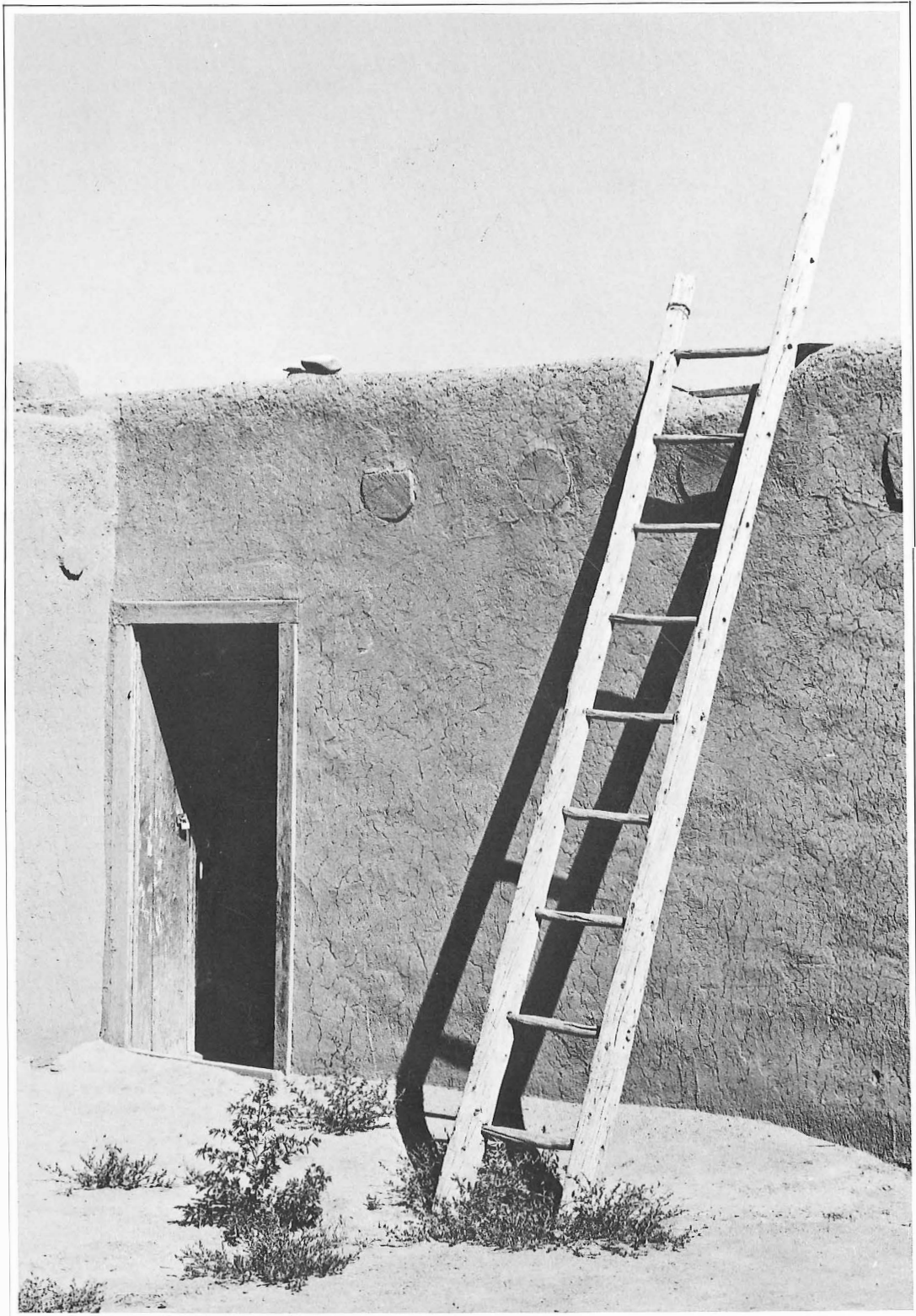


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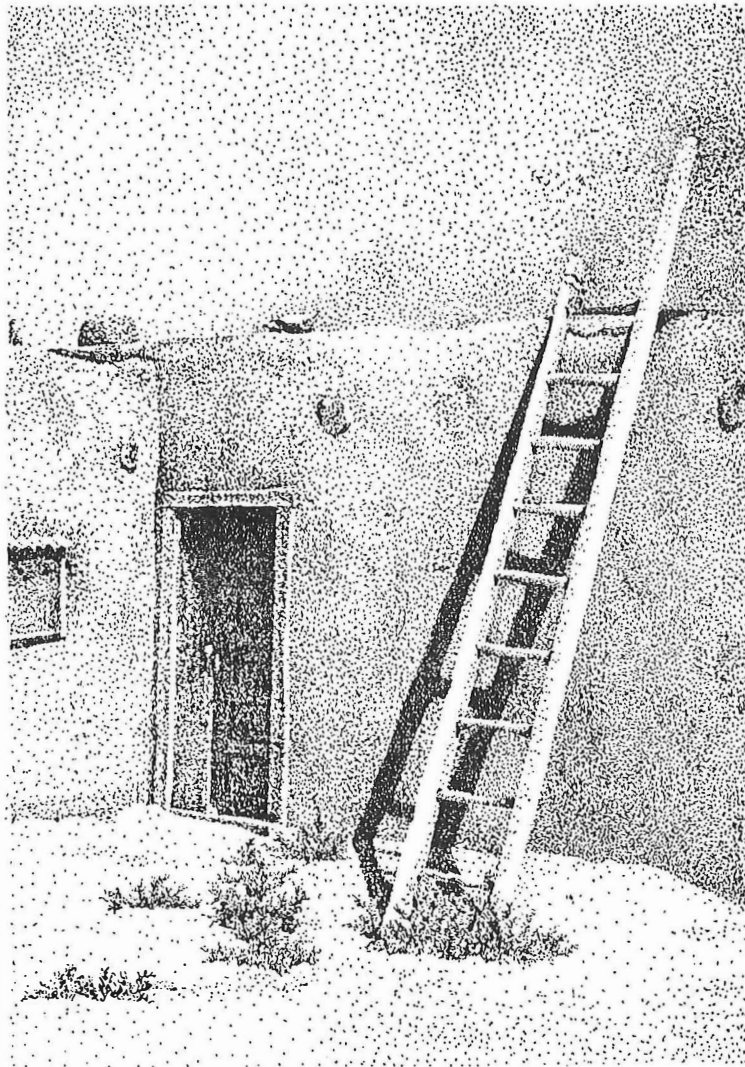
WINTER ♦ 1987



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# Erehwon

A Magazine of Creative Arts  
Volume 21, Number 1  
Winter 1987



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*Points of Departure*

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Winston Churchill High School  
11300 Gainsborough Road  
Potomac, Maryland 20854

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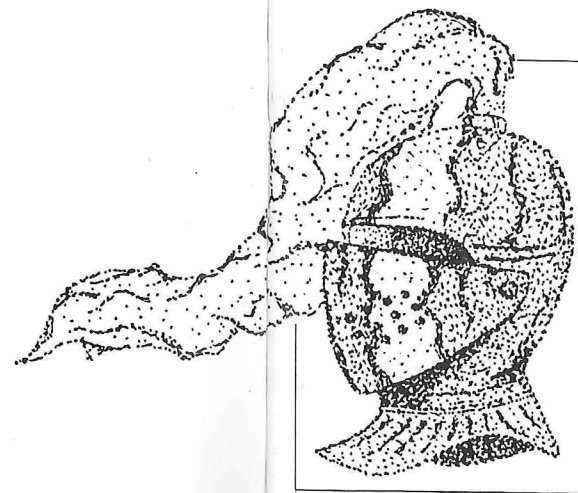
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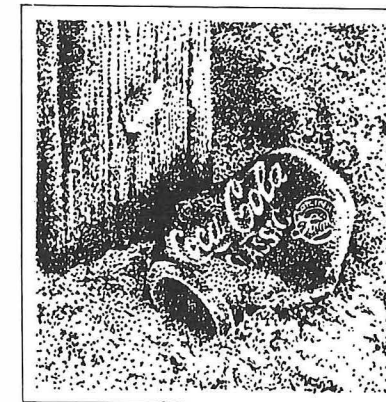
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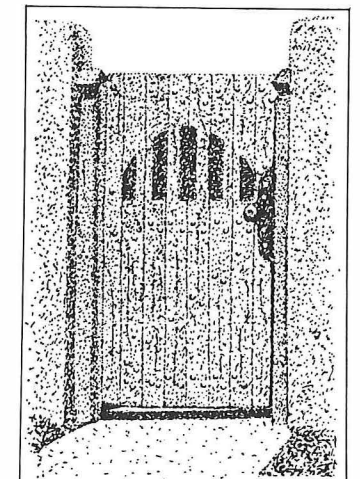
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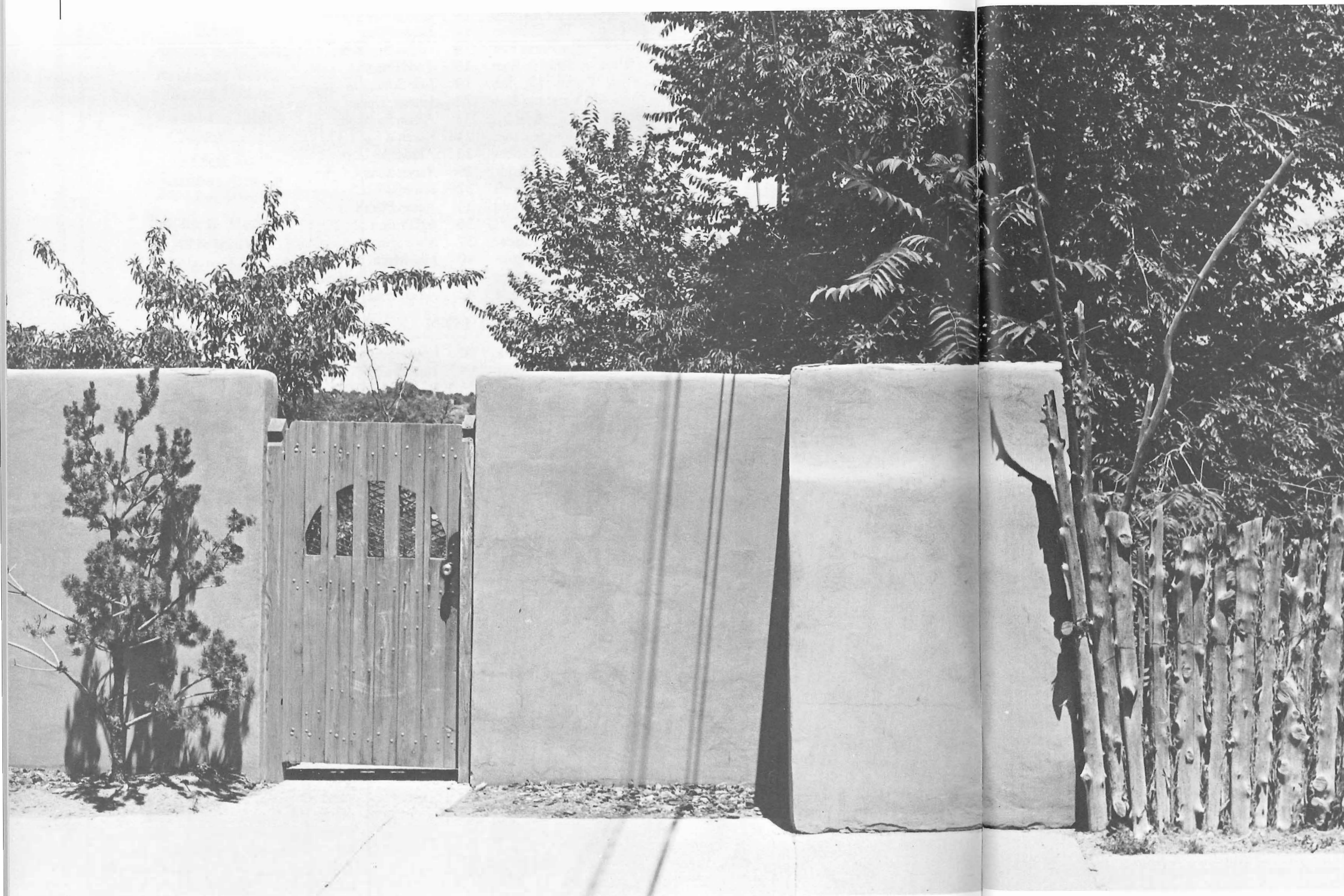
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\* Winners of the Winter 1987 PTSA Creative Writing Awards





Villa Gate

Andy Katzenmeyer

## Points of Departure

When points merge, they eventually run together and form a line. Yet between any two points on the line, there are always others. The number is infinite. The line can be straight or wavy, thick or thin, short or long, but it is always a continuous set of points. Although the line has a definite beginning and end, there is no end to the forms it can take.

In many ways, the progression from a point to a line is similar to the creative process. It is the job of the writer to blend ideas with images until they form a coherent statement—until they run together to combine and form a new, creative style. Each writer has his or her own style, as different from another writer's as a straight line is from a curve. But most writers hope to share their creative thoughts with an audience. Although the work is contained in a definite structure, there is no limit to the interpretations of the reader.

After all, what is beyond a line?



## Double Take

You look

away

and then I catch  
the glimmer of those eyes  
which makes

you look

away

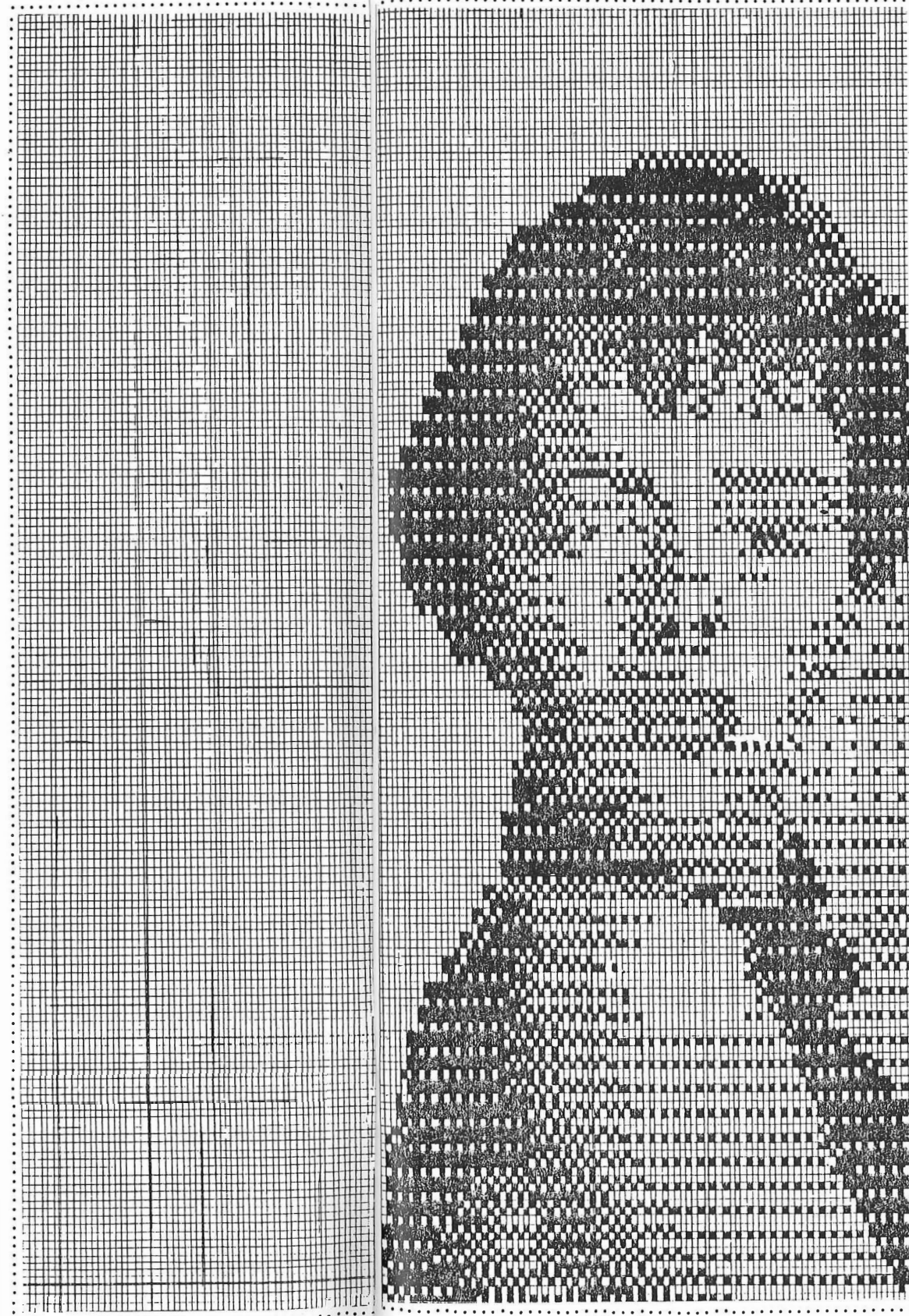
again.

I look

me look

*Jennifer Jung*

Candy Apple Smile Roger Krishnamurthy



## Party Animals

In one corner  
giggling faces  
with candy apple smiles  
play the game:  
toy and grin  
whisper and blush  
flaunting clips and curls  
for the passing crewcut  
who nods appreciatively  
but then goes past.  
Faces exhale.  
Quick cake-on  
moisten-up  
arrange  
check labels  
for next passing haircut.

In corner two  
raucous bodies  
in somber hues  
avoid the game:  
sneer and laugh  
shout and snicker  
conceal themselves  
under heavy raincoats  
from all who pass.  
Mimic hatefully  
from behind turned backs  
living the London Fog.

In corner three  
crewcuts with numbers  
and very obvious  
muscles  
replay the day's game  
for the evening's crowd of  
perfumed fans.

Queerly smiling  
I look on and  
watch,  
ensconced in normality  
taking pleasure in  
dissection  
from this  
safe  
fourth corner  
of my human triangle.

*Rob Sondik*



### Begonia

Begonia, jonquil, bluebell, orchid, rose,  
Adornments living solely to display.  
Though all with wisps and petals boldly pose,  
Scarce glances only nourish them each day.

To peel back one's own petals will expose  
An open ovum with a filthy stench;  
But don a cloak of polish and enclose  
Solicitors in jittery suspense.

Will blondes with burlesqued bosoms subjugate  
The reticent, bespectacled, and shy?  
Will fleshy pricks and stings incarnate  
The reeling out of inner fire?

Nay, overtness warrants but a shudder,  
For none appeals more than the latent lover.

*Albert Hsia*

Jonquils

*Cheryl Anne Levin*



### The Starry Night

At eventide we chose to stroll through fields,  
And all above us silent stars to light the way.  
Inspired by cosmic fires, the songs were sealed  
To sanctify my mind, where fire-flies played.

Your deafened ears no poetry could hear,  
No evensong the lonely night to sing.  
The darkly quiet skies impressed your fear  
Of unheard muted foreign tongues I bring.

The widening spaces might bid me speak  
To you, your question-knitted eyebrows smooth.  
I think, Don't shackle me and choke me weak  
By words—through words my love I cannot prove.

But softly soon my language shall you learn,  
And speak of winds that whisper, stars that burn.

*Erik Goldner*

### To Holly Hailman on Her Wedding Day

We always knew you'd be the  
first, but  
when you paraded in,  
wiggled your jeweled finger  
in our faces,  
we only stared.  
Hugs came later.

You visited your mother  
that day, I know—  
relived memories,  
planned futures,  
laid daisies.

True friend I was, though,  
stomping out rumors of  
"real reasons",  
sifting through invitation books,  
searching for cheap fares  
and an affordable honey  
moon  
for a housepainter  
and his  
new young wife.

Our math teacher tried  
logic:  
"You're just 17, dear;  
why don't you wait  
a while?"  
But in June things  
would be different,  
you told her;  
you'll be 18,  
he'll be 24!  
"And that's  
respectable,  
ain't it?"

February defrosted  
our tiny town;  
March drizzled.  
I sewed for the bridesmaids;  
You shopped for shoes.  
April poured.  
We licked 'n' stamped  
till our tongues were cotton.  
May flowered;  
You gathered old and new,  
borrowed,  
blue.

And June,  
one cloudless marryin' morn  
saw your sisters and brothers  
lined up  
cleaned up  
dressed up  
and your daddy,  
the Town Rednose, sobered up.

I cried, of course;  
our whole class cried;  
and I just couldn't  
tell you  
that your diamond won't scratch glass.

*Alison Buckholtz*



# Dreamhouse

Laurie Ginsberg

She drummed her fuschia "glamour-length" nails on the formica, puffing nervously on a freshly-lit cigarette.

"So, exactly what sort of home are you and your husband interested in?" The realtor inquired.

"Oh no, Oliver is not my husband; he's my baby brother," the woman replied, smiling tenderly at the forty-three year old man that sat beside her. "Oliver and I have elected Barney as our spokesman, so perhaps you should speak with him." She drove the laminated chopsticks deeper into the grey bun on top of her head.

"But I thought you said your hus..., rather brother's name was Oliver," the realtor said, glancing towards the stout man questioningly.

"Yes, Oliver is my baby brother," Roberta said impatiently, stressing the word baby. "Barney is our older brother," she clarified. "What a dimwit," she muttered under her breath.

"Fine," the realtor smiled tightly. "Now, there is no need to get snippy about it. Where exactly is Barney?"

"Oh, he should be here any minute. He wanted to see if Paula Tupper would be the returning champion on 'Jeopardy,'" Roberta replied.

"Who should be here any minute?" A deep, scratchy voice questioned.

"Barney!" Roberta called excitedly. "We waited for you."

Barney ducked under the door frame and sank into the wicker chair, which squealed under his weight.

"This is Barney," Roberta sang proudly.

"How nice to meet you, I have heard so much about you from your lovely er...sister," the realtor said primly. "So Barney, may I call you that?"

"That is my name," Barney replied blandly.

"Well, fine, Barney it is. My name, by the way, is Joan Simmons. Your sister and brother have informed me that you are the one who will tell me exactly what you are looking for in a house."

"Space," Barney said simply.

"Excuse me," the realtor questioned.

"You are excused." Barney laughed uproariously, slapping his knee, while Roberta tittered, and Oliver looked amused.

"Isn't Barney hilarious? He seems to have gotten the sense of humor in our family. One time..." Roberta began.

"Um, yes. I am sorry, but I do have other clients to see today, so if you would just tell me about the sort of home you are interested in, we could..." Joan trailed off, staring wide-eyed, her mouth slack, at Oliver.

"Excuse me sir, exactly what are you doing?"

Oliver had pulled an enormous tweed suitcase out from under his chair and had proceeded to empty its contents onto the realtor's desk.

"Organizing my maps," Oliver replied, removing the rubber band from a stack of street maps. He then spread them out in a fan-pattern on the table.

"As you can see, Oliver is very into maps: street, city, country, metro, school, etc. He loves them all, and carries them with him everywhere, so that when he is bored, no offense intended, he can categorize them according to color and weight," Roberta explained.

"Oh, I see," Joan replied, although she really didn't see at all. "So, about your house, I still really don't quite understand what it is that you are interested in."

"I have a splendid idea. Why don't you come to our present home and see its weak and strong points?" Roberta leaned back with a complacent grin.

"Fine, it is settled. Just followed the purple camper," Roberta decided, standing and smoothing out the wrinkles in her pink and brown flowered smock.

"The um, purple camper?" Joan said uncertainly.

"That is correct. Oh, yes, there is an old tractor attached to the back," Roberta clarified.

"Well, fine, I will meet you there," Joan replied.

"Right this way," Roberta led Joan through a narrow, cleared path in the entrance hall. Rusty lawn furniture and stacks of board games crowded the hall.

"Your home is very, well, it is so, um, well, yes it certainly is, nice. Yes, that's it, it's nice," Joan stuttered. "Who is the game freak?" She inquired amiably.

"First of all, they belong to me," Roberta began coldly, "and second of all, I certainly am not a game 'freak' as you so call it. Games are works of art and one most definitely does not call an art collector, an art FREAK!"

"Oh, excuse me, I was just trying to be friendly. I love games also. I think they are just grand. Do you have 'Monopoly'?" Joan asked trying not to lose her commission.

"Of course I have 'Monopoly!'" Roberta replied, pronouncing each word deliberately. Roberta inhaled deeply in exasperation, and stomped off to the kitchen, leaving Joan with Oliver and Barney, who were now glaring at her through slitted eyelids.

"Well, boys, I guess it is just you and me," Joan began. "So, where should we begin?"

Oliver and Barney were silent.

"Perhaps I should look at the kitchen, bedrooms, bath..." Joan tried again, however stopped abruptly when both men shuffled into the kitchen, leaving Joan alone in the front hall. Joan rummaged in her purse for a cigarette.

Puffing anxiously, Joan switched her weight to the other foot and leaned against a grimy chaise lounge. Voices in the other room rose and fell in anger. Joan heard snips of the argument through the kitchen door. "How dare she....game freak....We do want a larger house....Fine I will be nice....I said I would be nice!"

Roberta walked stiffly back into the foyer. "Won't you please come into the kitchen, Miss Simmons?"

They edged their way, single-file into the kitchen.

"We have several requests for our new home. First of all, the house must have very large rooms. As you may have noticed, we are a family of collectors. Some may call us packrats or hoarders, however, we prefer the term collectors. Therefore, all our interests in the new home will revolve around our collections. Oliver, as you have seen, collects maps, lawn furniture, and oh yes, the back covers of *National Geographic*. He therefore needs a very large room, preferably without windows, as light fades the maps. Roberta collects board games and pictures of Howard Cosell, so she requires a great deal of wall space on which to hang her photographs. Finally, I love game shows and collect the back seats of abandoned cars. I simply must watch television from these car seats, as couches will not do. There is something so fascinating about the cracked vinyl..." Barney began.

"Well, thank you Barney, I seem to have a fairly good idea about the type of home you desire, however the problem will be finding such a house." Joan whipped out a pad of paper and began to list the requirements. "A large, windowless house, with..."

"Also, a roomy basement, and a nuclear fallout shelter," Oliver added.

"Certainly, everyone needs a nuclea., a nuclear fallout shelter! What on earth do you need a nuclear fallout shelter for, um, on second thought, please don't explain," Joan pleaded. "I think that I have enough to go on, and I will telephone you, you do have a telephone, don't you?"

"We most certainly do. As a matter of fact, we have twelve," Roberta injected.

"Well, fine, I will be in touch. It was a real pleasure

meeting you all," Joan called as she edged towards the door.

"What a weird woman," Barney remarked. "She certainly won't be able to find the house for us."

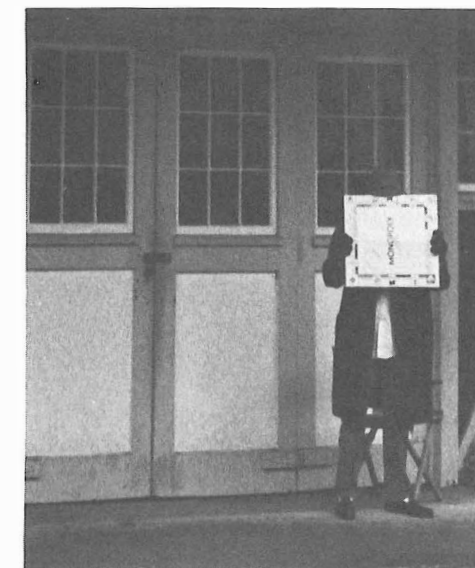
"Hello....yes, this is Roberta....you did!....that's fabulous....hold on one moment while I tell the boys." She covered the phone and hollered for her brothers. "Just one moment, Joan," Roberta said sweetly.

"What is it, Roberta?" Oliver asked.

"Miss Simmons, Joan, she found us a new place to live. She says it is perfect for us. Let me get the details," Roberta crowed.

"Take highway 60 several miles to the edge of town, yes, take a right and a left, yes, uh huh, Oliver, have you got all that? This is the place....Oh thank you Joan, it has been a real pleasure working with you. Oh that, well let's just forget all about our little argument, shall we? Well fine, and thanks again," Roberta lowered the phone into the cradle with a resounding smack. "Boys, isn't that marvelous! We'll move in as soon as possible. It will be so nice to be out of all this clutter."

*"Oliver collects maps, lawn furniture and the back covers of National Geographic. Roberta collects board games and pictures of Howard Cosell. I love game shows and collect the back seats of abandoned cars."*



John Young



“Suppertime!” Roberta called, as she balanced the ricecakes, okra and Spaghetti-O’s on her hip and forearms.

“Just a minute, Roberta. I just want to see the end of ‘The Dating Game.’” Barney replied, eagerly turning the volume up. “SSSSizz! Pffst!” The television blinked black and green for several seconds before shorting out completely. “Hey, what the....Roberrrrrrta!” Barney hollered, leaping from the olive-green car seat and smashing his fist on the top of the television.

“Barney, what is it?” Roberta came running, leaving a trail of garbanzo beans behind her.

“The television, it just turned off, it just shorted out. I don’t, I just don’t know what happened. I don’t even know if bachelor number three was chosen! What are we going to doooooo?” Barney whined, shrilling the last word.

“Now don’t get upset, Barney. I am sure it can be fixed,” Roberta reassured. “We’ll just call the television repair man in the morning and....”

“The morning! I can’t wait until tomorrow. I’ll miss ‘Wheel of Fortune’ and ‘Family Feud’ and ‘The Price is....’” Barney complained, ticking each game show off on his fingers.

“Fine, dear, we will call him now. Just calm down,” Roberta hissed, her patience almost gone.

Roberta searched frantically through the crowded kitchen for the telephone book, while Barney brooded in the other room. “Where is that stupid book? I swear, this house seems even more crowded than the last one, what with Oliver insisting on keeping the packing crates and Barney saving the other tenant’s trash. Well, I can’t find it here, I’ll just have to call information,” Roberta remarked to no one in particular. “Searching this house for nearly thirty minutes,

the dinner is probably dusty by now. My word, if it’s not one thing,” Roberta dialed 411. “Um, yes the number of Harvey’s Fixit Shop, Harvard Avenue....yes I’ll hold....uh huh, 555-7173, alright, thank...CLICK!...Why they hung up. Of all the nerve! It will be a long time before I’m polite to Information again. Barneeeey,” Roberta called. “I got the number.”

“Well it is about time,” Barney muttered to himself.

“What was that, dear? Well, never mind, I’ll just call myself,” Roberta again picked up the telephone and dialed the number. “The things I do for this family that go unappreciated....Oh, hello, I seem to have a television emergency, uh huh, that’s right, it seems to have just shorted out, OF COURSE it’s plugged in....yes, I’m sure!...well that would be great....NEXT WEEK! Um, I’m sorry that is just not possible....Yes, I know you have other customers, it is just that it is a real emergen....Well it’s not just a television to us, it really is important....Oh you can! Why that’s just great, thank you so...” Roberta was again cut off. “My address, oh, well we really don’t have an address, but I’ll just give you directions. It really is quite simple to find, just follow highway 60 to the edge of town, yes that’s right, take a right, yes, then a left, uh huh, you will see an abandoned amusement park....no, that IS the place!” Roberta chuckled in amusement, enjoying the repairman’s confusion. “Drive past the merry-go-round and take a right. We live in the orange and pink building, ah yes, there are two green turrets in the front, and if you still can’t find it, there is a peeling picture of a clown painted on the front of our house, reading:

‘The Glenview House of Fun and Surprise’”



John Young

Dream House

## The Ballad of Doris, the Neiman-Marcus Checkout Girl

’Twas Christmas and the hollied halls  
Did twinkle flicker spark  
Beside the ’lectric bulbs and glass  
The sprayed-on snow seemed stark

And all had left the Gourmet Mart  
Save loyal Doris Jones  
She sparred with angry customers  
She answered all the phones

“O little town of Bethlehem”  
The Muzak speakers blared  
The heater was turned on full-blast  
Sweet Doris whispered, “Merde”

The heat made Doris feel quite faint  
She trembled and she sweat  
But bravely manned the register:  
Her household was in debt

Requests poured in for Sushi Cake  
A lady returned bleu cheese  
And no one noticed Doris Jones  
Alas, they ignored her wheeze

When she collapsed onto the floor  
Sweat streaming from her brow  
The crowd of white minked shoppers  
screamed,  
“We want our fruitcake now!”

Her life had gone in sacrifice  
To chocolate smeared bear claws  
To liver popcorn, cookies moist  
She died for a noble cause

And all had left the Gourmet Mart  
Save loyal Doris Jones  
She’ll rest in peace, now free at last  
Of angry ringing phones

Joanna Schaenman

## The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Alphabet in permutations.  
Beat keys in frustration.  
Capture the succession of letters on the page.  
Damn—The quik brpwn fos jimps ocer teh laay dof.  
Every letter is supposed to be there.  
Foxes jump over lazy dogs over and over and over.  
Get fingers in the right places.  
Have to get it right.  
It’s wrong again.  
Jump fox, jump not julmp, jump, jump, jump!  
Keys dance, but their steps are out of order.  
Learn where letters are.  
Match keys and fingers.  
Next time I’ll get it!  
Or not.  
Please dog be layz lazy.  
Quickly fox, jump.  
Rong again, again, again, again, again.  
Slowly, concentrate...  
T H E Q U I C K B W R O...  
Ug.  
Very carefully, verify...  
Where’s the Z?  
X-amine again.  
YES, it’s right!  
Zooming over the lazy dog, the quick brown fox jumps.

But please, before you jump away,  
Pack my box with five dozen liquor jugs.

Cheryl Levin

They were away, praying for the world's soul  
 But God was crying, and I feigned sneezes  
 And stayed  
 ("Meet you in the Square at noon, Joey")  
 After my shower, I debated:  
 To breakfast? Or not to break fast?  
 ("We are Vile. We Kill. We Maim. We Pervert. We Repent.")  
 Cautiously, I opened the refrigerator door and before you  
     could say blasphemy had prepared a plate of bagel, lox  
     and Philly.  
 Tiptoed down the hall  
 Into the bathroom  
 Locked the door behind me so God and my little sister  
     wouldn't see  
 Life has not been the same since

Alison Buckholtz

### The Coroner

She speaks with the alacrity  
 Of something dying.

so often

Twenty-four stenographers  
 Are propped like corpses in their chairs.  
 They masticate her words with their ears  
 And spit them out on paper.

we live

I raise my hand  
 And she glares "doubleplusungood."  
 She preaches Apathy with amazing  
 Conviction.  
 My question is vaporized.

our lives

Her stare spits chloroform  
 Into my nose and mouth.  
 I almost succumb, and  
 The coroner is ready and waiting,  
 Number-two lead pencil in hand.

in chains

But I cannot let her win.

never knowing

I stagger to the door  
 And whisper my request:  
 "Please may I go to the health room I don't feel well."  
 But I leave before she can attack again.

we have

"Touché," comments the coroner,  
 As I slip out the door.

the key.

Karen White

### Tuesday Safari In Rust

It was  
 three o'clock  
 and time for lunch.

Flat reluctant steps bring me closer  
 and  
 although unfamiliar roads are to be traversed  
 I feel familiar enough to wing it.

Egads! but what may this be  
 this wreck  
 a sea of wretchedness in this non-heaven  
 a makeshift house with a main feature in the front yard  
 that is  
 the cars

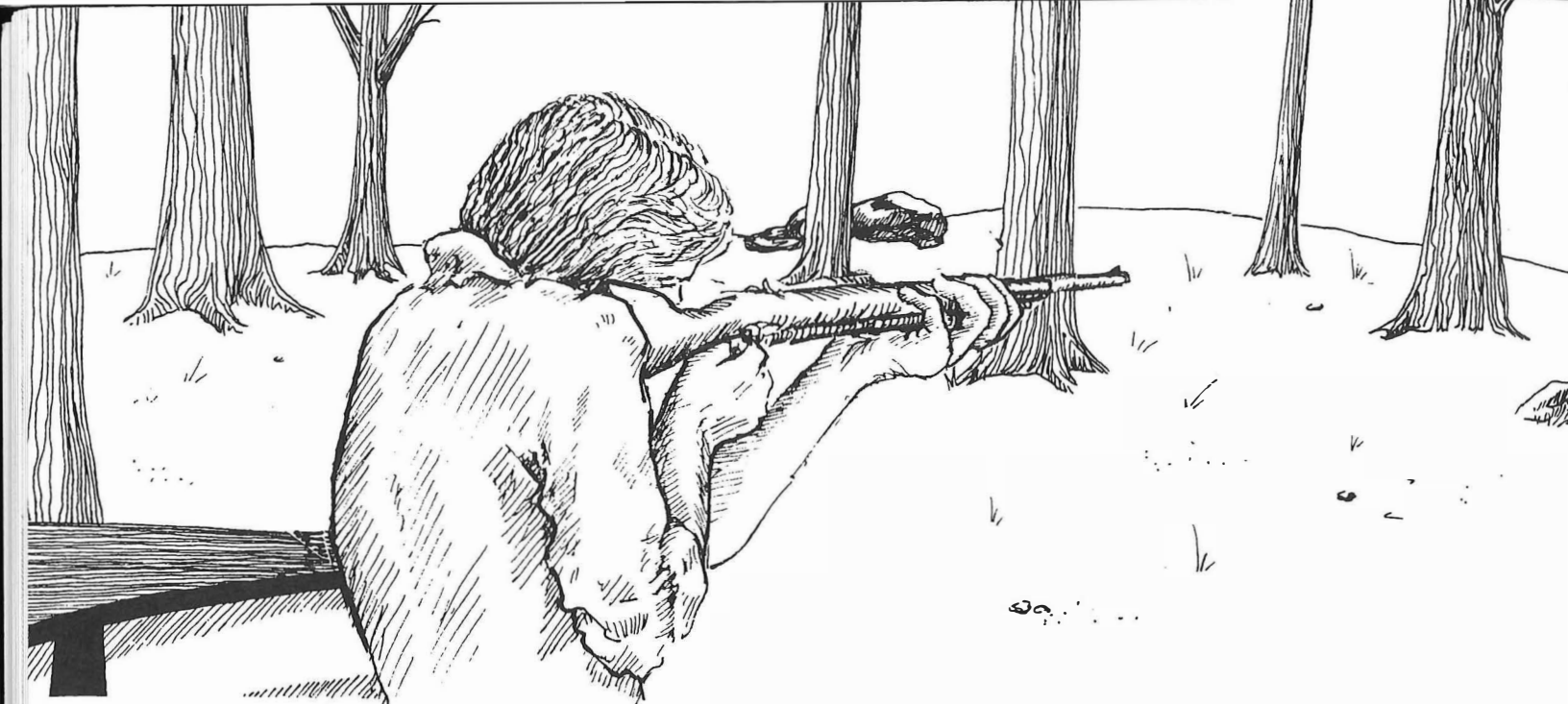
A few are sitting idly.  
 One somewhat new, but possibly used  
 Another looks okay, but the mouth is open  
 and nothing is in it;  
 no engine no guts no nothing.

Granddaddy Overmull, I decide, is  
 An octochromatic Volkswagen, with all its  
 wartorn glory patched up by  
 welded seams of sickly rusted scars.  
 And it has served well.  
 Perched on its own bed of four little cinderblocks  
 It waits to be called for service, although  
 someone would have to remind it.  
 Weeds have captured the four-posts and  
 have got them locked into the rooted earth.  
 If someone calls it to action

much work is to be done,

as someone has to wake it up and tell it  
 to  
 "Put on your tires."

Todd Pruzan



Alex Heffess



*I saw the Knight  
and yet I saw only the money.  
I wanted the money that this  
famous suit would fetch.*

# American Poachers Outside London

Todd Pruzan

**H**e swore loudly when morning arrived, because the car was parked where the sun was in our eyes. I sat in the driver's seat, shivering and thinking about nothing in particular and drinking hot chocolate. Mike was next to me, cleaning one of the guns. I'd let him have the job, as I'd no idea of how to do it myself; I knew the paper and rods were necessary, but that was about it.

"Want some of this?" I indicated my steaming mug.  
"That? Oh, no thanks." He went back to the gun.  
"I'm insulted."  
"You should be."

I muttered an obscenity, followed by a "No offense."  
"None taken."

This was met by laughter, the first laugh of the morning.

We sat in the car, my car, my red Japanese car which appeared quite out of place parked in the middle of the woods. As far as I could tell, there was no real path either. What's more, we'd arrived at night. We got here, and just sat here, waiting for something to happen. Nothing did.

The sun was now cracking through the trees, giving the air that interesting misty look that's always seen in pictures. The sound of a few distant birds pierced the sky. We sat.

It's a strange story. It began as sort of a dare on ourselves, sort of an impulsive kind of thing, but Mike and I were

here, in the middle of the woods, ready to kill anything and sell the booty. Maybe he wasn't, but I personally was flat broke—well, technically, I had \$1.06 in my pocket. All of it was in change. I found this notion slightly embarrassing, and hesitated to mention it to him. At home, the story was much the same: no money. "Go out and make some money," my parents would tell me. Hell, yes. But what about time? I don't have time for a job. At least I didn't, until I learned how to manipulate it.

Of course, the money problem didn't matter now; all we had to do was make our stalkings, our shootings, collect the valuable stuff, and get away—sell it to the museum or something. Anything.

"That gun ready?"

"Yeah. I think. I mean, I don't know about guns."

Et tu, Mike? I can't do this by myself, you know. And you want money too.

**I**saw the thing on me early morning rounds. 'Twas a work of God, or the Devil, I daresay. A great carriage of red, yet no horses! It looked like nothing to me knowledge, and I don't consider myself to be one of ignorance. Me eyes could have been likened to great saucers. How was I to believe it? Was it witchcraft? Methinks that may be the answer.

The carriage was largely constructed of armor and glass, it being of large size. I likened the glass to water, it was so clear. The wheels were not of the ordinary kind; they were round, to be sure, but no spokes. How it kept from collapsing under its own weight, I couldn't tell. In what looked to be the front and the back, as I found, were bits of stained

glass, like in Henry's Church; they were coloured red, gold and white; the whites were round and there were four of them. Their purpose was a mystery. I thought of the origin of the carriage. It looked to be a veritable suit of scarlet armor. Was it a creation of King Henry? What was the purpose of such a thing? It rolled free of the will of horses, and could easily protect not only one from the smarting blades, but perhaps four or five. Those inside it didn't even need their mail to be perfectly safe! Did the King use it? Did he invent it? I didn't know—at the time.

Intrigued, yet frightened, mind you, I crept around it, perhaps a few yards away, and hid myself behind a tree. I watched it serenely for about a quarter of an hour.

Suddenly, the most furious noises ever to escape from the lips of Satan erupted in the air! Crossing myself, I remained behind the tree, frozen. Me eyes were fixed upon the carriage. There was a great fire going on within; smoke poured from the rear of the steedless wagon. The carriage started to roll forward, and went at a pace quicker than I'd yet seen from a steed, finally stopping several yards further, at the top of a hilly spot—but somewhat closer to me. The roaring ceased. Had it seen me? I clutched the tree and begged mercy from God.

**"H**ey." Mike had put the rifle in the back seat. It looked odd—a gun in the back seat of my car.

"Yeah?"

"Look—we've been here for a few hours, and nothing's come by yet. How close are we to the castle?"

"According to the map here, we're easily within a mile."

"Well, isn't there an overlooking hill anywhere?"

"I have no idea."

"Oh, well. Hey, gimme oneathose bagels." I passed him the bag.

"Happy breakfast."

"Thanks, 007."

I snorted. "Licensed to kill things..." I faltered momentarily. "...with exoskelteons."

"Yeah," followed by a laugh, which is one way I'd come to know his particular laugh.

We sat for a minute or two. Finally, Mike suggested, "Hey, move the car up there. I think that's the hill. I mean, sort of a hill."

"Where?"

"Right in front." He pointed.

I turned the key and tapped the accelerator while in park, then pushed us slowly forward. After reaching what was actually a small hill overlooking some part of the woods, I turned the car off gently. The engine had filled the air with smoke—and the silence—with a horrible exploding noise, and I regretted having shattered the tranquility. But, I reasoned, at least no one was around to hear it.

**O**h, mercy me! I clean forgot. I was supposed to give King Henry the message of the invasion. There we were, the other messenger and myself—his name is Ian Cruikshanks—we were supposed to go forth to the castle and give him the news, as the fight is thought to be taking place this very afternoon. And now the future of England may be in ruin. And it's me own fault. France is advancing—oh, what am I to do?



So anyway, we were getting here as the sun rose over the horizon, and we were in the middle of the hills, when I says to Ian, I says, "Me God! Do you see that?"

And he says, "What?" because Ian's not too good with his eyes.

And I says, "That red carriage!"

And he says, "Never seen the likes of it before."

And I says, "Do you think it's from France?"

And he says, "Well, I don't know."

And I says, "I think we should tell King Henry about this."

And he says, "I think you'd better stick around here, friend."

And I says, "That I will, to be sure," because God knows I'm not a coward of any sort.

But now I'm scared.

Methinks someone plans to be getting out of the wagon.

I hope Ian Cruikshanks arrives at the Windsor. King Henry's there this weekend, you know.

"What's that?" I asked.  
Mike looked up. "What?"  
"I heard something."

"I didn't."

"Sounded like a trumpet," I suggested.

We waited. Distantly, but distinctly, I heard it again; this time, he did too.

"I hope they're coming this way," said Mike.

"We're going to have to move the car."

"This isn't hidden enough?"

I thought. "I guess you're right.—Well, what can they do to us, anyway?"

"Yeah."

Both of us laughed with hearty anticipation for the upcoming hunt. I reached to the back seat for the rifle. The tip scraped the ceiling as I carefully pulled it forward. I opened the car door and stepped outside with the rifle.

"Or do you want this?"

"No, I'll get the one in the trunk."

---

*Oh heavens me! The two brightly-clad boys pointed their iron-sticks at our beloved knight, and the ends of the sticks exploded like cannon.*

---

I bent down next to my seat and pulled the lever. The lid snapped open. Both of us went to the rear and he took the rifle.

"Well, this should be interesting," he said in a mock English accent.

"Nothing's more dangerous than a wounded knight," I warned in Cockney.

We walked back to the front of the car, and we were about to step in.

"Wait a minute."

"What?"

"Are we going to pull this Francis Macomber stuff?"

"What do you mean—"

"Are we going to be..."

"What?"

I must've seemed embarrassed. "Are we taking pot-shots from inside the car?"

He blinked, frowning. "Hell, yes! Are you brain-dead?"

We laughed once again. I felt relieved.

**M**e word, what's in the hold? There's two young men, not much older than the page-boy in the court, and they're stepping out of the carriage. In me life, never have I seen clothes the likes of which adorned them; they were brightly coloured, their coats hanging short and loose. Their hair, too, was short; they wore blue trousers and white shoes. I've never seen people looking like this before.

Back to the hold. They both got out, and the door on the hold rose up by itself. One of them clutched a long bit of iron with a stick attached; the other extracted another iron-stick just like it. It looked to be a weapon, like a pike or a halberd without a blade. They shut the door of the hold and walked to the front. The boys stepped back into the carriage. A few silent moments passed; then, I grabbed me tree even harder; for one of Henry's knights was on the loose! He came around a hidden bend in the hidden path, in all of his glory.

I knew all about him—save his name. He was one of King Henry's favourites, all garbed in silver and gold leaf. He wore the colours of England proudly; his silver sword was unsheathed, and his bugle at his side. Many more were on the way; within a few moments, I knew, they'd be here; the move was into battle with the Knights of England. Where were the French? I thought the battlefield to be much further up and away. Still, I remained behind me tree.

Then there was a clap of thunder, and the lead knight fell off his horse!

"Oh, Christ. Here they come."  
"Sure that's them?" I deadpanned.  
He laughed, and so did I. I knew this hunt would be fun.

"Seriously, I only hear one."

"Well, he sure is close."

"Here he comes, Mike! Get ready!"

"I'm not loaded."

"Me neither."

"Crap." He opened the glove compartment, and filled the magazine with bullets. "Here, gimme yours." I handed him mine, and he loaded that one as well.

"Thanks."

"Get ready. He's almost here."

I slammed the stack into the rifle and rolled down my window. Mike did the same. We were both waiting, leaning out the windows with the guns. I pushed the safety off. I didn't breathe.

The knight came bounding up the hill; all I could think about was the silver-gold mail he wore. Quite a bundle, it would hail. I saw the knight, and yet I saw only the money. I wanted the money that this famous suit would fetch. This was one of the knights we'd discussed in history, I decided dogmatically. Of course, I had no idea.

He reared his horse, its hindquarters raised, hooves digging the ground. He was watching us through the slit in his visor, perplexed.

"Fire!" I shouted. The knight, alarmed, looked over his shoulder, but didn't see anything burning.

Together, we picked him off. The horse galloped away, screaming.

I opened the door, and the car buzzed until both doors were closed again.

"We nailed him," said Mike.

"Where'd you hit?"

"Neck."

"Great! Me too. Maybe we didn't damage the mail at all."

We crouched next to the dead suit of mail. After a few minutes, we had emptied it of its contents.

"This is valuable stuff."

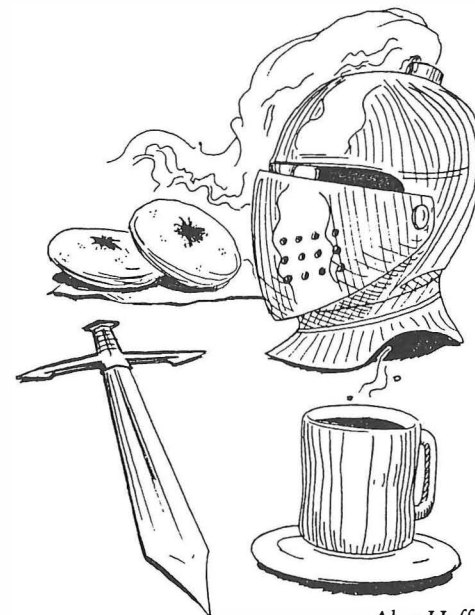
"Don't I know." I laughed triumphantly. "We're rich!"

We loaded the disassembled armor, weapons and bugle into the back seat and pulled away, off to the side, from where we came. He had the guns in his lap. And I really felt satisfied.

Finally.

**O**h, heavens me! The two brightly-clad boys pointed their iron-sticks at our beloved knight, and the ends of the sticks exploded like cannon. The knight fell, the thunder ceased, the doors of the carriage opened. Stunned, I stood me ground, frozen. The carriage boys walked to the knight and inspected him, and then undid the mail. They carried all the pieces back into their wagon, and the sky roared again, and with a great gust of fiery smoke, the carriage rolled away again, faster than I'd seen it the first time.

I blinked, and I knew I was still seeing this. I hadn't been dreaming this. And, a few moments later, the other knights approached, and they too reared their horses at the foot of the body, almost as the first had done. I remained in hiding. I didn't move. At that moment, I hated and feared the French more than anything in me life.



Alex Heffess

## Job (a palindrome)

To listen, I will Him.

Asked I:

Should it not happen?

Will good forever stand alone?

You now forget; not do, said I,

that which you promised.

I said and.

then He appeared.

Appeared He then

and said

I promised you which? That I said

Do Not Forget!

Now you, alone, stand forever.

Good will happen, not it should.

I asked.

Him will I listen to.

Julie Schulman

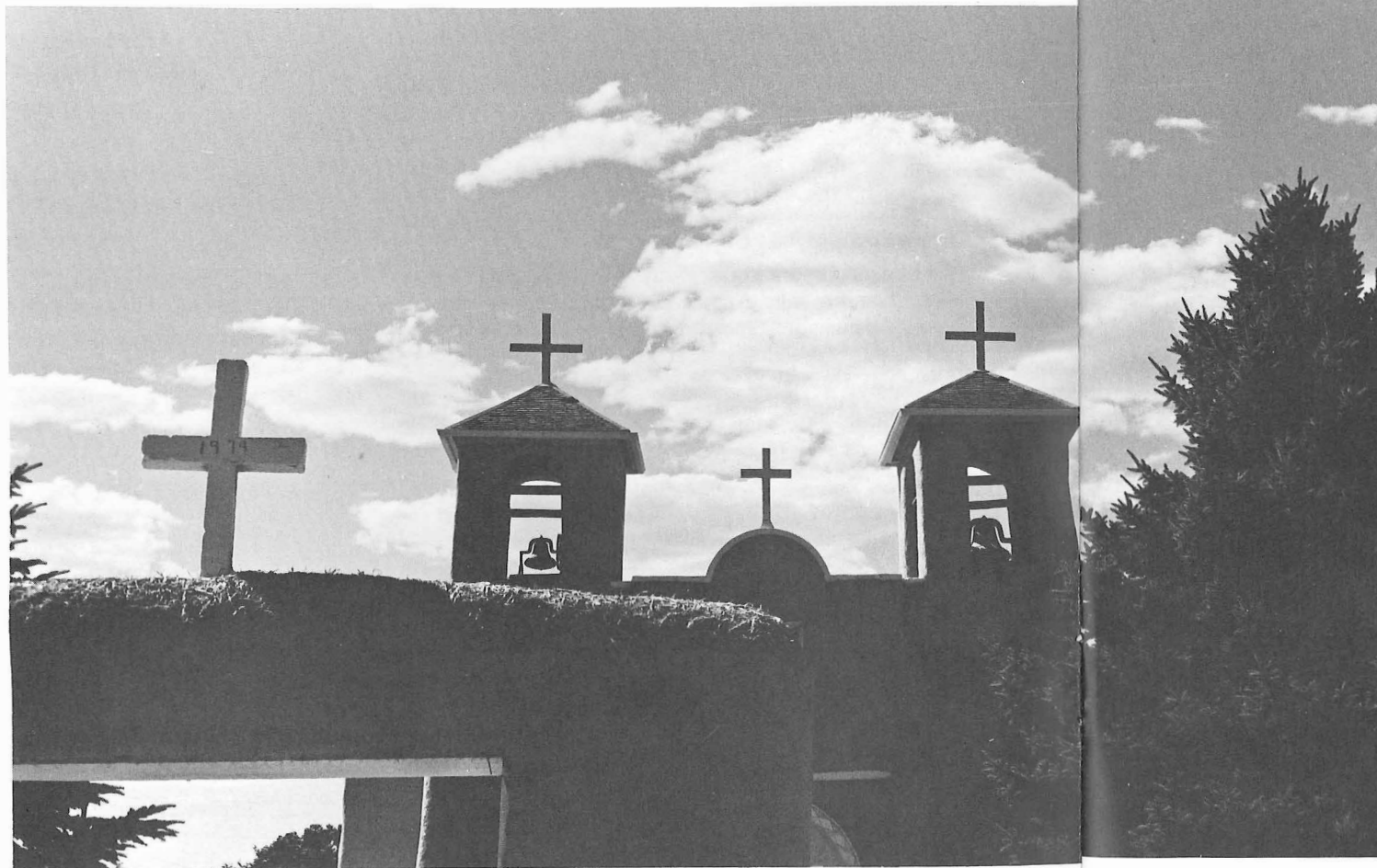
## On Veteran's Day

1967  
Robert Johnson  
Wieland Norris  
Crowds Stood  
Ever Faithful  
Near The Long  
Wall Black,  
A. Huge  
Somber Tombstone  
For Those  
Who Never

Came Home  
From A. War  
That Never  
Knew Sense  
1968  
Thomas Sikes  
John S. Berg  
Cold Rain Fell  
On Those  
Still There  
United With

Tears of Even  
The Tomb  
1969  
And I. Stood  
From A. Generation  
Without Worry  
Without War  
Some Sorrow  
Certainly Sympathy  
Yet Impervious  
To The Rain

*Jennifer Dixon*



Four Crosses — Andy Katzenmeyer

## A Truth

Ev'ry writhing Eve  
gives up more than one thin rib  
for the child Adam

*Alison Buckholtz*

## Grandmother

The watercolor sun  
Washes over the sky in pastel tides,  
Your twisted torso terrible and black  
Against the spreading waves.  
Gnarled fingers reach out from knobby limbs  
That are hunched with your age.  
Your children kept you young and green  
And now they are gone in their golden years,  
Leaving you only a carpet of memories.

The sky is an ocean of color now  
And your black body stands bravely  
Alone.  
We planted you there  
When you left us ten years ago,  
And you have grown,  
Each fall your tired trunk  
Waiting for the spring.

*Karen White*

# Welcome to The Writer's Center

*The largest local  
organization for writers  
celebrates its tenth anniversary.*

*by Alison Buckholtz*

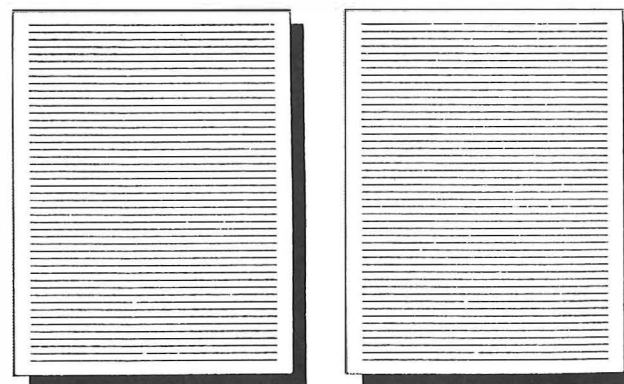


Jean Kim

If you turn left onto Democracy after Montgomery Mall, take a right on Old Georgetown, continue about five miles and park after Cordell Avenue, you will be very close.

Just walk to the door with the ordinary logo, amble up the worn grey stairs, and turn left. That's it. You're there. Maybe no one will be at the front desk to greet you except Purr, the resident cat, but that's okay. Stroll around the place. A "Writing science fiction" group might be gathered in the Book Room. A typesetting lesson could be taking place by one of the computers. Whatever the time of day, something is probably happening.

Welcome to The Writer's Center.



The Writer's Center, a small building that functions as a workshop, poetry hall, bookstore and typesetting business, opened ten years ago to a modest but dedicated group of Washington writers. Today it claims about 2000 members and shows no signs of fading from the writing scene.

"Everything just gets bigger and bigger," said founder Al Lefkowitz. "Every year, more members join, the gallery sells more books—all this from six people in a dining room ten years ago!"

Lefkowitz, a white-haired man clad in paint-spattered jeans, sweatshirt, and sailor's cap, recalled his organization's 1976 conception. "I had just finished a book, and was bored," he said. "I saw an ad for space to rent in Glen Echo Park and thought, 'wouldn't it be nice to have a theater.' Someone else said, 'wouldn't it be nice to have a place for poets.' Another person said, 'Why don't we have a space to display books.'" Lefkowitz smiled. "I did not found The Writer's Center. The Writer's Center happened."

However, Lefkowitz admitted, the success that followed its opening is due to the gap it filled in the Washington writing community.

"It isn't a matter of being popular, it's fulfilling a need," he explained. "It's the belonging, the sense of community, a professional feeling one gets from being here. This is your playing field."

"It's what people want," agreed Robin Suleiman, a Churchill tenth grader who volunteers at The Writer's Center. "There's no other organization that serves writers like this one does."

Local writer Micha Lev also concurred. "I think it's very important that writers not write in a vacuum," he said, remembering the ten years of progress on his first book, *Yordim*. "It's important to react to others' writing so you can continue growing."

But The Writer's Center claims only a few full-time writers, according to Lefkowitz. "Most of our members are people who are serious writers and have other positions," he said. "Some are lawyers, some are janitors; it's their living and their experience, their material. They are committed. Writing is not just their hobby."

Several teenagers also belong to The Writer's Center, and although teenage representation is low, according to Lefkowitz, "in some cases they can benefit the most. For a teenager interested in writing, how easy is it to announce that interest, then share it with others?" he asked. "We make it easy. We take everyone for what they are."

Although some teen-only classes are available, like the College Writing Workshop, Lefkowitz said that most teenagers choose to join adult classes. "Teenagers benefit from attending classes with published writers. We become a resource for teens who want to know the reality of the writing game," he explained. "For example, they realize that you can aim for other professions: reporting, dentistry—not poetry though."

Suleiman added that The Writer's Center is even more valuable for teenagers because of a lack of other options. "There's not much around to help teenage writers," he said. "Aside from school classes and The Writer's Center, there's nothing. They really have to write on their own."

Lefkowitz added that teenagers benefit from the same sense of professionalism and brotherhood that adult writers

do. "Teenagers are attracted to us because this is a place where you're respected, regardless of age, just because you're doing well," he explained. "We don't categorize. We don't say, 'for someone your age, this is good.'"

"People of all ages can go and have their work critiqued by other writers. That's why I'm a member," Suleiman said.

Although Lefkowitz believes that "writing for many teenagers is more than just a hobby," he said that adult writers have more problems attracting audiences.

"Some writers are very discouraged when they come to us," he said. "Big New York publishers are publishing fewer little-known authors, but there are thousands of small presses begging for material. As a result, more writing is getting published than is getting read."

Living in Washington poses a special problem for writers, Lefkowitz said. "There is so much to do here beside read. We have a lot of fine writers here, but not a lot of fine readers."

Lev quoted author Toni Morrison to illustrate his problem with today's writers. "Everyone wants to be an author, but no one wants to be a writer," he chuckled, then added, "You have to become a TV personality before you're recognized as a writer. We're living in a video culture."

When a writer is stuck on a certain project, or has finished a piece and is waiting to publish, "practical skills for extra bread," like The Writer's Center's typesetting class, are helpful, according to Lefkowitz. He clarified, "Our typesetting class is short, useful, and popular. But people attend the writing workshops and other activities not just to sharpen writing—it also helps their reading," he explained. "You get more pleasure from a work if you have knowledge of the art."

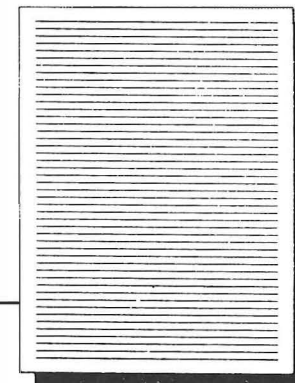
"I love the poetry readings that The Writer's Center offers," Lev said. "I find them to be inspiring."

Lefkowitz said that he is often inspired to offer new courses and branch out. "I'd like to introduce a TV writing course, something coupled with production, but with a consciousness of the limitations of the media. I'd also like an afterschool college writing and reading workshop where teenagers could be with a group of people all on the same level."

"My goal is to someday have our own space," he continued, glancing around the room. "We rent now. Also, since I founded this is part as a theater, I'd like to see more theater."

"Essentially, though, as we grow, I want us to grow with openness, flexibility and variety. To hold on to our grass roots quality, and remember what it was like at the beginning. Not much money, but most people gave their time," he said, adjusting his cap.

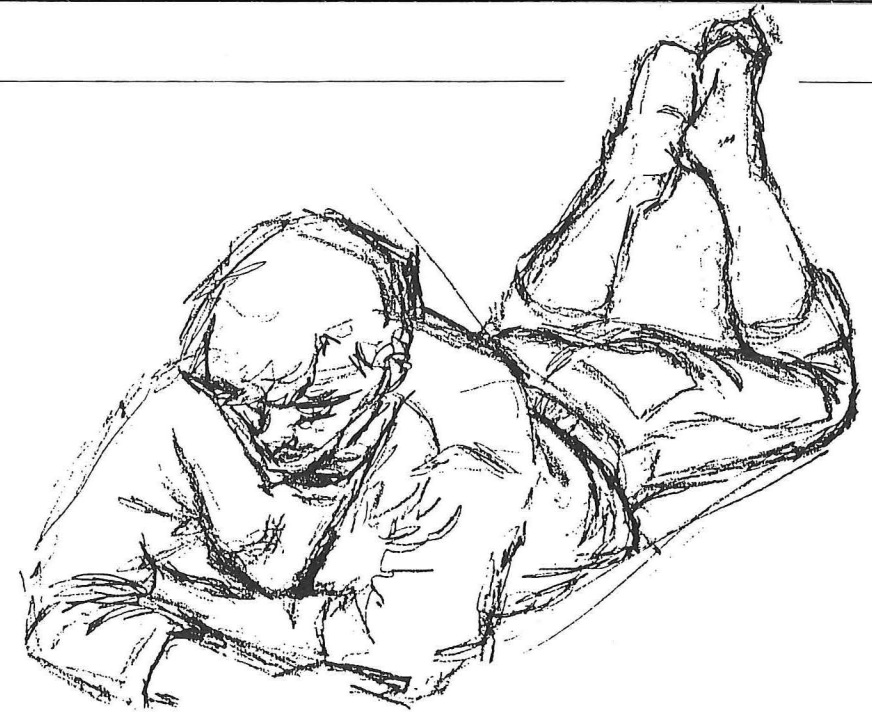
"We sometimes say that we just open the door and sweep the floor," he smiled. "People just come in. A lot of what we are is just from being here. After a workshop people talk, show each other their work, keep in touch. And that's what we're all about." ●







Cheryl Anne Levin  
Studies



### Somewhere in October

In the computer, my nose looks like a pickle and my eyes are tiny. This is the fourth night this week I've been up past one doing homework. When it gets this late I forget words for things, like the tv part of this contraption. Terminal? No.

I can change the brightness of the lime-green computer letters (Screen? Yeah, maybe) but I prefer them shiny, eerie against the midnight. I let my eyes blur and the letters double, run together, dance.

Someone mentioned senioritis the other day. Senioritis? I asked. Then I remembered that senior year is lazy, easy, play with friends and come to school drunk. Oh yeah! Senioritis!

I was about to tell the senioritis person that I didn't have time for it, didn't have time enough for anything, there weren't enough numbers on the clock, all I do is...but I forgot the word for all I do so I just slid down against her locker and closed my eyes.

*Alison Buckholtz*

# Bluesong

John Mufti



**I**hey call it Valentine's Day. Day of Love, of hearts, juicy red hearts and chubby cherubs bearing the Bows of Love. Valentine's Day. Funny feelings I have on Valentine's Day.

Outta the Stark Cold Depths of Bluedreams, into the infinitely colder Cold Depths of a Friday morning in the midst of February. Moving in paper thin pajamas through the 6 a.m. frozen atoms, groping like a baby from a crib, I stumble into the day. Remnants of dreams fade, reality swings into Focus—Yes, I see it now. Lists of day's duties flash before mind's eye as I sit on the toilet, as I wash hands, splash steaming hot water on face. All thoughts but a jumble as I stare into that face, that utterly disgusting pimpled face I have tried to ignore for so long, ever since Adolescence set in and those kinds of things started to be important. Groaning, plunging head into sink, I drown.

And the day begins. Friday. Three-day-weekend ahead. Hey, I can make it through this day. I'll make it a good day. Work hard and savor the weekend.

Bike ride through the melting three-day-old blackened, gray, slushy, smutty snow. Heart pounds. Thinking of Tess. Each day, as the school nears, the same thing—*thinking of Tess. Feeling for Tess. And wondering Where is she? When will I see her? Each day, the mystery. Where is she hiding this time. What is she wearing today. What will I say to her today.*

Eight o'clock.

Nine o'clock.

Ten o'clock.

There she is. Snappy outfit, today. Pretty, Lord she's pretty. Why doesn't anyone look at her? No one notices. I'm the only one who sees her. No one knows she's beautiful. I'm the only—I'm her only admirer. I'm her only—

Ted Simmons. Talking with her. Laughing with her. His hand on her shoulder. His face close to hers. Looking at her, into her.

Oh, God. Weakness within. Insides dropping out, away, stomach churning. *He is going to kiss her, I think. Why doesn't he kiss her? No one's looking except me and I'm pretending not to. Why doesn't he—*

Ted Simmons kisses Tess Leigherty on the lips. An incredibly short, almost nonexistent kiss. He looks at her, they smile, the bell rings and he is gone. My teacher closes the door and works her mouth. No sound comes out. In fact, all is silent. And my teacher is melting. What—

Oh my God. I'm crying.

**T**he day goes on. Sort of. Dangling by a strand of string, pulled, yanked, heaved and hauled and tossed and kicked and battered—

And at the end of the day, Brian, Brian bestbuddyol'pal, Brian he laughs.

"Thanks, Brian. Just go ahead and laugh your ugly head off."

"Harlie. Come on. I'm just trying to cheer you up. Why don't you say we head on out throoz the snow and rest out the night at my place."

I look at him. "You wanna skip seventh period?"

"Of course."

A smile. "Let's go."

We stay a little longer at our lockers, ease out a side door and laugh our slippery way around the building to our bikes.

Do you know what it's like to bike down barren winter streets, ice hanging from the sky, ice blanketing the earth, ice clutching your lungs? Gray dank mist burrows deep in heart and mind, beckoning from another place.

"Siberia."

Brian looks back, precariously perched on tiny pedals above steep descent. "Yeah, Siberia," he says.

"South Pole."

"North Pole!"

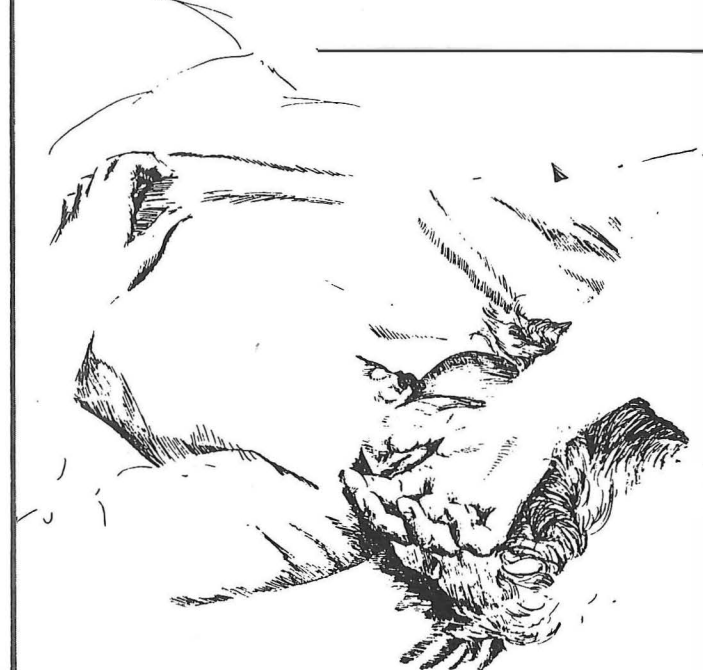
Speeding down iced cake, frosting smacking lips and tongue. Mmmm...

"Alaska!"

"Norway!"

"Nepal!"

"Watch the car."



Cheryl Anne Levin

Home. Brian's home, that is. But still home. A home like you've never seen. Submerged in forest, twelve acres of forest, twelve acres of Otherworld—snow-clad Ice sprawled on This world blankets—beneath sticks of stone, Stripped Stone Sticks that once were trees, now toothpicks staring at whitegray sky, looking for someone to notice. But Mr. Bright Eye is asleep.

"Want some hot chocolate?"

"You've got some?"

"I can make some."

"All right."

Brian fiddles in the kitchen, I lie on the family room sofa, gazing outside, dreaming.

Crying...Tess. Tess. *I wantchya, Tess. Wantchya so so bad. Dontchya know, Tess. Good God dontchya know...*

"Here we go." The thick gray mugs steam.

"Hey—you cryin', Harlie?"

Bleary-eyed, looking up at Brian silhouetted against snow-light from distant window. "Yeah. I've been crying." Sniff.

"Here, drink somma this stuff."

I sit up, clutch the beacon of warmth. The liquid sears, bubbles within, squirts down swallowtube, down, down... "Ah that's good."

"Mighta fine, mighta fine," Brian says, deep-voiced, mocking a teacher we know.

"Thank God."

"What?"

"You're laughing."

"Oh." Snort. "Yeah."

Silence.

"Come on, Harlie. Tell me about it."

Our eyes lock.

"What's there to say? I told you: Ted Simmons kissed Tess in Roth's room. All day I've felt like shit."

Sigh. "Brian, this is so stupid. Why should one little kiss destroy me?"

"Because you love her."

"Well why the hell do I have to love her so much? Why do I... Why do I even love her at all? What's so great about

her? Just because she's pretty and got a great personality—sometimes—and a great mind and heart—"

"You just explained why: She's pretty and has a great personality and a brilliant mind and a warm heart. You know that she feels strongly like you, that she cares for people, and so you want her to care for you. And because you want that so badly, you go all wacko inside whenever she gets within ten feet of another guy. Your stomach starts to twist like someone's ringing it out, getting rid of all the gastric juices or whatever's inside. You can't eat. You can't think. Life sucks. And then when a guy kisses her—Jesus."

"Yeah," I say, leaning forward and lying on my stomach, pretending to rise above my heartfelt feelings, trying to look laid-back.

But tears well and stream, releasing pain in uncontrolled wash.

A strum. And another. Strum, strum, strum—strums of a guitar.

Looking up from my blanket of tears, I glimpse a watery Brian, swaying, jagged-edged, strumming a watery, stretched guitar. Swimming, flowing... In a sea of tears, Brian is playing a song.

Listen. Listen to his song. Pretty, isn't it? Sad. Oh so sad. Play, Brian, play. Lemmee hear that—Oh, God. How can such sadness come from a guitar? Words... Just what are those words that you sing? What are those cool-colored gems that roll off that black-shrouded tongue? Come on, Brian, lemme hear—

*"A queen on a horse in a whitewood pall,  
Watch her bend down and kiss  
A man stoutly dressed and tall.  
They walk away on an angel-dressed wing,  
You hear the shouts that say:  
GO! GO! Catch her if you can and sing.  
You cry, cry, cry all alone in dreams,  
Smash all your bones and flesh,  
Oh the world it's cruel, so it seems.  
The queen she doesn't know, nor does she care,  
For to her you're just a guy,  
Not a home of passions that can't get no air.  
Cower with a rabbit under a pine,  
Blast a wail to all the sky:  
Tiny Tessie gal, wontchya be mine?"*

More strums. Brian, music filling his soul like a balloon, he keeps playing—on and on and oohhh, on.

The sweetsad notes rock me off the edge—

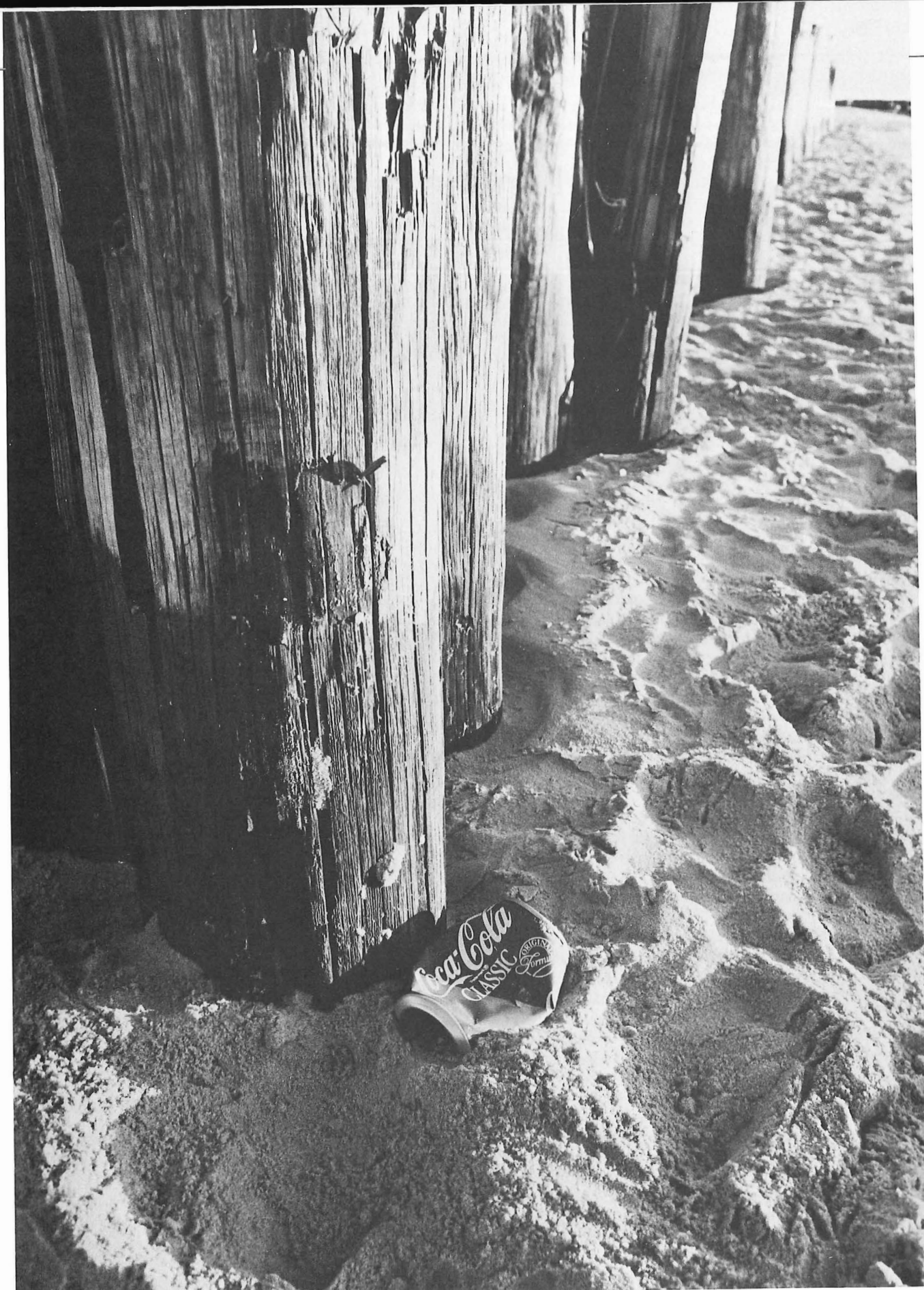
*Sleep, hello. How do you do. I missed you, you know. Missed you so. Your touch, your caress... Missed you missed you—*

**O**utside, thick white flakes cascade through the frozen air. Somewhere far away, a girl named Tess steps from a faded yellow bus, her feet crushing freshly-fallen snow. She sighs, a tiny puff of whitened air slipping past her lips. She is not thinking of anything in particular. Still, she is sad. She does not know why.

Twenty minutes later she settles on her bed, slips a tape into her recorder. For the next forty minutes she lies with her eyes closed, listening to her favorite collection of songs.

They are sad songs, and it is not long before she is crying. ●





Coke Classic—Greg Chang

## Filicide

Gastric convulsions  
in the belly of a rusted bus.  
Half buried in sand,  
gripping beachbrush  
the yellow box  
screams  
as parasites  
churn acidic juices.

Pa thrashes through children  
to other end of bus.  
Susan rescues Mike from path.  
John holds ball still.  
Ma slaps Tom quiet  
openhanded.  
Mary's crutch is stuck  
in aisle,  
so Pa, en route,  
trips,  
turns,  
takes aim and  
fires fist.

Then Ma shouts  
and Pa hears  
but will not oblige.  
Today,  
Dom will pay.  
Pa plows over small feet  
deaf to cries  
blind to tears  
bearing a face  
disturbing.  
Today,  
Dom will learn  
the difference between  
respect and  
respect.

On the empty beach,  
the metal mound quivers,  
weeping silent in September wind.  
But  
Forever  
in Dom's eyes  
blue ocean extends infinitely past  
the Edge.  
In Dom's ears,  
rushing sea shields fear.

So Dom does not know  
that Pa has now peeled him from window pane  
to offer some enstified advice.  
Dom can only accept,  
with filial grace,  
the paternal blows,  
boneshattering reality.

On the beach,  
for a moment,  
Forever  
subsides  
and the bus  
swallows.  
But then the misting  
wind resumes  
its cold and calculating course  
across the sea.

Rob Sondik



# Machine With No Instructions

Jeff Pruzan

**T**he old festering, living corpse sat vegetating somewhere upstairs, but they always moved her around so he didn't know where exactly she was. He hated to visit her because she was an obscene thing to have to look at. She looked like a shriveled, dying old goat. He hated the idea of it, and he hated having these ideas about this mother—but he could see no way of avoiding them.

Runnow's entry of the hospital was almost discreet. He took off his thin brown hat and glanced at it. "Truly!" he thought as he approached the desk in the middle of the dim lobby. "Is this thing as weary as I am?" He held the rumpled, weathered hat in two hands to achieve a humble look which wasn't really there. The lobby was cold and oppressive. Here we are, thought Runnow—Hell.

After a moment, the nurse at the reception desk stopped filing down her long nails and looked up. Her face was tired and rather disinterested-looking. The gum in her mouth snapped tightly as she chewed.

"May I help you?" asked the woman.

"Yes," he said and looked down. Humility in Hell. "I'm uh I'm Dennis Runnow R-U-N-N-O-W and um I'm uh here to see Mrs. Claudette Runnow (same spelling)."

She dropped her eyes mechanically to a computer which Runnow had seen, but not noticed. Tak-tak-tak. Tak. Tak-tak. "It's room 1806."

1806! Jesus H. Christ! Bad enough she's dying, without her being jammed up in the 18th floor!

"Have a nice day," she smiled laboriously. The gum stopped snapping for a moment, then resumed.

**T**he routine of coming to the hospital was one which Runnow practiced every week on Sunday mornings. He always had to ask where his mother's room was because they moved her around frantically, as if trying to decide what to do with her. He found this out early during this ordeal, when he stumbled into the room of another patient. Hernia patient. All the visitors were drinking and laughing. "A hospital," Runnow had thought at first. "And there's a goddamn party going on in 1312...!—they must have moved my mother out."

Then it was 422. Then 603, then 903, then 900...when they put her up past the thirties, he decided, he'd have to complain.

**T**he elevator was one of those elevators they must have designed for claustrophobics: a car that seems overbloated. Seats forty-five, all aboard. He walked up to it as the doors were closing. When they were closed almost fully, he jabbed his thumb into the "UP" button. He got a massive electric shock, and sucked his thumb as the doors reopened. Everyone already on board groaned.

He entered looking diffident. There was a scowling woman in her 60's; a man slightly younger than Runnow, but with grey hair; a wiry looking man; and a tiny Oriental woman who stared at Runnow.

The lights in the car were very bad: long fluorescent tubes covered by a translucent, plastic mask. The pallid light stabbed at Runnow where there was a tremendous crack in the plastic. One bulb shimmered with age, sputtering grey and white alternately. The elevator stank of the unnerving stench of sterility.

Runnow decided that he would be much more at ease without these scowling, skeptical, inquiring faces staring at him. His eyes crept up to the spitting bulb.

The doors of the elevator ushered themselves inwards.

**O**h God damn this thing's so heavy what the hell I gotta do this for anyway I gotta stand up yes sir stand up for my rights I pay my dues I mean I ain't gettin no free ride no sir no sir Jesus why the hell's this thing gotta be so heavy anyway damn the door's-a-closin' up and I gotta wait here—ahh! got the damn thing pushed in time!

"Oh, not again," whined the older woman. "That's the third time!" She glared at the wiry man and at Runnow.

"Not all of us are as punctual as you, your Ladyship," Wiry Man said hotly.

The doors opened. There was an intern wearing all white. He was middle aged and fat. For a hospital worker, he was extremely unkempt-looking to Runnow: disheveled hair,

unshaved, slovenly, even somewhat dirty.

He carted in a huge machine: a gargantuan, white and metallic-looking box. The intern gasped crudely, tugging the thing inside. The fat on his belly shook in quakes. The wheels on the bottom of the machine seemed to help very little.

"C'mon," cooed the intern. "C'mon baby, c'mon."

The machine was in and the doors closed. The intern stood next to Ladyship, who edged away. Oriental Woman looked intently at the machine, and said dully, "So that's why these elevators have to be so big."

The intern laughed loudly and embarrassingly. Ladyship rolled her eyes disgustingly, and Wiry Man glared at her.

*He always had to ask where his mother's room was because they moved her around frantically, as if trying to decide what to do with her.*

Runnow looked around; Mr. Grey said nothing.

"Goddamn, lady, I hope you nevah need one ah these babies!"

"What is it—eh—for?" ventured Runnow. He gestured uneasily at the immense box.

"I dunno but they say that it's for people who are coming to the end of the line." He laughed.

Ladyship flashed a wild-eyed look at him.

"What does it do?" asked Oriental Woman.

"Well, lady, it does some kinda heart regulation or something. But, 'tween you and me, it doesn't do nothin'."

The car stopped and Mr. Grey stepped off.

**C**laudette stirred in her sleep, her dry mouth searching for air. Her tongue came out and licked her lips. Her crusty lid flickered, as if to test the quality of the lighting in her room. The eye stopped flickering and stayed open. Soon her other eye opened. It's morning now, thought Claudette. She blinked.

"Nothing?" asked Oriental woman.

He laughed. "This don't do a damn thing by the time you need it. Just keeps ya round for a couple more hours."

Ladyship looked horrified. "Why do you use it then?"

He rolled his eyes and slowly turned to her. "Lady, how do I know? I just work here and take the damn thing back in forth."

She gasped. "Do you mean, that, that at this very moment someone's...someone needs the machine?"

He nodded. Runnow took off his hat and scratched his head.

"Old lady's slippin' away right now."

The woman paled. The elevator stopped, and she exited. Runnow noticed that it was taking along time for the elevator to climb, an extraordinarily long time.

"How long has the hospital had this thing?" asked Oriental Woman. Oh good, thought Runnow. Now we get into history. Runnow began to think about his own dying mother and nausea invaded his stomach.

"Oh, 'bout a year. Never worked any miracles yet." He whispered behind his hand, and rolled his eyes over to look at the lady. "Costs mor'n a Rolls Royce!"

"Yet it doesn't work."

"Who knows!" he grinned enthusiastically, flashing a mouthful of yellow teeth. "It might sometime! It might save someone's life. Course it can't just yet."

"Why?" asked Oriental Woman and Runnow at once. The two looked at each other.

He paused, and then laughed hoarsely. "Cause no one here knows how to work the goddamn thing!"

"Come on. Surely you must know, if you're going around the building with it, taking it to patients."

"Lady, you drive a car all the time, but do you know how it really works? I mean, how it REALLY works."

"I think I see your point, but—"

"No, lady. You don't know your car, we don't know our thingy."

The car stopped at the 18th floor. Oriental Woman left the car first, turning right. As Runnow maneuvered himself around the box to get out, the man said, "I feel sorry for that old girl what needs this! Sheez!"

Runnow was irritated and frightened about the whole situation. He edged out of the car. This is Hell.

Runnow stepped to the left and jogged down the hall to his mother's room. He hadn't actually seen it yet, but he was becoming very familiar with the hospital's intimate geography.

He turned around, as though being pursued: and, in a sense, he was. The machine was still in the elevator, the intern grunting: "Goddamn it to hell get out you stupid lazy bastard-of-a-box thing..."

He was stuck. Runnow had time: "Pace yourself."

Tears in his eyes, he wrenched off his sorry little hat and flung open the door. He walked into the soft grey room. It was raining outside. The room was cozy, hallowed, ethereal. The braised thing on the bed opened its eyes wide.

"Morning, Dennis."

"Hello, mother. They're...bringing you this thing."

"Good. I could use something."

"But I think," he hesitated. Christ, how do you tell your mother they're giving her the electrical last rites? "You don't have much longer," he euphemized, "to go."

She was silent.

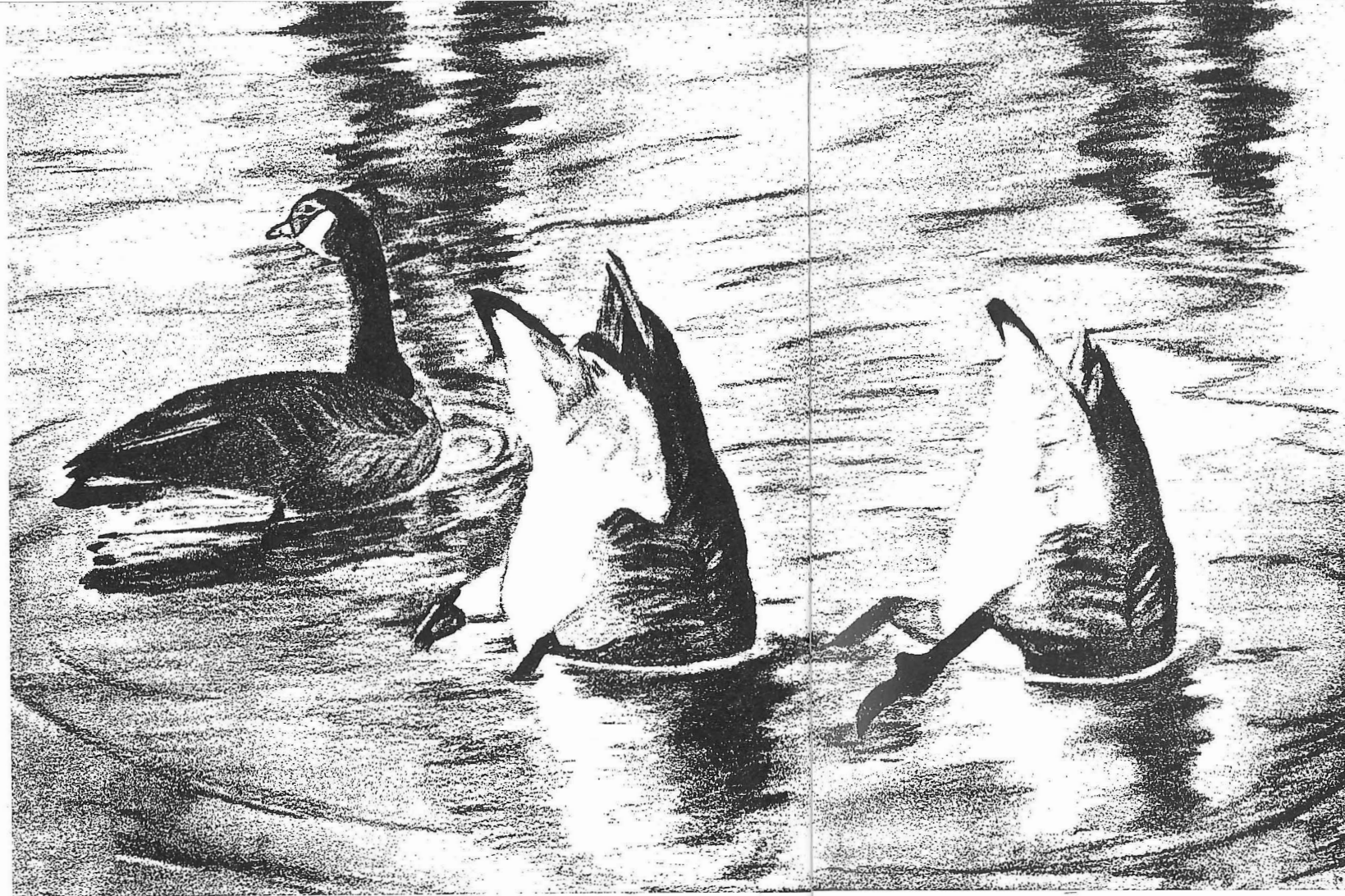
"And...I heard them all on the elevator...this machine they're bringing up..."

"What exactly are you trying to tell me?" asked Claudette Runnow, but before Dennis could answer the door opened.

Runnow gazed at the intern, transfixed.

"How do you like that," the intern muttered to himself, entering backwards and tugging in the death box. "All the way up here for only one person." He dropped his eyes and wagged his head. "I dunno what they see in this lousy contraption anyway..."

"Please hurry with that thing," said Claudette. "Please hurry." ☉



Duck Tails Stacy Hahn

### The Marsh

The reeds are gathered  
 For evening prayer.  
 The women, with their blonde braids piled high  
 Above their wiry bodies,  
 Are rocking with heads bowed in worship.  
 Now the wind whispers a rumor  
 And sends it rustling through the group,  
 Unsettling the religious fervor.  
 The more fanatical members  
 Kow-tow and kiss the soft ground.  
 The others—  
 The short people in green  
 And the cattails with their brown shaven heads—  
 Watch silently,  
 As the reeds gossip quietly  
 Against the ash sky.

Karen White

### Life Viewed Through a Sand Castle Mold

The moon was half full,

an eye lowered in demure approval,  
 as we dove through the shimmering waves  
 of cool summer.

The ocean's hand with fingers soft  
 wiped our faces fresh  
 of cotton candy smiles  
 and our senses snapped shut  
 to all but the cyclic chase  
 of each others' feet.

Down crashed the tail of the restless whale!  
 Smirking and knowing  
 or maybe not knowing  
 but certainly not caring if we knew,  
 we raced after his blue-green fin.  
 Catching then clutching it, we stood,  
 bowed and curtsied.  
 And as he soared in and out of the waves,  
 we danced to the tidal fiddler;  
 danced on the fin of a whale.

Labor Day sounded,  
 like the lifeguard's whistle,  
 and back ashore the charade returned.

But  
 when no one is looking  
 I peer through my secret mold  
 and I can see the sunset bridge  
 composed of white fire and gold  
 stretching across the sequined water,  
 and I know  
 tomorrow we will cross  
 together.

Aaron Bloom



# Summer at Cornell

Karen White

**T**rish, Jenn, Whitney and I lie on the hill in our bikinis and shades, waiting for the sun to bronze our bodies. I am done with classes for the day, and the other three have two hours until their next class. The sun is out for the first time this week. When I first came here, it was sunny for three days straight; it's as if they planned it that way so that we wouldn't turn around and go home.

Kenny comes over to us and starts talking about what a nice day it is. He is looking at Trish especially, examining her in her skimpy suit. Then he turns to me and asks me what I am doing tonight. I tell him that I have a research paper due Monday and that I will probably spend the night in the library, making love to a microfiche document. He looks disappointed, then says he has to run because he has a class in five minutes. When he is gone, I tell Trish that he was looking her over, and she insists that his eyes never left me. We both laugh.

The sky is bigger in Ithaca than it is in any other part of the world, especially on sunny days. It's so smooth and round and open and unending. You look up at it and you know you can't lie.

If I had to draw a picture of forever, I would draw the sky at Cornell.

**T**rish and I are lying on the wall, her radio between us. Jenn is sitting on my other side, straddling the wall and kicking the stones like the sides of an old horse. There are hundreds of other students in the area: on the wall, throwing a frisbee in the dust bowl, smoking under a tree, playing basketball.

I like to watch the sun drip over the buildings in the distance up on the hill. It is fluorescent and it makes the intricate architecture of each structure look like origami that could be stripped off the sky with a fingernail. I like the way the pinkness peeks between the pillars. This place really lets you think, not just about the insanity plea and biomedical ethics. I don't really have time to think at home.

The one thing I really hate about being in high school is that everyone's so busy shoving you through the assembly line toward college that you lose the power to think for yourself. Up here, it's different. I think a lot about my sister and me, and how I'm going to try to be nicer when I get home and how I'm going to set a good example for her. They're good thoughts, if not practical at least not totally impossible.

**W**hat's up tonight?" "I'm going to the movies with Kenny." Trish smiles at me. "You're gonna stand up the library computer?"

"The thought of spending Friday night in a learning facility makes me wretch."

"What're you seeing?" "Pretty in Pink.' Again." There are only two theaters in Ithaca, showing a total of four movies, and in four weeks I have seen all of them at least once.

"I thought you said you were tired and you wanted to rest tonight."

"I'm always tired here. It must be something about the atmosphere. If I slept every time I was tired, I wouldn't have gotten out of bed once since day one."

"Me neither."

"I don't know what it is that we do here when we're not studying," Jenn comments. "All we do is eat and sleep."

"Yeah, we're like cats!" We laugh. But we all know that it's true.

"Still, I don't think I've complained once in my letters home," Whitney says. "I love this place, don't ask me why."

"Hmm... It's better than watching 'Three's Company' reruns all summer."

"No, seriously," Whitney persists, "I feel like I can think up here. Like we're so far away from real life that for once I can think about myself and straighten out my life!" I stare at her. I had thought that Whitney was telepathic before, but now I'm sure.

"Well, I don't think it's just that," Trish says. "I don't know what the hell I like about being eight million miles from civilization, but there's something. I just know that six weeks isn't long enough."

"Yeah. I'm gonna miss you guys so much when I leave. I don't think I can relate to my friends at home like I relate to you guys. You're so weird, I feel closer to you."

I put my arm around Jenn. "Ditto, sweetie."

**I**t is a beautiful morning. The rays of light that come through the window pierce my eyelids and wake me.

Gigi, my roommate, takes half a pizza from our refrigerator and begins to eat it. I climb off my bunk and join her.

"How was the movie?" she asks.

"The same as the last time I saw it."

"We had pizza in Liz's room last night, about eight of us. Whitney was acting out a scene from *Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret*. It was hysterical." Gigi stuffs a piece of crust in her mouth. She is looking at me eagerly, and I know that she is curious about Kenny, but I don't feel like talking about him. I know he likes me, and I have a good time with him, and that is all. I think of Stuart, my boyfriend at home. He is far away, as distant as world hunger and missile crises. It is hard to think about him. I can read his letters, but I cannot read the feelings behind his words. And Stuart is young, I remind myself; a year younger than I am. I'm sure he has been dating other people since I left. I think I'll go out with Kenny again tonight, maybe out to dinner, but I don't feel like talking about it with Gigi right now.

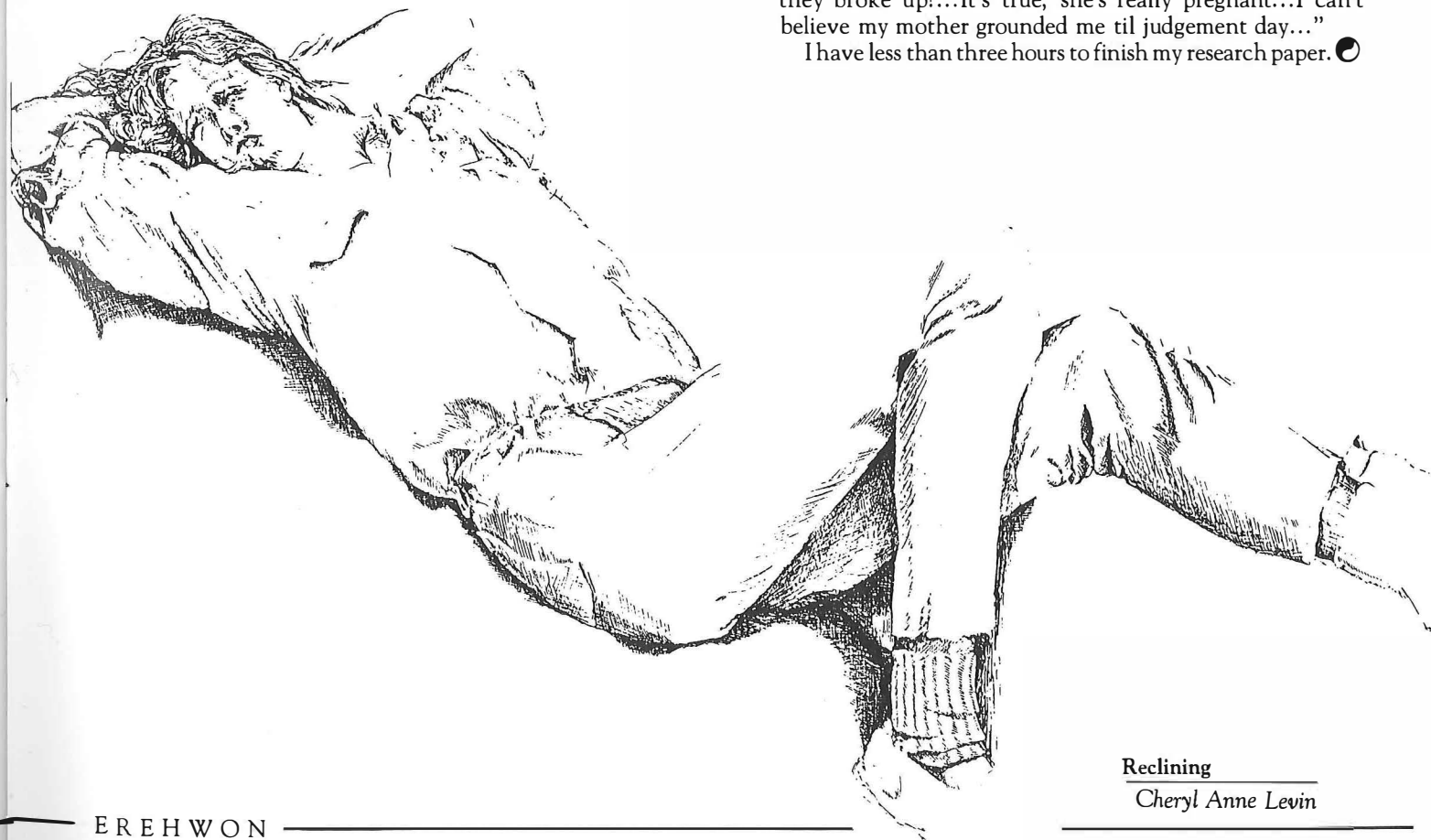
Gigi and I decide to go to the gorge today. We love the gorge and go there nearly every weekend. You don't have to love nature to appreciate the Cornell gorge. I sit by the edge of the water, and the undertow carries away all my frustration. Down here, you can't hear anything except the water crashing over the rocks. From the bottom of the gorge, you look up and you feel like you're sitting in a crevice in an old sofa and nobody knows you're there and you can see everything. You could come with a hundred people, but you would still be alone with the water and the rocks. I can't think of any place at home where I can see or think or feel as much as I do when I'm at the gorge.

We have two weeks left before we leave. I don't think there is anything else to do here that I haven't done yet. The again, I don't think there is anything I wouldn't mind doing over a few times, save seeing another movie. I don't think I could get enough pizza at midnight. Or ride my bike through the campus with Jenn too many times. Or dance on the furniture in the lounge too often. Or straighten out my life too much. I've been here four weeks, and I've just begun to scour out my brain. I'd need a few years to finish all the housekeeping I've let slide for so long.

**I** love the way the cool air feels at night, when we walk among the statues in the art quad. The night is a blanket around us, and we feel closer to one another than to anyone we have ever known.

Standing here at the top of the hill, centrally isolated in the middle of Ithaca, New York, I know it will not be the same when I come home, put my brain in neutral, and listen to my friends giving me an update on the latest gossip that has seeped out over the summer. "Can you believe they broke up?...It's true, she's really pregnant...I can't believe my mother grounded me til judgement day..."

I have less than three hours to finish my research paper. ☉



Reclining  
Cheryl Anne Levin



## Spanish T.V.

This woman is staring at me  
Through all of her flattering,  
Entirely untrue colors and buzzing shapes.  
My eyes and hers fail to meet  
So that I can look into her face,  
And then truly say I have known it.  
And she is screaming something in Spanish,  
Too fast for me to hear.

She might be in a soap opera, blaring with fakeness  
And cheating realism with bleary, hand-applied teardrops.  
Weeping into a telephone, this Spanish woman is desperate  
For the person at the other end of the line,  
Who is also Spanish and who can comprehend.

The unseen person must be a passionate Spaniard.  
He accentuates inaudible advice in an alien language.  
He devotes himself to twenty-five seconds  
Of Spanish soothing.  
He hangs up only when she is panicked,  
Melting away his aura of unseen, Spanish patience.

Choppy cuts of videotape  
From the Spanish t.v. studio downtown  
Douse my dark bedroom  
In flickering, dangerous hues.  
My saturated mirrors are vomiting colors  
Back at my bilingual t.v.  
The woman has just thrown down the phone  
In Spanish desperation  
And now cries the word "mother"  
In Spanish.

Spanish incidental music  
Seeps inwards  
And tends to invade me a bit,  
So I cringe a bit.  
The woman weeps Spanish tears.  
She throws a temper tantrum  
(Which comprises the most universal tongue.)

She sifts her Spanish sand  
Through her lazy bolt of Spanish hair.  
I am saddened and hurt by the incoherent commotion.  
This, I think, is not entertainment.  
So I tell my woman "Adios, buenos tardes"  
And then I flick the channel in English.

*Jeff Pruzan*

## Habla Ingles?

Tom Porter, citizen storeowner, please speak your wisdom:  
Yesterday this illegal shuffles in  
Wipin' his immigrant snot from his immigrant nose  
And I says  
'Can ya read th' sign, buddy?  
Cause if ya can't, ya gotta leave'

All Rodrigo has to offer is a puzzled gaze  
Trouble too easily found  
So carefully  
He positions the life-giving potion on the counter  
"Para mi familia" he pleads

Say somethin' in th LANGUAGE ergetout  
ya lazy lout  
I'm a proud patriot  
My ancestors made this place rate

Hunched, the semicitizen stumbles out  
Fighting the cool, cool wetness  
Of Southern snow in this long winter

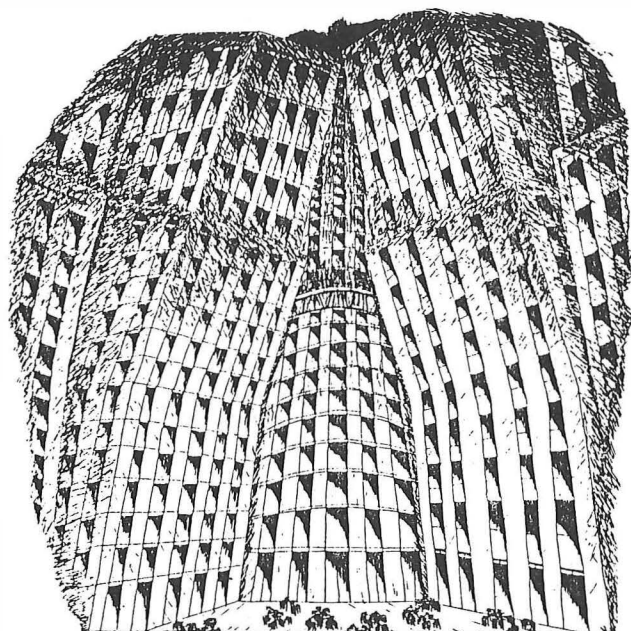
*Mike Spirtas*



**Hidden Door** Andy Katzenmeyer

# All Fall Down

Matt Jaffe



Mark Thompson

**B**askin was hungry and couldn't find his can opener. With one hand he held his breakfast—a tin can sheathed in antiseptic wrapping with bold letters proclaiming: EGG FLAVORED FOOD SQUARES, A PRODUCT OF THE UNITED EMPIRE OF NORTH AMERICA AND THE ARCTIC TERRITORIES (NO COOKING NECESSARY). The other hand rummaged through the silverware drawer uncovering two spoon/fork utensils and several matchbooks. Now, down on the floor like a dog looking for a bone, Baskin searched under his cot. Shoes, a belt buckle—hoedeedoedoe—a Bible with the New Testament ripped out (Baskin didn't believe in Jesus), an ancient copy of *Walden Pond*—hmmmmmm—an empty can of CHEESE FLAVORED PROTEIN BALLS filled with nails, and a rusty axe head. No can opener. Darn.

Sitting on the cot and pulling knots out of his beard, Baskin heard a distant whirring and looked to the plastic sheet covering a window on the opposite wall. Dusty sunlight sheened into the one roomed shack. His stomach grumbled, and closing his eyes, Baskin tried to recall where he had left his can opener. After all, there weren't many places to lose things, and Baskin didn't have many things to lose. Life's sweet and simple—except when you starve to death because you've misplaced your can opener. The noise outside grew as the shack tremored.

Fafafafafafa faa faaa faaa faaaaa splash faaaaa whuurr Baskin stood up and bounded over to the door. His heart pulsed in his head. The door was cracked open and Baskin peeked out. The sun just over the basin; a bowl of peaking slopes and jutting cornices. Crusty Aspens, a forest in this world, stood leafless on the shores of the lake. A helicopter—a skeleton flying machine with sputtering blades—floated, like a duck in the lake. Baskin saw someone moving on it.

Baskin sat on his cot again, facing the door, cracking his knuckles. "Play it cool big guy," he whispered to himself. Baskin hadn't had visitors in the six years that he had been

occupying this remote basin in the Rocky Mountains. Six years ago, when Baskin finally decided he had enough of so-called civilization. When Baskin had packed up his grandfather's backpack and headed for the mountains, people had said he was crazy. Crazy to give up his Stack—STACK: THE STANDARD HOUSING UNIT OF THE UNITED EMPIRE OF NORTH AMERICA AND THE ARCTIC TERRITORIES CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING UP TO EIGHT PEOPLE. A STACK CAN BE PLACED ON ANY FLAT SURFACE AND FURTHER EXPANDED BY PLACING ADDITIONAL STACKS ATOP THE ORIGINAL—crazy to give up his job—he worked for The Department of Census, and crazy to give up his wife—she was ugly. There were twelve billion people in the world when he left it. All those people, squirming together in their Stacks, screaming for more space. Baskin often thought of the endless rows of Stacks, piled on each other like layers of a sandwich, lined up like dominoes. He wished Zeus would come by knock them down with a mighty roar. The whole world would methodically tumble over—hahaha. Baskin heard a more familiar noise outside, a noise he had seen on television as a child; the sound of a motorboat rrrrrring across the water.

He imagined smoke from the motorboat coughing out in grey contaminating clouds, poisoning his lake. Temper, temper—but for all Baskin knew, his lake might be the last drop of fresh water on this earth. Twenty years ago, the largest rivers and lakes in the country were drained and filled with dirt from the bottom of the ocean—the water sucked into bloated holding vessels silently orbiting the earth. The filled rivers and lakes provided more room for the Stacks. Oh goody. Swamps and deserts were paved with asphalt as the world exploded with people. People who had no right to be born because the earth was so heavy with them that she was sagging and sinking into herself. The motorboat stopped running. Baskin stared wide eyed at the door.

Knock      knockknock

Something in Baskin's brain chirped, "Now remember your manners and open the door when a guest comes to your house and shake his hand and smile and invite him in and serve him tea and biscuits and talk about the weather and compliment him on his clothes and ask about his wife and his children."

KnockknockknockKNOCK

The door opened, grinding slowly against the hinges, until it hit the wall and stopped moving.

"(hoosh) Baskin No Name Listed?" a smothered voice called.

Baskin opened his mouth and leaned forward. "Manners, remember your manners," his mind sang. Something stepped through the open door.

A green man-shaped thing, its head covered by a black helmet—like a huge eight ball—turned slowly towards Baskin. The rest of it was masked by a loose frogskin contamination suit. As it breathed, steamy air geysered out of a respirator hanging from its back.

"You wouldn't happen to have a can opener I could borrow?" Baskin asked. His voice sounded distant, somehow foreign. That happens when you don't talk to anyone but yourself for six years.

"(hoosh) Baskin No Last Name Listed, (hoosh) I am a representative from the Department of the Interior (hoosh) here to inform you that..."

"Coffee?"

"(hoosh)?"

A long strained silence. The man-shape pulled off one rubber glove. Baskin watched the man's hand, pale as liquid moonlight, vanish into a pocket and return fondling a parchment.

"I'm forgetting my manners," Baskin said, trying to peer through man's midnight helmet. "Please, sit down. I didn't get your name."

*Life's sweet and simple—  
except when you starve to death  
because you've misplaced  
your can opener.*

The man held the paper in front of his mask and read, "You (hoosh) are hereby ordered, by The Grand Prince of the Interior, to vacate these quarters (hoosh) at once. This is in your best interest (hoosh)."

"How do you do?" Baskin extended his arm. The man, tucking the paper into his belt, put his glove back on and then, handed Baskin the note. Baskin dropped it under his cot. "Did you say something?"

"(hooshhooshhoosh) You must leave. We're tearing the mountains down."

"Oh, why didn't you say that in the first place? You can take that silly costume off."

The man stepped stiff kneed back, and shook his head violently. He reminded Baskin of fat balloon doll (POP).

"(hoosh) The radiation, the pollution; you can't...it's a miracle you're (hoosh) still alive—living without a suit (hoosh). Everybody wears a suit (hoosh)."

"Well, what you don't know can't hurt you. That's what I always say."

"You must (hoosh) leave. The mountains are (hoosh) being demolished. More space to build the Stacks (hoosh). An ingenious plan."

Baskin smiled and blinked. "I see, and what are you going to do with all the rubble? Make sand castles? Sell it to Arabians?"

"Fill (hoosh) the Gulf of Mexico. More (hoosh) room."

"I see. Well, I'll think about it. Goodbye."

The man turned, and said, "I'll be back to (hoosh) pick you up in seven days (hoosh)." Right. Baskin stood up. The man float-walked out the door.

"Wait," called Baskin. The man stopped. "Let me see your face."

"(hooshhooshhoosh)!" Panicked white air erupted from the man's pack.

"Please."

The man brought a trembling hand to his helmet and pushed some hidden button. A crack formed on the face plate and slowly gaped open. His head—almost a skull, wet and hairless—the face of a man who has never felt the sun. Squinting eyes melted into shadows of bruised-blue tissue. He had no lips, only thin lines of quivering worm-flesh. A grey tube ran out of one sunken nostril and snaked across his cheek, disappearing into the blackness of the helmet. He opened his mouth, toothless and grey gummed—a suffocating fish. "(gasp) Seven days, see you in seven days (gasp), be ready."

Baskin slammed the door and braced his back up against it. His breath rattled. "No way," he whispered over and over again. When he heard the helicopter leave, Baskin sat on his cot, legs crossed, trying to ignore his hollow stomach.

**T**he days drifted. On the first day, Baskin gave up his search for the can opener and fasted. The hunger faded. On the second day, he held a funeral for the lake and the trees, reading Psalms from his Bible. He ended it by carving his initial into the trunk of an aspen. The third and fourth days, Baskin stared across the mirror water, never blinking. On the fifth, he shed his clothes and spread out upon a rock. The sixth day slid by, Baskin didn't get out of bed.

The man in the helicopter came on the seventh day. Baskin was waiting. He sat on his roof, a brown-skinned job. The helicopter splashed down in the lake and the man, in his balloon suit, rasped through a megaphone. "Come now, (hoosh) you have to leave. The mountains go down tomorrow (hoosh). I'm trying to (hoosh) save you."

Baskin stared. With friends like these....

"Suit yourself (hoosh)." The man stepped into the machine and started the blades. "Alien!" he cackled over the whining engines. "(hoosh) Alien, alien, alien."

Watching as the helicopter faded away into the glare of the sun, Baskin laughed. And on the eighth day, before Baskin got out of bed, the mountains began to quake. ●



## The 11:20 to Washington

The distant hum rushed to a roar, screaming past but not away, on and on a mere whisper away. Rhythmic echoes howled, jarring nerves—a steady *whoooooaaaaarrrrr* across cave walls, set to a heavy background beat of *kerchunk—kerchunk—kerchunk*. The roar whistled into a prolonged screech, followed by a *humph!* and a *ppsssssss* that settled to silence. Creaks, slams, voices shouting: “ALL ABOARD to PRINCE, Hinton, Montgomery...” “This CAR to WASHINGTON!” Scuffling forward, clattering aboard, bags banging against metaled walls. Voices, soft then loud, sharp pierces from ahead and behind through the background shuffle. Slamsliding bags onto racks, *Huuuumphing* into seats, *uuhgrunting* into more comfortable positions.

Whuumpboom. Whuumpboom. Whuumpboom, *whuumpboom*, *boom boom* rumbles beneath, croaks and squeaks bend outward/inward. On and on, and *boomboomboom* sweeps into muffled *chugga-chugga*, *chugga-chugga*, *chugga-chugga*, *choooooooooooooo*. Ahead, *slam-bang* opens a door—high-pitched *chugga-chugga* whips into air from below—*clump* closes door, muffled *chugga-chugga* rolls on.

Crackling from above, breath scratches against metal microphone: “Welcome aboard Amtrack. This is your conductor speaking. Our frist stop is Prence, our last stop Washington. Stretchout, relax, eat in tha diningcar, and 'ave a good trip.” Ka-Thump.

John Mufti



Traveling — Jeffrey Scott Simmons

## Time Traveler

A bus travels through the city  
inside a woman sits on its plastic seats  
her hands twisted in her lap  
tired from her journey.

She stares out the greasy window  
glimpsing winter through the passing buildings  
idly picking lint from her worn hat  
as she waits for her stop to come.

The bus hurtles on  
and the seats slowly fill  
scattering passengers carefully in the emptiness  
and the woman sits alone.

The traffic thickens and the bus stops more often  
as tired passengers board  
paying their fare as they pass the woman  
to fill the vacant seats.

The silence hangs around the travelers  
as they sit alone next to the stranger beside them  
and look at the shrunken woman  
waiting for their journey to end.

An old woman sits alone on a bus  
staring out the greasy window  
glimpsing the evening lights  
from between the heads in the opposite seat.

Ana Maria Pinto Da Silva



**feeling may be first**  
(a response to e.e. cumming's "since feeling is first")

feeling may be first

but who fails to consider  
the proper demeanor  
will never earn the occasion  
to fondle anyone;  
the Mold is not putty

my sex flutters,  
then your fancied face nears my own  
and kisses  
lady i swear by all yearning. If only  
i would not stumble over syntax and  
let my shrill feelings pierce you

i behold your aura: then  
smile, your hair brushing his arm  
for life's not a concept

But instead i think a hollow hunt

*Albert Hsia*



First Kiss — Mark Rubin

## Winter, 1987 PTSA Creative Writing Awards

### Fiction

First: Todd Pruzan  
Second: John Mufti  
Third: Matt Jaffe

**Micha Lev**, who judged the fiction selections, has recently published his first novel, *Yordim*. He has also been published in national anthologies of young American poets as well as in literary magazines both here and in Israel. He has added to the understanding of the aftereffects of the Holocaust through his international study, "Anomie and Authoritarianism in Female Survivors of Nazi Europe." His documentary film "Desecration in Darkness" has been internationally acclaimed.

### Poetry

First: Alison Buckholtz  
Second: Jennifer Dixon  
Third: Karen White  
Honorable Mention: Robert Sondik

**Geraldine Connolly** judged the poetry selections. She teaches at The Writer's Center and in the Maryland Poetry-in-the-Schools program. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in the *Georgia Review*, *Nimrod*, *Crosscurrents* and *Poetry Now*. She has been a finalist for the Pablo Neruda Prize in poetry and recently received a creative writing fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

*Erehwon* is a member of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA), the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA), the Maryland Scholastic Press Association (MSPA), and the American Scholastic Press Association (ASPA).

The 1986 *Erehwon* received the following honors:

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All-American, NSPA  
Marylander Award, MSPA  
First Place, ASPA  
Award of Excellence, National Council of Teachers of English

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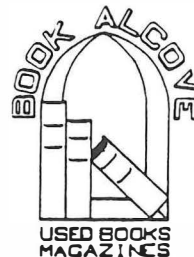
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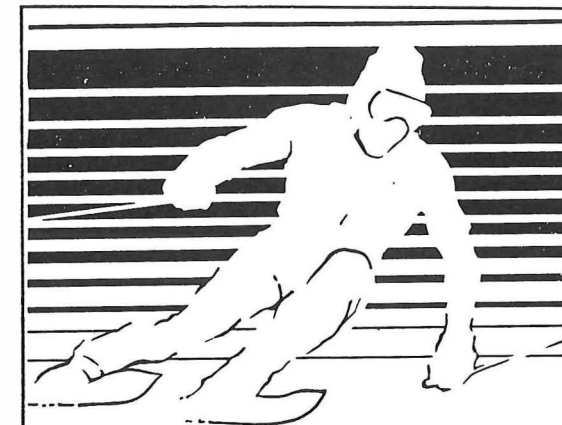
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## Dream Descends

(with apologies to Langston Hughes'  
"Dream Deferred")

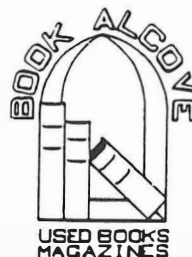
What happens as a dream descends?

Does it rage and fume hot like a book doused in gas?  
Or strike strangers with awe like a bomb's distant crash?  
Does it smolder and smoke like a cigarette butt?  
Or blacken and bleed, like a bruise or a cut?

Or does it just wither away?

As the dream for Soviet Jewry descends to future  
generations we must continue to rage and fume hot...  
'lest we forget.'

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