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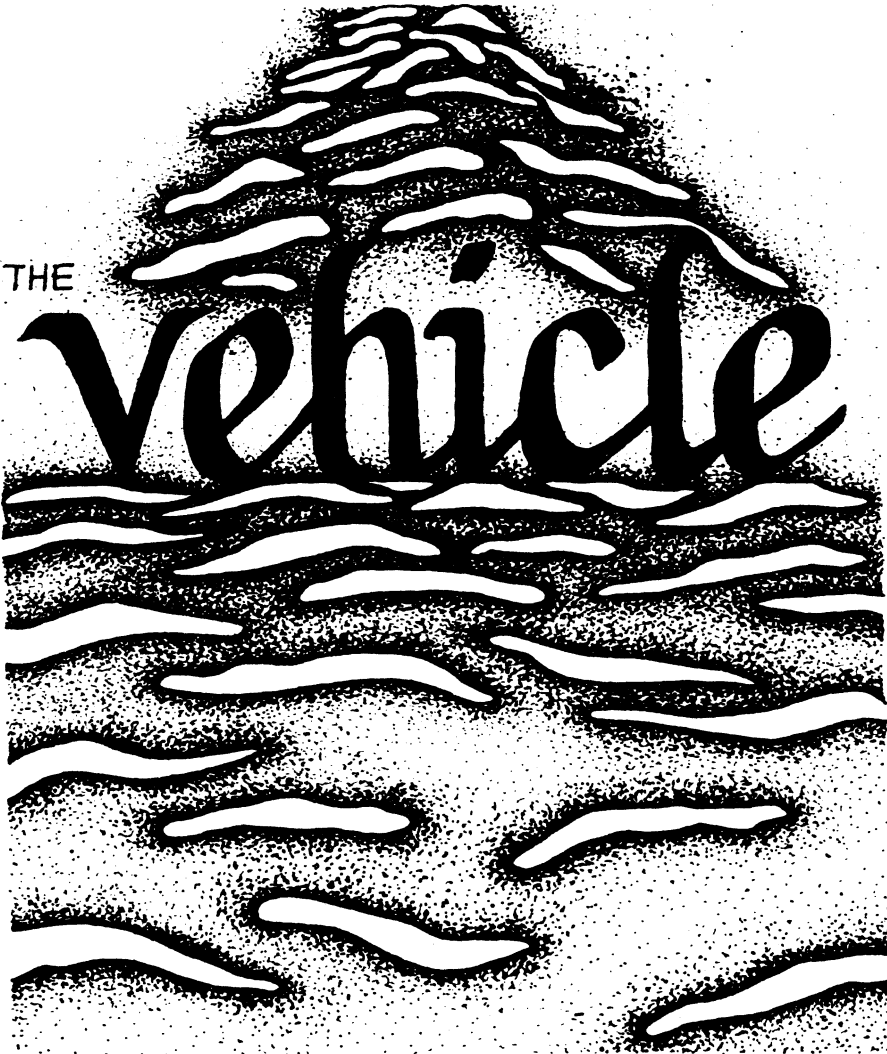
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The Vehicle

PRODUCED BY SIGMA TAU DELTA
International English Honor Society

Eastern Illinois University
Fall 1993

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The Vehicle ***Fall 1993***

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7/10ths Synthesis

A 'found poem'
assembled
from the words of Dr. Guernsey and
the students of English 4762.

A Poem is
an active
act of
language.
"It's really hard
to make
no sense."

Is a poem a puzzle
and each word a piece?
Or a riddle
with wisdom
locked within?
Is there something more
to each metaphor?
In pursuit of hidden
meaning
do we eat the pearl
and wear the oyster?

"I used to be
a History major."
"But that's redundant."
Harmony and symmetry
tyranny and parody.
Take the sting
and pluck it out
for all the world to see.

Wake to watch
the worlds rebirth
each day
through
new
iiii's

and
Never
stop
doing
somethiNg
e
w.

- Peter F. Essig

Aug 19

199

2 (My Small Catechism)

Isn't it merely that we academics are afraid
that the truest form of poetry today
is rap-
that we feel threatened with the truth
that our prose is worthless,
pond lillies, flowers with no soil?

We wake, you and I, in sweat,
trying to convince ourselves that we are victims
of some sort of hit and run
looking ignorant realizing that our glass palaces are fragile
expecting pity that for all our striving for gnosis
we are flesh and bone and god we have to use our mouths to speak.

For the balls to stick my face
and hands into some rich soil to remember.
I'd find a Queen Anne's Lace
and dig my hands until I feel the dirty roots and tug and tug
until I can see the roots of that field flower and
raise it high,
while the sun beats on my skull
like an otter beats a clam on a rock,
until I start to write lines that can be understood by all
and where love fills my page
and I am free from doctrine
and I can nail my theses to the door at Wittenberg
and I can breathe in the scent of my time
and I can give breath to more than my fantasy verse and my frustrations

- Jon Montgomery

Chaos Is-

In carefully measured steps I was
Walking, walking, walking, walking, walking, thinking
of Chaos Physics and its relevance
To Poetry and Prose.

I thought
Mr. Prufrock took walks much like this but with even more
Accurate steps. I think
I am walking/measuring but it doesn't
Match the reality of my walking:
My feet bend and scrape to the slanting Earth and
Protusions of rock and push/
Pull wind.

A concise poet wrote. "The world is too much with us." Not at all.
I know this to be wrong (although I may not know what is right),
For there is more in Heaven and Earth, beyond
Comprehension, to bring to dialectic and
Synthesis.
It is not with us. It
is,
Without us.

I stub my toe on the curb as I wander
Off the straight road, which may wander
Off in this and that direction, or may
Stop.

- J. Dylan McNeill

UNTOUCHED

Her bright eyes glitter like coins,
fresh from the mint, edges still rough,
but shiny and pure
unsmudged by human fingerprints,

unaware of what the future will hold.
She's in your hands now,
so please protect her,
she shouldn't be just another one
in a collection-

she's one of a kind, untouched, so rare,
and she'll bring you the good luck
you never received
from those you tossed in a fountain.

Don't let her tarnish,
she's gold and she's yours...
Take care of my little sister.

- **Traci Williams**

The Justification

'BUILD YOUR POETRY
WITH GLOVED HANDS,
CHISEL, GLUE,
SAND, BRICK AND POPSICLE STICKS...'

i know
it is taunts of white infinity
etched with dust-line null
and fallen hours
and drink
and tears, weeping
and my fingers nailed
bone-splintered
to a bleeding, bleating typewriter-
hieroglyphic-keyed
with subscript ancient babylonian
cuneiform uniformity in
lowercase-laughter,
that powers, empowering desire
to cast thought-lees
on void sheets, blank too memory
in the torn dimness of a dream-lull

- **John C. Carmine**

Lincoln

the street is busy to the eye
both sides of the road littered
with rows of sink-head street lamps
and the clutter of power and telephone poles
their lines cast to the horizon
upright signs of business press to the curb
crowding the road for attention
but the eye is confronted by power
cables criss-crossing above the traffic
they stream past the windshield in quick intervals
hypnotizing repetition of ugly black bars
insolently caging travelers from the sky
the only solace for sunburnt souls seen
when the established march of telephone poles and electric
cables
turn to the towering maples of Morton Park
here midway through town trees spiral beyond our concrete
confines
while a short homeless man sits
excavating the dirt along the sidewalk
with a twisted scrap of metal
until he discovers the ruins
of a broken bottle
as we all pass by he picks up the pieces

- Jon Montgomery



By Nicole Nieman

Park Poem

The stars are always brighter in the middle of nowhere,
and the shyest of smiles always say the most.
Dreams are always easier on the outskirts of somewhere,
and words reveal themselves some may boast.

Lilly-Livered Lions Long for Lusty Lasses &
Pink and Purple Peashooters Ponder Perpetually.
Scoffing Scamming Sailors Scream Silly Symptoms
of Candy-Colored Cocktails Clamorously Clanking.

Life lingers overhead as each breath passes,
and Love laughs like a jackhammer.
This is the place children come to philosophize—
intellectually gabbing about the rat race.

Kaleidoscope Colors Crackling Clamorously
Clumsily Quaking, Quietly Quacking
Queerly Perusing Peaceful Palmettos
Playfully Swooning the Swans—Kaboom!

The stars are always brighter in the middle of nowhere.
Lives breed Loves breed Dreams breed Philosophies
Enigmatic Oceans of free-thinking possibilities.
Without a place, Life would not exist...

- John Brillhart

Smoke

In the relaxed aura
in the midst of those
who live forever
it whirls around and among
wafting and weaving
a path through the bar
where I watch the translucent
white killer hover over its prey
putrid
in its smell
floating through
cloud-like it drifts
over the light-hearted mass
gliding along caressing each
with deadly fingers

-Julia Ann Canham

Warming the Bench

I cheer your name, but
Nolan Ryan is pitching an
almost perfect game. I
sit on the bench.

My lips move in vain, your
ears are locked, cathode
rays mesmerize you. Strike
out, again.

I return to the dugout waiting
for the next inning. You
cheer with the crowd, your
team winning.

I shout your name, but it's
the bottom of the ninth, an
almost perfect game. Hopeless,
I leave your diamond.

-Ann Moutray

Cereal Killer

Snap Crackle Pop
I crushed those stupid elves
Better locks up your cabinet
And fasten down your shelves

I sail the milky seas
Leading a murderous bunch
I'm crazy as a Fruit Loop
They calls me Captain Crunch

I'm Kookoo on Cocoa Puffs
I'm drunk on Apple Jacks
I captured Tony the Tiger
and diced 'im with my ax

Up in flames
Goes the Cracklin Oat Bran
No one is safe
From this fiendish plan

It won't help you
To get some Lucky Charms
Frankenberry tried it
So I cut off both 'is arms

If I hears ya say I'm Grape Nuts
Then you can bet your Life
I'm gonna get my Kix
From pokin' ya with my knife

The detective tried to catch me
He knew it was a feat
He used to be lightly frosted
But now he's Shredded Wheat

So don't ya try to cross me
Cause you know what you'll gets
I'll fills ya full of dynamite
And blows ya to Alpha-bits

-Jay Harnack

The Dutiful Sons

To: Conrad's Marlowe on the birth of Stephen Dedalus

Bless me father for I have sinned...

We are the ones
who carry your torch and
keep it burning in our hearts
forever yearning to keep alive
the precious dying dreams you told us of,
Oh how painful this did seem.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
who struggle endlessly to keep
the things you held so dear and deep
burning in our bellies, away from
the treachery and debaucherous hand of
our own primordial mindlessness.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
who weep endlessly at your tomb,
with tears of sorrow, tears of doom,
falling like rivers down upon your sacred hollow ground.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Who tirelessly, painfully endeavor
in a world conniving, cruel, and clever,
To continue dauntlessly down the pathways
Your own feet trodded and created.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Whose hearts eternally seem to break
As in this modern age we wake
To find the walls your calloused, gentle fingers built
being torn down by the heartless massive hordes.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Who bloody our hands in endless battle
to preserve your land,
and save your cattle
from the ravishing plunderers
of the harvests you sowed
but never reaped.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Who carry on our shoulders
crosses that plagued you to your very death
Knowing that before tomorrow
We must follow in your sorrow
down the trail of tears you left
which led us westward to the woodlands.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Who carry your light of knowledge strong
Into the jungle, thick and long,
Where you carried on your shoulders
A burden that now destroys
The Western World.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Who fought to keep caged
The birds escaping, filled with rage,
Until the value of your lessons
had been taught to them
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Hated and scorned by those
who denigrate the world forlorn,
For clarity and truth are bitter,
To them it is but scattered litter
Cluttering the roads you paved for them
Which takes them now to their empty aims.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Torn, broken, lost, and scattered,
Clinging to your pictures tattered
by their jealous hands.
We leave despair for the ways of man
And fall like rocks into the sand,
Fighting bitterly, angrily,
Betrothed to your visions
Never to return,
Only to see the meaning of it
Lost to their minds closed with red and gray.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Who lay here, robbed of youth,
innocence, love, and truth,
Filled with anger, angst, and ulcers,
Wishing desperately to change the sun and moon,
Which are so different than the ones
That rose high above your mighty heads.
We are the dutiful sons.

We are the ones
Who now lay dying and
gasp for air betwixt our crying,
And wish in our hearts that our fathers were near,
To know that we were valiant,
To see that we were gallant,
As we fought for all you gave to us
Only to see it lost
As we die in this eternal battle
Of recompense and filth.
We were the dutiful sons.

Oh how were we,
the dutiful sons.
We are never free,
The dutiful sons.
We must always be
The dutiful sons.
Can we still be
Your dutiful sons

-Tom McGrath

Untitled

how dare he say he loves me
when all he knows is cold
camouflage eyes cannot see
how constant games grow old
i gave to him a Flower
of unrequited love
though not all pure and dour
made in Heaven above
each day it grew
bloomed expanded or changed
mutual tears formed the dew
the petals rearranged
life supply completely drained
water of kindness gone
Flower withered as it pained
to hold the hope of Dawn
may the rising Sun bring health
and new life to the dead
forgotten art of care — stealth
drunken like my blood red
but do these eyes hope and wait
or do they plan to hide
in his subconscious need hate
til then the time will bide

— C.L.D.

7-up bottle

inside the refrigerator is a bottle of 7-up
half empty
I wish I could get inside it
and tread the cold crystalline liquid
rising and falling on carbonated bubbles
with a pleasant green glow descending

— Walt Howard

Breed

Late
in mating
season,
two worn infants
pass on years
of steam
and rhythm.
Tears too.

He plays
father's favorite story:
 Arrange seeds on inner wall
 Add 1/2 cup water

She
knows recipes
and how
tendencies run
on tuesdays.
Production
counts a future
with her clock
and raging
parts.
So she
hides pain
in nature
and responds favorably
to warmth.

- Dan Trutter

An Argument Against Love

Have I ever danced through your dreams,

Like a pale shadow of what you truly believe me to be.

Have I ever been a tear to roll down your cheek,

To be worn like a badge of courage, or is it shame?

Have I ever been there during your waking hours on the edge
of your conscious mind, boiling up passions of lust, or
is it hatred?

Or would it be more simple to ask, have I ever been there?

Have you ever felt me in your soul, as a gentle feather
or a cold steel knife. Because you are the demon that
haunts my mind.

You are the reason I give for lifting the bottle to my lips,
and also the reason I give when I put it back down.

You are the screams of anger I release, as I slam my fist
into a wall, when I realize I am alone.

You are the tears that roll down my face, as I cry myself to
sleep, and pray for just one more chance to love.

Or would it be more simple to say, you ripped through my soul
like a cold steel knife. In the void that remained you
have become my everything.

- Tony Martinez

Untitled

above the grass

I hover

on swaying steel

and I stare

up at the clouds

as their absence

is revealing a

starlit sky.

-T. Scott Lanigan

Glassblowers Ball

And the dance begins:

Twisting, twirling, transforming,
Fate entrusted
To craftful finger-tips
Dynamic on her frame.

Curves - molded to perfection
He spins her round and round
Arms streaming freely
An endless entanglement of colorful bliss.

At last, he blows a single breath
Life embraces her exquisite structure
She shimmers upon the silver stage
And gleams in her glassblown glory.

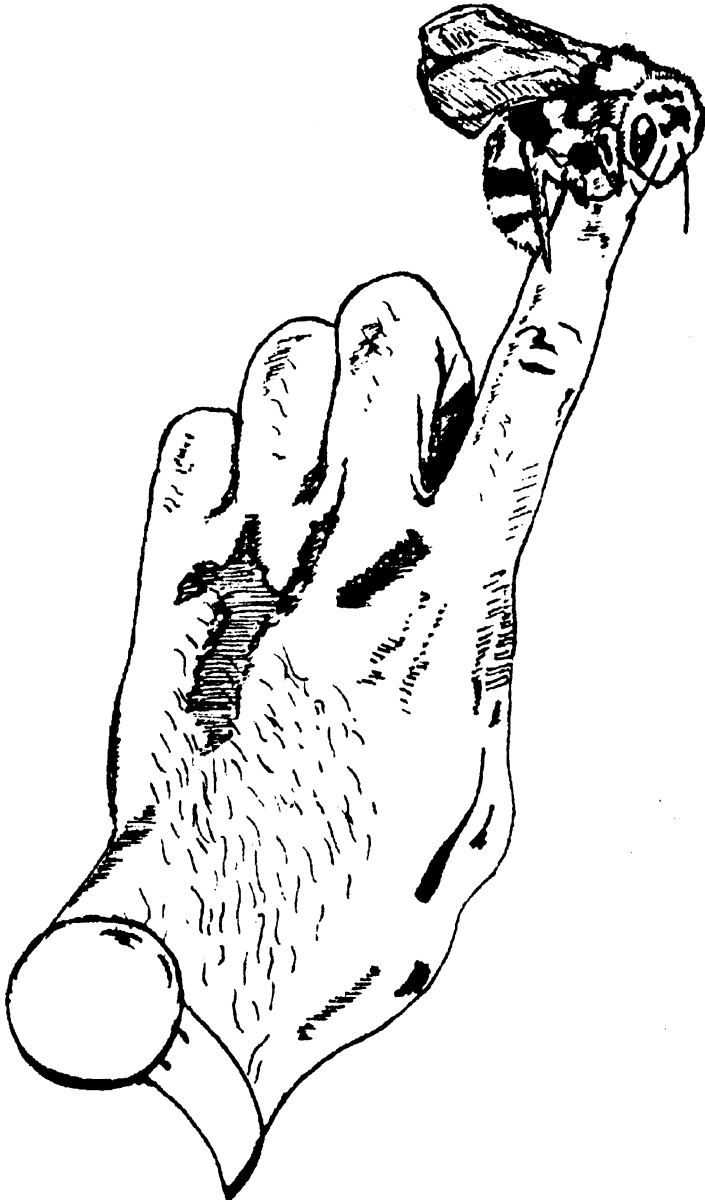
- Stephanie Franzen

Portrait of a Young Girl

Drawn from breath, diaphanously hesitant
fading into a ligature-
of line and shadow
she takes shape, breathlessly
in folds of transparency

An elbows frail curvature
a delicate cusp
of slender shading
concentrated in movement
clutching infinity, towards her breast

-John C. Carmine



Dan Trutter

Death of a Friend

Today, my clock died.
The General Electric
Model No. 7-4303G
stopped at 6:38 p.m. Sunday
At a most inconvenient time
in a most inconvenient way.
It suffered a stroke which left
Light shining
onto its rolodex-number face,
but it would not flip its numbers for me.

My clock died,
how will I awake for my 8:00?
I am unaccustomed to the quiet yawn
of my roommate's alarm
unlike my model No. 7-4303G
with its train curse screaming
in the dark.

My clock has been my companion
since second grade.
It has seen me through disease,
five roommates
early-morning work, and sleepless nights.
It has shaken me awake and
hummed in my sleep.
It has worn a sticker with my name
proudly through its life.

I love my clock.
It is dead.
unplugged
loved
missed.

I can hear Rebecca cheering from Champaign
Yes! Yes! the witch is dead
she sings
She hated my clock.
I think she killed it in a jealous frenzy.
One night, while I was away
she beat it with her purple toothbrush
and it screamed until
it died today.

-Lizabeth Kulka

Submission Blues

Submitting poetry is like going through
the ordeal of donating a kidney.
Only to have it sent back
with a rejection slip attached.

- Martin Paul Britt

To the Fourteen Year Old Suicide

I'm surprised.
I'm surprised both barrels
could fit into your little mouth.
You even found the perfect stick
with a "V" at one end to
cradle the trigger.
Prairie fire gossip says
you discovered you liked boys.
Fag can be a huge word in a town of 150.
I have to drive through your town often.
I can't but help wonder if maybe I didn't
see you once, perhaps only as a glimpse
caught in the rearview mirror
as you slipped behind a tree or building.
I probably wasn't paying any attention,
fumbling with the radio, lighting a cigarette-
ignorant as you scrolled out of view-
eyes cast down
looking for the perfect stick.

- Scott Langen

The Flabby Pilgrim

Placidly, he sits on soft vinyl.
Strains from the audience cry to Donahue.
He shouts his embittered opinion from the couch,
A generous answer for today's guest and
Their silly fragmented lives.
His hard-earned wisdom remains
Unheard from inside the living room.

The autumn sky emblazons coloured leaves
Just beyond cloistering curtains.
Yet, within lies the whiter shade of pale.
He aims his remote like an early musket,
Ridding the screen of a scrumptious Butterball.
They are tempting with their ads oppressive,
But his heart tells him he must wait for dinner.
With his musket, he claims victory
Over their failed temptation.
In pixels now are painted,
A primal scene of sweat and steam.
Primitive bodies flow like a Plymouth stream
And the voice of another appetite beckons him.

Upon this very couch, like a new dawn,
He thinks, what a harvest he has reaped!
All new episodes with explosive season premiers.
He has witnessed muscular heroes in battle as
They stand undaunted.
At times the stakes were land and lives,
At other times, only leather and field position.
Through this vessel, he has seen the world.
He has entered the private lives of others,
And so often has lived through these lives.
It is a day of Thanks.
He turns to the ceiling
And tells it of his gratitude
For the twenty-four inch screen,
Which, like the Mayflower,
Has taken him to these brave New Worlds.

- Tom McGrath

THE FALL OF IMMORTALITY

The wallpaper struck me first.
Oak leaves, their sinews tangled
All the green long since turned brown,
Fingerprints smeared there-
Splotches of red and beige
 Moved amongst those leaves,
Rubbed mascara and eyeshadow
 Trickling into new dresses.
I wondered when the leaves
 would fall from the plaster walls.

The box wasn't any longer than
 seven feet, any wider than three.
It was marble with white icing.
Golden hand-rails hugged the sides,
Something to grasp during transport.
Even there were leaves,
 shining now, but still fallen.

The inside was satin plush,
White, clean, sterile, antiseptic-
A preserve of something-
Jarred like your old grandma's jam.
Blurry, cheap polaroids stacked neatly,
Scrapbooks, pins, school colors,
All piled nicely into the heavy
Stone of the time capsule.

Inside lay another withered leaf,
A countenance forced to be sewn shut,
Dark glasses holding torn and ripped eyes.
The chloroform had been sucked dry,
 replaced with formaldehyde,
Sinking in the chest, bloating the face,
Drying the skin to leather.

I saw no golden October,
 for it was the mid of May.
I saw no graceful fall,
 for twisted steel on pavement,
 holds no Autumnal dance.
Death out of season, I mourn
 for my immortality,
Breaking away with crisp ashes
 into the dampness of the compost pile.

- Brian Wheeler

MERGING WITH AIR

Before his fall,
that perfect ovoid,
white, jolly, and rocking
back and forth
with heartfelt glee
from silly sight
of puny armies
pathetically guarding
his hearty health
until —

shaky balance shifts,
Humpty hurls toward
cobblestone calamity.
Airborne egg revolves,
head to toe,
limbs outstretched,
big base bumps brick,
foreboding foreshadow
as Humpty spies
brick, sky, and stone,
brick, sky, and stone.
Dizzying descent
before . . . CRACK!

Splitting with a splat,
shattering his thin
translucent skin.
Sweet liquid self
seeps over grout
as keystone corporals collide
with comic concern
for their fallen court jester.

Soldiers scramble
sweeping shell shards,
assembling Humpty,
their ultimate puzzle.
Bit by bit,
eye to ear,
adhering his whole
with cotton and chemicals,
soldier's sweat.

The ovum shrine
a gathering spot
for bad-ass boys
smoking Salems
or wayward birds
dropping dung dots.

Humpty's sweet
slimy substance
sizzles in April's sun,
heating with
its warming glow.
Bubbling brew
transforms to gas.
His succulent self suspends,
evaporating as he ascends,
merging slowly with

sweet
 spring
 air.

- Thom Schnarre

Untitled

I am a fool
A stupid romantic
 bleeding idiot
And you say
 that I am blind
 in lazy dreams
But you're still here
 and so am I

-C.L.D.

Tree Fish

Leaves are flying fish,
russets, yellows, creamed greens,
leaping in schools from a concrete creek.

Wind, bringing their death to life,
licks my face, and hints
of burning tree flesh.

Smelling and watching
crispy fish, I sit beneath a tree
clamoring in the hazy fall air.

Such supple creatures you are,
contorting, tossing,
sprouting barren balding limbs.

In your birth a seedling,
brief youth so lush,
color decaying to death.

Yet, how well you let
your fish fly, knowing
Spring will bring them back to nest.

- Sandra Beauchamp

Country Slumber

"Bless it, Jim! You're going to be late again! This is the last time I'm telling you—!"

"I'm up already!" he moaned to the pillow. His blankets were warm about him. He tested the cold of the room by pulling his hand out of the blanket and touching his nose. It was a brisk country morning . . . he decided to keep his hand there. He waited for more bellowing from the depths of the stairs. School started today, Jim remembered, and the realization grounded him to the bed. The bus would be full of screaming kids excited to begin the new schoolyear. They would be chattering and singing songs they had learned at summer camp.

Jim was not like the others. Jim preferred the whispers of the country around him to the noise of bells and books slamming into lockers. Birds chirped as they flew near his bedroom window. He reached for them, and in a half-dream, he grabbed one of the passing bird's tailfeathers and it took flight.

His hand dropped onto his shoes at the side of the bed. He pivoted to drop his feet near them. Blanket pulled around him, he slipped into them. His head lightened with the sudden move, and he almost found himself resting again on the pillow. By slowly crouching, he leaned himself upright. The blanket fell at his feet as he gathered his jeans and T-shirt. His pants were dampened by the dew morning and chilled his thighs. The passing of the collar over his head pulled his face tight and forced his eyes open to see the dark green and amber outside his window. He rubbed his hands on his chest to warm him. He stepped over the blanket and moaned as he picked up his heavy new school bag. He plodded down the stairs to the gathering at the kitchen table. His mother had been up much earlier to fix the elaborate breakfast before him: pancakes, sausages, bacon, eggs, ham, and fresh muffins. He fingered the eggs and licked his fingers.

"Hi, mom. Hi, dad."

His father didn't look up from his food. His mother was pouring his father a glass of milk.

"Well, Jim, among the living are you?" said his mother.

"Jimmy," pointed his father with a fork, "Just because school starts today, doesn't mean you can't do your chores first."

Jim shoved a piece of bacon in his mouth. His father stabbed a sausage onto his fork.

"And Jim . . ." he shook his sausage at him and looked up from his plate for the first time, "James! Are you listening?"

"Yes dad."

"Don't feed the rabbits with chicken food and—"

"Don't feed the chickens with rabbit food, I know dad. No, dad."

His mother sat down to eat next to his father.

"Excited to see all of your friends today Jim?" his mother asked. "I'm sure a lot has happened to them over the summer."

Jim looked out the kitchen window above the sink.

"Guess so."

"Sit down and eat, Jim."

"Can't. In a hurry, mom."

"Jim—" his father raised his voice.

"Gotta go. Might miss the bus."

"James! I told you to get up earlier, didn't I?" she scolded.

Jim threw the door open before he could acknowledge. He dropped the bag onto the wooden porch and headed toward the morning sun, but it was obscured by barn. Moist grass tickled his ankles as he climbed the hill to the barn doors. Brittle flakes from the ancient white-wash fell in his hands as he lifted the board and wiped his hands on his shirt. He stepped back and waited as the aged doors creaked open. Angry birds rose from the roof. Jim entered and kicked up the straw, releasing its pleasant odor. The birds protested again. Slices of sunlight streaked the barn and made the straw below glow.

Jim grabbed the two feed bags from the post and dragged his feet to the feed bin. He grabbed the cold metal handle—he didn't remember it ever being this cold all summer—and lifted the lid. He shoveled the feed in with his hands, putting rabbit feed in his left bag and chicken feed in his right bag. He left the barn and headed for the chickens.

With falsetto voice he cried, "Here chick-chick-chick! Here chick-chick-chick!"

He watched the rooster, who was always first, slowly leave the shelter as the others pushed him on. Jim rained the feed on them. As an after-thought, he checked his other bag to be sure he fed them the chicken feed. The chickens were noisy in their satisfaction.

Jim walked slowly to the rabbit shed. He always hated feeding the rabbits. They were a 4-H project for his sister Ellie, and she left them to Jim as a "present" when she went away to college. They only twitched their noses at him as he fed and watered them. Jim always thought his sister picked up her nose twitch

"And Jim . . ." he shook his sausage at him and looked up from his plate for the first time, "James! Are you listening?"

"Yes dad."

"Don't feed the rabbits with chicken food and—"

"Don't feed the chickens with rabbit food, I know dad. No, dad."

His mother sat down to eat next to his father.

"Excited to see all of your friends today Jim?" his mother asked. "I'm sure a lot has happened to them over the summer."

Jim looked out the kitchen window above the sink.

"Guess so."

"Sit down and eat, Jim."

"Can't. In a hurry, mom."

"Jim—" his father raised his voice.

"Gotta go. Might miss the bus."

"James! I told you to get up earlier, didn't I?" she scolded.

Jim threw the door open before he could acknowledge. He dropped the bag onto the wooden porch and headed toward the morning sun, but it was obscured by barn. Moist grass tickled his ankles as he climbed the hill to the barn doors. Brittle flakes from the ancient white-wash fell in his hands as he lifted the board and wiped his hands on his shirt. He stepped back and waited as the aged doors creaked open. Angry birds rose from the roof. Jim entered and kicked up the straw, releasing its pleasant odor. The birds protested again. Slices of sunlight streaked the barn and made the straw below glow.

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from them, or they picked up their nose twitch from her. They were all, his sister and the rabbits, just bratty and demanding, as far as he was concerned.

Jim returned to his barn and hung up the feed bags. He headed for the far dark corner. His hand found the rope and pulled his body to it, and he began to climb.

They've got it all wrong at the school, he thought, you can't climb rope without jeans. Those stupid shorts that they make you wear, they're good for nothing except showing white legs. Gym class is stupid. Mr. Frankoviak is stupid. School is stupid.

With one practiced swing, he fell onto a pile of straw in the loft. He rubbed his palms briskly. He had been working on his callouses all summer so that he could show Mr. Frankoviak that he wasn't just any old fourth-grader. He pictured himself at the top of the rope in the gym, and smiling down upon Jeff and Tom and sissy Heidi.

He pulled the loft door open and squinted at his sun-brightened shirt. The grass glistened with dew, and further down the hill he could see the top edges of the creek bed. He savored the memory of summer treks along the creek. He remembered how he followed that lazy creek for what seemed a thousand miles. Now even the possibility of such travels seemed so distant. A flock of birds was heading north away from him.

School is stupid. Jim picked up a straw and threw it into the sun, then watched it twirl as it floated softly into the grass below. Hezekiah Brink himself used to watch this sunrise from this very place, his dad told him. Hezekiah was one of the first farmers out here. "I bet he didn't have to go to no stupid school," he thought.

I wonder how the mice are, he thought. Jim dug between the two bales and felt a warm smooth baby mouse. The mother found his hand and rubbed its nose against his thumb. He carefully lifted her and brought her to his neck. The mouse scurried up his shoulder and down through the back of his shirt. Jim laughed and turned around to pick her up. He held her to his chest firmly.

"Momma takin' care of babies? . . . Huh?" he said in a baby voice. The mouse chattered and kicked her legs.

Chuckie meowed below. Jim quickly returned her to the nest. Jim relaxed into his worn bed of straw to wait for him. The meowing continued as Chuckie rose the various beams to the loft. He purred/meowed as he pranced to Jim. Jim could feel the cold paws through his shirt. He raised his hand to pet him, but Chuckie stopped short to smell the mouse on his hand. After

bumping his nose several times on his finger, Chuckie pushed his neck into Jim's palm. Jim ratted his fur, and Chuckie purred in approval. Chuckie relaxed onto him and closed his eyes.

Cats know nothing about school and buildings and books, he thought, and they're happy. They are lucky that they don't have to stare at a teacher for all day like me, he thought.

Jim closed his eyes to feel the purring of Chuckie as they shared a morning nap in the sun.

The bus honked up the long winding dirt pathway. Jim leapt to his feet, catapulting Chuckie into a rude awakening. Jim dismissed the rope and fell to the pile below, pausing only to dig a straw out of his shoe, and ran to the porch to grab his bag and throw it on his shoulder. The weight bobbed on his shoulder as he ran in full stride up the way in attempt to catch the bus.

"Mr. Foley is driving the bus, isn't he? He'll honk the horn again like he always does, won't he? Mr. Foley?"

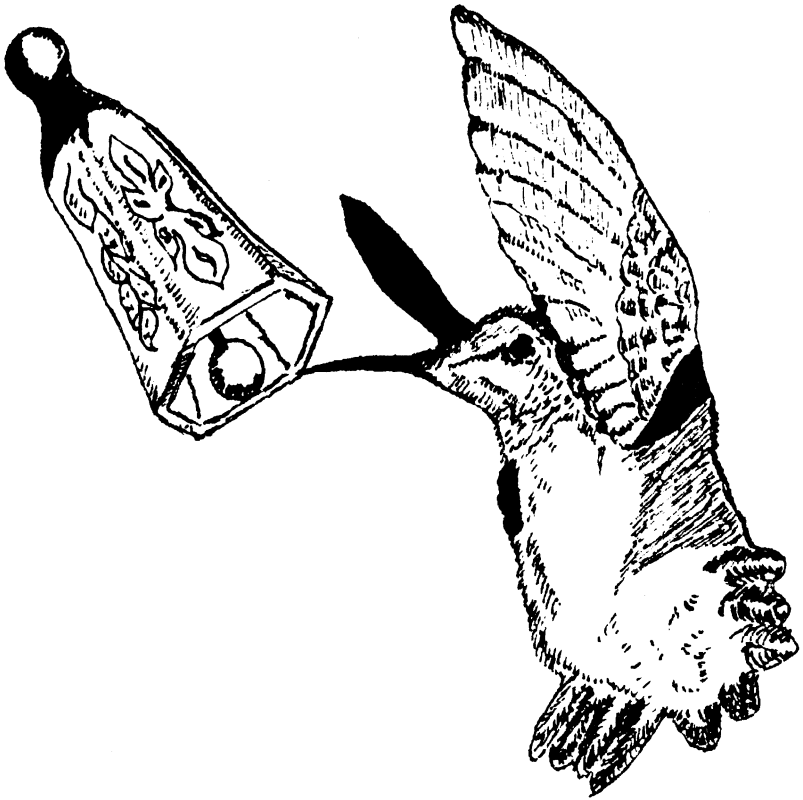
The bus honked again.

"Can't he see me?" he thought. "Open your eyes you stupid schoolbus! Mr. Foley! Open your eyes!"

Jim opened his eyes. The birds were calling to each other outside his bedroom window. The bus honked once again, and Jim could hear the engine roaring slowly away from him.

He pulled the covers over his head and closed his eyes.

- J. Dylan McNeill



By Dan Trutter

Authors' Page

Sandra Beauchamp is a senior English major with a creative writing minor who will graduate in December. She plans to get her Masters, but first wants to regroup her burnt-out brain cells somewhere in Milan or the Grand Canyon.

John Brillhart is in his third year as an English major. Aside from writing, his interests include listening to the Allman Brothers, reading A.A. Milne, and watching the grass grow. He is currently pondering Life, Love, and the Pursuit of Happiness. "Park Poem" is his first published piece of poetry.

Martin Paul Britt is a grad student in English. He has published poetry in such journals as *Midwest Poetry Review*, *Our Write Mind*, and *Cokefish*.

Julia Canham is a junior English major with a creative writing minor and absolutely no direction in her life. She believes "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Should the beholder have poor eyesight, she can ask the nearest person which boys look cute."

John C. Carmine believes poetry has lifted the embargo that contemporary society placed upon consciousness, synthesizing the past and the future by manipulating the parallelism between convention and innovation - forcing the realization that artistic creation is an individual process of universality.

Catherine DeGraaf is a student of life. Interests in art, literature, and philosophy are developed through studies in English and French. Inspiration is the elation and melancholy of love and passion. Appreciation of experience and the enjoyment of innocent pleasures are one in the same.

Peter F. Essig thanks Dr. Guernsey for tolerating his comments, constructive or otherwise. "7/10ths Synthesis" is a found poem, a composite created from the comments of Dr. Guernsey and Advanced Poetry classmates.

Stephanie Franzen will graduate in the spring of 1994 with a B.A. in English and a creative writing minor. "Wow! My first poem ever to be published!"

Mindy Glaze counts among her interests correctly spelling "DeGraaf."

Jay Harnack - aka "The Flying Carnack" - World Intercontinental WWF Heavyweight Champion, 5'6" 346 lbs, Born on the 4th of July, Nobel Prize Winner in Physics, Blind-in-One-Eye, Olympic Decathlete, Mastermind of the Perot for President Hoax, Suite 202, Statesville Retirement Community, Joliet.

Walt Howard is a senior English major with a creative writing minor. "7-up bottle is a silly little ditty about trying to escape to that divine and copacetic place. Groovy, isn't it?"

Lizabeth Kulka is a History major who is having trouble adjusting to life with her new clock.

Scott Langen is a senior English major who will graduate in December. His immediate plans include: allowing his stomach lining to grow back, continuing to practice Hromadkaiism, and to quit smoking, again.

T. Scott Lanigan is a Math and Philosophy double major who hopes to have a book *More Self-pitying Love Poems By Another Unknown Poet* published someday. He also is presumptuous enough to have an initial for a first name.

Tony Martinez is a third year, twenty year old student. After his first novel becomes a best seller, he intends to move to Colorado to become a cattle rancher. All his poems are written either in St. Louis or Marty's, while trying to find the connection between relationships and alcohol.

Tom McGrath hopes to take over David Hasselhoff's position on Baywatch with the help of best friend Jason Bever. If this doesn't work, he may make a million in poetry. "The Flabby Pilgrim" is dedicated to anyone with the courage to stand apart from the media and think for themselves. "The Dutiful Sons" honors those who, right or wrong, have sought to uphold tradition.

J. Dylan McNeill wrote "Chaos Is..." to relate the experience of intellectual and referential paralyzation, while "Country Slumber" relates the serenity that can be found in nature (away from schooling) - academics can disrupt one's "peace-of-mind."

Jon Montgomery: See Thom Schnarre, minus the PMC and all that poetic crap.

Ann Moutray, a grad student in the English department, is currently exploring Blake's poetry. "I find his works both challenging and inspiring." She is employed full-time at Eastern and resides in Arcola with her family. This is her second poem published in *The Vehicle*.

Thom Schnarre is a grad. ass. and is currently recovering from an active case of the recently-labeled condition, Precocious Mid-life Crisis (PMC), in which either the patient abandons his mundane career and embraces a new discipline, or he wears his mother's dresses and runs a motel (see Bates, Norman).

Dan Trutter is a junior Studio Art major. He listens to violins and has an itch to bathe in milk.

Brian Wheeler calls home the small, rural town of Carlyle. An English major working toward teacher certification, Brian would like to finish one of the many books shoved into the files of his word processor. Favorite writers include Poe, Blake, and Douglas Adams who "tuned him in" to writing.

Traci Williams is a graduating English major. A hopeless romantic, she'd love to travel Europe by motorcycle or move to Cape Cod to write a novel. But bill collectors are not romantics, so she's starting a career in advertising or public relations. 'Untouched' is dedicated to her sisters Alison and Kristen.

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