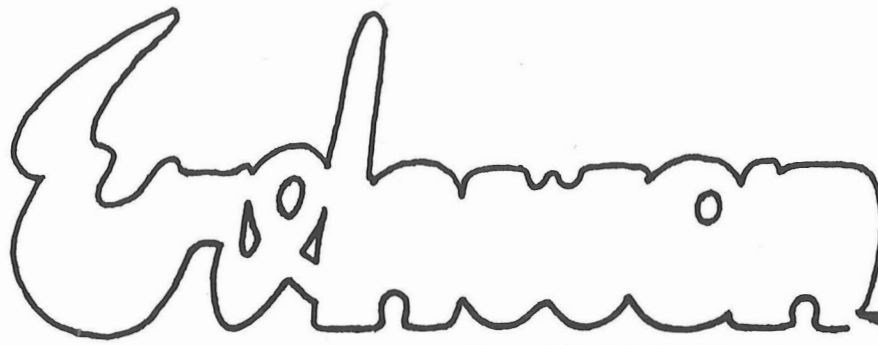
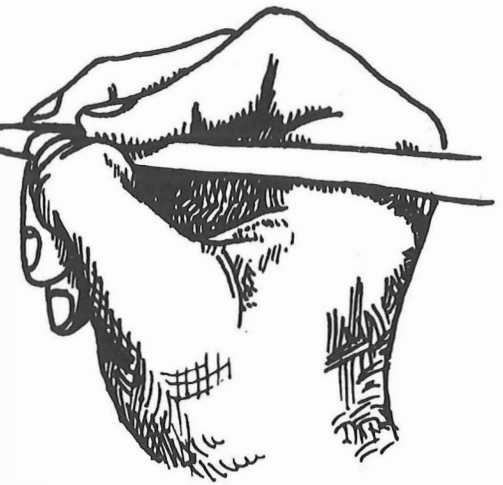


Erehwon



Literary Magazine of Winston Churchill High School, 1983



Poetry

Kevin Ludwig	3	<i>Beware</i>
Guy Wassertzug	3	<i>On Progression</i>
Rebecca Levin	3	<i>Let's Regress</i>
* Michael Gill	5	<i>Decisions, Decisions</i>
Jay Kamchi	6	<i>a modest proposal</i>
Michael Gill	7	<i>Christmas Lights</i>
Tina Cowles	7	<i>December 31st, approximately 11:57</i>
Donna Knaff	10	<i>Comprenez-vous</i>
Susan Gorman	10	<i>Leftovers</i>
Tom Forman	10	<i>conversation</i>
Debbie Copaken	11	<i>Biology Lesson</i>
Guy Wassertzug	11	<i>Death of a Car</i>
Rebecca Levin	12	<i>A World Under Glass</i>
Lenny Leimbach	12	<i>The Wraith</i>
* Beth Kaminow	13	<i>On Dying</i>
Lenny Leimbach	14	<i>Fractured Mirror</i>
Michelle Green	14	<i>22 November 1963</i>
Natalee Press	15	<i>Fatality</i>
Burt Patton	15	<i>Conversation (walls disappear)</i>
Tom Forman	15	<i>BASIC</i>
Hal Ratner	16	<i>Sleep</i>
Liz Kotchek	16	<i>Untouchable Dream</i>
Danny Lewis	16	<i>Dream of Consciousness</i>
Danny Lewis	18	<i>Cat</i>
* Guy Wassertzug	19	<i>Flash</i>
Sara Hill	19	<i>Kodak Memories</i>
Sandy Shapiro	19	<i>Inspired</i>
Louise Williams	20	<i>Mistake</i>
Kevin Ludwig	21	<i>Falling Leaf</i>
Natalee Press	26	<i>Fame</i>
Beth Kaminow	26	<i>Too Many Comfortable Pauses</i>
Jen. Karp	27	<i>Relative Perfection</i>
Brock Howe	27	<i>Cognitive Futility</i>
Donna Knaff	28	<i>Good Grief</i>
Will Judy	29	<i>Eat Your Heart Out, Robert Burns</i>
Beth Kaminow	29	<i>Dawn in Love</i>
Renee Kirshenbaum	29	<i>Utopia</i>
Rebecca Levin	32	<i>Condiments</i>
Amy Berth	32	<i>Five Ways of Looking at Limbs of Trees</i>
Louise Williams	33	<i>Tested</i>
Tom Forman	33	<i>Jefferson Thomas</i>
Lenny Leimbach	33	<i>Early Withdrawl</i>
Louise Williams	34	<i>Not So Special</i>
Danny Lewis	34	<i>Sonnet for Innocense</i>
Louise Williams	36	<i>Pachelbel</i>
Tom Forman	37	<i>Royal Commands</i>
Debbie Copaken	37	<i>Tunnel of Truth</i>
Michelle Green	37	<i>Song of the Captive</i>
Jen. Karp	38	<i>The Ideal</i>
Lenny Leimbach	38	<i>Blow the Blasted Thing's Head Off</i>
Donna Knaff	39	<i>May Your Tree Of Life, . .</i>
Julianne MacKinnon	39	<i>Bye Russy</i>
Brock Howe	40	<i>On Earth Between Trees</i>
Jen. Karp		<i>Haiku</i>

Prose

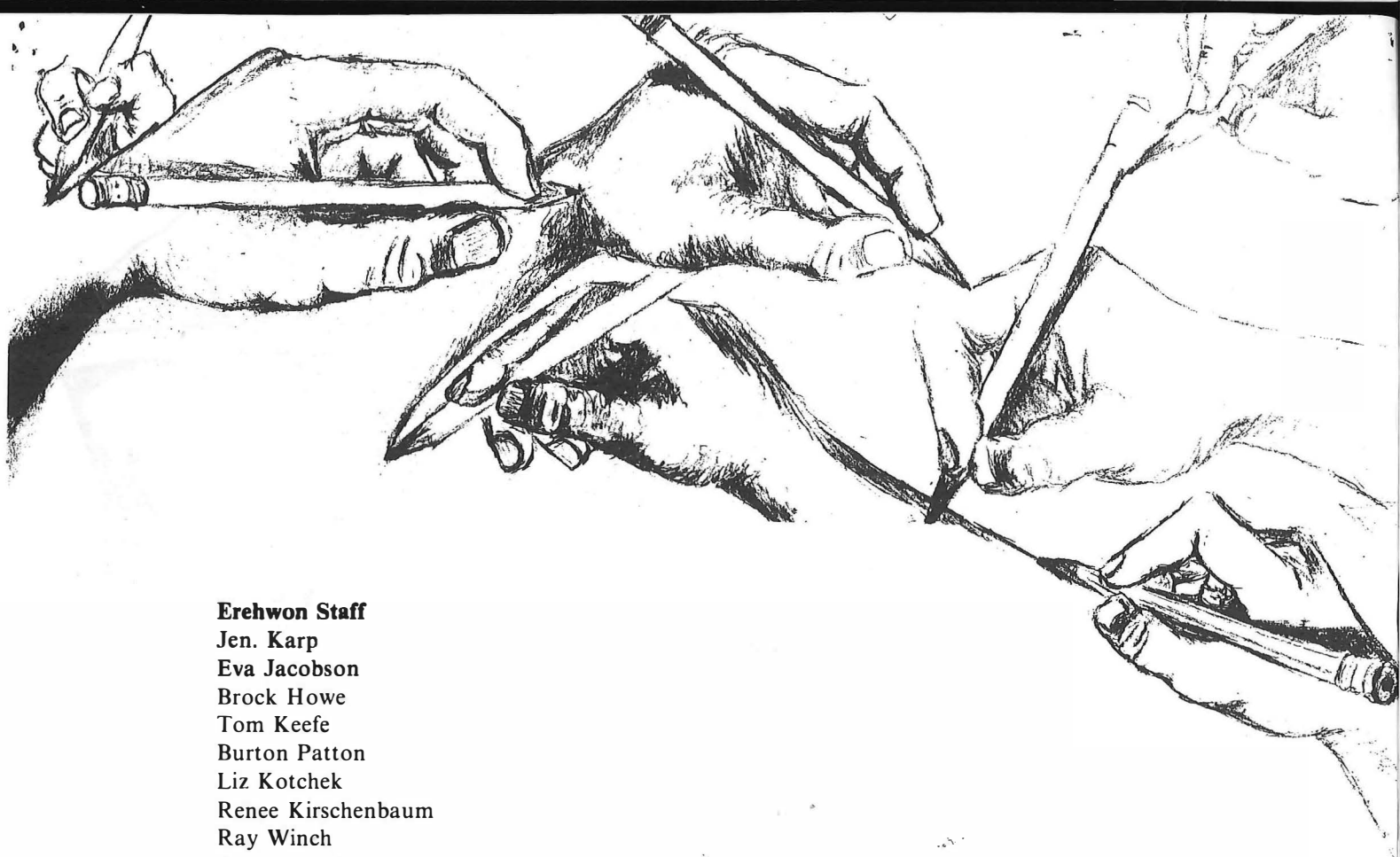
* William Judy	8	<i>I.O.U.</i>
* Brock Howe	17	<i>Internalization</i>
* Leonard Baer	23	<i>White on Black</i>
Sara Hill	30	<i>Gloria's Grill</i>
Brock Howe	35	<i>Alby</i>

Photography

Ana Floriani	4	<i>Phone and Hydrant</i>
Amy Verhoef	9	<i>Fire Knight</i>
Johanna Bernstein	13	<i>Grave</i>
Stacy Grigg	18	<i>Cat Reflections</i>
Erica Malamut	30	<i>Triple Trees</i>
Diego Osuna	36	<i>Tunes in the City</i>
Sara Hill	38	<i>Tree</i>

Artwork

Raleigh Ceasar	Cover	<i>River of Thoughts</i>
Cinjin St. John	6	<i>Umbrella</i>
Sandy Shapiro	11	<i>Nerd</i>
Rebecca Levin	20	<i>Spring</i>
Robert Anselmo	22	<i>Treescape</i>
Sandy Shapiro	28	<i>Wizard</i>
Michelle Niemela	40	<i>Between Trees</i>



Erehwon Staff

Jen. Karp
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Brock Howe
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Burton Patton
Liz Kotchek
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Ray Winch
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Janice M. Gunn
Sara Hill
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Guy Wassertzug
Donna Knaff
Sarit Helman
Tom Forman

Consultants

Rebecca Levin
Travis Kaplow
Beth Kaminow
Lenny Leimbach

Faculty Advisor

Peggy Zirzow

1983 PTSA Writing Awards

Poetry

First: Michael Gill
Second: Beth Kaminow
Third: Guy Wassertzug
Honorable Mention: Jen. Karp
Donna Knaff

Fiction

First: Will Judy
Second: Brock Howe
Third: Leonard Baer

Edward Gold, who judged the poetry category, is a widely published poet from the Washington area. He taught creative writing at the University of Maryland for several years. Currently, he is affiliated with the Writer's Center where he is teaching a course in freelance writing.

Donna Baier Stein, the fiction judge is a freelance writer with a variety of clients ranging from Oxford University Press to the Cousteau Society. She also writes stories and poems that have been published nationally. One of her most recent stories has been accepted for publication in the June issue of *Virginia Country*.

Beware

I want to warn you
about the perils
of discovery.

When you allow
your eye
to alight anew
ever so softly
in the vicinity
of an idea,
you may glance
quickly around,
perplexed, alarmed,
at some strange
new breath
that prickles
your neck.

You discover a
new sensation.
Your mind aroused,
your eye a gleam,
your will will
never be yours
again, but will
ever seek and
be drawn
by curiosity,
by life.

Kevin Ludwig

Let's Regress

What about four years ago
as bluegrass babies
on wet, grassy banks?
Sinking to our thighs in mud

before and after the rain, your face was clear
with the blessing of the earth.

But time told you truth.
Plastic toys taught you the way,
and chrome showed you
the divine light.

But, hey.
In case you are willing
to relive a lie,
bluegrass babies still
ride on dancing banjos
among the evergreens.

Rebecca Levin

Progression

Oh God it's about to happen waiting so long but now it's over and I am ready to begin the transition into that new stage of existence. My closed eyelids feel the salty water all about but still sense that smatter of something at the end of the shaft could it hold the key to a Great Awakening? I'm not sure who really knows what's there I know ask Grandpa Grover's gravestone or Baby Billy.

Guy Wassertzug



Decisions, Decisions

They lived in a car, the two of them.

A 1971 Cadillac. Black.

In the front seat they ate. They cooked, when in fact they did cook, on a camping stove. He, Wally, had brought it home from the war. This here, he was found of saying, survived the European theatre. He was proud.

They slept in the back seat underneath a quilt she, Sylvia, had woven. It's old and losing some threads, she said, but it's servicable. She smiled. Wally smiled.

Then they slept.

Except for five minutes at dawn the back seat was always dark and dimly lit. But a gap in the curtains let the sun light their, Wally's and Sylvia's, bedroom for the five minutes it took the sun to rise above the roof. Then it was again dimly lit, though not quite so dark.

They woke, when in fact they did wake, at that time.

Sometimes, though, they did not wake. If we have good dreams, said Sylvia, we go on sleeping. Sometimes they slept until they ate lunch, when in fact they did eat lunch.

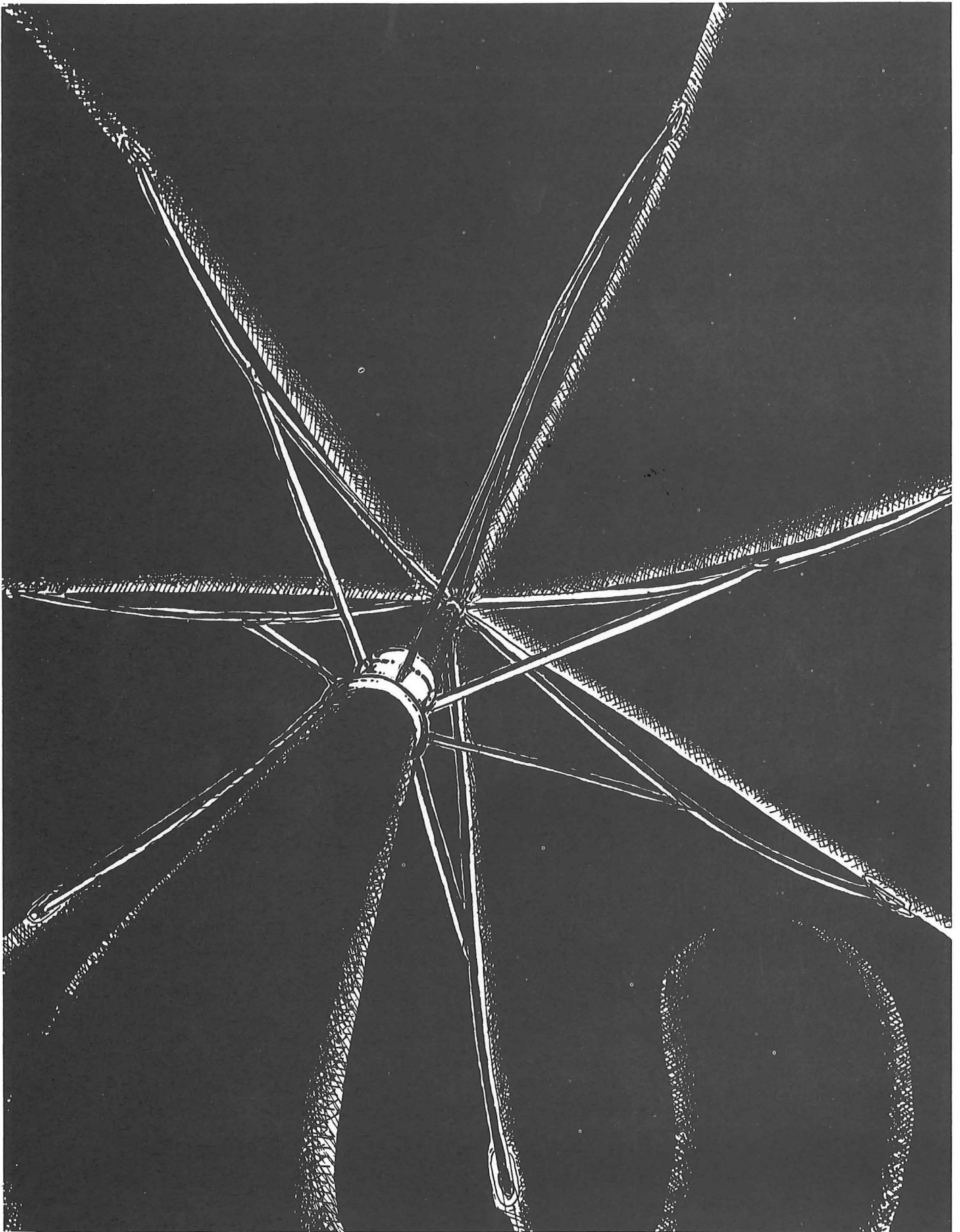
Sometimes they slept longer.

Michael Gill

a modest proposal

The rain is depressing me
It's such a big nuisance, see,
That I think we should unilaterally
impose a freeze.

Jay Kamchi



Christmas Lights

I really like
Christmas Lights, but
I used to
like them more.

Michael Gill

December 31st, approximately 11:57

Yes i'm changing everything
the way i eat pickled eggplant
the amount of spare 41 second intervals
i spend memorizing Milton's "Paradise Lost" or even
observing humanity

don't you remember

the muskrat belt austere wineglass paramecium print pantaloons
well they've become an integral part of our newly installed
sewage system
that flows into Lake Erie
from the devegetated plains of Boise Idaho

don't you know

why i am changing everything
my hair is too bleached my earlobe unattached my
poetry too perfumed i'll be
faster and taller smoother denser happier louder looser closer
to the door
than the welcome mat so start
memorizing your lines because the door is
barricaded shut and I left the key in the left rear pocket of my
paisley pantaloons

Tina Cowles

I.O.U.

I have awaited this day for years. The monitors have picked up an image they have not seen in decades - a man, in a radiation suit, moving so purposefully across the wastes in the unmistakable direction of my bunker. Only one other man knows of my shelter, the man who built it. Hunter is returning, to see that his debt to me has been paid.

I sit at the monitors and allow the memories to edge into my mind. They come painfully. So long ago it happened - the accident on the freeway, the fire and madness, and pulling Hunter's body from the car. I was only another person on the freeway, and could have driven past like all the others that day. But I stopped, I risked my life to save this stranger. And for that he owed me. I would be paid in full.

Hunter was then a man of affluence, a formidable man indeed. A man who always repaid his debts. The task of repaying a life was no task at all to a man of Hunter's genius. My payment was my shelter, for it was a chance to survive the war that the world knew would come so soon. The day it came was the last time I saw Hunter. He told me that day that he would someday return, to see that all was right with me.

To see that his debt had been repaid. A formidable man, Hunter, a man of his word.

I survived the years that came, using the plentiful supplies and the few comforts which Hunter had provided me. I survived, and the planet died. I lived with the

boredom and the loneliness; I developed new daily routines, and cultivated a kind of livelihood within the confines of my bunker. I did not go mad - it is amazing what the human mind can adapt to. And one day the radiation levels were low enough that I could finally emerge from my sanctuary. I took the radiation suit that Hunter had given me, along with the geiger counter and rifle, and set out to explore my kingdom.

And there was nothing. The world I had known no longer existed in any recognizable form, all that I have ever known lay in ruins. The cities were patches of rubble; the forests were fields of ash the color of ancient bones. My kingdom was the skeleton of a world that would not support life of any insane sort until I was thousands of years dead. Perhaps somewhere on this dead world men still live, but I will never reach them. I am alone, but for the man who had put me here. So this is my payment. I knew, for some reason, that Hunter would still come. And I have waited.

And now that day has come. He is near now, please may it be him. He reached the door of my sanctuary, his face fills the telescreen before me. I break the silence: "Password?"

He is startled, but answers correctly: *Fiat Voluntas Tua*. Roughly translated, thy will be done. It can only be Hunter. You chose those words so long ago, Hunter. A good choice indeed.

I press the button, machine guns open fire, and Hunter is cut down in the blinking of an eye. Hunter, a man of wealth and of affluence, a man who owed me a life, the man who left me king of this ruined world, a man of his word, a formidable man indeed.

And a man whose debt to me has finally been paid in full.

Will Judy



Comprenez - vous?

You
like a French verb
just when I think
I understand you
you have another conjugation.

You
the pluperfect of my life
the subjunctive or
future anterieur
with innumerable incomprehensible spellings
you extend forever
I write off the edge of my mind.

I think I'll take Latin.

Donna Knaff

Leftovers

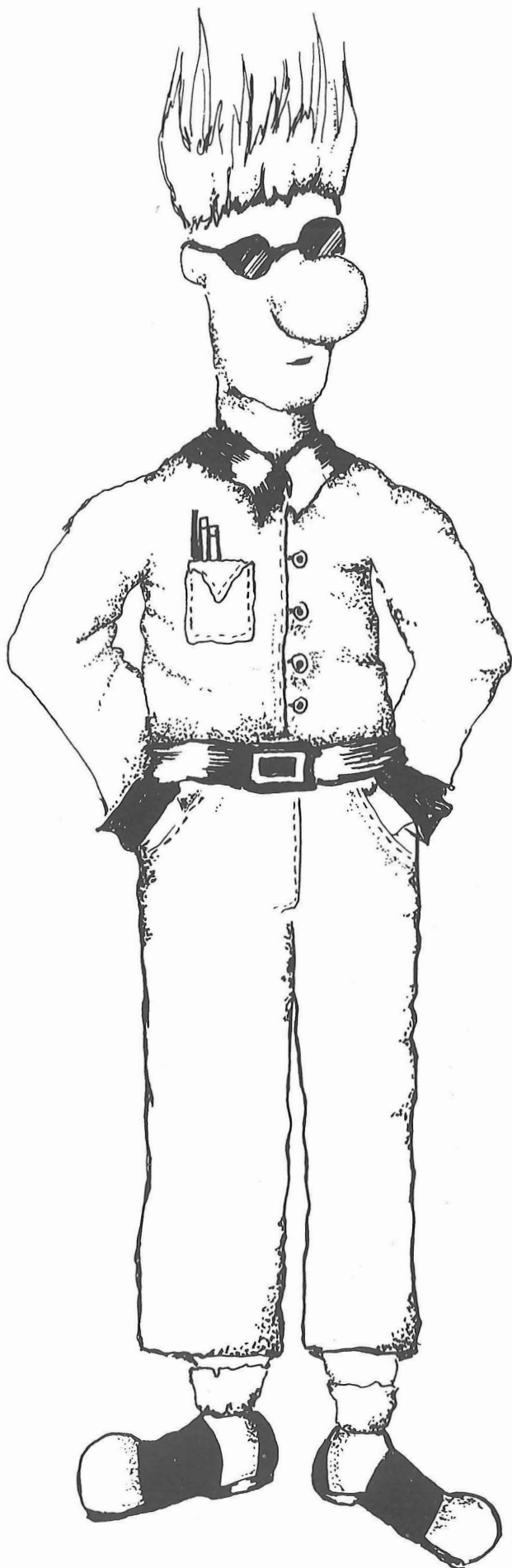
While opening the refrigerator,
I came face to face with an alligator.
(there had been a wild party the night before
with food and fun, champagne galore)
he was wearing a purple lampshade,
With a bright green tag that said handmade.
He said he and his friend, the chicken from Perdue,
Would be forever grateful if I chose to make beefstew.
But I, being famished for a crocodelicacy,
Grabbed him from the freezer, and diced him up with
glee.

Susan Gorman

conversation

twist and change
or so attempt
to rearrange the
edges of
the mazes
mend or bend
and so attempt
to descend into
the corners of
the phrases

Tom Forman



Biology Lesson

I ponder, I understand,
I have a brain, I command.

You wander, by Poseidon's hand;
You remain in the sand.

Perhaps that is why
I
am a homosapien life form
While you are an aurelia jellyfish.

Debbie Copaken

Death Of A Car

You drove me:
-to elation
-to frustration
-to Aunt Sally's

Just you and me, car, functioning as one unit
Driving through a sea of enmity.

When you died, you left
A space in my driveway
Which no other chassis could fill.

Your last moments were quiet--
Your tried to stand up on your own four cycles
But couldn't.
Just lay back and closed your cylinders
Off from that lifegiving death juice, gasoline,
Forever.

Your temperature gauge smiled up at me one last time;
Antifreeze frozen over.
I hugged your head (your object of direction)
Then shook your hand 1st 2nd 3rd 4th
Reverse! (Please?)

Guy Wassertzug

A World Under Glass

We sat in sunshine stupor
enveloped by the rays that
kissed the kitchen floor.
Cross legged side by side,
engrossed by the red checked cloth
that swung above our heads,
I saw how it could be.

Engulfing myself in a deep coffee sea,
that didn't matter
as I listened to your tales
of pyramids, palaces,
and patterns that moved before your eyes.

Your eyes.
Blue sapphires in flight
on winged black lashes.
They burned holes in the night
when you bicycled softly
through the dark to my door.
There, I welcomed you and
tried not to see how it would be.

Through wine and smoke, time
does amazing long jumps,
and pulls at my ear.
But I brush off it's touch,
and ignore all its cries
and continue to paint
genies, and birds,
and vines on my bedroom walls.

As I write this verse,
I glance now and then
at your world under glass
and my mountains, and trees,
and I am afraid
that I know how it will be.

Rebecca Levin

The Wraith

I took wood from a gallows
and fastened it with nails
from a murderer's coffin
to make my house

I cut curtains from an executioner's
Black Cloak.

How many names did I once more
turn to the earth by using their
stones for my walk?

My bed was fine,
made from the coarse fur
of tomb rats.
And sometimes I thought I could
feel them scurry
beneath my slumber.

But surely my garden would impress
any passer-by
whose Nightshade and Henbane
I watered with the tears of widows.

I chopped wood for the fire
from a church door
But when I held the match to it
the purifying flame
jumped from the wood
and chased me
It left my walls unscorched
as it followed my every turn
until finally it caught me
and burned me inside my clothes

I was buried in the yard
But the earth refused my flesh

Lenny Leimbach

On Dying

As we stood atop Mrs. Olivebranch
 You said that graveyards made you feel taken over inside
 And not yourself at all
 I said Mr. Goodfriend cheated on his wife
 And you agreed
 Walking over the family Byrd's mausoleum
 And knocking on the door

I want to be buried with no coffin
 And an acorn in my mouth, I said
 So that a tree will grow
 And the roots will absorb my knowledge
 I want little children to climb the tree
 And take catnaps in the branches

You said you thought your oak tree would die
 And laughed
 Reaction formation, you said
 And wondered whether anyone was home at the Byrd's

Hurricane Agnus dug bodies out from the cemetery
 And they floated to my backyard
 I wonder if Agnus ever thought of acorns.

Beth Kaminow



Fractured Mirror

The blood of a cardinal
blends nicely with his feathers
He flutters futilely to the ground
and shutters a dramatic death
His head ruptured
(At least with a legitimate cause)
Never again will he boast his
proud plumage
or his graceful flight
but even in death
he is a picture
A symbol for some passing player
to ponder

I look in the mirror
(I killed a bird like that once)

Lenny Leimbach

22 November 1963

It was a perfect day for a parade and we were all happy and proud because our handsome young hero was coming, and we came by the thousands to see the man who, we believed, could save the world. He smiled at us and waved and we cheered and there was music and firecrackers and applause and then one piercing pop which was not a firecracker and suddenly the world stopped turning. In those frozen seconds, we became old and cynical and we stopped believing in heroes and wondered why we ever thought the world could be saved, or even if it was worth saving. Later on, when people began to say that God was dead, we remembered that moment and silently despaired. Our hope had been murdered and no punishment to the killer could ever make up for our loss, and we were left with nothing to believe in but our own hopelessness. When the nation went to war and to hell in the next years, nobody stepped forward to guide us as he had and we struggled alone, convinced only of our futility.

Michelle E. Green

Fatality

Romeos, Daffodils.
Scholars create terror in barren hills
A red sun sets in an inflamed sky.

Quivered grounds shot up with waste
Neon lights in crystal lakes
Explosives compacted under cool, dry earth.

Warriors worship metal grounds
Fizzled screams and dazzled crowds
Silence sweeps over the land.

Buoyant objects in rising seas
Tidal waves engulf the trees
Darkness awaits vanishing earth.

As memories dilute with time
Nature's lost all classic rhyme
Life dims into nonexistence.

Natalee Press

BASIC

compute it
and onot attempt to
block or refute it
M-A-n ip
you late it
evry way
that you can
so as to
make it Run
parallel to
the plan

Tom Forman

Conversation (walls disappear)

When I am lonely
and I know I've done wrong
I'll lean on the wall
(the result of my fall)
and once through the wall
I'll talk to the Man
and once He talks back
the wall will be gone
and that's when I know
that I can move on

Burt Patton

Sleep

"I need sleep," said Jerimiah as he toppled off the roof to the sidewalk below. As he fell, he thought of the unity of the cosmos, the extinction of the Kiwi in northern Africa, the inevitability of events after committing a felony, and the possibility of dropping a 400 into a '69 Impalla and from what approximate height.

Fortunately his fall was broken by the pavement below and he splattered over the sidewalk like an egg. A little girl on a tricycle passed by and remarked, "Alas, what trying times these are when common ruffians milk the creative force from the veins of the bourgeoisie."

Hal Ratner

Untouchable Dream

I talked to Mr. McGreggor last night
he told me I was dead
I looked at him with laughter in my eyes
as he looked through my empty chest

I walked out to the garden
and threw down his black silk robe
"Mr. McGregor," I said. "I'm the princess of the sea."
He looked away from my body, naked as can be.

You picked a flower as we walked towards the sand
While my hand reached for the pussy willow branch.
I yelled to him as he pushed me to the sea,
"You are as alive as God and me."

Liz Kotchek

Dream of Consciousness

I dreamt I saw Dylan in Potomac-town last night it was--needless to say--quite an amusing sight but Dylan wasn't smiling I didn't even recognize him till I approached him and asked him the time and he sung me a song (from his subway wall) about war and famine and a rich kid without a watch or a care full of questions I played perfectly the role of frenzied fanatical fan bursting and bubbling with intrigue I wished I knew what he was thinking and as I was trying to avoid adulation two nearly real red fire engines came flashing fleeting by Dylan and me almost wakened by their screams turned around to find Dylan slipping away on his cycle to follow the now distant sirens

Danny Lewis

Internalization

Francis climbed the stairs to his apartment. It was a nice apartment, at least that's what his mother had told him. The last visit before she died was almost two years ago thought Francis. It felt strange thinking about his mother. Sometimes he thought he might have been adopted.

Francis turned the key slowly, opening the door and looking around as though someone could be hiding there. "Don't trust anyone when you move to the city," his mother had told him.

The two room apartment looked onto the roof of a laundromat. Steam poured out of small, one-foot high tubes in the roof. There were four in all. Francis counted them again to make sure. Once he had counted five and it scared the hell out of him. Quickly he had re-counted them, breathing heavily and straining his small eyes until he was sure there were only four. Then he had collapsed onto the sofa by the window. The sofa was old and ripped up, but it was sturdy and felt comfortable at a time like that.

The kitchen had a small table where Francis began placing some things for his dinner. The table would be satisfactory his mother had said. She never knew that one of the legs was shorter than the rest and caused the table to rock, usually spilling his milk or juice when he sat down. He pulled a can of spinach from the cupboard and opened it carefully to avoid the sharp edges.

When he finished dinner he picked up the morning paper to skim the headlines. "President Requests Increase In Military Budget," said one. Francis remembered what his father had said about the army. "We need bombs, blow 'em up, damn commies." Something occurred to Francis. He had forgotten to fold his socks. He tossed the paper onto the table and hurried into his bedroom.

After folding his socks he lay back in bed and stared at the pile they made. His mother had taught him how to fold socks the "right way," he remembered. Francis looked around the room and then back to the pile of socks. Curiously he reached out and began dismantling a folded pair, his mind going over the many possible ways socks could be folded.

Brock Howe

Cat

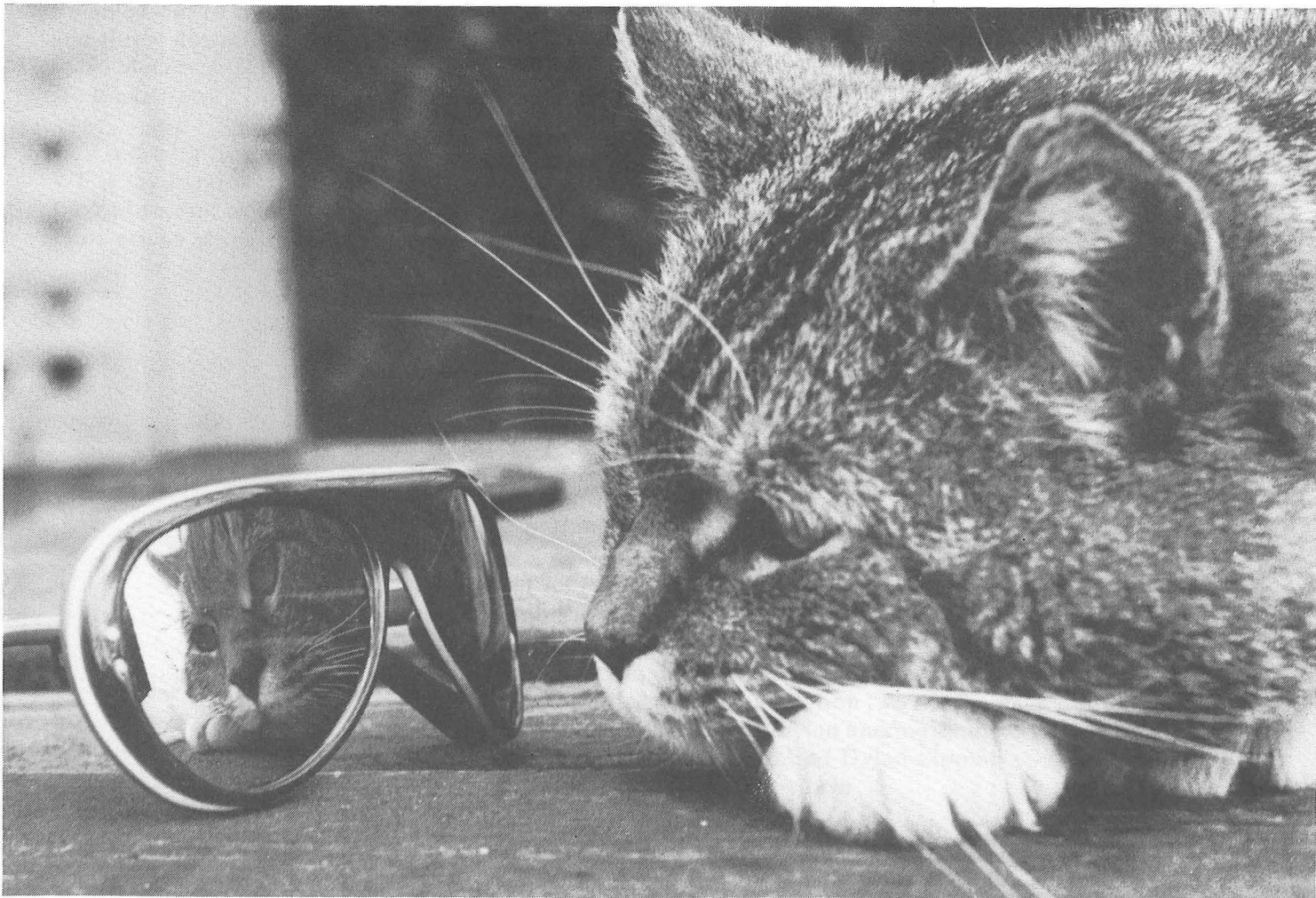
Cat in a mirror
Doin' that 'independence strut'
Am I a part of your reflections?

From afar I've watched you
Watch me from afar,
Glazed eyes staring,
Glittering, glaring in the morning sunwarmth
And now, front paws on my hillside chest
And me on the rug,
Our eyes refuse to meet.

You pop that cocked head out of a dreamworld
To chase the runaway ball of yarn,
Like a madnormal child
You scramble scatterbrained
Through the playgrounds of my room.

Your chin is smug
And chest confident,
Yet those eyes cry insecurity.
Since eyes are soulful windows
Then chins and chests are for stranger impressions
I guess.
But first impressions last less than last, Cat.
So close those eyes when you strut for that door
And maybe I'll remember that facade of yours.

Dan Lewis



Flash

I sit up in the chair
Every hair on my head
Clearly defined by my comb.

The photographer lifts my chin, swivels the seat
And orders, "Smile!"

I think about the dead on the planet.
The ones who died of disease and
The ones who died in wars and
The ones who just died
Like Nancy's cat that day he closed his eyes
For the last time. But

I smile
And the camera clicks

Open and shut again.

Guy Wassertzug

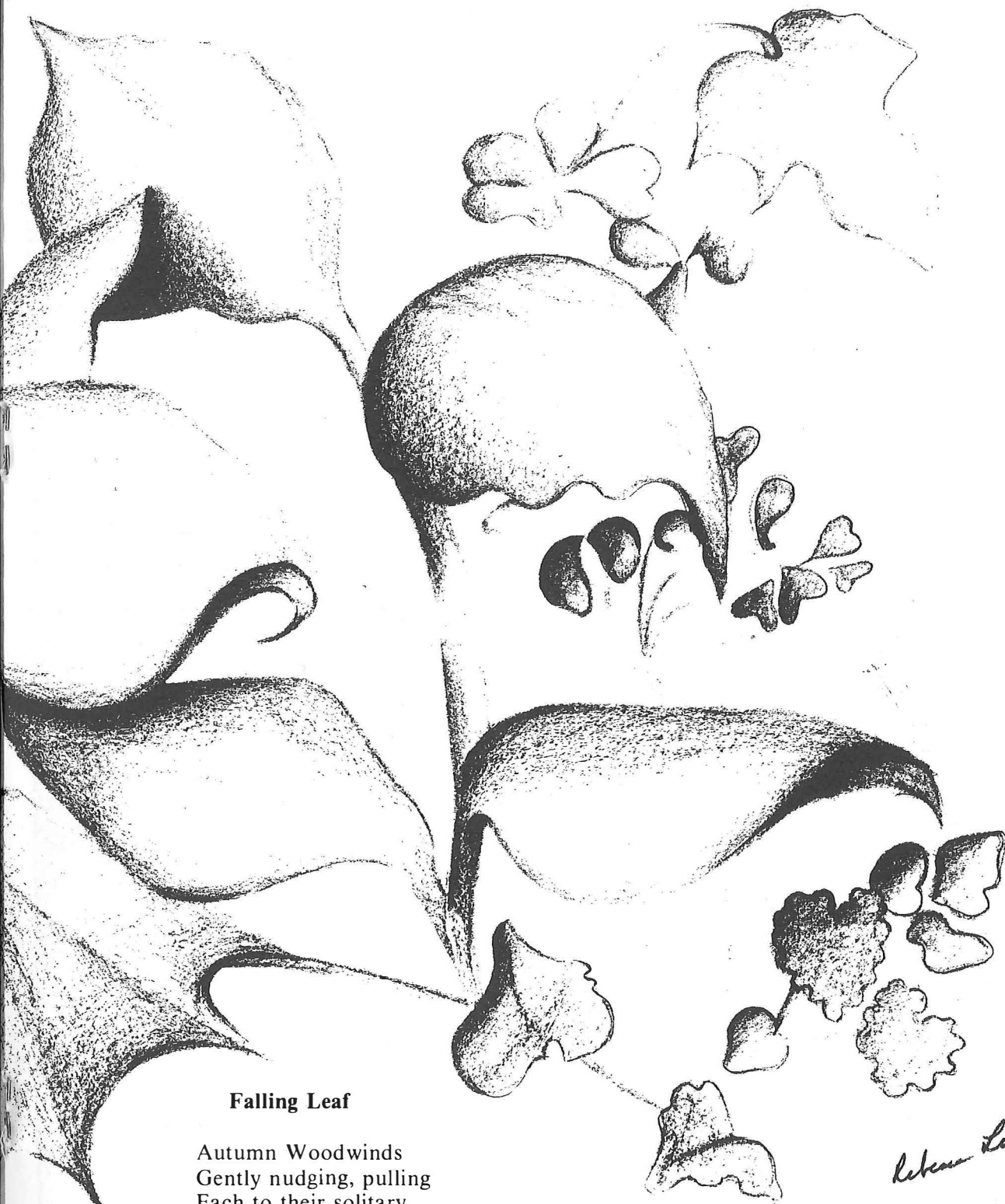
Kodak Memories

Silver halide moments
Imprisoned in black and white cages
Silently impersonating
Plastic flowers
In an empty room,
Their April days truly forgotten
As the snow begins to fall.

Sara Hill

In the midst of
Never-ending struggles
Stands a
Person; never
Inclined to
Relinquish his
Eternal
Dreams.

Sandy Shapiro

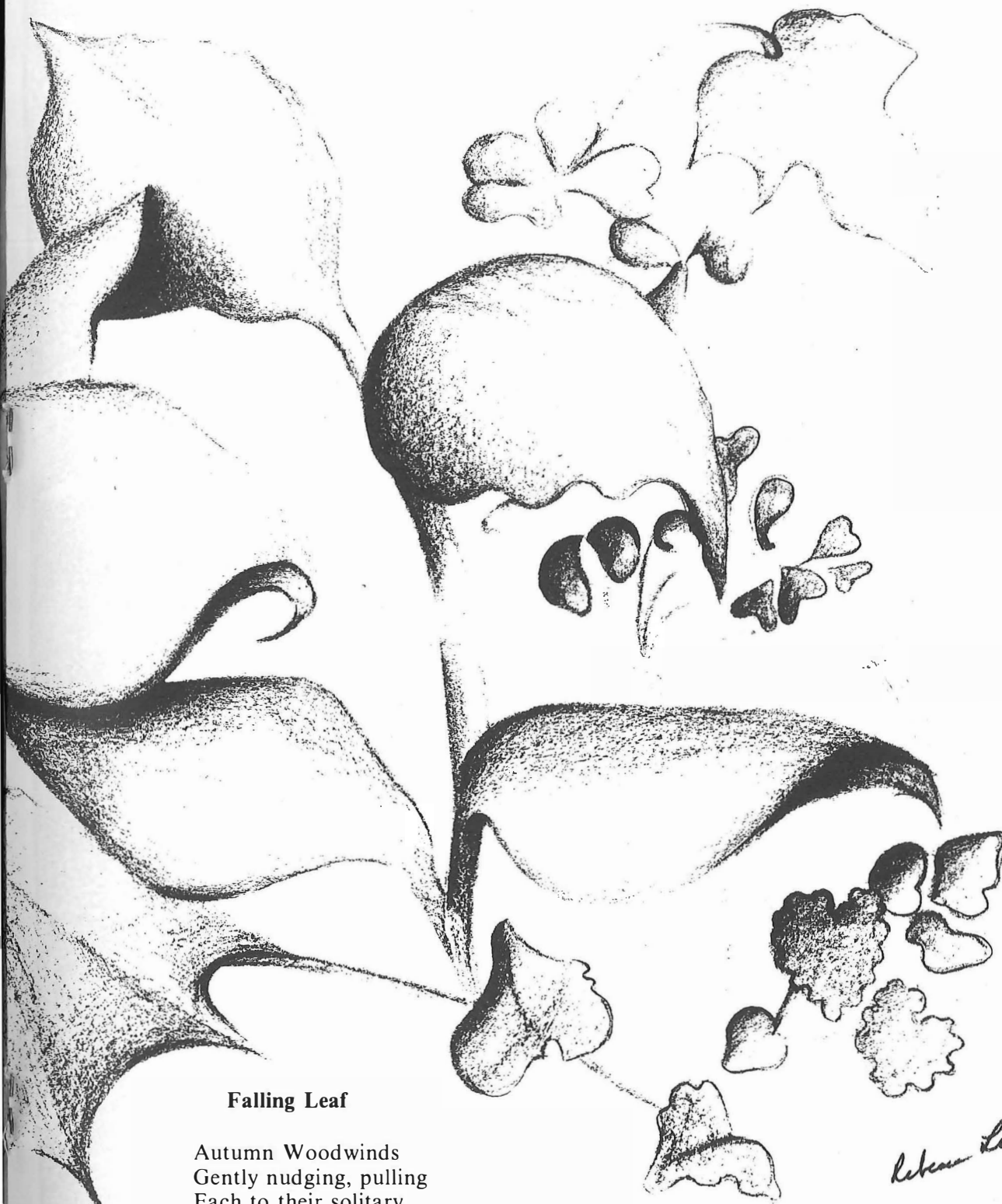


Falling Leaf

Autumn Woodwinds
Gently nudging, pulling
Each to their solitary
Finale, bourne floating,
Lifting, diving
Silhouetted against tumbling
Scudding gray clouds
Through shining shafts of light
To the soft
Silent
Earth
Below

Kevin Ludwig

Kevin Ludwig



Falling Leaf

Autumn Woodwinds
Gently nudging, pulling
Each to their solitary
Finale, bourne floating,
Lifting, diving
Silhouetted against tumbling
Scudding gray clouds
Through shining shafts of light
To the soft
Silent
Earth
Below

Kevin Ludwig

Kevin Ludwig



White on Black

There was a crack, then a swoosh. The young tree snapped in two, but no one was there to cry timber. Rain gusted down onto its shabby boughs, blending ebony slop with once-green foliage. A brown, furry squirrel painstakingly limped away from the accident, her left front leg bloody and grotesque. There was another crack, another swoosh, somewhere else in the woodland. The squirrel paused, looked in the direction of the sound, and then hobbled away in search of a home. Thunder rumbled angrily above.

Sylvester Elby's cabin, used for camping, was vacant. It was rain-drenched only on the outside. It had no door, only an entry way inviting all. No one ever came in, except Sylvester and his pal, on rare occasions. No wild animals used the cabin for shelter, not even the ailing squirrel. No one.

Sylvester was in his apartment, far from the forest, and near the urban world. He was looking out of his window, watching white forks paint the gray-blue sky, and waiting patiently for the boom that was to follow. As the lightning came closer, his houselights flickered on and off, on and off, and his waiting ceased, for the thunder boomed immediately after the lightning struck.

He crawled into bed, turned on his electric nightlight and tossed and turned, his bed creaking the entire night. He heard the cracks, the swooshes, the booms. He heard them, and that was reason enough to cry timber silently to himself.

When he awoke, the storm had ended. His alarm clock buzzed and rattled painfully in his ears. With one small, meaningful stroke, he turned off the alarm. The rattling ceased.

He got ready for work, took the elevator down from the thirteenth floor to the lobby, left the building, and waited patiently at a bus stop. The cars blew their horns, and last night's rain dripped incessantly from a parked automobile. Drip, drip, drip.

The bus arrived after not-too-long-a-wait. Sylvester hopped in, paid his fare, and sat in the front left row, by a window. The engine roared, and at its every bellow, a stroke of white appeared on the gray-blue seat before him.

He looked out of the window, into the congested, overwrought streets, and saw a dead squirrel.

A radio blared in the rear. He turned his head and looked at the back of the bus. Sylvester then went about his business, in search of peaceful streets.

The bus door opened. He noticed it was his stop, and he went toward his office. His buddy, Clyde Samson, was already there, ready to face the day's tasks.

"Hey, Syl, how are you doing?"

Sylvester uttered his first word of the morning. "Uur," he said.

"Some greeting that is, man! We have to work on the prison story today. That's what the boss said yesterday, remember?" He grinned.

Sylvester tried to return the smile, but there was not enough warmth in him to do so at that awkward hour of nine A.M. "Uur," he said.

Clyde was raised in Harlem, Sylvester in Washington, D.C. They were best friends, and working companions; that is, whenever Sylvester clogged the working man's busy, blaring tones out of his ears. He was obsessed with anger at the noise he knew to destroy simple lives. He was suffering, and no one understood his anguish.

Sylvester was a quiet man, understandably so. An he was a successful newspaper reporter, now with the chance at the story of a lifetime. . . the story of a lifetime in his eyes only. It was like a dream come true to go beyond the shadows his pain hides behind, and to discover what makes others bing, bang and bubble with pain.

He and Clyde were welcomed by steel bar after steel bar after more.

The guard stood motionless. "This is Craig Hawkins." The guard looked into the eyes of Sylvester and Clyde. Clyde glanced away, but Sylvester kept eye contact. Then the guard turned his head, looked at Craig Hawkins, and continued, "I'll give you guys five minutes. No more. We got cameras and microphones in your cell, Hawkins, so don't get violent, and don't get any ideas! I'll make you pay for that murder, Hawkins!" Sylvester looked into the eyes of an angry man, the guard. The guard spoke again, "I got my eye on you, Hawkins!" Sylvester winced, but did not

look away. The guard left.

There was Craig Hawkins, his eyes half shut, his cheeks red with fear. "Don't know why he treat me like dat. I don't, I tell you, I don't" Hawkins wiped his nose with his fingers, and there was a loud, sniffing sound that made Sylvester cry silently to himself.

"How long have you been here?" asked Clyde.

"Don't know. I wake up every morning and I seen Martins--"

"Who is Martins?" asked Clyde.

He a big guy, real nasty." Hawkins rubbed his crotch. Clyde's eyes closed in disgust. "I gots to go to the bathroom."

"There's a stall right there," Sylvester pointed out.

"Why don't you go there?"

"Don't wanna go there."

"Very well, then," said Sylvester, "Let's get on with it. Tell me, what do you think of your treatment here?"

"Treas-treasmment? What?"

"Treatment!" voiced Clyde.

"Oh! Oh! Treatment! The doctor come in every so often and checks me out."

"Are the guards nice to you?" rephrased Sylvester. Clyde observed with growing impatience.

"I already told that. They nasty, big guys who treat me bad."

"What crime did you commit?" interjected Clyde.

"Murder, they say," said Hawkins.

"Can you tell me about it, hmmm?" Clyde questioned angrily. His hand slapped his knee.

"The court said I go to jail."

Clyde paced angrily, back and forth, back and forth, realizing that the interview was nothing but a pain. "Let's get out of this place, huh, Syl? This isn't working out! He's not talking, and he can't even understand us!" Clyde's face was red with fury.

Sylvester was patient. "Uur," he said.

The guard appeared, and escorted Clyde and Sylvester out of the prison. Sylvester was confiding with his buddy, "This is how he copes with suffering. He wimpers like a baby, see?"

The guard laughed.

Hawkins was commended for his superb acting job, and other prisoners reluctantly paid him ten dollar bills. There had been a bet.

With not much of an article to write, Sylvester and Clyde went back to the office. Clyde conversed bitterly with Sylvester, and Sylvester "Uur"ed in response.

They told the boss about the incident, and he commended them on their meaningless toil. The boss cried silently to himself.

They were instructed to interview a typical patient at a local hospital. The patient's name: Jim Othwo. His injury: whiplash from an automobile accident. Jim was to be released in a few days.

Sylvester now had that second opportunity to discover another human's pain. He and Clyde walked into the lobby of the hospital.

"How are you all doing, today? I'm so glad you're going to be doing a story about some one in the hospital," a nurse greeted them. "So glad. So glad." She was grinning. Beneath both her eyes, however, were streaks of wetness. Her lower eyelashes were damp.

"We're doing okay of we got a story," said Clyde.

"Well, come right this was," replied the nurse, as she sniffed. Sylvester winced.

The three of them walked through the white corridors that represented the blackness of many.

"Here's Jim," remarked the nurse, as she guided them into a room. "How are you doing today, Jim?"

"Fine. Fine. Just fine," he replied. She turned her back for a second, and he silently ground his teeth in pain.

"I'll leave you alone, now," she said, and then left the room.

"Have you been recuperating well?" began Clyde.

"Couldn't have had better treatment," Jim answered. He grinned, and then winced in pain.

"Are you doing okay?" asked Clyde.

"I'm fine. Fine. Fine. Just fine. And yourself?" He grinned again.

"Can you tell me anything about your accident?" asked Clyde.

"A car hit me from the rear. Nothing more to tell. I'm fine. Fine. Just fine." He displayed his teeth, and his upper lip was as high as his nose.

"This interview isn't working out," Clyde whispered to Sylvester. The duo left abruptly, and headed for the office. They told the boss what happened, and he seemed furious.

"You botched up another?" yelled the boss, "Why, I should never have hired you guys! Jeez! You messed up two good chances at a story today! Come back to work tomorrow, but don't expect the same chances! Leave, now! Get out of my sight!" Before that day, the boss was all set to inform them of a promotion. He suddenly postponed that, for he wanted them to think that they dissatisfied him. They were two of his finest employees, he believed, and was always pleased with them regardless if they succeeded or failed.

Sylvester waited patiently at a bus stop. The bus arrived, and he hoped in. He sat in his usual place. The horns beeped, the radio blared, the motor roared, and rain began to fall. Somewhere in the woodland, there was a crack, then a swoosh.

Sylvester stepped out of the bus, walked in puddles to get to his apartment building (splash, splash, splash), and greeted the clerk in the lobby. "Hello. How are you doing, today?"

The clerk's ivory pen stroked on ebony paper. He lifted his writing hand, and looked up at Sylvester. "Hmmm? Wha--wha--what was that you asked?" The clerk tapped his long, white fingernails on the black desk before him, bit his lip and squinted.

"How are you, friend?" repeated Sylvester.

The clerk continued to squint. "I uh, I uh am sorry, I didn't hear you. What'd you say?"

"How are you?"

"I'm doing great, Sylvester," he finally replied. He then squinted once more, as if he were trying to understand Sylvester deeper, deeper, deeper. His pen stroked again.

"How's the job?"

"Gr--gr--um--great," he responded, and then wiped sweat from his forehead.

The pitter-patter of his fingernails became obvious to

Sylvester. "Goodbye," finished Sylvester, aware that he was interfering. He left the lobby, took the elevator up to the thirteenth floor, and walked into his apartment. The telephone was ringing.

Hello?" answered Sylvester.

"It's me: Clyde. What do you think of the boss today? Eh, man?"

Sylvester placed his palm over the telephone receiver, and cried. He wanted to forget the unhappiness.

His hand moved away from the receiver, and he spoke, "I saw a dead squirrel on the road this morning."

Clyde continued, barely aware of what Sylvester said. "The boss was too rough on us, don't you think?"

"Car after car after car after bus, after whatever the Hell came next, they ran over and over that dead squirrel! No excuse! It's too--"

"The boss, man, the boss!" exclaimed Clyde, now fully aware of what Sylvester was saying. "I don't know anything about a squirrel! There are tons of them dead on the road every day, anyway."

"Timber!" cried Sylvester, but there was no crack, no swoosh.

"Are you feeling okay?"

"I'm fine," answered a dismayed man.

The conversation soon ended.

Sylvester gaped through his window into the nothingness that lay before him. It was evening. The rain had stopped.

Squirrels were still recuperating from the cracking and the swooshing. Sylvester was, too. There was silence. Everywhere.

The sun rose the next morning to shine upon the woodland. The tree that fell upon the brown, furry squirrel was gradually being restored to life. Termites, that once infested it, were no where to be found.

A swallow chirped beautifully in the tree, briefly at first, and then endlessly. Endlessly, that is, until the next storm.

Leonard Baer

Fame

This morning,
Robert told me I'd be famous
"You're destined for the stars," were his words
"Me?" I replied with a heavy sigh of doubt.
He nodded assuringly and replied a soft, "Yes."
He clenched my hand and whispered in my ear,
"I promise you, soon the world will be yours.
You'll have money, power and your name will appear
In lights on Broadway!"
My eyes became large and glossy-
I started to perspire-
The blood rushed in spasms to my brain.
"Yes, you're right. I'll be first class.
I'll own a Rolls Royce...a castle and light my
cigarettes with hundred-dollar bills!"
The warm flesh in my hand disappeared.
"I'll have a pool, a tennis court, servants and a chauffeur...
Robert...Robert...Where are you?
Please...don't leave me again."
I closed my eyes-the salt tingled my lips.
I heard a voice lingering in the distance,
"No, I was wrong again...you will never be famous,"
He said sympathetically.
A sharp chill came over me and
I shivered as it crawled through my spine.
Tears filled my eyes as he cried,
"I'm sorry, so very sorry."

Natalee Press

Too many comfortable pauses

Too many comfortable pauses
Have come between us
And too many daydreams
Were lost in the rain
We're too much in love
To stop holding hands
But we're too old to continue talking

And so my love,
I fear that this is the end of our friendship
And the beginning of marriage

Beth Kaminow

Relative Perfection

I slowly climbed down the stairs
My feet drudged along, the noisy gravel
scratched the man-made cement floor,
scarring its smooth-plane surface.

Perfection is the name of the game, my dear,
that's all we ask from you.
Oh, is that all? I thought it would be
something absurd
like freshly picked daisies
or candied kisses.

Well for perfection, mumsy, just push in the
coordinates on my memory bank.
Type in the process, readout will be in order,
void of all thought, logical and orderly,
Just like you wanted.
Perfection.

I kicked an empty beer bottle, shattering
its clear glass.
I could see through all the broken pieces,
and I knew that they would never
fit perfectly again.

I took the biggest piece,
the one with the withered, soggy label,
and threw it up and out in the sky,
and it landed into
a parked car's window. Right on target.
A perfect throw.

Jen. Karp

Cognitive Futility

Fate kicked her when she was down.
I swallowed hard, thinking about new clothes and ivy walls
she wouldn't see from the painted-shut window.
I waved happily, the amends maker on my throne of metaphoric futility.
She slapped my face, opening my eyes.
Looking closely I saw her short-ended world out of reach.
I tried again, throwing a simile like play money.
The fist caught my grin, a light flashed.
The easy chair toppled, my pen flew.
It wasn't working.

Brock Howe

Good Grief

You're a mystery to me
a source of frustration
a pain in the ass and an infuriation
you're milk after rhubarb, a pen that
won't write,
shell in my egg that is there just
for spite
you're a large piece of gristle in my
filet mignon life,
and your presence to me
is like Levi's too tight.
You're the lint on my velvet
the gum on my shoe
the ink in my mouth and
the sand in seafood.
My jawbone is sore from my
teeth being grit
my hand's an inch shorter from the
nails I've bit,
my fists are clenched - and
honey, you're the target
Because trying to know you is like reading
Sanskrit.

Donna Knaff



Eat Your Heart Out, Robert Burns

My love is like a summer rain,
that cleanses 'way my woes.
My love is like the wet, warm mud
which squishes 'tween my toes.
My love is like a cup of ale
which lights upon my brain.
My love is like a cigarette
dropped into a gas main.

Will Judy

Dawn In Love

A butterfly sings on crimson wings
Landing on a daffodil
And softly fluttering butterfly kisses
Whispers good morning to the dawn
Sometimes the sun sings quietly
And wanders into dawn quite gently
But this morning she knocked on my window pane
Jangling with laughter and bells
And I smiled because her laughter was so refreshing
And the sunshine bounced from tree to tree
Prancing through roses and begonias
She skipped through the morning dew
And swam in the cool summertime creek
and after drying off on the lily pads
She promptly landed on my windowseat
and kissed my eyelids open
and my mind awake

Beth Kaminow

Utopia

Walking into a cloud of ecstasy through
the streets of wonderland where everything
blossoms into a palm tree because every-
thing is there even though your body may be
somewhere else but your mind remains with the
utopian harmony of living and being where and
what you want to be where there is no need to
turn back and be in a state of drooping lilies
because now the incessant sparks of the sun
will make your petals rise.

Renee Kirschenbaum



Gloria's Grill

As the sun was climbing into its throne nestled in the hills of Lewington, North Carolina, Gloria Larken was searching for the white and yellow checked apron she had ironed only a day ago. She didn't really need to find the apron because the one she had worn yesterday was mostly clean except for an ice tea stain on the hem, but nevertheless she continued her search. Her search took her through two piles of laundry, but it was not until she opened her bedroom closet door that she found the apron hanging innocently on the door knob. She pushed a wispy strand of hair away from her eyes, wrapped the clean apron around her lemon yellow uniform and gulped down the last of her milky morning coffee. Soundlessly, not wanting to wake the other sleeping tenants, she latched the door to the bleak apartment she shared with only sparse furnishings. The crisp morning air caught her by surprise. She hesitated, wanting to get a sweater but decided she had wasted enough time in pursuit of the apron.

As Gloria brought the rusted '66 VW beetle to life the man from the WPRT news team told her it was 5:30. Despite its age, the dark blue beetle took the winding roads like a champion. In only minutes she had covered the few miles from her apartment to the center of Lewington, if it could be called the center. Years ago an interstate highway had neatly bisected the small residential town. Soon after restaurants and gasoline stations had sprouted along side the road like mushrooms after a spring rain.

It was in one of these run down restaurants that Gloria worked. The name was in fact Gloria's Grill but the place hadn't been named after Gloria Larken as most people assumed. Some people even thought Gloria owned the restaurant, but Frank, the true owner of the place, was quick to claim ownership. Frank could not, however, claim responsibility for naming the restaurant, he had bought the restaurant more than ten years ago, name included.

Gloria pulled the beetle into a parking place defined only by shadows of white lines painted some time ago. As she unlocked the service entrance she never noticed the crumbling concrete that guarded the doorway. She had

been the first to open up the restaurant for a year now and the outside appearance didn't concern her. As she entered, the outmoded kitchen brought forth the sour smell of mildewed sponges to greet her. She gave a cursory glance to the drying pots and pans that lay strewn about.

"We'll have to do something about that," she thought to herself. "Why can't those boys learn to clean up? I could be doing a lot better than this. I could be working in any one of those nice elegant restaurants in Raleigh. I wouldn't have to bother with all of these people who never know what they're doing." No one seeing her standing in the entrance to the dining area would have contradicted her. At thirty-four her face held few wrinkles and she looked as if she had been born a waitress. Her figure was lean and efficient, her hair held tightly in place, her uniform without a crease, and her face held a smile that told the world that she knew what she was doing.

But it was not time to think of Raleigh's high priced restaurants and their waiters and waitresses. Her morning ritual began as she lowered the Venetian blinds to lessen the intensity of the sun which cast its rays across the faded carpet. Palms flattened against the window sill, she lingered a little longer at the window before beginning her work. Stooping over each table with a bucket and wash cloth she moved her arm in a swift circular motion until the laminated plastic table tops shone, knowing that soon the bright speckled surfaces would be sticky with the inevitable afternoon humidity. Next she piled the stainless steel knives, forks, and spoons on top of each other with frightening precision and wrapped them in uniform napkin bundles. She was still engaged in her table setting when the morning cooks arrived.

Don and Lou had worked at Gloria's Grill almost as long as Frank had owned it. Don and Lou were cousins but now in their late forties they had come to look like identical twins. In their roly polly white cook's uniforms they were virtually indistinguishable and soon Frank and Gloria were the only ones who bothered to tell them apart. They called out good mornings to each other, and Gloria went back to work.

Gloria was filling pitchers with the pale substance some dairy company dared to call "real rich cream" when she heard Frank's Buick rumble into the parking lot. Frank, casually dressed in jeans and faded workshirt, ambled in bearing the morning paper. "Morning, Gloria, I want to talk to you when you have a chance," he said as he hoisted himself onto a stool at the counter.

"And I want to talk to you too. About Shirley I mean. I'm tired of trying to train her, I could be working in a better restaurant than this you know. I shouldn't have to put up with her." Gloria finished just as the three morning waitresses arrived for work. Although not identical like Don and Lou, all three shared sloppy uniforms and tired eyes.

When Gloria finished filling the cream pitchers, every chair and table condiment was perfectly aligned and standing at attention, and there was nothing left for her to do until the restaurant opened. She poured Frank another cup of coffee and sat down next to him at the counter.

"Thanks Gloria, looks like I've got some good news for you," Frank began as he folded the flimsy sports page of

the *Raleigh Gazette* in half. "I can finally let you go to work for one of those restaurants in Raleigh". Gloria's stomach tightened as Frank continued. "I found a girl who's waitressed before so you could leave whenever you're ready." Frank beamed, he would really miss Gloria, but Gloria thought she would only be happy if she were working for a big restaurant, and he wanted her to be happy. He owed all of his expertly trained waitresses, except perhaps Shirley, to Gloria. Gloria sat back on her stool stunned and remained in the same position until one of the other waitresses, Anne, settled herself on the other stool beside Frank.

"Can I interrupt you for a minute, Frank?" she began and then, without waiting for an answer, continued. "I have to give you my two weeks' notice because my best friend just got me a job at the department store she works at, so I won't have to get up so early and worry about getting a ride home. Okay?" Frank's face dropped visibly as he heard the news.

"Can't you stay a little while longer? I just told Gloria she could leave. I can't lose two waitresses."

"Oh, I'm real sorry, Frank," Ann said, wringing her hands. "I didn't know she wanted to leave."

During the conversation Gloria had sat motionless, but as she got up to seat the first customer she spoke to Frank. "You told me first and I've been working here longer, you know," she reminded him. Frank watched Gloria leave and turned back to Ann.

"She's right you know. Can't you wait a few weeks longer until we find another waitress?"

"I would, but I already told them I'd start in two weeks." Ann went to get another table and left Frank searching his cup of coffee for a solution. He didn't want to make Gloria stay, and he knew he couldn't force Ann to postpone her leaving.

The day went on uneventfully, but Gloria's co-workers noticed she worked more quietly than she usually did. As Gloria was leaving at the end of her shift, Frank crossed the dining area to talk to her. "You can still go Gloria. I'm sure we'll be okay."

"Thanks Frank, I guess I'll see you tomorrow."

The next morning, as Gloria awoke to see the yellow uniform waiting for her across the back of the chair, she smiled. She left for work and began her work routine in the same way as the day before. Frank's Buick arrived a little later than usual, but he ambled in carrying the familiar morning paper.

"Good morning Frank," Gloria called as she placed the last napkin bundle on its table. "I've decided to stay."

"You don't have to," Frank said, trying not to make his relief upon hearing the news obvious.

"I know."

The breakfast and lunch rushes left Gloria with little time to think about her decision, but she smiled when she caught Shirley apologizing to a customer for a late order, and when it came time for her to leave, the dark blue beetle slowly coasted down the winding roads as the sun climbed back into bed.

Sara Hill

Condiments

Intricacies linger
in mulled over memories
blind to essential generalities.

I can see the blue of your eyes
even after the harshness in your voice
has sung itself away into the West.

Rebecca Levin

Five Ways Of Looking At Limbs Of Trees

The bones of decaying animals, left alone to face the elements.
A spider's web, entangled and complicated, but sometimes deceiving.
The arms of a man reaching toward the sky.
An intricate mesh cradle providing a home to many babies.
A fence guarding the sky from intruders.

Amy Berlin



Tested

Oh teacher, but what
What
If my pencil forgets?
Or: What
If I am betrayed by some magnificent naughtiness
And What
If I dance tonight, instead?

And did you know, teacher, of your common gull
Who saves things and then vomits them lovingly
So that her young might live
As she did?

Because I am afraid
That mine is a less pleasant regurgitation
And this is a selfish terror. After all,
It is not for unborn babies
That I slave over irrelevancies:

I have yet to be so oneless.

(No! Please, it is not your facts I shun
But the unkenned dogs--
They bite! When they really weren't supposed to matter!
And the swollen, misplaced elephants
They kill.)

And shouldn't.

Louise Williams

Early Withdrawal

I looked at the ants
in their glass jar-capture
I saw them smiling and laughing
with glee
I looked even closer
to study their rapture
I found out the ants were laughing
at me

The vermin sat laughing
in their fragile glass world
(If only they knew it was but their tomb)
Out through my window
their glass jar I hurled
Then I sat happy
alone in my room

Lenny Leimbach

Jefferson Thomas

once a man
his hair turned grey
now marble can only
fade away
he stands stone
and tall
with a cane
and all
waving diplomatically
to the strangers
who hurriedly
pass bye
to glimpse at
his chiseled wisdoms

Tom Forman

Not So Special

and I have been sought after,
and I have been lonely,
Before:

But, how far beyond the fences
of normalcy is that,
Anyway?
Sunshine Susie says she's loved
Jelly Janet's had hers, too
And I don't consider myself even somewhat insightful
to see traces of my single self
within them
and others
the cliché goes
that the alone aren't always lonely
and I wasn't.
And I wasn't--
I find warmth in my buddy blanket
And my aloneness was only
aloneness
accompanied by touchable remembrances
Awful-Nice, and
Not over, and
I knew that, and
I know that
And
You know the rest

Louise Williams

Sonnet For Innocence

Where did you go after insatiable youth
In our yestertown of sheltered madness?
I remember your tears upon hearing cold truths
That drowned your spirit with a deadly sadness.
And on our green hill of memories we danced,
Silhouetted by a sunrise, ancient and free
Till Curiosity turned your head in mid-prance
And Apathy stole you away from me.
I cried out in a whisper, desperate and mute,
And longed for your warm hand of sympathy.
I cringed from the facts with your bold substitute,
With only a memory to comfort me.
But in looking back now I can understand
Your fate was governed by society's hand.

Danny Lewis

Alby

Albert ambled across the road with the grin of a drunk spread over his rotten teeth. He blinked at me, moving his unshaven face. "Guess what," he hollered. "I gotta case back in my room."

"Hey Alby," I answered, trying not to look directly at him.

"I'm probably gonna get drunk later, wanna come over and have a couple?"

"Sure, I guess." I had surrendered after several days of his asking me to join him for a drink. I think I really liked Albert, but it was hard when no one else seemed to. Even more strange was that Albert had taken my job when I got promoted. I was now a waiter in the resort dining room, while he was just a dishwasher. It felt funny ordering him around because he was twenty-five and I was just seventeen.

Alby climbed the five steps to the back porch with difficulty. His two-hundred pounds made a hefty load for a five foot, four inch frame. He hoisted the lid to the ice chest with a gasp and began the dishwashers' ritual of chopping ice for the salad bar. I was thankful for my promotion as I passed through the screen door into the employees' dining room.

"God, that guy Albert smells awful," Joe offered to one of the cottage girls. Joe was one of the many imported, rich college kids. They made quite a contrast to the locals who sometimes worked at the resort. I bet they wouldn't like to hear the things Alby could say about them.

"I think he made a pass at me the other day," announced

Susan, a cute little coed.

"Ha, I'm not surprised," laughed Joe. The thing that bothered me about Joe was that he had such a feminine walk. His nasal voice combined to make a rather all-around nasal personality that always had something to complain about.

Joe seemed to notice the look on my face. "Don't you think Alby stinks?" he asked me.

"I don't know, yeah, I guess," I stammered.

"Well, I sure think he's weird," Joe offered.

"Yeah," I quickly agreed. Joe was laughing now. So was I.

Later that night I climbed the stairs up to Alby's room with some hesitation. I wasn't sure I could face an evening of conversation with a drunk redneck that I didn't really know. Perhaps he would pass out so I could just get up and leave.

Alby's room was small but not crowded due to his few belongings. He had a clock radio beside the bed and a chest with some clothes hanging out of the drawers. On the top of the chest sat a framed picture of a girl who looked about eight years old. I asked Alby if it was his sister.

"Nope, my daughter," he answered. "You wanna beer?"

I thought for a moment before answering yes.

Alby and I talked for an hour, in which time he put away four warm Budweisers. He'd been drinking before I got there so he was pretty toasted by this time. One thing about Alby, when he was drunk he talked pretty indifferently.

"How old were you when you got married," I asked.

"Sixteen, had to," Alby looked at the floor. "She was pregnant."

Damn, I thought to myself. Poor redneck. "Ya know," I said angrily. "I think that Joe guy's a real fairy."

"Yup." Alby was laughing. I glanced at his daughter's picture. Suddenly a point earlier in the day hit me. I felt very cheap.

Brock Howe

Pachelbel

Canon for 3 violins and continuo
(5:55)

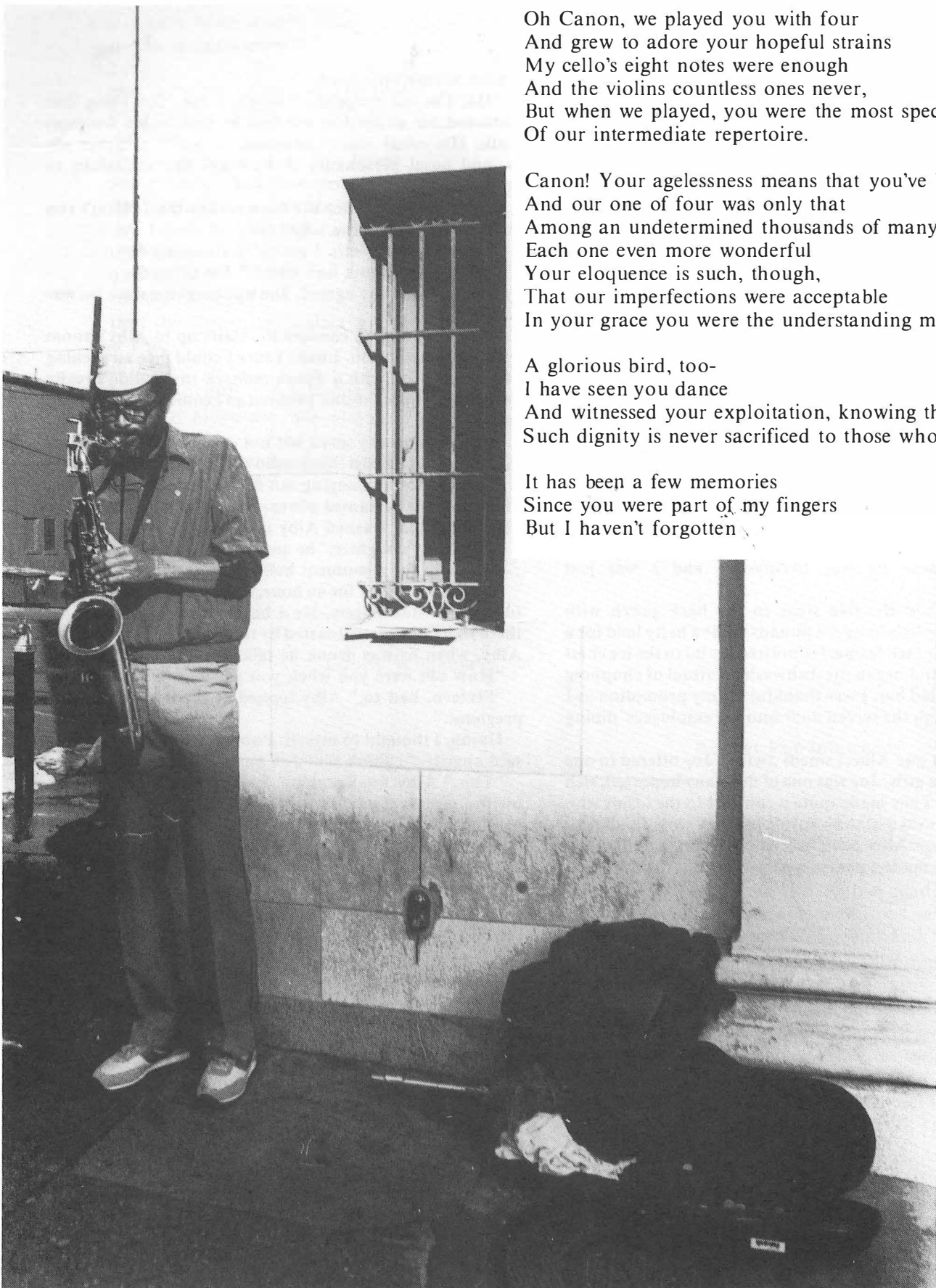
Oh Canon, we played you with four
And grew to adore your hopeful strains
My cello's eight notes were enough
And the violins countless ones never,
But when we played, you were the most special
Of our intermediate repertoire.

Canon! Your agelessness means that you've been loved forever
And our one of four was only that
Among an undetermined thousands of many
Each one even more wonderful
Your eloquence is such, though,
That our imperfections were acceptable
In your grace you were the understanding mother

A glorious bird, too-
I have seen you dance
And witnessed your exploitation, knowing that
Such dignity is never sacrificed to those who cannot understand

It has been a few memories
Since you were part of my fingers
But I haven't forgotten

Louise Williams



Royal Commands

Raise a sword you dashing fool
the jousting shall begin
Dear Knight your shining armor
has rusted in the wind
Behead the man who speaks with malice
against our royal king
slay the beast
who speaks with heat
And burns our lovely Queen
Reward the fool
who sings his song
for bits of stale, hard bread
A hero slays the dragon
And a blade
cuts off its head.

Tom Forman

Tunnel of Truth

Perhaps a drop
Of hydrochloric acid could bore its way
Through your flesh
and reach the membrane of your heart,
For you will not succumb
To the salty seawater embedded
in a teardrop.

Debbie Copaken

Song Of The Captive

Life in the circus is hell.
I am laughed at as I roar ferociously, pretending to fight,
When all know that I will submit to the humiliating whip.
It is a lonely life.
I am locked in cages, away from the creatures that might harm me,
Away from the creatures I could harm, but would not-
Only to be released
Into the torture chamber, under blinding lights,
The pain and degradation of the whips and flames,
The jeers, the fears, the endless years
Of suffering.
How can Man, who claims to love God and value life,
Submit any creature to the torment we call living?
They are unafraid, for I am defenseless.
For just one moment in the sun,
With no bars surrounding me, no whips prodding me,
For one moment of freedom,
I would gladly give my life.

Michelle E. Green

The Ideal

Across back
 a red knapsack
My face turned upwards
 toward the sky
My feet take pace
 in a drill-seargent style
My mind turns blank for a while.

My fist clenched tight
 around my straps
I spy a shelter for the night
 down in the streambed
 where a gentleman's dreams
Are forgotten, or at least
 out of style.

I lay myself down
 on nature's rugged carpet
Wincing at the rocks
 that poke my back.
Gazing into the starry sky
 my troubles vanish away
 in my sack.

I dream of futures never been
I dream of past forgotten
I dream, and that's all I can say
 because without an ideal
 I'm forgotten.

Jen. Karp

Blow The Blasted Thing's Head Off!

A bird

a stupid animal flys past my attic-bedroom window
It glides smoothly across
the clouded evening sky of spring
yep, and it's more free than I
For all of man's knowledge
a simple bird is more free

Perhaps with ignorance
comes freedom
because with wisdom
comes the realization
of one's true captivity

Lenny Leimbach

May your Tree of Life never be deciduous
(It made perfect sense to me)

Happily, I thought, it would never happen again, as I shook her hand; dry and soft yet wet and hard. It made perfect sense to me, lying on the dead leaves with hot sand grinding under my nose, and I was happy to be in the tree, thirsty as I was. I stroked the fur of the cat with long, fleabitten tweezers and then held up my burned fingers for the judge to see. We marched, and then we februaryed, in our haste to get up south. The violin string twanged once, and the mice danced on and on; until the hinge squealed and the folder slammed shut.

Donna Knaff

Bye Russy

The engine started up
We climbed over the ancient wooden sides
Looking back, trying to remember every event
 of the summer
The island looked lonely as we moved on
The fog thickened, hiding the island
 like a curtain at the end of a show
I turned and looked at Russy, who kept his rough,
 sea-beaten hands on the wheel
His eyes looked through his spectacles and
 glared at the waves in front of him
Charlie Brown sat perched on the bow, making impersonal
 conversation
We raised our voices and listened closely,
 eager to communicate with Russ
His rubber boots squeaked as the water sloshed inside
The dock became visible
"There's the mainland!" I said apprehensively

The time had come to say goodbye
Not a simple one, maybe one for good
We tried holding back the tears as we clenched his body
 weathered and tough as the sea
Yet his emotions were still, as soft as a new born child
And he cried, the first sound in his life,
and the last we heard of him

Julianne MacKinnon

On Earth Between Trees

On Earth between trees
On its wings over air the crow flew
Around wood pecked the woodpecker sound
Heard I below on the ground
By the stream swimming fish
After all thought I could be dead some day
In earth between trees.

Brock Howe



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HAIKU

Haiku! Haiku! Haiku!
Haiku! Haiku! Haiku! Haiku!
Haiku! Gesundheit.

Jen. Karp