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Perception

Cele Bona

College of DuPage

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1984 Poetry Contest

First Place Winner

PERCEPTION

By Cele Bona

I rest my fingers on the dusty screen,
look out. Grandma chased by a bear,
she told me that

story. She was little,
running under pine trees
in the North Woods. She tore

her yellow pinafore on
thorns and was punished
for the tear, sent

to the hay mow for supper.
My old grandmother who
smelled like a rusty pump

pinned that story into
the hem of my green
skirt one October night.

I saw her frightened face,
her small feet flying over
brown pine needles to her aunt

who shook her, told her
not to make up stories.
Always before, seeing the

pins marching between her lips,
steely hairs growing on her
chin, I thought she was always old.

Second Place Winner

A SHIFT IN TENSE

By David D. Richard

Someday a man
on a mission to collect
stardust and rainbows
shall gaze from beyond
the sky
at a brilliant blue
orb
set in the velvet
of space,
at a country
majestic
from sea to shining —
yet see how easily
crushed
beneath the
close-fisted clouds
and think of
a small house
in a small town
poised
on the Great Lakes'
very fingertip
and know
the buttons have
been pushed
and the atoms
have screamed their
primordial scream
and only the hiss
of the radio —
active remains
and realize:

There was no place
like home.