

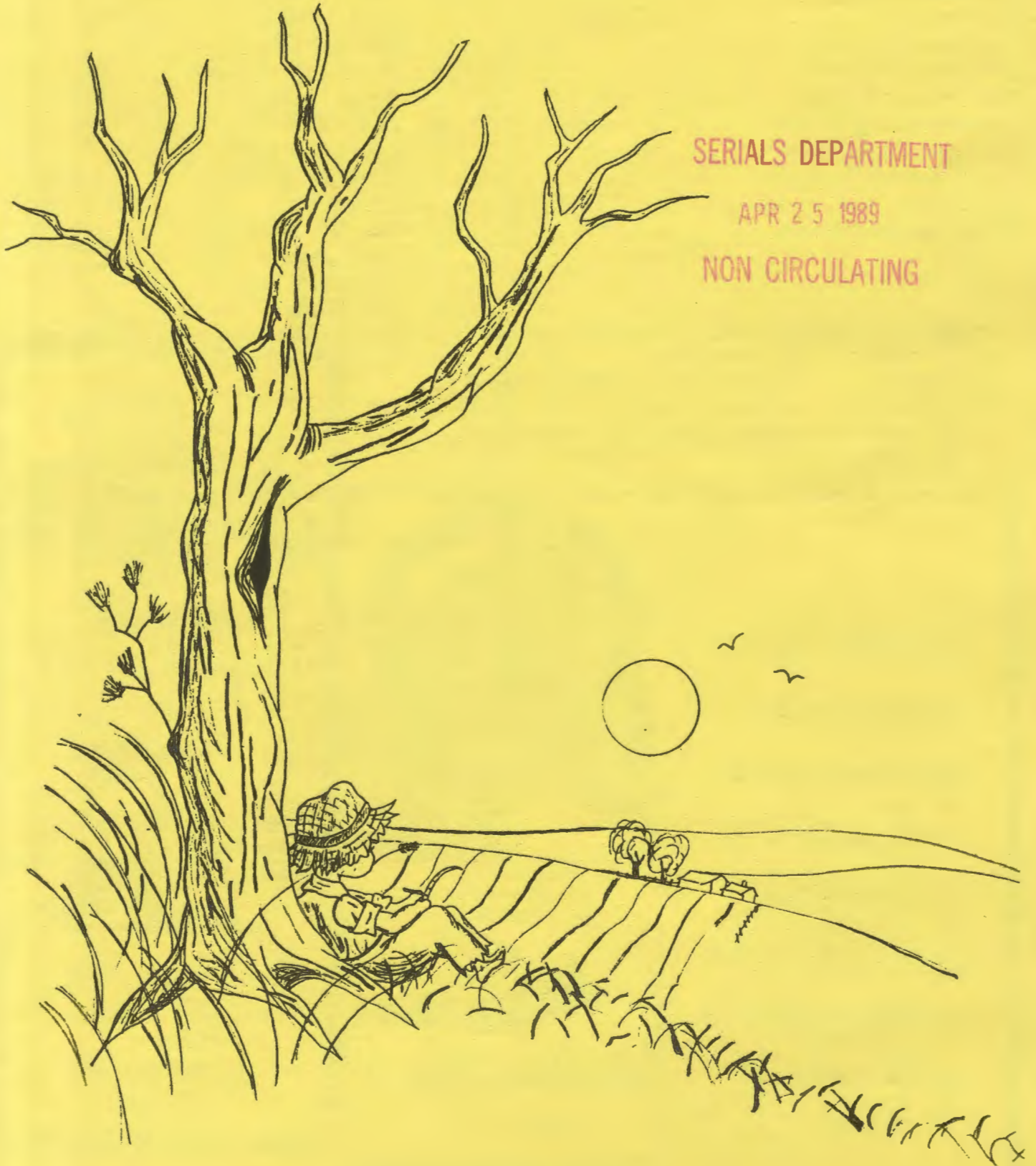
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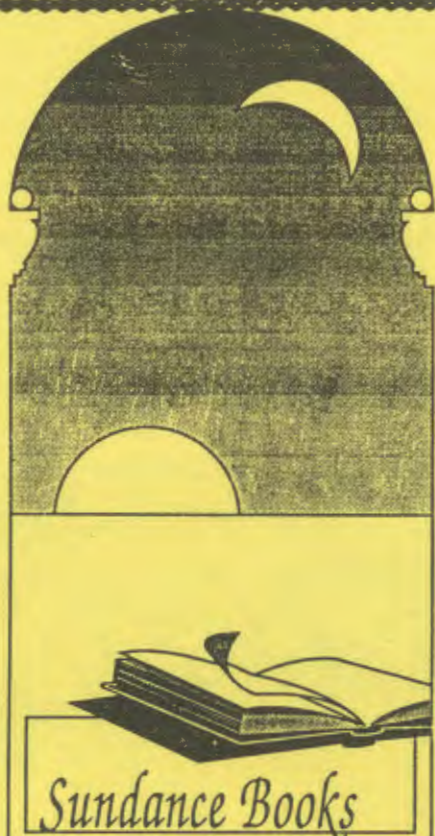


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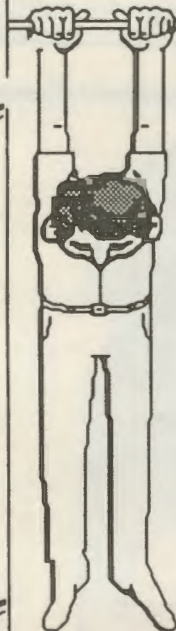
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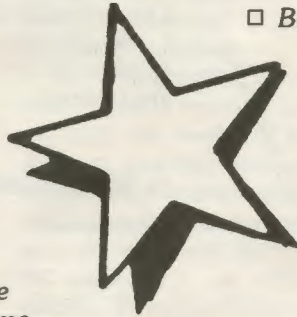
Missing You

*Did you feel me put my arm around you last night?
I wasn't there
But my thoughts which filled the air
Must have been strong enough for you to feel
My gentle hold
As I kneeled
By your bedside last night.
Did you hear me when I said I loved you last night?
I wasn't there
But the sound of my voice must have been clear
Enough to acquire
Knowledge of my every thought,
Every desire
As I laid by your side last night.
Did you feel the love between us as I kissed you last
night?
I wasn't there
But emotions I felt we surely must have shared
For when the morning appeared
All my doubts
And all my fears
Had vanished because I had slept by your side last
night.*



□ *Brenda DiModugno*

*In my dream
you came back to me
When I awoke
I cursed the morning,
then I laughed at the joke
the night had played on me*



*On that cool August night
when I lay beneath you in the field,
I saw a shooting star above your head*

*Each time I see you
I lose my breath,
and my broken heart pounds*

*Just when I think no more words will come tonight,
they creep into my mind like a tired cat,
and purr out of my pen.*

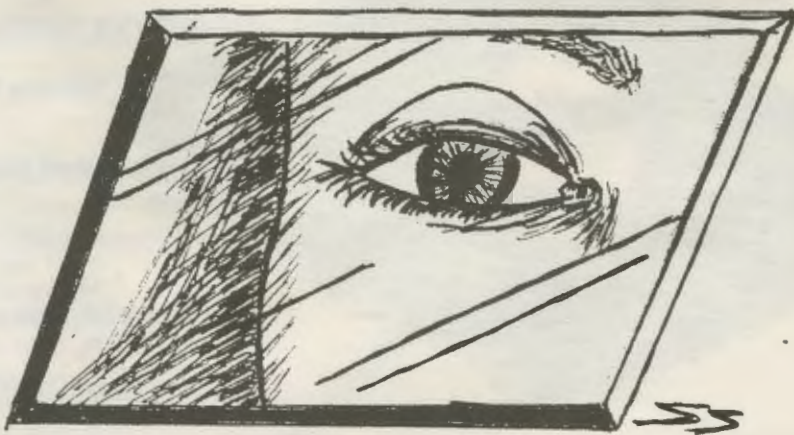


*As we lie in our embrace,
your hands pulling my long hair
remind me of your hold on me*



□ *Trevor Urban*

Reflecting
in the mirror
of the soul
is an image
of me
others know.
The true me
has been
distorted
by criticisms
of self
and my reflection
is only what
I
claim to be.



□ Lynn Ellen McCaffery

I walked through my mirror today;
Into a world of crystal icicles.
I came to the edge of a cliff
And looked out onto a sea of glaciers
So cold and white they blinded me.
I turned around and flames leapt at my feet.
I stepped back and fell onto a bed of jagged rocks.
Unscathed, I stood up and then,
I walked back through the mirror into
Reality.
And it hurt.

frightened
i am so scared
those boys look so mean
they want to hurt me

run
maybe they wont catch--
DADDY!!!
what are they doing
i dont understand

why
wont you look at me anymore
i didnt mean it
wasnt my fault

please
dont hate me i
still love you
still your little girl i
havent changed
you dont understand

□ Janice E. Brill

□ Brenda DiModugno

The Distance Between Sounds

I sprawl in the dark,
closing my eyes to
drift away from the
waking world. I don't
understand the images
I see crawling through
my mind, these manifestations
of my subconsciousness, but
everyone knows that
sleep is just death with
the beating of hearts.

□ John Sweet

Liquor and Literature

Bill Shakespeare was determined to be the best bartender he could be. He moonlighted as a poet and a playwright, but deep in his heart, he knew his calling was dispensing alcoholic beverages, and then soothing the ruffled feathers of those who had overindulged in his tasty concoctions.

Bill worked in a bar called Toper's, the high-class drinking hole in the hamlet of Stratford-on-Avon. The interior was done in English modern, that new style they called "Elizabethan" (very classy); Bill's working uniform also reflected the style and status of his workplace. The costume, so to speak, consisted of a large ruffle around the neck of an otherwise quite simple blouse, puffy sleeves that tapered down at the forearm, and voluminous knickers. Bill tolerated the get-up for the sake of his job.

And how he enjoyed his job! To him, there was nothing like serving the upper crust of the community, the ones with the bread. They fascinated him, and he loved them so much.

They loved him, too; they had given him a nickname: "The Bard". Quite simple, really, just short for "Bartender", but still a sign of affection from these exquisite people.

William's favorite part of his job at Toper's was not mixing and serving drinks (though he did enjoy disposing of the mistakes); he liked calming down the customers who had had too many of the savory spirits. He had favorite stories about riled customers in various stages of intoxication.

One episode that stuck vividly in Bill's mind was the plight of a cleaning lady in love with her master. Her drink of preference that evening was the fuzzy navel, and Bill had served her over a half dozen before he coaxed her to tell him her troubles. She wanted some way to tell her employer of her amorous intentions, yet her gift was for cleanliness, not words. William thought a moment, then scribbled the following lines on a cocktail napkin:

"I am your wife if you will marry me,
If not, I'll die your maid; to be your fellow
You may deny me, but I'll be your servant
Whether you will or no."*

The cleaning lady wobbled off with cocktail napkin in hand, to propose marriage to her employer. Fortunately for her, he was also drunk, and accepted

the offer. In the ensuing ado of wedding preparations, they forgot to invite Bill to the ceremony. The happy couple compensated for this faux pas, however, by hiring him to serve drinks at the reception, and he made quite a good haul in tips.

Another of Bill's favorite stories also involved unhappy love. A gentleman, good-looking by the day's standards, was in love with a woman who, when she was talked about, elicited comments such as, "Oh, but she had a nice personality." This handsome fellow was embarrassed by his lover's lack of beauty. William quoted the following for him over the man's third double vodka:

"My mistress' eyes are nothing like
the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare."*

The man went away feeling a little better, certainly less downtrodden. Incidentally, a descendant of this attractive sir developed plastic surgery for cosmetic purposes.

Not long after that, a woman wandered into Toper's wearing a long face. It seemed her husband had gone on a journey, and had been away for several months. Of course, with the mail being what it is, the poor matron had no way of knowing where her husband was on his expedition, or when he would return. This lover's complaint was well founded, and Bill took interest in the melancholy plight. She inhaled seven or eight martinis (Bill made very good martinis). After the fifth she slurred her words. After the seventh, she could not find any. Bill, at a loss, supplied them for her:

"O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art
thou, Romeo?
O, for a falconer's voice
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!"*

Romeo didn't come home for another six months, during which time his wife had an affair with the stable-boy and divorced poor Romeo upon his return. But Bill liked the lines, and later put them in a play where he felt they were done justice, rather than cheapened by reality.

Bill was, though, especially proud of the young gentleman who was very near to suicide when he came into Toper's. He couldn't have been over the legal drinking age (but Bill would have served him anyway; the pitiable knave was so forlorn, he really looked in need of a stiff drink).

He (the young man, not William) was not an experienced drinker. He intended to become intoxicated on beer; flaxen, frigid and frothy. Bill convinced him that if a state of drunkenness was his goal, hard liquor would accomplish the ends much more quickly with less need of urination. The young man consented, and Bill set about creating a boisterous, stinking drunk.

Now, it seemed that he (the young man, not William) had been the victim of quite a bit of bad luck. His father had died of an infected cyst in the left ear canal. His mother, convinced she would never find love and would have to settle for the next best thing, sold herself into prostitution. His flock of sheep had grazed in a field recently dusted with DDT. And to top it all off, two gentlemen visiting from Verona, unaware of the English traffic laws, trampled the poor fellow's dog. Needless to say, this pitiful young kid was debating whether sunrises and the smell of freshly cut lawns would make up for all of the strife. This sorry youth schemed to become besotted, (with Bill's help), and cast himself off a nearby bridge to the tempestuous river below.

However, the indecisive youth was wondering if he were not making much ado about nothing; he theorized that he may have a godparent or some other benefactor out in the world that could solve everything; allowing the youth his sunrises and olfactory treat of newly mown grass.

This lad's predicament gave Bill his biggest challenge to date; he had to come up with a truly eloquent speech, befitting the era, about suicide.

By this point, our unstable friend was becoming a disturbance to the other customers, proving to all that he was indeed new to drinking and unstable of stomach.

Bill, always the articulate, had an inspiration. He vaulted to the bar, bottle of whiskey in one hand, ice bucket in the other, and began his piece de resistance:

(continued on page 20)

Mirage

Black man stands on the pavement alone
Shirt untucked, face unknown,
Walks over to the wall, leans against the stone

Feels the pressing passage of the subway car
As he picks up his saxophone...

Shuffling his feet to the soft
Kicking tune, a friend stops by,
A mother stops her child to enjoy
The music, two young boys clap
Out the rhythm and a young girl
Giggles, driver beeps, and the
Saxophone pumps out a tune that
Neighbors smile at and know who
Created.

Black man slumps against the stone
Stares at the pavement all alone.

□ Alan Rissberger

Photographer

You...photographer.
do you see?
can you?

Watching the world through your glass
you only observe, you never ask.
Freeze the instant and put it away,
you're here and there, but you never stay.
See the bodies, the flames, the gun,
the flowers, and sky, and sea,
but mostly the people, young and old
silently pleading "take a picture of me".
You "capture the moment"
make it last for a thousand years,
does it matter to you? I wonder,
when I look in your lens,
I see no tears.

For you

The moon, silver soft,
rides high in the night blackness
unmoved by cold winds

□ Trevor Urban

THE DINER: PART II

Silently, she seeks him in the dark shadows
that surround the diner. The ice cold rain
penetrates her skin, piercing her to awareness.
She falters. She is beginning to see, somewhere
in the mist, his vision.

He awaits. He knew she would venture forth,
sacrificing herself to his artificial gods,
hoping to find freedom. He wishes he were
stronger, that he could lead her through the
night, but somewhere in the mist he blindly
waits. He is paralyzed.

She feels him accost her senses, slowly moving
forward as a rush of icy air fills her. She
feels as if she is intruding. The darkness
that surrounds her, cloaking her in his shadows,
is so alien to her. She is enveloped.

He sees her hypnotized, approaching on quiet
feet through the icy darkness to save her.
He suddenly stands before her, within reach,
yet unable to extend himself to her. He cannot
surrender as her sensuality cannot save her.

She gasps. She secretly relishes in his
nearness yet despises him for his inability
to complete the gesture. Her pride is
insurmountable. She gazes deeply into hollow
orbs. She draws life.

He opens, then closing around her he silences
the distance that separates them into two
individual revolutionaries. They become
slowly one. They cling.

Yet, she knows she is not a part of his world.
She knows her brightness only burns him as
he sees the darkness of himself swallow her.
She desperately pulls away, returning to
the warmth of the diner, leaving him staring
after her into the ice cold rain, anguished.

□ Susan Inneo



Contemplation

*A crimson rose grows singly through
cracked pavement*

*As an unending beam of light from
above strikes its silken petals and
thorned stem.*

*I become suspended in this beam of
radiance and it is comforting, reassuring.
Its warmth consols and pacifies my
anxieties.*

*I am later released from the comfort
of the suspension and am forced to
descend to the reality of the cracked
pavement.*

*The same rose is now black and
fragile and rests motionlessly on the
cracked pavement,
its crumbled, fragmented petals
drift effortlessly in the wind.*

□ Sheila Santangelo



Soul Soup

*If I could ever find my soul
Inside a silver ladle that
was made for spooning soup,
I'd think my life well-seasoned
And perhaps
I'd add some sugar to the mess*

□ Sarah Ruth Pagano

To Each His Own

*From the moment we opened our eyes...
The genesis of a mystery.
Life...indefinable and bizarre...
Brings us all an unique aura.
We feel time move so quickly,
Despite its slow motion of hands.
Living - both heaven and hell --
We are existing elsewhere.
And do we ever catch ourselves --
Looking for silver... when we have gold?
Or always feeling the rain,
But overlooking the rainbow?
And in sleep -- our dreams seem so unrealistic;
Yet, we never seem to question
The authenticity of a nightmare.
Self-torment becomes a way of life.
Finding no reason to go on...
We search in all the wrong places.
Though if we are ever a slave to our doubts,
We are soon unchained by self-esteem.
Our thirst for adventure --
Becomes quenched by our curiosity.
This game of life that we all must play --
Is never fun without a gamble.
Life... to each his own.*

□ Jeanne-Marie Fuchila

I'm going through some rough times now
Don't know why--but lately the clouds
have set in-

And the rain has begun to pour.
This should be a happy time-
The end of an era--the beginning of
life.

But what am I? Depressed.
I feel that no one understands-
or at least no one wants to hear.

So I try to push my thoughts on one
person, hoping they'll listen.
Someone I want to be a friend-
a good one.

Because I need one now.

But I'm afraid.

I'm afraid my persistence will
drive away a friendship yet to
blossom.

I want something so badly I'm allowing
my desire to govern emotions
and actions.

Friends don't start that way.
But combined with the falling rain and
torment-

I find it difficult to reason and
separate my thoughts and
activities into anything stable.

I keep pressing--even though I'm
threatened with my own insecurity.
Because I want someone to understand.
And to tell me everything will be alright.

So when the rain stops and the clouds
disappear-

I hope not to have lost you in the storm.
I hope you still believe-
And still care.

With an open heart and mind.

And a feeling of compassion and love.

For the sun will soon begin to shine.

□ Catherine V. Van Cook

"Life's A Finite Thing"

I live my life from day to day
And say "what's done is done,"
Yet today seems an eternity
From tomorrows still to come.

The world can give a warm embrace
Or inflict a painful sting.
I cannot grasp "forever"
For life's a finite thing.

I doubt my life will stagnate
At a point of endless bliss.
I fear my lips will not be touched
By the sweet of Fortune's kiss.

I long to have a timeless flight
Upon the dove's pure wing.
I cannot grasp "forever"
For life's a finite thing.

The day precedes the night, you see,
And warmth is trailed by chill.
The joys of life's stabilities
Are but a moment's thrill.

The quest for contentment--
Obsession of fling?
I cannot grasp "forever"
For life's a finite thing.

□ Cary Capurso

In a darkened room
Thoughts
Spin, weave, whirl.
Confusion
Reigns,
Thoughts
Touch break part.
A crack.
Thoughts
Meet, form, mix.
Knowledge
Comes.
Thoughts
Solid, certain, clear.
An enlightened room.

□ Chris Quader

Lisa Marie

She sat atop a throne of gold.

*And there she sang perfect renditions
of sharp blues
in turquoise
and royal midnight
splashed with lavender seasonings.*

*But our ears were not open enough to hear what
we listened to.*

*And there she danced gracefully
unmistakingly performing
violet moves
hinting of sunflower yellow.*

*But we were not patient enough to notice her
intricacy.*

*And there she painted a masterpiece
of bright reds
forest greens
and orange hues.*

*But our eyes were not wide enough to see her
portrait as more than just canvas.*

*And now that we can hear
and we've grown to rest
and our eyes have expanded*

...her song has been carried away in the wind

...her dance has been left to the bellowing grass

*...and her painting has been washed away
from too many
too late
wasted tears.*

□ Ann Margaret Carney



Inside a Mask

*Laughing like children with no
fear of flying, we kneel by the
edge of the highway in our
uniforms, digging in the coarse
dirt with our plastic spoons.*

*Cars whizz by, inches from our
crouched bodies, but we remain
invisible by sheer force of will.*

*Our make-up has been cut to
pieces by the sweat of our
labors, but we continue on, heedless
of fires burning on the
other side of the highway.*

*We reach China sometime after
midnight, and sweet music pours
up, there being no vehicles this
late at night to drown it out.*

*Howling like a child deprived of
food, you lie in the road,
legs crushed by a truck
travelling at the speed of light.*

*You scream for me to help
as I view the bloody remains of your
body, but I can't hear you.*

*Indifferently, I turn my back
to your screams and resume
with the work at hand.*

□ John Sweet

The All-Nighter

"Ahhhhh! Three finals, a term paper, and a four hundred page novel to be done for tomorrow. Looks like it's gonna be an all-nighter." Yes, that is the frantic scream of college students everywhere as they experience the peak of procrastination. Like a mountain lion closing in on its prey, the realization of deadlines slowly creeps into the minds of students oblivious to their impending danger. Without warning, it attacks with sadistic enjoyment as the panic-stricken victim struggles against its merciless grip. As the pressure mounts, more and more students turn to the popular all-nighter as a hopeful escape from the life-threatening situation.

Having existed for decades, the all-nighter has often been referred to as the procrastinator's way out, yet it is not just a late study night. It is a ceremony mixed with intricate rituals. The theory behind the all-nighter states that the best way to survive the night is through community support. Upon recognition that the victim proceeds to notify all his friends about the ordeal which is about to take place. All of them eagerly appear at the student's home with high aspirations of completing all their assignments in the next few hours. Once everyone has arrived at the house of the sufferer, the night begins with everyone working on whatever is due the next day. After a couple of minutes of serious concentration have passed, the participants engage in intellectual conversations about anything from the gravitational pull while on a roller coaster to what life would be like without hot dogs. After all, it is best to edge into serious work gradually; plunging into

the icy depths of mind-numbing work would be useless and hazardous to one's health unless, of course, one belongs to the intellectuals' Polar Bear Club.

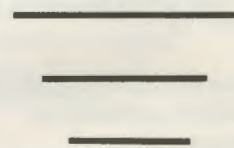
As the night rolls on, soda cans turn to coffee mugs as the victims begin to feel the effects of sleep deprivation. A desperate call for pizza is made as the participants cling to the belief that if the mouth continues to move, the eyes will remain open. A war cry is heard in every student as the battle of mind over matter begins. Heads droop over notebooks and pens fall from relaxed hands as the students fall into a deep sleep only to be awakened by a snoring companion.

The feeling of optimism that prevailed among the students early in the night is now taken over by a feeling of hopelessness as the moon continues to lower in the black sky. Overwhelmed by work, students begin to feel as though they are slowly being swallowed up by a quicksand of deadlines, doomed for a painful yet slow death. Miraculously, as the morning sun creeps above the horizon, the last letter of a term paper is typed, the final page of notes is read, and the end of the novel is reached.

The traditional ceremony is not officially over, however, until the next day when all the deadlines are met. The aftermath of the all-nighter is the most glorious moment for bleary-eyed victims to experience, for it is proof that they can survive extreme bodily torment. Once that test is finished and that research project is proudly handed in, the students immediately head for their beds. The moment before they are about to fall into a deep slumber,

they swear to themselves that they will never pull an all-nighter again. Just then the eye lids fly open. A lab report and a written debate are due this week! Ah, that can be done later, the students think as they are taken over by sleep. They lie vulnerable on their beds innocently dreaming about sunbathing on the California beaches. Meanwhile, silently in the distance, the mountain lion grins, anxiously waiting for its moment to attack once again.

□ Carolyn A. Campbell



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Lend Me

*If ever your stars just melt away
And streak the sky as fallen tears
...Lend me your sky...
And I will fill it with diamonds
That glisten forever.*

*If ever your nightmares seem to douse
The magical fire of a dream
...Lend me your fears...
And I will leave you with the comfort
Of a childhood teddybear.*

*If ever your happiness has left your life
The way uniqueness has abandoned a snowflake
That has experienced warm skin
...Lend me your soul...
So I may set it free to dance forever
Like a snowflake that refuses to die.*

*If ever your love has lost its way home
To the precious lair
...Lend me your heart...
So I may somehow work together its shattered
Pieces of glass and replenish it with gold.*

*And if ever all you are is forgotten --
Because of what you try to be
...Borrow My Eyes...
And you will never be so satisfied.*

□ Jeanne-Marie Fuchila



Sound It Out

*saxophone breathes
a wavering melody
whispering its
sadness in shallow
breaths, a billowing
rhapsody of lost hopes
and dreams...
piano drifts in
light and bouncing
now playing its low tune softly,
toying with hurt and grief,
now building it, thrashing
with anger...*

*saxophone screeches
holds its high note
piano begins a lively melody
a living, breathing,
foot-tapping song
banging its high and low
keys to a heart-racing song
saxophone wails, screams
out its happiness
emotions are alive
piano plays harder, faster
saxophone puffs its blaring
noise in ecstasy, shouting
piano bangs harder, faster,
high and low,
higher and lower,
heart and piano pounding in unison
pound, pound, pound
screech I just wanna shout
trail off in joy...*

□ Alan Rissberger

The Beach Ball

I was talking
to a medium-sized
plastic beach ball-
a bright, colorful
conversation.

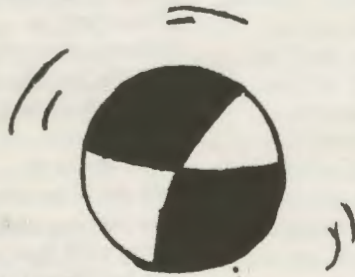
"How are you?"
I queried
He responded,
"Blue."
(I learned
he got a "D"
in
Contemporary Bio.).

I volunteered
the information
that I'd gotten
an "A."
The green hint
of jealousy
paraded across
his face.

□ Kimberly Eagen

To change
the touchy topic
I remarked
about the rumor
I'd heard
that he had
a date
this Saturday.
He turned his head
and blushed
an embarrassed
scarlet.

Now
with his mind
set on Saturday
the beach ball
smiled at me
and his mood
turned
bright
and
sunny.



Laughter

Is it a giggle
which makes you wiggle
onto the floor?
Maybe you snicker
quicker and quicker
until you roar.
Perhaps it is mirth
increasing your girth,
to then explode.
And when tickled pink
are you on the brink
set to unload?
Nothing of the sort;
oh, you like to snort,
even chortle.
Idle chitter chat?
Is it laughter that
makes us mortal?

□ M. W.

Day Dreaming

My mind left me awhile ago;
it's off in space somewhere.
Something more appealing
must have drawn its interest there.

Yet, it is embarrassing
(I did not do my best)
'cause Mrs. Jones collected
my blank Social Studies test.

□ Shelli L. Stiverson

Samuel McGue

When I was a little boy,
I used to put pennies onto the track -
Me and my cousin, Carrie.

We'd hear the engineer -
tootin' his whistle,
To proclaim his presence to passers-by.

Me and my cousin,
we'd run like hell outa the living room

"Bye, Grandma" - we used to scream,
while bolting out the door

By the time we were on the dirt road,
she'd yell back, "Be careful, you two."

We'd sprint down the dirt road,
with tape and pennies in our hand -
giggling like we were maniacs.

When we reached the tracks,
we had to be fast -
whipping out the woven tape and
wrapping the penny on

Then we'd get the hell outa there -
to let the train do its work.

Me and my cousin -
we did have great times.

□ Stuart Montgomery

Blackie

The car crawled slowly along the dirt road as the passengers peered eagerly out the window at the seemingly endless vista of field upon field of corn, wheat, and green beans. Somewhere in this endless landscape of farmland there was a house with a barn that was their destination. The little boy in the back seat could not take in the sights fast enough. It was all so new and exciting to him even though he had seen it all many times before.

"When will we get there?" he asked perhaps for the hundredth time.

"We will be there soon," replied the mother.

"I can't wait to see Blackie," the boy exclaimed excitedly. "Blackie will still be there, won't he Mama?"

"Blackie will be there," she reassured him.

The car rounded a bend, coming within sight of a white farmhouse next to which stood a red barn.

"There's Grandpa's house!" the boy exclaimed excitedly.

As the car's tires crunched over the driveway, a figure rushed down the stairs to meet the visitors. The car had barely come to a stop when Frankie clambered out to meet his grandfather. Grandpa caught his grandson in his arms, crushing him in a bear hug. A large black dog bounded out of the house barking a welcome. Frankie extracted himself from his grandfather's arms and buried his face in Blackie's fur.

"Did ya miss me, Blackie?" Blackie answered with wet slobbery licks of joy. Meanwhile, his grandpa welcomed his son and daughter-in-law.

"Dad are you sure you don't mind watching Frankie for a few weeks? We wouldn't want to impose," asked the father. It was a rhetorical question. They knew how much he loved having his grandson over. Frankie's bags were unloaded, and after a few minutes of "farewells" and "be goods" his parents left in a cloud of dust.

The little boy looked up at his grandfather as if to say, what now?

"What do you say we go in and say hello to Grandma? She's been baking your favorite oatmeal cookies, and I bet they're all ready to eat by now," He need not have asked, the look on Frankie's face was answer enough. After welcoming hugs and kisses from Grandma, he was seated

at the table with a plate of cookies and a glass of milk. Blackie sat next to his chair, staring up at him beseechingly. An occasional piece of cookie was slipped to him; Grandpa winked and smiled, telling him it was alright that he fed Blackie at the table.

At bedtime, Blackie settled himself on a rug next to Frankie's bed. Frankie's hand dangled down on his head as Frankie listened to Grandpa's bedtime stories. When the lights were out, his head was swimming with tales of elves and little creatures living under rocks.

A week passed in blissful laziness. Grandpa took Frankie fishing and swimming in the nearby stream. Grandma gave him small chores to do in the garden, and cooked his favorite treats. When he wasn't busy with his grandparents, he was exploring with Blackie. Together they slew dragons, ambushed Indians, and searched for hidden treasure.

Dark clouds threatened to spill their contents as Frankie finished picking lettuce in the garden. The house was empty when he entered, so he set the bowl on the kitchen counter. He wandered into the living room where he met his grandmother just coming in the front door. He could tell by the look on her face that something was wrong.

"Frankie, would you please go to your room. Grandpa will be up in a minute," she said. He could tell by the look on her face that this was no time to ask questions.

A few minutes later Grandpa was sitting on the bed with Frankie on his knee. A crash of thunder vibrated through the house, and a bright flash of lightning lit Grandpa's wrinkled face.

"Frankie, there are times in life when things happen that we wish we could change. We may cry, and that's okay. We can cry if it is something that was special to us."

"What happened Grandpa?"

"Blackie was playing in the cornfield while you were in the garden. The farmer who owns the field was tilling and didn't see Blackie until it was too late. There was nothing we could do for Blackie."

Tears welled in Frankie's eyes and came tumbling down his cheeks.

"B-Blackie is d-dead?" Frankie sobbed in disbelief. His eyes pleaded with Grandpa to deny it.

"Yes, Frankie, he is," he replied gently.

Frankie buried his face in his grandfather's shoulder, the tears running down his face like a river. In his mind he pictured Blackie: the inquisitive brown eyes that always followed him wherever he went, the nose that twitched as it sniffed for whatever treats he might have in his hand, and tail that wagged happily when he got back from shopping with Grandma.

"I want Blackie," cried Frankie.

"I know you do. We all want Blackie, but we can't get him back."

"Why did he have to get killed? I loved him!"

"I know you did. I loved Blackie very much too," Grandpa held Frankie in his arms as he cried. Outside the rain fell, against the windows as if it shared their sorrow. Finally, Frankie lifted his tear-stained face from his grandfather's shoulder.

"Did Blackie go to Heaven?" he asked.

"I'm sure Blackie went to Heaven, he was a good dog," Grandpa answered. "Now why don't we go down and see if we can cheer up Grandma?"

Frankie wiped his face with his sleeve and nodded his head. He slipped his little hand into his grandfather's big warm one, and together they went downstairs.

□ Lisa Kimel





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And She Loved Him...

The smile on her face
(hid a broken
stripped
shattered
crippled
shredded heart)
shone like the sun - revealing only feelings of
(despair
frustration
misery
agony
confusion
why why why)
happiness and delight, from a Love that
(was suddenly
maliciously
violently seized
stolen
ripped
torn away by alien hands)
tenderly caressed and made her heart
(SCREAM
Cry
moan
whimper...)
Sing with Joy.
How She Loved Him.
(oh...how she loved him...)

□ WendyLynne Weber

Why do I continue to gaze at the seas?
Is it to bring back the depth of your eyes?
Why do I watch the flight of a butterfly?
Is it to remind me of your goodbye?
Why do I listen to the wind on lonely nights - to
become mollified?
For in the wind I hear the sound of your beautiful
calm sighs.
Why do I listen to the clock until it sounds like the
buzzing of a fly?
Is it only to call to mind your heart - beating softly
like a lullaby.
Why do I shed more drops of sorrow than fields of
flowers after a deluge from the sky?
How can this be justified?
Why do I sit and watch the sun creep up from the
mountainside?
Is it to remind me of the fire I once saw in your
eyes?
And why do I continue to feel them?
Your gentle lips covering mine.
Why do I continue living?
To every day die a thousand times?

□ Brenda DiModugno

Familiar Strangers

"I know you," you assure me.
Meaning to comfort me, you say this.
It would, I think, be best if we were strange
to one another;
translucent shadows
touched only at the edges
by lamplight.
And so, when next we meet,
you will be a blind man
with a passion for sunsets
and history books;
I, a deaf child, living in a cardboard box
and endlessly awaiting
the cry of a bird.

□ Allison M. Hastings

Mourner's Song (for Dorothy)

I close my eyes.
I remember.
Every single moment we were together all at
once.
Images flicker.

I can see you.

I can see your face.

You are happy and I am sad and your hands
move to touch me I make them touch me I want
them to touch me.

But when they do, I feel nothing.

Emptiness comes.

Images stop.

Darkness?

: this is how I know you are gone.

□ L.E. Platt



The Time of the Shades

There's a chill in the air as the sun slowly
fades
Be warned, beware, tis' the time of the shades.
The leaves rustle past on bodies of air
To places of darkness -- to places not there.

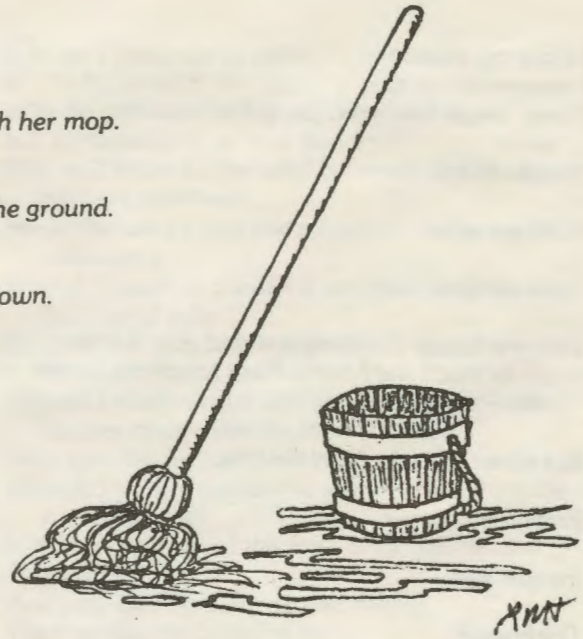
The moon glows bright on the dreadful night,
While clouds move in to hide it from sight.
The trees reach out with twisted limbs,
Acting upon their own ghoulish whims.
Shadows rise from earthy graves,
It's the warmth of the living that they crave.
While still darker things crawl up from below,
Seeking out life with eyes that glow.
From his perch an owl looks upon the earth
And spies these forms of evil birth.
Spreading its wings he cries in the night
And escapes to the sky in frantic flight.

"Stay inside don't venture out!"
The howling winds seem to shout.
For tonight is the night in which goodness fades
And cometh again tis' the time of the shades.

□ John C. Jaeger

Michael McGee
 climbed a tree
 until he got up to the top.
 Bill, his brother,
 told their mother
 who promptly came out with her mop.
 She yelled and screamed
 nearly split at the seams
 'til Michael came down to the ground.
 See, Michael McGee's
 not allowed to climb trees
 and now he can't even sit down.

□ Shelli L. Stiverson



Contemplation of Myself

My mind is numb futility
 in Reason which is reasonless
 And I can't find a resting place
 where I and my companion selves
 Can sit alone

I look at this insane rough world
 of Mud and Concrete:
 I'd rather be within that air
 where honeysuckle makes the walls
 And daffodils are cups for tea

Impotent Wishes!
 Wishing only tempts me into darkness
 Where everything is palewashed grey
 And shadows move hysterically
 Whispering gibberish

Sleep makes a lovely bedfellow, but
 Such lethargy is murderous
 Crushing upward movement and
 Stifling intelligence
 So from contemplation comes a
 reasoning forgetfulness
 And I plod upon concrete again
 and wish I had daffodil
 and perhaps some tea

□ Sarah Ruth Pagano

Bon Appetit

This scene I wasn't supposed to see - my fault,
 arriving unannounced.
 Rushing to leave, I can't help but glance at the
 cosy kitchen wonderland.
 You prepare dinner, an expression of love,
 as she looks on - reeking of contentment
 The silver gleams in anticipation, the plates
 smile knowingly.
 Tonight they will be forgotten, unwashed,
 on the table.
 The meal is but a lyrical prelude to love.
 My presence is as inappropriate as a lewd joke
 punctuated by a belch;
 so I go,
 unable to look at you
 or utter a word.
 Snow pelted my face on the way home.
 and I pictured you lighting candles,
 as part of a lyrical prelude to love.
 Last week I crawled atop you,
 to pump some of my life
 through your stagnant blood.
 You said nothing.
 There had been no prelude.
 Though afterward, I staggered to the kitchen,
 burrowed through the fridge,
 and took a decisive chomp
 out of a well-deserved
 pickle.

□ Allison M. Hastings



Race

Palms sweating, heart racing,
I step up to the block.
The starter calls, "Take your mark,"
and my stomach flips over.
(oh man, i'm really gonna blow it)

The gun goes off
with a sharp bang
that echoes through the air.
I bring my head up, look toward my destination,
and sail out over the water.
I hit and surface, all in one motion.
(we are talkin' cold here people)

I cut through the water
cleanly and swiftly
pulling ahead
out-distancing the others.
(oh no here comes the turn)

I go into my flip-turn and
get two lungfuls for
my trouble.
(i'm gonna die)

A hand upon my shoulder
startles me from
my thoughts.
In Coach's smile
I see the pride
and confidence
he has in me,
but this is no comfort
as...

Palms sweating, hearts racing,
I step up to the block.

□ B.L. Hackett

Last Will

What a glorious evening to spend
As snowflakes danced and curled
Together with a friend
Out to conquer the world

We stretched out our calves
We tightened our skis
Nervously we laughed
Sitting knee by knee

The ski lift took us higher
Over trails and trees
My throat felt a little drier
As I saw what lay before me

The name of the slope was **LAST WILL**
It loomed menacingly in the sky
As I looked up and down the hill
I teasingly asked: "Aren't we too young to die?"

The lift arrived at the top
We slid off one by one
I looked out over the drop
Could this slope be done?

"Let's go!" I cried
Leaping over the top
My body would now be tried
Because there was no way I could stop!

The snow rushed at my legs
The wind whipped my ears
My breath came in dregs
My eyes filled with tears

The bumps came rushing at me
I fought them one by one
I rode them with my knees
All my muscles tightly wrung

It was mountain vs. Diana
And now the incline began to ease
I began to feel sort of nirvana
As gradually I reduced my speed

We caught our breath for a while
My friend wiping ice off her chin
We both began to smile
And headed up the lift again.

□ Diana C. Wolf

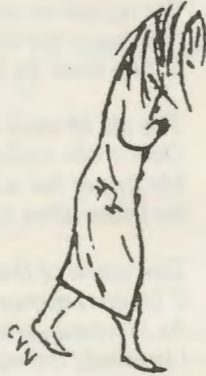
Summer Daze

*the footprints remain
embedded in the glistening sand
as a reminder of where I've been
with you.*

*the ocean ebbs
creeping, drifting into the forgotten
fading pictures
yellowing and erasing the permanent
secrets.*

*the waves crash
thunderous applause
knowing that I am better off
without the memories.*

□ Ann M. Carney



(continued from page 5)

"To be or not to be; that is the question;
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take up arms against a sea of
troubles,
And by opposing end them.
Thus conscience does make cowards
us all."*

This lovely tirade brought the house to its feet, eliciting an ovation like the tavern had never heard before, nor would hear again.

Soon after the young man's uncle came to help him pick out a new flock of sheep, William was fired from Toper's for his melodramatics and bad habit of dipping into the stock. This incident, along with a writers' strike occurring at the same time, precipitated Bill's career change and subsequent fame as a poet and a playwright. (Ironically, his nickname of "The Bard" stuck through the years, and is how William is often referred to in literary circles to this day.)

Toper's went bankrupted.

□ Heidi C. Beehler

*quotes from various works by William Shakespeare.

Haiku I

*On the day you died,
leaves fell one by one, and I
could not make them stop*

□ L.E. Platt



Autumn

*The colored leaves beneath my feet remind
My eyes of other Autumn days. I see
Them scatter as I walk, and look behind
To thoughts of days when you and I were free.
These days are new, as you were once to me.
The dappled path of leaves is now like you;
A beauty in my life seen truthfully.
Our words were strong; our promises were true.
The leaves are swept away, and we were too.
The wind is cold against the season's red
And orange. I think of how we changed and grew;
How change's wind instills in me this dread.
Though Autumn leaves with winter will be gone
Their colors live each morning with the dawn.*

□ Krystal Jensen

While i sleep

*While i sleep, a child is born.
He is new, and his mother holds him carefully,
As if not to break him.
She feeds him and cares for him diligently,
A mother with her new child.*

*While i sleep, a mother dies.
She is old, and her son holds her carefully,
As if not to break her.
He feeds her and cares for her diligently,
A son with his old mother.*

*In the morning, i awaken,
Unaware that anything happened.
To me, it was just another night.*

□ Heidi C. Beehler

*As I walk about
among life and youth,
I am invisible.
I gaze out from my mind
like a prisoner from a tower.
My prison is not stone walls
and steel gates,
but different.
Eyes that have cried, lips that have kissed,
hands that have touched,
bound by memories of the past.
I look out from behind dark lenses,
foolishly hoping,
as you, my jailer, walk by,
bloody keys dangling in my sight*

*You casually hand it to me to hold.
In my hands it is just a thing
laquered wood and tight stretched string.
When you hold it, it is transformed
by some magic within you and becomes music.
As you play, I fall in love with you again
and I remember gentle nights with you,
whispers in the dark.
But your songs and your voice haunt me
with memories of goodbye and loneliness.
and I wonder...
need the memories haunt me again?*

*I climbed a hill
to see the sunset.
But when I got to the top,
the earth had swallowed the sun*

□ Trevor Urban



Taper

*Taut taper tucked as
Fierce flame flickers and
Black smoke bickers with air.*

*Borrowed brightness burns
as yearning youth years
gather to form, flowing wax tears.*

□ Tom VanDeWater

AMV

Joey: When are you coming home?
Alex: Listen, Joey, can you stop pestering me with questions?
Joey: Mom said you're coming home soon.
Alex: I'm not coming home.
Joey: What's wrong with you?
Alex: Nothing.
Joey: Then why are you here? Why won't you come home?
Alex: I can't come home. They won't let me leave.
Joey: Mom said you can leave. She said your doctor is lying. She said...
Alex: Screw Mom! The doctor's not lying! I'm very sick.
Joey: What's wrong with you?
Alex: I'm sick, that's all.
Joey: Mom doesn't think you're sick.
Alex: Mom doesn't know any better.
Joey: Why don't you like Mommy?
Alex: I like her.
Joey: Why did you leave?
Alex: Shut up!
Joey: Mommy said you were sick and that's why you left and when you came back you wouldn't be sick anymore, and you came back so you can't be sick anymore.
Alex: Mommy lied.
Joey: She doesn't lie! You lie. You're a liar. I hate you! Mommy was crying before. She thinks you're gonna die.
Alex: She told you that?
Joey: No, I was listening. I wasn't supposed to, but I did. You guys think just because I'm little I don't know things. I'm not stupid you know.
Alex: No, you're not stupid.
Joey: I'm not. I know a lot of things. And if you're going to die I want to know that too.
Alex: Why?
Joey: Because nobody told me that Daddy was gonna die, and I didn't get to tell him things. Things like I love you, Daddy. I love you, Alex.
Alex: Tell him now.
Joey: What?
Alex: He's right over there. You said you wanted to tell Daddy you loved him. Now's your chance.
Joey: Where?
Alex: Say it, damn it! Oh. He's gone now.

Joey: Stop it, Alex.
Alex: Daddy killed himself you know.
Joey: Stop it!
Alex: He said he couldn't handle it anymore. I hate him.
Joey: You do not!
Alex: Yes, I do.
Joey: When you were younger you didn't hate Daddy. You said you wanted to grow up to be just like him.
Alex: I did. I killed myself, too.
Joey: You're not dead, Alex.
Alex: I'm very tired Joey, can you leave now?
Joey: Alex, you're not dead. You're not, you know. Mommy said that you're not dead.
Alex: Mommy said I was going to be dead, didn't she?
Joey: She didn't know. She doesn't see that you're not dead yet.
Alex: You should be more like Mommy.
Joey: But I love you and I missed you when you were gone and you can't just come back to die.
Alex: I didn't.
Joey: What happened?
Alex: I got sick.
Joey: What's wrong with you? Can't you get better?
Alex: No.
Joey: Why? What's wrong with you? Alex?
Alex: Yeah?
Joey: Are you a drug addict? I didn't mean to hear, but I did. I heard Mommy talking, and I heard her say it, and all the time she was crying and stuff.
Alex: No.
Joey: No? But Mommy...
Alex: So, I took some drugs. I'm not a drug addict.
Joey: If you are you can get off them, you know. I can help you. We can sit around and play checkers and you won't need any more drugs.
Alex: Thanks, Joey.
Joey: Why do you take drugs?
Alex: I stopped! I stopped taking drugs, and I came home. I hated Daddy and I was scared, so I left. I took drugs. I stopped. I came home.
Joey: But...well, then why are you here? Why can't you come home?

Alex: I didn't stop soon enough.
Joey: So, you can get better. The doctors can help.
Alex: Can you turn the T.V. on?
Joey: What channel?
Alex: I don't know.
Joey: What show?
Alex: I'm really tired. Can you please go now?
Joey: Why won't you tell me? I'm not stupid you know. I got a 98 on my math test today. I would have gotten a 100, but I forgot how to do something. But, that doesn't mean I'm stupid, you know.
Alex: I know. But I'm really very tired.
Joey: But how long could it take you to tell me?
Alex: You know how you share things with your friends sometimes?
Joey: Yeah.
Alex: Well, when I took drugs, I shared them with my friends. Then I got sick.
Joey: What happened?
Alex: I got A.I.D.S.
Joey: What's that?
Alex: Ask Mommy.

□ Terri Girardi



Love

"Where have you been?!" she asks as he slumps through the door. She smells his breath for alcohol and his shirt for perfume as he barges past her.

"You've been drinking again, haven't you?!" she nearly shouts.

He opens the refrigerator and peers into it, ignoring her.

"Goddamnit, look at me!" she screams.

"You've been out drinking again, and now you're going to stumble upstairs and pass out, just like you do every night!! You...!"

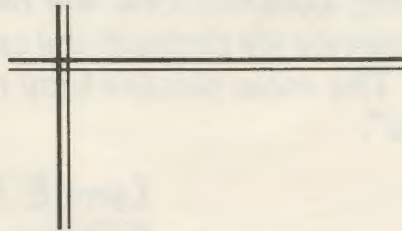
He wheels around suddenly and cuts off her voice with a slap across her face, violently and with the back of his hand. Her eyes widen, vulnerable and stunned, innocent for just a second before the tears begin to stream down her cheeks. She collapses against his chest, her body racking with sobs.

"You hit me," she accuses, her voice muffled by tears and the material of his shirt, "you hit me."

His heart breaks at the sound of her voice, and he enfolds her in his arms, wondering what he had been thinking when he struck her. He whispers tender words of apology as he gently strokes her hair.

This is the suspicion and abuse of their everyday life, and they tell themselves it's love.

□ John Sweet



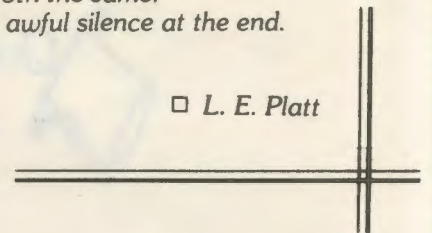
Life Storm

*Baby crying.
Grownups yelling.
Woman threatening divorce.
Door slamming.*

*Rain splattering.
Thunder sounding.
Lightning flashing.
Another thunder clap.*

*Either way.
They're both the same.
Both have that awful silence at the end.*

□ L. E. Platt



The Last Word

Among the rubble of exacto knives, layout boards, artwork, poetry, and prose, my staff and I stand proud. From this mass of raw materials, we created the Spring 1989 issue of **Our Time**.

No. That just doesn't sound right.

What can one say after reading this magazine that could be inspiring to old as well as new readers and is thankful to all those who made this issue possible without being corny or diminishing. Heaping on the "thank-you" words and the praise, which are hidden behind flowery words and brilliant images, makes **The Last Word** appear insincere. I concluded that I must write this statement in accordance to our truest feelings.

Our Time does not magically appear. We work at it, and that work can be chaotic and stressful. We worry about submissions, bills, layout, sales...But even though we have a lot on our minds, it isn't so bad because we work together as a team. There is always work to do but by doing it together, we have fun. On behalf of the **Our Time** staff, I invite all who would like to join the fun to do so at the beginning of next fall.

With the help of our many contributors, we believe that we have provided you a way to experience life through the creative endeavors of SUNY Geneseo students. The most sincere way to thank all of you is simply to say: "I thank you".

Lynn E. McCaffery
Editor-in-Chief

