet Black Chevrolet</i> , Scott Barsotti '03.....	43
<i>Fulfilling Duty</i> , Daniel Kinicki '05.....	57



"Hidden" by Elizabeth Averbeck '04

What the Dead Had Grown

Slow light hung behind the shaded ash groves.
 My brother ambled awkwardly in overalls
 I handed down to him last summer.
 Behind our house, a gravel path stretched on
 toward town, past a graveyard
 where tall grass testified neglect.
 There, the years drizzled commemorations
 from the gravestones. Slate markers cracked open
 like the pages of an unattended book.
 I stretched out on the ground, and watched a chicory
 hang from the weight of the dew;
 my finger caught the droplets accruing
 on its petal as my brother hurtled
 through the garden that the dead had grown for us.
 Wild strawberries swelled there like tiny rising suns
 and my tongue burned sour as I pressed
 each one against my palate.
 A few weeks later, my brother ventured there alone
 and when he came home with some berries before breakfast,
 our mother washed them, sliced them on cereal,
 and we ate them. The taste, she said, was unbelievable
 and asked my brother where he found them.
 I watched him explain himself, words falling
 like rain. My mother coughed into a rag.

--Steve Kovach '03



"Untitled" by Laura Cannon '05

Here's to Mary

Mark walked slowly through the room, barely lifting his feet, unusually uncomfortable in the alien atmosphere, like a stray dog that wandered into the wrong yard. Suddenly very hot, he loosened his tie and undid the top button of his white dress shirt. The outfit was nothing close to the casual long-sleeved T-shirts and jeans he usually wore, and he could picture Mary laughing at him in this stuffy suit. He suppressed his smile at the thought of her—her cheerful, good-humored spirit—and made his way to a corner of the room where he might not be so noticeable. He knew he would see her here, and he wasn't sure if that was what he wanted.

Trey was sitting on the couch, where he had been for the past hour, watching people meander through his living room, listening to the casual chitchat and the occasional tinkle of laughter. Every-so-often, he would hear Mary among the voices, but he couldn't see her. She always called him anti-social, although he knew that this time she really wouldn't mind him secluding himself on the couch. Family was intimidating. Then he saw Mark, and Mark saw him.

They stared at each other across the room, Mark's intense green eyes looking darkly and directly into Trey's baby blues, daring him to make a move. Trey stood slowly, careful not to bring himself to attention, and sidestepped his way through the crowd. He didn't move directly towards Mark, but he never lost sight of his target. *The nerve of Mark to show up here, in our house*, he thought. Finally, after being sidetracked by two fat aunts and one long-lost cousin, Trey arrived in the chilly corner where Mark was waiting. Mark couldn't believe this man would dare approach him—would dare to think that he would stay away forever.

"What are you doing here?" Trey kept his voice low, but firm, expecting that half of the people in the room had their eyes bored into the back of his head, and each had his or her good ear turned intently in their direction. It was a crowd of family and friends, all wonderful, and all eager to hear a bit of gossip that would make for a great story.

"I'm doing what everyone else is doing—having a gay old time, reminiscing about the good old days." Mark couldn't help but smirk, knowing that Mary would disapprove of his usual smart-ass tone. His smug attitude had been the one thing that had eluded her easy-going acceptance. She had tolerated it so long because she had known it was only a guise he put up to block his true emotional frailty—or so she had said. He and everyone else knew that he was just cocky. But there was never any point in arguing with that woman when she came up with a theory. This thought slightly broadened his smirk, and Trey read it as a challenge.

Still, under the circumstances, Trey remained calm. "Listen, I'm not going to make you leave, but only because Mary would insist that you stay. I didn't know you were coming, but if you really feel the need to be here, then you're welcome. Just know that this is my house, *our* house, and I won't tolerate a scene. You got that?"

Mark raised his eyebrows and nodded, slightly shocked by the tiger eyes that he had just witnessed peering out of this gentle housecat for the first time. As Trey started to turn away, Mark said, "Wait. There's something I want."

Trey snapped back around and feigned surprise. "Oh, really? And here I thought

you just came to enjoy the champagne and good company. My mistake. I should have known there would be something more. There always is, isn't there?" Mark was silent, so Trey continued. "What could you possibly want? I know it couldn't be Mary, because that was settled a long time ago. She'll always be mine now, so what else could it be?"

Mark let the comment roll off his shoulders, as he had so many other things so many times before. He cleared his throat. "Pictures. There were some pictures of us on vacation in Australia. I wanted to go again, and I thought maybe the photos would be helpful, you know, since I couldn't really remember what places I liked the best. It's all sort of blurry, it was so long ago..." He lost his momentum, knowing how ridiculous he sounded.

"And you chose today to come get them?" Trey was incredulous, but Mark remained unfazed.

"Well any time was going to be awkward, right?" he said with an uncomfortable chuckle and a shrug.

Trey just looked at him, still not believing that this man was actually standing in his living room. There was nothing really left to do but sigh and say, "I don't know what pictures you're talking about." Mark started to interrupt. "But," Trey continued, "she has boxes of photographs in our closet. I'll go look." Knowing that this was the best thing to do, that this was what Mary would want, and that this was the quickest way to get Mark to leave, he started to head for the stairs.

As Trey began to walk away, Mark became all too aware of being very alone, and very noticeable. He felt as though some sort of honing device had been planted somewhere on his body, and now its signal was ringing loud and clear to everyone in the room. Not wanting to stay, not wanting to see her—not yet—he had to move. "I'm coming with you," he said to Trey's back. Trey just stopped, sighed again, and then continued on to the stairs, sensing Mark close on his tail. The smell of his cologne was unmistakable. That smell triggered memories that Trey never wanted to think about again, so he blocked it out, thinking about happier times, and quickened his pace.

Top of the stairs, first door on the left. It was closed. Mark nearly ran into Trey when he paused just outside the door, not exactly sure he wanted to enter his and Mary's bedroom with Mark—this man that he hated so much—this man that Mary had loved so much. Then, realizing that he had no choice if he wanted to keep the peace, he opened the door and walked in. Mark lingered in the doorway, taking in everything. The room was almost exactly as he remembered it from four months before, with the pale blue walls and the delicate white curtains that billowed in the slightest breeze. Mary always loved to keep the windows open, just as they were now, and he remembered lying on that very bed with the white down comforter, she in his arms, and staring across the room at the picture of her in the arms of another man—the man who had true claim to this bedroom and this woman. He felt a tinge of the old guilt and jealousy creep into his mind, but again, he let it roll off as he stepped into the room.

It was as though he had entered into her very being, and the memories came flooding back. That smell! That smell was what triggered it—not the walls, or the curtains, or the bed, but that sweet smell of roses and fruit and clean things that were all of her. He never knew what it was that made her smell that way—he didn't care to know—he only cared that she did, and that he loved it, and he really did love her. Still. *This is not good*, was his last thought before he followed Trey into the oversized walk-in closet.

If there was any sign at all that a man did indeed live in this room, Mark saw that it was in the closet. Trey's shoes, ties and socks littered the floor, his clothes spilling off shelves and barely clinging to hangers. It was a huge contrast to the tidiness of the bedroom, to say the least. The presence of a man seemed to overpower this little space, Trey's clutter almost completely obliterating Mary's small, self-appointed section. Her bare-necessity collection of clothes were hanging neatly on the few hangers, and her shoes were all lined right foot, left foot, on the shoe rack below. Mark smiled.

When Trey reached up and drew back a curtain that hung across the uppermost shelf, Mark barely suppressed the laugh that desperately tried to escape from his lungs. That was the Mary he knew: she had the knack for appearing completely clean and organized on the outside, but once you opened the curtains to reveal what was inside, her life was complete chaos. Although Mark couldn't see it, Trey was smiling too—he was smiling at the same thing—her antics, her cleverness. He loved the way she didn't own an exuberant amount of clothes as so many other women he dated had, and he loved the way she let him have that space, just how he wanted it, without a word about the mess, and he knew that this was why. Way up on the top shelf, normally hidden behind the curtain, was a plethora of old hats, tangled masses of yarn, broken picture frames, books that she had read and re-read, and boxes upon boxes of photos, none of which were labeled. With that he remembered what he was really doing here, and he returned to business.

"Well, they could be in any one of these boxes, so let's start digging." He began to hand the boxes down to Mark, one by one. He didn't like the idea of Mark going through her things, but there were so many that it would take long enough with the two of them looking.

The first box that Trey opened contained Mary's old family photos. There were pictures of her parents before the divorce that Mary had never truly gotten over, pictures of aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents, and several old black and whites of people he didn't recognize. He thought they would have been fun to dig through at one time, but not now. Next box.

Mark's box really wasn't filled with photos at all, but old letters, cards, poems and other various trinkets that Mary had collected over the years. Arranging himself so it would be difficult for Trey to see what he was looking at, he began to dig through the contents. To his surprise, he saw that many of the items had been gifts from himself: a small locket, several birthday cards, even Mark's one and only attempt at poetry. When he unearthed a cassette tape buried at the bottom, he almost cried for the second time in his life. The first time had been when he had given her this cassette. On it was a recording of a song about regret over a lost relationship—he gave it to her after they had broken up, tears in his eyes, and he had told her that he would never love anyone else like he had loved her. And he hadn't.

"What are you humming?" It was Trey.

"What?" Mark didn't realize he had been humming the tune under his breath.

"It's her favorite song," Trey answered himself. "I never understood why... it seems so depressing to me."

Mark's back was still turned, his eyes still peering into the box, his hand still on the cassette. "We had an affair." There. He said it. He didn't look up.

Trey just stared at the back of Mark's head. He had never expected it to be out in

the open. Not like this, anyway. "I know," he finally said. "I always knew." And that was it. It had been four months ago, and it was over. Mary had chosen him, said she was finally over Mark, and Trey had forgiven her. Completely. Quietly placing the lid back on the box, Mark pushed it against the wall where he would remember to put it on the bottom of the pile when they cleaned up. Trey didn't need to know it existed. At least not now.

The second box that Trey opened contained holiday pictures. He pulled one out from last Thanksgiving. They had decided to have everyone over to their house last year, figuring they could handle it, and the event had turned into an utter disaster. The turkey was practically purple inside, and the steamed vegetables were so mushy that they had been crushed in the casserole by their own weight. Mary was incredibly upset that she hadn't been successful in turning herself into a cook overnight, until she looked at the beautiful apple pie she had cooling on the counter. When she brought it into the room, it looked amazing, and everyone couldn't wait to get started, especially since it was the only edible food in the house.

He remembered she had been displaying it proudly, holding it straight out in front of her like a prized trophy—she had even placed the tin on her great grandmother's silver serving platter—when it slipped right off the platter and landed upside-down on Aunt May's head. Aside from May's yell of surprise, everyone was dead still, not quite sure how to react. On the one hand, they wanted to laugh because it was quite the funny scene, but on the other hand, they wanted to cry because they were so hungry. Mary was still standing behind May, arms frozen high, the now-empty platter still tipped at that precarious angle, when she let out a small chuckle. The chuckle then turned to flat-out laughter and tears streamed down her face as everyone else joined in. Someone snapped the picture right at that moment, with everyone laughing and the pie still on May's head, luckily sufficiently cool enough not to cause any serious injury. They ended up having Thanksgiving dinner at the casino, since it was the only place open, but it was still a good time. Trey chuckled as he remembered that moment, and Mark looked in his direction.

"What's so funny?"

"I was just thinking about her sense of humor," he laughed, not quite realizing who he was talking to.

Mark felt more at ease as well, and he found himself replying, "Oh I know. I remember this time she put a rubber band around the handle of the pull-out nozzle on the faucet, pressing it in. So when I turned on the water, it came out of that nozzle, which just happened to be pointed directly at me!" Trey laughed, in spite of himself. He knew Mary was capable of such a thing. Soon they were exchanging stories about the pranks she had pulled, forgetting for a time that they did not get along, and for the very first time since the two men had been aware of each other's existence, the air was clear. They continued to go through the boxes, until Trey finally opened the one they were looking for. He stopped talking, and Mark looked up in the sudden silence, immediately knowing what it was.

Trey was shuffling through the pictures—happy times of Mark and Mary, Mary and Mark. Standing in front of a waterfall, in front of the Opera House, the ocean, and even a kangaroo. Always smiling. Always together. He looked up at Mark, who was just staring at him, and then he said, "She never stopped loving you, you know."

"I know, but you're the one she chose."

"I know," he said, "because I'm stable and smart and sensitive." Trey couldn't quite keep the bitterness out of his tone, amazed that the jealousy was still there. Mark looked down. "Here," he said, replacing the lid and handing the box to Mark.

"Thanks." What else was there to say? "I'll help you put these back," he said, picking up the box he had carefully placed next to the wall—the box with the song. He returned it to the shelf, and made sure it was covered by the rest of the clutter.

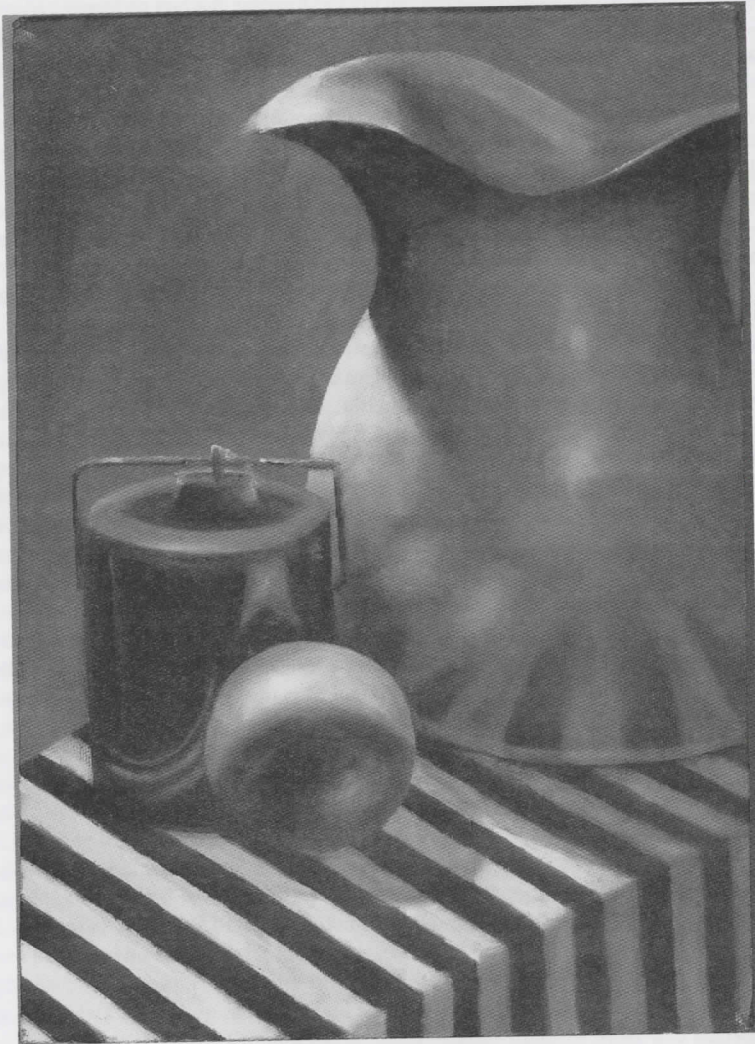
After they finished, Trey closed the bedroom door, but not before Mark took in her scent one more time. They descended the stairs and saw that most of the guests had already left. Mark started to head for the door, but then turned back to Trey. "I need to say goodbye to her," he almost whispered, as though he were convincing himself, and then the green eyes focused on Trey with a look of pleading, and Trey realized that he would not go without permission.

"Go on. I forgot something upstairs." He turned and went back to their bedroom, knowing it was the right thing to do.

Mark headed towards the living room where he knew she was waiting, and took something out of his jacket pocket. There were a few people still in the room when he entered, but they quietly left when they saw him. Then he saw her. He walked over and looked down. She looked exactly the same. Simply beautiful. He almost thought she was sleeping. So peaceful... He kissed the wilted and slightly crumpled rose he was holding and carefully placed it next to her body. "Goodbye Mary," His voice was soft—the sound weak from fighting against the lump in his throat. "I'll never love anyone else like I love you."

He walked to the front door and didn't look back. Trey was waiting for him, and he was holding a box. "Take this one, too," he said. "It's not mine to keep." Mark knew it was the box with the song, and he looked at this man—this man who had taken Mary—who had taken her, but not all of her. Death had done that, and they both knew this, and they couldn't hate anymore. There just wasn't any room. She had loved them both, and both had given her all they could and that had to be enough. This they understood, and it showed in their eyes. She was truly amazing. Mark took the box and walked out into the sunshine, and Trey closed the door behind him.

--Katie Mannel '05



"Untitled" by Matt Messmer '06

European Affairs

Sitting, amongst fur coats, and patent leather purses,
she quietly sobs, curled into the corner.
The wife had found the crumpled receipt
in the jacket he sent home to Houston.

The Drake Hotel, Luxembourg
1 man's shirt, heavy starch
1 woman's skirt, delicate press
Room number fifty-four.

He had asked her in a letter,
to patch its hole with her magic hands.
She clutches her husband's jacket,
afraid to let the only comfort go.

The wife's mascara leaves
black puddles under sleep deprived eyes.
Hours later she remains in the closet,
lulled by the rhythm of her own crying,

She is home alone, her husband still overseas,
Waking from yet another night with his mistress.
He is hurrying her naked body into the shower,
making sure the water is running as his fingers dial home.

--Ginna Fuselier '03



"Hieve el agua" by Emily Stenken '0.

The Game of Right

"Shoot the rock, T, don't have all damn day." I didn't quite know how to react to Jerome... whether to take his sorry ass to school, or just light him up from downtown. I had a good two years experience and two inches on my side. The quickness and fearlessness was his, though.

"C'mon, ya better start movin' else that ball's mine." I bent my knees real low, dribbled fast, and looked up at his six-three frame. I smiled, faked right, and zoomed by left...2-0. Was he pissed. Can't complain though, it was always the goal. His competitive juice flowed as hot as any Compton tar pit every Saturday we played in "The Cage." We lived to get under each other's skin.

"We just started J, don't go in the tank yet."

"Fuck you, T, fuck you!" My little brother snatched the ball as it bounced his way and checked it.

"Aight, 2-0, your lead...last lead you're gonna get."

"Bring it!" I squatted in a stance, covering alotta ground to try to answer his quickness. He swung the ball through, looked right and caught me off balance. Before I knew it, the ball was sailing through the hoop for three...3-2.

"That's right, that's what I'm talkin' bout. You got nothing on me." I couldn't help but grin. We'd been playing in the Cage every Saturday for the last nine years. It was only a year ago that Jerome was starting to beat me...Goddamn, before I knew it, we were exchanging wins and losses like dealers exchange drugs for money on these streets. I had to put him in his place whenever I got the chance.

"Your ball, check it up," He said coolly, like he knew something I didn't.

"What's that on your face?"

"Play, man, just play."

"Yeah...it's my footprint, after I jam it on yo ass!" I dribbled and spun to my left and dropped a step. I jumped up to what seemed like a mile high, and Jerome slapped the ball away. It hit my foot hard and bounced off the fence, making the trademark clinging noise.

"Say what? Say what? Oh, cling, clang!" He became so cocky in the last year but I loved him for it. It added to the game and made me a better player in the process.

"I'll give ya that one...good play, my man. But don't think it's happenin' again." I lived to challenge Jerome. I thought I made him better for it as well. Jerome picked up the ball and checked it again.

"Let's go," I said a little impatiently. Jerome laughed, dribbled high to start, thinking about what he wanted to do this time. Guess he could read my impatience. He dribbled around the outside of the key. He cross-dribbled from his right to the left, drove to the middle and faked once. I wasn't buyin', then he took a jump shot...swatted! The clinging of the fence was the only sound we heard as the ball bounced to the side of the court.

"T, ya got lucky on that one...too damn lucky." I laughed while I wiped the sweat from my forehead.

"For once in ya life, gimme a little credit, will ya?"

"I would...if you'd quit playin' like a white boy!" Those were always fightin' words in our part...specially when it was in the Cage. I threw him a sharp look, licked my lips, and knew he meant business...in some playful way, I guess.

"Still your ball, J, try to get it to the hoop this time!"

"Yeah, jus wait, be like last Saturday." Jerome beat me last Saturday after we'd played a pick-up game with some friends. Knocked down a three to win right in my face before we called it a day. We were always the last to leave the Cage, and we always made sure we left together. Guess our pride got in the way, like we didn't want the other to stay longer to work on the game. Hoops meant somethin' to us. It was our way, our court. We solved problems here, talked things out, and damn near killed ourselves we played so long. Especially now towards the end of May, approachin' the long California summers.

"It's a new day, J, new ball game. Don't live in the past, cause the present will bend you over if ya don't look out." He took the ball in his hands and stepped his right foot toward me to see if I'd lose my balance...not this time. He faked a shot and drove to the right, trying to burn me for a lay-up. He took to the sky while I got his side, my left arm hacking his attempt and knocking him to the ground...still 3-2, Jerome's lead. I got him hard on that one. He fell on his left elbow and got up slowly.

"Foul," he said casually, still favoring his elbow.

"You aight? Went down pretty hard. Didn't mean ta take ya down like that."

"Cool, it's cool." He nodded. "Jus gimme a minute."

"Man, sun's scorchin'. Wanna get a drink?" I needed it. The sweat was comin' from my body in buckets. My Kings jersey was soaked, and we just started playin'. I could see it in Jerome's face too. He was tired, and his Nike jersey just about had it, he was so drenched in sweat.

"Read ma mind. Let's go, then we'll finish this, oh, I mean, I'll finish ya off." He laughed as he spoke, patting me on the back as he passed me and headed for the swinging Cage door. I picked up the ball and followed him out wishin' I had a towel. Musta been ninety degrees out there, but it felt like a lot more. We shut the door behind us when we left the Cage and headed over to Seven Eleven about a block away, just round the corner.

"Watcha think bout my game lately?" Jerome asked. It was the first time he'd asked the question in a while.

"Which game, one on the court, or outta ya mouth?" He was good at both, hard to say which was better.

"I could always talk, T. Ball man, all bout the ball."

"Gettin' better all the time. Ya know that. Don't need me to tell ya." Jerome was gonna be a sophomore and I was gonna be a senior at Compton high school. We had to spend alotta the summer playin', cause we both wanted to start next season. I was also workin' on a scholarship to Pepperdine. I had to start next season, no question. I figured we would, but ya never can tell if a coach is gonna dick ya around.

"We be startin' next season...I know it," He said with confidence. I agreed. As we approached the corner, we heard some loud shouting.

"Mutha fucka, gimme it now!" We heard as Jerome looked at me suddenly. We started to walk a little faster, curious to what was happenin'.

"Fuck you, bitch! What'd I say? Give it! Give it!" We heard a loud gun shot just before we turned the corner. Wasn't it, though. We turned and the shouter shot again, hit

some black guy right in the throat...bout thirty yards from us. We stopped dead in our tracks, stunned at what we were seein'. My eyes glanced around, not seein' many around the sight. But I saw the shooter and I know Jerome did too. He was our friend, Lidell Sanders. Damn, the guy was angry, didn't even notice us. We ducked outta sight behind a parked car as I caught a glimpse of him hoppin' in some beat up blue Buick sayin' "Let's go, drive, drive, drive!" The tires on the old Buick screeched as the car sped away from the scene. We didn't see the driver as I peeped my head around the back of the car. God, the guy that was shot lay there, right in front of the liquor store next to Seven Eleven. The blood gushin' outta his neck as shopkeepers ran out to see what the hell was goin' on. Me and Jerome ducked our heads behind again, only hearin' guys say, "Call the meds, he's losin' blood...fast! Get 911!"

"C'mon, T, let's get the hell outta here!" Jerome looked scared, fuck, we both were. I looked back as we ran to safety, watching the guy's arms twitch and his head shake as more people started to gather. We rounded the corner faster than we moved in games. We sprinted back to the Cage a block or so away gasping for air. The heat hit us fast on the panic-driven run. We stood with our hands on our knees lookin' at each other with wide eyes. I dropped my ball down and set it in between my legs and stared at it, and then back at Jerome. All I could hear was the last gun shot repeatin' in my head.

"Oh shit, that was Lidell, man, Lidell!" Jerome panicked as he spoke.

"I know, J, what the fuck was he doin'?" Shot some guy dead...right in his throat."

I couldn't even swallow at the thought. My stomach was one big knot when I thought of the image of our friend shootin' some guy right in throat and the sound, the God awful sound it made...Guy wasn't even more than five feet away.

"J, we gotta tell someone. We saw him do it." Jerome looked at me like I threatened to shoot *him*.

"What? No way, no way, man. We can't tell...Lidell's our friend, we can't rat his ass out! What you talkin' bout!?" He became passionate. But we had to do it, even if it meant rattin' him out. We saw him do it, shot some guy and left him for dead. Made me wonder why we didn't stay and help, or at least call for help or somethin'. I started feelin' bad when I spoke.

"J, Lidell shot that guy! We saw it! Can't let him hit and run. Naw man, what are YOU talkin' bout?" I meant what I said to my brother. I leaned on the outside of the cage when he stood upright, huffin' and puffin'.

"No, Terrell, we can't tell on him, not our place. I can't see him go to some shit jail like that! No, we didn't see nothing! Got that? Nothing!"

"Get yo head outta ya ass, J! We *did* see somethin'...and we can't let it go. He shot in cold blood!" I still couldn't believe it. I saw Lidell, a guy we grew up with, shoot a man. I thought about him some more. We hadn't hung out or played ball in months. I heard he was gettin' into blow this past year and was dealin', but I didn't ask him bout it, couldn't bring myself to. I always suspected J knew somethin', but he wasn't talkin', and part of me didn't even wanna know.

"Look T, I won't tell, he's not like that, man!"

"Don't gimme that shit, we just saw him shoot! God knows why...probably on drugs. Admit it, we haven't done much chillin' with him in forever. He's been shady, fuckin' with the wrong shit, man. Ya know?" He gave me a dark look, gritted his teeth and

clenched his fists as he approached me. I didn't budge, I knew he was hurtin', the guy was our friend. I loved Lidell to death...but no way, couldn't let him go, not with what I suspected he was doing, let alone what I saw him do.

"Bullshit! He ain't on drugs! Whatever! Doesn't matter anyway." Jerome was bein' stupid, not usin' his head. But I understood, he loved the guy, and didn't wanna put him away. Shit, I didn't either. But I didn't know if I could let it go since I saw the killing. I couldn't live with myself if I let Lidell walk. He was my friend, but I wanted him to get help, dealin' and shit, bad news, just bad news. I couldn't look anyone, not Jerome or Lidell, in the eyes if I didn't act. Jerome wouldn't understand.

"T, why you bein' like this? Why can't we just turn our heads the other way?"

"No, Jerome, it's not gonna be like that."

"I won't let you rat him out, T, I won't." He looked at me seriously as he spoke. I knew he wasn't kiddin' around. He meant business. I looked right back at him, not turning my head for a second.

"J, I won't let you stop me. Not right, be damned if I sit back and you just let Lidell get away with the shooting."

"You're not his friend, Terrell, if you rat him out like that. You soft." I shook my head at the comment and looked up, tryin' to contain my anger. Jerome was startin' to get to me.

"How good a friend are you? Let a drug dealin' murderer not get help and get his life straight?"

"T, they'll put him away fa life! He ain't gonna have a life if ya rat him out." I thought about it for a moment, then looked at Jerome again, not giving him an inch on this one. No way he was gonna take this argument from me...I knew I was right.

"Uh uh, his life'll be gettin' back if we turn him in. He be away for a long time, but he won't hurt others, and won't hurt himself. Think about it, J!" He turned around from me, looked up at the beating sun, and slapped the outside of the Cage.

"Damn, man, fuck your white boy nonsense!" I lost some of my cool when I pushed him against the fence.

"No, J, use your fuckin' head." He pushed back, but my six five frame got the better of him as I brushed his hands off of me, and knocked him back against the fence. He pressed his lips tightly and his nose squinted...he knew I had him beat physically. He put his hands on his hips and didn't say a word, just looked at me.

"J, I know this is a hard decision, but we gotta help Lidell by turnin' him in. God knows what'll do next. We can't let this slide." I wanted to look people in the eyes after today. Maybe much of my reasoning was a little selfish, but I couldn't let myself or my brother down, no matter which way he thought. I also couldn't let Lidell down. His messed up ass probably wouldn't understand, but he was still my friend, and he needed help. I quickly bent over, picked up my ball and got up. I was ready to go to the police. .

"C'mon, J, let's go."

"Play ya for it," Jerome said in a challengin' tone. I was shocked as I turned around at what I heard.

"What?"

"Play ya for it," Jerome repeated in the same tone.

"What you mean?" Could he have meant what I thought he meant?

"In the Cage, let's play, one on one, like every Saturday. Only if I win this game, we do it my way...we say nothin'. You win, ball's in your court, we'll turn Lidell in." I didn't know what to say but deep down I knew, it would probably be the only way to settle things, once and for all. I still struggled though, shit, what if I lost this one? I couldn't, I wouldn't! As much as I didn't wanna play, I had to. I wiped a little sweat off the back of my neck, held out my hand and said, "You're on." Jerome shook it with a sweaty palm and nodded.

We stepped into the cage, our place, our court, and took our sides. We were about to play the biggest game we'd ever played together. And we were on different sides. I hated it, all of it! I knew it was hittin' Jerome hard, but he was wrong, and I couldn't let him win this game today.

"We'll play to ten." He said as he looked off onto the streets. He had fire in his eyes. I could hear the police and ambulance sirens in the distance approaching the crime scene. Our friend's future was ridin' in this game, between me and my brother. The thought bothered me.

"Shoot for ball, J." I passed the ball hard. He caught it easily, took it behind the three point line, and readied the shot. The tension was fueled only by our difference of opinion...and the heat of the California sun. It was just us two, only two left for the day in the Cage...as usual, the last to leave. Who was I kiddin', though, today it was lose/lose, even if I won, I lost this one. Even if Jerome won, I know he'd be feelin' nothin' but loss. The thoughts ran through my head as I looked away when Jerome decided who would start with the ball. The swoosh sound of the hoop gave me my answer. I stretched my arms and bent to touch my toes when Jerome looked at me and said, "I start." He bounced me the ball and I checked it back...the game was on.

I squatted in the defensive and shuffled my feet slightly, my nerves were goin' nuts. Jerome dribbled low and quickly, seemed like the ball wasn't even bouncing upwards it was so low. He backed into me, easing me toward the goal. I let him go on backin' me in, thinkin' he was gonna turn right and take a quick jumper. I was wrong...he went left, faked the jumper and to the hoop...2-0. I kicked the fence in frustration as I saw Jerome look at me expressionless. He didn't say a word. The clinging from the kick echoed for a good three seconds before I gathered myself, and grabbed the ball. I said nothing, just bounced the ball to check it with Jerome. I didn't hesitate. When the ball was in my hands on the check, I was in the air, shooting for three. The ball hung and Jerome turned around watching it. Sun was so bright, he lost sight of it, but I saw it. It hit the left of the rusted rim, rolled around twice, and rimmed out. I followed my shot when it bounced right before Jerome could get his sight. I grabbed the ball with aggression and made a strong move to the hoop. Jerome came too late, making a failed attempt at a blocked shot...2-2.

It was a beautiful two points, but I couldn't take notice, couldn't even crack a smile. Neither could Jerome. He didn't make any wise-ass remarks, no trash talk at all. He knew this was serious. Two high school kids were in the Cage, facing a harsh world. Who thought we'd start facin' it against each other in the cell we grew up playin' in? I bounced the ball at Jerome and was immediately in my stance. My left hand touching his right arm before he dribbled. He swung the ball through, forcing me to move my hand. He moved slowly outside the three point line to the left. He looked at the hoop, then in my eyes, cross dribbled from his left to his right and went through toward the middle. He stopped after two

dribbles and faked a jumper...I jumped. He went up and under, and shot the ball up off the backboard and through the hoop...4-2, Jerome. His quickness and the fake got the best of me on that one. Normally I would have applauded the play, but not this time. I looked at Jerome with the same blank expression he gave me earlier as the sweat felt like it was searing my eyes. I took the bottom of my jersey and rubbed them hard.

Jerome checked the ball to me. I took it right, backed him into the hoop and turned around. I did the same up and under he just did on me. He didn't fall for the fake, but I still went under, busting through his chest and put the ball up toward the hoop. It came off soft, just barely missing as I jumped again, and tapped it in over Jerome's soaring arms...4-4.

The sirens grew louder when my feet hit the ground again. Man was probably dead by now, if not sooner. I knew we'd never see any ambulance or police go to the scene. They'd be comin' from the opposite direction. I was glad by the thought. Didn't wanna see it. Was bad enough hearin' those damn sirens. I thought of Lidell and where he was now. Shootin' up or into some other trouble. It worried me, and it worried me even more that Jerome wanted him to go free. Guess he thought he was doin' a favor. Jerome took the ball once again and started. He looked as if he was goin' right, and then took a jumper. I jumped with him, hacking his arm as I forced his shot to hit the fence.

"Foul, man." It was the first thing he said since we began. I just gave him a look of agreement and tossed the ball back. He wasn't gonna miss again. He immediately jumped again as I jumped with him. The ball just missed my outstretched fingertips and swished the net of the hoop, three-pointer...7-4. It was gettin' even more intense. One more three, and I'd be history. I ignored my exhaustion when I looked back up at the hoop and then back at Jerome. I could tell he was just as tired as I was, but was thinkin' along the same lines. We'd leave the Cage together, win or lose, just as we went in.

I took the ball back. I showed toughness as I came back and went up for a three. Surprisingly, I caught Jerome off guard. The ball didn't go up pretty, but rolled around the hoop again, tapped the backboard, and bounced through the net for three...7-7. It was gettin' to crunch time. The game felt like forever, it wasn't kid stuff anymore. Not a carefree Saturday like normal. The thought makes me regret ever being thirsty. Could have avoided the mess, just read about it in the papers or got word from friends in the neighborhood. Naw, it was just me bein' selfish again. It was weird, the Cage seemed to be closing in on us both from the outside. The clear blue sky looked like paradise compared to where we were. The Cage usually was a small paradise, but for me and Jerome, it was solitary confinement, with the exception of two instead of one.

I threw the ball off the backboard so that it bounced directly to Jerome. He checked it to me and while he did, he rubbed his hands against his shorts. He was nervous too. He drove right to the basket with me riding his side the whole way and forced up a bad shot. I took the rebound down strong and brought the ball back out to the top of the key. I demonstrated a little of my brother's fearlessness by taking a shot as I reached the top...it was to win outright. No such luck, though, it was a lazy shot, but yet, so damn close to bouncing through the hoop. Without hesitation Jerome picked up the rebound and brought the ball back out. He dribbled to his left, then switched right and made a break for the hoop. I managed to beat him to the spot...but not by much. He picked up his dribble and was stuck with my desperate arms wavin' in his flushed face. He faked a shot, but I didn't budge

Searching for a way out of the jam, he continued to move the ball around and threw it right off my left leg. It bounced aridly and he got it back using his quickness. Damn, Jerome had his dribble back and didn't hesitate to take full advantage. He drove to the hoop with me trying to catch up and went up and under the hoop, laying it in. Goddammit it looked pretty...and it counted...9-7, Jerome.

I had my hands on my knees as I bent down. Jerome knew the move was good, but wasn't his cocky-ass self, but all business, with no time for rubbin' it in my face. He rolled the ball to me. I picked it up slowly and began. I drove left and he beat me to the spot, so I spun to my right and as I did, Jerome's foot got tangled with my left leg and he hit the pavement hard. I had him and took it to the hoop for a two handed slam. I Couldn't believe I had the energy to pull it off but I did...that one was for me...9-9.

After the bucket, we paused for a few seconds and looked over our shoulder in the direction of the noise we heard from a block and almost a world away from us.

"The whole fuckin' city shook with that dunk, T. Ain't enough though." He was right. Must say I was a little shocked that he spoke.

"I'll take it as a compliment," I said, not really knowing how to take it. Our intensities grew along with the temperature and the wretchedness of the Cage. I threw the ball at Jerome hard, inviting him to try to win the game. No way in hell I was gonna let him. He dribbled to his right low, but not low enough. I knocked the ball away and grabbed it with ease. I took it back out to the top of the key and drove down the middle and pulled up for a shot. It only hit the side of the rim and bounced right, allowing Jerome easy access to get it. It was Jerome's turn to try to shine as he backed me into the lane and tried to hit a fade away jumper. My fingertips were able to tip it just enough so that the ball fell short of the hoop. I grabbed it as I felt his hand yank my jersey in a shitty effort to stop me. "My ball, my rules," I thought to myself.

"Dammit!" Jerome said loudly like he was talkin' to somebody across the street. He was only talkin' to himself. I wondered if he actually heard. I took the ball and made a few strong dribbles toward the right, put the ball behind my back with a pretty move, I had him beat! I took it to the hole and laid it up strong...too strong, it rimmed out as I felt a slight shove from Jerome when he took position to grab the rebound...9-9.

"Son of a bitch!" I shouted like I was talkin' to the same person...guess it was almost the same...I was talkin' to me. We stood on the court together in disbelief, like we were the same with a differing opinion. We hated each other for it. He had the ball again and tried to make it count. He cross dribbled from his right to left, and crossed back again. I watched his right hip dip right and knew that's where he was goin', but it didn't matter, he beat me to the spot. He pulled up to take a baby-jump shot that hit the backboard, went in the hoop and came right back out. I ran to get the ball back relieved. I could feel my legs starting to wear down when I brought the ball back out to the top. Jerome's left knee was all red from the fall he took a little earlier. His faced looked like it was gonna melt. My jersey stuck to my back. I'd need a knife to cut it off after the game ended...if the game would ever end. Neither one of us seemed to be able to score. Almost like we didn't wanna, like we wanted the other to win...and I didn't know why. The idea scared me. I knew I couldn't let him, not today, any other day *but* today.

I bounced the ball up top, bout as hard as I could. I could smell the trash from the Dumpster just outside the Cage. It hit me hard as I thought about Lidell, Jerome, and what

we'd seen today. Jerome lunged at the ball and missed but was quickly back in position. Still 9-9, I stood there stallin' for time, thinkin' about my next move while he waited for me. All the sudden I'd made my decision...I was gonna take it right through him. I dribbled easily outside, tryin' to draw him out so I could blow by...I couldn't wait, I drove before the trap was set. I took it to my right, pressing him further down with each step and went up. He stuck right with me just like the jersey on my back but I got just out of his reach. The ball arced and hit the front of the rim, bounced off of the backboard, hit the right and rolled around for what must've been fucking forever...we watched as the ball came on its last go 'round and edged out of the rim, falling to the ground. We watched in shock much like we had watched Lidell's gunshot earlier, glimpsed at each other, and both dove for the ball. We hit the pavement collapsin' on the ball and wrestled for it. It was anybody's ball and game now. We didn't care, we were willing to do anything to get possession. Our hands fought hard and as I thought I was about to pull the ball away...

"Hey...you guys!" The ball slipped out and rolled across the court in the direction of the voice we both heard. The ball rested right up against the fence in front of a white man who wore a white shirt and a black tie. We slowly got to our feet and approached the man, wonderin' what the hell he wanted. He reached into his pocket, pulled out his wallet and opened it, revealing a bright gold badge that reflected the sun's light right in my eyes.

"I'm Detective Jacob Simmons." Me and Jerome looked at each other with tired eyes and a little fear as the detective spoke.

"I have a witness at the shooting today that places you two at the scene. I want to take you uptown to the station to answer a few questions." I looked through the fence at the detective, looked back over at the hoop, and then back at my brother. His mouth was slouched open and he became white as a ghost, or even a white guy. He didn't move, didn't even make a sound. All I saw move was his eyes. He glanced at the detective and looked at me fiercely. We both were thinkin' the same thing. Our game wasn't comin' to an end, but only beginning. We were gonna play on an unfamiliar court. I stared at my opponent, my only brother, and he stared back. The score was tied...0-0.

--Bradley Prefling '03



"A Late One" by Sarah R. Smith '03

Combing the Everglades

Dig in the marsh, brother,
and show us what you've found.

I'll make my home where I find sun belts and plump pies
glowing near high noon with confectioner's sugar.
I find him somewhere in the swamp where he pushes
through the mud, squirting irresistibly uncomfortable
between toes. He barely speaks, selfishly.
He says he found a map.
Nothing to do with me he says.
I reminisce with him of when I taught him to drink beer,
dark amber bock the tarnish of the water.
Which is more significant?

I ask him if he ever believed in the Bible. He said 'no.'
I ask him if the ground he stands on is my home. He said 'no.'
Could it be? 'No.'
That's not a map, brother. 'Fuck you, asshole.'
I was just saying.
'Deal with your own affairs.'

Wavy hair beneath the gallons of muck,
alligators fading under.
One takes a bite of my brother's calf.
He's not happy but continues his dig. It's only blood.

You're naïve, brother,
you'll find nothing there but new dry ground
to make wet with the rushing waters.
I'll build my home in a place where the sun still bounces
off the surface, and doesn't absorb to die like shrapnel.
'We'll see,' he says, and swims arrogantly.

In my head he's dying, covered in mud,
face down as his back becomes caked and grey
in the midday heat.
Some fucking treasure.

Fall into the marsh in line,
lay down next to your coffinmate,
he's waiting for you.
So orderly in life.
So orderly in death.

Where dig, brother?
why, brother?

--Scott Barsotti '03

Combining the Everyday


"Between the Lines" by Greg Holden '03

The Interview

Grandma went to their living room and picked up a large black binder, carried it to the dining room and set it on the table. I assumed we would do the interview there. The binder was a scrapbook she had put together of all of BJ's baseball memories, newspaper articles, contracts, and pictures. As she turned the pages and showed me how the scrapbook was arranged, I noticed a picture of him that covered the whole page in the middle of the scrapbook; it was dated 1957. I was surprised by how young and attractive he looked. In the black and white photo he seems to be wearing a beige or gray suit. He is holding an unlit cigarette in his right hand and his left hand is resting on the back of a chair, his wedding ring catching the light. The grin on his face is so natural, so sure. I always thought of my Grandpa BJ as a gruff guy, but this young gentleman in the picture looked like quite a charmer!

Grandpa BJ came in and we decided to get started. Grandma Julia excused herself to give us privacy and flashed us that beautiful smile we know so well. She seemed much more excited about my project than he was. We sat down at their dining room table, facing each other. He had brought in a beer, a pack of cigarettes, a lighter, and an ashtray. They lay in front of his tan arms, folded in front of him on the table. He had on a short polo shirt that he probably wore golfing this afternoon, a gold necklace, and glasses. His light, buzzed hair blended in with his tan, wrinkled face. Years ago, before it was buzzed and when it was a lot thicker, my sister and I would mess up his hair while he napped on his "throne," a comfy armchair facing the TV. When he would fall asleep after dinner in the evenings she and I could never pass up the opportunity to pick on him. BJ is a gruff guy; he would get all upset, scold us and mutter curse words under his breath. Then he would look over at us standing together about arm's length away from the armchair, our eyes wide. Realizing he was overreacting and making us feel bad, he would smirk and reach out with those long arms, pull us in, and tickle us until we broke free. When he buzzed his hair he told us it was so that ornery girls couldn't mess it up any more. We were naturally disappointed.

I smiled at the memory and began the interview. The first thing I needed to know was a general overview of his career. So he prepared to hit all the highlights. He got out a cigarette, lit it, inhaling deeply. I turned on my cheap hand-held tape recorder and settled myself over a steno notebook with my pen. He shot me a look that said something like, "You look nervous, kid." I don't know why, really, but I was nervous. He exhaled and started. I know he has been interviewed before, but he acted as if he didn't know what I wanted to hear.

"We played for fun. It was a pick-up game with all the boys. It lasted all summer." I asked if he played for his high school and he replied that they had no team. There was an area team, made up of high school age kids called the Baxter Springs Whiz Kids. BJ played for the Whiz Kids from 1946-1948. He was the third baseman and a good hitter. After giving me this information he paused, flicked the ash off his cigarette and added, "That's when I played with Mantle."

I wanted my story's focus to be based on the fact that my grandpa played with Mickey Mantle. So when BJ paused, I said, "Tell me about Mickey Mantle." BJ looked

like he was going to chuckle. He must have been thinking that was what I wanted to hear—just like every other reporter that had interviewed him—it was always about Mantle.

“He was on the team, but he was a scrawny little shit. You saw the pictures in there, you know—where he was in the back, standing up...” He was referring to the picture Grandma was so proud of.

BJ explained that Mantle’s dad worked in the lead and zinc mines in the area with the manager of the Whiz Kids, and that’s why he was on the team. He lived in a little town called Commerce, Oklahoma, about 6 miles away from Baxter Springs, Kansas. “Had a leg problem,” BJ said. Mantle suffered from the bone disease osteomyelites. BJ tried to help me understand: “He got kicked playing football—in the shins—and that brought it on.” He went on to tell me that when they played together in 1947 Mantle was 5’5” and about 125 pounds.

After getting leg surgery in Oklahoma City, he grew up. In 1948, he was 5’10” and 170lbs. BJ laughed to himself as he explained this. What he did not say I found in Mantle’s autobiographies:

Mutt Mantle had wanted a son so badly. A son that would play baseball, a son who would not just play well, but be a star—a legend—not work in the mines like his father had. Mutt put baseballs in the crib with Mickey. He named him after the American league catcher Mickey Cochran. He researched the success of switch hitters before his son was even born and decided to teach him to hit from both sides of the plate. I remember reading that Mutt put a radio broadcast of a baseball game in the crib with Mickey as the sound to go with his mobile, which had baseball hats, balls, and mitts hanging down.

He did get kicked in the shins playing football, a sport Mutt did not even want him to play. So somehow his parents found the money and they took him to Oklahoma City to get surgery, which saved his career.

While Mantle was getting well and growing strong, BJ was Baxter Springs’s star third baseman. BJ explained that there was only one field they could play at. At night they played under lights designed for a football game. At the games there were about a couple hundred people, he estimated. They would cheer a lot. The Whiz Kids “won most of the time,” he said. They had games three nights a week and some on Sunday afternoons. “It did not cost to get in but they passed the hat around for donations. You know, like they do in the movies.” He smiled and I thought of the baseball movies I had seen set in that time. It was such an honest and generous gesture. The memory made us both smile.

“Five or six players from the Whiz Kids team signed pro contracts. There was only one star out of the bunch of us: Mantle. Oh yeah, it was big when someone got signed. Read about it in the paper, you know.” I wanted to know more about Kansas and Oklahoma where the Whiz Kids played. He said Southeast Kansas was flat. There was nothing to do as a kid, except “play ball, o’ course.” They also spent their time by riding bicycles and swimming in the river.

When asked about his family, BJ answered in short sentences. He wasn’t nostalgic or sentimental. His parents called him Billy and came to most of the Whiz Kids’ games. Like Mutt Mantle, BJ’s father wanted his son to play pro ball. He had played until

he was 35 and almost went to the University of Missouri, but he was the last son and had to stay on his family’s cattle farm and help.

While playing ball for Baxter Springs, BJ lived in an “average sized ranch house” in town and walked or rode his bike to school. He was blond, what BJ referred to as a “tow head.” He said he was a three-sport letterman, but only mentioned playing basketball and football in high school. Their mascot was the lion. In the February 20, 1947 Baxter Springs paper, there is a picture of BJ’s basketball team—the new Twin-Valley Conference Tournament Champions.

He was the quarterback and still holds the record for sixteen consecutive completed passes in one game. Newspaper clippings gave detailed accounts of every game, such as: “With Johnson and Abe Richards making some nice runs, Johnson scored off tackle from the 5 yard line. A pass, Johnson to Underhill was good. Johnson did a nice job of punting under the worst conditions,” (Baxter Springs Paper, 1947). In the winter-time, he worked for his dad in the Chevy garage, being a “gopher” for about fifty dollars a week.

I later gathered more details from various autobiographies and stories about Mantle. At the time of this interview, all I knew of Mantle was what I had seen in that movie and what BJ was telling me. However, I knew I could learn the facts of Mantle’s fame; what I needed from BJ were the stories books like *The Mick* left out.

I asked if the teammates were close to one another, all friends, or if it was “pretty much just baseball.” He decided the bond was just baseball, then stopped and thought. A memory passed through his mind and then he said, “Well, you don’t have to put it in there,” gesturing to my notes before continuing, “but I remember one incident,” and began the story:

We played Columbus, Kansas (the county seat of Cherokee county, where Baxter Springs was) and this one particular night we beat them for the championship of the league. And after the game Mickey Mantle, Buddy Ball, and me were going to the county fair. We had our uniforms on and everything. Didn’t have a shower, you know, go home took a shower or whatever, but we were going to the county fair.

“Buddy had his folks’ brand new 1948 Plymouth, which was the first time they came out with low pressure tires. You just think about turning the car and the tires squealed, you know. Sounded like you were going a hundred miles an hour. Going to the county fair, we turned this corner, tires squealed, the police are right on us. Cost us ten dollars and never made it to the fair. Buddy had 5, I had three, Mantle had two, and that was ten dollars—and there went the fair! That was one time we were gonna be buddies, you know.”

We both laughed at the recollection. In Mantle’s autobiography, *The Mick*, he relates a similar story. They took a car trip with Harry Wells who, during Mantle’s first year with the Whiz Kids, gave him a job at his cemetery business. That trip turned out to be a bonding experience. The “Billy Johnson” Mantle mentions is my Grandpa BJ.

That’s Harry all over. A man of great patience. I remember when he bought a brand-new red Mercury convertible. He invited me and some of the Whiz Kids—Billy Johnson, Buddy Ball, and Jim Canega, I think—to take a ride all the way to St. Louis, a 300-mile trip. It was the end of our baseball season and Harry had secured tickets for a Cardinals game at Sportsman’s Park.

We left the night before and persuaded Harry to put the top down. It was colder than Siberia and Harry's shivering at the wheel while the three of us are in the backseat, laughing our heads off. At the same time other cars are darting to avoid us because we are chewing these big wads of bubble gum, then taking them out of our mouths and throwing them at the windshields of cars coming from the opposite direction on the old narrow highway going into St. Louis. Drove there in the middle of the night, then stopped off at the crack of dawn and restocked ourselves with candy, soda pop, and more bubble gum. When we finally strolled back to the car, Harry was wearing a frozen smile to match the icicles on his nose.

Those were great times.

BJ's scrapbook is filled with articles about the Whiz Kids games. He was clearly a star on that team. In each article his skills earn a paragraph. An example of one of his better games:

In the game Sunday afternoon, Billy Johnson, regular third baseman for the county team, pitched a brilliant three-hit game to sit the Dixie Runners down in the one-sided 7-0 tilt. Headland threatened to score only twice, once in the second and once in the seventh. Both times there were two men out and Johnson struck the last man out each time. The noted third baseman was credited with seven strikeouts.

In 1948, a Yankee scout named Tom Greenwade came to see BJ play. Greenwade did not know it yet, but BJ had already signed with the Philadelphia Athletics semi-pro league and was about to go to Leary, Georgia to play for them. That night BJ did not become a Yankee, but Greenwade found a future star for the Yankees: Mantle, of course. That was what Mantle called "a significant event, a milestone in my life."

BJ didn't say much about that night. Just that it was raining and Mantle did play well in the game. I asked him if he was upset at the time that he did not hold out for the Yankees. He explained that he wasn't. His signing bonus for the A's was three thousand dollars. That was more than the Yankees, Cardinals, Red Sox, or Dodgers offered him.

It is understandable that Mantle remembers the night much better and much to his favor in his autobiography, *The Mick*.

...my sole ambition was to play professional ball. The where and how meant little, only the chance. Well, there's such a thing as luck and some of it rubbed off on me when Tom Greenwade came down the road from Springfield, Missouri, to scout prospects for the Yankee farm system. He was at the Baxter Springs ballpark, evaluating a kid named Billy Johnson, our third baseman. I wasn't even on his list. But whatever he saw in Billy, he apparently found something more to his liking after watching me switch-hit a couple of home runs into the river on one bounce. I also remember the rain; a big cloudburst, everybody ducking for their cars, when suddenly Dad steers me to him, saying there's a fellow in there who's dying to meet me. It's Greenwade, a ready old guy with a nice friendly smile. He says, "How would you like to play

for the Yankees?" I give him a look, totally flabbergasted. He says, "Well, I can't talk officially because you're still in high school, but don't sign with anyone else and the day you graduate I'll be back."

Dad says, "With an offer?"

And Greenwade smiles reassuringly. "We'll see what we can do."

Going home, I remember Dad explaining the opportunities I'd have in New York, feeling the excitement as he talked about the Yankee stadium, the Babe, Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio—a royal tradition. "No question," he said, "we oughta wait on Greenwade."

The reason Greenwade could not sign BJ was because he had already signed and was headed to Georgia, where he "got paid, but you wasn't supposed to. It was under the table. A lot of college guys, but we were just kids. None of us had jobs and they paid us. We were considered amateurs. Semi-pro, we had some older guys who had played pro ball. We played about six games a week."

In February 1950, he was playing for the A's in Welch, West Virginia, "which is D ball, the lowest form of pro-ball at the time. D, C, B, A, AA and then the majors." The Joplin Globe wrote an article about BJ for the May 2, 1951 paper. Part of that article read:

Johnson hit well in spring ball. He has worked almost to the dropping point under Skaff's watchful eye at his fielding. He has the ability; he has played the position a year.

Now he gets the big test. His play can mean a lot to Lincoln's hopes to climb up the Western League ladder. He has made a big hit with everyone concerned so far. His resemblance to Nelly Fox is pronounced.

I asked BJ what he thought of being compared to Nellie Fox, the famous White Sox second baseman. He asked me what I meant. "Well, is it true that you're like him?" I blurted.

"I wasn't the one who said that, so how do I know if it is true? It was his comment, not mine," he tested me, but I kept trying.

"Can you see any similarities? Do you agree with his opinion?"

"Well, I guess I agree—I looked kinda like him, back then. But playing like him—I don't know. He was in the major leagues!" BJ laughed. In my head I commented that he could've been just as good as a major leaguer—that's why they signed him, but I decided not to argue.

BJ made the rookie all-star team there. "Had a good year, so they jumped me to A ball, Lincoln, Nebraska. And I had a mediocre year there, cuz I met a girl and then in December of '51 I went in the Air Force."

BJ was in the Air Force for 4 years, during the Korean War. When he got out he was 25 years old. In 1953, he was on the all Air Force team (like an all-star team). In '54, they won the World Wide Air Force tournament. All the bases sent a team. This particular one was held at Scott Field in Illinois. Then the four winners from all the branches of the armed services went to the all-service tourney. BJ played third base, of course. Air force got 3rd place. "Navy beat us, we beat the marines and got third place." So I take it that the Army won.

His Air force team was called the Mustangs. His manager talks about the benefits of watching the Air force games:

Most of the onlookers with whom I have talked agree that third baseman Bill Johnson has the best chance of any of our fine ball players of going to the majors when he leaves the Air Force. Bill was playing "A" ball at Lincoln of the Western league when he entered the service, and it's my personal opinion that he was only about three or four years from the big show at that time. All members of the team have been, or are potentially, professional players. There's no admission charge to any of the games and you'd have to go at least to Denver to see any better ball.

Johnson either leads or is tied for about every individual honor on the club. He and Gus Poulos have 30 hits each to lead that department, and Johnson has stolen 17 bases, driven in 36 runs, and his six homers to be top man in all those categories.

He stopped playing in '55 and became manager of the Air Force team. One clipping from May 1955 said, "Bill Johnson, a returning veteran of the Warren Mustang Baseball squad will coach this year's defending champions at the base until a permanent manager is appointed" (The Wyoming Eagle).

The next year he married the girl from Ohio (not my grandma) and moved to Ohio. "Then I ended up in Abilene, Texas. In 1956, hurt my arm and my career ended." I asked him how he hurt his arm. He said, "...throwing too hard, too soon. Pulled rotator plate, [gestures to his shoulder] tore it. So my career ended, I finished the season, but...[frowns and shrugs]. Then I came home and went to work. End of the story."

During this time in BJ's career, Mantle played a year in the minor leagues preparing for the Yankees. They brought him up in 1951, giving him the number six, but the pressure was too much for him. He was sent back to the Yankees Triple A minor league team in Kansas City to regain his batting swing. In August, after a pep talk from his father and some practice, he was brought back up and given his now-famous number seven. His bone disease, osteomyelites, kept him from the draft into the Korean War, and the rest is history. He led the league in 27 batting titles and is one of history's best-loved Yankees. He was a power-hitter, one of the most feared in his time. He scored 1,677 career runs.

Just as BJ finished the overview of his career, Grandma came in and asked us if we could take a break for dinner. She had gone to Wendy's while we were talking and bought us salads. She got utensils from the kitchen and asked us what we wanted to drink while I shuffled all my papers back into my notebook and stuffed the tape recorder in my bag.

We ate dinner and commented on how good and filling those new Wendy's salads were. Grandma brought up the CIA job offer I had. The promise of money and job security was oh-so-appealing to my family. But, to most everyone's disappointment, I had done the irrational and decided I would rather be a writer. Grandpa BJ did not seem to be paying attention. He went upstairs to use the bathroom while Grandma urged me to apply for the CIA thing and just see what happened. I acted like I might.

We cleared the table and threw away the plastic to-go containers while Grandpa

flipped through the sports highlights and news on the TV in the front room. He was draining a beer, standing behind the armchair dubbed his "throne" so long ago. He looked like he had a long day.

Kansas City Press-chronicle details a rough week in his game:

From jeers to cheers.

That's the story of Bill Johnson, Welch's third baseman, who despite a few bad nights has closed his ears to the jeers and hustled anyway.

Johnny looked like a major leaguer out there last night. He scooped up everything that came his way like a gigantic steam shovel.

Now its surprising what a little boost will do for a ballplayer just breaking into the professional game. Johnson had a few backslaps despite his disastrous night Wednesday and came right back with a terrific performance.

Grandma decided he needed a little boost to get the interview going again. She grabbed his arm and steered him back to the dining room. He turned off the TV with the remote and tossed it back on the chair, exclaiming, "What? We aren't done yet?" I am pretty sure he was serious. He let out a labored sigh and settled back into his chair, which she had pulled out for him. I repositioned myself and reviewed the remaining questions on my list, noticing the details of our setting: the just-emptied ashtray and new pack of cigarettes in front of his chair. I felt bad and a little offended that he wanted it to be over. My other grandparents had loved the whole thing, talking too much at times. So I tried to think of something interesting to say.

"What is your favorite memory of a game or a moment in the game?" That is interesting, I thought; it might lighten things up a bit if he was getting frustrated with me or tired of the interview.

He didn't answer me. His face was all scrunched up as he looked down in the ashtray. I waited. The cheap tape-recorder was clicking in the middle of the table between us. He decided he would just tell me about a good game he remembered. It was one Sunday afternoon on the Air Force team: He had five runs, a home run, two doubles, and a single. "All in one game, that was a good game. Every game is a good game, I think." He shrugged. "I love the game."

Then I asked about money. I had no idea how much a baseball player made in the 40's, and I didn't want to guess and look stupid. He said when he started he was on a D contract for \$175 a month and then, a year later, on an A contract for \$325 a month. This was during the late 1940's and early 50's. He concluded with a sigh that didn't seem too disappointed, "Four years later making the same money."

In other interviews I have read, major leaguers complain about traveling, so I wanted to see what BJ would have to say about it. He thought back and recalled that each team had a bus, an old school bus. They would sing, joke, talk about girls. He did not complain like other players are known to, but I knew he didn't fly. That may have made a big difference, players now complain of jet lag and airports. On the subject of traveling he concluded, "No, I really enjoyed it."

"Was 'making it' or becoming famous important to you? Or was it just love of the game?" I asked, finally at ease again.

"Loved the game. We all just hoped to get by. The goal was to be famous or

pro, but the game meant more in the long run than the fame did." He was seemingly at ease too.

"Who were your favorite ball players?" I asked. He answered: Ted Williams, who he said was a "great hitter" and Ty Cobb. I just nodded and wrote them down. The names meant little to me. While reading about baseball I found out who these players that my grandfather favored actually were. Ted Williams was the last player to bat .400 and he had 521 home runs, despite missing nearly five full seasons to military service.

Ty Cobb is not so easy to summarize. He broke records as well, but the stats are not the only facts about Cobb that are memorable. He was possibly the first millionaire ballplayer. He brought cruelty, viciousness, and danger to the game. Though his emotional stability and mental health have been questioned, he is known as "the most efficient, competent, consistently sensational ballplayers of all time," (Gallico, 199-216). His spikes often cut members of the opposing team who were blocking the base he was trying to reach.

His father, whom he loved and respected, wanted him to go to West Point. He was constantly out to prove himself to his father and to his peers. It has been said that he went into every game and thought of it as nothing less than war.

The sad truth about Cobb's story is there was a reason for his emotional instability. His father suspected Cobb's mother of infidelity, so he pretended to go away on a business trip then climbed in their bedroom window from outside expecting to catch her in the act. Being alone in the 1930s, she took a shotgun to bed with her that night. Thinking he was a criminal, she killed him. That story explained his emotional condition well enough for me.

Since I didn't know who Ted Williams or Ty Cobb were, I moved on. "Who are your favorite players now?" He scoffed and did not reply. I laughed a little and assumed he did not have any. Then he started to discuss the differences between baseball then and now. "There were sixteen major teams: eight American, eight National. Now there are thirty teams. So, there are two times as many teams and the talent is diluted. They are all trying to hit homeruns. The whole thing is money, the owners always get their way because they have so much money." This comment of BJ's made me think of an interview I read by Studs Terkel with Steve Hamilton. Hamilton and BJ agreed: Hitting has become more important. The ball is made harder so it will go farther. And no one cares about coming to see someone because they are a good outfielder.

I decided to push my luck. "Care to comment on the baseball strike?" He didn't answer for a moment or two. "No," he smiled slyly and sighed like he was disappointed or his opinion was disjointed. He did eventually comment in short aggravated sentences. Saying things like, "more money, killing the all-American game, greed."

To conclude the interview I asked, "What made you decide to stop playing?"

He simply said, "Korean War. Did not want to get drafted, so I enlisted in the Air Force. Played ball there, but five years is a lot of time to lose in pro baseball. Hurt my arm in '56 and my career ended."

After the interview, I was going through his scrapbook, writing down names and dates for future reference. Grandma had highlighted passages where he was mentioned: "Johnson's double with the sacks clogged drove home the tying and winning runs." I was finding appropriate quotes when Dad came in. He was there to take me back

to campus. He looked down at the large black binder, the contents of which I was pouring over, more interested in what it had to say than what he did. He put his hand on my shoulder then looked at his mother and made an apology for, I believe, being late. Then Dad found an article about when BJ and Bill Reynolds, a former football star with the Cleveland Browns, played for the Mustangs together in the Air force. He and Grandma started talking about what an amazing life BJ has had, what an amazing ball player BJ was, and generally how amazing he is. When BJ himself walked into the room they quit talking. You can't praise BJ in front of him; he blows it off, makes a joke. Yet he has never been a joke to us. His amazing baseball past is not a big deal to him—it's just his life.

I looked up. He had a beer in one hand and was finishing a cigarette in the other. He smashed the butt in the ashtray before shaking my dad's hand. Then he smiled down at me and tried to read the article I was looking at. Grandma decided just then that what was wrong was he needed one name. She pointed. "Bill Johnson," two pages later, "Willard Johnson," and the next article quoted Mantle's book, "Billy Johnson." She looked up at him. "You needed to have one name that everyone knew you by. That's it, you woulda been a star." He sniffed and paced the room while Dad read excerpts from some of the clippings: "Johnson, after one year of pro ball, is remindful of Nelly Fox. Well coordinated, he has been one of the leading men with the bat and he handles himself well in the field" (Dick Becker, April 1951). Dad looked at him and let out a long labored sigh (for effect, I suppose). Then he announced, "When it comes to talent, Mantle was lacking."

BJ set his beer can down and headed for his throne in front of the evening news. With his back to us, we heard that gruff voice clearly say: "I signed with the wrong organization. Talent had nothin' to do with it."

I looked up at Grandma and wondered if we were thinking the same thing. Never had a baseball star showed so much pride and modesty at the same time. I looked at the scrapbook for another moment. An article closed with, "Bill is going to improve in every game he plays...So there he is—Bill Johnson third baseman. Let's push him up baseball's difficult ladder." I closed the large scrapbook and let it rest on the table. Looking up at the front room, I saw the back of BJ's head as it faced the TV, the channels clicking by. Then he paused for a second on ESPN, surprised a little by the report that the Reds had won.

--Nicole Bennett '04



"Carwash" by Greg Holden '03

Persecution

I'd be lost without it.
 My girlfriend's father
 doesn't understand.
 "My house is built on rock,"
 he says, "it won't wash away
 with sand." Agnostics
 don't stand on the theologies of others.
 I don't need a god to love his daughter.
 And I don't need a house - I'm the water
 that swells behind all
 this man would swear by.

--Steve Kovach '03

Pernicious

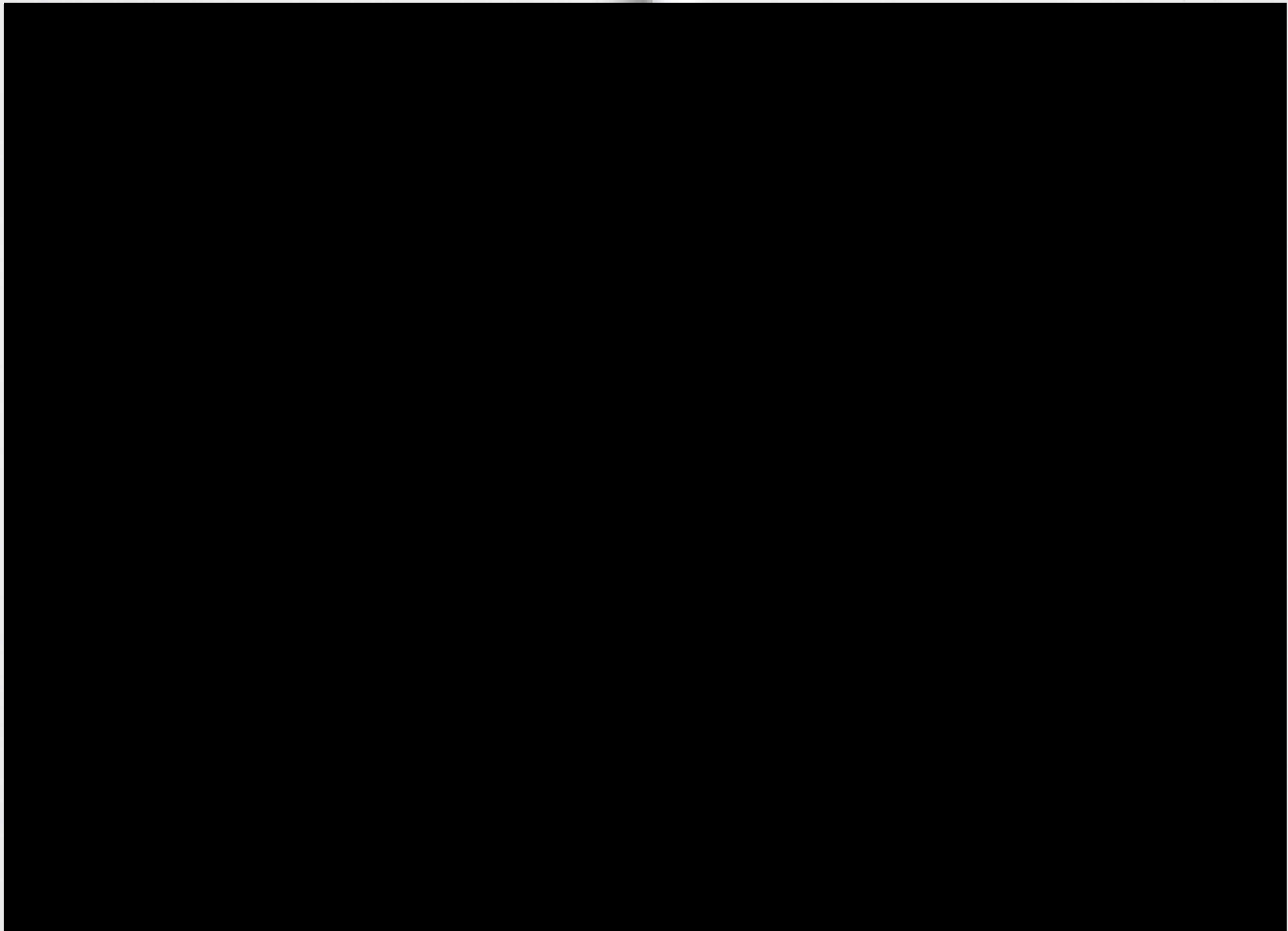
The first of the
the second of the
the third of the
the fourth of the
the fifth of the



"Untitled" by Laura Cannon '05



s
y
C
C
a
z
t
i
a
w
P
d
s
b
o
k
r
T
C
ch
w
h
w



lo
dr
di

s
k
m

n
h

S
c

V
t

r
r
c

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sam resumed cutting the vegetables as Catherine fumingly cleansed and

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

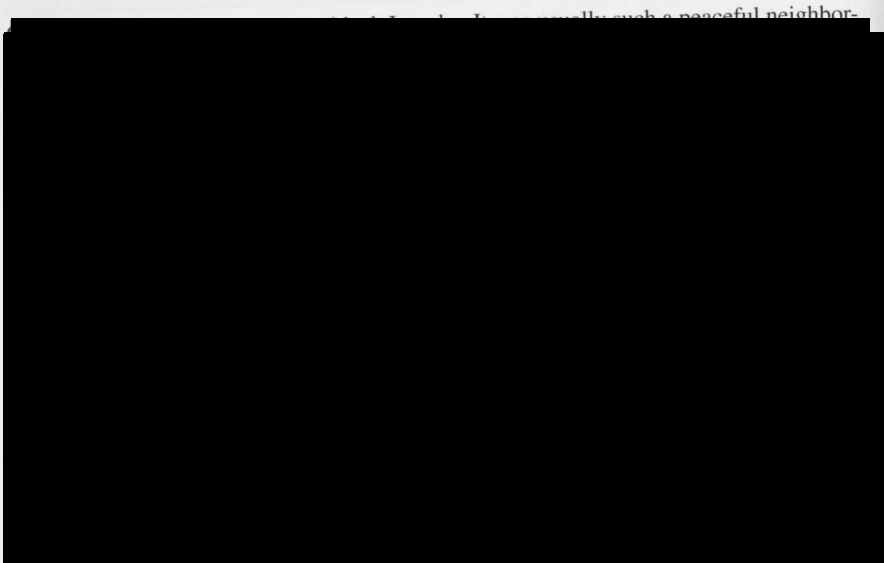
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



--Scott Barsotti '03



"Flowers in Her Hair" by Greg Holden '03

A few coins in a styrofoam cup

singing, he closes
 his glazed eyes, passion bleeding
 from heart to lips,
 to the ears of an audience
 driven to dreaming
 of that rundown austin hotel
 where a musician
 cries for his boston girl.
 devoted fans wish for her too,
 singing with him:

*hallelujah,
 hallelujah
 heaven get me out of here*

outside on the pavement
 a man holds his coins in a
 styrofoam cup. he bleeds as well,
 frigid with hunger
 and aching bones.
 while time catches up with him
 and wrinkles his tender skin,
 he lets his green eyes sparkle,
 shakes his instrument,
 and joins in:

*have goodness in your heart
 lead me from hell to home
 heaven get me out of here*

his soul echoes from the stage
 through the crowded hall
 with vibrations of voice.
 he connects to his companions
 with blinded eyes.
 all the pain in the world
 is felt right here;
 inside his amplified guitar chords,
 broken hearts scream
 of nothing ever feeling worse.

*how can you leave me
 hopeless and alone
 heaven get me out of here*

singing, he smiles his eyes
 despite helplessness bleeding
 from heart to lips.
 the crowd bustles by, bundled
 in coats and hats and shared emotion.
 the coins jingle on, unheard
 as the musician drives off to sell
 the same songs to new customers.
 head to burlap, bare knees
 to concrete, he searches for comfort
 in sleep, humming with limo's
 engine, the final lines:

*hear my humble prayer
 amen.*

--Miranda Bodfish '05



"Untitled Forrest" by Jessica Kramer '03

Fulfilling Duty

The man raised the eyepiece slowly and painfully to his face. He gazed through blood-speckled eyelashes to stare down into the boulder field. He searched the field with a clinical trained inspection. He first located a broken, twitching corpse; blood had puddled among the stones after pouring from numerous wounds.

His gaze slowly fanned across the field. Without reaction he surveyed a scene of carnage. Among the rocky ground lay many varied kinds of death. Crack snipers lay mowed down among the metallic debris of destroyed battlebots. Pieces of human bodies lay everywhere, blown apart by explosives. Worst to look upon were the guerrillas, they were contorted in photographic images of horrible death, simple folk murdering and murdered in defense of their homes. Here lay one man spitted on his own rifle, another pair had been melted together by a blast, and one body lay propped against a boulder, a gaping hole in place of a chest.

The man's eye moved to the right, from death in mass to a neater set of rows. Here the corpses had been placed in a flat line as if they had been killed on parade. Their dismembered limbs were placed by their bodies as if they had been dissected. Beside these rows were pools of blood that stained the rocks red, and massive piles of scrap from destroyed battlebots surrounded the corpses.

After taking all this in, the man lowered his eyepiece. With jerking movements, he replaced it in a battered leather case. He slid off the boulder he hunched upon with a sickening thud, and his face contorted in pain. He pulled himself upright with strong, but battered arms. He began to move through the boulder field in a wrenching half hobble, half crawl. Every time his left leg hit anything, he let out a small cry of pain, for his leg was cut off raggedly halfway below the knee. He moved by, using his arms and remaining leg, and with his left knee pushed off trees and upright rocks. In this fashion, off-balance and wrenching motion that brought constant pain, he could move steadily.

As the afternoon wore on, the man made progress through the rock fields, aided by a large branch and an ingrained sense of the quickest and easiest path to travel. By this time it was too dark to see and move safely, though the man had pressed recklessly up to this point, making use of superb night vision. He had traveled twelve miles.

The man curled up in a small crevice and collapsed instantly into a light and dreamless, but quite restful, sleep. All afternoon he had focused only on his journey, not once had he thought about what he had seen. He thought only of the relevant tactical information the situation created, and how that information must be relayed.

The man awoke before dawn; he had slept only three and a half hours. He was not tired, yet his pain aggravated him and he berated himself for letting it affect him. Immediately after he awoke, he raised the eyepiece and scanned all around. Then he lurched onward, heading east toward the rising sun and stark, jagged, snowy mountains.

As the day progressed the man moved closer to the craggy peaks and reached easier ground. With the advent of easier ground, the man no longer focused solely on the trek itself. He began to think, for the first time, on what he had seen.

Why? Why did the battle go so poorly? They annihilated us. Oh, they paid heavily for it, but still, we should have been victorious. I saw the battle happen, every

moment from beginning to end; somehow they were able to protect their battlebots from our guerrillas' missiles. We were destroyed.

I was the only survivor, the thought echoed in his mind. *That fact cannot change my mission*. The man was a Dastrian Scout, a member of the elite scout corps, the best reconnaissance and intelligence force among humankind. His observation skills were superb, he could walk forty miles a day without tiring, and he could go without sleep for four nights with no degradation.

Always return the information. That was the most important task of a scout. The man would normally have communicated with high command by secure comm transmission, but his transmitter was broken and satellite communication was down. He knew a staging base was just over the mountains, only forty miles from his original position. Normally he could have traveled that in a single day, but now he was exhausted, wounded, and missing part of an essential limb. Still, though he truly feared climbing the mountains, his duty and task were clear.

The man proceeded to travel throughout the day. By the end of the day he had reached the foothills of the mountains. The man found clouds slowly drifting across the darkening sky. Soon the moon was clouded over. The scout stopped. Then he curled into a ball and fell asleep upon the open ground.

The scout awakened in the morning after sleeping for eight hours. It was still dark and rain fell softly, soaking through everything. The scout was already totally wet, but he did not feel the rain through a mask of pain and resolve. The scout began to move through the black darkness, his severed leg so frequently striking upraised objects that the pain became almost rhythmic. Even worse, the scout suffered from agonizing muscle pain throughout his body. He found it difficult to think and contemplations slipped from his mind like elusive sounds. If not for the training that penetrated down to an instinctive level he would have fallen and been unable to continue.

Gradually the foothills changed into jagged, cliff-like mountains and the real struggle began. The ground shifted until the vertical seemed to outweigh the horizontal, and the scout was forced to leave his branch behind in order to have his hands free. His progress slowed as he was forced to rely almost completely on his pained and weary arms.

The Scout began to leave a trail of blood behind him as scabs broke open on his legs and his hands scraped themselves apart on the rocks. The horrible wound on his leg broke open again and the scout could feel himself slowly weakening. As the sun grew higher in the sky the rocks heated and a glare blasted at the eyes of the scout. He began to lose focus and his vision swam. Still he pressed upward. The scout did not carry sophisticated climbing equipment so a single fall could mean death. The scout scraped and stumbled and had numerous close calls. He broke the bones of two toes and strained several ribs, making every stop and breath an agony worse than any torture.

By midday the scout could not continue to move. He had gone eight miles in as many hours; his broken body had navigated terrain that would give an experienced climber pause. Still, the scout felt like a traitor, he was failing in his duty. He was traveling too slowly, if he could not make his battered body do more, his information would arrive too late and his fellow countrymen would suffer.

The scout knew he must rest. He bound his reopened wounds as best he could

and settled into an uneasy sleep. At dusk he awoke. He contemplated the remainder of his journey. He had four more miles to go upwards. Then it was a long, rocky voyage down to his goal. He knew that if he reached the top he should be able to make better progress and survive the downward trek. The scout needed to endure only four miles more.

Therefore, he willed the pain from his body and started upward as darkness began to fall. Every single step was a trial. He had difficulty seeing and for every two steps he took forward he slid backward one. His body fought against any motion, it wanted only to let go. The scout was forced to override every natural impulse with a massive exertion of will and press onward.

Blackness fell across the scout's vision at the worst possible time. He hung upon a cliff face too far to fall to the nearest ledge. He had to feel with his broken, bloody hands, to find the way upward. He kept going, despite being blinded by the night. In the morning, with the sun creeping over the horizon, the scout collapsed on the summit. He had reached the high point; everything would be easier from here to the objective. Relief swept over the scout as he spiraled into sleep.

When the Scout awoke it was mid-afternoon. He struggled to get up and move on. He went slowly, to help his body recover as best it could, but the downhill slope was gentle, it went easily and he made good time. By the time he stopped next morning only ten miles remained before he could reach the base.

At midday, as the scout set out once more to begin the trek, he heard a sound. It was a metallic noise, the sound of an armored boot striking the rocks. The scout instantly dropped to the ground and ripped his eyepiece up to his face. He scanned 360 degrees for infrared signatures. He picked up ten that qualified as human. The scout was immediately dismayed. There were too many to fight, too many to even count on successfully hiding from. The scout knew he needed more information to determine if there was any possible course of action.

The scout pulled himself up on a ledge and used his eyepiece to get a better glimpse of the men. The ten were gathered in a loose band in a clearing. Each carried a powerful multi-purpose assault rifle. They wore a complete combat suit made up of light polymeric alloys, suits designed to block both ballistic and laser weapons. They wore blast helmets that concealed their faces and made them look more like machines than men.

Instantly the scout determined who these men were. They were Mavel Dash Troopers, the common foot soldiers of the same house that had destroyed his countrymen those few days ago on the battlefield. Anger burned in the scout to attack these men, yet his training and his reason prevailed, keeping him hidden. He knew the best way to hurt these men was to deliver his information. He also knew that the small pistol he carried was barely worth covering a captive; it was not going to be very useful in a fight with fully equipped Dash troopers.

As the scout was observing, one of the soldiers stood up and began giving orders to the others. The scout could not read his lips because of the blast helmets, but he could tell what was happening as the Dash troopers spread out in a pattern. The scout knew now that the soldiers were looking for him.

The scout skimmed down from the ledge, worried but not yet panicked, even though only 300 meters of light forest and rock separated him from the Dash Troopers.

The scout picked his branch up and began to hurry on his way. The scout moved quickly and rather recklessly, but he was sure he could put distance between himself and the soldiers. The Dash troopers would have to move slowly to make sure they did not miss the scout in hiding, and they could not use the maneuvering capabilities of their Dash suits or risk alerting the sensors of the nearby staging base.

Strangely, as the scout began this last leg of his trek, his mind refused to focus on the current situation. For the first time since the end of the battle the scout had seen another human being. This had opened up the path to thoughts other than completing his trek once more. The images of the carnage fields hung in front of his eyes. They spurred him on, he could not fail the deaths of his comrades. The scout's mind wandered wide through an eerie landscape of morals, values, and duty, trying to reconcile himself to the events of the past few days. First was the battle itself, which he had seen from his far off observational position and still could not escape. Then came the fields of corpses and his desperate trek through the wilderness. Now his situation was precarious. If the Mavel Dash Troopers caught his trail he had no chance to outrun them in his current condition.

The scout moved as fast as he could, fighting both a physical and mental race against time. He had to avoid his pursuers and reach the base before his mind snapped completely from the pressure and exhaustion of the past few days.

As the scout traveled his physical gauntlet, his mind unraveled further and further and he began to doubt even his duty, that one conviction that had carried him this far. Then suddenly everything changed. His shortened leg clattered into a rock and a single thought struck his mind with the quickness and force of a lightning bolt. *This is my final mission as a Dastrian Scout*, he thought. He was crippled, and no artificial limb would restore him completely. He would be discharged with honor and placed in some other service. With that realization in mind he knew that if he failed his duty now he would be forever a failure. His storming mind found an anchor in that fact, which made all other struggles irrelevant. The scout determined he would continue onward, no matter the obstacles or the personal cost, he would not fail the call of duty in its final hour.

An explosive flash impacted to the scout's right. He immediately tumbled onto his belly and slithered into a crevice in the ground. He had recognized the flash as a laser blast; at least one enemy soldier had found him. The scout twisted in the crevice and pulled free both eyepiece and pistol. He found the soldier on a ridge above him, comm. antennae extended, assault rifle searching. The scout took in the soldier's profile, then aimed and fired. He hit the soldier in the vulnerable right hip. The soldier collapsed on the ground.

The scout got up and strove to move at a run toward the staging base. He managed a twisted amalgamation of hopping and running that gained him at least something better than walking speed. The scout was now trapped in a combination game of hide-and-seek and a race. The scout traveled swiftly through the forest, and the soldiers followed. As the soldiers tried to track and corner the scout, the sound of their metal boots, and the occasional laser blast, rang out in the night.

Then the scout could see the staging base through his eyepiece, it was only six hundred meters away.

Then pain exploded everywhere and all went dark. The burst from the fragmentation grenade scorched the ground in a circle that included the burnt corpse of the scout.

The Mavel soldiers approached the scout's body, communicating to each other on their helmet comms. Then each man suddenly reeled and fell, a large hole appearing in his head or chest plating. The only sound was that of bodies hitting the ground. The burst from the fragmentation grenade had attracted a sniper patrol from the nearby base, and they had swiftly dispatched the Mavel Dash Troopers.

The scout was dead. He had failed to reach the base. Still, his body was recovered. The data record from the scout's eyepiece was retrieved. Due to the scout's death the record was given a high analysis priority. This would ultimately result in a major intelligence victory. Had the scout not been killed the data would have received a lower priority, and it would have taken second place to the scout's personal report. By the time analysis would have been completed the data would have been outdated. Thus it was only through his own death that the scout was able to complete his duty and save the lives of his countrymen.

--Daniel Kinicki '05

Contributors' Notes

Elizabeth Averbek, a "Kentucky Original," is a junior Art History and English double major from Ft. Wright. Art is her passion both in study and creation. "I love the way a photograph captures the emotion of a moment and freezes the image within a frame, leaving the viewer to explore what the artist has created," she said.

Scott Barsotti is a senior Creative Writing and Communication major with a strong interest in theatre. He is from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and is frustrated by NFL halftime shows, his painfully slow reading speed, and the allergic reaction on his left eye that just won't go away. Scott is producing two theatre shows next semester and wants you to go see them.

Nicole M. Bennett is a junior English writing major and Political Science minor from Heath, Ohio. She writes, "I am in love with Jesus Christ, have the greatest friends, I do not get enough sleep, and my favorite animals are cats. My dad should let us get a cat --at home. Don't worry res life!" She continues, "I would like to thank BJ for the interview. It's his story; I only made him retell it--again. Grandparents really are some type of angel. He'll call me crazy for saying he is an angel."

Miranda Bodfish is a sophomore International Studies and Black Studies major from Littleton, Colorado. She wrote "A few coins in a styrofoam cup" for Professor Townsend's creative writing class, which she is taking for fun this semester.

Laura Cannon is a sophomore from Laurel, Maryland. She is a biology major hoping to attend medical school after graduating from Denison. Laura has always been interested in photography but only recently got her first chance to study the art form this semester. She has thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Looking through the lens of a camera has given her an interesting new perspective with which to view the world, and she hopes to continue the study and practice of photography in the future.

Ginna Fuselier is a senior from Escondido, California. She will be graduating in May 2003 with a B.S. degree in biology and a minor in English literature. She prides herself on her wide interests, including a love for both poetry and biology. She plans on either teaching or going to nursing school post-graduation. She has been influenced by such writers as Fitzgerald, Angelou, Cummings, Bukowski, and Shakespeare himself and hopes to one day publish a book of poems. A friend (a writer himself) once told her to never stop writing. She hopes she never does.

Gregory Holden is a senior Religion major from Bucyrus, Ohio. A member of the Denison Crew Team, the Hilltoppers, and the Outing Club, this is his first submission to a publication, a fitting debut after a hiatus of creating purposeful art for five years. "I have found great satisfaction in photography as a medium with which I can perfectly capture a moment, and express emotion and thought through a very realistic form," he said. "While I do not see this becoming a career, photography will remain something that I am passionate about for the rest of my life."

Daniel Kinicki is a sophomore Biology major with an interest in writing serious science fiction and fantasy with the general purpose of exploring human reaction in a surreal setting and then looking back at how that affects the real world.

Steve Kovach is a senior English writing major who enjoys poetry and ancient Greek syntax.

Jessica Kramer is an English Writing major from Louisville, Kentucky. She sees visual art as a welcome release when not working on poetry and strongly recommends it to all.

Katie Mannel is a sophomore Environmental Studies major from Omaha, Nebraska.

Matt Messmer is a freshman Studio Art major from Phoenix, Arizona. He's had an interest in art and painting all his life, and he also likes photography and drawing.

Brad Prefling is a senior Communication major and English minor. He is originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He is a member of WDUB and hosts two shows, "The Afternoon Moon with the Wolfman" and "The Friday Free For All." Brad is also one for nostalgic tastes, most notably his enjoyment of Elvis Presley, Huey Lewis and the News, and the Marx Brothers.

Sarah R. Smith is a senior Religion and Sociology/Anthropology major from Louisville, KY.

Emily Stenken is a senior International Studies and Spanish double major from Cincinnati, Ohio. She spent last semester in Oaxaca, Mexico, where her photograph titled "Herve el agua" was taken.

Editorial Board

All submissions are reviewed on an anonymous basis, and all editorial decisions are shared equally among the members of the Editorial Board.

Co-Editors-in-Chief

Jeremy J. Miller & Annie Loudon

Faculty Advisor

David Baker

Art Board

Jeremy J. Miller, Editor

Lauren Caryer

Lauren Haas

Jessica Kramer

Jenny Soares

Poetry Board

Jessica Kramer, Editor

Elise Albrecht

Scott Barsotti

Nicole Bennett

Tim Durbin

GINNA FUSELIER

Jennifer Humbert

Prose Board

Charles Capasso, Editor

Scott Barsotti

Brian Boylan

Kelli Gibson

Suzanne Hodsdon

Cover Art "Despair" by Gregory Holden '03

Back Cover Art "Untitled" by Laura Cannon '05

Printed by Printing Arts Press

Editorial Board

All members of the Editorial Board are invited to submit articles for consideration to the Editor, who will select the articles for publication in the Journal.

Chairman
David J. Little, *London*

President
John Little, *London*

Vice-President
George A. Miller, *London*

Secretary
Lynn Hill, *London*

Treasurer
John Little, *London*

Editor
John Little, *London*

Editorial Board
John Little, *London*

Editorial Board
John Little, *London*

Editorial Board
John Little, *London*

Editorial Board
John Little, *London*

Editorial Board
John Little, *London*

Editorial Board
John Little, *London*

Journal of Business, 100, 1977, 1-10
Copyright © 1977 by John Little, Ltd.

Published by John Little, Ltd.

