

The Mockingbird

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1992

# The Mockingbird

ETSU Department of English

ETSU Department of Art

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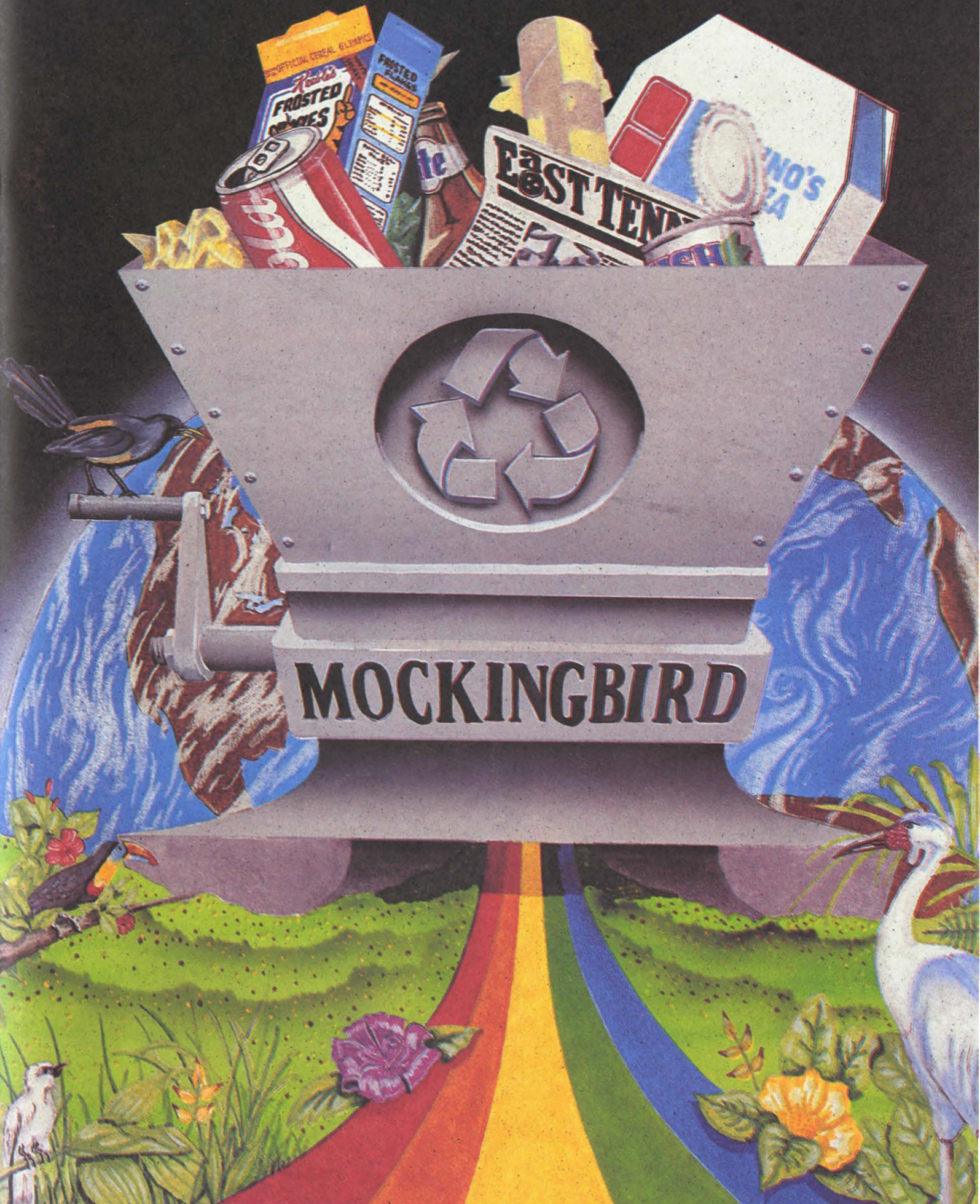
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**MOCKINGBIRD**



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# **Mockingbird**

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## THE ANNUAL LITERARY/ART PUBLICATION OF EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

# **1992**

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## **JUDGES**

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**Judy Miller**, this year's fiction judge, helped to found The Appalachian Center for Poets and Writers, which she now chairs. She is also a board member of the Appalachian Writers Association. As a fellow at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts she wrote part of *Earthstarr*, a novel she has just finished. She has published a number of short stories and poems in literary journals including the *Mockingbird*. Presently she is working on a sequel to *Earthstarr*.

**Dr. Richard Peake**, Professor of English at Clinch Valley College of the University of Virginia since 1968, judged this year's non-fiction entries. An amateur ornithologist, he is currently a member of the Board for the Society of Ornithology. He writes a weekly column for the *Kingsport Times-News* and reviews books about birds for *The Raven* and books on Appalachian and Renaissance literature for *Choice*. An article of his on Mary Lee Settle appeared in the *Iron Mountain Review* and he is working on a volume of poetry, a play and two novels.

**R. T. Smith**, this year's poetry judge, is an alumni writer-in residence at Auburn University. He has published several books of poetry, including *Rural Route*, *Banish Misfortune*, and his most recent book, *The Cardinal Heart*. His poems have appeared in such journals as *Poetry*, *Georgia Review* and the *Gettysburg Review*. The Poetry Society of America has honored him with both the Emily Dickinson and John Masefield Awards.

**Dr. Marvin Tadlock**, this year's art judge, is the chairman of the fine arts division at Virginia Intermont College. He has taught at Virginia Intermont for twenty years. His BFA and MFA were earned at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and his EdD from the University of Georgia at Athens. A two man show at St. Anne's Catholic Church in Bristol is currently displaying works by artist Bill Bledsoe and sculpture by Dr. Tadlock.

## **Editors' Comment**

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Our vision for this 1992 issue was to display environmental concerns. We are proud to say this *Mockingbird* is printed using 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper. Commitment to this choice meant sacrificing print quality. We hope the artists and our readers will approve this decision. The front cover design sets the stage for the recurring theme of recycling. A journal with a unified, thematic structure has been attempted. We would like to thank the people who contributed to this endeavor: the students who had the courage to submit their work. The inside back cover is dedicated to these students.

This issue also draws on the talent of a variety of students. You will find works by freshmen and graduate students, sophomores and seniors in these pages. As editors, we decided that literary staff could not submit. Entries were read and ranked by the staff and our advisor. The top ranking entries were then sent on to the judges for final placement. We feel this opened up the possibilities for a broader spectrum of talent to be presented. English majors do not have a monopoly on literary creativity. Biology and environmental health majors write poetry, too.

We would also like to thank our art directors and staff, Steve, Katherine, and Tyler; the literary staff, Katie, Michelle, and Amy; the judges; our advisors, Dr. Ron Giles and Mr. Wayne Dyer; Mr. Majid Ejlali, Dr. Styron Harris, Dr. Chesla Sharp, Dr. Fred Sauceman, Eric Layne, Deanna Bryant, Ruth Tapp, and Caroline Jackson. Special thanks to the Friends of the Reece Museum for administering the Paul Whitaker Memorial Award to provide prize money in both drawing and photography.

*Tami Penley  
Kevin Martens*



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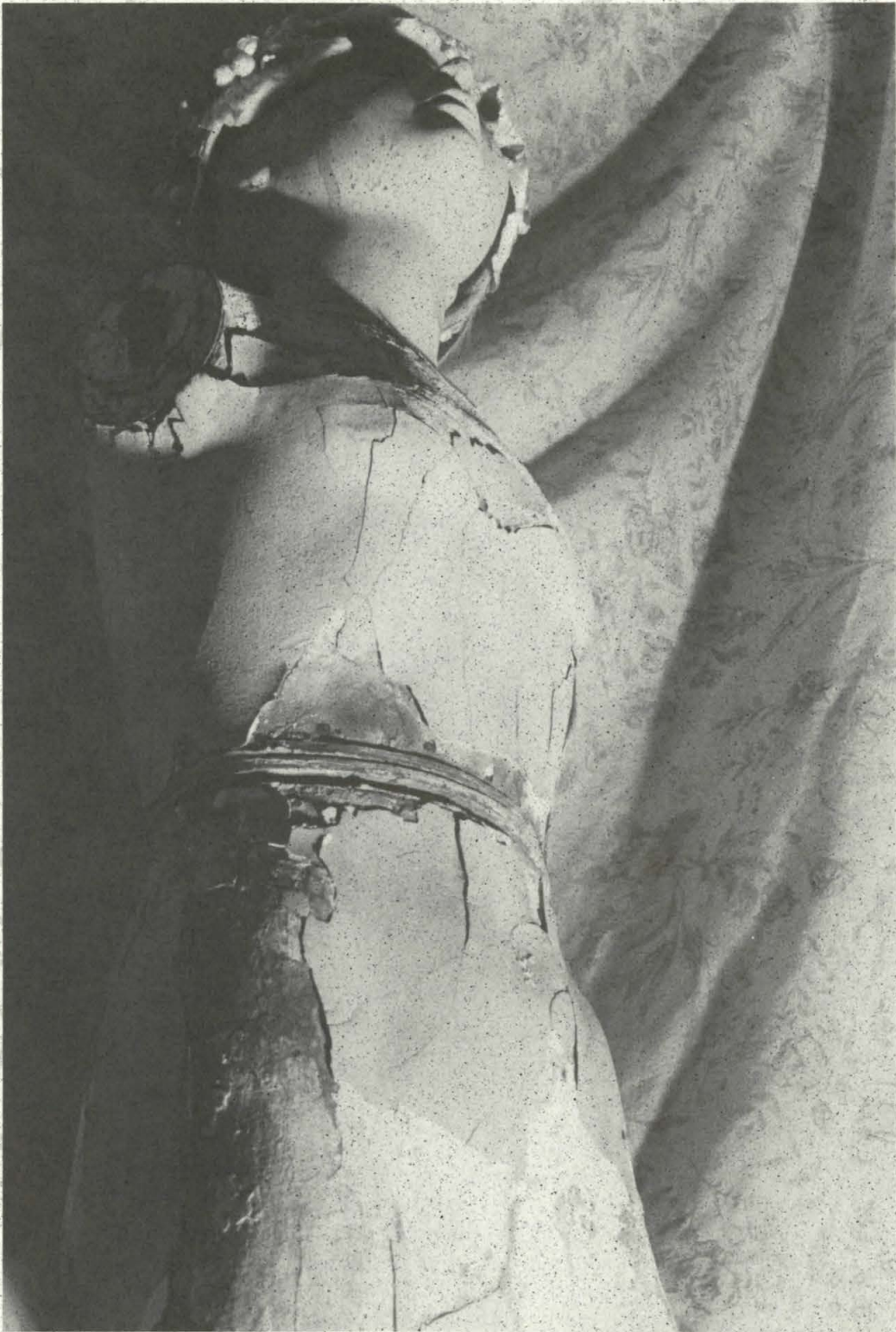
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Second Place, Photography

Kim Barker, **Crumbling Myth**



Bert ground out the glowing butt of his cigarette against the damp concrete. He glanced around for the hundredth time, peering into the gloom that permeated the old garage. Where was Sly? Could he have been delayed? Maybe he got caught. What if they both got caught? A slight sound behind him caused him to spin around, heart jumping into his throat in fear. A large, scruffy rat looked coolly at him for a moment before returning to the shadows. Taking a deep breath, Bert turned away and resumed his anxious surveying of the road that stretched across the barren plains surrounding the deserted service station. Sly better get here soon.

Bert had gotten into the racket almost four years ago. Laid off from his job at the processing plant, he'd been desperate for money when Sly had approached him. Sly said he needed a courier, that it was good money, that the job was risk free. It was only after Bert did a run that he realized just what Sly was into, and by that time, it was far too late to back out. As Sly so coldly put it, one little phone call and Bert could admire the world from behind bars for the rest of his life. So, here he was. He checked his watch for the tenth time in half as many minutes. Sly should have been here by now. It wasn't like him to be late.

With shaking hands, Bert pulled out another cigarette. It took him several tries to pull off the lighting tab, his hands were trembling so badly. He finally got it off and inhaled the fragrant smoke. The relaxing effects began to take hold and he could feel his trembling ease.

A shadow of motion out in the vast plain caught his eye. He walked away from his hovercar to get a better view of the road. Was that dust way over there on the horizon? His heart started the slow steady pounding that had become so characteristic of the minutes before a contact. Moving back to the hovercar, he picked up the binoculars that were laying on the seat, then returned to his vantage point at the dusty window. The autofocus hummed softly as he peered through the lenses. The dust resolved itself into an old-style pickup truck creeping across the barren landscape. It was Sly's. Breathing a sigh of relief, Bert returned the

binoculars to the seat, then leaned against the hovercraft's side and watched the vehicle crawling across the vast bowl of the plain.

It looked like a bug, he decided in a surge of relief and giddiness. The truck was a small, blue bug making its way across the rolling plain, further dwarfed by the huge vault of sky above it. Yeah, a bug on a plate. But who's holding the plate? He shook his head and began pacing back and forth, burning nervous energy until Sly could get there.

About a century ago, he'd been told, this entire area was nothing but thick forest. He wondered what that would have been like. It seemed almost obscene, somehow. How could anyone see what was coming with all the trees in the way? But, of course, the forest was all logged off by the late 1990s. He'd visited a forest once on a fifth-grade field trip. He'd hated it. He spent the whole time in mortal fear that one of those towering monsters was going to come crashing down on him.

What was taking Sly so long? Couldn't he drive a little faster? He looked through the binoculars again. The truck was hidden by a slight dip in the landscape but he could see the faint plume of dust kicked up by the tires. He stared at it for a moment. That was an awfully big plume for just one car. Lowering the binoculars, he squinted against the glare and the distance. Sly wouldn't have a second car along, would he? He peered through the binoculars again trying to see what was going on. A few moments later the truck topped the rise. He watched its back trail carefully, fearful of betrayal. It was alone. Now he could breathe a sigh of relief. The waiting was almost over.

He took a final drag on his cigarette and then its butt joined the half dozen others littering the grease-stained floor of the garage. Lifting up the trunk of his hovercar, he pulled

out the briefcase that lay within. The trunk slammed shut with a loud crash as he let go and walked to the hood of the car where he set the briefcase down. Popping the latch, Bert lifted the lid to examine the contents one more time. A cool million in bills stared up at him. He caressed the bills with shaking hands. He could have lost himself with this much fortune. Sly never could have found him.

"Who am I kidding?" He asked out loud, wincing at the echo of his voice in the cavernous garage. He stared at the bills for a long moment. With that amount of wealth, he could go to another country, change his name, and maybe even get a real job after awhile and settle down. At least, he could settle down until Sly found him and killed him for stealing. Bert

rubbed his eyes wearily. He had to get out of this business. If Sly didn't kill him, the stress probably would. The distant sound of an engine broke the stillness of the afternoon. Sly was almost here. Slamming the briefcase closed, he refastened the latch. It would never do to let Sly see him eyeing the money like that.

The crunch of tires on gravel heralded the arrival of the truck. Bert took a deep breath, picked up the briefcase and headed out to meet his contact.

The truck door opened and a slim figure stepped out. He was wearing a baseball cap that shadowed his face. As the man sauntered towards the front of the truck, Bert's warning bells started to jingle.

"You got the money?" The voice was wrong. A low baritone where Sly had a thin tenor. Bert tried to act nonchalant.

"Maybe. Where's Sly?" He could hear the suspicion in his traitorous voice.

"Sly's got other business to take care of. He sent me to do the swap. Gave me his truck so you wouldn't worry." The man casually

*"He checked  
his watch for the  
tenth time in half  
as many minutes.  
Sly should  
have been here by  
now. It wasn't like  
him to be late".*



patted the dusty fender with one hand. "So, let's get down to business." Bert hesitated. The stranger frowned. "You got a problem with the arrangement the boss worked out, Little Man?" Bert's thoughts were racing in circles. What if this was a plant? Maybe Sly had sold him out. What if this wasn't a plant? Sly wouldn't be happy if the buy didn't go down smoothly. What should he do?

"How'm I supposed to know that Sly sent you?" He was clutching the briefcase handle so hard his knuckles were turning white. The man shrugged carelessly.

"I got the goods. You can believe me or not. Are we going to do business or do I go back and tell Mr. Sly you were too scared to make the drop?" The stranger's voice never varied from a cool, bored monotone.

"I ain't scared of nobody!" Bert exclaimed in a surge of bravado. "Let me see the goods."

"Let me see the bread." The stranger returned impassively.

"The goods first" Bert ordered as the stranger hesitated. "The goods first or we don't deal." With a minute shrug, the stranger reached into the truck and pulled out a briefcase that

almost matched the one Bert was carrying. He walked to the front of the truck where he laid the case down and opened it up. Bert looked at it and eyed the stranger suspiciously. "Back away." The stranger shrugged again and took several steps back. The low angle of the sun highlighted the stranger's face, revealing harsh features and cold, hard eyes. Bert suppressed a shudder of fear, sidled up to the truck and looked into the case.

A brilliant array of white gleamed in the sunlight. Bert pulled a white handkerchief out of his pockets and wiped his sweaty hands before reaching out to touch the goods. He ran his fingers across the snowy expanse, delighting in the satiny texture. Then he reached down to the bottom of the case, judging the amount of

goods present, and finally, flipped back the top layers to make sure the stuff was pure all the way to the bottom. Satisfied, he stepped back and nodded.

"Looks good."

"It oughta. Let me see your part of the deal."

Bert opened his briefcase and watched in silence as the stranger riffled through it.

"Guaranteed untraceable?"

"Yeah. Just like always."

The stranger shut the briefcase, and with one smooth movement, stood up, letting the satchel of money dangle carelessly from one hand.

"The goods are all yours." Throwing the briefcase down on the seat next to him, he climbed into the truck and started the motor.

Bert hastily grabbed the case of goods from its precarious perch on the hood as the bulky vehicle lurched into gear and began to back away. Clutching the case under his arm, Bert scrambled to the driver's window, grabbing the dusty rear view mirror brace.

"Wait. What about my pay?" The stranger hesitated for a second, eyes unreadable.

"Sly will get it to you tomorrow."

With that, he backed the truck away from Bert's grasp. Bert watched the truck move off in dismay. He'd never had to do a delivery without getting paid first. Feeling more rattled by the moment, he climbed into his hovercar and keyed the starter pad. The rotors purred smoothly in bizarre counterpoint to Bert's frantic thoughts. He'd wait, that's what he'd do. He slid the case under his seat. He'd sit tight with the goods and wait. When he got his money, he'd deliver the goods. He put the car into low and glided out to the garage, following the road the truck had taken back toward the city.

Yeah, waiting sounds good. If Sly wants the goods delivered, he'll pay me. If he doesn't pay me, his business associate won't get

the goods and then Sly will get in trouble. How would you like to get in trouble, you little weasel? Bert was so caught up in the prospect of being in a position of superiority over his employer that he didn't notice the police cars hiding in the dip of the road until he was almost on top of them. By then, it was far too late to flee.

"Get out of the car and put your hands on your head." Numbly, Bert complied. As he stepped down, he saw Sly's pickup truck by the side of the road. He felt a momentary puzzlement. How did the police know? How'd they catch the... Then he turned and saw who was ordering him about. The stranger was approaching. He'd removed his baseball cap and Bert could see the grim line of the stranger's jaw. The sunlight reflected brightly off the handcuffs hanging at the stranger's belt and cast a dull sheen along the barrel of the gun that was unwaveringly pointed at Bert's midsection. Bert had been set up. He stood submissively as the stranger issued orders to the men.

"Search the car." He told one of them, never taking his eyes off Bert. A few seconds later, the man emerged from the car with the case. "Open it."

The latches snapped loudly in the tense silence, and all eyes watched warily as the officer opened the case. As the lid came up, a vagrant breeze toyed with a corner of the goods. The sheets of white, virgin paper rustled and one sheet began to lift off the stack. The police exchanged bleak looks as the lid was gently lowered, concealing the evidence.

Bert watched the proceedings with a sense of detachment. How had this happened? Sly had to be in on the bust since he would never willingly part with his truck. Perhaps Sly had ratted on them all to save his own skin. Though the conflicting emotions of anger at Sly's apparent betrayal and weary relief that the whole sordid affair was over, Bert could barely make sense out of the words being spoken by the policeman.

"Under the Reforestation Acts of 2019, all trees on U.S. soil were declared the property of the federal government..."



*The low angle  
of the sun  
highlighted the  
stranger's face,  
revealing harsh  
features and  
cold, hard eyes.*



*Katherine Kopp  
Senior-English/Biology*





Tyler Bishop, **Dune**



FIRST PLACE, POETRY

## A Wisconsin Memory

And when I looked in his eyes, I saw a flashing of green;  
And it was flame.

And in his eyes this flame contained;  
    readiness,  
        understanding,  
            willingness;  
and in his face, was  
    sadness,  
        and peace.

He whispered,  
His dying breath faint from the thin bellows within his frail  
    body; shaking with every labored breath,  
"Miss me . . .",  
    a last request,  
And then all was silence.  
    and heaviness.  
    and stunning  
        stillness.

and peace.

---

*Adam Johnson*  
*Freshman—Biology*

## Meditation—Upon Autumn

blood red, blinding yellow  
    commence their annual adornment  
        dressing for death, their searing raiments  
        flash defiantly beautiful,  
        radiating color-heat through the triumphal chill.

some, in their struggle to explode  
    merely achieve the mottled hues of discolored expectancy  
while others flame, unconscious of attempt  
or anyone's regard. Still others cling idly  
    to their neighbors' bright reflections,  
basking in the borrowed scene  
but

        the sea of leaves  
        deafening underfoot  
    massages the eardrums, masks the noise  
of the train and the faraway voices  
while the sky's soft sustained glory  
makes shine the smell of decay

---

*Sarah Maulden*  
*Special—Nursing*



## Whimsy: Water in Wood

The oak boards beneath my feet  
pitch and roll, streams of water  
frozen into wooden form.  
I'm on the high seas of imagination,  
on a petrified surface of  
currents, ripples, eddies,  
all suspended under my tread.  
Solidified amber water on which I walk.

The timbered flow carries me along  
with its own kind of displacement.  
If it were to melt, would I sink down  
to the bottom, carried along  
in a puddle of sawdust and pulp  
running off to the forest?

---

*Eileen Glaven  
Graduate-English*

**(and it's) spring**  
(in the style of e. e. cummings)

feet licking up  
the sun(warm)shine  
from the side(bright)walk  
yum! it's  
purple plum time it's  
warm in moon shine it's  
spring

not now any more  
do sweaters do sniffles  
now through the wind(open  
window) may wind flow  
may grass mow  
may sun show it's  
tickle-bright nose time it's  
garden green hose time it's  
spring

and (upside down) trees  
wave their lavender skirts  
over cloud frosting skies  
a peeping sweet bird cries  
far oh  
away

and you will and I  
will be goin a  
way far away  
for a long (far) a  
long way apart  
is a long  
is a lone  
and it's  
spring

---

*Sarah Maulden  
Special-Nursing*





First Place, Photography

Tim Perry, Man



# Things Stand Just The Way They Were

Beyond the fact that Leander Sexton was a drunk and a braggart, he had a respectable reputation. At least once a week, he boasted to somebody, "I've never shot a gun, worked on a public job, or sold bad liquor."

Belle, Leander's wife, had lived with Leander long enough to look over his bragging. At times, she could even appreciate his lazy way to get other people to do his farm work. But Leander's drinking was a different proposition. Belle had preached, slapped, threatened, and finally, almost given up trying to get Leander to quit drinking that hell-slop. But Belle came up with one last plan to make her husband quit his drinking.

Knowing Leander had to walk across a railroad bridge with no railings to get home from his moonshine still at night, Belle decided to scare the love for that hell-slop right out of him. At twelve o'clock one night during the dark of an October moon, Belle covered herself with a white sheet and squatted down in the middle of the bridge, waiting for Leander.

Shortly, Belle heard her husband stop his singing and step a little slower as he staggered onto the railroad bridge. When Leander got within a yard or two of her, Belle jumped straight up, waved her arms, and yelled, "I'm the Devil!"

Without missing a step, Leander turned around and hollered over his shoulder, "I ought to know who you are, I married your sister." Shocked, Belle stumbled backwards tangling herself in the sheet. Her foot slipped as she tried to regain her balance, and she fell off the bridge into the Clinch River. The cold waters of the Clinch were enough to give Belle the fall fever. She recovered sometime in December of that same year, and the sickness only strengthened her hate for hell-slop and her desire for revenge.

Leander didn't count making moonshine as real labor. Planting and harvesting crops was the work to avoid. When the fields needed plowing or when the summer corn was ripe, Leander sent out word that he was going to have a "working." This was his way of getting other folks, mostly young people, to do the biggest chores on the farm for the price of a noon meal and a square dance in the evening.

Besides church services, events such as these were the main places where young people got to spend time together, so there was always a big crowd.

At a molasses stir-off one year, Leander got into a fuss with one of the neighbors who came to help. Every man who helped cut and grind the sugarcane got to take home a small, two-pound lard bucket full of molasses after the syrup cooked. Surveying the progress of the working, Leander saw Corbitt Sizemore dipping into the molasses pan with a ten-pound bucket. Leander called out, "Now Corbitt, that's too big for a fair dip of sorghum, and you know it."

"You never said how big a bucket we could use," Corbitt growled, embarrassed that Leander would even mention it. "Well, it's too big for a fair dip," Leander said. "I didn't say you could have all you could carry." Corbitt, who had just begun dipping into the pan, turned his bucket over and emptied at least a quart of molasses on the ground and went home mad.

That spring, Leander went on a three-week drunk and started having trouble with his heart. Doc Cornett, the veterinarian convinced Leander that his home-made hell-slop was going to kill him. "Leander," Doc Cornett warned, "You'd better set your house in order."

After a few sleepless nights, he sent for his enemy Corbitt Sizemore to come to his bedside. "I want to make peace," Leander said. "The doctor says I may be going to meet my Maker, and I want you to forgive me."

"I'll forgive you," Corbitt said. "It's the Christian thing to do. But I'll never come to another one of your workings."

Breathing a sigh of relief, Leander set up in the bed and said, "I thank you for forgiving me. But if I get better and don't die, things stand just the way they were."

Leander's heart got well when he sobered up, and he decided to visit Corbitt after

hearing about what a fine bunch of pigs his neighbor had. Taking a look at his neighbor's stock, Leander bragged, "I've got a pig at home just like that black-spotted one of yours. That little one over there in the corner of the lot."

"Is that right?" Corbitt asked. "This little fellow is going to bring me a blue ribbon at the county fair."

"I've already won that ribbon," Leander bragged.

"Do tell," Corbitt said. "Well, I'll be over to see your swine in a day or two."

The little black-spotted pig went amiss before Corbitt could get time to visit Leander.

After two or three weeks of looking for his pig,

Corbitt finally gave up trying to find it. Remembering Leander's brags about raising hogs, Corbitt stopped by the Sexton farm on the way home from town one evening.

Leander grinned as he led his neighbor past the garden patch on the way to the hog lot. As he reached the lot, Corbitt squalled, "Why, that's my ani-

mal, you hog thief! I'll have you arrested before sundown."

"Now you know that's not your pig, Corbett. Don't you remember? I told you I had a little black-spotted pig at home just like yours. The only difference is that my pig is probably a little bit bigger than yours," Leander returned.

Corbitt Sizemore swore a big oath as he cut a path down the middle of Leander's bean patch, kicking up at least two rows of plants as he headed toward home. Between oaths, Corbitt promised himself, "I'll send that lying braggart into eternity the next time he steps foot on my land."

Within the hour, Corbitt put up a sign on his front gate that read, "Trespassing Sextons Will Be Shot."

Leander didn't care if he ever visited Corbitt again. The biggest thing on Leander's mind was the blue ribbon at the Tazewell

*Leander didn't  
count making  
moonshine  
as real labor.  
Planting and  
harvesting crops  
was the work  
to avoid.*



County Fair. Never had a Sexton earned such a prize, and Leander was sure to win with Corbitt's pig. Leander babied that pig like it was a firstborn child. Before the fair in May, Leander made his children carry water from the Clinch River to wash and scrub that pig. Sadie they named her.

The black spots became darker, and the pig did take on a certain air of being special. Leander had trained that animal to sit and heel by pulling on a rope around Sadie's neck. The poor hog looked like a lap dog on a leash.

Leander now had other people bragging on him and his pig. Somebody started a rumor on the first day of the fair that a man from up on the Clinch River had a pig that could talk. Nobody ever actually heard Sadie talk, but the crowd was still impressed with a pig that would let someone lead it on a small rope. Leander and his pig made a sight parading around the fair grounds. Belle described Sadie and Leander more as a spectacle than a show.

On the first day of the fair, Leander got afraid that someone would try to steal his pig. "Why, some people would stoop pretty low to see me lose this contest," Leander told Belle.

"You don't need to worry about winning," Belle assured Leander. "Everybody will know how much you're worth after tomorrow."

At the fairgrounds, Leander slept on the ground beside his pig's pen the night before the judging. He wasn't taking any chances. Right after daylight, Belle brought Leander's pig five gallons of special food that she had mixed just for the occasion.

"Stand guard while I go over to the creek and wash up before the judging starts," Leander told Belle. "I want to be ready in case any newspaper reporters show up."

"You go on and get washed up," said Belle. "I can handle things here."

Leander stood beside his pig as the judges entered the stalls to begin their work. The judges were five stalls down from Leander when Sadie just laid down in the dirt.

"Get up, Sadie, or I'll have to wash you again," Leander said. "Get up, girl."

When Sadie didn't move, Leander got beside her and tried to push the animal to her feet. Sadie didn't move. By this time the judges were only two stalls away. "Sadie, please," Leander begged. "Get up so I can lead you around

the lot to show the judges how smart you are."

Sadie seemed to hear Leander's plea and tried to get to her feet, only to fall over again. Leander coaxed and begged until Sadie finally made it to her feet. Sadie wobbled. She grunted. She fell again.

"So this is the famous Sadie we've heard so much about," one of the judges said. "Well, when does the show start?"

Leander was ready to cry by this time and he whispered something into Sadie's ears he pulled on her leash. "There. She's ready," Leander said as Sadie stood to her feet. "Come on, girl." Sadie grunted and fell again as Leander tried to lead her around the stall.

By this time one of the judges had stepped into the stall to get a closer look at Sadie. As he bent over the pig to get a better look at Sadie's hide and color, the judge started laughing. The judge's laughing stopped as Sadie rolled over, pinning the judge against the wooden slats of the stall.

"Some of you men need to go get the extra judge for this event. We're sure going to need him. This animal is drunk," the judge said. "I don't know if that disqualifies the entry or not. We'll let the tie-breaking judge decide."

As word of Sadie's condition spread among the crowd, people began to snicker and giggle. Some even had the gall to laugh out loud. In fact, men and boys escorting the new judge were laughing as he walked down the rows of stalls toward Sadie. The judge in the stall with Sadie saw the

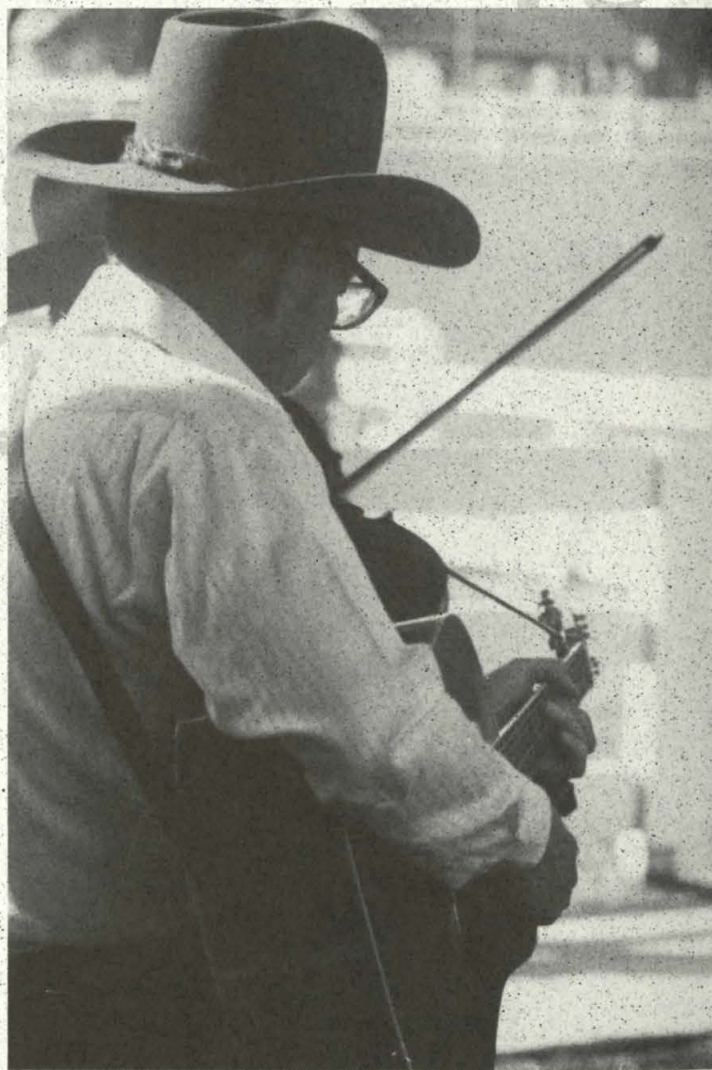
crowd coming down the middle of the stalls. "Make way, Fellows, and let the man through," he said.

"Oh, no," said Leander.

The two judges conferred a few minutes by whispering in each other's ear. "Everybody be quiet," said the tie-breaking judge. And he climbed over into Sadie's stall. "I proudly present this award to the drunkest pig in the whole state of Virginia," the judge said.

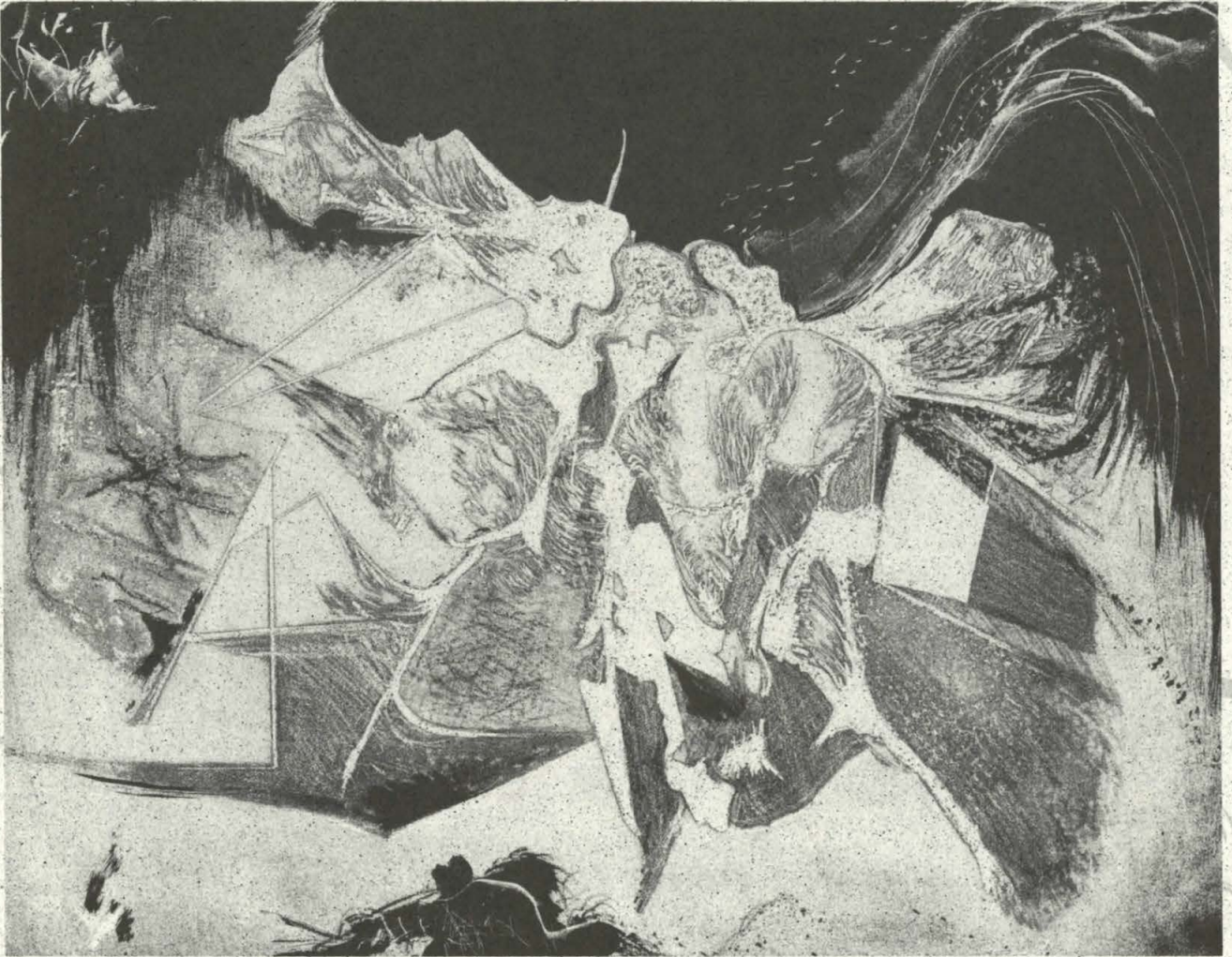
As the crowd laughed, Mr. Corbitt Sizemore, the tie-breaking judge for the Tazewell County Fair and Stock Show, tied a pink ribbon around Sadie's neck.

*Tom K. McKnight  
Graduate-English*



*Christine Keys, Music Man*

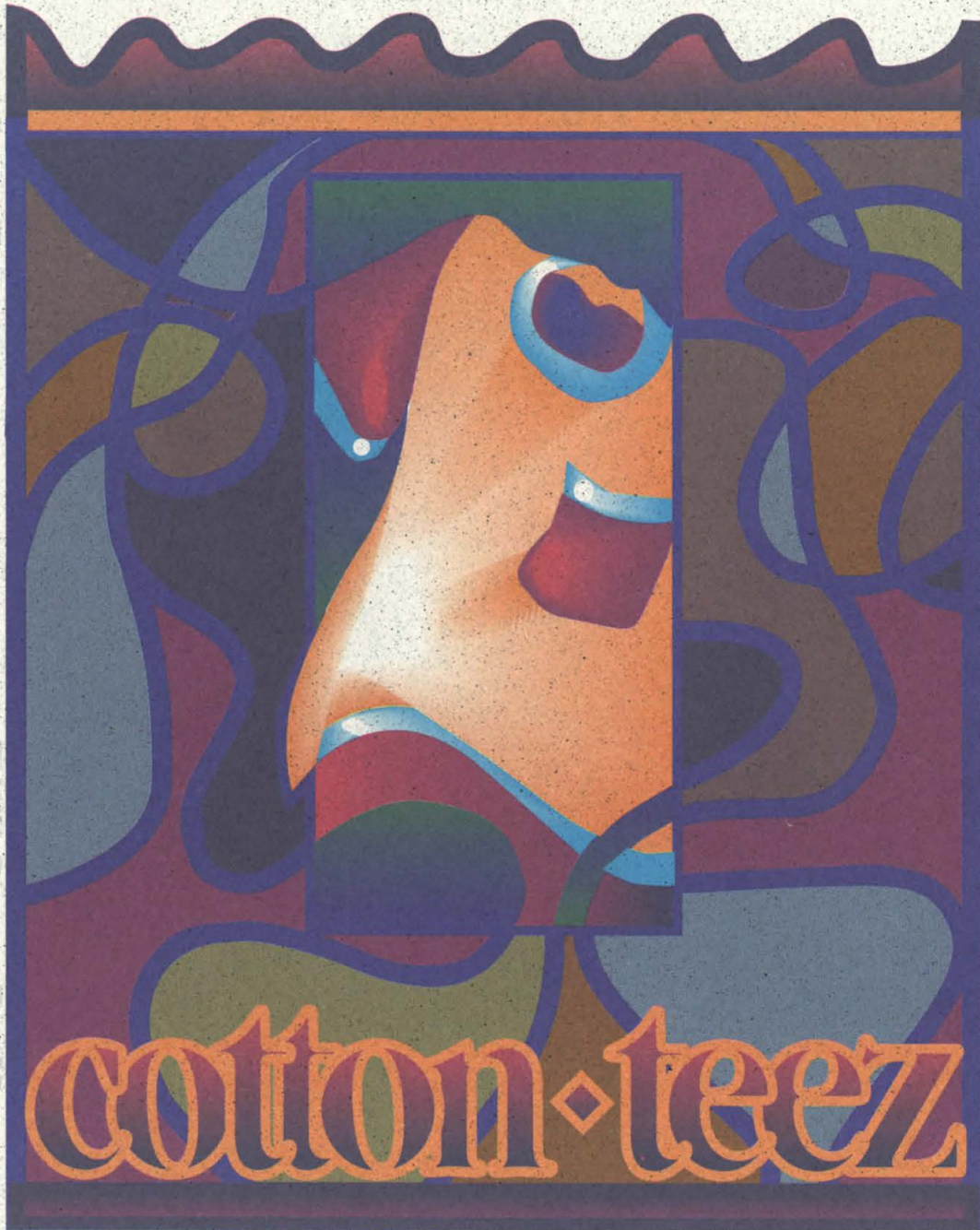




Second Place, Drawing/Printmaking

Christiana Popper, **Flight's Mystery**





Theresa Bellamy, Cotton Teez



SECOND PLACE, POETRY

**childhood**

Carousel pony, round and round forever,  
a merry-go-round to never-never.  
Give me a wish, play with my hair,  
pennies from heaven, a jewel so rare.  
Up and down, in white and gold,  
my trusty steed, a knight so bold.  
Carousel pony, take me away,  
cotton candy, c'mon let's play.  
A twinkle, a star,  
don't go too far.  
Up and away,  
an apple a day.  
Carousel pony, round and round forever,  
A merry-go-round to never-never.  
No more coins,  
the day is forgotten.  
Your legs are tired,  
My apple is rotten.

---

*Elizabeth Abbott*  
*Senior-Advertising/Art*

**untitled**

Grandmother sits in her oak  
rocker wind blown wrinkles  
entwine her bones  
A glazed stare since the  
flood and his last breath  
Homemade dreams and a whiskey remedy  
Knowledge found in a cobweb attic trunk  
a high school prom a diamond ring  
a dead flower from her lover  
With musty breath she mumbles  
yesterdaytodaytomorrow  
all are one and  
preparations for his dinner must be made  
And she moves to feed  
the dead forgetting she is alive.

---

*Elizabeth Abbott*  
*Senior-Advertising/Art*





Julie Branham, *Carpe Noctem*



# HELL

For the damned, there are no cars in Hell, only buses. Whenever you wish to go anywhere, a bus is the only way. The buses are always crowded with loud people who have nothing to say. Your neighboring passenger is, depending on the shamefulness of your earthly crimes, either an ancient drunk with a nose hair moustache, reeking of fortified wine; or an extremely fat, sweaty person of the opposite sex exuding a sickly sweet odor of festering perspiration, and laden with cumbersome parcels. In a hopeless, evasive maneuver, you lean away from your seat mate, pressing yourself against the side of the bus. You feel the vaguely greasy, nicotine-coated window and the dusty plaid seat, with its bits of chewing gum blackened like asphalt, and its crumbs which have petrified and are digging into the flesh of your legs. But the most horrible torment of this Hell-chariot is the air conditioner. One shudders at the diabolical efficiency of the demon chemist who perfected its formula, laughing in anticipation of the atrocities his ware would inflict on unrepentant noses. The smell is best described as a combination of an overfull vacuum cleaner bag and a fart which has hovered in the stagnant air of a cave for ten years.

The demons in Hell, however, do have cars. The lower demons drive Volvos with "Baby on Board" or "Drive Carefully. Marvateen Gymnast Inside" on bumper stickers fastened to the rear hatch. The higher and more evil demons drive BMWs and Porsches with vanity plates saying things like "IM4U2NV" or "SCUL4U". They delight in driving through mud puddles and splashing you as you wait for the bus.

The homes of Hell are assembly-line tract homes covered with off-blue vinyl siding, in neighborhoods with no trees. The front yards are decorated with miniature wishing wells, plaster stable boys, sombreroed Mexicans driving donkey carts, and pink flamingos. Pets are allowed in Hell as long as they are incontinent and they hate you. Consequently the yards of dog-owning Hellions are littered with the beasts' droppings. The interiors of Hell homes feature plaid recliner sofas, octagonal simulated wood end tables and oil-on-black-velvet paintings of Elvis and stampeding wild horses.

Televisions are plentiful in Hell, with each resident having at least one. The programs available are limited to pro wrestling, soap operas, "The Price is Right," golf tournaments, and Jerry Lewis telethons. Occasionally, something you want to watch comes on, but someone turns on a power saw after a few seconds, ruining the reception.

Hell's musical variety is not much better. The only radio station in Hell plays elevator music twenty-four hours a day. Records are available by such fine artists as Barry Manilow, Jim Nabors, Yoko Ono, and Bon Jovi. The national anthem of Hell is "Afternoon Delight."

The cuisine of Hell rivals that of Bayonne, New Jersey, in its delicacy. Breakfast usually consists of one of the "Monster Cereals," or anything else with brightly-colored marshmallows and a build-it-yourself home lobotomy kit in a plastic bag inside the package. For lunch, one may have barbecued pork rinds or a half-pound bag of gummy candies shaped like various household vermin. Dinners consist of partially cooked TV dinners with at least one unidentifiable substance which you are required to eat entirely.

The literary climate of Hell is quite "sin-tillating." The book selection consists of anything by Anton Zander LeVay (naturally), Amanda Kittering Ros, biographies of Hollywood celebrities, and numerous pop-psyche, self-help manuals with titles like "Men Who Make Women Lance the Boils on Their Backs and Women Who Do It and Like It." Many periodicals are available, featuring articles on Joan Rivers's latest thigh liposuction, or pregnant men married to their grandmothers.

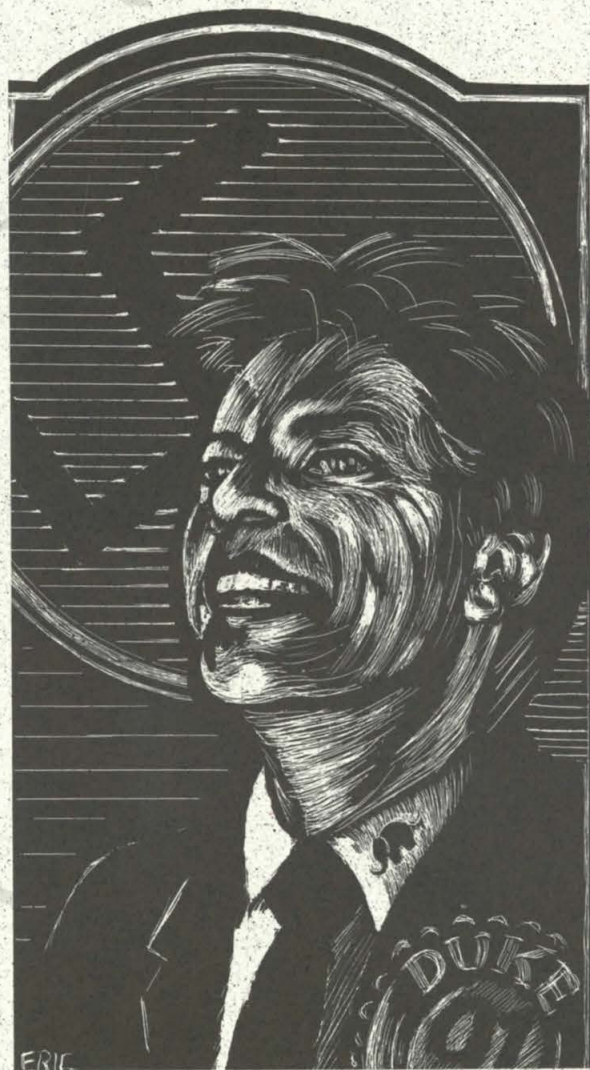
The citizens of Hell work and shop in large department stores with brightly colored

plastic carts and an aroma of burning caramel popcorn in the air. Many racks of polyester prints beckon the fashion consumer.

Suffice it so say that everything you see in Hell is ugly, everything you hear is cacophonous, everything smells eliminatory or putrid, everything you touch is abrasive or filthy and everyone you meet is obnoxious.

Otherwise, Hell ain't a bad place to be.

*Tommas Koehler  
Freshman—Environmental Health*



W. E. Layne, Duke '91





Bryant Owens, **George Bush Trucking**



# Capitalism

Parents just don't understand that it's a beautiful day in the neighborhood, and Tom Brokaw is up early eating breakfast at McDonald's. Gramps in the wheelchair doesn't approve of the marriage of Michael Jackson and Boy George. The Gulf War is over and it's time to rebuild the cities on rock and roll. Sir, would you choose hamburger A, a Wendy's hamburger, or hamburger B, one that sits around all day instead of sweatin' to the oldies with Richard Simmons? Madge, I soaked in it and I am scratching my head— must be dandruff. The cup ran away with the spoon, and soon cups were part of everyone's balanced breakfast, so you better eat your Wheaties! Along came a spider who sat down beside her and frightened Miss Muffet away, so she bought Raid to kill the bug dead. The frosted side helps keep me high, while the whole wheat side keeps me regular. If you treat your puppy like a dog, then you should treat your baby like an overgrown chauvinist pig. If little Hershey's Kisses have big, big chocolate, then do big Hershey's Kisses have little, little

chocolate? I trust that Ed McMahon has my one million dollar prize from Publishers' Clearing House and heeere's Johnny waiting to give it to me. Plop, plop, fizz, fizz oh what a relief it is that Jim Bakker can save my soul for a mere monetary contribution or maybe a Get Out of Jail Free Card. I wish I were an Oscar Mayer Wiener, that is what I truly want to be so I can clog your arteries, but Medi-Care has got you covered, don't they? Why don't you get a piece of the rock, or you could settle for a piece of the Berlin Wall? Sir, which tastes better to you, Coke or Pepsi? Would you prefer Diet Coke, Caffeine-Free Diet Coke, or just a nice glass of polluted, natural spring water? Pardon me, but are those Bugle Boy jeans that you're wearing, or are you just happy to see me? Everyone in Ethiopia is wondering, "Where's the beef?" If we give the rich a tax break, then they will stimulate the withered economy, and I have some ocean-front property in Arizona to sell you— dirt cheap. Before you kill a kid to get his eighty dollar sneakers, you'd better make sure he wears your

size. Did Dr. Freud really exist? And if he did, tell us about his mother. You would have to eat three bowls of your cereal just to make up for the price of one bowl of our cereal. Barbie is so lifelike that you can call this confidential, toll-free hotline for women with eating disorders. If Roadrunner pushes Coyote off the cliff and he survives, should I invest in Acme, Inc.? If America is the land of the free and the home of the brave, then we are going to Hell. Go to Hell, go directly to Hell, do not pass go, do not collect two hundred dollars. The capitalists own Boardwalk and Park Place, and you can bet your ass they'll be buying hotels.

*Elizabeth Abbott*  
Senior-Advertising/Art



Ben Dowdy, **Gulf War Sketchbook #4**



## The Gargoyle

Soon to spring from the sooty tower,  
'neath your fearsome visage cower  
sucklings of the milk of light  
While the boiling earth sustains your power

Frail creatures born of fleshy wombs  
their fears encased in rude stone, hewn,  
with grimacing folly and hungry stare  
concealing black secrets lit at noon.  
When long away our world began,  
Eyes that burned erythrean  
presided o'er the teeming mass,  
Your Day of Christening yet to pass.

Cities aflame with hopeless rage,  
flicker in the eye of the granite sage,  
calmly waiting to fulfill,  
a lust for souls that none can gauge.

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*Tommas Koehler*  
*Freshman—Environmental Health*

## library/cairn

Somewhere below Big Bald Mountain  
lies a small stack  
of mouldering books.

good stuff: Yeats, Eliot  
StevensRilkeBeckett—yes, Pynchon:  
thought they'd help

in an abstract way.  
But they were heavy. And  
you can't eat paper.

---

*Douglas A. Powell*  
*Graduate—English*



## Gentility of Steel for Jack Higgs

These four walls are no longer padded,  
They are no longer here—  
A mirage dispersed by the voice which  
reaches into the dust-covered corners  
of our minds.

*Write this down.*

Socrates is pacing the floor again  
Like a caged animal,  
Bars of apathy attempt to hold him back,  
But he bursts forth in song.

*Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war,  
Listen to that word. War. War. War.*

His wisdom is his burden  
And shines from his eyes through sorrow,  
The gaining of knowledge  
requires the exposure of reality.

Listen to his voice.  
It is Homer, Aristotle, and Plato.

Grasp his spirit.  
It is Jefferson, Emerson, and Thoreau.

Run with his soul.  
It is Whitman, Lincoln, and Dickinson.

Tap his mind to find  
Jung and Freud.

He weaves a tapestry of life,  
Our souls vibrant colors,  
Our minds brooding shades.

*Write, rewrite, and rewrite. Think and  
rethink— don't be echoes or copycaters.  
Think. Everybody understand? Are  
with me?*

The reactions and awakenings are like  
stirring winds coming together to  
create a storm of thought.  
Paideia

Rustling notebooks and closing texts recall  
the four walls,  
Time defeats even the best.

*Hold on. We have two minutes.*

Three minutes later we leave our agora,  
rejuvenated, inspired, nurtured  
until our next meeting,  
For our Socrates speaks not spake.

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Maria Bledsoe  
Sophomore-English





Honorable Mention, Drawing/Printmaking

Christiana Popper, **Worship**



# Pennies Kill the Fishes

*Greene County, Tennessee, 1954*

The heat was oppressive that July in Tennessee. A farmer might have called it a good corn growing weather, but it was oppressive and suffocating with humidity. It had just gone noon and white hot sun stung the tops of my arms as I stood by the front yard gate waiting for Mr. John's old black farmhand, Silas Mosely, to come walking by. I had spotted him coming across the top of the hill, scuffling a red dust cloud behind him, and I knew he would be passing our house soon.

Old Silas was easy to recognize, even from a distance. He was tall and lean, quick moving most times, but that day he came slowly and deliberately, dragging the soles of his shoes through the dusty road.

As Silas drew closer, I could see great circles of sweat running under his armpits and across the chest of his khaki shirt. Silas always wore khaki, always clean and pressed, sometimes patched, always a felt hat, round-brimmed and grease stained about the headband. Years of hard work had stooped his shoulders. That day I could not see his black face beneath his hat brim for the added weight of a burlap sack slung up over his back had bent him over at the waist.

Silas has a sack of corn to husk, I thought, or a bit of feed to take to Myrtle, our brood mare, who was grazing in the sun-burnt pasture beyond the woods. We would take Myrtle to the river for a cool drink. We would paddle along the edge of the river in a quiet shady place and wash the dust off our feet, just as we always did.

Perhaps Silas has a sack of apples from Mr. John's cellar. We would make cider from the left-over June apples and drink it in the heat of the evening. Silas was coming to borrow the cider press. My grandfather had made the press himself, an old wooden one with a round barrel, a round wooden plate, and a long metal screw between the handle and the plate. Mr. John would be along directly to supervise the cider making. A tart spring cider, one with bite, that's what Mr. John liked.

But Silas stopped at our gate and opened the sack to show me five puppies, brown and white spotted balls of fur wiggling over one

another, crying as the sun light rushed in on them. I reached into the sack and ran my fingers down the softness of their backs, felt their rough tongues licking along the tips of my fingers.

And then Silas drew out a quarter from his pocket and, showing it to me, he said, "I knowed what Mr. John wanted soon as he handed me this here quarter, and I knowed they was nothing I could do 'cept do as I'm told!"

"Now, Silas, what did Mr. John tell you to do?" I asked him.

"Mr. John say get rid of these here pups. He say they's all bitch dogs and they's all mongrels to boot and he say get rid of these here pups anyway I could. Say I could take a hammer—but I never could do a thing like that. So he say drown them pups in the river. Just don't come bringing them back. That's what he say."

Silas took off his hat and rubbed his bald head, which was as smooth and brown as a river slick, and then he picked up the sack and slid it up across his back and walked in the direction of the river.

I had told Mama that Silas was coming by and could I please go. She said it was okay as long as I minded, and so I fell in behind him.

The dirt road was baked in the sunshine and the hot gravel stung my bare feet. I has forgotten my sandals again. I remember watching the road for the hot gravel and saying to Silas, "You don't have to do everything Mr. John tells you to, Silas."

"Yes sir, I do. I knowed when that bitch had pups what would have to be done, and what old nigger man would have to do it. I knowed it shore."

Then I said to the back of him that maybe Mama would let me keep the pups, but Silas said he knowed better than to do a trick like leaving five bitch dogs on a good neighbor.

Down the road a short way we cut off across a meadow toward the river and followed a cow path over the slope of green pasture, down through the bottom land where a crop of tobacco grew waist high to Silas. The leaves hit me at eye level, and the strong smell of green tobacco suffocated me. Gummy leaves stuck at my arms and legs as we waded through the patch. The

bottom land had been plowed between the rows with the roto-tiller and the fine, silky dirt squished up in puffs between my toes like brown talcum powder.

We got to the river quickly, for it wasn't far from my house. We could hear the hum of water before we could see the river. A row of large locust and sycamore trees guarded the river bank; the underbellies of their leaves shimmered white-silver in the sunshine. We padded beneath the high ceiling of branches and found the pathway which unwound like a flat brown ribbon and ran alongside the river bank for miles and miles downstream.

The Nolichucky was crystal that day. Silas said that the clearness was unnatural, low and slow as a creek dribbling along. Things which usually remained in the muddiness were revealed like long hidden secrets. We could see brown river slicks on the bottom, and the slimy sticks and rotted leaves tangled among them. Mussel shells lay in a heap under the water where a raccoon had been feasting. Crawdads picked about the river bottom, backing in and out of the river rocks. Two small bluegills were trapped, gasping air in a puddle along the bank. Silas waded in and threw them flipping and fighting into the safety of the river.

"I tell you we'll be needing rain right soon. This river's too clean. We need a good muddying rain to brang this river up," Silas said as he took up his sack and picked his way down the path slowly in front of me.

Sawbriars overgrowing the edge of the pathway grabbed at my bare legs and drew a long string of red droplets. I was wearing a dress that day. Mama would fuss about my scratched legs; a young lady, she'd say, shouldn't go about with long, red briar scratches up and down her legs. And there was church tomorrow, too.

We walked silently. Except for a solitary crow squawking in the distance, and the brush of our bodies in the tall grass there were no sounds. In the stillness I asked Silas, "Why did you take the quarter anyway? Maybe you shouldn't have taken the quarter, Silas?"

"That quarter ain't got nothing to do with it, Young'un," he said, stopping and leaning way out over the river bank looking downstream. "When you grows up to be a big lady,



you can see why the quarter ain't got nothing to do with it."

And then he said, "It's giving the quarter got just as much to do with it as taking the quarter. Because sometimes a nigger's got to take it, but YOU don't have to give it to him, now does you?"

Silas shifted the sack to the other side of his back and moved slowly onto the pathway. I trooped behind him, close enough to see a hundred beggar's lice sticking to the backs of his khaki legs, moving rhythmically in the folds of his pants as he walked. The sack swung above my head. As the puppies wiggled and bumped in the sack, I would smell their breath panting warm and moist through the burlap.

Silas stopped abruptly and I bumped into the back of him. He turned off the pathway and sat down in a clearing near the river bank beneath a large catawba tree whose limbs spread like monstrous shaggy arms above the river. I sat beside the wiggling sack.

"We could just turn them loose here, Silas, and nobody would ever know."

"No, Young'un. The foxes would eat them up right away," he said. "It's a mercy to send them on where the fishes go. These dogs ain't no use to nobody. It's a mercy to send them swimming."

Silas fanned himself with his hat and contemplated the river. He was far away, his mind drifting down river with the humming water, his knees pulled up under his chin, his arms across them. He picked a tall blade of sawgrass and chewed on the end of it. And so I picked some grass, too, and chewed the sweetness out of it.

The river was green near the bank where the shade lay on the water, the smell of muddiness gone, the fish blowing circles, spreading to nothingness. Silas kept his eye on the river and said, "It's a sad thing to be a mongrel on this here earth, now ain't it. Fit for nothing but the river water. Fit to go where the fishes go."

Silas and I came to a place on the Nolichucky we called the Puddle Hole where we often fished in quiet, deep water. An ancient uprooted beech tree leaned right-angled above the river. Silas turned the quarter over and over between his thumb and forefinger, and then he sent it slicing through the water. I remember thinking he would change his mind now that he

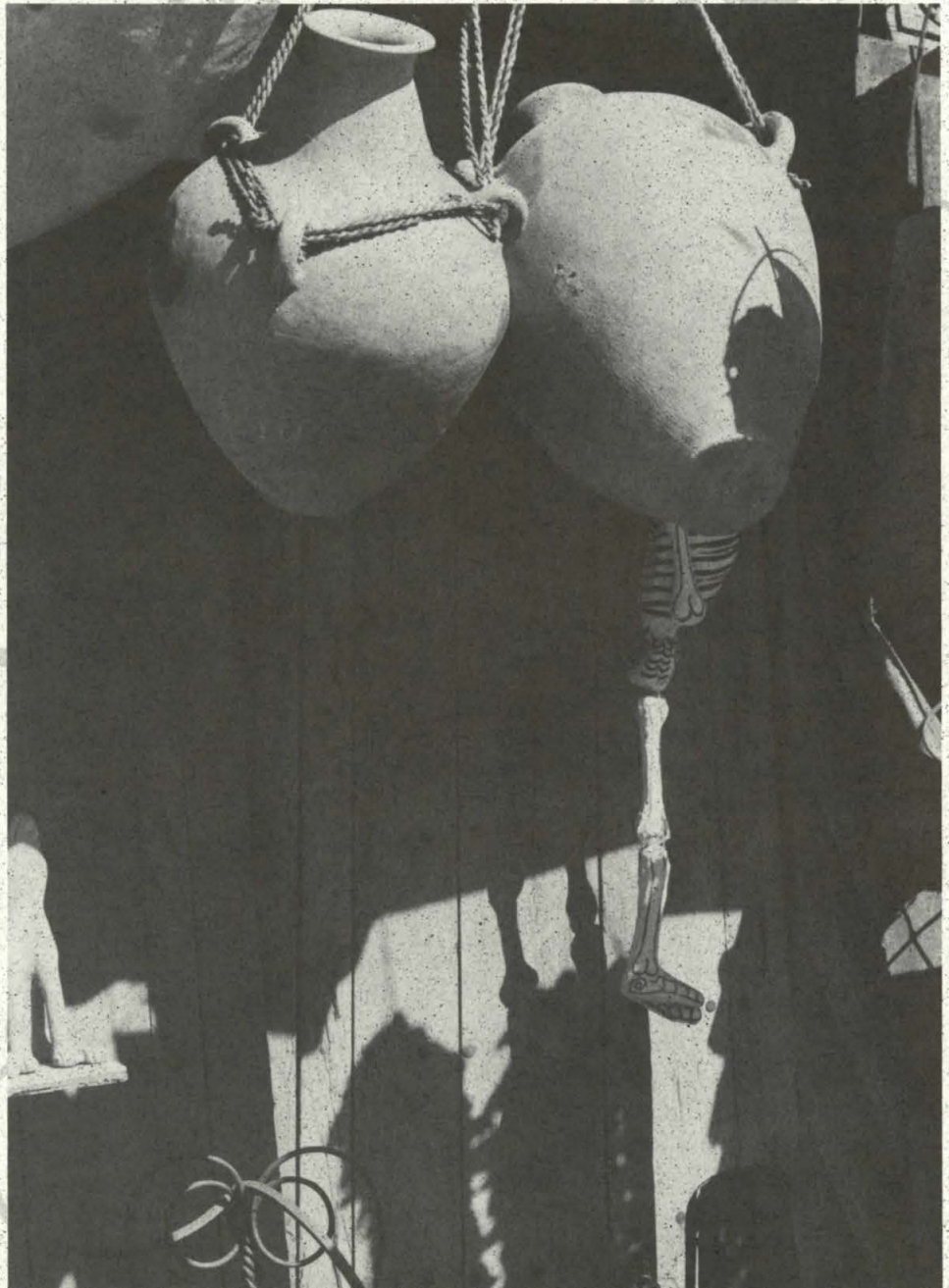
was rid of the quarter, but he said to me angrily, "I done told you, time and again, it ain't the quarter, Young'un!"

Silas dug his heels into the river bank and brought the sack up to shoulder level. He swung it back and forth, low to the ground and then up as high as his shoulder, and then he let it go. The sack turned somersaults above the water and splashed down clear beyond the end of the beech log, making great waves in the river. But there must have been air in the sack because it began to bob and sink, and bob and

sink.

I held my breath until it hurt my chest, and I stared at the sack until my eyes blurred over. I could not blink away the blindness, like sun in my eyes. Something was pressing the breath out of me, but I could not see what it was.

And then I could see Silas with a sack of Mr. John's June apples. I could see him setting up grandfather's apple cider press. Mr. John was saying to Silas that the apples were good this year for cider.



Honorable Mention, Photography

Penny L. Strozier, Santa Fe, New Mexico



Mr. John wanted to mash the apples first, before he put them in the press. They were hard and tart, and he handed the sack to Silas and said, "Mash the apples with the heel of your boot, Silas. Mash them right in the sack." Silas stomped the sack until the apple pulp oozed up through the burlap. Then Mr. John said, "Pour them into the press, Silas, and put the wooden plate tightly over the mashed apples." Then Mr. John tried hard to turn the press handle, but he could not make the juice come out into the little pail under the spout.

"Silas, you press the apples," Mr. John said. Silas turned the handle until the good, clear apple juice gurgled out into the pail. He bore down harder and harder on the screw handle, and Mr. John smiled at the juice and said it would make a good tart cider. He stuck his finger in the pail and sucked off the juice.

Mr. John said, "Silas, press them apples right down to the skins." So Silas stopped and rolled up his khaki sleeves above his elbows. And when he pressed down hard again, his face blew up tight, and black ropes came up along his neck.

Mr. John, smiling down at the apple juice, said, "Just a few more turns, Silas, and you'll have those apples pressed out good." And Silas turned down hard on the handle until his arms trembled under the strain, and he blew spit out of the corners of his mouth.

Finally, it was done. He gave the handle a twirl and the plate spun up, and the breath came rushing back into my chest, like someone blowing me up like a balloon.

I blinked the river clear again. There was nothing but the humming water. I whispered up to Silas who was leaning out stiff as a fishing pole over the river, "Are they gone now, Silas?"

Silas did not answer directly; he kept his eye on the river. At last Silas said in a low voice, "I ought to know by now about putting a rock or two in the sack. You'd think I'd know by now about the rocks."

*Nassau, Bahamas, 1978*

The Negro man came toward us out of a white cloud of heat. He stood on the prow of his glass-bottomed boat, one hand putting a cigar in his mouth and the other resting easily on the big wooden wheel with spokes radiating

from the center.

I had been standing beneath two ragged palms near the boat pier on Paradise Island waiting patiently in the heat for the glass-bottomed boat to return from Nassau and ferry me back across the waterway to the straw market along the harbor wall.

The travel agent, Mrs. Boswell, had warned me about visiting Nassau in August. "The Doldrums," she said to me when I insisted on a reservation. "Hot as hell. You can't even breathe. It's like somebody put you in a glass jar and punched a few holes in the top."

I couldn't afford the luxury of in-season rates on my teacher's salary. Hotels, \$150 per night. Meals, astronomical. Taxis, \$15, just to go across the bridge from Paradise Island, where I was staying in the Holiday Inn, to the Grand Island, Nassau. Holiday Inn was almost empty and had turned off the air conditioning to save money. "How else can we offer \$150 rooms with a view of the ocean for \$35?" the black hotel clerk had grinned at me as he stamped my receipt.

I could have slapped myself for not listening to the travel agent, but instead I languished in the noonday heat with a handful of other tourists until the boat sputtered and bumped against the rotten canvas padding roped to the pier. The Negro pilot was an old man wearing a slouch hat and a sweat-soaked shirt, khaki pants. When his black face glided toward me through the white hot heat above the water, I called out to him, "Silas Mosley? Silas? Is that you?"

The Negro looked at me puzzled and shook his head. I felt inside like a wind-up toy, sputtering fast on a tight spring and then running down quickly. "Foolish woman," I thought shaking my head clear in the heat.

The pilot roped the boat to the pier and then assisted the chattering tourists onto the landing. They rolled out in a tangle of arms, legs, hats, cameras, straw dolls, baskets, and packages brimming over.

We climbed, one by one, on board and sat in rows upon rough plank benches running the length of each side of the swaying weather-beaten canvas awning strung haphazardously across the top. A hard brown scum covered the small two-by-two glass plate in the bottom of the boat so that we were forced to put our heads out over the railing to see the fish swim among the

coral on the bottom of the ocean.

"There is the famous straw market," the pilot pointed with great flourish to the other side, and we could see faintly through the hazy heat by making a visor of our hands and squinting. Vivid straw goods, woven baskets, and rag rugs at the sprawling harbor market were simply a smudge of color along the horizon.

"We have good price on jewelry if you go downtown Nassau. And, of course, the rum is also cheap," the pilot laughed.

Then the pilot leaned up against a palm tree and smoked another cigar. He kept his eyes peeled toward the hotels upon the hills, oblivious to the heat and to us.

A big man wearing a cowboy hat and western boots sitting in a dark corner of the boat shouted to the pilot, "Hey. Why don't we get a move on?"

The pilot said with a wide, white smile, "We wait for two more people. Boat MUST be filled before we go across. That is the rule. No money running a boat not full."

"We're going to cook out here in this heat," the man shouted back.

The pilot answered calmly with his wide, white smile, "The rule is the rule. You can take the cab for six dollar across the bridge." He pointed his cigar to the long bridge across the waterway. "Or wait. Pay fifty cent to me." He drew upon the cigar, shrugging. "But the rule is the rule."

"We're plainly helpless against the natives," said a small woman in a pink striped sun dress, fanning herself with a newspaper.

"The natives are used to this heat. They don't care about making us wait until we shrivel up like raisins," chirped a large woman with a New Jersey accent. She had a big empty canvas bag folded on her knee.

The pilot waited under the tree. We waited. Sweat trickled down our backs. Our clothes stuck to us. Our faces burned in the dead air of Paradise Island. Then an elderly couple came to us from the direction of Hotel International, panting, walking as if they had chains about their feet. The pilot cranked the engine.

Our little scum-covered boat sputtered slowly toward Nassau Harbor, its dull bow bumping through a long row of heat ghosts whose long white legs danced across the surface of the water, their arms waving us back, their



faces a dead blank in the sun.

Silas always called them heat boogers. He said when the weather got so dry-hot you couldn't spit, and the heat boogers danced above dried out mud puddles, it was time for a revelation. Time to watch for a sign.

When we floated behind the haze and sputtered into the harbor, we could see the straw market stretched before us. Shopping stalls strung up and down Harbor Street spilled over with dolls, mats, fruit. We could see racks of bananas hanging from one stall. Hawkers of sea-shell necklaces ran up and down, clanking the strands like windchimes and shouting, "Dollar, dollar!"

Rock 'n roll music from a passing tourist's radio briefly intermingled with the straw market noises. From the boat, we could see tired-faced native women haggling with tourists over the price of woven goods. To the right, the Grand Hotel loomed up through a crowd of shady trees. Far above us, the Governor's House was perched atop a steep hill.

The pilot cut the engine. The ten of us were on our feet maneuvering to get off, when three black native boys dressed in cut-off jeans appeared out of nowhere on the harbor wall and hawked in loud voices to us. "Hey! Ladies. Gentlemen. We dive for quarter, show how good we swim. Throw quarter, please!" they shouted, their palms toward the sky.

Most of us, too hot and tired to be amused, tried to climb off the boat, but the pilot, who was standing in the bow, threw up his arms and wouldn't let us pass.

"Come now," he pleaded. "Give the little boys a quarter. They are orphans. Give them a few quarters from your generous pockets."

A tall man with an eagle tattooed on his forearm hissed, "What a racket!" And the small woman in the pink dress cried to the man, "Please give them some money so we can get off this boat. I am perishing of thirst."

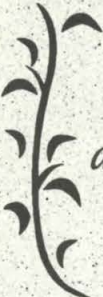
The passengers dug out change from pockets and purses and tossed it overboard. Quarters, dimes, and nickels rained into the water. The little boys dove off the pier wall and swam, open-eyed, under water. They swam among the fish, catching coins, stuffing the money inside their cheeks until they were puffed out in big knots on either side of their mouths.

The woman in the pink striped dress


frantically opened her change purse and dumped in a load of pennies. One of the little boys came to the surface. He clutched the side of the boat and gasped angrily, spitting his words through a large knot of silver coins in his cheek. "Pennies keel de feeshes! Pennies keel de feeshes! Silver only please! Pennies keel de feeshes!"

And the old pilot who was leaned up against the wheel and smoking another cigar, said to us, "Please throw quarters or dimes or nickels. The boys do not see pennies well. Besides, pennies are not much." He shrugged up his body and blew out a wreath of smoke.

"Damned if this racked don't cost more than taking the cab across the bridge," a man in green plaid shorts cursed.



*Quarters, dimes,  
and nickels rained  
into the water.*



"Yes, it's a racket," said the elderly man who had gotten on the boat last. "They should not take advantage of old people like this—old people living on pensions."

And the pilot uncrossed his arms and said, "But they are orphans. They must eat too."

"Well, the change is all gone." The man in plaid shorts pulled both of his pockets inside out.

The boat emptied out into the noise of the cobbled straw market. A wave of heat heavy as a lead blanket moved through the boat. Spears of sunlight coming through the rotted canvas top stabbed at my bare arms. I leaned out to look over the edge of the boat, and one of the little boys popped up out of the water and called to me with his hand up in the air.

"Quarter, please." His bronze face bobbed in the water. He held to the side of the boat with one hand and grabbed my wrist with his other hand as I leaned over to speak to him. "Quarter, please," he said again.

I sat down and put my free hand atop his wet black one. "Doesn't your mother care that you come down here to beg for quarters?"

"Ain't got no mama," he shook his head. "We orphans!" He proudly patted himself on the part of his chest above the water line.

"Don't you go to school? What does your teacher say about your being down here begging for quarters?"

The little boy giggled so hard he almost spat out his money. "Don't go to school, Lady."

"What are you going to do when you grow up, then?" I asked him.

He rumped up his nose and scratched his wet, matted hair. "Get rich diving for quarters, then swim with the feeshes for fun." The boy laughed and laughed as if it was the biggest joke. And his two companions, whose faces were two disks of burnished copper floating above the water, laughed with him.

"I don't have a quarter," I showed him several wet pennies I had clutched in the palm of my hand, and then I dropped them overboard.

"Lady! You keel de feeshes," he screamed as if I had hit him, then he grabbed my wrist again, tightly. "Pennies keel de feeshes!"

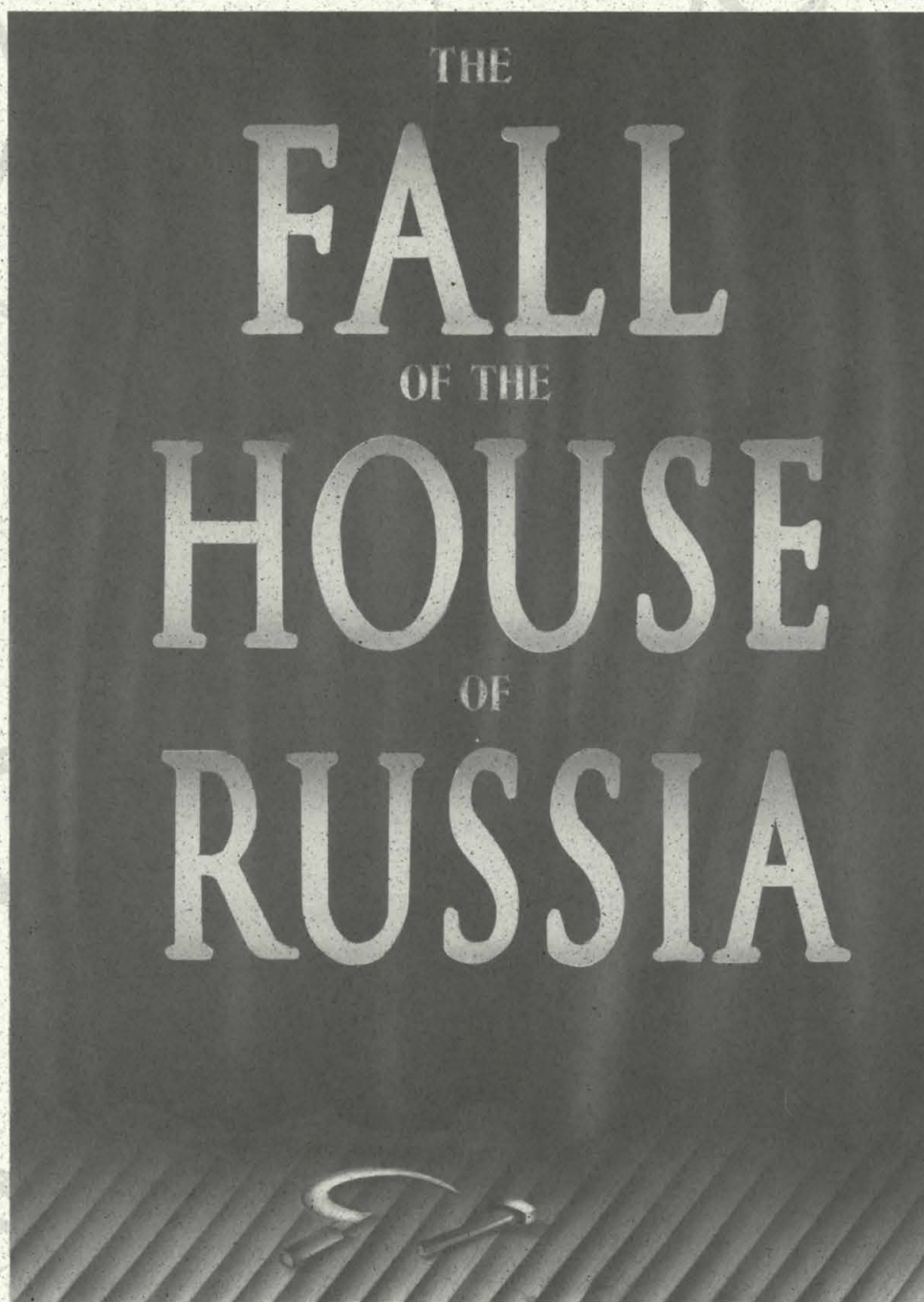
The sun, reflecting off the water, hit me at eye level, blinding. I pulled the boy's hand loose from my wrist. "I didn't mean to kill them," I said. I showed him my empty hands. "See. I don't have a quarter to give you." I showed him inside my empty change purse. "I did not mean to kill them. You see, don't you?" But the boy, disbelieving, shook his head no.

I rose up from the bench out of the white hot heat, and smiled at Silas Mosely who was sitting in the bow leaned up against the wheel with his arms folded against his khaki chest. I passed through his shadow as I climbed off the glass-bottomed boat, and walked toward the straw market without looking back.

---

*Tamara Baxter  
Special—English*





Third Place, Graphics

John T. Rhea, **Fall of the House of Russia**



## Fishing Lies

Dedicated to Grandpa Richardson

There's one thing I just can't get through  
This simple mind of mine,  
How some fishermen that I know well,  
Can tell such doggone lies.

The story goes, at least I'm told,  
About a fish so large  
That it merely flipped its tail a bit,  
And upset their fishing barge.

Also, about the big one  
That always got away  
I've heard that told a million times  
It gets bigger everyday.

But the biggest lie, I think they tell,  
At least it seems to me,  
Is about some lake where you have to bait  
Your hook behind a tree.

When their fishing days are over,  
And St. Peter calls them home,  
I'm sure that he will understand  
The lies they told below.

"I know you weren't so bad on earth,  
But no matter how I've tried  
I can't get you in the special place  
With those that never lied."

"So we've built another heaven  
For fishermen like you  
Where all the lies  
you told on earth  
Up here will all come true."

"We've even made a lake here  
You can fish it every day,  
And I'll guarantee you'll catch those fish  
That always got away."

"So here's a rod and reel for each  
And take a tip from me,  
When you bait your hook up here  
Stand behind a tree."

---

*David Blatchley*  
*Senior - Biology*





Third Place, Drawing/Printmaking

Bryant Owens, **Redneck**



## In a Wizard's Eye (for Levi)

Somewhere beyond the bounds of space  
Gleaming and glistening through the night  
By the mercy of the Angels' grace  
There came a vision onto the Wizard's eye . . .  
There, standing in a grassy field  
A youthful Angel's smiling face  
So vivid, so bright, and so real  
Like an Autumn moon, with solace.

Shaken, within his crystalline dream  
As if chilled by the chant of an owl  
He fell back into a conscious stream  
And lost the vision he had found . . .  
Woe, to be so close to Heaven  
And still not know what hope it brings  
To be mortal, with the gifts of seven  
After losing such a sylvan beam.

Clothed, red as a cardinal's breast  
(Brighter than the cherry, where he lays)  
Caressed, by a tropical sea's breath  
warm and moist, as the latter days of May . . .  
Which Sun above shines upon this Heavenly guest?  
Does it shine in those blue eyes eternally  
For he who seeks life in death?  
Beyond the darkest valley, behold— he sees!

What is left after all joy departs  
After sniffing all the fragrance from the rose?  
What becomes of all the broken hearts  
Left behind after all joy goes?  
Should a Wizard continue for the sake of art  
Harden his heart like a leaden stone?  
Or surrender to the deep and the dark  
And leave this world where sad seeds are sown.

---

*Tommy Warden*  
*Senior—English/Geography*





First Place, Graphics

John T. Rhea, **Tribute to Gene**





Third Place, Photography

Tim Perry, **Nude**



## The Coming of the Need

### I

Your voice hidden in the darkness—  
*The world is full of delicate pink streamers  
hanging in lovely masses from a star-studded  
ceiling, catching the lights in swirling unity,  
And everybody is so fucking happy.*

There is a voice which springs from our soul,  
crying for understanding  
I hear yours.

*The fact is—the words come and I write, but I'm  
probably just beating my head against a wall.*

Hemingway and Williams so far away.

*Listen to the dialogue and tell me if it works.  
What does it say to you? Tell me what you see.*

If you're going to write then say something.  
You do, and man is thinking,  
but it's a world of mere thinkers.

### II

In the morning light I hold you,  
Your back feels like warm seashells against  
my lips,  
And longing is an emerging wave  
Swallowing the light and darkness.

I paint you in my mind  
with the anguish of Van Gogh,  
Colours separating in my confusion,  
The choices clear but painful—  
Your soul worth the sacrifice.

I leave you to your morning ritual,  
rehearsing for indifference.  
I feel empty and tired as I greet  
an Autumn sky with weariness.  
Above me the morning rays have tinged  
the clouds with a pouting pink,  
and they move carelessly in their  
blue vastness  
Like *streamers*.  
And no one is truly happy,  
But still I love.

---

*Maria Bledsoe  
Sophomore—English*



# The Horses Simply Went Home

They had stopped at Cain's Conoco station to fill up.

"Be sure to check all your corners before you change lanes or cross an intersection. You missed the guy in a hurry who just about passed against the yellow before you pulled in here."

Today's driving lesson out in the country had taken them 30 miles or more. The son had learned to drive straight even with the right wheels on the shoulder when they encountered oncoming traffic on the one-lane country road. He had practiced twice turning around by pulling up a lane and backing out again. He had begun to have the confidence to keep the car moving, half on the road and half on the shoulder, as they met oncoming vehicles. Hardest of all was learning to drive up to and across the one-lane wooden bridges more by feel than by sight.

The station was located at the intersection, between the Illinois Central tracks, U.S. Route 45 that ran parallel to the tracks and the section road that ran perpendicular to both, that formed a capital H. The car faced up at the cross bar, perhaps 60 feet across, that when extended into the country was known as the Savoy Road but was also known as Main Street inside the town. Savoy was a commuter town five miles south of Champaign. Completely surrounded by farm country the landscape was broken up by these small towns, with their tall grain elevators lining the railroad tracks, the trees and buildings of the farms, the taller buildings in the twin cities, power lines and the occasional coasting airplane in the landing pattern overhead. Across the hood of the '65 Chevy the son could see the closed, faded green railway station with "SAVOY" in block letters on a sign over the end window nearest them. Across the highway from the station was the cottage-sized brick post office with the flag barely stirring. He didn't have to look behind the filling station, to his left, on the other side of the IC tracks, to see the five story, white, plaster cylinders of the grain elevators.

The son looked up and saw, just left of center in the small window of the rear view mirror, barely on the horizon, the headlight of a southbound train. His gaze returned to the railway station and he could see for about a mile

south beyond it. One time he and his dad had raced down Route 45 trying to overtake the Panama Limited along the two mile stretch to the Philo road where the lack of cross traffic gave them enough time to catch the speeding passenger train. They had to quit at 82 miles per hour when they came up behind a grain truck. All they had accomplished was to pull even with the club car. Illinois Central passenger trains could set speed records along the flat farm land or on the long stretches where there were no Savoy's for which to slow down. Not that any train slowed down much. He had also sat at the crossings at Savoy, and Philo, and Farmer City, and Camargo, Allerton and Broadlands, with their gates and cross arms, and counted easily as a one-hundred and seventy-five-car train rumbled by, pushing a rush of air out like the wake of a boat. There had been IC and Monon box cars, black painted coal cars, an occasional Rock Island flat car, Milwaukee Road reefers and transporters carrying Fords and Chevys.

Once in a while someone would hurry around the gates before the train arrived. Sometimes they made it and sometimes it took a mile for the train to stop so the crew and the volunteer firemen could clear the carnage. He had seen on the evening television news about a fast freight smashing into a loaded gas truck at a crossing. Despite the fire and explosion, despite the dead train crew, and the halves of the gas truck out in the field, the train stood on the tracks. The driver had abandoned the truck minutes before.

His dad opened the passenger door and sat down, leaving his feet outside. He wore work slacks and a white shirt with the sleeves rolled up over his elbows. His neck was sunburned, his face was clean shaven and his arms tanned and strong. He wore a driving cap, pushed back on his head. The son had on school pants and a checked cotton shirt. They both wore aviator sunglasses. Not quite as tall as his father, the son was tall enough to look over his right shoulder and see the top of the right hand rear fender. He sat straight up in the seat, rocking the steering wheel, one hand at 10:00 o'clock and one at 2:00 o'clock. The fall sun was warm, but the air was cooling just slightly late on a Sunday afternoon. His dad followed his view down the tracks.

"Did I ever tell you about what happened one time my aunt and uncle came through here?"

"No, I don't think so."

"In the 20s my aunt and uncle would come out to church here in Savoy, over at the Methodist Church, I believe. They drove a horse and buggy. Not many folks had cars but I think we had a Ford Tee at the time. I remember hearing that they had a team of chestnuts that were their pride and joy. Of course, I heard all this as a youngster. I couldn't have been even ten, I guess. Well sure, your Aunt Janet wasn't born yet so that had to be before 1925. But anyway, they started back about noon just after the service. In those days, there wasn't any gates or bells at the crossing. They waited for the south bound to clear on the far set of tracks and then proceeded across. Unfortunately, they didn't expect the northbound to be coming out from behind the southbound on the other set of tracks. Why they didn't look—why they were in such a hurry to not have noticed—why they didn't hear the northbound—I just don't know. Well, as you can guess, my aunt and uncle were killed immediately. But the horses survived although probably thoroughly frightened. The buggy was basically ripped off behind them. The story I heard was that the horses, not knowing anything was wrong, but only that they were free to go on, simply went on home."

The son didn't have any answer but continued to watch the scene of the station and the crossing, the corn fields and the sky.

"Can I drive all the way home?"

"As far as the city limits then I better take over." His father got out of the car and walked around in front of it into the station to pay the bill. The son watched a station wagon go through the crossing. He adjusted the mirror again to see how far the train had come. The light could now be distinguished between a rotating light on top of a steady light. In the late sun the sides of the cars mirrored red although he couldn't see the individual cars or the engine. Another car drove through the quiet crossing in front of him. The traffic along the highway came by him in twos and threes. Some slowed for turns and some kept on going. Through the heat waves he could now see the miniature en-



gine with the black diesel smoke drifting away to one side. There was a slight streak of black against the sky as the engine pumped out unburned fuel in the struggle against the drag of the railcars. Clearly this side of the crossing a mile behind him, the headlight was now farther to the left of the center of the mirror. His father returned to the passenger side of the bench seat. This time he got in and closed the door.

"Ready to go?"

"Yeah, I 'spect so." He put his right foot on the brake and twisted the key. The Chevy small block, as if waiting eagerly to start, kicked over almost at the thought of the starter engaging. The son leaned slightly to his right to check the train in the mirror. The engine just now passed out of the mirror's range. The son turned his head ever so slightly to listen for the airhorn

and the rumble. The crossing signal began to clang and the lights blinked. The arms descended rapidly as if some person who controlled them at the last minute remembered to do it. A black Ford panel truck pulled up to the gates. The driver was a man, his bare arm hanging out the window. They could see the man look to his left and right. They could see him crank the steering wheel and begin to go left around the near gate. The panel truck driver stopped. The son could feel the rush of air, even on this side of the building, as the locomotive pushed by. The air resonated with the sub-sonic bass of the tonnage rolling along the ground. Within a split second the train was at the crossing, the wail of its claxon already fading away from the son and his father. The passenger train rumbled through. Fifteen cars rolled smoothly past the Savoy terminal. People stared out into the low sun looking at the trees, the corn field, the people staring back at them from waiting cars. No one waved. The club car had the shades pulled.

"This time tomorrow," said the Father, "they'll be in New Orleans. Used to be the best way to travel ever devised. But I just as soon visit your brother by flying. I'd even fly the Stinson except you'd get sick before we ever got beyond the Mississippi." He grinned at the ribbing.

"After I learn to drive I'm gonna learn to fly. Then I won't get air sick."

"I'll hold you to that one. Let's go home. Your mother's probably got supper waitin'."

The boy slipped the automatic gear selector into drive, the Chevy eased away from the pump island and down the shallow ramp. A touch of the gas with his big toe drew them up towards the grade level. Braking ever so slightly, the boy stopped the car with its hood nearly in line with the uprights of the gates. Twice he looked both ways. Then he let off the brake.

*Charles F. Moore  
Graduate-English*

Bill Hightower, **Winter Walk**



THIRD PLACE, POETRY  
**In Honor of**

"I'm tired." So saying,  
she lets herself splash  
with a sigh on the mattress  
springs groan

This oldness she's put on  
is like newness. It  
doesn't quite fit  
(like a borrowed coat)  
her I thought I knew

The one who carried me  
then set me down  
taught me to walk jump run  
then easily with difficulty  
let me go

This slack-jawed mask of sleep she wears  
conceals, reveals:  
The One Who Knew Everything  
is gone; in her place  
this weary-faced stranger  
this tired-out woman  
with gray in her hair

A momentary glimpse  
was all— yet  
something in the cracks  
in her voice  
next day remains,  
reminds me,  
me, unmindful of frailty.

---

*Sarah Maulden  
Special—Nursing*



## **A Walk Through the Attic**

My heart, an empty shell,  
Waits listlessly in the sand  
As the morning tide  
Wakes my weary eyes  
With salt sea kisses.

Warm breezes, gulls cry,  
Mor alibis not to take flight  
In the midst of calm.  
Children collect my reminiscence  
As they play in the sand.

No longer does the sea  
Caress my weary wounds  
For I am but a memory of  
Childhood lost when they  
Placed me on a lofty shelf,  
Collecting dust in an attic.

---

*Sabrina Chambers*  
*Graduate-English*

## **WRITE YOUR OWN**

Poems. Poems. What are Poems?  
Lines. Phrases. Pulled as One.  
Rhyme. Rhythm. Iambic Pentameter.  
Frost. Masters. T. S. Eliot.  
Love. Death. Or just nature.  
Words. Thoughts. All motivated.  
Poet's Choice. It is written.  
Enjoy. Dream. Just imagine.  
Pencil. Paper. Write your own.

---

*Winn Ann Weesner*  
*Graduate-English*





Katherine Gibson, **Untitled**



# The Universal Appalachian Poet

Appalachian poetry is the voice of the mountains and the people living in those mountains. It is the voice of our grandparents, mama and daddy, friends and neighbors, teachers, and preachers; and their kinship with hog-killing, barn dances, shooting matches, coal mining, poverty, sickness and death, and the sublime and destructive forces of nature. Appalachian poetry is universal. It does not merely speak to the spirit of the mountaineer, but to American Indians, the black South African, the laborer in Poland and all oppressed peoples. The Appalachian poet does not set boundaries, but penetrates deep into the reality of a particular place and time, thus becoming a representative for the salt of the earth. He is not merely a representative of conditions in Appalachia, but the human condition in Appalachia: the universal human condition characterized by the vices of exploitation, brutality and greed, as well as the virtues of courage and compassion.

Jo Carson and Billy Edd Wheeler are two such Appalachian poets.

The poet of Appalachia is a representative of all Appalachians; he must convince the reader he has been there, lived there and will die there. Emerson states:

The poet is the person in whom these powers are in balance, the man without impediment, who sees and handles that which others dream of, traverses the whole scale of experience, and its representative of man, in virtue of being their largest power to receive and impart. (264)

Jo Carson evokes such a feeling from her readers. She is a self-proclaimed "eavesdropper," who reports the sometimes crude reality she has seen or overheard to her readers through poetry. Her poetry is Appalachian in its rhetoric and setting but is as universal as the iniquity of man. Lines excerpted from the people piece entitled "All the times he hit me" display the transcendental quality of Carson's poetry:

Tell the people at the hospital  
the truth  
no matter how much you think  
you love him.  
Do not say you fell down stairs  
no matter how much he swears

he loves you.  
He does love you, he loves you  
hurt and he will hit you again.  
(51)

The subject of this poem easily becomes a battered wife in the Bronx or Mexico City, Carson does not confine herself to one location or more importantly one reader.

Carson avoids falling into the pit of ethnocentrism many Appalachian poets succumb to by acknowledging the stereotypes and validating some of them as evidenced in "All the times he hit me," and "About them whiskey boys," while discarding other such stereotypes as displayed in "Mountain people." Just as "All the times he hit me" recognizes the stereotype of violence associated with Appalachian people, specifically spouse abuse, "About them whiskey boys" displays the mountaineer's affinity with alcohol:

Evan Williams will remind you  
in the moinin'  
what you done that night.  
And Jack Daniels,  
Lord, that devil Jack Daniels . . .  
make you wish for things  
you never even thought about  
before. (27)

While Carson remains objective, she realizes as Jim Wayne Miller has stated, "The only image of Appalachia and Appalachian people that can sustain us is the image that Appalachians themselves create" (address). She discards the vulgar stereotype inflicted by outsiders that Appalachian people are ignorant and barbaric. The following excerpt from "Mountain people" offers evidence:

Mountain people  
can't read,  
can't write,  
don't wear shoes,

They beat their friends,  
beat their neighbors,  
and beat their dogs.

Well let me tell you:  
I am from here,  
I'm not like that  
and I am damned tired of being

told I am. (28-9)

These realities or stereotypes are characteristic of the human condition not only in Appalachia, but abroad. The characters spoken of in her poetry easily become the Highland Scots, American Indians, and Australian aborigines—all oppressed peoples.

Billy Edd Wheeler relies on issues native to Appalachia more than Carson but his poetry also transcends Appalachia. "Coal Tattoo" and "Goliath" work as metaphors for analogous situations occurring throughout the world. "Coal Tattoo," obviously about the Appalachian coal miner, works as a metaphor for labor unrest in Russia, Poland or the United Telephone workers in East Tennessee. The following lines offer evidence:

I've stood for the Union, I've  
walked in the line,  
I've fought against the company.  
Stood for the U. M. W. of A.  
Now who's gonna stand for me? (328)

"Goliath" would appeal to the citizens of Venezuela who have seen their rain forest dwindle in the name of progress just as Appalachians have seen what happens to their land with strip mining:

The ground he can eat is a sight  
Takes a hundred tons at a bite  
He can dig up the grass  
It's a fact  
But he can't put it back . . . (329)

While the Appalachian poet who seeks a universal audience relies on Emerson's concept that "Every one has some interest in the advent of the poet, and no one knows how much it may concern him," (267) he must not focus on this precept. Instead, he must write with authority and avoid the unnecessary inclusion of regional boundaries such as an abundance of regional rhetoric and imagery. Wheeler is instinctively writing about Appalachia in "Coal Tattoo," but he avoids an overabundance of regional subject matter, thus providing for a universal audience much like D. H. Lawrence accomplished with his seemingly regional short story "The Odor of Chrysanthemums."

The Appalachian poet is not necessarily concerned with being revolutionary, but seeks to revitalize an oppressed people. He appeals to



the courage, honor and compassion of his reader, thus offering inspiration. This inspiration comforts the reader and instills a sense of pride in a people who often have little else. Billy Edd Wheeler is not summoning his reader to social change in "An Old Man," but is seeking to revive the reader's sense of regional pride:

Before missionaries came  
And Federal planners  
And men who organized  
Under selfish banners  
Their own gravy trains  
And took us on a ride,  
I saw in mountain men  
A little pride.  
I'd rather be poor and dumb  
Than see a line  
Of neighbors taking free food  
And licking the behind  
Of politicians. (328-9)

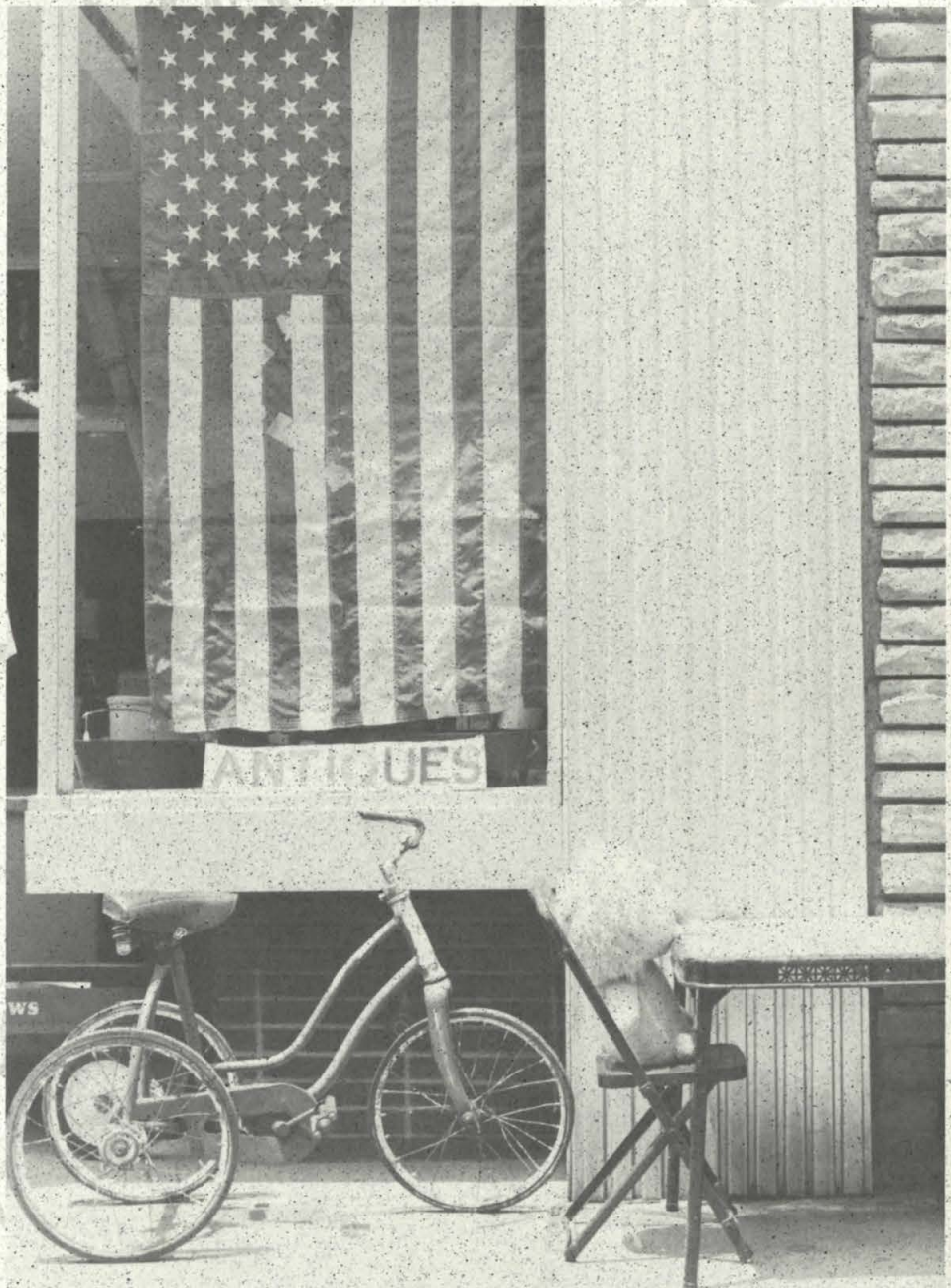
The Appalachian poet's mission is partially to restore and revitalize the dignity and honor all oppressed peoples.

Jo Carson and Billy Edd Wheeler are representatives of Appalachia. However, their constituents are not only Appalachians, but all oppressed peoples victimized by exploitation, brutality and greed. Carson and Wheeler defy the limitations of the regional poet as they transcend the borders of Appalachia into the very heart of the human condition. They are universal Appalachian poets.

*Brian Thomas Chisom  
Graduate-English*

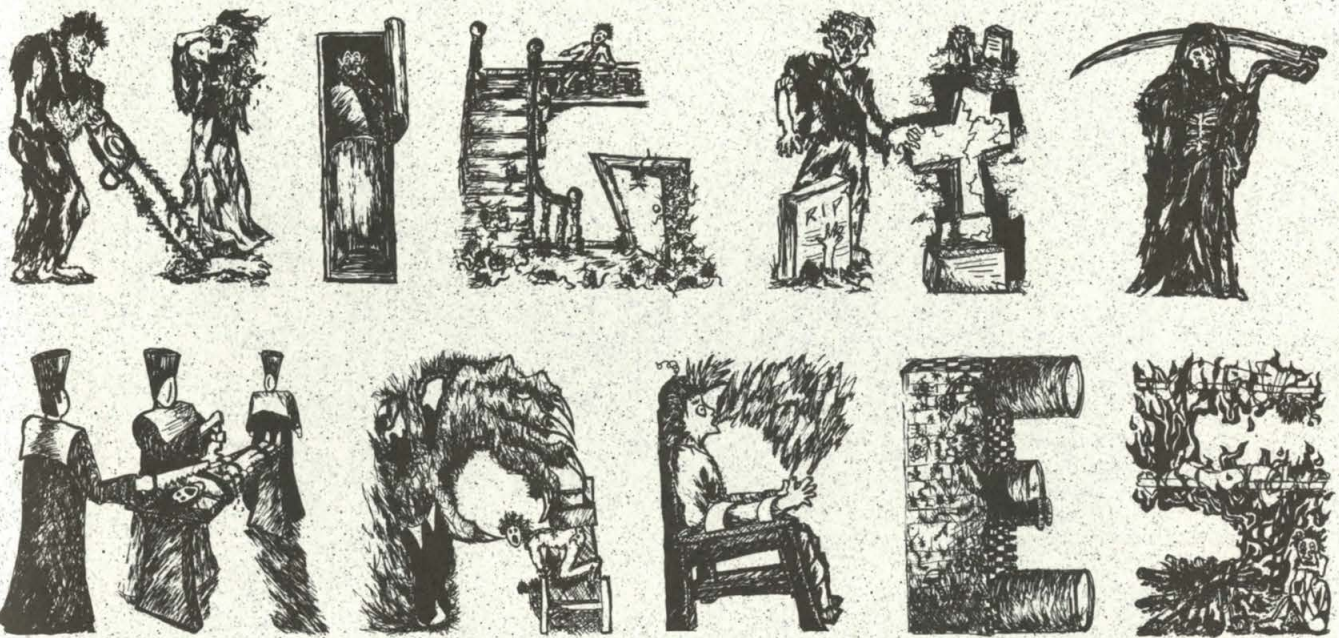
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Penny L. Strozier, Erwin, TN

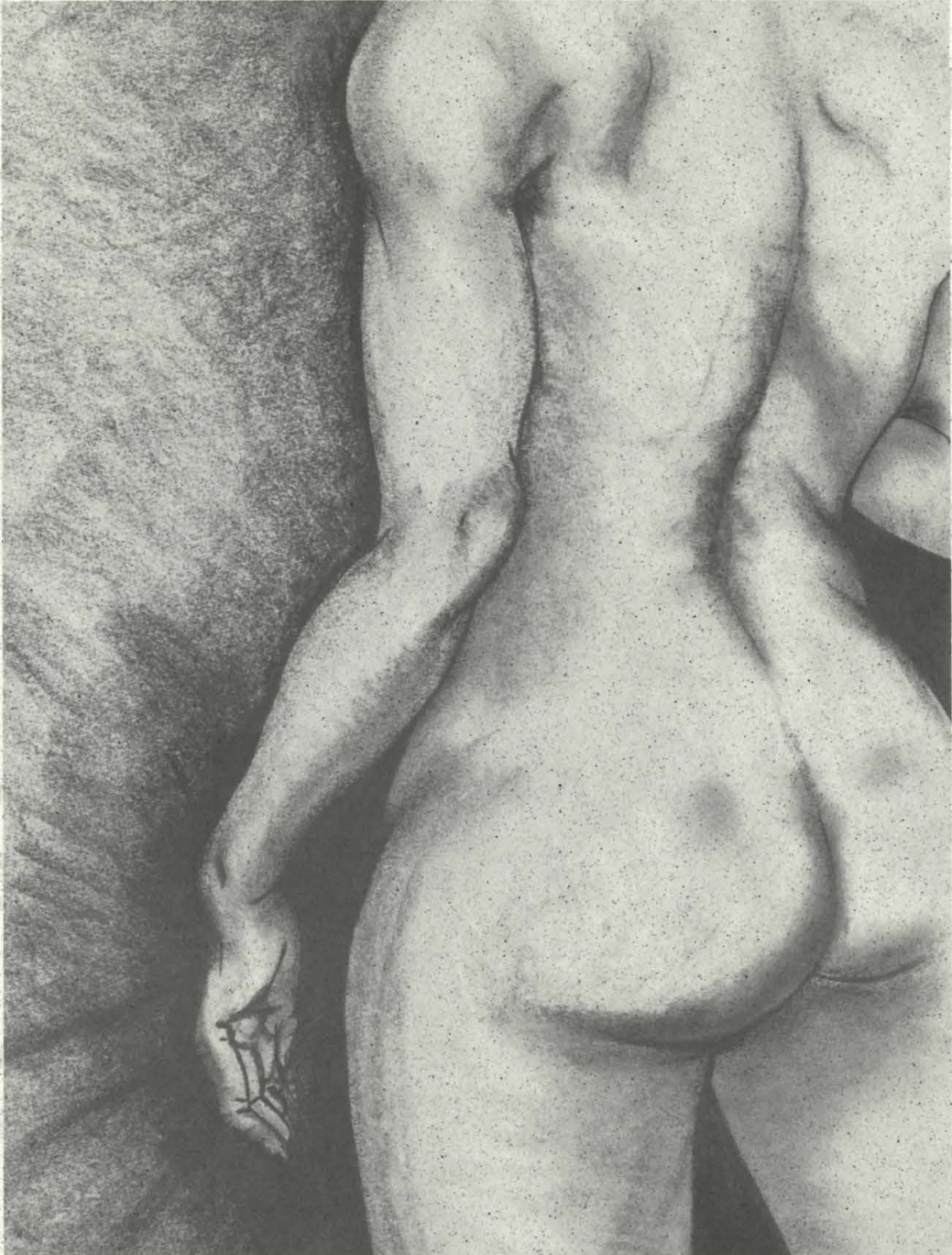




Second Place, Graphics

Julie Branham, **Nightmares**





First Place, Drawing/Printmaking

Charlotte Roberts, **Untitled**



## Special **THANKS** to all who submitted work.

---

Bill Abbott  
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Gail Ball  
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Kim Barker  
Tamara M. Baxter  
Sarah Bellamy  
Theresa Bellamy  
Tyler Bishop  
David Blatchley  
Maria Bledsoe  
Teresa Thomas Bohannon  
Rebecca Bolton  
Julie Bramham  
Jill Brooks  
Nacole Buckner  
Crystal Lynn Caldwell  
Aaron Brett Carson  
Sabrina Chambers  
Brian Thomas Chisom  
Jimi Constable  
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Audrey Cooper  
Helen Leigh Cornelius  
Amy M. Davis  
Kelli DeVault  
Ben Dowdy  
Tommy Van Etteger  
Jeff Faidley  
Lisa Frazier  
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Eileen Glaven  
Lori Heaton  
Leslie Hedrick  
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Jimmie Ray Jones, Jr.  
William Kelley Jones  
Jill Jordan  
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