

Spring 1995

New Tricks (1995)

James Swanson
Dakota State University

Brenda Eitemiller
Dakota State University


Nikoa Stassi
Dakota State University

Alie Wireings
Dakota State University

Ken Hudson
Dakota State University

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

James Swanson, Brenda Eitemiller, Nikoa Stassi, Alie Wireings, Ken Hudson, Melissa Kaul, and Ann Weber

Box 692

New Tricks



*Sponsored by: Sigma Tau Delta
Spring 1995*

New Tricks

The Literary Magazine
of
Dakota State University

Published by:

Sigma Tau Delta,
International English Honor Society

Brenda Eitemiller, Nikoa Stassi and Alie Wieringa,
Editors

Editorial Board: Ken Hudson, Melissa Kaul, Ann
Weber

Art Editor: Linda Black

Faculty Advisor: James Swanson

Spring, 1995

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Table Of Contents

My Backyard <i>Kay Pearson</i>	1
Destined Love <i>Tracy Larson</i>	2
Cupid's Fire <i>David E. Lund</i>	2
For The Record <i>Nikoa Stassi</i>	3
For The Record: Part II (1 year later) <i>Nikoa Stassi</i>	4
Untitled <i>Rick L. Janssen</i>	5
Random Waves of Grain <i>David Ludwig</i>	6
Fuzzy <i>Jim Janke</i>	10
Untitled <i>Kay Pearson</i>	10
Purple Grape Jam <i>Jane Rice</i>	11
Untitled <i>brenda eitemiller</i>	12
X, Y, and Z <i>Ann Weber</i>	13
The Woman Has Soul By <i>Deb Henrikson</i>	14

1993 <i>Melissa Kaul</i>	16
for orange juice and vodka <i>brenda eitemiller</i>	17
Peace Series III <i>Marc L. Sundermeyer</i>	18
Untitled <i>Melissa Kaul</i>	19
A November Day In South Dakota <i>Ann Weber</i>	20
Untitled <i>brenda eitemiller</i>	21
What I Have Slept With <i>Brian Eitemiller</i>	22
A Daughter's Beginnings <i>Ann Weber</i>	24
Clothes Make the Man? <i>Jim Janke</i>	25
Summer by the Ocean in Holland <i>Alie Wieringa</i>	25
Milking Time <i>Jane Rice</i>	26
Memories From An Old Shoe Box <i>Alie Wieringa</i>	27
1862 <i>Jim Janke</i>	28
Little Boy In The Highchair <i>Ann Weber</i>	29

Untitled	
<i>Rick L. Janssen</i>	30
The Troll	
<i>Ken Hudson</i>	31
South Dakota Summer	
<i>Melissa Kaul</i>	33
Bengali Music	
<i>Alie Wieringa</i>	34
Untitled	
<i>Lauretta Perrine</i>	34
Sleepy Days	
<i>Marc Sundermeyer</i>	35
Good Night Kiss	
<i>Jason Dauwen</i>	37
Sister Rose	
<i>Tanya Jaragoske</i>	37
The Dream	
<i>Nikoa Stassi</i>	38
We	
<i>Clyde Brashier</i>	38
A Mother's Agony	
<i>Cyndi Underberg</i>	40
Thumping in the Night	
<i>David E. Lund, Carol Larson, Brian Pruss</i>	42

Foreword

You are looking at the latest issue of New Tricks, a literary magazine published by Sigma Tau Delta of Dakota State University. Sigma Tau Delta is an international honor society for English majors. The DSU chapter was started in 1993 with six charter members. Since then, it has grown into an organization of ten. We organize many activities each semester; the largest activity is publishing the literary magazine. We would like to thank the students and faculty who submitted art work and manuscripts, Jan Hedley for helping with the cover design, and our sponsors for making this magazine financially possible. A very special thank you goes to John Laflin, the advisor for Sigma Tau Delta and James Swanson, the advisor for New Tricks. Without your efforts, this magazine would not have been possible.

My Backyard

Kay Pearson

Coffee's brewing, eggs are crackling
toast and marmalade on the kitchen table

Backdoor slamming, cavernous gulps of air, I'm
here, I've arrived
running down the stone path to my world of nature

Bending down to check the progress
their colors peeking out to greet the sun

Such gifts of life - anew each Spring:
Crocus, tenaciously fighting for their place amongst
the wild flowers

Tulip petals a luscious ruby red
like the lips of a wanton woman
Delphiniums, bold blocks of color, so tall, so strong,
sky scrapers in a rural setting

Their freshness is like none other
Exuding their luster, they give promise and hope
serenity

Destined Love

Tracy Larson

We are still apart,
 dreaming of each other,
 waiting patiently to finally meet.
 The love we seek,
 we can find from no other,
 for until we're one,
 we won't be complete.

Cupid's Fire

David E. Lund

Flaming arrows of love
 speeding through the air
 searching for a victim
 to pierce and scorch.
 They find their mark
 and penetrate deeply
 causing internal burning
 of passionate love.
 Because they are arrows,
 instruments of death,
 the defenseless heart
 is slowly bled dry.
 The feelings and emotions
 are boiled away
 leaving what was once there
 a charred, brittle piece.

For The Record

Nikoa Stassi

Hi. I just wanted you to know...
 I still care, but I am over you.
 I even quit playing that song
 over and over and over again.
 Two months of it was plenty for me.
 I met someone, by the way.
 (He's not you, but he'll do.)
 I have also stopped reading the stack
 of all the letters you wrote me.
 I thought about burning them,
 but instead decided to tie them
 neatly with a ribbon and hide
 them away in a shoe box (Nike).
 The picture you gave me is still
 on the night stand beside my bed,
 but I no longer cry over it (as often).
 I could go on and on explaining all
 the things that no longer remind me
 of you, but I think you understand.
 Just one more thing though...just for the record,
 I forgot about you a long time ago

For The Record

Part II (1 year later)

Nikoa Stassi

Hi. I just wanted you to know...
 Last week I buried what was
 left of your memory in the snow
 along with the ashes that were once
 the stack of all the letters you wrote me.
 Yes, I finally burned them and toasted
 marshmallows over the flames as well.
 I met someone, by the way.
 (He's not you, thank God.)
 I admit I still think about you,
 but that's only when I roast marshmallows.

Untitled

Rick L Janssen

if
 jesters jest
 clowns clown
 jokers joke
 fools fool
 then
 jesters fool
 clowns jest
 jokers clown
 fools joke
 when
 jesters joke
 clowns fool
 jokers jest
 fools clown
 because
 jesters clown
 clowns joke
 jokers fool
 fools jest
 if
 jesters jest
 clowns clown
 jokers joke
 and
 fools fool

Random Waves of Grain

David Ludwig

I've felt the beat of the beat, from the red orange neon skies of Hollywood to the solemn turbulent grays of the midwest. I've seen men weeping and women crying, to be heard but not noticed, to be noticed but not disrupted (corrupted?; nah, deep down in the murky quirky depths of our souls we all want to be corrupted (?)(!)). It's all in the skies, the eyes (the lies?).

I've seen people screaming for attention but wanting none. I've seen farmers and tractors and pheasants (peasants?) dead in the road. I heard the quick silent death of my grandfather in the languid pulsating Palm Springs heat, so far from home. I've run with him across oceans and continents; he knew how to run, he knew how not to run, he died long before I was born (I miss never knowing him, never bouncing in his arms or admiring his old-world narrow-minded but at the same time oh so insightful wisdom of experience, of life, of seeing).

I've seen movie stars and trash in the ocean both floating in the same way. I've seen anger in my mother's eyes and love in a stranger's. I've hit home runs with Mickey Mantle and danced with cotton picking plantation owned exploited used abused but still keeping their spirits high negroes in the south.

I've felt the vibes of the dusty smoke-filled Frisco jazz blues clubs of the fifties (sweat sweet Frisco, scene of life). I've danced to the cajun ramblings of a New Orleans bar joint. I've driven flown glided across America in all her intricate weaving intertwined highways byways (the intricacies of life love hate anger, passion). I weep for America in all her beautiful crusty neon homeless turbulent "will work for food or whatever the hell else you have to offer in the back streets of downtown Vegas, behind the neon." I've run with the fugitives and the Indians from the same pursuer.

I've heard the cries of the rich and shared the joy of the poor. (Give me your poor, your wretched, your huddled masses so that I may exploit them to add to the color of this place; God shed His grace on thee.) Flying, in a hopeless claustrophobic high class tour bus (737 or 757 or whatever the name of that damned little fifty person overcrowded commuter plane is) I have grinned all knowingly god-like at the treasures down below ("peaceful place, so it looks from space"). I've been harassed by the cops and the robbers and just about everybody in between, I have hugged them all (those bastard colorful everybodys that I hate to love).

I've seen sexual dementia and religious morality abstinence dementia. And I kiss them both on the mouth and beat them with a New York cop's battered overused abused nightstick and leave them bloody

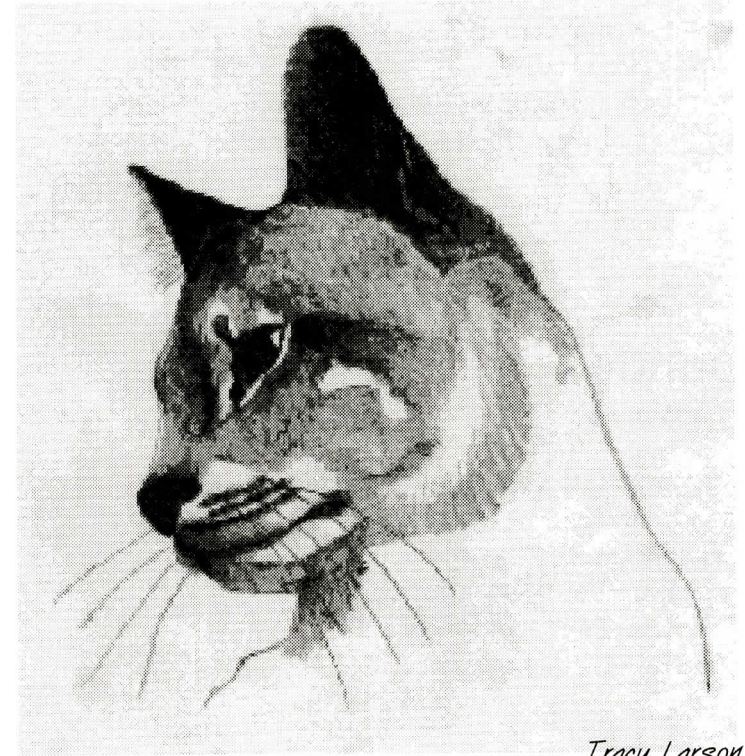
and writhing under the green skies they call home. I've seen men kill men with weapons not yet invented but more cruel and harsh than anything we could possibly conceive, kissing killing one another in the middle of main street in a small midwestern town that no one has heard of but everyone is familiar with. These are my brothers. I can see their faces illuminated by the swift neon of the American dream. I want to dance with them; I do, I have danced with them (we dance the same dance in American neon insanity).

My own demented warped divine hallucinations have showed me things the likes of which you can't imagine, warped twisted poetic truthful visions of reality in the eyes flies of America, green red orange blue ugly neon monsters shaking hands with twisted crippled homeless (helpless?) veterans on the sidewalk in front of some middle America squeaky clean white Baptist church in the middle of the day (always that same blinding dusty-white church, hurts your eyes to look at, white bright f-light).

When I was born I dove out of the ocean and never stopped swimming. I fly with the birds and swim with the trees and dig holes in the air with an old rusty overused used-to-be-silver spoon. My life is that of everyone, of no one, singing springing swinging across America oblivious to time knowing only that

which is in front of my pitiful straining to see it all but always missing something eyes. I grew up with insects on (in) my head and clouds for shoes, tread always worn out.

I want to be able to scream and not be heard but helped, I want to run away (I don't need rain to grow). I feel the shame, the pain, the rain of America. She doesn't need me but I need her (is this love?).



Tracy Larson

Fuzzy

Jim Janke

My cat is lying on the floor,
Her eyes clenched tight
Against the light
That floods in through the open door.

Her breathing comes in easy sighs;
Her nervous twitch
From dreaming which
Will end before the evening dies.

For then she's up and on the prowl.
The darkness draws
Her teeth and claws,
And mice must fear to hear her growl.

Untitled

Kay Pearson

Her face had a cameo-like quality
regal, opalescent features
yet a simplicity existed
skin like that of an infant child
eyes innocent, yet knowing
alas, her telltale eyes

Purple Grape Jam

Jane Rice

Buckets of small purple balls
Floating in crystal clear water.
Balls pulled away from stems,
To be popped in a kettle.

White, shiny sugar,
Poured in a stream,
Over the small purple balls.
Purple mixture bubbles, and boils.

Thick, purple sauce,
Hot, sweet, thick sauce.
Pouring, and filling glass jars.
Thick, sweet, steamy, purple sauce,
Waiting to be tasted.

Untitled

brenda eitemiller

bone cold
 no cover shall cure this
 Velvet Elvis.
 Red Passion Variety No. 2
 night grows
 to be high
 the drowning sounds of midnight
 can not reckon this
 Velvet Elvis.
 my hand is mine to comfort this
 And I had a picture of happiness
 Velvet Elvis.
 times remembered
 the past insists
 bone cold
 no cover shall cure this
 for you are
 Velvet Elvis.

X, Y, and Z

Ann Weber

Help...
 I need a reason for Algebra
 I do not see a purpose
 For all the x's, y's and z's

I spend many lost hours
 Looking for an elusive z
 I must justify the time
 Spent with paper and pencil

Patrick wants help with a puzzle
 I look for the value of x
 Larry wants supper
 I'm looking for a lost z

Every night I pray
 Lord, let me just get a C
 So I will never have to look
 Again for the x's, y's and z's

The Woman Has Soul

By Deb Henrikson

She woke to find herself alone, a state that has been happening more often than she will admit. As the clock ticks past 1:00 and moves swiftly to 2:00 she feels the dark grow closer and heavier with each tick. She begins to roleplay the scene that will unfold when the door opens, then closes and the familiar footsteps are heard climbing the stairs.

1:00

She sees the first play. She is strong, forceful and angry. He is cowardly and pitiful in the shame he feels for putting her through the agony night after night. "I'm leaving you if things don't change," she says. "I don't have to live this way. I can find someone who loves me, appreciates me and will give me what I need. I can't take this stress of being alone and waiting." She then sees herself throwing his clothes outside and telling him to find someone else who is dumb enough to wait for him. He begins to cry and says he'll change. But she will not give in; she stands with her legs spread, arms folded and head held high while she tells him, "Get Out!"

She sits back, using her pillows as a back rest, and smiles. Now there's a woman with soul, strong, confident!

2:00

She begins to pray, "Lord Jesus, bring him home safely!" She sees the second play begin. His is in a ditch. The car lies sideways with the tires still spinning. He is bloody and crawling, calling her name. She stops this play quickly, she can't go on without him in her life.

The next play follows quickly. He is in an apartment. Dual laughter comes from the next room. He leaves, but first makes a date to meet in two nights just like always. She ends this play quickly also; if she can not have him no one will! She can't bear the vision of him in someone else's arms.

2:30

The tears begin! Lack of sleep, emotional strain and loneliness have overcome her. She can not be angry anymore. She prays he will come home to her. When he does she knows coming home and being with her is his choice. Whatever he has done tonight, he still comes home to her.

3:00

The door opens, then closes and he climbs the stairs...

1993*Melissa Kaul*

Palms together
 Your hand in mine
 Fingers slip a millimeter to the right and close
 Over my heart, shielding my soul,
 Not letting go
 Never Letting go.

And still holding on,
 Still holding on....
 A green line across a cold black screen,
 Constantly beeping.
 And holding on,

Holding on,
 White-knuckled,
 Clutching,
 Slipping,
 But holding.

Dazing eyes and subconscious nightmares
 Haunt me Helplessness—

Clutching,
 Holding,
 Forgetting.

for orange juice and vodka*brenda eitemiller*

As he bled on my perfect beige carpet
 I paused to wonder "what makes minutes flee,
 scurry, like squirrels collecting for winter
 Or where time goes as it courses out his perfect
 bald head"
 pouring onto my carpet
 in the most magnificent blood red
 collecting in piles like months and years
 multiplied to mark birthdays and anniversaries
 of death— to wipe this pool
 is in earnest but a blatant mistruth.
 For we, collectively,
 have had much too much to drink.

Peace Series III

Marc L. Sundermeyer

The small forest of tall trees reach up to the sun's
warm light.

The grass sways in the breezes that weave among
the trees.

A beach of tanned sand bathes in the cool waters to
my right.

Fields plowed to the color of pepper spilled upon
the floor to my left.

Rusting behind me is the old fence to protect our
claims.

In hand are some seeds to plant by the old grave.
To be here, I have walked along the untouched
plains.

Worshipping the peace that flows from here, to
everywhere.

Untitled

Melissa Kaul

Tonight I noticed
The sign on the corner
It read: "Ernie's Liquor,"
With a half-burned out light bulb
Flickering off and on in
Uncertain pulses.
Hundreds of times unnoticed.

Worlds moving fast..
Each of us in our own,
Revolving around
Orbits of self-interest
Without magnetic poles.

A November Day In South

Dakota

Ann Weber

The day is warm and bright
 A caressing breeze brings the sun
 Oh, the blessing of a spring day in November
 I take time to smell the freshness

Suddenly, the wind turns on me
 Where did that leaden sky come from?
 Soon flakes start to show up in the wind
 Just a few tentative feathers

It's time to head for home
 The highway is covered with slop
 The wipers struggle to push the snow aside
 Faster and faster

How many miles yet to go?
 The world is reduced
 To the shortened view before the car

The car trudges onward
 Toward home
 Where is the spring day?

Untitled

brenda eitemiller

Quiet-to thrust towards life
 to spill and ease towards death
 to ache a while
 (all the while)
 in between.

Late for dinner. I am always
 late for dinner.

Silenced sliced by quiet—
 blackened hooded night
 table placed with
 crisp, dark linens and
 brass candlesticks, rich
 red wine to taste
 quiet— late
 for dinner.

I don't care to be
 on time for wine or tea
 (while it is served by thee)
 Blackened hooded night.
 For I shall be
 always and forever—
 late for dinner.

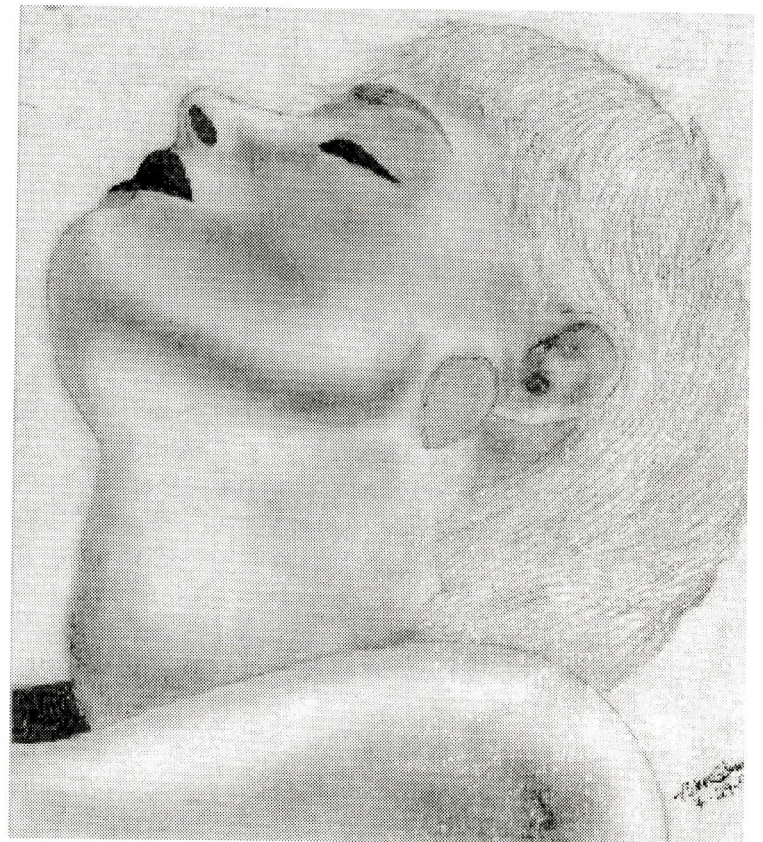
What I Have Slept With

Brian Eitemiller

- I have slept with darkness, the only way to sleep.
 I have slept with my mom, but only during thunderstorms.
 I have slept with my sister, but she always got the floor.
 I have slept with my dog, she died in my bed.
 I have slept with my teddy bear, he was soft and cute.
 I have slept with my night light, until I was seven.
 I have slept with the wilderness, compliments of Dad.
 I have slept with a bedpan, I hate being sick.
 I have slept with the Bible, pondering my existence.
 I have slept with the t.v. on, Letterman in my subconscious.
 I have slept with my contacts in, that infection hurt.
 I have slept with my right hand, but everyone does.
 I have slept with my uncle, but I don't want to talk about it.
 I have slept with Rhonda, my first love.
 I have slept with the porcelain god, oh what a night.
 I have slept with a high school teacher, she gave me an "A".
 I have slept with my roommate's girlfriend, what a mess.
 I have slept with an entire Chem class, how boring can you get?
 I have slept with girls from bars, told them I'd call, never did.

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- I have slept with Xanax, a mild but helpful tranquilizer.
 I have slept with my wife, and always will.
 I have slept with my son, part of me, and a part of my wife.
 I have slept with Kathy Ireland, but then I woke up.



Nikoa Stassi

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A Daughter's Beginnings

Ann Weber

I held your hand
And we walked to your first day of school
At ten I took you again
To a new school in a new town

Soon it was time to load your stuff
And take you to college
I stood by while you got your bearings
A hug and a pat sent you into your new life

I had hardly turned around
When it was time to help you furnish a house
That time it took paint and drapes
Along with a hug and a pat
To send you into yet another new life

Now you make the most important beginning of
your life
Someone else helps you this time
You must forgive a few tears
As we lovingly give both of you pats and hugs
To send you into this new life together

Clothes Make the Man?

Jim Janke

There was a coyote named Guido,
Who wore a goatee and tuxedo,
But looks couldn't stop
The shot from a cop
While robbing a store in Toledo.

Summer by the Ocean in Holland

Alie Wieringa

I'm wearing my sunglasses, although it's raining
They protect my eyes from the sand that is flying
around
but they can't protect my mouth
I eat sand every time I try to breathe
I feel it crunching between my teeth when I talk
I spit

I can't hear the usual sounds of birds singing
on a hot summer's day
There is only the sound of the wind whistling in
my ear, and
of waves crashing onto the beach
These are the sounds that make me feel warm
inside
I spit again and sit down to listen.

Milking Time

Jane Rice

Evening time,
The orange sun hangs heavy in the sky.
The evening air is cooling,
And the locusts buzz loudly in the trees.

Grandpa goes to the barn,
Pitches hay into the troughs,
And opens the pasture door.

Outside, the cows are called
Obediently, single file cows enter
Filling their stalls for milking time.
They lick up mouthfuls of the golden hay,
As Grandpa connects them to the tubes.

The suction starts with a slurp.
Noises of slurping, sucking, gurgling,
Are so loud, for so long,
It leaves the ears ringing.

Memories From An Old Shoe Box

Alie Wieringa

A smile creeps on my face when I look at our
picture
Our eyes so bright, our mouths laughing
as we were playing in your back yard
We were so happy then

Then you moved to another town
I remember the pain of an infected finger
after we'd sworn to be blood sisters
Friends forever and ever...

Oh, and here's the postcard you sent me
Yeah, some friends we were
That was the last time I ever heard from you
The trace of a tear on my face
and a salty taste as it reaches my lips
You even spelled my name wrong.

1862*Jim Janke*

The *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*
 One day in March in the Hampton Roads
 Went out to battle and fire their loads
 Of shot and shell and each other whack.

The *Congress* sank on the previous day,
 And, too, the *Cumberland* burned and died,
 Although the Federals fiercely tried
 To keep the ironclad far at bay.

The Union ships had their wooden walls,
 And mighty guns that could hurl huge shot,
 But they the *Merrimac* proved could not
 Withstand gray shell guns and iron balls.

Four hours of fighting at point blank range,
 Four hours of pounding and fire that day
 Showed all who saw the two ships that they
 To naval warfare had brought a change.

From then on navies of wooden craft
 Were obsolete and there was no ship
 That dared not bow and flag to tip
 To the *Monitor* or the *Merrimac*.

Little Boy In The Highchair*Ann Weber*

How can it be?
 Are you a ghost?
 You seem the same
 As the boy of twenty-seven years ago

You have the same hair
 You have the same eyes
 You have the same frown
 As the boy of twenty-seven years ago

You sit in the same chair
 You make the same mess
 You squeal the same squeal
 As the boy of twenty-seven years ago

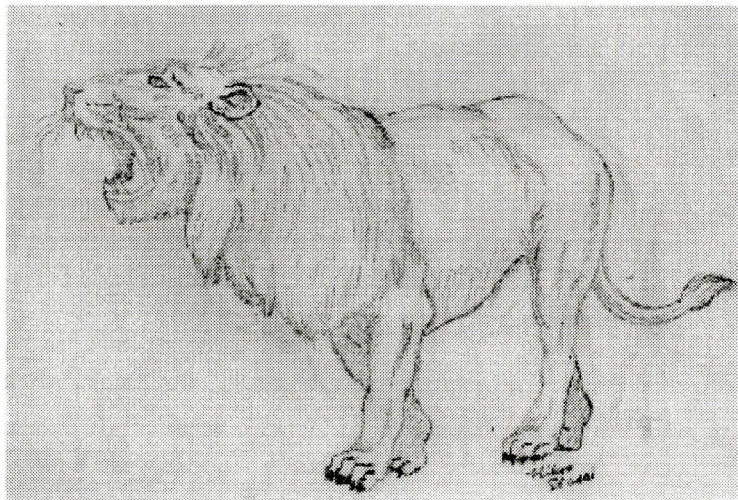
When I come on you
 Suddenly I am a young mother
 And you are your father
 The boy of twenty-seven years ago

Untitled

Rick L. Janssen

Product
 Conceived produce
 Sealed
 Packaged
 UPCed
 To conceive
 More product

 Before
 Expiration
 Date



Nikoa Stassi

This Page Sponsored By: Jim Janke

The Troll

Ken Hudson

Keep your Kindness.
 Your generosity is Ingenuous
 and Self Serving.

Such displays of shameless humanitarianism
 I find revolting.
 Pity me not.
 For I find great comfort in my solitude.
 My sores and bruises are my solace.
 And my desperation
 Keeps me warm at night.

Far worse than ragged, rugged repulsiveness of my
 exterior,
 is the mockery of mercy you make behind a mask.
 In the name of caring and sympathy.

A dandy enterprise you've built for yourself as a
 professional charlatan.
 I receive not your false sentiment, take it from here.

My dwelling place is 'neath a rickety bridge.
 By choice not poverty or want.

The shoes of those who've tried before,
 now burn in a smoky fire over which boils
 a stew kettle of entrails and juice.

This Page Sponsored By: Jubilee Foods

A stack of bones testify to the many a bumbling
do-gooder
who thought only to wrest me from this misery.
Yours will be next, lest you leave here and soon
under vaporous mist and shadowy moon.
If I wanted your assistance,
I'd strangle it from you.



Tracy Larson

South Dakota Summer

Melissa Kaul

I see
My father's field
From the east window,
Living green ocean letting
The wind
Ripple waves
Deep and long
Across tasseled stalks and silk-laden stems.

Barbed-wire strings
Strung between poles
Sagging and
bent

Here
and
there
Hold the ocean but not
The wind.

Neighbors and friends slowly
Drive by, tires tossing dust from the
Road up into the wind.
With windows cranked down
Heads look left,
then right,
Then left,
then right,
And maybe left again - watching
Oceans of corn
Growing in the humid
Haze of a day in July.

Bengali Music

Alie Wieringa

Emotional voices accompany sweet tunes
They're singing in a language I don't understand
But it doesn't matter

We're lying on the bed, listening
It's a love song, you say
Your strong, masculine arms around my shoulders

My heart is smiling

Untitled

Lauretta Perrine

Blue Mountains standing tall as if sentries
Pale morning sunlight casting lonely shadows
Village women washing their laundry in a nearby
stream
Solemn faces I see along the path

Thatched roofs dotted in the distance
Rice paddies patchworked throughout the land
My heart reaches out to you
Korea, land of the morning calm.

Sleepy Days

Marc Sundermeyer

Eyes dart open to the electronic sound
Nails being scratched over a chalkboard
The body rushes with instinct
A slapping kills the small beast

The cold then hot then warm liquid pours
Artificial rain cleans with soap and cloth
Hands fumble through sliding doors and boxes
Garments pleasing only to the eye assemble

Hair, a mix from one to another, stroked into order
Obeying the commands of scented sprays and
liquids
A late look to the clock scares the mind
The heart quickens the beats to speed the rush

Off to the outside, no time for food
Stomach grumbles with anger
Arrival is successful for today
The leader comes right behind

Sitting forward to follow commands
Listening to the hollow voice with boredom
Slumping back down to the morning's position
Sleep, without consideration, lovingly holds you

Dreams of breakfast and someone beside you
The false comfort not seen by the others
Tapping finger scares the sleep
Muscles jerk with fear

Time to pass to the next room
 Everyone leaving in a stir of mumbles
 Home is hours away
 The tired body shall sleep, anyway.



Nikoa Stassi

Good Night Kiss

Jason Dauwen

The candlelight retreats into the darkness
 And the darkness into the night
 And the night into the
 red Blooming roses and white wine
 The white and the red mingle in your lips
 And your lips mingle with mine
 The white and the red burn in the fire
 A warm comfortable orange inside of you
 A pale lonely blue inside of me
 The blue invades your eyes
 Teased by the orange passions inside
 That dance with the gray ambiguity inside mine
 And then a tender kiss of no color
 that is an infinite rainbow that breaks
 the dark black cold of the night
 And the night escapes into the darkness
 And the darkness escapes into the light

Sister Rose

Tanya Jaragoske

Sister Rose
 So sweet, so beautiful,
 as delicate and fragile as I,
 can be destroyed
 by one single cruel hand,
 but the seeds of our souls
 will always remain
 to grow and bloom
 once again...

The Dream

Nikoa Stassi

The dream always comes when
I'm too deep in my sleep to escape it.
It bores its way to the back of my brain.
Its soul aim is simply to remain.
I give it life, or it gives me pain.
It lives within me and I within it.
We're trapped with no way out.
Imperishable, it swells in my memory.
There's no way to break the spell
that dwells in my soul for eternity.
Hand in hand, it will always be
this lingering dream and me.

We

Clyde Brashier

This I saw
Or imagined it
Or dreamt it.
On the far horizons
Furious battles raged
Men died
Women and children cried
and sometimes died.
Leaders stood along the battle's edge
And proclaimed with glee
and ecstasy
We are winning.
Always we
The collective we
The grand and glorious we.

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Darest thou not to fight
And bleed
And die
For your country
For your fellowman
For your Leaders
Thou cowardly cur
Times demand it.
People demand it
We sacrifice
We plan
We conquer
Yours is only
To follow orders
To enter the fray
To beat back the foe
To die when necessary
We will honor you
We will glorify you
We will sing your praise
You will be remembered
You will be revered
You will be immortal
But
Dead

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A Mother's Agony

Cyndi Underberg

"Hush little baby don't you cry ..." I can hear myself singing, ever so softly, but am not sure why I'm singing. My baby isn't crying. In fact, he's just lying there listless, almost lifeless. NO! I will not think that way! I nuzzle my nose against the soft fuzz of baby hair; it's damp and salty smelling. My shirt is soaking wet where he is resting against me. Dear God, my baby is burning up. Where is Dr. Carroll?

Trying to stay calm and to hold back the tears that are stinging my eyes, I look around. The doctor's office is bright and cheery, painted a sunshine yellow. Photos of teddybears and trains adorn the walls. What a contrast to the fear and anxiety I'm feeling. I can hear people outside. Someone says to get Dr. Carroll quickly. I recognize the voice. It's Dr. Carroll's nurse, Jody; a baby is crying ...

Kenneth whimpers like a lost puppy. I hold him closer but this only makes him whimper more. I gently rub his hot, sweaty back. I can smell the baby lotion that I'd lovingly rubbed on it earlier, mingled with the sweet smell of my dripping breast milk. My whole body is responding to my baby's whimper.

Behind the closed door there is a rush of activity, sounds of running, hushed yelling, and controlled confusion. Where are they? Why don't they hurry?

Kenneth tenses and then becomes stiff. His whole body is rigid. I am frozen with fear, unable to move, useless. I look down at my baby. He's flung his body straight back. His eyes are open, rolled back into the dark recess of his head. The corners of his mouth are turning blue. And then nothing. He goes totally limp. There is nothingness.

Dear God, my baby is dead. I cry out, screaming.

Faceless white coats take my baby away from me. More of the white coats come into the room. My muddled mind finally realizes that the one white coat is Dr. Carroll and that she is bending over Kenneth. I hear him whimper, and then Jody gently leads me out.

Thumping in the Night

David Lund, Carol Larson, Brian Pruss

Returning to my room mentally and physically
drained

I fall into my bed ready for a night of hard earned
rest.

On the verge of consciousness I am pulled back to
reality by the sound of thumping in the night.

Through darkness I hear a beating on the wall,
Like a train departing from the station slowly and
rhythmically accelerating until it reaches a climactic
pace

releasing steam as it chugs along.

Then through the wall comes a high piercing
screech as the train comes braking into the
station

after finishing a hard run,
unloading its contents and preparing for another
trip.

After this, sleep eludes me so I rise and smoke a
cigarette, sleep totally forgotten.

