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University of Houston—Downtown Literary Journal

Spring 1993

The

Bayou

Review

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Spring 1993

The University of Houston–Downtown
One Main Street
Houston, Texas 77002

Editor

Jerry Tumlinson

Assistant Editors

Carol Greer

Nicole Smart

L. Ross

Theresa Duke

Dawn H. Moses

Layout/Design

Jerry Dworaczyk

Faculty Advisors

Robert Jarrett

Fabian Worsham

Lorenzo Thomas

Chair, Student Publications Committee

Margaret Shelton

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The Bayou Review reserves the right to edit for grammar, punctuation, and content.

"It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in the worthy cause; who, at the best, knows in the end the triumph of achievement; and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

-Theodore Roosevelt

by Kerry McGee 

Acknowledgments

The Spring 1993 Bayou Review is full of creative energy. All of the artists, one way or another, found a way to express that part of humanity which overcomes. They have jumped into life's river, committed to a change through creativity.

The Bayou Review's Spring release coincides with a reading in room 1099-N. Featured are distinguished English professors at UH-Downtown: Fabian Worsham and Writer-in-Residence, Lorenzo Thomas.

The Bayou Review awarded 4 – \$50 prizes for winning submissions in the categories of poetry, short-story, artwork and translation. The award recipients for the Spring 1993 Bayou Review are:

Poetry

The Regret of the Civilized Man
by Theo O. Johnson

Short Story

The Fear
by Leonid Korolkov

Translation

Sizin Icin
by Orhan Veli Kanik
Translation by Murat Inegolluoglu

Artwork

Calligraphy
by Kerry McGee






Many special thanks to: Dan Jones, Lorenzo Thomas, Fabian Worsham, Rob Jarrett, Margaret Shelton, Jerry Dworaczyk, Carol Greer, Nicole Smart, Terry Duke, L. Ross, Dawn H. Moses, and the crew at UH Printing Department.

Sit down, read the book, enjoy; I did.


Jerry Tumlinson
Editor


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 Writer-in-Residence


 Dean of College of Humanities and Social Sciences

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award recipient

Success

*To laugh often and much; to win
the respect of intelligent people
and affection of children; to earn
the appreciation of honest critics
and endure the betrayal of false
friends; to appreciate beauty, to
find the best in others; to leave
the world a bit better whether by
a healthy child, a garden patch
or a redeemed social condition; to
know even one life has breathed
easier because you have lived.
This is to have succeeded.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

by Kerry McGee 

Theo O.
Johnson



The Regret of the Civilized Man

Piano man oblivion in grey stale smoke,
Intoxicating pounding ancient rhythm I choke.
The crowds of people searching for a table lit red,
The black and white-keyed Steinway pounding in my head.

The fingers on the instruments, like rain on rusted tin,
Tickle me, and loosely let me shed my skin.
My soul and bones are humming, loving, brightly, I burn,
And grunting, I have now forgotten all that I've learned.

Envision morbid festivals, I dance around the kill.
Bouncing on the balls of feet, with primitive will,
I tear and spill from sharpened teeth a weak sacrifice
(Devouring the charred up lives is my only vice!).

Opening my eyes, I'm now back in the bar,
And feeling that, in retrospect, we've come so far.
But there's so much we give up, being civilized,
The hunger of the native for this meek disguise.

Men in our family don't seem to last long. Smothered by obsessive women they die young, either physically, mentally and/or financially.

I use to think some genetic monster rested in our bosoms that made us attracted to weak men. As I grew I came to know the only thing that made most of them weak was the fact that they loved us enough to hang around overbearing, domineering, abrasive women.

It has to be excruciating to live with such an aberration. You also have to wonder how great a capacity for love some of these men must have possessed.

Take my father; an average man, with the flaws and faults of many a human being. He brought laughter and joy to my brothers and me many times. Strong shoulders, broad smile, resounding base voice - he stood ten feet tall in my eyes. Every chance mother got she took him down an inch, publicly and privately. I remember thinking why did she stay

with him if she felt he was such a no good, alcoholic, womanizing derelict. I know he must have hurt her deeply from time to time; but it was apparent on more than one occasion that they loved each other deeply.

I recall stories about how more than once she had left him. Once he walked thirty miles to plead with her to stay with him. I also remember the genuine pain in her face as tears rolled down her cheeks whenever he said he was going to leave.

Now, looking back I wonder if obligations should be damned and everyone go their separate way when you start to dislike each other so much that the only look between you is one of disdain. My father was far from perfect but I realize now no man could have lived up to my mother's expectations. She often spoke of being punished because they were "unequally yoked." She constantly remarked how without her he would be nothing. If there is such a personality that can be described as shrewish, it might be ascribed to her.

Thinking back, I realize I've committed murder myself. I've assassinated two husbands mentally, perhaps a little financially.

Yes . . . several men have suffered under my hand; brothers, cousins, lovers, acquaintances, friends. . . and now my sons.

The destruction was never intentional. It began lovingly with a passionate determination to always make better the individual I tortured.

No. I won't kill anymore. I love my sons and they deserve a chance. I pray any damage done is not irreparable. I know I can

change. God help me, I must.

So, everyday I embrace myself, look at me and say "Today you will enjoy you and everything and everyone around you." I hug my sons and tell them, "I love you. You are the best part of my life. Should I for any brief moment make you feel otherwise say so." They do.

Maybe there must be pain; but the destruction has been minimized. □

Generations of Pain

by Cassandra Harris

Symphony of blue and green
Accompanied by song of bird
Answer to my winter dream
Sweetest sound I've ever heard
Gentle breeze caresses leaves
Against a sky of quiet blue
Wisps of clouds above the trees
Branches damp with morning dew
Squirrels a 'lyin' in the sun
Life is good for all around
Winter's hardships are all done
Seasons do their turn around
In the bubbling, babbling brook
Tiny fish are starting school
Gentle doe comes for a look
A fledgling fawn obeys her rule
All is peaceful, all is good
Nature yields all she can bring
In my corner of the wood
Each year I welcome home the spring

Ron
Luster

Welcome
Home
the
Spring

Nicole
Smart

Tribute:
MLK

When you speak
In tones that transcend time
The wholeness of my soul
VIBRATES.

Ron
Luster | on Sunday afternoon

Your breath is moist and hot upon my tingling neck
And mine is short and sobbing in response
Your lips are whispering softly to my skin
A sudden chill runs through me but cannot fight the fire that
roars within

Then all control is lost as heaven's gates are opened
Together we pass through to share the ecstasy
And complete the journey concurrently, the way that it
should be

With its end the game has left us drained
But play will soon resume
For love renews resolve to carry on and travel back once more
To where we shared that frenzied joy, on Sunday afternoon

The unstoppable stream of time takes away from me the most precious memories of my life, the memories of my childhood. Sometimes I realize that I cannot recall certain details which I knew by heart and recounted to somebody just a year ago, like the color of the dress my mother wore on the day I went to school for the first time, or how I managed to climb to that thinnest and highest branch of the apple tree behind my

grandmother's house. Very often, I realize that I cannot separate my childhood dreams from my childhood reality anymore. To my regret, however, I clearly remember the most terrifying events of my life, the ones that I would love to forget.

The Fear

by Leonid
Korolkov



Trips to my uncle's home always were very memorable. I guess he represented the missing part of my family, my father. I think that if I ever said that I wanted to have a father, I must have added that he would have to be just like my uncle. I loved just about everything

that characterized my uncle: the way he talked, the way he walked. I admired his rough sense of humor and his manner of laughing loudly after every successful joke for a couple of minutes. He was in his middle thirties, the age when the men are especially energetic, enthusiastic, and when they are the best role model for young boys. My uncle had a harmonious family, a respectable job, and many close friends.

Our relationship also had a very special meaning to me. My uncle was my godfather, and as my mother explained to me once: "He is the person that should take a special care of you through all your life." I think my uncle felt that obligation. Therefore, he always tried to satisfy my need for a father figure and friendly support.

The thought that this man would be unjust to anybody had never even briefly entered my mind. When he left his wife and son, I naturally assumed that 'they' were wrong and not him, and I took the news very calmly. The only thing that made me uncomfortable was the news that I could not see my cousin anymore. He had been my game companion for almost as long as I could remember. He stood out from all my cousins with his lively temper and tomboyish attitude, and he certainly was my favorite.

My sorrow about the "lost" cousin did not last for long. A couple of months after my uncle left his family, I learned that he had moved to a new apartment and lived there with a new wife and her child. Soon I started to call the woman "aunt" and felt that I knew her son, my new "cousin" Sergey, a younger hyperactive boy, all my life. Sergey, a blonde fragile child, adored me as an older brother who was more experienced than him, and I loved him.

I always felt welcome in this new family and was never afraid to accept their hospitality. The anticipation of each visit occupied my thoughts. I did not feel ashamed about begging my mother to call her brother and ask him if it would be okay for me to come visit on a weekend. As always, she felt concerned about my traveling across the city; after all, I was only ten or eleven years old. Finally she would always give in. Of course, every time she called, my uncle agreed to meet me at the bus stop in the evening.

After almost two hours of riding in the crowded buses and waiting at the dirty bus stops, I always did the same things. I would call my mother to notify her of my safe arrival. Then I would politely answer my uncle's and his wife's questions about school and about whether we received any letters from my grandmother, who lived in the country. The next moment I would grab Sergey and run down the stairs from the thirteenth floor to the street.

We could play for hours and hours, but our parents never allowed us to be without their supervision for too long. The rumors about the mysterious disappearances of some children in the city or

a little article in the newspaper about a child that was killed by a drunk driver on the way home from school always worried them. Usually our parents feared that our own carelessness might become the cause of an accident.

My uncle's subdivision had been built a year or two before and, unlike mine, it was not strictly residential. Erected in record-breaking time shortly before the Moscow Olympics, it housed thousands of foreigners for only a brief period during the games. The Olympic Village was built as an autonomous settlement and designed to prevent the guests from having contact with the local population by a tall metal fence. They did not have to leave the territory of the Village for any reason. It had just about everything in its boundaries: restaurants, shops, stadiums and theaters.

This unusual planning gave my cousin and I a chance to compete against each other in the stadiums, by running the tracks, playing tennis or soccer. We wandered in the stores looking for the half-erased words written with Latin letters on the walls and the windows, sunbathed in the park, which had only thin grass and young withered trees. Though the park did not have even simple benches, and sometimes was unkempt, between the monoliths of the fourteen-story apartment buildings, it was an oasis for us.

The people who walked in the park always ended up on the bank of a pond, which was created as the logical center of the park. It was loved by the residents of the Village and the ducks that migrated there between the seasons. The children probably loved the pond even more than the ducks, but the adults were never convinced that the bank could serve as an appropriate place for games. They shouted at the children who played too close to the water, pulled them away from it and then explained, with anger in their voices, how dangerous it was. They usually threatened children with punishment if they went to the water just one more time. Unfortunately, not every adult was aware of how dangerous the water was.

One July afternoon, we walked in the park, trying to find something to do, discussing what would be nice to have for dinner, and complaining that almost half of our summer vacation was gone. As usual on Sunday nights, the park was jammed with people walking their children, their dogs or just themselves. It was one of those familiar lazy weekend afternoons when everybody thinks about tomorrow, about the work that has to be done, and about the passing day.

The closer we got to the pond, more obvious was the change in the mood of the crowd. It seemed that the whole atmosphere of the evening had changed in an instant. People sensed the change and asked the passersby that walked away from the pond nervously,

"What's happened?" After a short answer they quickened their pace, or turned around and walked in the opposite direction.

Sergey urged me to run toward the pond, which seemed to be the source of agitation, and in a few minutes we found a big crowd that had gathered near the pond and a couple of vans. We also saw a giant military-looking truck parked carelessly on the emerald grass, like a giant piece of mud that had just landed on a soft new carpet in the middle of a living room.

We moved through the humming crowd, trying to find out the reason for this excitement. On the way, we listened to the talk that flew around above our heads. The deeper we moved into the mass of people, the quieter voices became. As we reached the front edge of the crowd they turned into a whisper that made the situation even scarier. The next moment we saw everything, and we knew everything.

On the bank of the pond a team of skin-divers searched for the body of a drowned man. Some unfortunate man got drunk with his buddies Friday night by the water, decided to swim a little and had not been seen since. The divers worked for almost two hours, but they could not find anything except broken concrete blocks and rusted pieces of pipe. The crowd started to lose patience, and some of the people began to leave. Their behavior was hard to understand, but they looked somewhat disappointed, like an audience in a theater when the opening of a show is delayed.

Even today, I do not know why we stayed there. Sergey was completely terrified, and I did not want to even think about the drowned man. We did not confess our fears at that time. Actually, we did not talk at all. The fear of something that had no place in our lives paralyzed us and forced us to wait for the gruesome answer to our curiosity. I believe neither one of us had witnessed death so closely before, and this first encounter brought new difficult feelings in us. Only years later would we confidently talk about that episode. When we started that first conversation we realized how different our impressions were. Only the course of events we remembered exactly the same.

Suddenly, one of the men monitoring the divers started to scream, "He's got 'im! He's got 'im!" The bubbles of air that appeared on the surface of the brownish water showed the movement of the diver. Then we saw the divers head rising over the water, and his shoulders, and his chest. Without any strain the diver carried the dead man by the wrist, as if the dead body was a plastic mannequin of a strange black-blue color.

My heart had stopped, and I felt that odd sugary taste of fear in my mouth. For the first time in my life I was face to face with death. The body of a dead man was lying in front of me, motionless,

Korolkov—The Fear

nevertheless, terrifying. The dead eyes were squinted; the swollen hands of the dead were brought to his face, as if he did not want to see that frightful last moment of his life. The drowned man had on a neon green bathing suit, and that color seemed to be too bright and too inappropriate for that moment. I felt the terrible nature of the moment and thought, 'It does not make any difference to him now, does it?' The shameless eyes of the tens of people examined the body. Somebody walked away quietly; the others gave comments and argued about how fast he died or if he was an alcoholic.

I looked at the man, and, suddenly felt a breath of a fresh spring wind, smelled the melting snow, and heard the mud under my feet. I saw myself at a cemetery on Easter Sunday, and my whole family was visiting the graves of people that I did not remember. They kissed and greeted each other with "Christ is risen!," kissed again and answered "He's risen indeed!" They kissed the pictures of the dead on the monuments, drank vodka, cried, prayed to God for mercy and complained to the dead about their miserable lives. I stood by the fence that surrounded the graves and thought, 'They don't care about you! They don't care about anything now.'

This image sobered me. I took a deep breath and put my hand on Sergey's shoulder. Without saying a word I started to gently push him away from the crowd.

About a year later, one warm April day, I learned that my father had died. The last time I had seen him I was three. I had no contact with him since, except a few letters addressed to my mother, but were intended almost completely for me.

I think I agreed to go to his funeral because it would give me a chance to skip a week of school, and I would have a chance to go to a place that I had not been to before.

Two days of preparation passed. In the afternoon of the third day I found myself squeezed in the corner of the truck bed, trying to be as far away from the corpse in the coffin as possible. The road to the cemetery was extremely bumpy. I remember how it caused the head of the corpse to shake with the motion of the truck. Somebody crawled to the body and tried to hold its head. I kept asking myself, 'What do I feel? What is this man to me?' I had no answer. I only felt the fear that he would hurt his head and wake up. Then I would have to face my father, somebody whom I never knew, but knew me.

I lay on the very top berth of the train compartment that carried us home. It was the middle of the night, and everyone in the car slept or maybe I just wished that they were sleeping. I cried, and I could not stop my tears. I finally realized what that dead man in the coffin meant to me. He was not just a stranger, like the drowned man by the pond. I understood that I will never have a father. □

Fierce, Fierce, Fierce
the wind roars inside,
a tornado of the soul.

Barbara
A.
Delano

Storm

Round, Round, Round
a twisted cloud,
it blows.

Fears, Fears, Fears
lying in its path,
collecting as it grows.

Feelings, Feelings, Feelings
are the eye,
unseeing as it goes.

Faster, Faster, Faster
it whirls,
what isn't gathered,
to the side it throws.

Doubts, Doubts, Doubts
destruction it leaves behind,
a broken spirit of the mind.

Rotten little computer
You ate my disk
You son-of-an-electronic blip.
Cough it up, spit it out,
I'll hit you, cuss you, and shout—
I WANT MY DISK BACK!
I/O ERROR FATAL ERROR? RE-INITIALIZE? TRY
ANOTHER
Oh Yeah, **your MOTHER-**
She was a TRASH COMPACTOR.
YOUR FATHER—A GARBAGE DUMPSTER!
Gimmie back my disk or I'll—
FRY YOUR MICROCHIPS!
REDUCE YOUR SILICONE TO SAND!
HACK!
Damn my work is all gone – erased.
ROTTEN LITTLE COMPUTER.
Ha! I made a back-up copy.
I guess I'm just to tough for you!

Kwan-
Moniqué
Johnson

Human
Over
Machine

Stealthily creeping in until it found
an obscure seat in a corner.

Suddenly, it reared its ugly head and sneered
The creature viciously laughed and cheered.

I know it must have had great fun
devouring your life cells,
one by one.

The creature became bolder and stronger with each feeding
while you helplessly stood by,
your soul slowly bleeding.

Its insatiable appetite grew
until the creature consumed
all of you.

Barbara
A.
Delano

Uninvited

It pinned you to the sheets so white
you could only lay there,
defeated and pale in the dim light.

The creature finally departed, the hideous beast
it slithered away to search for another feast
But it left us one short than when the party started.

The creature finished its game when you could play no more
I imagined I heard it thunderously roar,
"Victory is mine once again. Thank you for being a gracious host."

Steven
Nassar

Breakfast- time

A grayish gap-toothed lizard
who does not change colors as easily
as he once could, pastes himself to a
window - one eye on Good Morning America,
the other watching the younger lizards -
The sure of themselves twenty-toed
shadows of green bending branches
like Tarzan to catch white flies
dancing on Summer air.

"... Save for a twist of fate we the fortunate and the
unfortunate might be each other ..."
- Bill Clinton

I am afraid of the people
Under the bridge
Their peering eyes and bony ribs
Their seeing smells
THEY live in an earthly hell
Eyes so glossy-like mirrored glass
what fears me most is I see
MYSELF.

Kwan-
Moniqué
Johnson

The People Under The Bridge

Two paychecks and a pinkslip away.
Then we the fortunate become the unfortunate -
A pawn played by fate.

I do not fear the people under the bridge -
I fear I will learn how THEY got there -
by becoming homeless.

Adia
Curtis
Kilpatrick

Birthday 29

Another year, a canvas clean,
a chance for a new design!
A palette of opportunity,
and the color choice is thine!
May beauty grace your masterpiece,
pastels of love and peace combine
with shades of truth, creating depth.
Compassion softens any line.
Highlight with hues of happiness,
coat with laughter, make it shine!
Your signature is a stroke of luck,
So frame with faith that's genuine.
When finished, Art and Artist find
Their ultimate critic is Divine.
Inside your gallery of success,
Mount your talent at twenty-nine!

The voice on my answering machine was newly familiar. It was Mary, my sister's lover. "Hi Terry, this is Mary," the voice said, "I was wondering if you had seen Tamara, or might know where she is."

Tamara is my sister. I call her Tammy and I am probably the only person who could get away with that. After all, she had been introducing herself as Tamara for almost ten years now. But, because I am her older sister, I happen to know that she hates the name Tamara. I don't know if Mary knows that. It really doesn't matter to me what Mary knows though. I don't like Mary very much, although I am somewhat grateful for the protection she has offered Tammy during their five year relationship.

"Tamara left yesterday afternoon and I haven't heard from her," Mary's voice filled the room. "Do you know where she might be?" The question hung in the air on a cloud of suspicion. Mary is very jealous and she doesn't trust me. I'm certain that she senses my disapproval of her. "Call me . . . please." The sound of the receiver dropping into its cradle ended the monologue.

This was Mary's second — no — third message on my machine. She was concerned about Tammy's absence; I heard that clearly in her message, yet, I felt it was too early for such concern. Tammy had long been a secretive person. Lying about her actions and whereabouts was not beneath her; it was almost a game. You try to guess what she's up to and she maneuvers around your questions. Tammy is a heroin addict. She has lived an addict's life for 15 years and is not very likely to change her well-worn behavior of avoidance and evasion. I know about this behavior at a very personal level — she is my little sister and she has been a heroin addict since the tender age of 14.

I hadn't heard from Tammy, but I wasn't surprised. I figured she was setting up a scenario for leaving Mary. Tammy and I had talked about it a week ago. She planned to leave Mary. She wasn't happy in the relationship; she never had been and was severing the tie. I figured I'd hear from her within a couple of days, after she had arranged new housing. I didn't return Mary's phone call; there seemed no point in my doing so.

I love my sister, but I know with whom I am dealing. She and I had just recently renewed contact with each other. She left Chicago more than 12 years ago for a new life in San Diego, California. An unplanned pregnancy and a geographic escape brought her to "America's Finest City." I just moved to San Diego less than six weeks ago.

I was excited about being with her again. Like I said, I love my

Tammy

by Theresa Duke

sister. I was ready to renew our relationship; to be sisters again. I was also prepared to enforce the personal limits I knew would be necessary to have an emotionally healthy experience. Minimizing emotional pain was my goal for us both. Yet, when dealing with an addict, while noble, this goal can be elusive. And when the addict is your little sister — well, the obstacles become magnified.

It was early Monday evening, about 5:30 p.m. Remarkably, the weather had threatened rain all day. Somehow, I thought that it would be sunshine and flowers forever, here in southern California. San Diego can have that effect on a person. Yet an unusually dismal and overcast demeanor had pervaded, something more than just "marine layer" hung over the whole day. For the first time that I had called San Diego home, I needed to go outside and put the convertible roof on my car.

I was also in a hurry. I had made arrangements to attend a class sponsored by San Diego Gas and Electric. The class was to cover household conservation methods. Once completed, I would avoid a new-user deposit on my account. It was about \$100 and I didn't want to tie up that amount of money with a "savings account" that paid no interest. Utility companies leave a bad taste in my mouth. They've got you trapped no matter what you do. You will pay ALL the money or you won't have a telephone, hot water, electricity, or anything else for that matter.

Generally, it was just another Monday — like any other Monday. I had been at work in my new job for a few weeks. I was excited to be living and working in San Diego. I had happened upon some old and warm friends, whom I had known for years back in Chicago, before they relocated to southern California. They had started a medical billing service and I was managing their San Diego office. They had helped me purchase a new car to get around town and I had chosen a perfectly San Diegan vehicle in which to do just that — a Suzuki Samurai convertible with a removable stereo to prevent theft.

Life really seemed to have opened up for me within the last few months. Another exciting development was that I had recently allowed a new gentleman into my life. Travis and I were getting to know each other and had been on a few dates. I had met him through some of my other, extended family members living in the San Diego area. I was excited about this new twist in my romantic life and looked forward to getting to know him better.

With the roof securely in place, I jumped in my Suzuki and headed over to pick up Paul, another new friend. He was taking the San Diego Gas and Electric class also. His deposit was \$500; I guess Paul was a bigger risk to SDG&E than was I.

The class was boring. After two and one half hours we

disbanded for the evening. The next class was set for Tuesday. Paul and I manufactured meaningless chatter as I drove him home. As we approached his house on Chamoune Avenue, Paul offered me a cup of coffee. I accepted, explaining that I was expecting to meet Travis at my home within 30 minutes, and I couldn't stay long. I asked to use his phone to call my cousin, Mariclairet. I wanted to say hi and see what she was up to later that evening.

I dialed Mariclairet's phone number and waited patiently for the empty ringing to be answered on the other end of the line. Within a minute, Mariclairet's roommate, Natalia, answered the phone.

"Hi Natalia. Is Mariclairet there?" I asked.

"No, she's not here Terry. She's at your grandmother's."

My grandmother lives in Rancho Penasquitos, a small suburb about 20 minutes north of San Diego. I was surprised to hear this; Mariclairet and I were going to have a late dinner together with Travis after my SDG&E class.

"What is she doing there?" I asked Natalia. "We're supposed to have dinner and she's supposed to come by and pick us up."

"Don't you know?" Natalia queried. I surmised that something was up, but I wasn't catching the drift yet.

"It's your sister," Natalia said with gravity. On my end of the telephone, my stomach clenched. In another room I heard a mumbled conversation; one of Paul's roommates was speaking quickly and with emotion. And then, above all else I heard, "Oh my God, no." Paul couldn't seem to believe what someone had just told him. Paul came toward me from the hallway while Natalia said:

"She's dead, Terry. Tamara is dead. It was an overdose."

It's funny how the human mind works to protect itself from too much information. Adrenaline exploded in my veins like a skyrocket. Instinct took over and decisions began revealing themselves about a course of action to take, none of which I could follow up, nor remember within a second of thinking them.

A sense of panic filled me. I felt a great need to run somewhere, but I didn't know where to go. I walked in small circles in the middle of Paul's living room. I stopped and stared at a crack in the ceiling. This seemed to calm me for a moment until I could gather myself up.

I recalled thanking Natalia for the information and hung up the telephone. I watched my hand replace the receiver in the cradle as though I were in a dream. Slowly, I turned toward the door. I needed to go home. I needed quiet isolation, to be alone, to think about the severe impact of this information.

Paul asked me if he could drive me home. I thanked him and said no; I was okay and could manage to get home on my own. I

only live ten minutes away by car and those ten minutes would help me clear my head.

I walked to my cute little car in "America's Finest City" and thought about Tammy. I had prepared myself for this event ten years ago; somehow I had overlooked how much it would hurt.

I expected this to happen in her teens — unbelievably, she lasted longer than most heroin addicts can possibly hope for. An addict lives on the edge of oblivion and their loved ones are trapped, unwilling witnesses as the horror of their self-destruction plays out.

My mind wanted to get into action and it raced off on a track of its own. All the things that Tammy and I wouldn't do together flashed through my mind. I had great difficulty integrating the enormity of this situation. I couldn't get on top of it, but I wasn't worried; this information wasn't going to change and I had all the time in the world to embrace it. Death is, after all, forever.

During the drive home I plotted, planned and cried. I was the only member of our immediate family living in San Diego. My mother would, undoubtedly, arrive from Chicago within a day or so. Until then, I would have to take care of any mortuary arrangements that needed to be made. It was time for me to protect my baby sister. She had reached a critical point in her life. She was now as defenseless as a newborn infant.

I struck me, like a bolt that transformed into a wave of relief, that Tammy was released from the excruciating pain of a life filled with emotional wounds that never completely healed.

Tammy's world had been one of constant pain. A deep and profound emotional innocence left her with little resources to meet the challenges of overcoming the little injustices of everyday life. Tammy lacked the ability to shake off the nicks and dents of life; instead they became magnified, causing her intense emotional and spiritual pain. She sought relief from that pain in the oblivion of drug use and for a while, that was enough for her.

Now though, the driving need for her to seek solace in a needle had come full circle. My sister had finally gone home. Her pain was at an end and mine had just begun. I didn't know who was in a better position — Tammy or me.

How could this have happened to her — to us? Sure, families break up; divorces happen all the time. Fathers beat mothers. Sisters and brothers beat each other, and then their spouses after marriage. And sometimes, drug addiction beats all of them.

But for now, with what remained, Tammy had lost the ability to care for herself and I was the only person who could assure her a sense of dignity in her final time of greatest need. I would fight like hell to preserve what little integrity remained to her. Without a doubt, my heart was broken.

Duke—Tammy

Hands gripping the steering wheel, I slowly wove my way home. Through burning tears of pain, I thanked God for releasing Tammy from the living hell of her life. I thanked Him for allowing her suffering to be brief. I thanked Him for the awesome beauty of my pain, for in that moment I was most surely alive with the gift of emotion. Because on September 19, 1988, six weeks after her twenty-ninth birthday, my beautiful baby sister, Tammy, had gone home to our Father in heaven and I couldn't have been more relieved.

It was time to get into action. I drove carefully home. □

When we've finally both forgotten why
Another path you chose to take,
And why you went away and left me alone
And why you ever smiled at me the first time;

Kurt
Sonntag | **Untitled**

There will still be little things our memories will always keep
Some things known only to each other.

I cannot speculate on what our cluttered minds will save...
Thoughts of the rainy afternoons we spent together
Sometimes listening to songs we thought were "ours,"
Or may be the way our eyes exchanged "I love you" even in a
crowded room.

I only know the dying heart needs the nourishment of memory
To live beyond too many winters,
And winter is here.

Baudelaire's

Faith

Steven
Nassar

Exhausted from drink, a poet spent -
Groggily swaying, spinning, swishing,
swirling dreams like clothes obeying
the physics of a washing machine
taunting, teasing forgotten stains
of yesterday.

Rise in your sleeping sweat Baudelaire,
and curl up by a cold fire-place trying to
recall a childhood that never way.
Did an "Angry Angel" visit you?

Mary Fuller | Instinct

Laying, soaking in the sun's warmth, he notices the movement in the grass and he positions his body. With patience, he waits, watching carefully before making the first move. He watches the innocent prey continue to feed unaware of the danger surrounding it.

Eyes focused and bringing his rigid body closer to the ground, he begins to inch forward ever so slowly. His heart begins to beat faster with anticipation. In what seems an eternity, he moves closer and closer to his prey.

Suddenly, the prey sees the moment and as if in slow motion, the bird lifts it's body to take flight. The cat, with all of this strength, pushes his body up away from the ground as if to take flight as well, only to come back down with nothing. Twitching his tail, he looks up and watches the bird fly away.

The back door of the house opens. "Here kitty, kitty! Time for din-din." The cat runs into the house. He gently rubs the woman's legs as she prepares the cat food.

After eating, he jumps up on the back of his favorite chair facing the window to clean himself. More birds are out in the grass eating bugs. With each lick of the paw, the cat watches the birds. His instinct tells him one day he will catch one.

Chau Nguyen | A World of Colors

We are born in this world, our fragile world.
This world that possesses colors, many colors, our color.
We live with these colors that are painted on us.
For a simple reason, the recognition of dignified culture.
We are born in this world, our world, one world.
In this world that is surrounded with many hues.
We aimlessly become jealous and scorned because of our
differences.
We bruise and we cut only to spill everyone's color.
On this world, this truly one colored world.

There once was a tiger,
So timed he was.
He let no one know him
For fear they might laugh.

Thomas was this little tiger's name.
The kids in school all called him
"Tiny Thomas, the timid tiger,"
And laughed.

Thomas was nervous and scared
About going to school –
Or just Doing anything
That he wasn't told to do.
Girls scared him most.

*Carmen
Echegaray*

Thomas the Timid Tiger

Little Thomas just could not see
Why he was so timid and so terribly
Shy. He tried and tried, but still he
Could not see. Thomas was so sad and so
Confused.

Thomas wasn't sure where to begin to
Look for the answer to his question.
He was even starting to feel bored –
Not knowing what to do with himself.
Yet, he knew there was something he
Must do.

He asked his mother: "Why am I so
Terribly timid and shy?" And his
Mother replied: "Thomas, you're not so
Terribly timid and shy. It's just a
Stage you're going through. It will
Pass. You'll see.

"Now go on out and play before it gets
Too late." So, Thomas went out to play
In his yard. He wasn't sure he knew
What his mother was talking about.

Knowing no one was watching,
Thomas decided to catch a butterfly
That happened to be flying by. He ran
And ran so hard trying to catch her, he

Echegaray—Thomas the Timid Tiger

Had to stop to catch his breath.

Thomas sat in the shade of a big oak
Tree to catch his breath. Then, lo and
Behold, the butterfly came and sat
Right beside him. She too was out of
Breath.

Thomas could only speak a few words at
A time between breaths, but managed to
Ask the butterfly: "Why did you ...
Come sit beside me, ... when I ...
Chased you so?"

The butterfly fluttered her wings for a
Moment. She too was out of breath, you
Know. Then she managed to answer him:
"Because ... you've stopped trying to
Catch me ... I can now ... sit beside
You."

Thomas thought: 'This could just be my
Answer. If I stop trying so hard to
Not be so terribly timid and shy, then
Maybe I'll be alright.'

It was now starting to get dark so
Thomas went in the house for dinner.
He was starting to feel better already.

Thomas thought he'd ask his father next
Why he is so terribly timid and shy.
But, he must wait for all to finish
Dinner so not to disrupt.

When dinner was ended, he knew he could
Ask why he was so terribly timid and so
Terribly shy. His father replied:
"Nonsense, my son, tigers aren't timid.
This is just an awkward stage you must
Be going through and you'll soon outgrow.
You'll see."

Again, Thomas wasn't sure he knew what
His father had said. Grown-ups sure

Echegaray—Thomas the Timid Tiger

Have a funny way of talking, he
Thought.

Thomas, the tiger, that night went to
Bed with thoughts that someday he would
Outgrow his terribly timid and shy
Ways, whatever that meant. 'What would
It be like,' he asked himself.

That night Thomas had great dreams of
Himself being anything but timid or
Shy. He roared. He laughed. He had
Friends all around him. Thomas felt
Really good. He felt he was on top of
The world.

When morning came, Thomas was up and
Dressed for school in no time flat.
His mother was aghast! Thomas did not
Seem at all afraid of facing the day.

Thomas walked to school. On his way to
School he seemed to have a certain new
Spring in his step. The walk to school
Seemed especially shorter than normal.
He was having fun!

Thomas felt happy. Throughout the day,
He noticed that while he was happy and
Helpful he felt good. When he felt
Good, others wanted his company.

During lunch, the kids were calling to
Him: "Thomas, come eat your lunch with
Us." During recess, they called:
"Thomas, come play catch with us."
Hey, school was fun!

He started to think of ways and things
He could do to be helpful at home and
At school. Thomas had lots of energy
Now. He was not going to be bored
Again, and that was that! This tiger
Is not timid. And that's that!

The jury was in deliberation. As I made my way
through the courthouse toward the holding cell, I began
to look back and wonder how I came to be here.

Seventeen years ago, I dove out of a tree into a shallow
spillway. Almost as soon as I hit the water, I hit the bottom. In that
split second my life changed. I immediately went into shock, but
temporarily regained my faculties as I floated to the top of the water.
I needed to get air, but I couldn't move my arms. The need for air,
coupled with the fear of drowning, sent
adrenaline through my body. I threw my
head out of the water and took a deep
breath. As I yelled help, the air I took in
went out with the word. I started to sink
again. A few seconds went by before my
head was lifted above the water. I didn't
know who pulled me out of the water, but as soon as I was on the
shore, I told the people that gathered around me to cover me. I knew
what I had done. I also knew I was going into shock. It seemed as
though I was the only one there who knew what to do, and I knew I
had to explain everything quickly before I lost my faculties to shock.
I guess all those health courses I took were finally being put to use.

I thought I had lost consciousness shortly after giving the
paramedics vital information, but according to my family, I was
coherent for eight hours while waiting for a neurologist. Three days
later, when I knew I was coherent, I had to ask the doctor what I'd
already been told. I had completely severed my spinal cord. I would
be a quadriplegic for the rest of my life.

I stayed in the hospital for a few month, going through
occupational and physical therapy, learning the basics of life over
again. After learning how to bathe, dress, transfer to and from the
wheelchair, and other necessities of life, it was time to relearn more
difficult things, like driving. As it turned out, those things weren't
as difficult as I thought.

The next couple of years were spent doing basically nothing.
Friends would come by and we would watch movies or sports on
television. Occasionally we might play chess or backgammon. I
rarely went out. It wasn't until I had to go back into the hospital for a
fairly routine surgery that I met someone who helped me out of that
mold.

We were in the same room for two weeks. He got out of the
hospital a few days before me, but before he left he asked me if I
would come play wheelchair football with him. I was athletic prior
to my accident, so when I got out I went. I was good at it. I met lots
of people, in and out of chairs. I enjoyed the company as much as the

The Case

by Landon Colgan

game. We did other things as a group. We celebrated Christmas, New Year's Eve and birthdays. We had barbecues, played poker and just hung out together. After two seasons, or about a year, I realized it was time to do something else with my life. I thought about the person who pulled me out of the water and decided I would do something to help others.

Three years after my accident I enrolled in college. In the middle of my second year I knew what I wanted to do. Although I had a few medical problems that kept me from graduating when I wanted, I stuck it out and graduated in six years.

It took me nine more months, but I finally got accepted to law school. I had cleared the first hurdle toward helping others.

Law school was tougher than I had expected, but I was determined to get through on time, barring any medical problems. I decided criminal law would be the best way to go. However, I wasn't sure whether being a prosecutor, trying to put criminals away, or a defense attorney, using the law to get the client acquitted, guilty or not, would be the right way to go.

As time went by I became more and more fascinated with defense. After two years of law school I began to lose sight of my original goal, but I didn't see it at the time.

I got through law school on time, finishing about the middle of my class. I wanted to pass the Bar exam on the first try, so I took six months to prepare for it. When it came time to take it, I was ready. When the results came in it was time to celebrate. Not only did I pass, but I was in the top ten percent.

It had been almost fourteen years since my accident. I was about to embark upon my first job since the accident. I wasn't starting my own practice, but it was employment. I was a public defender at the county courthouse.

For three years I worked cases like prostitution, repeated drug offenders, assault and battery, possession of stolen property, aggravated assault, aggravated robbery, possession of narcotics with intent to distribute, manslaughter, sexual assault, and rape, just to name a few. The cycle seemed endless. Sometimes it was hard to tell the real criminals from my peers. Probably because some of them were breaking the law. Some were selling dope, some were using and some were doing both.

Don't get me wrong. Most of the attorneys were on the up and up. Plea bargains are a normality. An occasional shady deal here and there was expected. However, there were those who made it look bad for the rest of us. To be honest, I was waiting for that one case that would give me enough exposure to get out of the cesspool I had gotten myself into.

Now, that old cliché, be careful what you ask for because you

just might get it, was slapping me in the face.

A murder case came to the public defenders office and I was appointed to handle it. I got the case file and began reading it. Thomas Hebert, a 35 year-old male, was arrested and charged with the murder of Robert Agee, a 21 year-old male. Hebert allegedly shot Agee twice in the chest, at point-blank range, with a nine millimeter, semi-automatic handgun. According to the report, the deceased had previously been convicted of armed robbery and was out on parole at the time of his death. Agee was convicted of robbing the same store he was shot in, three years earlier. The report also stated Hebert was working at the time of the robbery.

I finally got to the evidence report. The police had Hebert's weapon, Agee's switch-blade and the store's surveillance video. I knew the District Attorney's office would soon have the tape, that is if they didn't already.

I was just finishing the report when my phone rang. It was the DA's office. They wanted me to come view the tape, and before they hung up, they assured me it was an open and shut case. I had planned on going to the county jail to see my new client, but I decided to see the video first.

When I saw the tape, all Agee did was taunt Hebert. Granted, Agee taunted him for three and a half minutes about robbing Hebert at gun-point and said he would do it all over again. Agee also said he enjoyed it. As Agee turned and started toward the door, Hebert reached under the counter, pulled out the pistol and said, "Look at me." When Agee turned, Hebert pumped two shots into his chest. Throughout the entire tape, I never saw Hebert's face, but that would come soon.

I was sitting in the interrogation room when the deputy brought Hebert in. I introduced myself and then he sat down. I looked at him and for a moment I thought he looked familiar. I thought about it, then dismissed it. I told him if I was to represent him he had to be totally honest with me or I was out the door. He agreed. I told him I had seen the tape. He put his hands over his face and said he couldn't take it. He said he just lost it. He asked me if I'd ever had a loaded gun pointed at my face with someone threatening to kill me. I said no. He asked me to think about what it would feel like if that had happened to me, and then have the same person come back, laugh in my face, and say he enjoyed it and would do it again. I told him that was no excuse to murder someone and it surely wouldn't hold up in court. I had to be straight with him, so I told him as long as that tape could be used as evidence, his only option was to plead guilty and skip a jury trial. His best chance was to just deal with the DA and hope for leniency in sentencing. He told me to go home and think about who he was. The last thing he said to me

Colgan—The Case

was he would make only one deal and it wasn't with the DA.

I thought about what he said all night. I couldn't sleep. Then I remembered.

I went into the holding cell at the courthouse. There we were, alone for the last time.

"I sacrificed my career for you Hebert," I said in a gut wrenching tone. "Now that you're going to be acquitted, do you want to know how?"

"If you think I need to, yea," he said, as if he really didn't care.

I looked at him and said, "Whatever I say stays here in this room. What I'm about to tell you is between attorney and client, strictly confidential. Do you agree?"

He looked at me, knowing if he agreed to my terms he would walk on the murder charge. "I agree," he said.

"I had a friend of mine on the force destroy that tape by placing a high powered magnet next to the tape in the evidence room." As I said that I started to feel sick to my stomach.

"How did you get it there?" he asked.

"I had to pay someone to throw the magnet through a jewelry store window to get it in the evidence room." Maybe I shouldn't have told him that, but I knew he wouldn't say anything.

He looked at me with a sincere and caring look, and said, "What will you do after this?"

"I really don't know." As soon as I said that there was a knock on the door. It was the bailiff letting us know the jury had finished its deliberation. After the door closed, I looked at him and said, "Once the jury renders its decision, that will be the last time we will see each other. There will be no more contact. Do you understand?"

"I understand perfectly," he replied.

"One last thing." This was the most important thing of all to me. "No one must ever know. Since it is not a matter of public record, and can't be proven. No one must ever know it was you who pulled me out of the water." □

*Theo O.
Johnson*

I'll stay (but

I'll stay (but

you get on my nerves.
Right now I don't even like you)

because I love you.

Alone on the paths of the moon,
absorbing you like the humidity,
I waited only with echoes
of rehearsed conversations.
I steal and recreate
your mouth and hands whispering
a delicate confession on my skin.

I denied the distance of your framed walnut eyes,
peeled the skin-thin layers that
revealed your conflicts and barriers,
leaving you finally with
a frightened silent stare.

*Theo O.
Johnson*

I had trespassed into an
historical reflection of Claudio,
the child, who descended
into his own adobe heaven,
protecting his senses
with childish satisfaction
from the difficult prodding
of thought.

Bending my back to you,
my hair knotted around your brown knuckles,
my extended arms asking why,
your jaw tightens, hissing
the most unkind words in the guise
of a frightening courtesy.
But my resignation and your absence
are still more painful that your
newly fading handprints on me.

**Alone on
the Paths
of the
Moon**

*Dawn
H.
Moses*

**winter in
texas**

brown twigs
against the gold
spots of green
all in profusion

The small boy marvels at the circular ripples
on the surface of the calm clear water.

The pebble causes no more than a minor disturbance
to the fine layer of silt on the bottom -
silt which gradually settles again,
allowing the water to clear;
only a few fish are startled
out of their afternoon reverie.

David
Miller

The Pond

The small boy fades.
The small boy dies.

The boy smiles as his wood-shop creation
glides across the water.

Nothing more than a few pieces of pine glued together,
sporting only a small paper sail,
it slowly floats out of reach -
forgotten, its glue will slowly give way
to the inexorable power of the water
and the pine will again become one with nature.

The boy fades.
The boy dies.

The youth relishes the simple pleasures
he finds when he comes to the pond.

Hours are spent swimming, or fishing, or merely
wasting hours of fine summer afternoons,
pondering why, and what might be -
aware, even in his innocence, that this place
is a special place, one to be revered
and remembered always.

The youth fades.
The youth dies.

The young man frequents the pond for the solitude
and pleasures it has to afford.

Discarded beer bottles and assorted debris
now litter the once sandy bottom -
innocence is forgotten, and the pond becomes

Miller—The Pond

a receptacle for the detritus of man;
a defined condom floats lewdly on the surface;
fish nibble at it, thinking it to be sustenance.

The young man fades.
The young man dies.

The man ascribes utility to the pond
because he calls it *his*.

The discards of his life find their final resting place
among the bottles and debris on the bottom -
fish no longer navigate amongst the rubbish;
they have long since met their demise
at the hands of the toxic chemicals
that were too costly to dispose of as prescribed.

The man fades.
The man dies.

The old man recalls what once was a pond,
and prays in vain for the past.

The small boy cries.
The boy cries.
The youth cries.
The young man cries.
The man cries.
The old man cries.
The old
man
dies.

It's a nice day today — at least it
looks nice through the window.
Too bad I can't go out there. It'd
be nice to feel what 'outside' is like again. I
have to reach into my memory to remember
what cold or hot or windy or cool feels like.
I know that somewhere deep inside there is a remembrance I can
draw from. All I can do for now is sit here in the kitchen and wonder
and hope that they don't forget my breakfast.

Hey! Here they come now. I thought for a moment that they
weren't going to come in here at all today, but here they are! Joseph
is such a tall handsome man, and Marjorie is really a very beautiful
woman. And wasn't all that exercise worth it after she had the baby?

Watching
by David Miller

Miller—Watching

She's still working hard, but I really don't think it's all that necessary anymore. They're a beautiful couple, and the baby is so cute. I wish there was some way I could show them just how much I appreciate them. If only I could touch the baby gently or make him giggle and coo the way they do, I would be so happy. I guess it wasn't meant to be. God must have his reasons.

Something seems to be wrong today, though. Through my right eye I can see the baby in his little chair. He seems happy and contented. Hey, it looks like he's going to fall asleep. But my left eye can only see shadows moving rapidly on the wall. I can hear Joseph talking loudly. It frightens me. I wish I could see what was going on. Maybe if I can just move over. . .

There, that's better. I can just barely see them around the corner. Marjorie has her back to me. I can see that her head is hanging down, and she seems to be looking at her shoes. Joseph is waving his arms rapidly; his face is red and there is a dark look in his eyes — like the time he came home early and found that other man in the house. It frightens me now because things were very different for a long time after that. I wish I could understand what he is saying.

My right eye still sees the baby - asleep now - oblivious to everything. He still looks so peaceful and happy. He must have already had his breakfast; otherwise he wouldn't be sound asleep. I hope they remember to give me my breakfast. I'm really getting hungry.

All the while, my left eye sees Joseph getting more and more agitated. Marjorie is beginning to shrink away from him. What is wrong? Why doesn't he stop? Suddenly he reaches out, grabs a glass and throws it against the wall. Marjorie turns to run from him. The baby screams out a panicked wail. Both adults freeze. Joseph's mask of darkness lifts and Marjorie's fear evaporates. With so many sensations from all sides, I'm petrified.

As they both run toward the baby, I can do nothing but sit here and hope for the best. Out of my right eye, I can already see that the baby is okay. He's just frightened from the sound of breaking glass. Joseph and Marjorie seem so relieved that they engulf him and each other in a huge embrace. Whatever had Joseph so upset has evaporated like his dark mask and all seems to be fine again. I wish I could join them — a hug would be so comforting.

Maybe they'll remember to give me my breakfast now. What with all the commotion, my ruffled feathers could use a bit of smoothing, too. Come to think of it, my cage could use a good cleaning, too. Maybe they'll notice when they give me my breakfast — I'm really hungry. I just hope they don't make me say "Polly want a cracker." It's so damn demeaning. □

Kimberly
Newman

Suzanne Doesn't Wannabe

Dearest Suzanne is strange, you see
Her actions don't follow logically.
Sly glances and chances that were forsook,
Betray enigmatic lingering looks.
Are we there yet, started, or is it the end?
How disgusting and lovely your mysterious grin!
Please tell me right now! What is it to be?
Are you friend, lover, or just wannabe?

Given the chance, her name wouldn't be
Incessantly plugged into my memory,
I'd choose Gertrude or Myrtle, or even Ruth Ann,
Never again would I whisper Suzanne!
If she'd only stop gazing with eyes oh so green-
I'd cease this desire and perpetual dream.
But wait! Perhaps in my haste I've omitted some clue
She's smiling again. Are we one or still two?

I've finally set a deadline, silent as can be
She's got one week to speak, or should it be three?
I'll allow but a week — I've grown so weary of this dance!
Never again will she be allowed this opportune chance
To know me and love me in this vast universe.
Funny how the name now borders on the perverse.
Post one week - Suzanne doesn't speak. I decide what's to be.
Although still fond; love is gone. Now I don't wannabe.

Lorenzo
Thomas^o

Matisse in Motion

^o Writer-in-Residence

Matisse in Motion

We puzzle each other
Wanting to know all we share

Pretty with sun stripes
Cat on an armchair
When mystery visits your face

That measuring stare

A political activist is something to be
Get your name in the post, your face on t.v.
On every hate list your name will be.
It's all in the way you choose to be free.

Feds and fanatics follow you well.
Antis say Jesus will send you to hell.
Politicians vow your voice to quell,
Sun and wind make your face look like hell.

*Kimberly
Newman*

With Apologies to John

Marching and chanting, you praise liberty
Freedom, choice, justice, and equality.
Family and lovers don't want you to be
The radical activist they see on t.v.

After you've burned out and can no longer care,
Comrades will call and demand how you dare
Abandon the cause as the problem's still there.
An activist just can't be everywhere.

*Antonya
R.
Dunlap*

Swaying Thoughts

Wouldn't it be nice to enjoy life,
and not die,
To have daily happiness and never
have to cry.
To wake up every morning to that
same lovely face,
That you see every morning
that never loses its grace.

Wouldn't it be nice to love and
be loved as much the same
To always lend support
never get caught up in downfalls
and fames.
To love no matter what
and say it everyday
That you're loved more than the
day before and forever you
will be always.

If only you knew me
If only I knew you
If only I knew your thoughts,
I would make them more pleasant.

If only I should
If only I could
If only I would

*Antonya
R.
Dunlap*

If Only

If only you knew why
If only you knew how
If only you knew the reasons,
you would understand.

If only you could understand
If only you could feel the same
If only I would realize,
and never have to feel any pain.

If only.
If only.
If only.

If only everyday of life was of
happiness and care,
Everyday of life I would love you,
and forever want to share.

*Antonya
R.
Dunlap*

Today

Today the day is clear,
And the clouds are white.
Nothing will I fear,
Because I'll see you tonight.

Today the sun is beaming,
And the wind is blowing.
I think I'm falling in love,
Because I feel I'm glowing.

Today the trees are swaying
And the grass is green.
Love is in the air
Hear the birds hum
"See what I mean."

Often women like her
Are in airports.
Perfect every hair,
Every line.
A magazine cover face
Eyes expectant
Uncertain content.

Often there is a child
Or two with her,
A baby or a little one.
She is young
Not the mother of teens.
She was a teen herself
Years ago, three maybe five.

Slim gold jewelry moves
As she attends
The child's questioning.

She's not in an airport now.
She stands in the white July heat
Outside the stadium,
The flags limp in early evening calm
While the crowd swirls
Into the Dome.
She stands beside the gate.
The little boy in the cap,
With a glove,
Runs from her and to her.
They wait.

Often women don't like her.
They're jealous.
Rich men capture women like her.
They marry them,
Make Children,
Dress the women and children beautifully,
And leave them waiting
In airports, outside stadiums,
With perfect hair,
Magazine cover faces
Staring, waiting eyes.
The men are busy, dealing, late.

Michael
Dressman ^Δ

A Woman Like Her

I've missed the national anthem
And most of the first inning,
The ticket droops, moist in my hand.
I stare at her, at the little boy.
He runs from her again.
They wait for the man.

As I climb the dry white
Concrete ramp past her
Through the gate
So close I can see the freckles
On her shoulder,
I wonder when she'll feel her power.
When will it be?
Three years, five years?

She'll tell him she will wait no more.
She has the power.
I can feel it.
He'll feel it, too.
She doesn't know it yet.
But when she does,
Out from the cover of the magazine,
Those eyes will sear him.

And he'll have to grow up
And face a woman like her.

All the world is but a stage
And we are players on it.
Yet gender tends to turn the page
To write an image fit.

Forced to be the fairer race
More perfect than we are
The aid of Estee Lauder's grace
Strives to mask life's scars.

Yet lines and gray are just the way
That men are meant to be.
They can freely perform the play
Just with what we see.

For them tis most distinguishing—
For us tis merely old.

Gwenn
Gos ^{*}

The Woman Behind the Mask

^{*} Professor/English Department

^Δ Dean/College of Humanities
and Social Sciences

Don't be what they want you to be.
Don't do what they want you to do ...

Keep those shining eyes
that look of life
rushing into morning.

It matters not that you're old.

It's relative all
the same

short skirt
long hair shining gold
father's stare cold
still there

it's all the same when you're old.

But measure life by cupful o'erflow

take it all
live it all

give it all

that you've known doesn't constrain
frees.

If I knew then what I now know ...
would I begin again?

yet better butterfly than crab
I am new.

Why so hopeful?
Why so afraid?

I, too, grow old
and yet so
young

It was worth it all
worth the pain
the fall

Some see me as whore
I still want more

Yes, let the juice run down my chin ...

Gwenn
Gos*

Dare to Live

In this year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and four, as elders of the New Haven German Baptist Church, we pronounce your presence in our congregation intolerable. And, furthermore, demand ye flee this sacred community of God without hesitation. After much prayer and consideration, we rule ye unfit to associate with these God's children. We demand ye adhere to this judgment immediately in order to avoid dire consequences.

— Aaron Hochstetler
Elder

Shunned
by Gwenn Gos*

As Anna Black read the words impaled on the delicate parchment, a veil of tears washed over her – rushed her back through years of sacrifice and pain – years of the desire to grasp life while confined in the chaste world of the church. Anna's thoughts continued to swirl as the realization of her fate began to sink in. The billowing wheat field beside her strong, white house seemed to wash her away from the pain as it carried her back to the early years of her marriage.

When Anna Heltzel agreed to marry Joshua Black, she had no idea that they would immediately leave their familiar world for that of the big city. They both grew up in a small farming community in northern Michigan – they both led very sheltered lives, and at eighteen, were so very young. And yet – they were so different. It's strange that two people who grew up in the same environment could be so different. It's true that they both viewed the world as a challenge, but that is where the similarity ended. Joshua's world was one of rules. His solemn brown eyes observed and judged the world in an orderly manner. But for Anna the challenges of the world came not in restraint but in living each moment to the fullest. Her eyes of the blues gray reflected the ambiguity of her life. Their sparks of bright, blue fire always seemed to dodge the cold, gray mist of the severe, conservative community in which she lived. And yet in spite of forces which looked down on any form of enjoyment, she did everything with a zeal which expressed an intense love of life. The simplest things were special to her – she could turn the most boring task into an adventure.

"Hurry Josh, we'll be late for the train! I don't want to miss one moment of this trip. I can't wait to get to the seminary and meet our new friends. And, our apartment ... can you imagine us living in the big city? Just think ... an apartment!"

"We will get there in plenty of time. You know that I have taken great care in planning our itinerary. And please do not call me Josh. You know how I hate that."

* Professor/English Department

Anna smiled at her husband over the top of her open suitcase as she continued to throw things inside. Joshua smiled in spite of himself as he watched her smile radiate upward to her eyes ... he shook his head.

"You really are impossible."

Upon their arrival in Chicago, they looked at the rush of the city, and then at each other. Joshua's eyes filled with new zeal at the prospect of so many new Biblical concepts to learn and to apply to the sinners who were sure to be found. He was not excited about the many new things that the city had to offer – only about what he could do to change it.

Anna's eyes were also filled – but filled with joy and expectation. She was naturally curious and looked on this experience as the chance for many wonderful adventures. She had never seen so many people, or so many houses and shops all together. She had never realized that there were so many people in the world – that the world was so big! As the solid oak doors of the seminary closed behind them, it seemed to Anna as if the world had been shut off. It reminded her of the feeling that she often had on Sunday morning when the enormous doors of the church were closed signaling the commencement of worship, sealing its people safely off from the evil world.

"God, it's hot ... God, I'm fat!" thought Anna aloud as she planted marigold in front of the church. She quickly looked up to see if anyone had heard her "take the Lord's name in vain." No one had. No one really noticed her that much – except, of course to make sure she behaved like a respectable minister's wife. As they began their lives in their first church, she had no idea of the expectations that would be placed on her. Why, she had always worked in the church. Her mother had teased her that she had always been in church "every time the doors were open." But now it all seemed different. She couldn't serve the church because she wanted to – she had to do it because it was expected. And it was really worse than that – it seemed that her every move was scrutinized by the church members – by the community – by the world ...

Joshua had warned her only this morning that she shouldn't plant flowers in the heat of the day. Anna wondered at the time if his warning was for the sake of the flowers, or because she was nine months pregnant with their first child – or more importantly, because it might not look right to the parishioners. But, of course, it had to be out of concern of her – didn't Joshua always say the right thing? Anna relished the feel of the warm dirt between her fingers as she continued to contemplate her husband's power over people.

Joshua had graduated with honors from the seminary and then

proceeded to be courted by many churches who had heard of the dynamic young preacher. They finally ended up "back home" in Michigan among the farmers with whom they grew up. It's not as if Michigan were "mecca" of the German Baptist Church, but Joshua felt that they would be better off among their own kind. He had been mildly disturbed by Ann's attitude in Chicago. He felt that she had grown a little too fond of the hustle of the big city – why she had even had the audacity to try to drive one of those new-fangled motor cars – he had to get her back to where she belonged – where she could act as a respectable wife should – he had to get her far away from the temptations of the city – he had to get her far away from – him. He figured that she thought he didn't know. But he knew ... he knew.

"Did you see her yesterday? Out planting flowers without caring who saw her?"

"Doesn't she realize that it's just not proper – that she must be confined? Why she acts as if nothing's wrong with her!"

"Appalling! I'm sure she knows that it's not acceptable to be seen in public in her condition. I don't understand why she insists on being different."

"And it's not only that – did you notice her dresses all have those fancy buttons on them? Doesn't she know that it's sinful to be so adorned?"

"Disgraceful! I'll bet she bought them in the city – the city corrupts, you know."

"You're absolutely right, Sarah. Why there's no tellin' what goes on there."

"Don't ever let anything corrupt the happy way that you feel when you make something beautiful. It can be something that you make with your hands, or something that you do – but don't ever let anyone tell you that you're not good enough or that what you do isn't important." As Anna looked at the shining faces surrounding her on the back lawn, she felt truly happy. Working with her fifth grade Sunday school class was one of her few joys these days. The children were still so full of life – so curious – so uncorrupted by the expectations of the church – the conformity of the world of the church. For you see, the church really was "the world" for everyone in her acquaintance – the adult everyone that is. She had met someone once, though, who was different ...

"Samuel, I cannot get behind the wheel of that automobile! It just wouldn't be right!"

"Anna – oh, my beautiful Anna – you can do anything that you want. If you could only see that the world is yours!"

Anna watched the wind gently blow Samuel's fiery hair as he

Gos—Shunned

admired her from the other side of the car. His smile was so inviting – so alive. She often wondered when she was with her new friend if she had ever seen Joshua smile. It was hard to recall ... As they wheeled down the lakeshore drive Anna felt the exhilaration of the cool breeze as it mingled with the warmth of the sunlight. It was a perfect day – she felt so free!

“I’ve heard tell that she kept company with a man in the city.”

“How could that be? Reverend Black would never stand for that!”

“But all the same, they say it’s true. They say she wouldn’t stay home. She went out and got a job in one of those horrid shops and met – a man!”

“Disgraceful!”

“Unheard of! Something’s got to be done about her! Someone has got to come to the aid of our dear minister. I’m sure that he’s done all he can to make her see the err of her ways. Our prayers are just not enough anymore – we must bring that evil woman before the church.”

As Anna wiped her tears with the back of her sleeve, she slowly turned her head in the direction of the church. She could just see it looming above the next rise – so erect, so foreboding. She could also see the somberly dressed congregation gathering around her husband – consoling – enfolding. Mesmerized, she continued to watch as the dim figures seemed to further enshroud him in their presence. But suddenly, out of the corner of her eye, she caught a glimpse of a sprite shape streaking over the rise. As her small son ran toward her, his golden hair clashed with the spark in his blue gray eyes.

“Wait Mommy! I don’t care what they say – I’m coming with you!” □

Dawn
H.
Moses

Identification

Ourself so small
Though infinite
A yell within our soul
What point is there?
What is the actual goal?

She left St. Petersburg
when she was fifteen.
Her parents bought her
a one way ticket to Berlin.
He walked from Kiev
through frozen fields of Poland,
cyrillic letters raining where he went.
They met in a small library
where poetry stretched wide on the shelves
wider than politics, wider than philosophy, wider than physics
and I already was there
in the fireworks of their eyes.

Andre
de
Korvin^o

Intersection

Andre
de
Korvin

It’s not
easy

Writing poems about aging
facing blank pages at the River Cafe.
I write ‘time flows differently inside a poem’
and the page catches my reflection.
On the other side of the glass, my father sits at his desk.
He jots down another stanza,
a rose blooms on the tip of his pen.
He looks up, his face
younger than mine.

Andre
de
Korvin

To Mr.
Vanee

Children who had imagination said:
Mr. Vanee, our math teacher,
is made of empty space.
I still can see him
ascending the steps of our school
apathy on his heels
like a dog on a leash.
Years later, he’s a corpse in my roughdrafts,
his grave marked by a crossed off stanza,
and the whiteness of the page blazes
like the winter he carried within.

^o Professor / Computer and Mathematical Sciences

Their song has no rhythm
It cannot hold a tune
Perplexing
Confusing
Its all the same word

*Dawn H.
Moses*

Political Rhetoric

*David
Vandiver*

Camelot's Creed

Saddened, in melancholy solitude I grieve
The evil of laical madness I see,
Right turned wrong and wrong inside out;
"An ode to Camelot's Creed."

Faceless faces, succumbed by their greed,
Feign their hallowed humanitarian deeds,
Right turned wrong and wrong inside out;
"Forsaken is Camelot's Creed."

On the blood of virtue and innocence feed
the tabescent demons who seek by decree,
Right turned wrong and wrong inside out;
"Mourn ye for Camelot's Creed!"

Imperilled humanity! Listen! Hear incubus creep!
Awaken and face him or face your defeat,
Right turned wrong and wrong inside out;
"Resolve ye to Camelot's Creed!"

Come righteous warriors, now gather your seed!
Make fast your procession! In battle proceed!
Nevermore right turned wrong nor wrong inside out;
"Defend ye forever, Camelot's Creed!"

Understanding perfection
Is not materialistic possessions,
Instead it is a particular view
Of things that are actual.

*Troy E.
Faldyn*

The Ideal Perfection

Perceptions of emotions,
Forever held by these items,
Sharing intentions of one
With the ideals of two.

One thing is perfection
Not by a sense of physical being,
But by knowing in your heart
That perfection will always remain.

A special kind of relation
That time cannot diminish,
Not one of two becoming one,
Instead, two becoming closer as two.

It is not a lover
That holds that perfection
Yet, that special friend
Is the one who forever is ideal.

*Nicole
Smart*

Black Diamond

Yes.
I
Am
Wealthy.
Rich with darkness
Of color so
Pure
Deep
Majestic.

Yes.
I
Am wealthy.
Splendors abound
In heritage
In pride
In spirit
In song.

A child cries
 When laughter turns to sorrow.
An elder questions
 The fate that brings tomorrow
Understanding
 A decision yet unclear
Life's mystery
 A universal estranged fear

Fire in water, which glows eternal
Never ending, glow bright
Dusk, dawn, the force nocturnal
Through the eyes of darkest night

Fear enlivened, none for long
Growing weaker through each stage,
Belief of passage, evil gone,
With a Zephur's burning rage

*Troy E.
Faldyn*

Zephyr's Fire

Love's unsodden
 When nurtured through the heart
Emotion standing
 Must play its forbidden part
Inner feeling
 Through fire of the hidden soul
Blindsight thinking
 Through the eye that fiercely holds

Internal darkness, led to shine
Forever, never through eyes of black
Conflicting pleasure, passage of time
The coldest fire in turning back.

Never ending, fading sorrow
Holding high its angelic device
Never dying beyond tomorrow
Like the rose which lives but twice.

Getting up with the morning sun,
the day has just begun,
For my grandfather the saw miller and
my grandmother the cotton picker.

Getting up with the morning sun,
the miller's day has just begun.
The buzzing, whirring, and cutting
of the saw's wheel
As the shavings of wood fall like rain.

*Yvonne
Ruth*

A Hard Day

Getting up with the morning sun,
the picker's day has just begun.
Bending, pulling, and throwing-in
The work of a picker never ends.

Cutting and picking; picking and cutting
Until there is no morning sun,
because the miller and picker
can't cut or pick anymore
For the miller's soul has faded away
and the picker's eyes shall see
no other day.

*Nicole
Smart*

Ponderance: To our mother, with love

I wonder
What it would be like . . .
To soar
as a vixen
or slither
like the serpent?
To be at the mercy
Of the ignorant. . .

Nick waited for the bus and tried not to look at the old man on the bench. Don't look 'em in the eye or they'll ask you for money. It was his mother's voice. His mother always said that those people on the street who asked you for money were bums. She worked hard to make a living for herself and Nick and she wasn't about to give money to some bum. So Nick tried not to look at him. He sure looked like a bum. He was probably already drunk. Nick couldn't help but notice the long white hair and the long beard that would have been white if it hadn't been yellow. He noticed the stained brown pants and the dirty tennis

Shiny Black Shoes

Tommy N. Thomason

shoes — two different tennis shoes. The old man wore no socks. A wrinkled ball cap sat on the man's head and the visor covered his eyes so Nick dared a

look in the old man's face. The old man hadn't stirred — he probably really was drunk, and it was only eight o'clock in the morning.

Pitiful, he thought, couple more weeks and I'll have the car — then I won't have to look at this kind of thing anymore. I worked hard for my education. I worked hard for my job. No reason I should give a bum like that anything. Nick thought briefly that he was perhaps being unfair. After all, the old man hadn't asked him for anything. A bum's a bum, and this bum would probably get around to asking for a little change.

Nick bent down to clean a smudge off his shiny black shoes and as he did, he heard the old man chuckle softly to himself. Nick wondered what he was laughing at and decided that the old man was probably crazy, too. The bus came and Nick got on and rode downtown to his new office and his new job — a direct by-product of his new degree.

The next morning, when Nick went to the bus stop, the old man was there again. He wore the same pants, the same shoes, the same cap. Nick wore a different suit, a different tie and the same shiny black shoes. He turned his back to the old man and waited for the bus. He tried not to even glance in the bum's direction this time and looked continually up the street for the bus. He heard the old man get up and thought, he's gonna ask for money. Nick decided to put a stop to this nonsense right away and turned to look the man right in the eye. Instead of the weak, deluded eyes that Nick thought he would see, he stared into a cold, hard intelligence that make him feel like a child. Nick's confidence emptied out of him like air from a balloon, he forgot what he was going to say, stuttered, tried to remember and finally said "Look buddy, I don't have any money for

you." Nick didn't sound nearly as forceful as he had hoped he would. The old man looked at Nick, smiled to himself and walked away, talking to himself: "I guess someone 'll tell him." Nick thought it was an odd thing to say.

Nick stood there alone at the bus stop thinking that something had gone wrong, but he couldn't figure out what it was. What was he supposed to do? Give up his hard earned money to some wino who wouldn't even know where the money came from a half hour later. The bus came and Nick got on it, almost forgetting the incident entirely.

On the bus, Nick noticed an attractive young woman with long brown hair, and wonderful eyes. He tried his best to casually, confidently walk to the seat across from the young woman and he sat down and casually, confidently glanced up at the young woman. She smiled. He said hello. She giggled. Nick looked confused. She giggled again, and asked him what was all over his back and Nick checked and discovered that he had been chosen, set apart, delegated, as the morning pigeon outhouse.

I guess someone 'll tell him. □

Tommy N. Thomason

The Fabric of Flight

Read, she said. You can go anywhere, you can do anything.
You can learn about the war, the big one WWII.
You can see it through a soldier's eyes,
Or a thirteen year old Jewish girls-reading takes you there.
Read, she said. Read all you can.
Float down the Mississippi, with a boy and a slave.
Learn what slavery feels like—and freedom.
Read, she said.

(I had a dream.)

Reading takes you there—listen to Socrates, to Jesus.
To philosophers and story-tellers,
Tales of truth and wisdom and fantasy.
Be frightened, be amused, be amazed, be encouraged.
Reading takes you there.

(I dreamed we were at a different school.

The teacher was the same, we were wearing wings.
Wings of fabric made from the pages of books
And she was teaching us to fly.)

Odessa touched the mirror like one touches an iron when unsure of its temperature. It was old and some of its silver backing had come off in specks, taking away from its once smooth youthfulness. This was a thing she had dearly loved about Great Grandmama Phillipa who had left her the mirror when she passed away less than a month ago. It was her legacy. It was said that Great Grandmama would sit in front of the mirror, Odessa was told by her father, and stare at it for hours, sometimes applying cosmetics and sometimes talking to herself. Her

soliloquy could only be heard if one stopped long enough outside her bedroom door before opening it. Once she had realized her solitude had been disrupted, she would abruptly

Silver Reflected

by L. Ross

stop her soliloquy and quietly continue to apply moisturizers and cremes to her face, taking much time to slowly massage the muscles in her face. Phillipa's husband, Grandpapa Samuel admitted that this behavior was vary strange, but jokingly confessed he liked the results the cremes would have on his wife's youthful looking skin and the curative, calming effects the mirror had on her temperament.

Once thought to be a determined woman, Phillipa had changed. It had been three weeks before their tenth wedding anniversary and she was in the ninth month of her third pregnancy. She had been feeling tired and had begun to take many naps during the day. Oftentimes she complained of an ache on her right side and ate very little to try to overcome the full feeling the growing child inside her created. She already had two sons, which much pleased their father, but she wanted so much to have a daughter, a child of her own.

Grandpapa remembers that there was a thick fog the night of the birth, the kind of thickness that made his neck tight and created a pressure in his ears. After the end of fifteen long, laborious hours Phillipa was told the baby had been stillborn. When her husband came to console her, she caught a glimpse of the baby's hands as the midwife whisked the limp child out of the bedroom and down the hall. All the fingers had been there, so what was the problem, the hands were perfectly formed. Why had goodness taken her baby away, finally, a female child that would have been loved and cherished enormously.

Phillipa had been storing up maternal love for her child, now, for seven months, ever since her suspicions of pregnancy had been confirmed by Dr. Theodore in town. What was she to do with all that emotion now? Taking a moment of time to create without the benefit of a finished product left Phillipa feeling useless, empty. With no

other outlet to shun her grief and anger Phillipa stayed more and more to herself. Her two sons were fast approaching their teens and spending more time with their father, making the nest of love (Phillipa had created when she would enter the empty nursery) seem more and more unoccupied.

When their tenth anniversary did arrive Samuel bought his wife the gilded Tiffany mirror that the sales lady assured him would brighten any lady's heart. He came home with it that evening and found his wife in the parlor, which has become cold by the early dusk of fall. He started a fire in the hearth, trying to focus his wife's attention on the brightly blue papered package wrapped with a white bow. Phillipa barely noticed her husband as she took another sip of her port and muttered, "How was your day, dear?" She seemed to choke on her words and wiped her mouth with her handkerchief after sputtering them out.

"What's that you have there?" The question was automatic after her curious eyes finally caught the light reflected by the fire onto the package. "'Didn't you remember what day this was,'" he asked, adding, "Don't you feel well, dear?" She was still in her nightgown from that morning and looked as if she had not washed her hair in days. She had bothered to put on some lipstick and a bit of rouge, perhaps in an attempt to cheer herself up.

Phillipa had been very cheery before and during the pregnancy. She had been active in their church and was forever trying to head up this or that volunteer campaign, but the careful, vitality. She had always contained a tinge of arrogance. They had met at a catholic school dance and when he first saw her, she was the prettiest girl he'd ever seen and couldn't take his eyes off of her.

He couldn't take his eyes off her now as she was presented the package and tore open the blue wrapping, exclaiming with eyes bring with reserved excitement, "Oh, it's a mirror from Tiffany's, I had forgotten, darling, that today was our anniversary, thank you so much!" He poured her another port and one for himself asking her "Would you like to go out tonight for a nice meal?" She declined and they sat there by the fire most of the night with Phillipa petting the mirror every so often and admiring its gilded edges and shiny glass.

After that night, Phillipa turned one of the guest rooms into a room of her own so she could "Have more privacy, time to heal" as it were. Grandpapa said he did not totally agree to her sleeping alone and even less so when Grandmama would spend hours in her room carrying on what he thought he heard as a muted conversation. Outside her room she had become cheerier again, getting involved in church activities but abstaining from marital exercises with her husband, except by some odd calculation of the cycle of the full moon. She never seemed to get any older. Even the

Ross—Silver Reflected

day she died, at age seventy, she seemed no older than a woman of, perhaps, forty. Except for the salt and pepper hair, she had earned over the years, her skin was as soft and supple and her appearance was much as when she was a young woman. Sometimes Samuel would peer through the keyhole of her bedroom door to find her naked from the waist up, fondling her breasts while looking in the mirror. Although the conversation she carried on while committing this exercise he found odd, it was still a sight that made him long for the full moon.

He thought of this while he told Odessa about the mirror as he gave her the heirloom. It had been up in the attic for at least five years, Phillipa finally agreeing to let him take it there after a fit of jealousy had enraged him enough to threaten to destroy it. She still went to visit the old mirror, though, and on her last visit fell from the attic stairs, breaking her hip and remaining in the hospital until she died.

Grandmama had passed away last month, leaving her the faded mirror. Odessa adored the mirror and soon found herself caressing it. Odessa was the only granddaughter, the only daughter of four siblings and four male cousins. She took the mirror to the nearest silversmith to get the back sanded and resurfaced. When she picked it up, she marveled at how the silversmith made the mirror seem like new by resurfacing the back and shining the gilded border. Odessa took her inheritance home to her bedroom and placed it upon her highboy dresser. Weeks later, her brother peered into the keyhole of her now often locked bedroom door to find his eighteen year old sister, naked, her body kissing the mirror, chanting in some unknown conversation. □

Philonis
Stevenson

Hymns

she say
hummmm
i say
why you go
hummmm
lak dat ?
she say
HUMMM
moe loud
you sad?

Allen
Lawless | Valentines

Words are just words, expressions
I share with you
But when I say "I love you" these
words I know are true,
You've filled my heart with many things, all of
which I know
For in these things are our love that
will always grow,
Stronger and stronger with each
passing day,
Our love can only grow better in every
kind of way,
We've been through a lot and more
I'm sure we will
But when people tell me to move on,
I just tell them to chill
Cause loving you is what I'll do
down that long and winding road
Just count on me and you'll see
you'll always have me to hold.
forever my love.

Philonis
Stevenson

Caesarean

you are lost - yet near
as my water rush forth
i become iphigenia
sacrificed - tied down
————— cut —————
you are here

After their spontaneous excursion out of the city, they immediately took up where they left off. First of all, they moved into a smaller apartment in a well-tended building; it was a very much to their liking and – they thought approvingly – quite well situated. Even before removing to their new abode, Mr. Samsa took upon himself the liberty of discharging the door – slamming harridan they had been unfortunate enough to engage in the first place; their new cleaning woman performed as well the services of maid and cook; so, freed from these mundane tasks, life went on for the Samsas.

Metaphological

by Hollis Evon Ramsey

Their main concerns were these: earning a livelihood and paying off the debt they owed their late son's company. To this end, Mrs. Samsa sewed such a prodigious pile of delicate lingerie as to amass a tidy sum. Day after day, she sat at the table, head bowed over her work, cutting and joining, embroidering and clipping till her eyes reddened from the strain and her fingertips swelled, calloused over, and eventually remained numb. Mr. Samsa invigorated somewhat by their relocation (as well as by a thorough cleaning and mending of his stained and well-worn uniform, for which he had his wife to thank), rose steadily in the hierarchy of his company, from messenger to doorman at the bank. At his age he should not have had to work at all (he thought), but circumstances being what they were, he was glad for a job that provided for his family. His relief at the easing of their so recently precarious financial situation showed in the self-importance with which he swung open the portals to the passing of some minor functionary or other, giving the gleaming handle (which he polished incessantly) a peculiar flourish in the unlatching process that seemed, to him, quiet impressive.

As for Grete-ah, the changes wrought in recent months had affected her the most. The bloom in her fresh young cheek, the pith of her lithe young frame, could not go unnoticed for long. Her study of shorthand and French, added to her burgeoning beauty, served to further her career. From salesgirl she rose to sales secretary, administering to the needs of the store's several salesmen: sorting their samples, inking their itineraries, tracking their timetables. She too was able to contribute a small sum towards the elimination of the family's now rapidly dwindling debt (imagine! What would have taken one person five years to accomplish would take three persons less than half that time!), but the grueling hours of her work

precluded the pleasure that had at first attended the weekly ceremony. Grete played her violin infrequently, preferring instead to peruse the illustrated magazines that were currently all the rage.

One still evening in the spring of that year, Grete was suddenly seized with the desire to play her violin. Taking up the instrument and fetching the music stand and sheet music from the closet to which they had been relegated, she embarked upon a plaintive air that had always been a particular family favorite, and their rooms were rich with dulcet tones. As Grete played, the melancholy moved her to shed silent tears, and her parents wept in concert. The dim memories of family tragedy were purged somewhat; they felt refreshed, as though after a spring shower, while the *aqia vita* traced its course down their creasy miens in a meandering search for the gravitational flashpoints of nose and chin. "Ah, Grete," murmured her mother. And "ah, Grete," echoed her father more firmly – the patriarchal stamp of approval. The swelling sounds escaped their modest quarters, embracing the crepuscular night and enveloping the Samsas in a tranquility they had rarely known.

The violin's piercing tremolo permeated the stolid building's musty crevices. One of the tenants was moved to respond to its call, in a manner that at another time might have been considered too forward, for this tenant traced the music to its source – he knocked on their front door. There followed a cessation of all sound, as Grete was startled into the here-and-now. Mr. Samsa stood smartly in instinctive answer to the impersonal summons and marched briskly to the offending instrument. He grasped the doorknob and twisted it sharply, thereby demonstrating to the unknown entity outside his annoyance at such an unwelcome intrusion. He swung open the door (professionally, it should be noted).

At the entrance stood Hermann Brodsky, a young man of medium build whose dark hair stood in sharp contrast to rather pale complexion. The Samsas knew him to be the son of their neighbor, and therefore a neighbor in his own right; when they met in the halls or passed on the stairs, they nodded politely one to the other, never betraying any additional familiarity than what was required of propriety.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he began, "but I could not resist the beautiful music, which surely came from your rooms?" His questing glance took in the scene, and the answer was evident. "I hope, sir, that I will not be the cause of its surcease," he continued somewhat more earnestly, seemingly imbued with fresh courage upon glancing in the musician's direction. Focusing his attention upon the doorman (reluctantly, it seemed to Grete, who felt in his perusal a potential for . . . something), young Mr. Brodsky spoke more firmly. "I wished merely to thank the musician for the entertainment, for myself and

on behalf of my family." Mr. Samsa's gruffness faded in the face of the young man's palpable discomfort; he held the door invitingly open as he smiled a welcome. And so Herman Brodsky entered their lives, to the lament of the *Liebestraum*.

Grete and Hermann had many common desires. They both worked to contribute to the support of their families. Herman was an administrator in a large, government-funded insurance company and spent his days filing papers, drafting policy statements and writing brochures. He was regular in his habits and generally a first-class civil servant; his was a promising and respectable career.

Herman was very concerned with his status in the community. One could find no fault in his attire or his posture – both were exactly what was required of a man in his position on the social ladder. He and Grete would pass many evenings tracing the precise steps of his bureaucratic ascension, up the rungs to the pinnacle of class. "You see, Grete," he would often pontificate, "how right it is that I attend to my responsibilities. My employer cannot fault my diligence or my loyalty. My acquaintance cannot fault the regularity of my behavior. I have always been careful to maintain a correct character, and I must say it pleases me exceedingly that you are in agreement with these views." Grete was flattered to be so complemented. She basked in his approval; it was rarely necessary for her to participate verbally in these conclaves. An occasional "yes," Herman, you are right," would suffice. Her very acquiescence gratified him.

In the course of their courtship, with its elaborate displays of preening and posturing, it was determined they both wished – someday – to have children of their own to care for. (After all, who could be there to provide for them when it became necessary? One really had to entertain the possibility, circumstances being what they were in those times).

On this firm foundation they built a relationship that very soon admitted the possibility of marriage. Shortly after the subject was broached, the ceremony was performed. All involved were extremely satisfied as the inevitable end was attained. The Samsas and the Brodskys both benefited from the joining of their progeny, as Herman and Grete, by pooling their earnings, were able to engage much larger rooms on Charlotte Street and there to install both sets of in-laws in relative comfort.

In due time, the Samsas' debt was repaid; they were no longer under so onerous an obligation. To celebrate this new freedom, Grete became pregnant and, in the month of July of that year, on the second day, she gave birth to a son. She asked Herman if he liked the

name Gregor, for that was name she wished to give their son. "His name will be Gregor, if that is your preference, but I wish to give him a name also, if you will not object too strenuously." And in answer to Grete's query, he named the name Joseph. "Who is Joseph to you?" she quizzed artlessly. "Well," he replied, somewhat taken aback by her guilelessness, "and who is Gregor to you?"

Little Gregor Joseph Brodsky, it seemed, was to be named after two uncles who died tragically. Grete told Herman about her late brother Gregor – never before so much as hinted at – and Herman told Grete about his late brother Joseph – likewise a complete mystery to the Samsas. In what seemed at first a remarkable coincidence, both men had succumbed to the same affliction; the doctors had a name for it – *chronic orthopterosis* was their diagnosis. The name of the malady meant nothing to the two families, but they were intimately acquainted with the symptoms. Apparently the condition was not so unusual in the city at this time; much as, at another time, another plague cuts a swath across a civilization's habitats, leaving death and despair in its wake, but leaving so much of it as to inure the survivors to the destruction. (It seems that is possible to habituate oneself to whatever fate may throw out, if only at the price of a certain numbness – a paralysis, as it were, of the psyche.) But what had seemed at first remarkable, became in time less so.

Shortly after the birth of the heir apparent, the elder Samsas both ceased working at their jobs. The elder Brodskys had left off work entirely many years earlier, so all four in-laws now lived in retirement in the home of their children. Mr. Samsa left off wearing his uniform, opting instead for a fine warm robe purchased at one of the better shops. It was a time of great contentment for him, that he could once again indulge himself in his rightfully-deserved retirement. He and his counterpart, Brodsky père, reflected each other in their daily routines – they rose and retired, robed and disrobed, ingested their meals and expelled their wastes, with an unremarkable synchronicity. Their wives devoted the majority of their waking hours administering to the menfolk, which arrangement, in all its comfortable monotony, appeared to appease them all.

Grete was able to take leave of her secretarial position, so as to attend to Gregor Joseph personally. Herman, you see, did not approve of a mother who did not raise her son at first hand. After all, what would people think? Grete, of course, was in complete agreement with her husband. As they often reminded each other, baby Gregor was *their* investment in the future. That was as it should be. You only had to look to *their* parents to see perfect complacency.

The years pass in a welcome tedium – nothing occurs that is

Ramsey—Metaphological

not planned well in advance, no situation arises to challenge the status quo. Life goes on for the Brodsky clan. Gregor graduates from the nursery at an early age and takes up residency at the top of the house, where – as his father never fails in reminding him – he can reflect upon the responsibilities that in time (but not so soon!) will be his.

When Gregor first leaves the nursery for the solitude of the attic, he often whimper in his loneliness, wishing for the warmth of the hearth two flights below. Herman cures him of this unseemly habit in the same way that *his* father had cured *him* – he snatches Gregor up from his cot and carries him, clad only in his thin cotton nightshirt, out to the balcony, deposits him onto the cold brick floor, and locks the door behind him, leaving Gregor to contemplate the alternative of an even colder loneliness. Gregor learns his lesson well (he is quite intelligent, you see) and subsequently becomes a quiet and obedient child, much to the satisfaction of his parents.

Gregor is exhibiting some interest in a literary career, his teacher informs them. Herman – speaking practically and in the interest of the whole family – will not even consider such a career for his son and heir. Between father and son there grows a rift; Herman's uncompromising hostility is natural, when one considers the notoriety a literary career would bring to a good, hard-working civil servant ... and his family, of course. The budding author would do well to recall the forbidding cold of his childhood punishment, for that is the lot of the literati in society.

Gregor embarks upon a career as a salesman. It is a socially respectable career (his mother and his namesake uncle having broken ground, so to speak), and his father approves. More and more, the Brodsky enclave comes to depend upon Gregor. He dutifully shoulders the responsibilities that gravitate toward him, day after day, week after week, year after year.

The young man is satisfied – nay, even more, content – with his life. He feels a little thrill of pride with every monetary contribution to the family pot. He is an adult, and his elders depend upon him; the responsibilities upon which he had so often reflected are now his; he is more than ready to accept them. Yet during the autumn of one particularly difficult year – it is *this* year, as a matter of fact – he begins to have unsettling dreams. □

Michelle
Nip

Affinity

Some people say by affinity individuals meet,
Become friends if they sowed the seeds of love
Several lives before.
We have affinity 'cause we met
On a land that's foreign to both of us
I guess we also got ready several lives ago
To welcome the budding of this young friendship.
Yet I'm not satisfied
With this relationship that seems so remote.
Should I fertilize this young sprout
With affections and love,
Or should I go ahead and wait for more transmigrations,
To make this unique, scented bloom of us
Blossom and toss its head in the light breeze?

Michelle
Nip

Melodies

In these days of dreams and fancies,
Our friendship is like the —
forever existing melodies
Softly playing about those —
Missing sweet memories,
Till the forever thereafter . . .

Frances
J. Fisher

Take a Chance

Your passion entices me
like a snug fitting
red sequined dress
warm and exciting
tempting me
to
try
it
on.

Frances J.
Fisher

Therapy

They finally met in the kitchen between late nights at the office and running to appointments.

He wished her happy birthday and declared emphatically, "I love you."

She waited. She waited for some token of his love. Some small brightly gift-wrapped bauble that would deliver childlike delight and inspire celebration rather than dread about being another year older. She barely remembered romantic evenings and sweet surprises and desired the heat they once ignited.

Nothing was presented. No card. No token. No bauble.

She glared at him with burning eyes and glibly replied, "I love you too. I'm going shopping."

15 August 1943: five years earlier than before
Stalag V, near Mannheim, Germany

Sherlock sat on the bench, literally and figuratively, and wanted to throttle somebody – anybody – for both reasons.

There was no better way to spend the ides of August, in a prison camp, at least, than by playing baseball. Inside the barracks, although it was relatively dark and shaded, no breezes came to call, and the stagnant air seemed to wrap itself about one's body like an unwholesome and unwelcome second skin. One could always volunteer for the local theater group, of course, but it was no cooler in the theater than it was anywhere else, and besides, the rehearsals had a distressing tendency to degenerate into petulant arguments.

The showers provided relief from the heat for a while, but the trickle of tepid water, if left on for too long, had a disturbing tendency to trickle less and less until only the occasional drop splashed down upon one's body, signalling the end of that diversion – and besides, it wasn't cricket, as the British officers liked to say, leaving no water for the next man. Sherlock had a sneaking suspicion that the Germans considered it uncouth as well, and kept some ferret-faced litter *Unteroffizier* hidden somewhere in the washroom, with his only job to slowly reduce the water pressure until the self-indulgent prisoner was forced out to fend for himself.

No, Sherlock had long ago come to the conclusion that he may as well sit outside as anywhere; it was no cooler, but it was no hotter, and at least out there the air occasionally moved a bit. And, since Sherlock knew himself to have a relatively short internal time-span for sitting and doing nothing, he'd organized a baseball league. He'd finagled an assortment of bats, gloves, and balls from the American Red Cross, then gotten his point of view persuasively across to the major portion of the men. As a result, as well as coordinating escape attempts within the camp, Sherlock also managed seventeen baseball teams of varying calibers in a free-for-all attack upon the *Stalag V* Camp Series Trophy. In both processes, he kept uncountable prisoners both excited and entertained, and made himself both popular and unpopular with the Germans, depending upon which role he was fulfilling at the time. Sherlock was, generally speaking, a reasonably contented man, knowing he was fighting his own personal war to the best of his capabilities.

But today, *things* just weren't going his way. Not only was he still smarting from the wreck of a perfectly wonderful escape

Excerpt from Friends

by Cheryl Beeler Grey

attempt and the resulting thirty days' solitary. He'd also bobbled two easy throws from his position at second base, and the only thing he'd hit all game long was the mosquito nibbling at his ankle. To make matters worse, it would soon be his turn at bat again, and he'd have to stand back up there at the plate and make a fool of himself again – unless, of course, two of the three men batting before him made outs and mercifully ended this game. Sherlock was not normally a pessimist, and normally a tied game in the bottom of the ninth inning would have him screaming his lungs out for his gang's efforts. But this was not a normal day and he didn't feel like screaming.

Wings, whose spectacularly dribbled sacrifice between first and second bases had tied the game two at-bats ago, plopped down on the bench beside Sherlock, and stared at him with one wrinkle between his washed-out blue eyes. "I'm worried about you."

Sherlock cocked an eyebrow at him and said nothing.

"After all, you've been out of the cooler for over a week now," Wings continued, "and you have not even decided where to dig the next tunnel."

"I keep thinking about the lavatory in the theater," Sherlock said. "That concrete floor's just begging to be demolished."

Wings shook his head. "The theater's off limits. One hint of hanky-panky there, and the Goons will close it down without mercy. And too many of the men enjoy the theater's performances – why, I can't imagine."

"You have to know how to enjoy a spoof," Sherlock said.

"Although I doubt the performances are *intended* to be spoofs. Yeah, I hear what you're saying. The Escape Committee voted the theater off limits when it was first built, for that very reason. But it keeps haunting me."

"Well, you need to choose your haunts more carefully." Wings suddenly stopped speaking and stiffened, staring fixedly at the batter's box. Sherlock heard the sudden crack of bat meeting ball at high speed.

Wings jumped up and yelled, "Good shot, Pat!"

Sherlock winced. Even the kid was playing better than he was today, and Pat wasn't even an American kid. "Who's where? I can't stand to look."

Wings sat back down. "Bonnie's on second, Pat's on first. And I must say, jealousy doesn't become you." Wings stiffened again, but this time he was looking back over his shoulder toward the outside gate. When he spoke again, his voice was quiet and formal. "Here comes your friend."

Sherlock twisted and looked for himself. Sure enough, Hoffmann sauntered toward the bench. He wasn't looking where he

was going; his green eyes were fixed on the playing field and lively interest.

Sherlock scratched his chin, the germ of an idea occurring to him. "I wonder if he's ever played baseball before."

Wings shrugged. "If he has," he said, "see if he'll bat for you. He can't be any worse than you are today."

"Thanks," Sherlock said, and meant it. A graceful way out, after all, was a graceful way out, and he didn't want to bat again today.

"Unless, of course, Robbie or MacElsa hits a homer and sweeps the diamond clean. Then, neither of your services shall be required." Wings left on that note, rejoining the cheering spectators closer to the batter's box. After all, those two sluggers who were the heart of the gang's lineup were coming up to bat, Robbie first.

Hoffmann stopped at the bench without glancing down or even saying hello. He propped one black soft-leather boot on the bench beside Sherlock and leaned on it, keeping the other knee straight so that he stretched the Achilles tendon. Today, instead of unmarked battledress, he wore the black Panzer crew uniform of a non-commissioned officer, with red piping about the collar tabs and no insignia. Maybe, Sherlock thought, Hoffmann had recognized the social mistake of confusion inherent in wearing unmarked battledress, and was swinging the pendulum all the way to the opposite side by wearing this instead. It looked hot, but otherwise loose and comfortable.

Since Hoffmann said nothing, Sherlock felt constrained to open the conversation. He said the first thing that came to his mind. "Hey, kraut. How's it hanging?"

Hoffmann glanced at him, reflectively, as if unsure whether to take offense. He seemed to decide against it, glanced down at his bent knee, then back to the baseball diamond. "Can't complain. Do you play?"

Sherlock winced. He would ask. "Yeah, I'm up at bat soon, if nothing happens." With any luck, something would happen; Sherlock distinctly heard the umpire yell strike two on Robbie. "How 'bout you?"

"Oh, years ago."

Sherlock glanced up sharply at that. Hoffmann's voice sounded wistful, almost nostalgic, an open invitation for him to take Sherlock's place at bat. After all, as Wings had said – "How many years? Ten? Fifteen?"

Hoffmann glanced down again, and Sherlock again marvelled at how green those green eyes were. "Not as many as that. Six or seven – I was at college at the time."

"What college?"

Hoffmann paused. Finally, reluctantly, he said, "Harvard."

Sherlock paused himself, impressed and a little shocked. The day, and even the game, seemed to still about him as he digested that. Clearly he remembered Hoffmann saying that, when he had been at college, he'd studied pre-med. and biology. The thought of Sherlock himself studying such a subject at, say, the University of Berlin, quaked him somewhere deep inside, and he realized just *how* good Hoffmann's English had to be.

Off to one side, the umpire yelled strike three, and Robbie sat down amid howls from the gang's supporters. Such interrupting sounds were enough to finalize Sherlock's decision. After all, about six years ago Harvard had a genuine baseball team.

"You could do me a favor," Sherlock said.

Hoffmann looked at him again, warily and out of the corner of his eye. "How?"

Sherlock waved toward home plate, where MacElsa grimly waggled a bat at the opposing pitcher. "Unless that big lug makes the third out, I'm supposed to bat after him, and so far today I've been pretty useless. Well, worse than useless, despicable. And I don't want to bat again. You could do it for me."

"Not if you paid me." Hoffmann turned back to the game, but without resolution, as if he wanted to be persuaded.

It wasn't much of an invitation, but it was something, and Sherlock accepted it as such. "Really, you could help a guy out here."

"You can't possibly be doing that poorly."

There was one real quick way to settle that. "Hey, Wings," Sherlock yelled.

Wings turned, one eyebrow cocked.

"He says I can't be playing that badly."

Wings shifted focus to Hoffmann. Sherlock watched as the two men made solid eye contact. "I don't care what he said, he's playing worse. Do us the favor and bat for him. We've got a bit of a rally going here, and it's a definite that he'd end it swinging. At least you'd be a possibility.

"And what will you do if I strike out?" Hoffmann asked.

Wings shrugged. "Blame him, of course." He jerked a thumb toward Sherlock. "It was his idea, I believe."

Hoffmann laughed, looked down at his clasped hands. Wings turned back to the game as the umpire called a ball, tight inside.

"But if you wanna do it," Sherlock said, "you'd better grab a bat and warm up. My slot's after MacElsa."

Hoffmann shook his head, still staring at the game. "You're inviting me to make a fool of myself."

Sherlock stared at Hoffmann's profile, noticing the squint lines beside the green eyes and the more sensitive curves about the

mouth. His comment surprised Sherlock, so he swiftly considered the implications, running through them in his mind. Hoffmann seemed to feel the formality of his status as an enemy officer, moreover one who had made a nuisance of himself, and it seemed to disturb him. This was an attempt to do the human thing – not the German thing, or the American thing, or the British stiff-upper-lip thing – but the human thing, by paying a purely social call and giving Sherlock some of his time. But Hoffmann didn't seem sure of his welcome, and obviously he doubted Sherlock's motives, and by doing so was perpetuating that formality. It was up to Sherlock to take the next step.

"No," Sherlock said. "No. I'm inviting you to play baseball with us."

Hoffmann stared at the game for a moment longer. Then he swivelled from the waist and stared at Sherlock. His mouth opened slightly, as if in surprise. Then he dropped his glance and shifted, bounding up and down on that bent knee as if it was a hobby horse. Sherlock was equally surprised by the little-boy gratitude that stare had contained. The German was touched. More than that, he was – yes, he was. He was embarrassed.

"Thank you," Hoffmann finally said.

Bat met ball again with a swinging crack, and the crowd roared for a few seconds. Sherlock got to his feet and stood on the bench to see above everyone's heads. MacElsa had sliced a very deliberate line drive past the shortstop to center field for a clean single. But it hadn't been deep enough for Bonnie on second to make it home, which meant the gang still needed another batter. And Sherlock wanted to do it even less, now that the bases were loaded with two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning of a tied ball game.

"Well?" Wings called to Hoffmann. "Do we have a substitute batter? Please say yes."

Wings, of course, had not been in on that little private exchange, and was actually being somewhat sarcastic. But Hoffmann seemed not to hear the inflections in the Briton's voice. He straightened and stepped over the bench toward the propped stack of bats.

Quietly, he said to Sherlock, "I'm still going to make a fool of myself." Aloud he said in passing to Wings, "Why not?"

The crowd of prisoners murmured slightly as the change of players was announced. Sherlock, wincing at their tactlessness, wished he could explain to them just what had happened a few moments ago. For the matter of that, he wished he clearly understood it himself. The only thing he was sure of was that it was nothing German, American, nor especially stiff-upper-lip British.

Hoffmann reddened under the disbelieving stares as he

selected a bat and limbered up. It was as if he immediately regretted letting himself be talked into this, because he never raised his eyes from the little tasks that go into preparing for an at-bat. But, at the same time, his chin hardened and his lips lost their sensitive look. His movements, as he wiped dirt on his hands and on the wrapped handle of the bat, as he stretched out his other Achilles tendon and shook out his shoulder muscles, were steady and deliberate. Sherlock stood on the bench and watched him, the same as everybody else, and wondered just what he had started. For some reason, he really wanted Hoffmann to hit a good one and impress the whole crowd.

At least Hoffmann looked fairly competent as he settled into the batter's box. He planted his feet relatively near the plate, carefully, one at a time, and waggled the bat a balanced three inches above his right shoulder and behind his ear. The crowd settled down, silently now, awaiting developments.

The opposing pitcher, Sergeant Barney Blake, was an ex-machine-gun crew leader who had been captured at the Kasserine Pass, single-handedly holding off a Panzer advance with a mortar until he ran out of shells. He hadn't gotten rattled then, according to the various reports Sherlock had heard, and no one in the camp was willing to report seeing him rattled since – not even when the Germans had caught him snipping through the barbed wire with a set of homemade clippers in broad daylight.

And he wasn't rattled now. Indeed, Sherlock was almost willing to swear that Sergeant Blake was smiling. Curious, Sherlock tried considering the situation from Blake's point of view – a high-ranking enemy officer one hard-ball pitch away, with no means of defense beyond a second-hand wooden bat. Sherlock jumped off the bench, yelling for time.

Sherlock was too late. Blake wound up and hurled the ball with an almost manic desperation, as if he knew he'd never have this chance again.

For a split second Hoffmann held his ground, the bat still waving gently above his shoulder. But the ball, both tight and inside, just kept getting tighter an closer inside. At the last possible moment, Hoffmann threw himself backward into the dirt. The fastball whipped through the little bit of air where he had been standing, before the desperately sidestepping catcher stopped it with his padded mitt and unpadded chest.

The crowd of prisoners broke into an undisciplined roar, approving and applauding Blake's aim. Blake himself didn't seem too happy, but then, he'd missed. Hoffmann, propped on one elbow where he'd landed in the dirt, was pale. His face seemed tight, with all traces of softness erased, and one rope of his black forelock had

disattached itself from the rest of his hair and fallen down across his high forehead into his eyes.

Sherlock was furious. A cold hard something encased his stomach and reached its fingers up into his brain, and concrete details vanished before its groping. All Sherlock could see was Hoffmann, slowly picking himself up and dusting the worst of the dirt from his black fatigues, and Blake, on the pitcher's mound fielding the catcher's return toss with a disappointed jerk of his glove. For a moment longer Sherlock stood beside the bench, wondering what he – as senior American officer – should do to level the playing field here and give Hoffmann a fair chance. He couldn't make too much of a public fuss over the incident, or it would appear that he was protecting Hoffmann. And Sherlock, for some strange reason, didn't want to give that impression, especially since he was pretty sure that Hoffmann was quite capable of taking care of himself. But nor could he simply ignore this, or Blake and various other belligerent prisoners might get the misguided impression that high-ranking German officers were fair game, which could lead to massive and well-earned reprisals in the camp. Sherlock had to do something; he just wasn't sure what.

Sherlock glanced back at the pitcher's mound just as Blake glanced over at him. Blake's eyes were narrow, his face rigid, and that clinched the issue for Sherlock. Without attracting the attention of the still noisome crowd, Sherlock pointed at Blake from across the diamond. Silently, Sherlock mouthed, "One more time, and you're mine." A forefinger jerked across his throat punctuated the message. Blake glanced at Hoffmann, standing just outside the batter's box staring rigidly back at him, then turned away, slapping the ball into his mitt.

"Okay, guys," Sherlock said above the now lowering voices, "that's not the first attempted beanball you've ever seen. Cool it down." He turned to Hoffmann. "You all right?"

Hoffmann glanced at him. Those green eyes glittered, but only for a moment. Then they cooled, and his mouth softened again before twisting into a wry grin. "I told you so."

Sherlock, taken aback, paused for a moment before grinning back at him. "Wanna back out? I won't hold it against you."

"No." Hoffmann didn't hesitate, but stepped into the batter's box.

Uh-oh. Sherlock felt more trouble brewing. But he couldn't just yank Hoffmann unceremoniously away from the plate and call the whole thing off. Nor could he order Blake off the mound. And Blake and Hoffmann were staring at each other again. For the first time, Sherlock wished he'd taken his own turn at bat, even if he had struck out. But everyone was not waiting on him, including the umpire.

Grey—Excerpt from *Friends*

There was nothing he could do, and he knew it. Sherlock shrugged and stepped out of the way, and the umpire yelled, "Play ball!"

Blake stared at Hoffmann, and Hoffmann stared back, for a long minute more. Blake seemed almost mesmerized by Hoffmann's gaze. Sherlock, standing behind the batter's box, could not see Hoffmann's face, but the mounting intensity within those black fatigues told its own story. Sherlock promised himself he'd never ask Hoffmann to bat for him again. Then Blake yanked his attention from Hoffmann's face and forced himself to concentrate on the catcher's signals. Hoffmann resettled at the plate. Sherlock wondered if he really was crouching lower this time, almost like a puma ready to pounce, or if the difference was only in his own imagination.

Blake straightened, paused with the ball and mitt at his belt, danced his measure on the mound, and hurled. The ball was high, almost to Hoffmann's shoulders. Sherlock relaxed. No beanball, this time. Hoffmann crouched back onto his right leg. Sherlock saw the bat shift down slightly behind his shoulder. The intensity coalesced until it was almost a tangible presence about the batter's box. Then Hoffmann glided forward onto his left leg, the bat whipped about in a blur like a striking cat's claw, and the hit ball smashed straight for Blake's crotch.

The crowd exploded into an equally approving roar. The runners on base, and Hoffmann at the plate, took off running at the crack of the bat. Blake frantically protected himself with his mitt. The ball smashed into the padding, the padding smashed into Blake, Blake danced three steps back, the ball tumbled into the dirt, Bonnie tore across home plate, and as easy as that the game was over. □

Tamara
J.
Taylor | **Rain**

Life giving/taking moisture
What emotions you evoke
Answer to the shaman's prayers
Monsoon terror to an island people
Acid, yellow, ecological mess
Refreshing drops riding a summer breeze
Rainbarrels, lakes, tanks, ponds, rivers,
Streams, bayous, arroyos, seas and oceans
Great gulps of relief

A single
drop
of life

Pinging on your windowpane

RAIN

Tangled scenes of frantic panic
Breathing heavy — it's closer, it's closer
The door is locked, the path is blocked
The phone is dead, the heart is bled.

Tamara
J.
Taylor

**Terror
Dreams**

Agony screams within the throat
And dies on the tongue

Thrashing on sheets
struggling for consciousness
Scratching and clawing towards awakening —

Go, hurry, HURRY, scream yourself awake!
Escape the grasp
Of the unknown terror
The other that stalks through dreams.

Oh sweet bliss! familiar sights
A comforting voice and touch
to ease the pounding heart
And heavy breath,
The spawn of terror dreams.

Nicole
Smart

Introspection

Who is she,
That onyx-eyed young woman
Solemnly staring
At me
In the mirror?
Be she
Friend
Or foe?
Only I know.

Tamara J.
Taylor

I AM — A Bedside Table in February

I took a deep breath and listened to the old brag of my heart, I am, I am, I am.

Sylvia Plath (1932-1963)

One overdue bill, screams the excess
of winter blues and Christmas past.

Dusty books patiently wait to fill a brief respite, like dry seeds
they anticipate the moisture of comprehension.

A fourth grade spelling list
awaits Friday morning's panic drill.

An unforgiving clock maliciously measures the
unequal hours of night and rest.

Two unread magazines portray the
true extremes of my psyche — Victoria and Ms.

Three sisters snapshot, we smile for our daddy
through the tranquil veil of youth.

One graduate school application promotes
optimistic foresight — helps me stay focused.

YOU MAY ALREADY BE A MILLIONAIRE! (thank you for
the daydream Ed McMahon.)

Valentine clutter; a wrinkled doily reads: i ♥ U mOm
A vase of fading blossoms, To the One I Love.

A circle of yellow yielded by an antique lamp
casts a comforting glow over all; and still,

One appealing mail-order catalog, begs
only to be included in this year's Christmas excess.

I was hovering over my breakfast as I was watching the Saturday morning cartoons in the dining room in our two-story house while my mother was cleaning the table.

"Joey, aren't you going to finish your cereal, honey?," said Mom.

"Yes mom, I will finish my cereal in a minute after I watch Wiley Coyote try to catch the roadrunner with another of this schemes." My father was sitting across from me reading the sports section of the morning newspaper.

"Son of a gun, the New Jersey Dodgers won last night in the last inning," he said as he was cheerful about his favorite baseball team having won. It was a beautiful Saturday morning in New Jersey and I planned on taking a bike ride around the neighborhood after I had finished eating my

The Supermarket Incident

by Miguel Alliegro

breakfast. I was 10-years-old, and like most little boys, I had my typical recreational interests. I loved to ride my bike during my off time from school. It provided me with a sense of freedom after a hectic week of school. After I had finished eating breakfast, I went out and grabbed my brand new bike that I received last Christmas. I was proud to see how shiny it still looked as it stood there on the porch. As I was getting ready to leave, my mother stuck her head out the door.

"Honey, remember we have to go get some new shoes and then go to the supermarket to get a couple of things."

"Yes mom, I will be back soon," I said reluctantly as I was riding off. I was not thrilled about having to go with my mother to get a new pair of shoes every time my old ones wore out. But a necessity was a necessity. As I was riding my bike, I observed a lot of people in the neighborhood. I felt free and in perfect harmony with myself as I was pedaling and pedaling. Once or twice, I spotted this girl who was mean to me. When she saw me, she came after me, but luckily I ditched her. The next person I spotted was my best friend Johnny. He was also on his bike.

"Hey Joey, my dad got three tickets to the baseball game today. You want to go with us? My dad will buy us some caramel popcorn and hot dogs. It will be great."

"I'm afraid I can't make it, Johnny. Later on, I have to go with my mom to get some stupid shoes. Afterwards, we have to go to the supermarket to pick up a few items."

Inside, I really wanted to go to this baseball game, as I was a baseball fan. But I knew that if I didn't go with my mother, she

Alliegro—The Supermarket Incident

would be disappointed. It was about noon when I came home. My mother was ready to go run the errands. I put my bike away and climbed into the station wagon. When we got to the Payless shoe store, my mother changed her mind about buying one pair of shoes. "I think I will buy you two pairs of shoes. One pair is for special occasions and the other pair is for playing."

I was bored out of my wits. I responded: "Yes mom." I wanted to be somewhere else. But I liked my new pairs of shoes and I wore my new pair of sneakers to the supermarket. When we got to the supermarket, my mother and I went our separate directions. We agreed to meet at the front when she was through doing the grocery shopping.

"Now Joey, don't go wander off anywhere outside the market. You can hang around freely if you like, as long as it is inside the market." She gave me a dollar so I could spend it on candy. First, I went to the toy section. I wanted to see if they had any plastic army men as I liked to play this game. Then I went to the candy section. I was hungry and I did not have anymore money on me as I already spent the dollar on a drink. I saw a bag of miniature chocolate bars. I opened it and took 3 or 4 of the bars and stuffed them in my pocket. While I was not looking, a man, who was an undercover police officer, saw me take the bars. I went to the other section and he purposefully followed me there so that he would catch me red-handed. As I was looking at some items in this section, he stood next to me and all of a sudden, he stuck his hand in my pocket.

"What is this you have here?"

"Just a candy bar, sir."

He reached again into my pocket and was astonished to find another one.

"Another one?"

"I meant to pay for it, sir. Honest, I was going to pay for it.

It's just that I was very hungry and ran out of money."

"Well, I am afraid I am going to have to take you to the back to sign some papers. Where is your mother?"

I felt very nervous and scared. I knew that my freedom was at stake here.

"I don't know where my mother is, sir. She is somewhere in the supermarket."

"Well, can you lead me to her?"

I said I would, and a nervous chill ran through my body as I was leading this police officer to my mother. This man, who is a total stranger, was going to take my freedom away. We were going in circles looking for my mother until we found her.

"Mam, are you this boy's mother?"

My mother was startled.

Alliegro—The supermarket Incident

"Yes I am, is there anything wrong?"

"I am a police officer and I spotted your son taking these candy bars without paying for the entire bag."

My mother had to go to the back to talk to the police officer.

"Officer, I will pay for the bag of candies. But please, don't take my son away."

Luckily, the officer was lenient and he let me go on the condition that the bag of candy was paid for. Both my mother and I were shaken up by the unfortunate incident, but deep inside, and only a boy of 10, I felt happy that my freedom was preserved. □

The water dripped tremulously from the lavatory faucet in the filthy, paper-strewn bathroom of the local Dairy Queen. Caroline Rivers viewed her reflection in the dirty, cracked mirror and groaned, "Oh, God!" Encased in a muddy cocoon, she stood there, scrutinizing her reflection. Mud — wet, oozing mud — cloaked her body from her wild, hairy halo to her squishy toes. Her eyes, glazed over in utter disbelief, focused on the primary job at hand — washing her body with slowly,

Beauty and the Brazos

by *Connie R. Thurmond*

slowly dripping water. No clean paper of any kind was in sight, so Caroline took used Kleenex from her mud-soaked purse and began the laborious task of bathing — in a foreign Dairy Queen, no less.

"Oh, God!" she exclaimed. "How could you do this to me? Whatever have I done to deserve this mess?" Quietly, she reflected on the fact that only seven hours had passed since she left home that very day. Only seven hours? Seemed like an eternity!

Caroline's day of infamy began with a starchy, crisp November morning.

"What a beautiful day for a geological field trip," she thought, as she drove to a college campus. Being in college after a 25-year absence was simultaneously a fearful challenge and a dream-come-true. She felt such happiness inside and eagerly anticipated the field trip to central Texas and "digging" in the red banks of the mighty, rolling Brazos River.

Caroline had dressed carefully. Her designer duds were totally color-coordinated from her earrings down to her brand new white

Nike's. Hot pink, her favorite color, blossomed like the first pink azaleas of Spring throughout her new pantsuit. She always liked to wear bright colors on a cold, wintry day.

Boarding the dilapidated school bus with her geological colleagues, Caroline literally bumped her way to Bryan, Texas, a thriving, but old-fashioned, college town. Actually feeling a bit carsick from several hours of halting and bumping, she anxiously viewed the first stop on her exciting adventure.

What a sight! The Brazos River flowed past big mounds of mixed shells (millions of years old), remnants of old Indian relics, and dregs of historical wastes (actually eons old) – a geologist's Disney World! And now, Caroline was going to hone her class-learned skills and "dig" for ancient treasures.

The leader of this infamous expedition as none other than a crusty, serious-minded, ex-Marine, sporting a crew cut whose hairs, akin to a porcupine's quills, saluted the sky. He was dressed for the hunt (or "dig" in geological vernacular): tan shirt, epaulet-shouldered; wrinkled, tan shorts; heavy boots with no-nonsense laces; and a waist belt with a sharp pickax swinging from his left hip, neighbored by a water canteen, netting, a flour-type sifter, and a really big glass jar. He bounded from the bus with a grace of a laboring gazelle, and hollered to the fledgling geology recruits to follow his lead and keep the pace.

About this time Caroline started eying the clothing of her fellow diggers. Most everyone was dressed for the occasion – pick axes in tow, lunch sacks, water canteens, really sensible items. However, nothing in her professor's "Field Instructions" for this trip reflected the type of clothes to be worn or the actual agenda of the expedition; actually, they emphasized promptness of arrival at the school at 6 a.m. and promised lunch in Bryan.

"Damn!" she mused.

Caroline struggled to keep up with the conga line of dynamic diggers, traipsing from slippery stone to slippery stone across the rushing waters of the Brazos.

"I can't do this. I'm going to fall into the river and drown, for sure," she thought. "I hate this!"

Reaching the big mound, the cavalier troops knelt like sportsman-like nuns at prayer and began digging. Caroline, with her kneecaps deeply ensconced in the dirt pillows, grabbed a plastic spoon from a friend's lunch sack and feverishly dug her way down into geological strata oblivion.

Amazingly, Caroline found nothing extraordinary – just dirty pebbles and a few old arrowheads. "What's the big deal about all this?" she questioned. But to impress the old Montezuma Marine,

she kept kneeling and she kept digging. "Kind of interesting, though," she mused. Maybe I'll find a really old fossil and become famous."

Caroline amicably referred to her professor as "El Jefe" (Spanish for "chief"). She listened as he loudly beckoned the group towards an open farmland, completely fenced in barbed wire, with a big "POSTED NO TRESPASSING" sign tilted from a fence post. When Caroline questioned El Jefe about the legality of their trespassing on privately-owned lands, his inaudible mutterings and glaring look forced her to look heavenward. "Let the old buzzard freeze in jail," she thought. "I'm not going to jail for anyone."

So, Caroline waited outside the parameters of the fence while her colleague ventured forth to illegally probe into legal grounds. El Jefe was not amused with Caroline's boycott.

When the group emerged from her farm, El Jefe motioned the line to follow him across a thick tree limb stretched across the roaring Brazos. As usual, Caroline was the caboose, and sensed an evil foreboding. She was afraid of heights, her tennis shoes were wet and slippery, and she did not want to walk across that tree limb! However, because she was in El Jefe's bad grace, she decided it was in her grade's best interest that she make the effort to get to the other side.

Carefully, she ventured forth – Oh, so carefully did she walk. Leaning to one side, and then to the other, with nothing to hold onto but empty air, Caroline twisted to the right and fell face-down into a bank of lizard-like, oozing, red mud, sliding with force toward the Brazos itself. "Oh, my God, I'm going to die!" she thought. "Help me! Help me!" she screamed to her compatriots. However, her screams were ignored by the galloping geological herd because they were too far downstream to hear her cries. Grabbing a stub of a scraggly bush, Caroline forced her body to stop its deadly drive. She lay there in this mattress of mud – exhausted, scraped, scared witless, with every orifice in her body oozing mud. "Oh, my God! Oh, my God!" she silently screamed. "I would kill for a sip of cold water!"

Finally, Caroline pulled herself to a seated position and surveyed her surroundings. Her tennis shoes were gone with the mud, her beautifully applied eye make-up washed away, her designer clothes torn by a questionably benevolent Brazos, her hair frizzled like dreadlocks caught in a hurricane, her muscles aching as if she were a defeated athlete. "I hate this," she thought.

She lumbered slowly back to the parked school bus and waited the return of her fellow adventures.

Then, El Jefe leaped to the bus, followed by his conga line, announced, "Time for lunch – let's head for the Dairy Queen... □

Connie R.
Thurmond

Sawmilling Time in Scott County

I trail quietly behind my grandpa
stubbing my bare toes in the dirt...
sauntering down the briar-scratching paths.
listening to the sirens of the big whirring
saws.

It's sawmilling time in Scott County.

I smell the sawdust,
pungent like turpentine lemons
squeezed to the pulp...
and I run,
jumping into the shredded timber mountain
revelling in my sawdust shroud.

It sawmilling time in Scott County.

I sweat curly ringlets in my forehead and neck,
nibble cold biscuits and a chocolate moonpie...
watch the lawyers load the mile-long trucks,
see the sawtimber bulging against its
restraints.

It's sawmilling time in Scott County.

I woke with a start and quickly scanned the dimly lit room. I jumped up from the cramped, uncomfortable chair that had been my bed and glanced at the clock. It was almost 4:00 a.m. Grandpa died about that time in this same hospital four years earlier. "Coincidence?" I wondered.

What made me jerk awake? It was the first sound sleep that any of us had in three days. And we slept like babies. Later, I wondered why all of us had been asleep at the same time. Did she want us to have some rest? To ease our sorrow? By now everyone was wide awake and looking at each other. I knew that this was it. Yes, it was time. I stood by the bed holding her hand. She looked peaceful and pain-free for the first time since she was brought to the

hospital. Her breathing grew so faint that it was almost impossible to see her chest rise and fall. It reminded me of watching David Copperfield perform his magic, "Now you see it, now you don't." Except magic is supposed to be entertaining and I was not laughing. Finally, it fell for one last time. "Quick, get an emesis basin," my Aunt Linda yelled. I grabbed the dull-yellow, kidney-shaped plastic tub and handed it to her. She carefully placed it under her mother's chin to catch the blood that slipped from the mouth. Watching the life drain from someone before your very eyes is like having your heart ripped from your chest without any anesthetic.

The finality of the loss swept over me. It was all over. I clung to Linda and cried. The person whom I admired and loved the most was really gone — forever — hopefully to a better place where there is no pain, no hideous monster to rear its ugly head and destroy life.

I thought how this raging creature ravaged her helpless body. As she lay there dying I would run my fingers up and down her arm, and I could feel the tiny cancer tumors filling her body. It was awful, no, it was worse than that because there was not a damn thing in the world that I, or anyone else, could do about it. Useless and helpless were two words that had constantly bounced around in my mind. Oh, I tried to console myself by saying that she was almost 70-years-old and had lived a full life. But that didn't take the pain away. When I prayed I wondered what I was praying for. For her to die and be removed from the pain? Then I felt a horrible guilt as though I were wishing her dead? I just wanted the pain to be gone. I wanted her back, but I knew it was just another impossible dream that would never, could never, come true.

"What day is it?" I thought. "Oh yeah, it's Christmas Eve morning. What a day to die. What to do now?" There was no need

The Year I Lost Christmas *by Barbara Delano*

for us to stay with her any longer. I felt as though I were deserting Grandma as we drove away from the hospital one last time into the dark, cold December morning. I hoped it was warm and sunny where Grandma went.

Death had made its presence known in the house too. It felt cold and lonely, as though all life had gone. I expected to hear Grandma's voice or her step, but I knew I would never hear them again. When Grandma left us, home became only a house, a place to make the funeral arrangements.

We sat in the living room with the unlit Christmas tree while the rest of the lights in the house blazed as if they could take the chill from the air. It was the day before Christmas. Death shows no respect for holidays.

As I sat in the empty house filled with people my mind wandered back to a happier time. The imagined aromas from her cooking made my mouth water. Grandma was the world's greatest cook, her Sunday roasts and cole-slaw salad have yet to be beat. Saturday nights at Grandma's meant Chef-Boyardee pizza, and root-beer floats. We would watch Lawrence Welk, Hee-Haw and then play games of UNO and SORRY. I wished that I could be that little girl again sitting in the living room with the lights turned low, and laughing with her Roy Clark and Buck Owens a pickin' and a grinnin'. Back then life seemed so simple and care-free. As a kid I never really paid attention to the passing of time, nor did I ever think it would run out. I thought the people you loved lived forever. And I always believed there would be time to learn her cooking secrets, but the alarm went off without warning. That's another thing I discovered about death, it does not care about convenience or schedules.

Christmas Eve is a day when families and homes are supposed to be filled with good cheer. My family was spending it choosing calling cards and a casket. As though we did not have enough to cope with besides what message to print on the cards. I thought, "Who really cares? My Grandma is dead. How do you print comfort onto a card?" But a choice had to be made so we decided on cards with the "Lord's Prayer" and scenes of untouched wilderness on the front.

I felt cold inside knowing that we were going to place Grandma in a box and plant her in the ground. I looked at the available caskets with my aunts. You just picked one, right? Wrong. There were wooden ones, metal ones, ones with engraving and embroidery, green ones, blue ones, cheap ones, and expensive ones. I spotted the one with the baby blue satin lining which had birds embroidered on it and an inscription "I'm going home." "Grandma would like this one," I thought. It matched her personality. She kept

a book next to her bed that consisted of a single poem entitled "Some Day I'm Going Home." I keep it by my bed now with one of the funeral cards in the front. I read the poem each Christmas Eve and wish that she could be with me again.

Grandma's ways were simple. She was born in 1915 and grew up during the Depression. Each morning she would drink her "pearl tea" which was hot water with a little milk in it. The only "glamorous" thing about Grandma was that she liked to paint her fingernails bright red. Her clothes often came from rummage sales. For birthdays you could expect a crisp one-dollar bill and for Christmas a crisp five-dollar bill. But there were no crisp five-dollar bills that year.

Although she never received a formal education she was wise about life; she understood its hardships and its happiness. Grandma loved nature and all of its creatures. She called all of the squirrels "Frisky" and all of us girls "Suzy-Q." After her death, the squirrels were just plain squirrels and all of the girls have different names.

Grandma was the glue that held the family together. Right after her death I felt the family falling apart. Who gets this or that? What to do with the house? How much money did she leave? These questions drew the vultures out of the woodwork. All I wanted was to have her back. But I had to settle for the multi-colored lion pepper-shaker that she bought for a quarter at a "junk" store.

Grandma taught me to appreciate the things that money can't buy. I learned about love, patience and forgiveness. A family is more than just a bunch of people that share the same last name, a family is understanding. She loved you regardless of what you did or how you treated her. Grandma knew when you did something wrong even before you told her what it was. And she always forgave.

Given the chance to turn the clock back I would still sit by Grandma's side and hold her hand as she left me. It is a comfort knowing that I could give Grandma a little bit of the love that she gave to me. There is nothing worse than living with regret for things you did not do. "I only wish I could go back and..." Unfortunately, once a person is dead, they are dead forever, there is no going back to make up for lost time. And the tricky thing about death is that it does not always warn you of its coming. But even if it does, you are never fully prepared for its arrival.

Has it really been six years since we drove to the frozen cemetery and put Grandma to rest? No matter what they say about time healing all wounds, it doesn't seem to make a hell of a lot of difference when you are racked with sorrow. Death is a pain like no other pain. It is not like a cut or a broken leg. Death is a permanent wound that never really heals. But death is also a teacher. It taught me how important it is to make time for loved ones, no matter how

busy you think you are, because you never know when they will be taken away. Grandma had an infinite amount of love reserved for her family. She said it was because, "You never know when you might get another chance, or what might happen." And she was right. □

Orhan Veli Kanik

Sizin Icin

(1949)

Sizin igin, insan kardesiarim,
Her sey sizin icin;
Gece de sizin icin, gunduz de;
Gun isigi, ay isigi;
Ay isiginda yapraklar;
Yapraklards merak;
Yapraklarde akil;
Gun isiginda binbir yeail;
Sarilar de sizin icin, pembeler de;
Tenin avuca deyisi,
Sicakligi, yumusakligi;
Yetistaki rahatlik;
Merhabalar sizin icin;
Sizin icin limanda sallanan dirskle;
Gunlerin ve aylarin isimleri
Kayiklarin boyalar, sizin icin;
Sizin icin postacinin ayagi,
Testicinin elleri;
Alinlardan akan ter,
Cephelerde harcanan marmiler
sizin icin mazarlar, mezar taslari
Hapishansler, kelepceler, idam cozari;
Sizin icin,
Her sey sizin icin.


Orhan Veli Kanik

(For You)

(1949)

For you, my fellow humans
It is all for you
Night is for you and so is Day,
Sunlight as well as the moonlight
Leaves shimmering in the plight
Leaves full of anticipation
Leaves full of wisdom
A thousand shades of green in the reflection of the Sun
moonlight Leaves shimmering in the plight; Leaves full of
anticipation; Leaves full of wisdom. A thousand shades of
green in the reflection of the Sun with masts swinging
about in the plight; Leaves full of anticipation
messenger, hands of the carpenter
Sweat pouring down faces;
Bullets wasted in the battlefront;
For you, these graves, these tombstones;
Prisons, handcuffs, executions;
For you,
It is all for you.

Orhan Veli Kanik (1914-1950)

Translation by
Murat Inegolluoglu 

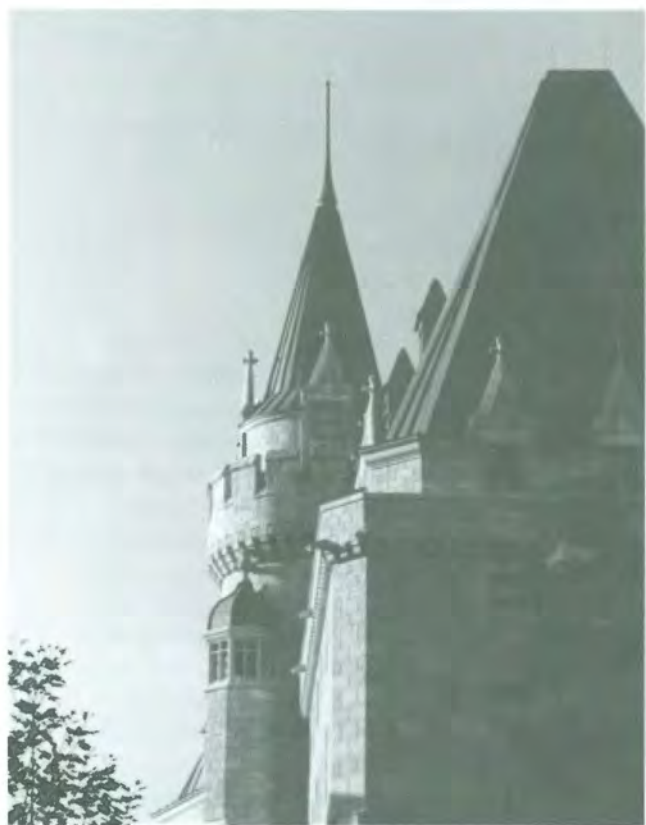


photo by Sergio Pernas