

# Southern Voices

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Brad Fielder '91



## SOUTHERN VOICES

Volume Three  
Spring, 1991

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Cover designs by Brad Fielder

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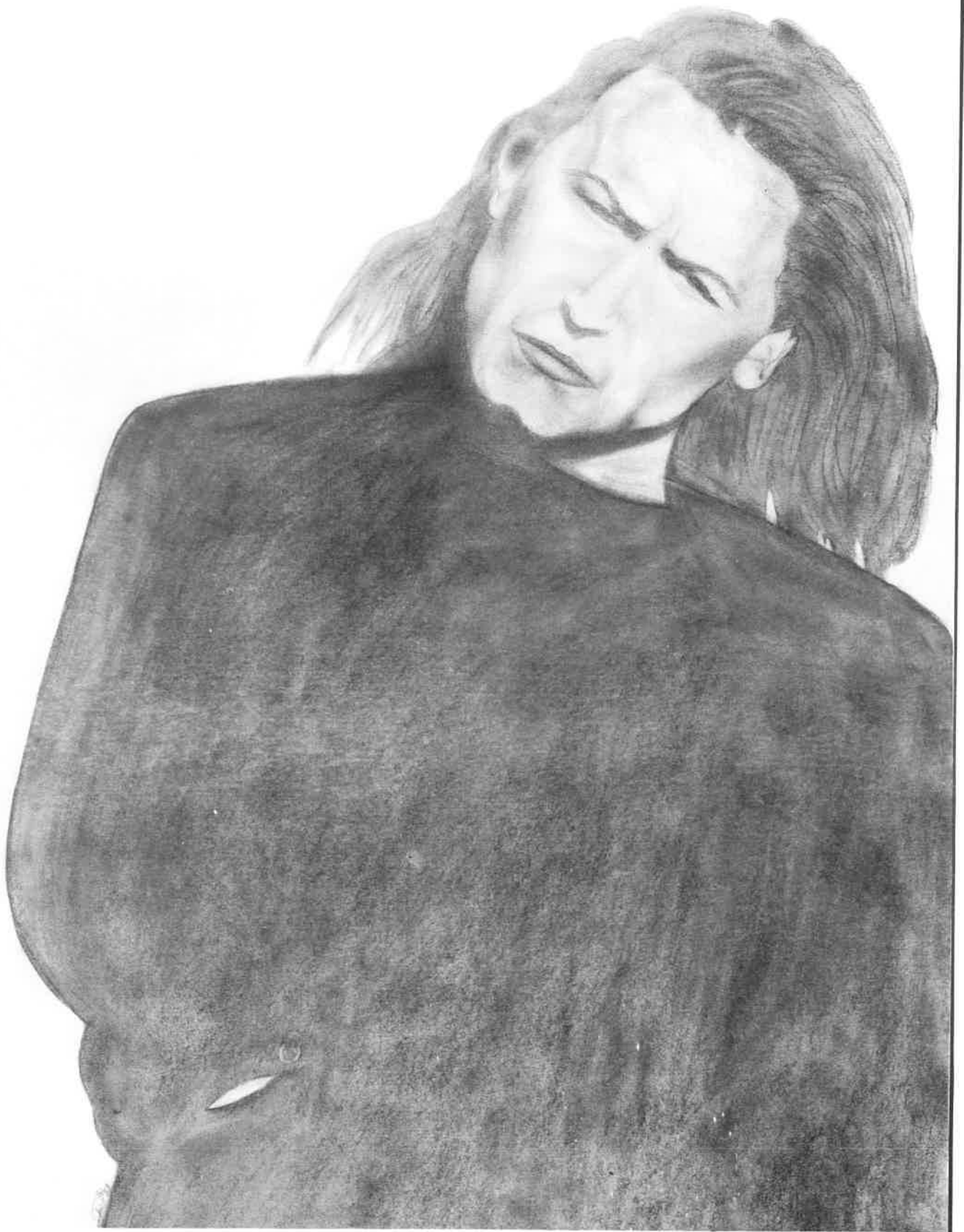
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Pencil

*Rebecca Brackin*

### Jimmy

He walked with gliding strides  
As if he owned the street,  
Head held high  
And shoulders relaxed.  
He wore the word Power,  
In red,  
Stamped across his shirt.  
And across his face  
A bandage  
White against the unmarred skin –  
Stretched tightly around the sturdy jaw.  
He walked without smiling –  
Without pausing or looking around.  
Betraying his cool confidence  
Only with his eyes  
That were not at all blank,  
But brilliant,  
Like a starry night  
And as scared and sadly out of place  
As a lost lion cub  
Trapped behind steel bars.

**Kelet Robinson**  
Third Place  
Poetry Contest

### "Bird's Eye View"

Mumbling fancies.  
At 8:00  
No, Can't make  
It.  
Two winds in  
Cata-  
clysmic frenzy.  
Rabbit ears.  
Swift twitch of  
His nose sends  
Her mouth  
To curl.  
Does it always  
Do that?  
Twisting her rings. . .  
For support, she  
Breathes a sigh of  
Relief or was  
It belief?  
  
Look up at me  
In the frame  
Of your world,  
Never stopping  
To chat.  
Only to  
Eavesdrop.

**Callie Hall**

---

### Ishie

Arthritic hands  
Knit time-told tales  
Of long-lost youth  
And polio legs.  
A black-haired boy  
Rolls in her chair  
Wedged between sitter and Singer  
Experienced machine,  
Filled with broken thread  
And eyeless needles.  
Her cooking's all done,  
Now it's time to rest.  
Heavy eyelids close.  
Chin nods.  
Body shakes.  
Goodnight, Ishie,  
Sleep well.

**Steven Mitchell**

---

### HALLWAY PHILOSOPHY

Wandering through the halls of our school,  
A six-foot-four colossus lives —  
Mr. Hassleman knows this world.  
He shouts,  
"Hurry up! I've got two wars to fight,  
a sea to cross and an empire to build!"  
Now I know it, too.

Two hours a day  
and five days a week  
I saw Mr. Hassleman;  
We thought we were smart  
And that no teacher could top us,  
But he taught us how to think  
and how to live.

**Reagen Ward**

## Grandma's House

A young child walks a long road stretched before him.  
The dirt chokes him; an old beaten truck passes him.  
In the distance there's a tree. Its long flowing  
branches touch the ground.

Children flitter about: Newly made wreaths decorate  
their bodies. They own this fair land-rulers to the  
chickens and rabbits.

An old man sits on a swing on the porch - shellin' the  
peas and shuckin' the corn - faithful Bullet beside him  
sleepily watching his master's movements.

An old woman seen through the window scurries about  
picking up debris thrown by the children. Sweet aromas  
come from within. DINNER'S READY!!!!!!

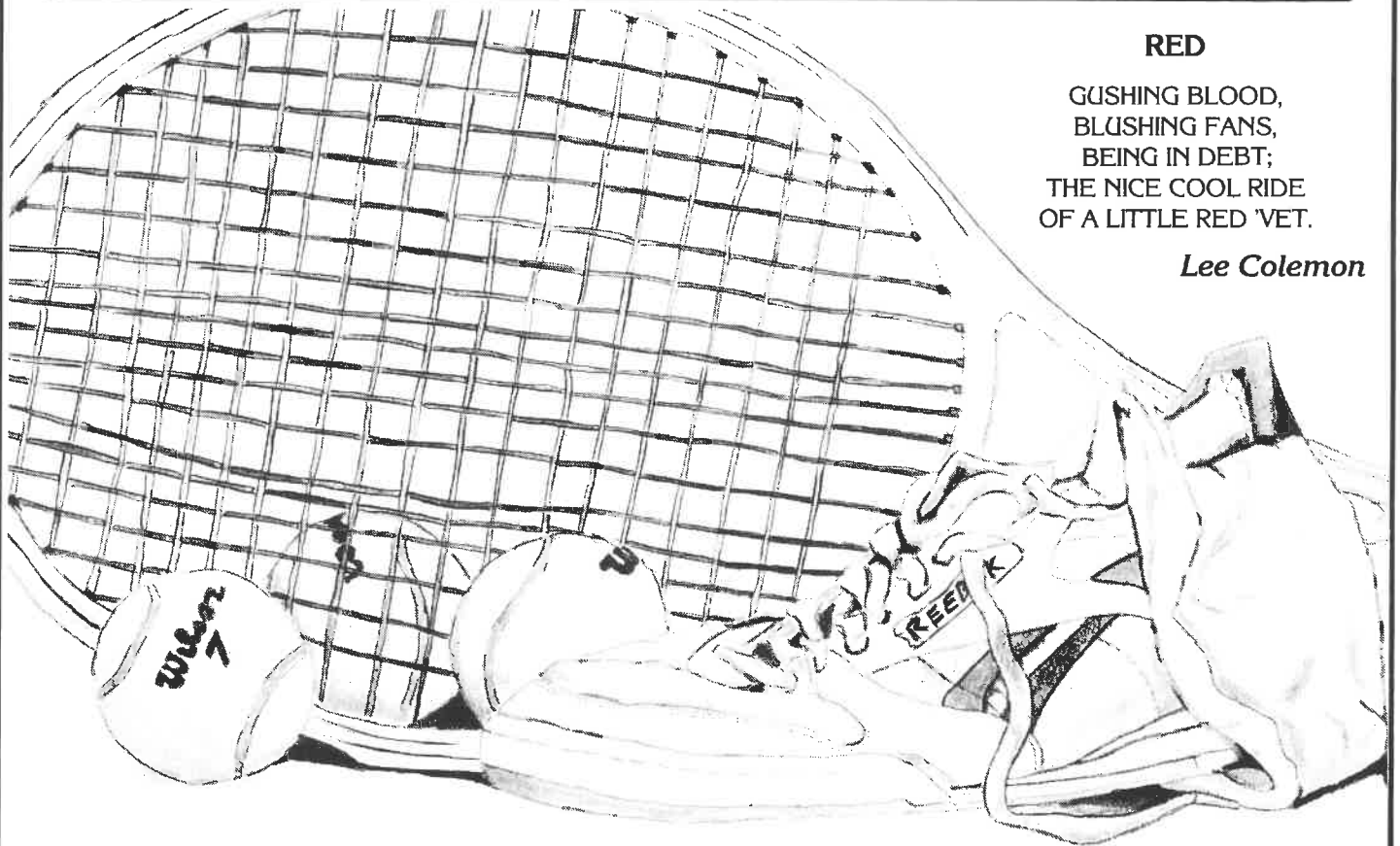
*Kendra Ferrell*

## Sighs

Sighs come from:

a chemistry text  
a wordy professor  
a newly-oiled door  
the first restroom for miles on a highway  
the sleeping dog  
the king after court  
the old women in welfare lines  
the condemned building  
the worn-out horse  
the leather buckle just undone  
the tuba player at the foot of the stadium stairs  
a bird landing on a dead tree limb.

*Dyan Dawson*



## RED

GUSHING BLOOD,  
BLUSHING FANS,  
BEING IN DEBT;  
THE NICE COOL RIDE  
OF A LITTLE RED 'VET.

*Lee Colemon*

*Ink Wash*

*Webster Miller*

## Just a Smile

I used to be a great pouter. If a situation didn't go my way, out went those lips. But Aunt Carol was always smiling. The unusual thing about it was that she had so many hardships, yet she was always happy. I often wondered why she wasn't pouting, too. Then I looked carefully at her life and found that she had built a solid wall around herself as protection from the crumbling world around her. The most solid brick in that wall was her smile. After facing hardships myself, I, too, learned the value of a smile.

Besides being a relative, Aunt Carol was my fifth-grade science teacher. I remember well how much all of the kids in her class loved her. She was once even picked as "Teacher of the Year." The wonderful thing about Aunt Carol was the warmth that radiated from her face. She could tell a story that would turn a bunch of loudmouthed, silly fifth graders into a captive audience. The response to her teaching astounded parents and faculty earning her their highest respect. Aunt Carol taught me more than just science that year; she taught me how to be a warm and able leader.

One of my first opportunities to put into practice Aunt Carol's leadership techniques was when I was asked to teach a rambunctious group of first graders in Vacation Bible School. When I thought that my patience was completely gone, I remembered Aunt Carol's smile. My reward was having eager, attentive listeners, and dozens of little arms reaching up for a hug or kiss.

Aunt Carol's smile was so warm and caring that even nature responded kindly towards her. The most beautiful flowers, juiciest strawberries, and sweetest corn were grown from her garden. I marveled at the time and hard work that she put into that garden. From sun-up 'til sun-down, by the sweat of her brow, she managed to tend that garden, do household chores, feed three hungry children, and support an alcoholic husband who was always out of work. Even through these hardships, Aunt Carol's smile was always present. Personally, I had never considered facing major trials with such a positive attitude. Just the thought of sweating my summers in a garden when I could be watching soap operas was downright depressing. But

then the time came when my own family suffered from hardships: my mother was ill from a mental breakdown and my daddy had to work long hours in his soybean fields each day just to break even. I turned to Aunt Carol's example, and she returned to me a smile.

As an only child, taking care of the chores became my sole responsibility; therefore, I started getting up early in the morning, cooking breakfast, and going to the garden. Late at night, I would put up the vegetables and clean the house. I stayed home on weekends because I lived too far out in the country to ride with friends to a movie. And since Mother was ill and Daddy was always working, I relied on the company of my cats and backyard nature trails to occupy my time. Yet my parents were shocked each morning when I greeted them: I had turned my pout into a smile and found that I could handle hardships with a positive attitude.

I have had a major trial which has been more difficult to overcome than my other hardships. My eyes have been my problem. Being diagnosed as a young child of eighteen months with an eye disorder known as "lazy eye," my family was given little hope that my eyes would ever be corrected. While growing up, I witnessed the pain and worry of my over-protective parents through my tiny, thick lenses; I also endured the jokes and insults of my insensitive classmates as they taunted me with the names "Four Eyes" and "Crossed Eyes." But Aunt Carol's face offered constant inspiration and subtle steering in the right direction so that I learned to deflect my pain into a painless smile.

Aunt Carol is still smiling. Even through life's new challenges, her response is always the same. And thanks to her gentle yet powerful influence, my response to adversity mirrors Aunt Carol's. Four surgeries and tears later, I no longer have to look at the world through thick glasses. And although my eyes may never be completely straight, my vision has been fully corrected. In a sense, my eyes have been straightened, too. . .by the curve of my smile.

*Mindy Mallory*



## Steps

Take one step at a time: you bobble along —  
hands and knees never quite together. Chugging  
patiently. Ignore the eternal carpeted runway;  
you will outlive it.

Take one step at a time: you hold my fingers —  
legs clink in your weightlessness. I will never  
let you fall. Put your tiny feet on mine, and I  
will walk for both of us.

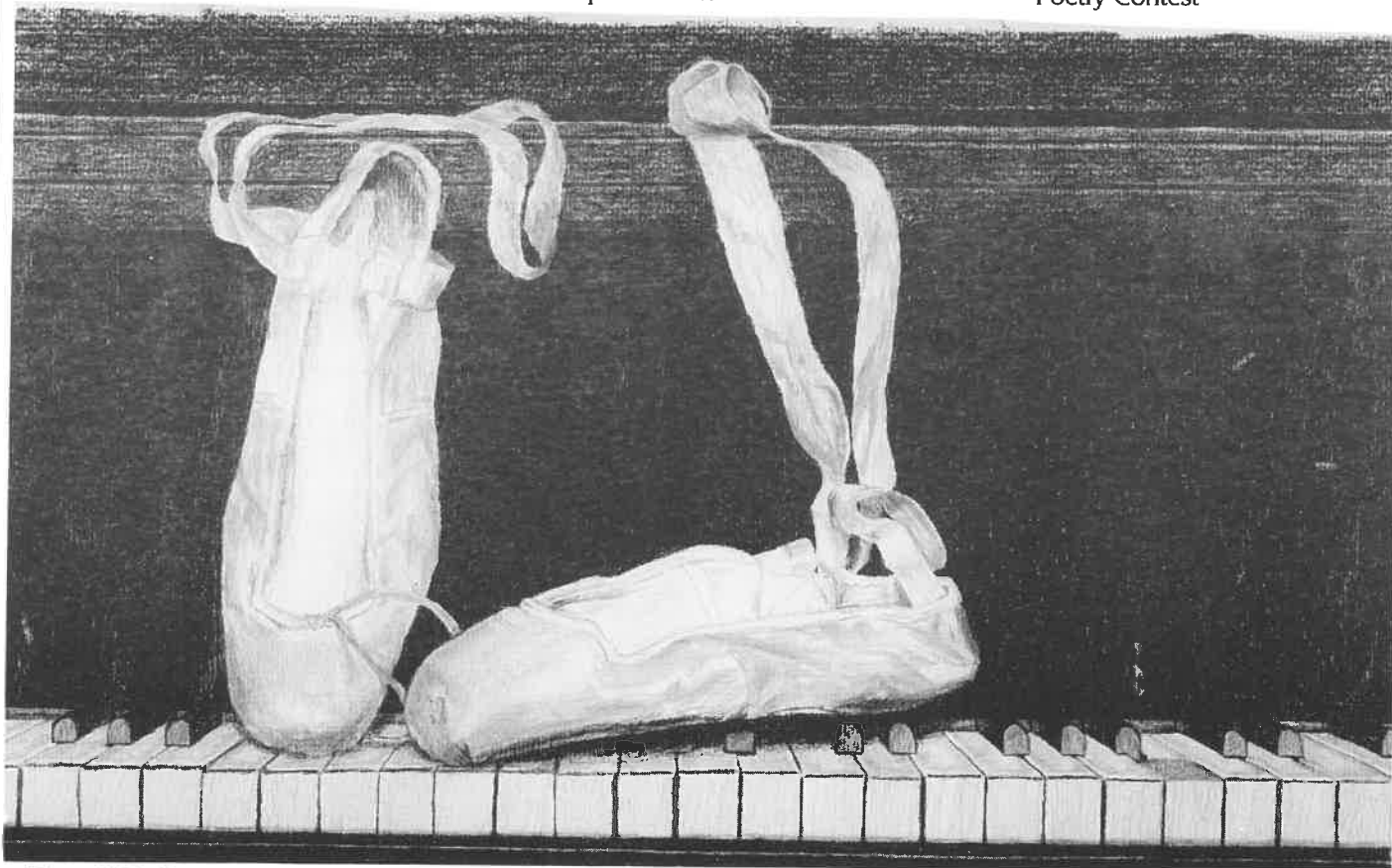
Take one step at a time: you grab knobs and  
drawers, counters and chairs — supporting yourself.  
Right, left. Right, left. Always tumbling down;  
always getting up.

Take one step at a time: you prance for attention —  
priding new-found coordination. Learn grace and  
balance. Make soft, pink, ballerina steps.

Take one step at a time: you chase puppies —  
running down winds in the grasses. Swift strides,  
practiced pace. Look forward — intent; let your  
feet find their own place.

Take one step at a time.

**Chandra S. Harrell**  
Second Place  
Poetry Contest



Pencil & Crayon

**Kenneth White**

## "Haircut"

His ears were quite large. Well, not abnormally large – just "large for his face," as Janet had politely said.

He watched her as she sat down to arrange her shampoos alphabetically.

"A-Romance, Beautiful You, Just Right, . . ." She stopped abruptly — as if disconnected from ground control.

"Sue, have you seen my special formula cream rinse? You know, the one I created **myself**?"

Janet emphasized this last pronoun to reassure everyone of her apparent advancement in beauty proficiency.

He watched her chew methodically on her gum. Somehow this act lay in the boundaries of couth so that it did not look profane.

"Are you ready, Jes?"

She directed her attention fully to the boy in front of her, flashing a smile of pageantry.

Jes stood up and nodded meekly. The fewer words he said, the less he could massacre. It was bad enough that she had to be close enough to his ears to actually see how vain they were.

Janet robed and throned him in a plastic-cushioned chair. Her mouth slightly parted as she was combing his hair, and he could faintly see the small gum-satellite meandering aimlessly throughout its pink universe. He noticed that her breath was always strawberry flavored.

"Now, what do you want done this time? Going for something new?"

Her anticipation made him almost want to say "yes."

"No. Just the same old thing."

Janet looked at the specimen in front of her, not computing its response.

"I just got my new California Hair books in, and I'm just dying to try them out," she hinted.

Unfrequented by stimulus, the boy remained in his niche — molded by the ritual of habit.

"Uh. . . I kinda just wanted a trim. You know, just like I always get."

He adored Janet but was a bit wary of her sense of taste.

Janet was disgusted by his ineptitude to experiment. She nodded and began to choose her weapons.

"How's school? What grade are you in now. . . ninth?"

"Just fine. No ma'am, 11th. I'm a junior."

"My, you've grown up so fast."

They were only about seven years apart. But somehow it felt much, much longer.

"Do you want a shampoo first or just a cut?"

"Uh, shampoo's fine."

She led him to another padded cell, complete with dunking pool. She began to wet his head — this, of course, decreased the show of hair and made ear expansion possible.

"You have a real nice hair color. . . kinda brown with some copper tints in it."

He smiled. This was the life: lounging, doing absolutely nothing, while a beautiful woman was willingly running her fingers through his hair. While Janet ran the warm water over his head, he imagined cool white beaches, Janet in a bikini, and himself sitting beside. . .

"What time shall I pick you up tonight?"

The boy jerked back to reality. A man was standing beside Janet now. Who was he? What was he doing here? Didn't he see that Janet had work to do? Janet was busy cutting his hair, running her fingers through his hair.

"Seven's fine. Mama's been dying to see you."

Mama? The boy studied Janet and the man. They looked about the same age. There was no way he could be her brother.

"Excuse me, will you, Jes?"

What else could he say? "Sure" tripped from his boulderous lips.

He watched Janet and the man go into the office.

The boy stared at his reflection, like a curious wet elephant, in the wall of mirrors before him.

His ears were quite large.

*Callie Hall*

### Old Woman In the Chair

She sat in her chair,  
Hardly ever saying a word.  
Sometimes she would just stare  
Like a lost soul in space:  
When she did talk,  
You knew that she loved you.  
She would tell you stories  
Of how things used to be,  
And how things were going to be.  
No matter what she did  
You knew she was the greatest.

*Chris Doeblen*

### Mama P

Jumping around the room  
Trying to keep our attention  
Raising a voice maternal and paternal  
So much patience so much knowledge  
Demonstrations scribbles yelling  
Anything to get us to learn  
Some fear her  
I see  
Authority and concern shooting  
Out like lightning  
The round compassion surrounded  
By soft aging  
"Are you with me?! Are you with me!?"

*Martha Barron Bishop*



Pen & Ink

*Diane Carney*

### Twilight Hymn

Children, look up, look out, for the Artist has painted;  
Great is the Artist and great is the painting.  
Bands of purest color, rainbow-blushing,  
Wind-swept streaks of warm vermilion glowing,  
Golden stripes and azure, greenly brushing,  
Threads of silver moonlight starbeads sewing -  
Twilight now is watercolored brightly  
By the one who paints the constellations;  
He who fills the universal canvas,  
He whose brushstrokes raise both winds and nations.  
Every star is orchestrated by Him;  
Every voice, a solo in His Choirs.  
Every instant swells a chord in one hymn;  
All that is, for one great work aspires.  
For Artist and Composer, sing with one accord;  
The omniverse is magnum opus of the Lord.  
Children, look up, look out, for the Artist has painted;  
Great is the Artist and great is the painting.

*Jennifer Boggess*

## Gold Can Stay

Like some absurd tripod, I placed the rump of my left hand on the humus ground to lift my rear off the stump. With my right hand I pawed around for the splinter and pulled it away, leaving a much more comfortable seat. I tilted my head back and gazed up into the vast knotty branches of the Magnolia tree that not more than twelve years earlier I could leap. . . .

"This is my land, and it was my father's land before me, and some day, Son, this will be your land."

Shifting on the stump, I swallowed his cliché and realized that this land had become my land much too soon. It was Mother's Day, and I was four. . . .

"Oh, Bill, I can hardly imagine," Mother said, visually consuming the little gold, cardboard box. "You really shouldn't have, Bill, I can just hardly imagine what you've gone out and bought."

She fingered the edges of the little box and, with her red nails, sliced the **Crowley's Jewelry** label and propped open the lid. "It's just so beautiful." She held what seemed, to me, a gold piece of string up to her eye level. "Bill, you must have spent a fortune, I really can't keep this," Mother said, by female requisite. "Here," she said, "do this, please," and she stroked her mane of silky licorice hair over one

shoulder as father pinched the clasps of the necklace from mother's fingers, so graceful that all seemed as pinkies. . . .

I retreated from thought when a splinter, from high in the Magnolia, broke from bark and found its way right into my left eye. This inconvenient twig caused my eyes to water with a swell of tears. Pinching my eyelid with the soft side of my index finger I gently brushed the splinter away, got up from the stump and looked down at its mossy exterior. I remembered cutting down that tree, revealing its amber rings of age, and creating a mere place to sit. . . .

"Hold on just a minute," Mother sang out, to the sharp raps at the door. I watched her flow through doorways, with her customary bustle. As she opened the angry door, the **cause** of her shocked silence cursed me. . . .

Mother still has the necklace. After that Mother's Day, I've never seen her wear it — She just keeps it in that old **Crowley's** box: not hidden away somewhere, but right with her, in her house-coat pocket. The poor box has been handled so much, that its once gold exterior has faded to a mossy, dark green. The necklace is still as beautiful today, as when I first saw it flow around a mother's young neck — back when the box was gold, too.

*J.H. Barlow*

## Just Listen

Voices.

Echo in the sound of the stream  
From her tender eyelids.

The voices encompass the decayed  
and Lame can't escape their clutches.  
They grip Lame's forearm with overpowering faith  
and tease his temptors with the taste of the  
fresh spring water from fields of dry sand.

Portals.

Slowly turn their heads to the skies  
and worship the abyss which they cannot explain.

Orion laughs at their ignorance  
and Infirm can only fall to abstractness.  
Writhing in unpitied anguish caused from the years  
of the labyrinth.

Palms.

Lie on the temples of the living  
and breathe strength from their folly.

Contemplate the successor.

*Amber Kidd*

---

## PRECIPICE

Wiping waves washing your face,  
Ailing legs losing the race.  
Salty sea searing your eyes,  
Choking throat dreading each rise.  
Even ebbs ending never,  
Rises, crests, peaks forever.  
Trickling tears trailing your cheeks,  
Whisked away by cresting peaks.  
Wanton wishes wandering home,  
Ocean tremendous and you alone.  
Sweeping seraphs sing above,  
Lasting vision, last mortal love.  
Eerie endings escape their lair,  
Finding you floating, spine to the air.  
Tiny tot's toy, the waves play ball,  
Lasting vision, once and for all.

The light approaches, you approach the light,  
And you realize that the light at the end of the tunnel  
Is only the pale moon above your head.

*Brad Fielder*

## Calling

I pick up the phone and dial home.  
I remember the last time. . .  
the tears. . .  
the crumbling wall that let me see. . .  
I remember your pain. . .

You never told me that you missed me  
so much.  
You never seemed to care when I told you about  
**my** pain.  
Again and Again, I reached out to you.  
Every time, I was alone.

He says that you can't stop your lives  
for me.  
Where have I written that?  
When have I said that?  
All that I ask is that you make a little  
room for me. . .  
In and among **his** clutter.

I still hate him.  
I don't mean to. . .I've never meant to.  
He just pushes me out. . .  
And you don't notice.

I will always hate him.  
My pain,  
from him,  
Will never heal.

The hate  
separates us  
more than the miles between us.  
You have done nothing.  
I am alone.

Tears stream down my face.  
I slowly  
replace the receiver.

*Brandie Bjorklund-Jones*

---

## With Apologies to A.E. Housman. . .

Clay lies still, but mind is motion;  
Thought's the ware which wills one weep.  
All I have is blind devotion;  
Leave me be, and let me sleep.

*Jennifer Boggess*

## Just Family Gossip and Stuff

They started whispering about it even before we started dinner which meant it was a rare and intriguing bit of news. The gossip was usually saved for after the meal; before the meal was for hugging and kissing, and reporting on who had lost weight, and who hadn't. Today, they moved right into the talk which meant that something more than the normal brew was astir. Even while I was still floating on the last waves of my naptime dreamworld, I heard Aunt Rice's crisp voice reaching out into the hall, "I always said that man would come to no good".

"We all did," Aunt Billy crowed in response. I could feel her, even if I couldn't see her, rocking back and forth in my grandfather's oak rocking chair by the window, "We all tried to tell her, but you know what they say, love is blind."

"That poor girl," Aunt Callie interjected, "she dropped out of school in tenth grade to marry that man. . ."

"Schooling wouldn't matter if she had had some sense," Aunt Billy mumbled.

Aunt Callie ignored her, "and now she's got that little girl to look after, and no help."

They were talking of course, about my cousin, Rosalyn. She had gotten married two years ago — to a truck driver — much to the dismay of our family. He was a tall thin guy with a face somewhat similar to a mule's. He was 28 when he asked for her 16-year-old hand in marriage. The whole family was in a bit of an uproar over the whole ordeal. (The day the engagement was announced was one of the few other occasions when the gossiping got started before the meal.) The whole lot of them begged and bribed her not to marry him. I had never seen such a show, but she was determined. She said they were in love and they were getting married no matter what anyone said. True to her word, they had a proper ceremony in Little Rock Baptist Church on Wednesday, April 29. More than a few of the kinsfolk claimed they'd never show their faces at such an event (they were just that much against that fellow) but eventually raw curiosity dragged them all in. Even Rosalyn's mother threatened not to show up. Mary Lewis ranted and raved for days about her baby being taken advantage of and refusing to have any part in it. Rosalyn's father argued just as hard that it wouldn't be fitting for her not to show up at her own daughter's wedding. They fought like this for weeks. During one of these arguments, Aunt Mary stood up and told him right to his face that she'd dig her own grave in a thunderstorm then jump in with a toaster clutched to her breast and a lightning rod tied to her head before she'd spoil one of her good dresses at such an occasion. They finally compromised, and on the day of the wedding, Mrs. Lewis strutted right down that aisle — wearing a pair of tattered blue jeans, a white t-shirt, and a baseball cap. Later the family would argue over whether the bigger disgrace was the mother or the daughter, whether the true head of

the household was Mr. or Mrs. Lewis, and whether it would have been more acceptable if the top Mrs. Lewis wore to the wedding had not been white.

After the wedding, no one heard a word from Rosalyn or her husband, Bernard, for a while. When they did finally decide to let people know how things were getting on, they simply showed up at our grandparents' house on Christmas Eve. Bernard had picked up a few pounds and a couple of new clothes. He was wearing a pair of dark blue trousers, creased so sharp they could have sliced a block of cheese and a tan sweater that looked as soft as home churned cream. Rosalyn wore a gigantic smile and an equally large maternity dress. So, it seemed that contrary to the wants and wishes of the house majority and against all their prayers and predictions, things in the Hill household were going pretty well.

Rosalyn was seven months pregnant and already bigger than an apartment complex. She was so big that she had trouble even moving effectively. Her favorite little quirk when trying to get up from a sitting position was "I'll pull, someone else push". Aunt Mary swore up and down that the only reason they ever showed up was to weasel a free meal. I don't know how true that statement was but I can testify that Rosalyn Hill ate enough food for five or six starving children that Christmas. It may have been all this extra food consumption that prompted her into an early delivery.

Rosalyn started getting contractions about 2:00 that morning. I know this because that is the time Bernard started running through the hall screaming his lungs out. Poor Aunt Billy thought the house was on fire. She ran out of the house without her glasses on. We have yet to figure out how she made the trip for Aunt Billy is very blind. When we got Rosalyn to the car she was still standing outside jerking her head from side to side and shouting fiercely through the night air, "What's going on? Where am I? Where am I?"

Rosalyn gave birth to a healthy, six pound, seven ounce, baby girl. Everybody had a suggestion as to what its name should be, but Rosalyn and Bernard agreed that she should be named after Rosalyn's maternal grandparents, Oliver and Marie Bellhaven.

Her name is "Ollibelle Marie Hill," Rosalyn would say stubbornly everytime someone came up with a new suggestion for a name. And indeed it was. . . for three days. After three days (thus says the grapevine) Grandpa Lewis went over to visit the Hills, and in a private conversation with Rosalyn, said, "Don't name your child after the Bells. Them Bells too big a devils". Ever since then the child's been known simply as Betty Hill with no proper middle name whatsoever. The birth of Betty was the last anyone heard from or of Rosalyn for months.

\* \* \* \*

I got up, mostly because I knew the sound of voices in the next room would prevent me from resting anymore. Deciding to join them, I walked into the next room, and took a seat by the fireplace, right next to Aunt Rice. The fireplace had gotten so hot that within 15 minutes, I was sweating. Just about the time the sweat started really dripping, someone knocked on the door. I waited to see who would answer it then praised my lucky stars because it was Aunt Billy. I eagerly awaited the moment she would have to pass between me and the fireplace to get to the door, and the two seconds of delightful coolness that would accompany it. Aunt Rice was so bony that if it had been her who answered the door, enough of the fireplace would never have been blocked to ensure that relief. And even though Aunt Callie is much larger than Aunt Rice, she still is no comparison to Aunt Billy. Having Aunt Billy walk between you and the fireplace is like that rare breeze you get on an August day here, in the Mississippi delta, at noon.

Within a couple of hours, the house was packed with people. As usual, there were a few there I didn't know, but I assumed they were related to me in some remote way and therefore granted them the right to hug and kiss me along with the rest of the bunch. When it looked like everyone who was coming had come, we all crowded around the table for the blessing. I waited patiently for Grandpa to finish talking so I could eat. Just as he said "Amen," someone else knocked on the door. Everyone eyed the room to see who would be the one to answer it. It was my cousin Katie who finally left to answer on the second knock. She walked back into the room, followed by Bernard Hill, holding little Betty asleep in his arms.

"Good evening," he said.

Everyone spoke to him and asked about Rosalyn out of forced politeness. Aunt Rice (who never could hold her tongue) was the one who said what everyone else was thinking. She started right in on him with "I know it's none of my business what you do in your married life, but don't you think it's mighty bold of you to come to a family get-together after you've left the person who put you into the family?"

He cleared his throat, "But, I didn't leave her".

"But aren't you divorcing her?"

"No," I don't see how I could even if I wanted to. . . Rosalyn's gone. . . she left me."

"She what? What did you do to her?"

"I . . . don't really know. Last night, she was talking about how she felt tied down and never really got to live her life. And when I got up this morning, she was just. . . gone."

The room fell silent for a split second. "I don't know what to do," he sighed.

Aunt Billy began to walk from the room. She paused at the door, then turned to me and said, "Tasha, honey, will you pass me another piece of that sweet potato pie, please?" Then she turned to Bernard "Well what can you do?" she said, "nothing you can do. So, just bring yourself on over and get some food. You're family now — for good it seems; so, just make yourself at home and come on over and get some food. It'll all work out in the end. God willing, it'll all work out."

**Kelet Robinson**  
Second Place  
Short Story Contest

### From the Web

Deception was invisible  
Overtaking me in its merciless grip.  
A grip of death  
Around a tender throat  
That had not yet tasted sin.

She forced me to wear her dress.  
An unwilling groom  
Till death do its part.  
The guests stared endlessly  
From sockets full of lace.

She and black were one and the same.  
All light consumed  
In a shifting pitch void.  
Dragging her plump abdomen  
Stretched taut with wicked death.

It was rancid and tangy-sweet.  
Fermented with evil during a lifetime of iniquity.  
The black hand caressed my brain to sleep.  
I felt the first strand run across my face.

She kissed me and whispered something eternal.

*Shawn Salvant*

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### October

Samhain closes on our world;  
spirits walk the land.  
The amber leaves try to fly  
as the first frost appears.  
The last of the crickets  
sings his lonely requiem.  
A hint of winter comes from the north  
pushing birds ahead.

*Dyan Dawson*

### Web

Sid sits there  
In the Stillness  
Waiting  
Watching,  
Slowly crawling, Moving  
first one, then another  
his feet hit the ground  
Drops of rain like they sound  
he stands over the waterbowl  
Hairy legs and Pink Toes  
Screaming Excitement  
with the cricket  
But there he sits,  
on the closet shelf.

*Rob Black*

---

### October

Green trees are almost gone  
replaced by brilliant red, yellow and orange  
Cool winds send crisp brown leaves skittering  
across the sidewalk.  
Cloudy skies and grey mornings give away to cool,  
sunny afternoons.  
Darkness closes early, leaves late.  
October comes silently  
with just a flip of the calendar pages,  
And is ushered out by ghosts and goblins,  
witches and pumpkins.  
Smiles on children's faces freeze while frosty  
fingers hold sticky candy.

*Dawn Bounds*



### **The Shadow**

A lonesome shadow flits across  
A tapestry of gray.  
Silently, desperately begging for comfort  
In a weary, desolate way.

As the clock so grand makes its proclamation,  
The shadow whispers its grief.  
Pleading for love, for life, for caring  
Won't someone grant it relief?

Hours on wings of lead fly by  
While the image all alone,  
Slowly succumbs to greater despair  
Than this world has ever known.

Ignored by all of humankind,  
Repressed by its own starved pleas,  
The shadow inches downward  
And trips over shattered dreams.

Now, devoid of all emotion,  
Whipped and beaten before you I stand  
In the blackened, dreary world  
Of the shadow that I am.

*Sandi Thomas*

### **Another Day**

Lost in a timeless charade  
Walls of doubt, confusion  
World of sorrow, worlds of pain  
Desperate souls, no relief  
Breathing, racing, dreaming  
Bitterness, hatred, rejection  
Running, no goal  
Reaching, empty hands  
People encircling  
Smiling, laughing  
Cold hearts, war themselves  
Confusion, anger, fight, murder  
Another soul, eternity  
Wasted lives  
Money, lust, broken dreams  
Clock ticking  
Men cry, hearts break  
Men kill, no pain  
Sun rises, another day  
Brotherhood — Freedom cries  
War's chamber, many doors  
Threat turns reality  
Life turns death  
Chains, bondage, darkness  
Sorrow cuts mother's heart  
Wife crying, child confused  
World bewildered, sick hearts  
Bandaging slowly  
Sun goes down  
God cries.

*Carla Hosch*

### **Lullaby**

Strong chains bound to prisoners  
Fragile as broken glass slivers  
So beautiful with morning dew gleaming  
High wire above the ground.  
Evil traps intending to provide dinner.  
Warmth of his breath near  
Creeping closer. . . .and closer  
Sensation of his hairy legs  
Delicate symmetry  
Ornate Malevolence

*Lisa Honn*

## Rule

"Diligent hands will rule, but laziness ends in slave labor."

**Proverbs 12:24**

Pine-sap soap.  
Bath of needles.  
Rake  
Here  
Rake  
There

Come on in,  
Water's dry.  
Head  
Under  
Straw  
Over  
Work hard,  
Stop. Cold.  
Work  
Ebb  
Don  
Coat

Diligent hands.  
Square yard.  
Corner  
To  
Corner  
Clean.

*J.H. Barlow*

## Picture

Wretched, torn, and crying.  
The picture fell from the wall.  
The soul of the painting  
moved from the floor  
to the hole in the wall  
left where the bodiless  
spirit once hung.  
The cracks in the old,  
strong wall revealed  
the weight of the  
frame of copper  
and the canvas of paper.  
The vision of the old  
man who lived so  
long ago. The spirit  
retreated into the  
hole where it once  
hung, like it had  
so many years before.

*Kirbye Burns*

## The Traveller

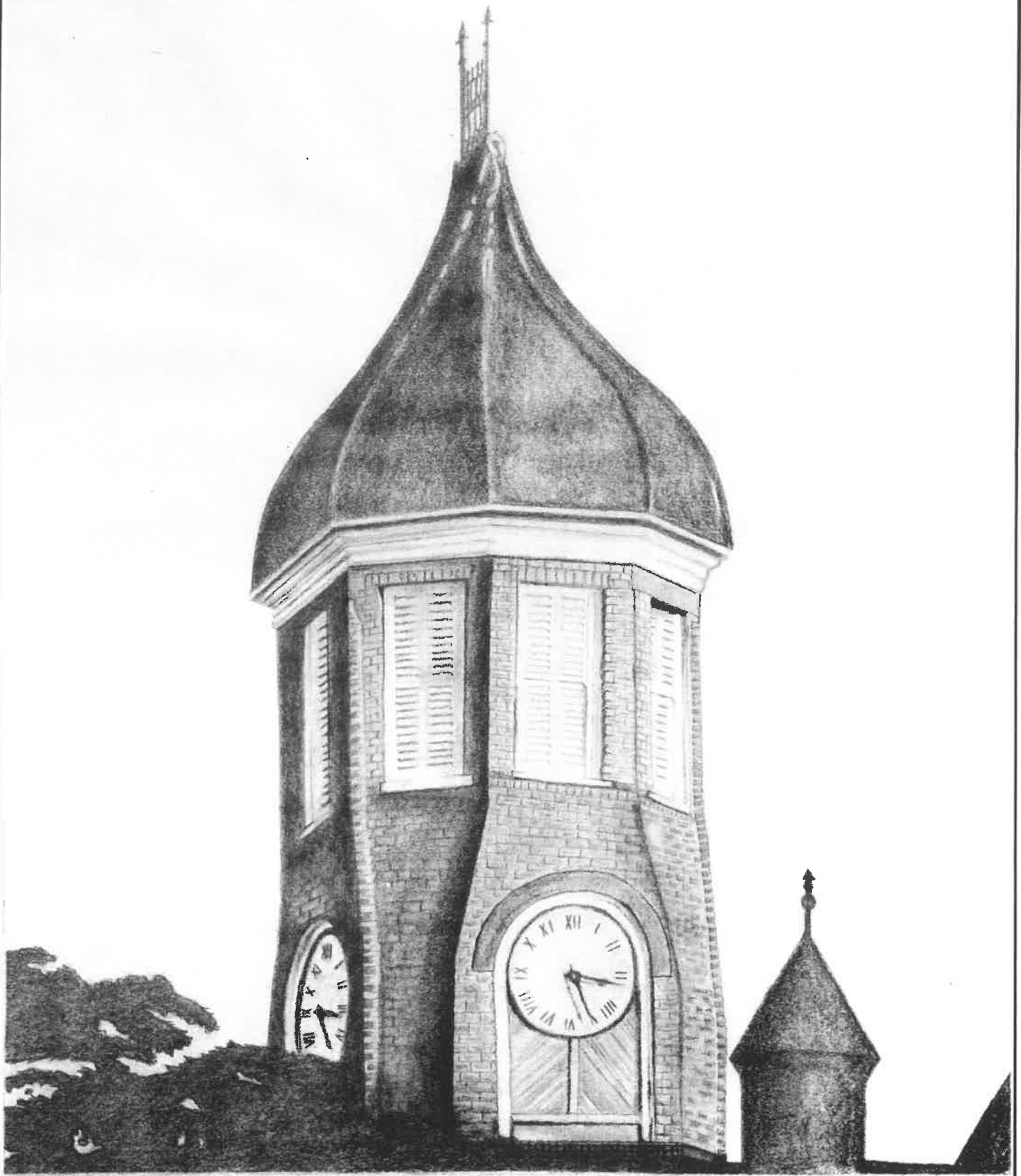
The traveller, cold and wet  
Inhales the tears of God.  
A light,  
A shimmer,  
A shiver,  
A cough.  
The car drove by, passed on.  
Looks up, looks down, and goes on.  
A door,  
A window,  
Heat and  
Home.  
Forever death behind closed doors.  
The shelter, no more of the rain.  
Security,  
Fertility,  
A life,  
A health.  
Never to walk again.  
Never to talk again.  
A woman,  
A man,  
A visitor,  
Silence.  
The door closed.

*Kirbye Burns*

## "Roadside Man"

"Ain't nobody care what you do -  
So long as you keep to yourself."  
Trapped in zoo collection  
Your face marred by  
Beaten malice. Eyes of an  
Assassin, you see no  
Limit of weapons  
Only lack of suspects.  
It's your race  
To finish.  
Teeth of mercurial bite.  
Lips of swarthy larvae.  
Oh, Charon, how you manifest!  
Plagued by the tenement.  
Chafed by belittlement.  
You don't mind candescent truths -  
Only easy lies. It's not  
Hard to swallow the reality:  
It won't get better tomorrow.

*Callie Hall*



Pencil

*James King*

## Dominion

I see a lot from my monthly orbit around Earth. I was the sole spectator as the Earth's surface was ripped asunder and molten rock spewed forth – cooling over millennia to form great chunks of solid land. I have seen earthquakes shake whole continents, floods submerge the entire globe, and glaciers create oceans where mountains once stood.

All of this, I must say, was quite entertaining, but what happened next nearly threw me out of orbit.

It started first in the water. One day, while I was concentrating hard on creating a tide, a peculiar movement caught my eye. I peered closer and glimpsed a tiny piece of matter actually moving of its own volition! However, when the next wave passed, I could see no trace of the mysterious particle. I finally convinced myself it was imaginary. Then, lo and behold, several of these particles pulled themselves on shore, stayed for a brief moment, and then slithered back into the ocean. Over the centuries, these brief excursions onto land lasted longer and longer until eventually the creatures began to leave the ocean for good. I had witnessed the beginning of Life.

Although the earlier explosions and convulsions of Earth were indeed spectacular, they became commonplace compared to Life's magnificence. Earthquakes can become boring after a while, but Life was constantly entertaining.

I was immediately fond of the dinosaurs. Large and powerful, they easily dominated Earth's surface. Their strength was their sole asset, and it was all they needed to maintain their dominance. At this point, I constructed a law for survival on Earth:

### A DOMINANT SPECIES MUST HAVE SUPERIOR STRENGTH.

I predicted that this law would hold true for eternity on Earth, but I was soon proven wrong as the climate began to change. The dinosaurs, unable to adapt, soon died off (except, of course, for a small clan of aquatic dinosaurs in a cave at the bottom of Loch Ness). Dismayed by the death of a species that I was most fond of, I amended my law:

### A DOMINANT SPECIES MUST HAVE SUPERIOR STRENGTH OR ADAPTABILITY.

Mammals were the next species to dominate the Earth, and I found that my new law was accurate for them. Some mammals continued to survive by strength alone. The strongest wolf led the pack, and the strongest deer outran the wolves. Other mammals survived by adapting. Animals such as the snowshoe rabbit adapted by changing their hair color to hide from their predators while other mammals learned to adapt to the cold by hibernating. I thought my new law stated Life's universal truth, but then humans came along and I began to question the validity of my amended law.

When I saw the first human, I felt his days were numbered. He had no hair, scales, or feathers like decent creatures – except for an odd patch of hair that grew only on his abnormally large head. The rest of his body looked weak, like that of a diseased wolf who had lost his hair to mange. He was neither fast nor strong. And his hairless body left him no way to adapt to a changing climate or to hide from hungry predators. I predicted the entire race would be extinct in a few hundred years.

My opinion changed, however, when I saw a small group of humans attack and kill a giant mammoth, an animal even the fiercest predators avoided. These humans used teamwork and stone tools to replace what aggressive features nature had denied them. They clothed themselves in the skins of other animals to adapt to the cold, and even more strikingly, they discovered fire. From that point on, their technological progress increased exponentially, each new discovery leading to a host of others. They began to use machines to replace the strength they lacked. Instead of adapting to the environment, they altered the environment to them. Their whirlwind of progress changed Earth like never before. The success of the humans compelled me to alter my law again:

### A DOMINANT SPECIES MUST HAVE SUPERIOR STRENGTH, ADAPTABILITY, OR INTELLIGENCE.

My amazement at the dominance of the humans grew every day as they spread over Earth. They destroyed great tracts of land and mercilessly killed other species or forced them into submission. Several times, a few of them even launched through space and landed on my surface.

Then, as suddenly as they appeared, they were gone. They had changed Earth so completely that it was no longer able to support life of any kind, including their own. The ozone layer and other valuable gases had been used up, and toxic chemicals had killed off the plants that were the only means to replace the lost gases.

The humans died horrible deaths. Those that did not kill themselves died breathing Earth's atmosphere of airborne germs and poisonous gases. So struck was I by the humans' devastation of Earth that I modified my law of survival once more:

### A DOMINANT SPECIES MUST HAVE SUPERIOR STRENGTH, ADAPTABILITY, OR INTELLIGENCE COUPLED WITH FORESIGHT.

However, the Earth quickly recovered and was next dominated by . . .

*L. Cary Gunn, III*

### Quietness Comes From

The Blasting Stereo  
that fills the room

My Hands,

When my sister tries to sing

The Tarantulas

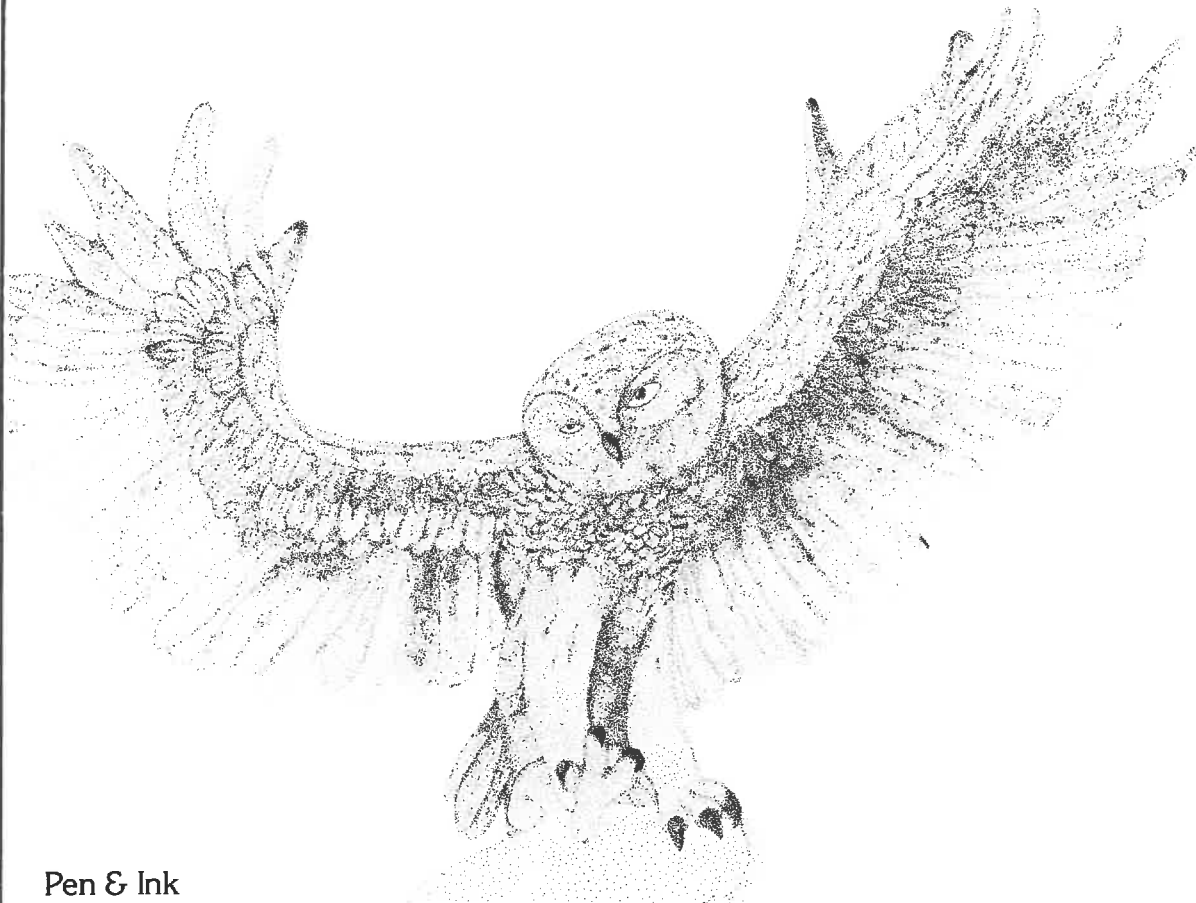
That sit and wait for their prey  
and quiet comes from  
Zimbabwe.

*Rob Black*

### Quiet

Quiet is the telephone  
no longer ringing;  
Memories of music;  
A gentle rain;  
The beach at dawn;  
An abandoned house;  
A dusty road.

*Tricia Bacon*



Pen & Ink

*Leslie Flint*

## A Wooded Refuge

The place where I grew up was isolated. I had few neighbors; and there was nobody my age to provide companionship. This situation brought about the necessity of inventiveness. When I was old enough, I began exploring into the driveway (it was sand and rocks — a perfect playground for a constructive mind). On the other side of the house was a mushy bed of shrubbery full of roly-polies and worms that delighted me for hours. However, the older I got, the more interested I became in what lay beyond the driveway and the shrubs. As months and years went by, I ventured farther and farther into the expanse of fascinating wilderness on the foothills behind my house.

Underneath vaulting pine branches lay hills, ravines, vines, and thickets, huge trees and creature-burrows, tiny enclaves for easy concealment, and arching thatched gateways into other worlds.

The best part of the forest, though, was that it was my personal domain. Only I knew the whereabouts of fortresses and hideaways — places where I could go to escape whatever foul beast was pursuing me at the time, or places just to visit and manage all my personal affairs and the assets of my kingdom.

And only the privileged were granted passage into my realm. Entrance was strictly limited to my closest confidants. Of course, no one other than my buddies and I was interested in trying to get in at all, but you could never have convinced me of that.

Those woods became my friend — a refuge and a playground that comprised the whole of my imaginary world.

After a few years of playing in the woods, I was old enough to ride my bike across the bridge into town. I grew more interested in city streets and backyards than in my old friend. Soon school began to take up time and pull us farther apart. We sold our old house and moved across the highway beside a lake. I took to the water as my new frontier, and my old friend slipped even farther away.

I never saw much of him after all that, and I might very well have forgotten about him had it not been for his sudden death a year ago. What caused it? Ignorance, mostly.

Nobody ever considered what they were doing when they made the decision to cut it all down.

There are now no more vines and valleys, hideaways, or hills. No forts or passageways, not even any creature holes. The thick roof of pine needles that once provided shelter was ripped away, leaving stark and barren piles of dry earth and splintered fragments of wood. No animal life can be seen. Deer and turkey who resided there now search for other homes. Rabbits, squirrels, a dozen types of birds were all violently evicted.

I visited my old friend just before his death. When I got there, I felt the strong arm of one of his trees supporting me, and at the same time, a gentle breeze cooling me. I walked slowly and resolutely over the paths that I had spent so many summer days on running back and forth.

As we said our last goodbyes, I thanked him. I told him I appreciated what he had done for me — how he had always been there when I called on him and how I always knew I could count on him.

I also tried to console him. I told him I'd do everything I could to ensure that his posterity had a good life. I promised that I would not let my own children miss out on playing where I had and having the opportunity to experience the same things I did.

As I left that day, I cried. I cried because I knew that that was the last time I would see him, but mostly just because I remembered. I remembered how simple things once were, and how good life can be. I realized that the times I've been happiest have been the times when I was as close to myself as I was back then. I realized that if we had our priorities straight, we would probably all go back to the place that we knew as children — maybe taking one person with us, but mainly for the purpose of being with ourselves and enjoying the bliss of solitude.

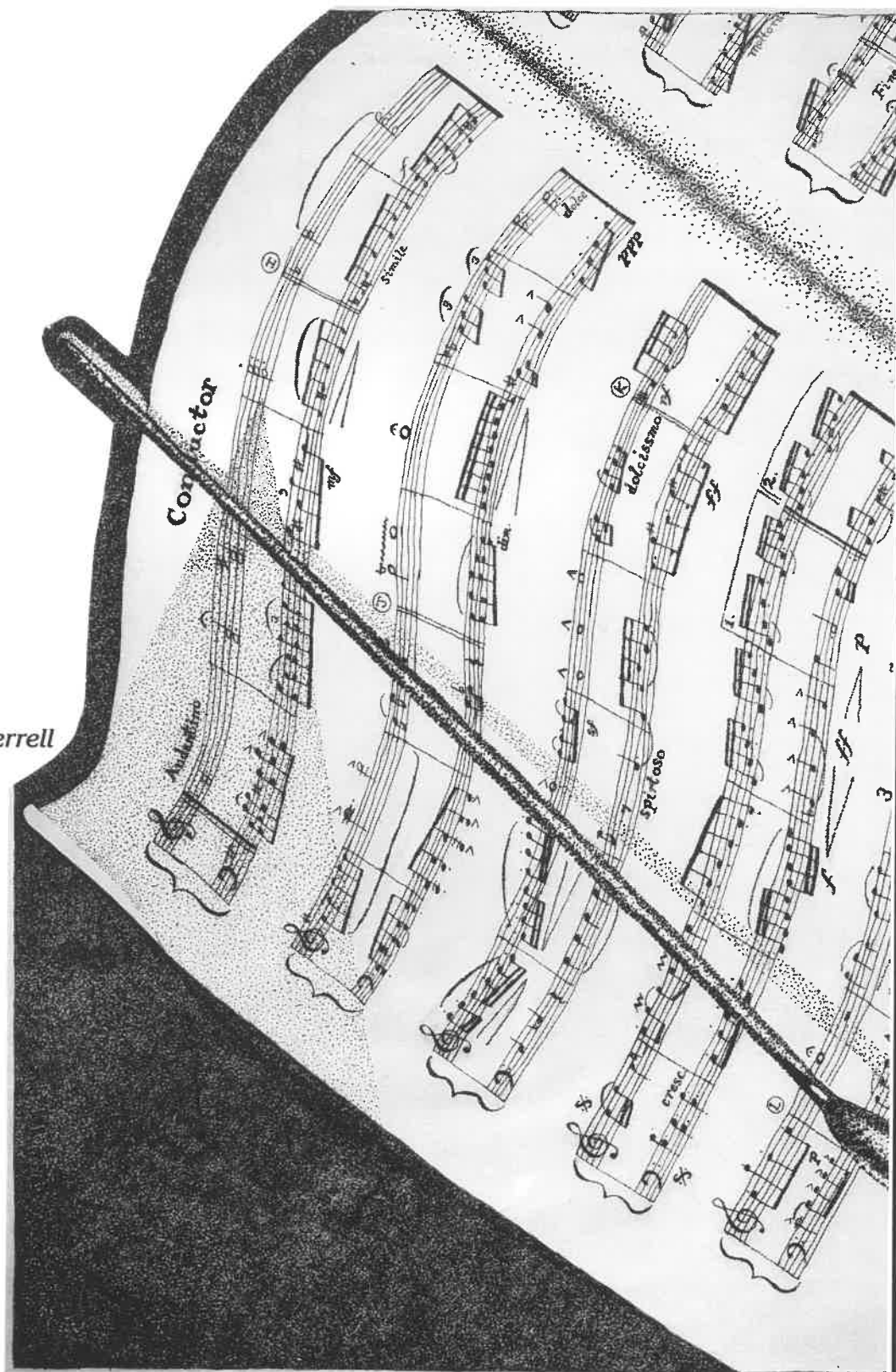
Since my youth, I have found other branches to support me and other comforting breezes that have blown in and out of my life, but none have been as reliable as those of my own personal woods.

*Will Longwitz*

## Mr. Piano Man

Mr. Piano Man  
With fingers so  
neatly curved -  
walking briskly  
down ivory keys  
and eyes which  
bore holes through  
those blacks and  
whites, his head  
moves as a  
pendulum - back and  
forth, never  
ceasing. His mouth  
is tightly sealed -  
biting a lip to  
help concentration.  
He makes me feel  
the beauty, the  
music flows  
through my veins.  
Mr. Piano Man, I  
love you.

*Kendra Ferrell*



Pen & Ink

*Zorana Booker*

### Patience

When things seem to be close but far,  
Remember Time brings things together,

But depression over time,  
Blinds the bind,

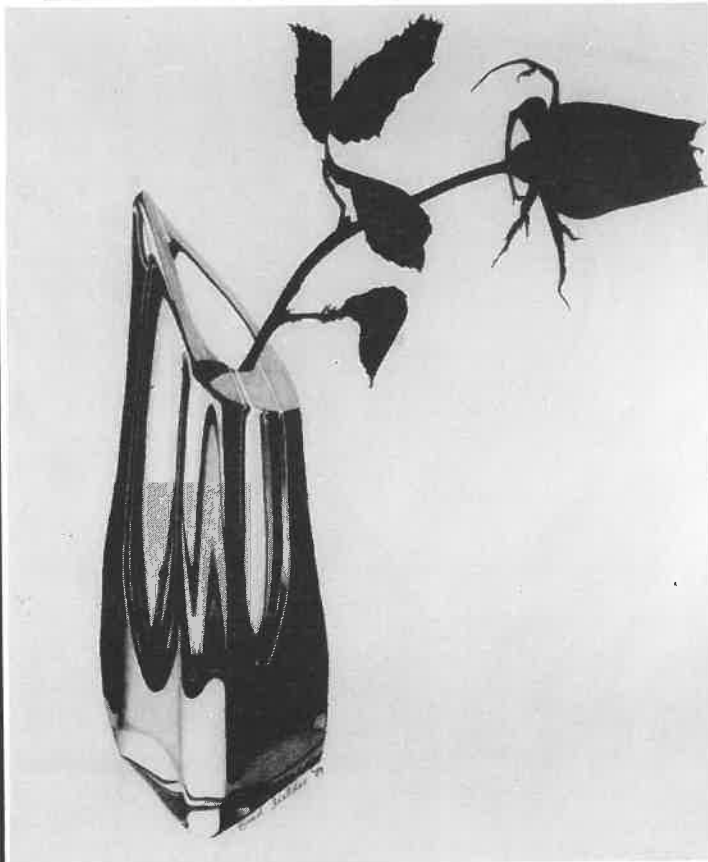
And Rhyme only betters the time,  
With a bind.

*Philip Ludington*

### Indifferent

Fingers bleed  
To an undying death  
Blood drips  
Like faucets at night.  
Dark silent nights grow  
Black as coal  
Sensations throb  
As the pulse quickens  
Hope abounds  
As the night grows shorter.

*Lisa Honn*



Pencil

*Brad Fielder*

### Hatred

Why is hate so strong?  
It must be beaten down.  
The Berlin Wall -  
With pickaxes and chisels -  
Sweat dripping down,  
And dirt.  
The German camps,  
Burned to the ground.  
And America  
Littered with broken windows  
And bloodied streets.  
Riot  
Gains equality.

*Kelet Robinson*



### Prosperity Wither

I feel your face.  
Enthused brow,  
Edging forward,  
Hidden in hair.

I feel your eye.  
Clear Envelope,  
Well-water deep.  
Well-water dark.

"I'm doing the best I can,"  
Is not what I long to say.  
You understand —  
No words,  
No job.  
Silence is timely.

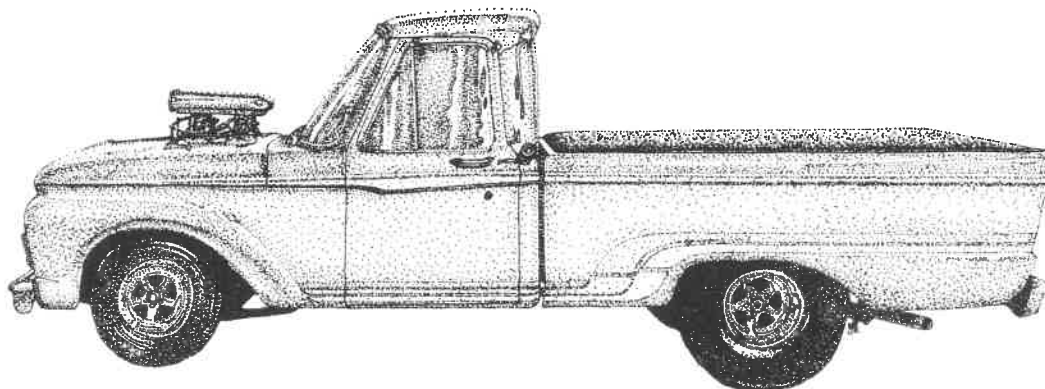
Prosperity bloom,  
Is prosperity wither.  
In your eye —  
We caress,  
Well-water deep,  
Well-water dark.

*J.H. Barlow*

### Farm Boy

The farm is threatened  
but he stands ready  
to defend  
until the last drop of scarlet  
stains his rumpled grey.  
It's hard to think of peace  
when he sees the garden lilies  
over the tiny mound  
nestled against the back fence;  
Hard to walk away  
and leave Ma and sisters  
unprotected as he fights  
to keep Southern land;  
Hard to reconcile the flaming fields  
and felled pines,  
the echoing screams of dying,  
with last summer's picnic  
right under that hill  
where the general waits now  
for new recruits to join the march to glory;  
Hard to grip the stock of a cold rifle  
without aiming and pulling the trigger  
when he looks toward the belching serpent  
full of dark-blue poison  
flashing steel fangs -  
and burning brands  
Yankee blood is sweet  
after months of Southern death.

*Misty D. Blagg*  
Honorable Mention  
Poetry Contest



Pen & Ink

*James King*

## Nicaraguan Dawn

Even though I could feel the dampness of the air on my tired, jet-lagged body, I was ready to begin my week-long mission as a dental assistant in the Latin American country of Nicaragua. I knew that this was going to be an exciting adventure for me.

Members of the Honduras Baptist Medical and Dental Team boarded the bus that morning and proceeded towards the school where we would be providing dental, medical, and spiritual help. The roads we traveled on were well constructed, but the buildings and houses that lined the streets were in poor condition. Over and over again I saw people's homes made from pieces of cardboard with plastic coverings for roofs. My heart reached out to these people who had to live in such degrading conditions. The sides of buildings and sidewalks were covered with graffiti in a wide array of colors. One thing that fascinated me was the Nicaraguans' use of billboards. They were expertly painted and well designed.

We finally reached the school where we were met with warm, curious eyes. Warm greetings of "hola" and "buenas dias" greeted us everywhere we went. People stretched out their tanned hands to show their appreciation for the work we were giving them. Their hands were warm, and they provided the whole group with a sense of importance.

My duty that morning was to assist in the dental clinic. Our anesthetics had not arrived from the airport, but were expected later that afternoon. Since we did not have our medication, patients could not be seen, and I was forced to entertain myself. Since I love children, I knew that I wanted to meet and get to know some of them. The classrooms of the school were arranged in a square that left an open area in the middle. I sat down in one of the chairs out in the open, when before I knew it, ten to twelve Nicaraguan children were sitting around me. These children had on dirty, torn clothes with their bellies bulging out because of the worms that were infesting them. Their bodies were malnourished, but this didn't keep the sparkle out of their eyes. Their bright faces with their beautiful smiles intrigued me. I wanted to know everything I could about these children.

I began by asking the children's names and ages, and

how they were doing. How could I mess up these simple questions? Even though I had had two years' instruction in Spanish, I was by no means an expert on the Spanish language. The children readily answered my questions. They were amazed that I could speak to them. I had led these people to believe that I could speak everything in the Spanish language, so they began asking me all sorts of questions. Words were soaring through the air, running through my mind. I was trying to make sense of what they were saying. The bewildered look on my face didn't relay the fact that I couldn't understand them because the questions kept coming. Finally they realized that I couldn't speak their language. I grew weary of this, and I was determined to understand and communicate with them.

I got a Spanish-English dictionary from one of my fellow team members. Together the children and I began communicating. With the Spanish that I knew and with the help of the dictionary, we were able to hold a partial conversation. We began learning things about one another. I could tell by the way they looked at me that they were intrigued by me. Most of them had never seen a white person. They touched my arms and my hair. They wanted to see how different I was from them.

The day progressed. Our medication soon arrived, and my work in the dental clinic kept me busy until the dark sky reached over the land. Throughout the day, my new friends would come to the windows and peek in and stare at the work we were doing.

We left the school late that night and travelled back to our hotel, I went to bed soon afterwards reflecting on what a wonderful day I had had. I learned that although we as people are miles apart from other people in different countries, and that we speak different languages and live in different cultures, we can still communicate with one another. We all thirst for knowledge and are curious about things that are foreign to us. My trip to Nicaragua has brought me a better outlook on people of different countries. I treasure their individuality and their friendship.

*Shana Harris*

## Spring Transition

From gray and dead to fresh and green  
The trees yawn and don new hue.

From sullen stillness to blustering bustle  
The wind exiles drab colors.

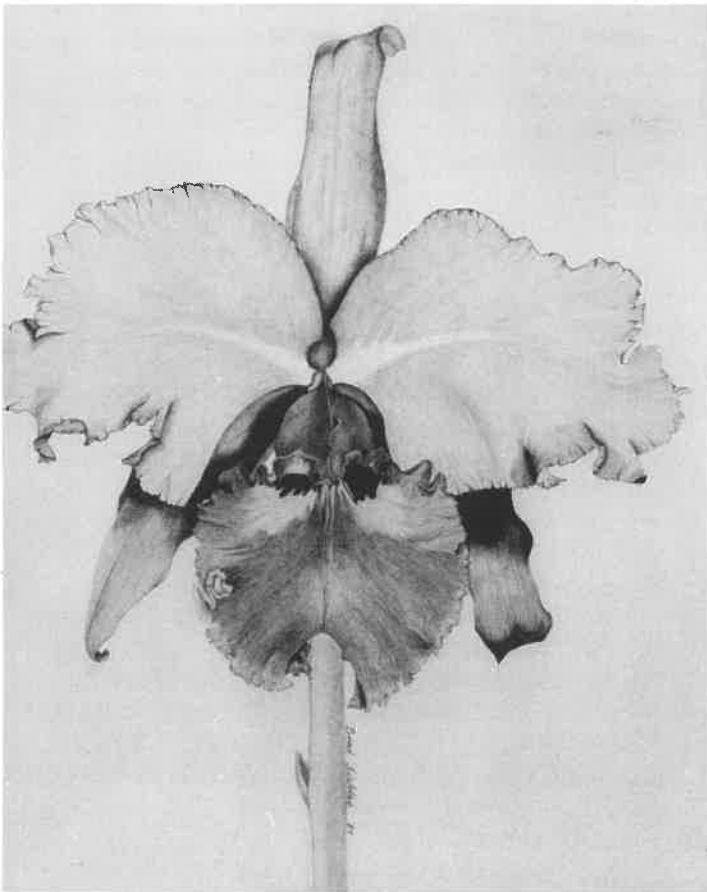
From slumbering streams to running blue  
The water carries life downstream.

From pale on pale to spectrums flung on aqua canvas  
The sky smiles and cheers the world.

From left to right  
Kindergarten kites play.

From me to you  
Love ushers forth.

**Shawn Salvant**  
Honorable Mention  
Poetry Contest



Pencil

**Brad Fielder**

## spring water

a cleansing bath in spring water  
and then  
his hair touched the pillow  
his mind distant and remote  
tired  
wanting rest  
but sleep refused  
to make an appearance  
that one question  
asked ages ago  
and still  
why  
why woo the woman  
with the end so inevitable  
so many years  
unable to love  
or find one  
so caring  
and sharing  
his tears when they rolled  
yet now she was  
his to hold  
oh joys never known  
flowed through his soul  
clear spring water  
down the side of  
a glorious mountain  
but a future so uncertain  
the earthquake could  
shake the mountain  
and the earth  
open her mouth  
and swallow the cleansing spring

**Chris Read**

## Potatoes for Gerald

The air was molded dust mixed with the odor of dry ashes and humid places, and his shoes sounded like sandpaper across the floor of the grocery store. Tiny heaps of dust and lint slept quietly under little corners of things — waiting for someone to come by and pick them up. The lines were long, so I stood back and waited at the magazine rack — the latest issue of **Sports Illustrated** in my hand. I wasn't really a fan of sports, so I began to watch him walk into line.

His sack of potatoes hung limply from his hand. His arm was like a jointed ruler — straight in parts and angled in others. I watched the fluorescent light glint off of his greasy, uncombed hair. I saw his dark brown skin peak out through the large holes in his tight, grayed T-shirt. I watched as his bare, bony ankles pivoted back and forth as he walked. I noticed his pants that were too short for a boy his height. I saw the holes in his shoes, and I also saw his toes poking out through large gaps in the tips of the shoes. My eyes followed the thin outline of his skinny figure, and I wondered if potatoes were all he'd ever had to eat. He was far back in line, and it would be a while until the single opened cash register could serve all the customers.

My magazine was beginning to bore me even more than before, and I looked more often at the boy. His eyes were focused on the candy section in the line. I thought about why he was here and where he came from?

\*\*\*

His mother was a fat thing — standing at the stove with her old wooden spoon in hand. "Gerald!" — that was probably his name — "Come here!"

The thin boy entered the house through the torn screen door. The door slammed behind him in the hot, summer breeze. "Yes, Momma?"

"Gerald, here are the last of the stamps for this month. Go down the street to the store and buy a bag of potatoes," the fat lady said sternly, "And bring back all the change."

The little boy was almost frightened by the responsibility of the stamps, but he left with the confidence and determination of a dying man. The door again slammed shut, and Gerald found himself in the open air — humidity licking at his forehead, and the sun hitting on his head.

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The little boy now moved forward a step in the line. I looked up to see his eyes still fixed on the candy. The whole town was out shopping that day, and it seemed that everyone was in the same line.

The pages of my magazine scraped together as I turned through the pages. The ice-cream in my cart was already melting, and I was sure that the milk was rotten by now. I looked again at the boy to see him staring at the bag of brown roots. I felt sorry for him, but I don't know why.

\*\*\*

The boy's feet hurt from walking on the concrete, but he didn't care much. He was so hungry. Since the shipyard lost the naval contract, his father had been out of work. The family was forced out of their apartment and into government housing. Though the boy hadn't noticed at the time, his parents' pride was greatly torn. His father was out of work, and his mother had been fired four times in the last year and saw no hope of any future employment.

The rays of sun hit the little boy in the eyes and made him squint to keep from going blind. The oily sweat dripped from his eyebrows in little trickles into his eyes and burned like tabasco on your tongue. His shoes made a flopping noise as he went along. The fronts were so badly ripped that the shoes were like flip-flops. He'd worn the same shoes since his father lost his job nearly a year ago. He didn't really mind wearing old, torn shoes — except when the children at school made fun of him. But this was summer, and he had no school. School meant an extra meal in the day. He got free lunches at school from the free lunch program.

The welfare paid little, and the food it allowed was boring and not very plentiful. Even though his mother was fat, she really didn't eat a lot of food. Gerald got even less. That's why he was so skinny.

\*\*\*

I happened to notice the corner of a dollar bill in the boy's pocket as he turned about in the line to see where the noise of a crashing buggy came from. I didn't expect to find any money there. Only stamps.

He stared at the candy seeming to wonder if he should spend his last few cents on something so short. I sympathized with him.

\*\*\*

As Gerald walked into the store, he saw the neat rows of candy in the boxes on the shelves by the counter. He wondered if he should spend the money he'd earned helping people in their yards on the candy.

He remembered the hard raking and bagging. The hot sun. The humid wind. The sweat. The exhaustion and hunger with little hope for rest or refreshment. He had earned only a few dollars, some of which he'd given to his parents to try and help get something — anything.

His mother's figure was quite large, fat. She ate a lot of what they called commodities. "Commodity fat," the children at school had said about his mother. Gerald had wanted to fight them after that, but he was so tired. So tired of everything. The hunger, the poor clothing, the crying in his bed at night.

He worried about the future and his parents. Were they losers? The children said that their parents said they were. But what did they know?

As Gerald — if that was his name — walked through the

first section of the store — if that was what he'd really done — he looked for the potatoes. The first section was the produce section. Gerald looked through the bags to find just the right one just as his mother had taught him to do. He carefully selected the fattest bag and picked it up.

\* \* \*

Why was he looking so at the candy? I noticed that he had spent a while at the cheap toy section of the store. The store had a small rack of very cheap and poorly made little toys and small items of the type that most children turn their noses at.

My hands were tired of magazines, and I wanted to leave. I put the magazine back on the shelf and put my hand on the cold handle of the buggy. I pushed the twisted metal into position behind the last person in line.

\* \* \*

Gerald had wandered about the store trying to what to do with his little bit of money. He's thought about a toy. He had stood in front of the toy rack for ten minutes trying to decide what to buy, but he couldn't decide, which made him somewhat happy.

He thought back to the past Christmas. He thought he must have been very bad not to even get switches. He asked his mother what he'd done to make Santa angry. She only cried to hear him ask. He thought he knew. Santa was too busy with the rich kids to bother with him. He knew they were poor when his mother and father hadn't given him any presents. The children at school were shocked to find that he'd gotten nothing for Christmas. He had been very embarrassed in class when the teacher asked all the students what Santa had given them and he had to explain that he had been bad.

After the toys, Gerald walked to the line.

\* \* \*

The line was much shorter and the boy was almost at the front. I was two places behind him and was waiting impatiently to get through the line. That was when I saw him reach for the candy. But he drew his hand back.

\* \* \*

Gerald had looked eagerly at the candy in the line. He wondered if it would be all right to have his own Christmas. His own time of giving and good cheer. He missed the last Christmas.

Gerald wondered what the chocolate would taste like on his tongue, what the crunch of the nuts would feel like between his teeth. He imagined pulling down the wrapper and biting into the rich, gooey caramel. But what a waste of money. He could have bought half a bag of potatoes with the money he had. Why spend it on such a short a thing as a candy-bar.

Gerald's eyes were glazed and fixed on the candy. He would be next in line. What would he buy?

\* \* \*

I watched the child look once more at the candy before stepping forward in the line. He looked as though he'd been deprived of his royal inheritance. I saw the look of anger in his eyes. The single tear formed and quickly got wiped away.

The boy stepped forward in the line and presented his potatoes. He meekly held out a hand full of stamps. He looked too old to believe in Santa Claus.

**Steven Mitchell**

First Place  
Short Story Contest

## ALONE

I sit and talk to you for hours a day, but,  
You never move or say a word.  
I tell you of school and the guy I like, but,  
You never move or say a word.  
I tell you of the birds singing and the sky so blue, but,  
You never move or say a word.  
I tell you of your neighbors Elizabeth Marie who was  
ninety-eight and little Billy who was only three, but,  
You never move or say a word.  
I tell you how hurt and angry I am at you for leaving  
me, but,  
You never move or say a word.  
I tell you all the things I never had the chance to say,  
and then I remember what you told me before you left:  
"I will always be with you," still,  
You never move or say a word.

*Suzanne Green*

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### Where Does Loneliness Come From?

It comes from a seagull overhead,  
a weeping willow,  
the remembrance of my mother's perfume,  
raindrops on my face,  
old lemondrops.  
Loneliness is the hand of despair  
resting upon my cold and lonesome heart.

*Tricia Bacon*

## Loneliness

Loneliness comes from the forgotten girl,  
Who cries only to herself.  
Loneliness comes from the eagle's cry,  
As he searches the plain for his mate.  
Loneliness comes from the deep and broken  
Core of my heart.  
Loneliness is the only true friend.

*Dyan Dawson*

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### Where Does Cold Come From?

Cold comes from  
The crack under the door  
The shiny tile floor  
  
Dark sink drains and  
cracks around window panes  
  
The morning frost and  
the new fallen snow  
The air vents and  
the dark storm drains below

*Dawn Bounds*

## working hands, working man

callous old man  
with a lightning bolt streak of hair  
on an ebony backdrop  
electric fluid flows all through  
his body  
putting a glimmering glitter in his eyes  
and strength  
in old wrinkled hands  
them old hands content  
with working the fields  
tilling  
and toiling away  
while that militant mind pondered  
the problems of a poor little town  
used to be a fun man  
young and carefree  
smelling the flowers on the way to nowhere  
nothing left but revulsion  
for a world that betrayed him  
them hands still working  
working with metal  
or wood  
or in the garden  
anything to keep busy  
to keep on feeling alive  
anything  
to keep that mind callous  
and them hands working.

**Chris Read**  
First Place  
Poetry Contest

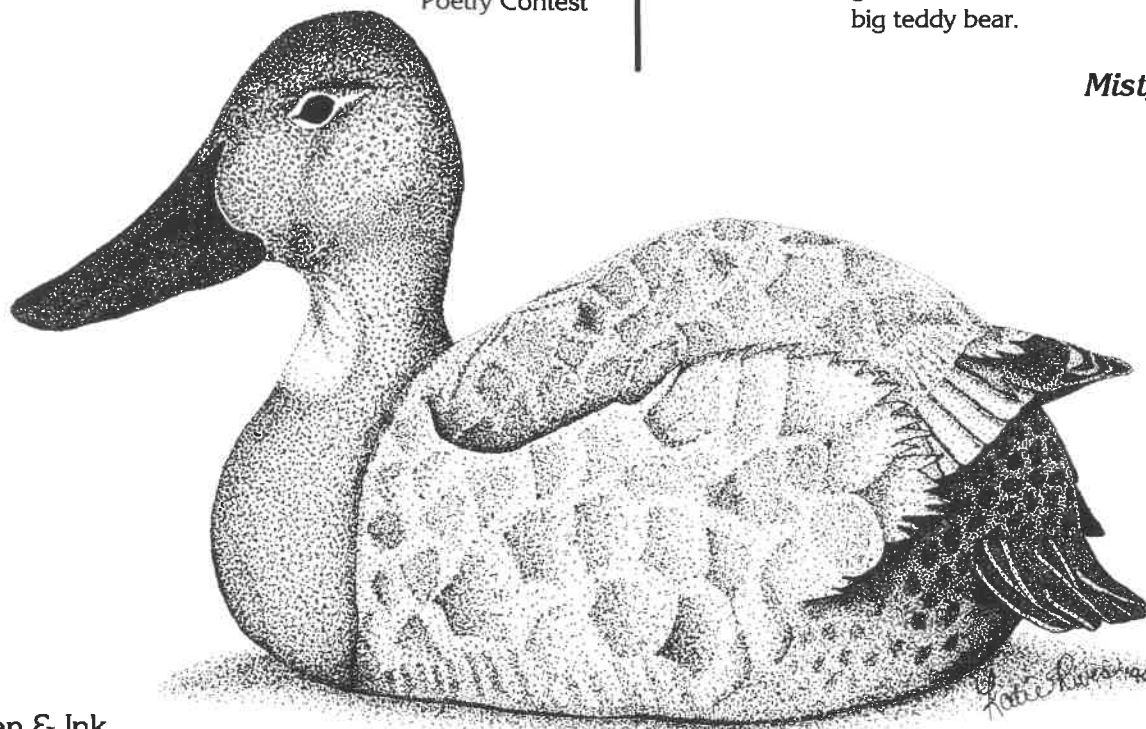
## DADDY

SIT DOWN!  
how he bellows  
bear of a man  
raging, stamping,  
showing his claws  
growling out orders  
grumbling lessons  
biomes and arteries  
species and nerves  
cross old grizzly.

TURN UP! !  
how he thunders  
burly ursus temper  
shouting, pointing  
roaring displeasure  
slapping shoulder pads  
yelling commands  
offense and defense  
hit harder, run faster  
ferocious old beast.

I'm home.  
how he says it  
mild, gentle tones  
settling, sighing,  
leaning back in the chair  
paternally questioning  
silently listening  
contests and recitals  
grades and concerns  
big teddy bear.

**Misty D. Blagg**



Pen & Ink

**Katie Rives**



## A Time to Heal

### Scene I

A restaurant. Lee and his grandfather enter stage right. Neither of them is talking. The waiter meets them right of center stage.

WAITER - How many in your party?

LEE - Table for two.

GRANDFATHER (loudly) - Table for **four**. (Aside, to Lee) - I'm not going to let them put me at one of them flower pot stands they call a table for two.

The Waiter leads Lee and his grandfather to a table center stage, waits for them to be seated. Gives them menus. Lee opens his menu and begins looking at it. Grandfather takes his menu and puts it down without opening it.

GRANDFATHER - I'm going to go ahead and order. Two top sirloins. One coffee. One unsweetened tea.

LEE - Grandfather, I'm perfectly capable of ordering for myself. (to the Waiter) - Cancel one of those sirloins. I'd like the Oriental Mixed Vegetable Platter.

The Waiter takes the orders without a word, takes menus, and leaves.

GRANDFATHER - What do you think you're doing, ordering that foreign food? You're about to graduate from high school, soon you'll enter the military, so you're entitled to a steak. You don't have to eat vege-tables like some foreigner that can't afford meat.

LEE - If I had wanted meat, I would have ordered it. But I don't. I don't want to eat a dead animal.

GRANDFATHER - If you don't eat meat, you're going to starve. How are you going to build up muscles if you don't get any protein?

LEE - The average person gets more protein than they need anyway. And with the grain used to produce meat just for America, you could feed most of the starving people of the world.

GRANDFATHER - Cows eat grass, Napoleon. Do you want me to throw you out in the yard and let you try to eat grass?

LEE - Obviously you haven't been to a farm recently. The cows don't wander over the plain eating grass like they do in the Westerns. They're kept in their stalls so they can't hurt themselves, and they're fed grain so that they'll produce higher quality meat. Grain that could be used to feed people.

The Waiter brings their food, sets it down, and leaves. Lee begins eating immediately. Grandfather bows his head, then realizes that Lee is eating.

GRANDFATHER - Didn't your mother teach you any manners? Aren't you going to say grace before you eat?

Lee sets down his fork.

LEE - Oh. I'm sorry. If you'd like to pray go ahead.

GRANDFATHER - Boy, you're going to thank the Lord for this food, and that's all there is to it. Now bow your head.

LEE (quietly) - Very well. If it means we can get on with dinner.

GRANDFATHER - What was that, boy?

LEE - Nothing.

Lee bows his head. Grandfather bows his head and inaudibly mumbles a prayer. After the prayer, they both begin eating. They eat for a moment in silence.

GRANDFATHER - I hope you realize that the military won't let you eat grass. They don't want our soldiers to get worn down because they don't get proper nutrition.

Lee makes a noncommittal grunt of agreement.

GRANDFATHER - Boy, didn't your mother teach you any manners at all? When I say something to you, I want to hear "yes sir." Do you hear me, boy?

LEE (sarcastically) - Yes sir.

GRANDFATHER - Boy, you've got an attitude on you. But the military will beat that out of you. Have you decided which branch of the military you're going to enter?

LEE (more sarcastically) - Yes, sir.

GRANDFATHER - Napoleon, when I ask you a question I want a straight answer. Which branch of military are you going to enter?

LEE (angrily) - Don't call me Napoleon. I hate that name. Call me Lee. Everyone else calls me Lee.

GRANDFATHER - Napoleon is your name, and that's what I'm going to call you. Napoleon was a great man, and you should consider yourself honored to be named after him.

LEE - He was a great **murderer**. And I don't consider it an honor to be named after him.

GRANDFATHER - I told your mother no good was going to come of sending you to that expensive private school. The Communists that teach there haven't taught you the truth about history. That's where you got all these subversive ideas. But the military will beat them out of you.

LEE - I'm not joining the military.

GRANDFATHER - Could you repeat yourself? I'm not



sure I understood what you said.

LEE – I said I'm not going to join the military.

The Waiter enters.

WAITER – Is everything all right?

GRANDFATHER – Everything's fine.

The Waiter leaves.

GRANDFATHER – Now, what were you saying about not joining the military?

LEE – I'm not going to join the military. I won't be a killer, and I won't help others kill.

GRANDFATHER – It's your obligation to your country to serve in the military. It is the responsibility of every citizen to help protect their country against foreigners.

LEE – That's part of the problem with you. You just see them as foreigners. You don't recognize that they're people too.

GRANDFATHER – I know they're people. But they're still foreigners. Don't you realize the danger America is in from Communists? They're just a two-day drive from the Texas border.

LEE – You're just paranoid. America has nothing that another country would want. This country is falling apart at the seams.

GRANDFATHER – You've been listening to those Communists at that school. They want you to believe America is weak so they will have an easier time taking over.

LEE – The Communists don't want to. . . I don't even want to talk about it. It's too ridiculous.

GRANDFATHER – Basic training will whip you into shape. Tomorrow after graduation I'm going to march you down to the recruiting station and enlist you in the Army.

LEE (frustrated) – I thought I'd already made it clear that I'm not going to enter the military.

GRANDFATHER – Well, if you're not going to enter the military, what are you going to do with yourself. Sit around and collect welfare, living off the labor of honest Americans?

LEE – I'm going to go to college.

GRANDFATHER – Over my dead body you are!

LEE – Grandfather, you haven't seen me in six years. For six years nothing, not even a birthday card. I sent you a letter inviting you to my senior piano recital. You didn't even answer. Don't think you can just waltz in here and take over my life.

GRANDFATHER – Boy, ever since your father died I sent your mother enough money to raise you. I probably paid for that jacket you're wearing. I think you owe me at least a little respect.

LEE – I didn't want your money. I knew the checks were

coming in. And every month Mother would cash the check and use it to buy more liquor. I got my first job when I was ten so I'd have a new pair of pants to wear to school. I didn't want your money. I wanted you. Do you know what it's like to have to sleep in a laundromat because your mother was so drunk she forgot you were coming home so she left the door locked to keep her latest drug-addict ex-boyfriend out? I didn't want your money, I wanted you. I wanted someone I could trust.

LEE (continued) – Someone I could count on.

Lee sits back in his chair, brooding, and takes a drink from his glass.

GRANDFATHER – Your mother is a fine woman, and I won't hear you talk about her this way.

Lee slams down his glass and sits forward in disbelief.

LEE – Sure. That's just what she wants you to think. She found out last week that you were coming, and she went out and had the carpet cleaned and rented new furniture. She wants you to think she's a good responsible woman. And she's fooled you. She's been sober almost three days. But the minute you step out the door tomorrow evening she'll get so slobbering drunk she won't even be able to sit up. But don't you worry about it. You'll be gone. And I've got my ticket out of here. I've got a scholarship to go to college in England. And day after tomorrow, I'm stepping on an airplane, and I'm never coming back here.

GRANDFATHER – You're not doing

LEE (interrupts) – Yes! I am! I already told you. I'm not going to let you control my life. It's my life, and I'll do what I want with it. I don't owe anyone anything, not you, not Mother, not anybody.

Grandfather is stunned into silence by this declaration of independence. As he tries to find some response to this, the Waiter enters.

WAITER – Is everything all right?

GRANDFATHER (explodes) – NO! Everything is not all right!

The Waiter hurries away.

GRANDFATHER (turns to Lee) – And as for you, you are not going to England! You are going to enlist in the army tomorrow if I have to carry you down to the recruiting office by brute force. Every son of the Jackson family for as far back as the family can be traced has served in the military for at least part of his life, and I'm not going to let you break such a long and glorious family history. Your great-grandfather fought in the Civil War. His great-grandfather fought in the Hundred Years War. **Your own father** defended this country against the Communists in the Vietnam War.

LEE – My father died from cancer. Do you know **why** he died from cancer? Because he was exposed to Agent

Orange while upholding this long and glorious family history of yours. If it weren't for you, forcing him to join the army, he would still be alive today.

GRANDFATHER – It's the greatest sacrifice a soldier can make, to die for his country.

LEE – This is not the **Middle Ages!** This is the **twentieth century!** Such devotion to a nation has no place in modern society.

GRANDFATHER – Your father gladly gave his life for this country.

LEE – No he did not! He didn't want to join the army. You forced him to! You're a monster! One day I found a letter that he'd written to me before he died. You want to know what it says? Here, look at it.

Lee pulls an envelope out of his jacket pocket, opens it, and pulls out a letter. He shoves the letter into Grandfather's hand. Grandfather throws it back.

GRANDFATHER – I don't have to take any more of this. I'm leaving.

Grandfather storms out. Lights down. End Scene I.

## Scene II

The waiting area at an airport. Lee is sitting in the leftmost chair of a group of three. The other two chairs are empty. Enter Grandfather, stage right. As soon as Lee sees Grandfather, he stands up.

LEE (defensively) – I thought I'd made it clear that I wasn't going to join the military.

GRANDFATHER – I

LEE (interrupts) – This is just like you. . . You were late coming to my graduation. . . You didn't even bother coming to my father's funeral. . . But you're right here on time to drag me into the military just because it suits you.

GRANDFATHER – You still think you're going to England, don't you?

LEE – I know I am. And nobody, not you, not anybody else, nobody, is going to be able to stop me.

GRANDFATHER – What do you think you're going to do in college? Napoleon

LEE (interrupts) – Don't call me that!

Lee sits down on the floor with his back to Grandfather.

GRANDFATHER – Napoleon. I know you're listening to me, so I'm going to keep talking. You may think I'm totally

ignorant of what you've been doing the past eight years, but I'm not. I've seen your report cards. You may be bright, but you're not college material.

Lee jumps up and spins around to face Grandfather.

LEE – You think you've got it all figured out. You think you know everything, don't you. You think you can learn everything about a person just by looking at their file. Well, I've got news for you. There's more to life than that.

GRANDFATHER – You never answered my question. What are you going to do in college?

LEE – I'm going to study classical piano.

GRANDFATHER – Do you really think you're good enough to play piano?

LEE – Yes, I do. What do you know about my piano playing? You've never heard me play before in your life.

GRANDFATHER – Your mother sent me a tape of you playing. You're pretty good, but I don't know if you're professional quality.

LEE – What was on the tape?

Grandfather pulls a tape out of his pocket and looks at it.

GRANDFATHER (reading from cassette box) – "Für Elise" by Beethoven.

LEE – Grandfather, that's a tape of my third year recital! I've had seven years of lessons since then. You're basing your opinion of my playing on my third year recital tape?

GRANDFATHER – It's the only tape I've got of your playing.

LEE – I invited you to come to my senior recital. But apparently that didn't fit into your plans.

Lee sits down in the same chair he was sitting in earlier. Grandfather sits down next to him.

GRANDFATHER – Look, Lee, maybe I haven't been the best grandfather. (pause) I haven't even been a good grandfather. But we all make mistakes. I know I won't ever be able to make up for what I've done. But I'm going to try. After all,

Grandfather pulls a ticket out of his pocket.

GRANDFATHER – What kind of grandfather would I be if I let my only grandson go to England by himself.

Lights down. End Scene II

THE END

*Jason Burnett*

## Loyal to His Country

Doin' it for his country,  
He was called to duty.  
Eyes small and blinking fast;  
Tired were his eyes, though alert.  
He had little grin, if he had one at all,  
And his jaws were steadily grinding.  
His face was dirty;  
The sweat falling from brow rubbed into dirt,  
His war paint.  
Nervous sweat, he was in waiting for the game.

Dark were his eyes watching his fingers grasp the steel  
ladder to the cockpit.  
His face went pale, and dirt mattered no more.  
He looked as if he'd run away.  
And from behind him shined the sun;  
The sun breathed heavy on his face.  
He looked like a child,  
But he was not approaching a gym set.  
These were not toy guns, but real.

And the sky — so blue,  
Was lighter than his uniform.  
The greyness of the cockpit shadowed him.  
Only whisper's sounds came as he sat in waiting.  
He wanted to tell coach, "I'm sick,"  
But coach had left him in before — no use in asking.

Rising, he only squinted at the golden orbs of fire watching.  
Not being sure of what he was doing,  
Lips chapped, fingers sweaty, eyebrows sweaty.  
Sweat in eye stings, he's been stung.  
He puts on his glasses and faces stage light,  
If not for himself, then for his country.

*Leslie Flint*



Pencil & Crayon

*Wes Blaney*

## When It Mattered the Most

I know what it is to be one with nature; I know what it is to be a man; but most of all I know the secret of life — the knowledge that God created someone to be there when it matters the most.

The men used to storm in at mealtime and sometimes late at night when all the owls were just starting to get out of bed and the moon tells you to get inside before the bogeyman gets you. Every Thanksgiving and every Christmas since I was old enough to care and young enough to notice, they would be in the woods. Said you couldn't really be a man until you killed that first deer. I used to think deer wasn't nothing but good eating, but I know now.

It was just a year ago, although it feels like forever or even longer. Uncle Scotty used to ask me if I ever planned to go deer hunting, but I knew he was just teasing. Until that morning. He'd come in the night before talking about how Mr. Hackney's son had killed that five-point, and I knew he was mad. Uncle Scotty used to have a son, but little Billy was only about six years old when they had the wreck. I ain't never seen anybody cry like Uncle Scotty did. I guess when my Daddy died Uncle Scotty just sort of figured I could be his "other little boy" when it mattered most. That morning must have been when he figured it would really matter.

He was telling me all about hunting and how that little dog he got me over the summer was really turning out to be a good deer dog, and I was wishing he would say I could go hunting. I always wanted to go, but I knew I couldn't unless one of the men asked Mama if it was okay; and not just any of the men. I think if anybody but Uncle Scotty would have asked her she would of just said no, but Uncle Scotty's special. Folks just have trouble saying no to those chestnut eyes. His smile said it all that morning. He wanted me to go hunting and not even Mama could say no if Uncle Scotty said it was okay.

"Be up at 5:30 in the morning and we'll get the big buck." I was so excited. I stood outside late that night and even though the air was cold, my heart was warm with the knowledge that tomorrow I was going with the men and may come back a man myself.

Mickey Mouse's hands pointed at 4:30 on the clock, but I knew it would be impossible for sleep to overcome my eyes for another half hour, so I got up and made myself a bowl of cereal. I was on the verge of becoming a man and had no time to wait on Mama to get up and fix breakfast for me.

I slipped my slim legs into my longjohns and pulled a pair of faded jeans up over them. After I buttoned up my old flannel shirt, and snuggled into Uncle Scotty's worn Navy jacket, I found that faithful 12-gauge Daddy used to hunt with sitting over by the door, where Uncle Scotty and I had left it the night before after we cleaned it. I took the eight shotgun shells Grandpa had given me and dropped

them into my jacket pocket. When I was all ready to go, I had to sit and patiently wait for Uncle Scotty to pick me up.

When the old Ford got there, I was more than eager to go. We started out to the camphouse and I knew by the way the sun was trying to peep over the horizon and into the truck window that it was destined to be a good day.

The men at the camphouse were talking about what plot of land they wanted to drive and I was surprised to find that I recognized some of the names from things I had heard Uncle Scotty and Grandpa say back when Grandpa used to hunt with the club. Uncle Scotty told everybody that I was Sue's little boy, but before the day was over he hoped to make me a man. I was beaming, but Mr. Hackney said to make sure the little boy didn't scare all the deer out of the woods.

In his truck, on the way to the stands, Uncle Scotty told me he was going to put me on a good stand where the big bucks cross. He told me there was a deer out there with a rocking chair on his head, and that dog of mine was going to run it straight to me. I knew I would have to be quick, but it helped to know that Uncle Scotty had confidence in me.

When I got to my stand, I just sat on the side of the gully, the wind's fingers ruffling my hair, listening. Listening intently and shivering as the coldness crept around my neck. Hunting sure didn't seem to be what I thought it would be. I didn't really see or hear nothing much. Just the still of the woods with a woodpecker pecking sporadically, and the cold telling me these woods weren't the place for a little boy to be sitting around waiting and listening. The wind snuck up my jacket sleeves, and tickled my arms, and the woodpecker just kept on pecking.

Suddenly, I heard it. Far off in the distance the yapping of a dog I recognized as my own, and the voices of a choir of others all of which I had heard out behind the cleaning shed at one time or another. Then I heard what I was really anticipating — the crackling of leaves, that sound of a four-legged canter through the woods, and suddenly the deer was rushing down the side of the gully straight at me! "Squeeze the trigger — don't jerk it!" Uncle Scotty always said. Amazing how just a squeeze can create a whole new world. A deafening boom resounded clearly, followed by silence. To emphasize the stillness, the deer's legs continued to silently pump steadily and rhythmically, until they finally gave way. I finally had what I had wanted for all those years, so why did I feel like crying? The deer was falling to my feet, but I almost felt a dampness conquer my eyes. Tears were hardly necessary — the wet splatter of blood cleansed my eyes! My heart rose to my throat and lodged, but all I felt was a surge of victory as steam rose from a hole just above the deer's shoulder.

Man, those antlers were big — I could just imagine that

big buck storming through the woods, those big antlers tearing down everything that got in the way. Running, running, running... Oh no, the deer was up and running again. He's supposed to be dead; I just shot him, and he fell down right in front of me. I tried fighting back the tears again while I watched my ascension to manhood fly away. BOOM! The forest froze and the deer jerked and fell once again to the ground. I felt the tightening of my throat, and the taste of bile in my mouth, like the taste you get right before vomiting.

"...ou see the size of that deer. ...ood. ...acious we got him Ken...ook at those antlers..." Uncle Scotty was yelling over my shoulder but his gun still screamed in my ear.

We drove up to a camphouse bustling with action. The men were busy talking about the hunt, and skinning the deer that had been killed, but none were too busy to hear Uncle Scotty brag about the 12-point I had killed. Mr. Hackney just slid back in his seat and his face went pale. I laughed in my heart because I knew, and so did Uncle Scotty, but no one else ever did. All that was important now was that we had been there when it really mattered the most.

***Chris Read***

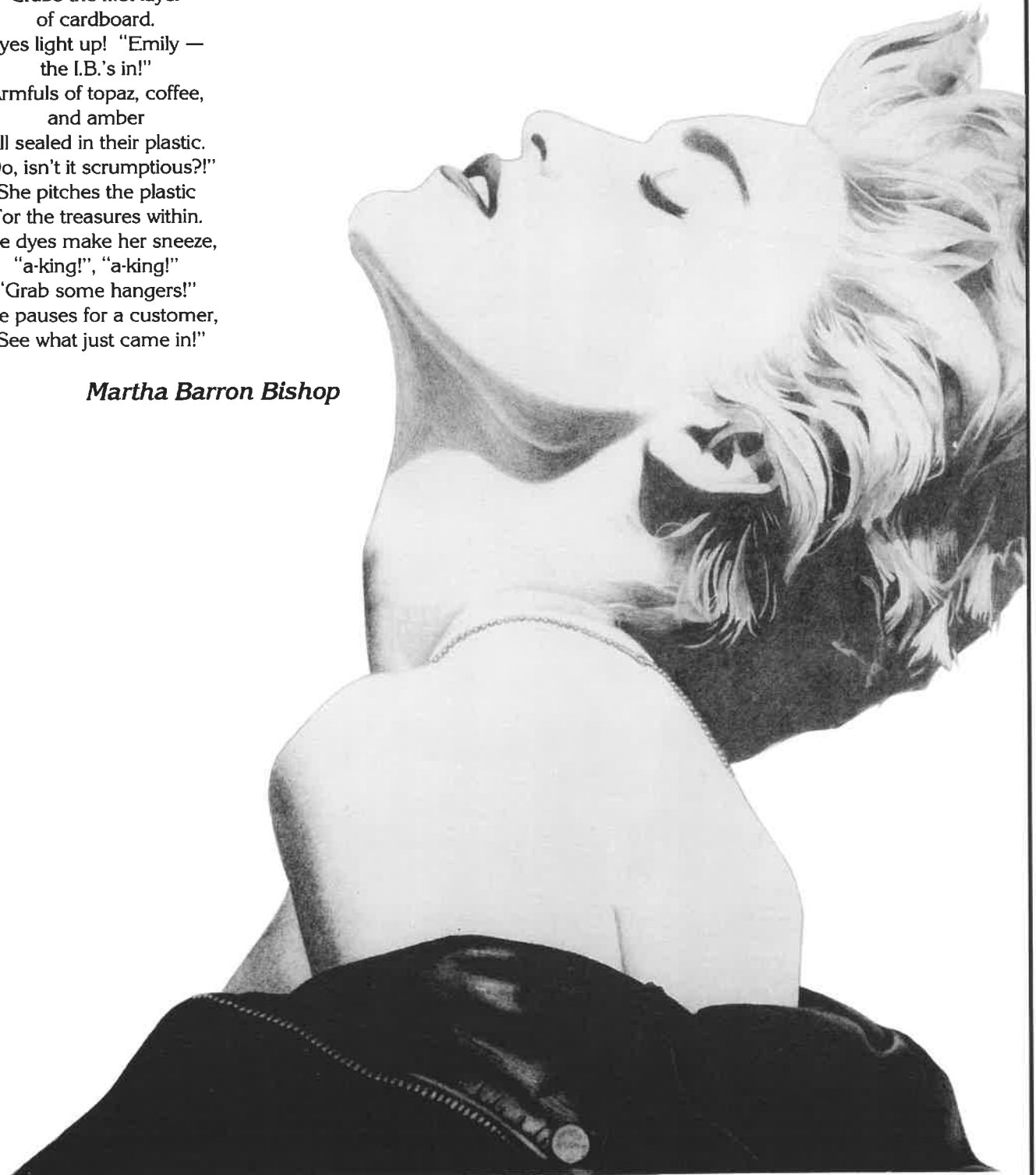
Third Place

Short Story Contest

## Vogue Girl

She clicks the cutter  
And extends the blade.  
A Christmas Eve face  
As she slices the tape,  
Grabs the first layer  
of cardboard.  
Eyes light up! "Emily —  
the I.B.'s in!"  
Armfuls of topaz, coffee,  
and amber  
All sealed in their plastic.  
"Oo, isn't it scrumptious?!"  
She pitches the plastic  
For the treasures within.  
The dyes make her sneeze,  
"a-king!", "a-king!"  
"Grab some hangers!"  
She pauses for a customer,  
"See what just came in!"

*Martha Barron Bishop*



Pencil

*Brad Felder*

### Sunlight of My Memory

In the sunlight of my memory  
I see a young child  
Sitting carelessly on the steps of eternity.

Long, black curls flailing in the wind  
Sweep past a milky, broad smile  
And eyes deeper than my soul.

Have youthful bliss branded on your heart,  
Keep innocence ever near.  
Knowledge, leave this one untainted.

*Liza Dabbs*

### I Sleep in the Green and Wait

I sleep in the green and wait  
For the Everything,  
For the culmination of myself.  
Only in these eternal seconds  
Can I feel the warm light glowing  
From the Secret Place.  
The Everything is here,  
Stealing my breath,  
Making me touch my life.  
Take me on,  
Carry me off to the Secret Place.  
Take me from this void,  
And fill my thoughts with everything.

*Diane Carney*



AMY  
BOGGAN

Pen & Ink

*Amy Boggan*

## Contributors' Notes

**Tricia Margaret Bacon**, a junior from Jackson, included poetry in this year's issue. Her favorite author is Jane Austen and she says that being accepted to MSMS has been the most influential event in her life. She hopes to study chemistry as her college major.

**Jonathan Hall Barlow**, a junior from Picayune, plans to major in pre-med and enjoys writing and recording music and playing the guitar. Jon recalls that the most influential event in his life was coming to MSMS. Jon contributed poetry and a short story in this year's issue.

**Martha Barron Bishop** is a senior from Indianola. She hopes to major in theatre. Her interests include drama, bowling, and reading. Martha Barron contributed poetry.

**James Robert (Rob) Black, IV** is a senior from Jackson who plans to major in both chemistry and philosophy. His poetry is included in this year's issue of *Southern Voices*.

**Misty D. Blagg** is a senior from Pontotoc who wants to major in cultural anthropology. She has poetry included in the magazine. Among her favorite authors are Tolkien, Shakespeare, and Sophocles.

**Weston Blaney**, known as Wes to his friends, is a senior from Starkville. Wes's artwork appears in this edition of *Southern Voices*. He enjoys drawing, painting, and reading Terry Brooks and Boris Vallejo.

**Amy L. Boggan** plans to major in music or English. She is a junior from Enterprise who has contributed artwork to the issue. Her hobbies include tennis, piano, running, and drawing.

**Jennifer Carolyn Boggess** is a junior from Columbus who plans to major in physics and math in college. She enjoys playing the French horn and writing poetry. Her poetry is published in this year's issue.

**Zorana Booker**, a senior from Macon, intends to major in biology. She enjoys singing, drawing, and traveling. Zorana's artwork appears in this edition of *Southern Voices*.

**Ashley Dawn Bounds**, known to her friends as Dawn, is a junior from Newton. Her hobbies include reading and writing. She enjoys reading Nathaniel Hawthorne, John Steinbeck, and Robert Frost. Her favorite genre is poetry — specifically about nature and abstract ideas. Dawn contributed poetry.

**Rebecca Brackin** from Jackson is a senior and intends to major in international law. Her artwork has appeared in two editions of *Southern Voices*.

**Jason K. Burnett** is a senior from Gautier who enjoys music, computers, and role-playing games. His favorite authors include William Gibson and Isaac Asimov. Jason plans to major in drama and computer science. He contributed a short play.

**Robert Kirby Burns** is a junior from Calhoun City who is on the Biographical Sketches crew and enjoys singing and writing poetry. Kirby's favorite writers are Jim Morrison and Henry David Thoreau. "Poetry is a creation that can explain anything: birth, death, and the little details in between and beyond." Kirby contributed poetry to this issue.

**Diane Wetherbee Carney** is a senior from Meridian. She has contributed poetry and artwork. Her intended major is biology. Diane enjoys reading all literary forms.

**Leonardo (Lee) Coleman** is a senior Creative Writing student from Shuqualak who wants to major in either pre-med or pre-law. He enjoys reading comedy, horror, and works of social awareness. He says his most influential event is the "MSMS experience." Lee included poetry in this year's issue.

**Elizabeth (Liza) Dabbs** is a junior from Brandon who intends to major in medicine. She enjoys the study of music and feels that her poetry is influenced by Claude Monet, John Irving, et al.

**Dyan (Gwenne or Bard) Dawson** is a junior from Ocean Springs who has poetry included in this year's issue. Dyan's main interests are storytelling and music. She particularly enjoys fantasy and sci-fi works and notes Mercedes Lackey and Katherine Kurtz as her most influential authors. "Reality? ? What's That? ?"



**Christopher Allen Doebl** (just Chris among friends) is a junior whose major theme and interest is sports. Chris is from Pascagoula and enjoys reading Tennessee Williams. His intended major is pre-med. Chris contributed poetry.

**Kendra Leigh Ferrell** is a junior from West Point who hopes to major in pediatric medicine in college. She enjoys singing, dancing, playing the flute, and acting. She has poetry published in this year's issue of *Southern Voices*. She says that coming to MSMS has been the most influential event in her life.

**Brad Pearson Fielder**, a senior from Gunnison, plans to major in art and business in college. He has had artwork printed in the last two issues of *Southern Voices*. Brad enjoys the works of Stephen King and the artist Nagel. He is this year's Art Editor.

**Alison Leslie Flint** is a senior from Hollandale who plans to major in biology. She has poetry and art included in this issue of *Southern Voices*. Her favorite authors are Thomas Hardy and Edgar Allen Poe. Her favorite themes are works about the "hill life" of Mississippi.

**Suzanne Green** (Suzi to her friends), is a senior from Pascagoula. She intends to major in criminology and her hobbies include dancing, figure skating, and the study of law. Suzanne has a poem in this issue. She feels that her poetry is most influenced by Emily Dickinson.

**L. Cary Gunn, III** is a senior from Eastabuchie who has contributed an essay. Cary has been accepted to the Air Force Academy and will major in engineering.

**Callie Hall** is a junior from Picayune who is interested in photography and tennis and is most influenced by Jack Kerouac and Sylvia Plath. She enjoys reading and writing poetry and her favorite topic is obscurity.

**Chandra Harrell**, a senior from Moss Point, intends to major in psychology and modern languages. She enjoys tennis and reading Margaret Atwood, Tennessee Williams, and Ann Grav. Her poetry has appeared in the last two issues of this magazine.

**Shana Harris**, a senior from Laurel, intends to major in pre-med. Her hobbies include traveling and reading Charles Dickens, William Shakespeare, and Robert Frost. Shana has an essay published in this year's issue.

**Lisa Noriko Honn** is a senior from Long Beach who is the Assistant Editor of the magazine this year. She contributed poems to *Southern Voices*, and she enjoys the works of William Faulkner, Laurence Sanders, Anne Sexton, and Dorie Sanders.

**Carla Lynn Hosch** is a junior from Gulfport who has poetry in this issue of *Southern Voices*. Carla's favorite authors are Max Lucado, Robert Burns, and Robert Frost. She also feels that Stephen Crane, Henry David Thoreau, and W.E.B. DuBois have influenced her work the most.

**Brandie L. Bjorkland-Jones** is a junior who intends to major in archaeology. Her interests are surfing and writing. Brandie is from Corinth and has contributed poetry to this issue. Her favorite authors include Anne Bradstreet and E.E. Cummings.

**Amber Kidd** of Enterprise is a senior who intends to major in computer engineering. She enjoys art, sports, music, writing, and people watching. She considers Edward Arlington Robinson the biggest influence on her poetry and short stories. Amber has had work published in the last two issues of *Southern Voices*.

**James H. King**, a junior from Biloxi, intends to major in medical illustration and graphic design. His favorite authors include Boris Vallejo, Fred Fields, Jeff Esly, and John Buscema, but he feels his artwork is heavily influenced by Walt Disney. James has two drawings in this issue.

**Will Longwitz**, a senior from Quitman, intends to major in history/political science. He enjoys reading works by John Donne, Lord Byron, Stephen Crane, and Walt Whitman. Will has an essay in this issue of *Southern Voices*. He feels that his essays are influenced by Thoreau, Wordsworth, and Blake.

**Philip Ludington** is a senior from Pascagoula. He enjoys computer programming and model railroading and intends to major in computer science. Philip feels that his poetry is most strongly influenced by X.J. Kennedy. He has a poem published in this issue.

**Mindy Mallory** of Shannon is a senior and intends to major in psychology or music. Her hobbies are playing piano, singing, dancing, and reading. Her essay appears in this year's copy of *Southern Voices*.

**Webster Miller** is a senior from Natchez. His interests include playing guitar, tennis, basketball, skiing, and reading Tolkien. His artwork appears in the past two years' editions of *Southern Voices*.

**Steven J. Mitchell**, a junior from Pascagoula, is on the Biographical Sketches crew of the magazine. He contributed poetry and short fiction. "All people are merely characters in the mind of someone reading a book; some are better than others."

**Chris D. Read** is a senior from Dekalb who is on the Biographical Sketches crew and who has included poetry and a short story in this issue. He feels that his works are most influenced by Clyde Edgerton and says of writing, "A writer's purpose is not to deliberately make a point, nor to conform to an audience, but rather to share his or her perspectives, emotions, and experiences with the reader."

**Katie Elise Rives** is a junior from Newton. She has contributed artwork to this year's *Southern Voices*. Her favorite artist is Picasso.

**Clandra Kelet Robinson**, who goes by Kelet, is an artistic senior from Cleveland. Kelet's favorite theme is life. Her favorite and most influential authors include Dr. Seuss, Robert Cormier, and John Donne. Perhaps a quote that best describes her work is "Life is sometimes twisted." Kelet's work was also featured in last year's *Southern Voices*. Kelet contributed this year, poetry and short fiction, and she is also Editor of this year's magazine.

**Shawn Christopher Salvant**, a junior from Pass Christian, included poetry in this year's issue. His favorite authors are King, Hawthorne, and Asimov. His most influential event is attending MSMS.

**Sandi Thomas** is a junior from New Albany who intends to major in biomedical engineering. She enjoys singing, modeling, and music. Her poetry appears in this year's edition of *Southern Voices*.

**Reagen B. Ward**, a senior from Oxford, has a poem in this issue of *Southern Voices*. Reagen likes to read, use computers, and practice archery. His favorite authors include Tennessee Williams, John Steinbeck, and Ray Bradbury.

**Kenneth White** is a junior from Pascagoula who has included artwork in this year's issue of *Southern Voices*. Kenneth enjoys drawing, skiing, and playing racquetball. He intends to major in art and enjoys the works of Norman Rockwell and Boris Vallejo.



Pencil

Brad Fielder

