

# *Griffin*



*1846-1990*

# THE GRIFFIN

**Staff:** Tim Stouffer  
Bryan Audrey  
**Faculty Advisor:** Jean Fields

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**T**his issue of THE GRIFFIN is a retrospective looking back to one hundred sixty-three years of student writing. It is fitting that the 1990 GRIFFIN be dedicated to the founder of Lindenwood College, Mary Easton Sibley, who built this college in 1827 when Missouri was still a thinly populated frontier.

She was not yet thirty years old when the first log building was constructed on the campus, but already she had spent nearly fifteen years in the most remote frontier as the wife of Major George Sibley, Indian Factor at Fort Osage and surveyor of the Santa Fe Trail. She saw the wilderness before civilization intruded and she knew the American Indians before the onrush of that civilization crushed their culture. Both Mary and George Sibley realized what was in store for the Indians and their first attempt to establish a school was directed at the Little and Grand Osage. This school failed because of the turmoil on the Missouri frontier, but she now knew the direction her life would take.

In 1827, the Sibleys came to St. Charles, first opening a school in their home on Main Street, and then in 1830 they built a two story log house with two wings. Here Mary Sibley conducted the school and Major George Sibley kept the records, and gave her the encouragement and support that enabled her to create Lindenwood.

The first recorded literary effort of Lindenwood College students was a handwritten "magazine" called THE EXPERIMENT published in 1845.

The Experiment  
"No effort is lost."

Volume I Linden Wood, October 24th, 1845 Number 1m  
Prospectus

Several years have elapsed since the establishment of Linden Wood School and that there has never existed any public document which can now be referred to, as a precedent for the benefit of the scholars now in attendance is a matter of regret that such is the case, for had a journal of events been kept, to which we could have referred in any doubt, now instead of our feeling, a great responsibility resting upon us in making any change, it would be the height of our ambition to take up some former rule and hand it down to those who might hereafter be so fortunate as to occupy a place at Linden Wood.

Being fully persuaded that some such document might not only be rendered interesting but useful to those who have the least desire to improve, and also tend to encourage a spirit of enterprise and eradicate everything which is in any way calculated to retard the progress of our education, we introduce to our hearers, "The Experiment."

In contributing to its columns let our object be general and individual improvement and in order to gain our object let us never attempt anything higher than our own experience and attainments will warrant; but let us willingly keep the narrow limits of our own imagination and endeavor to realize how much is expressed in our Motto "No effort is lost." The sentiment there expressed is a sufficient stimulant to urge us "onward and upward" in accomplishing our humble but not unimportant end.

We, the pupils of Linden Wood School, after due deliberation have associated ourselves with the advice of our patrons to endeavor to sustain and publish once a month "The Experiment," for the benefit of our school exclusively, and having for our object, improvement as well as amusement, we trust that each succeeding number will be better than the last, and then will all who may think this not a very feasible scheme, be bound to admit that it repays the efforts of its proprietors.

THE VIOLET, published in 1846, was an act of rebellion by younger students who were denied permission to publish their writings in the school literary paper by upper classmen.

The Violet  
Try! Try Again!  
Volume 1st Linden Wood April 24, 1846 Number 1  
Prospectus

The object of this paper is to teach the younger scholars how to compose before they commence writing for the larger one. The Elder girls have a paper & they will not let us write for theirs so we started this in opposition and named it the Violet as that is a very modest flower always hiding its face under some bush. But that is not the way with the Experiment. It comes out boldly. Our paper will not be very good but we will do our best and as there are not many of us you must not expect much, for we have never had any experience in writing for a paper and we can not compose as well as the large girls. This is the first time our paper has appeared. We of course cannot do as well as if we had been writing for months and we hope you will not expect much of us but however, we will do our best and if we fail we will take the advice of our motto and Try! Try again!

Recently a poem came to light that reflects the students' affection for Mrs. Sibley, as well as a bit of tongue-in-cheek humor. THE BELLE OF LINDENWOOD is a bit of comic doggerel written by a group of students for their teachers, Aurelia McDearmon and Mary Sibley.

THE BELLE OF LINDENWOOD  
1846

At Linden Wood, the lasses rate  
The Sweetest Girl in all the State  
Of all the girls it's understood  
I am the Belle of Linden Wood.

For my Aunt Mary

Upon the Tree down by the Gate,  
Sat a poor dove, who'd lost his mate  
He signed and Moaned and woo'd and woo'd  
To see the Belle of Linden Wood.

For my Aunt Mary

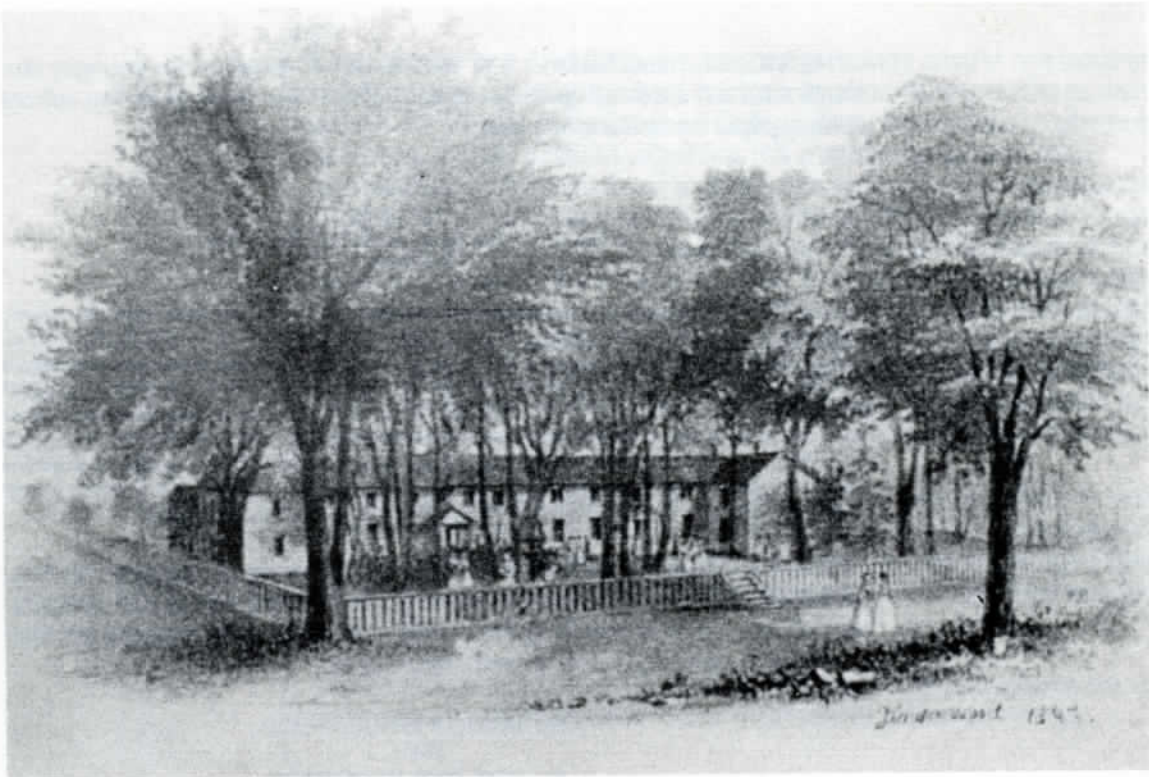
Upon the Green were all the girls  
With shining locks, and flowing curls,  
But non compar'd as there they stood  
With mine, the Belle of Linden Wood.

In reading the GRIFFINS accumulated over the decades, the staff often wondered what became of young poets. Flashes of vivid language, colorful images, and strong personalities that flow from the pages.

The imprint of Mary Sibley's personality remains in the enthusiasm and love of the creative impulse reflected in these early efforts of the VIOLET and THE EXPERIMENT. The name GRIFFIN appeared on the literary magazine for the first time in 1949, when students under the direction of Dr. Agnes Sibley renamed it.

It is our hope that those who come after us will accord THE GRIFFIN--the creature sacred to the sun, who keeps guard over hidden treasures--the love and hard work that we, and generations before us, have given it.

THE GRIFFIN STAFF



### Lindenwood

Thru the zephyrs of the night something sings to me,  
 The trees nod and rustle their leaves whispering to me,  
 Joyous messages of hope and wonder for you,  
 Oh, Lindenwood, my college true.

Glory of God springs thru the veins of the earth,  
 And for you, oh Lindenwood, there is a new day, a new birth.  
 Every tree cherishes for you a gift of beauty,  
 Birds sing of life and love,  
 And all the world beside note they worth.

Friends plan the ways of thy future growth,  
 Each in his own might offers his gift,  
 The student--youth, the teacher--wisdom,  
 The wealthy, gold to build thee stately halls,  
 And give thee books and treasures rare.  
 To thee, oh Lindenwood, youth and hope calls,  
 Forget them not, hearken ye unto these, the legacies of God.

*Pauline Crawl, 1918*

### The Poet's Column

Critics be damned.  
 Take as you will what I may write,  
 And tear each line apart;  
 Sit up late into the night  
 Lamenting.

Say that what I've written holds no reason,  
 Holds not truth nor thought nor rhyme.

Sit and read again  
 Weeping.

Tear your scribbling into pieces.  
 Say my mention is not worth of your books.  
 Then return to write--you cannot,  
 Dying.

And at your crypt I'll write a poem  
 You cannot tear apart.  
 If only you could understand  
 The words I write, not with my hand  
 But with my heart,  
 Singing!

*Marian Morgan, 1945*

## Alma Mater

**S**EE the monster  
concrete jaws and  
fangs of steel  
(U.S. high-grade  
assembly-line production)

Vacuum cleaner with  
ivy covered nozzle  
Suck in children  
Bounce them off books  
along the hose length  
Spew them out  
refuse  
adults  
How many tens of  
hundred thousands?  
(U.S. high-grade  
middle class citizens)

Form a line for the  
Registrar's office  
(Have your yellowcard  
ready for stamping)  
Line to the left for  
Physical inspection  
Fill out Form  
0007  
(Miss two turns  
come back tomorrow)  
Stand in line for your  
Veryown Counselor  
**HAVE YOUR YELLOWCARD  
READY FOR STAMPING**

please

Far above the common people

Vacuous, not still  
Juts our mammoth alma mater  
On a bulldozed hill  
(U.S. high-grade  
low-bid construction)

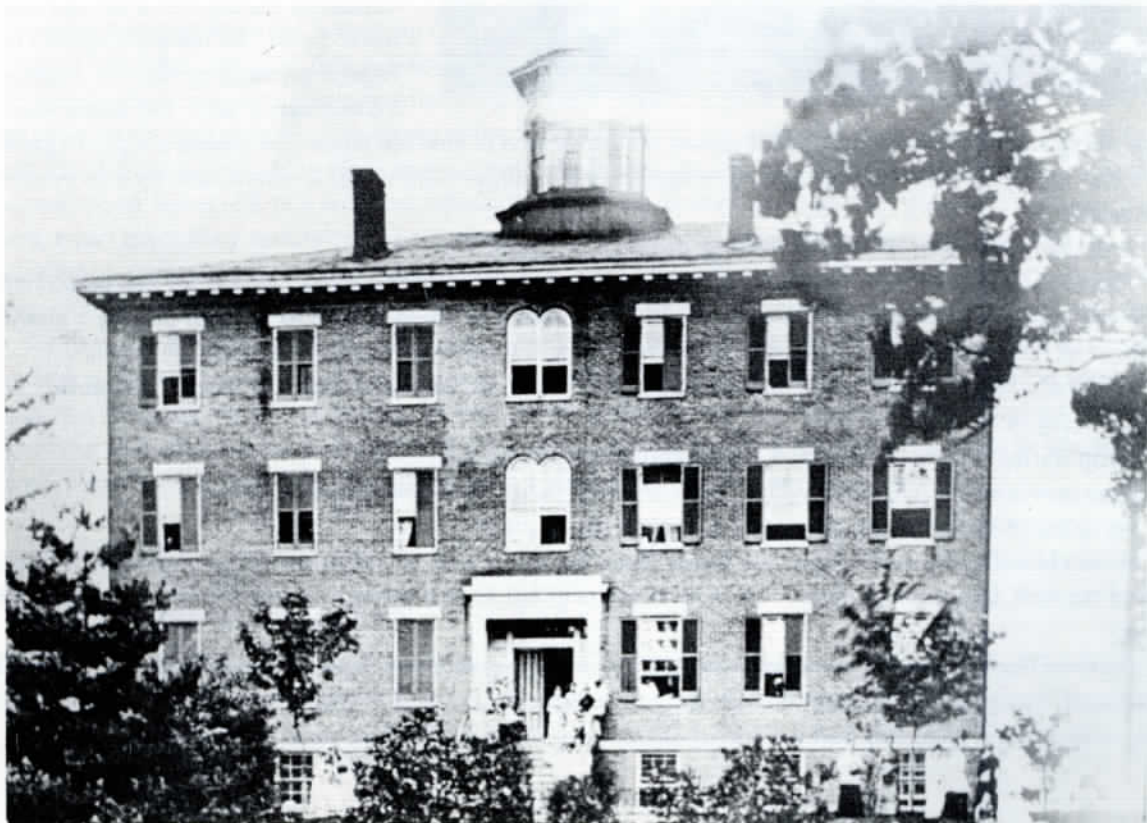
Push along  
down the line  
Head 'em up  
Move 'em out  
Watch the signs  
no holding back  
freshman sophomore  
junior senior  
and now you're  
through

*Madeena Spray, 1964*

## I.D. Ology

Flat plastic ball and chain  
Carry it everywhere!  
Invitation to animosity  
Just another number  
mark me off Gloria  
Green ticket to death  
Served on a plate  
Dirty plate  
Slow death  
One entree at a time

*Jason Silvers*



## A Love Story

by Tim Stouffer



I reached for the doorknob. In the blackness my extended fingers crossed the threshold and tingled, not with the shock of metal, but with the frigid air of the parlor.

The anticipation of the silent Victorian furniture was evident. I crossed over into the darkness and stood on the black and white checkered floor of the parlor's tiny foyer. My eyes could not adjust and so I avoided the black tiles, as if by chance they might give way to an infinite blackness of their own. Aside from the chaotic furniture, the only other thing visible was a gilded full-length mirror to my left. I took two steps forward. White, skip black. White. I suppose this is when the door swung shut.

I leaned forward and placed my hands on the mirror's granite base. I peered into the glass searching its depths for the secrets of the darkness of the parlor. Its luminous quality enhanced my visibility only the slightest. I could barely make out a long row of

jaggedly spaced teeth. An all too visible gaping mouth loomed behind the fangs. The creature began to growl, very low, barely audible. I stood rigid, both feet on one of those white squares, surrounded by four bottomless blacks.

And then, of its own accord, the baby grand began to harmonize.

The sound drew my eyes away from the looking glass. The parlor was vacant as before. The piano keys, however, continued to depress. The tune was old, reminiscent of some hymn. No one was playing it and yet it filled the room with a conglomeration of skillfully chosen scores. Early nineteenth century pieces.

It was soothing. Except for the uncanny thickness of the pitched night. And, of course, the music's unrealistic origins.

"Stop staring. Tell me if you think I'm beautiful, but remove your gaze."

from nowhere, a liquid voice. edible. i was seduced, no time for bewilderment.

my sideways vision caught movement in the mirror. i turned.

there's blood on the wall. red-brown burnt. dried like the squash of a bittersweet berry crushed. it comes out of the wall, into the wall. faster run. stop. dried drip fell, frozen blood. it marks the door. marks. THE door.

the third floor, corner suite. window view. clear stained glass windows that keep the darkness in. cornered, contained. Except for once as one broken one broke them. she crashed through pane after pane. pain, three long stories down. birth, life, death, a trilogy culminating in the death of the main character. she broke her

neck. and some window. pain. that let the light in. it burned its way through, like the blood on the wall. searing through the broken window. pain after pain it etched through the blackness and left its mark in the form of her fear. slowly. days later, the slow circle of a noose faded on the he wallpaper. they didn't notice: the men who came to fix the window. one of them cut his hand pretty bad. some panes have sharp edges. he cursed loudly. it was rare that men made it upstairs. they rushed through their job that day. finished it in a hurry. and left the girl's dormitory behind. behind them in the dark it groaned with dissatisfaction as it settled.

WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THE GLASS  
ENOUGH TO HATE THIS BUILDING  
IT WAS NAMED AFTER ME YOU KNOW  
EXACTLY MY POINT

I scanned the room with my eyes. And faster. Like the effect of spinning around or turning my head quickly. I did this. I caught glimpses of lace. A black lace dress woven out of the darkness.

ONLY THOSE WHO BELIEVE CAN SEE  
SO ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME I BELIEVE IN GHOSTS  
I'VE TOLD YOU NOTHING YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY TOLD YOURSELF  
WHAT HAPPENED UP THERE. IN THAT ROOM. WHAT HAPPENED  
WHAT DO YOU THINK  
A GIRL COMMITTED SUICIDE UP THERE  
YES

BECAUSE OF YOU. SHE DID IT BECAUSE OF YOU  
SHE KILLED HERSELF BECAUSE OF ANOTHER  
ANOTHER WHAT...WHO. WHY DOES THE WALL BLEED. WHY IS  
IT SO DARK IN THAT ROOM WITH ALL THOSE WINDOWS  
TOO MANY PANES. TOO MANY QUESTIONS. CLOSE YOUR EYES

up the staircase. from the bottom up this time. eyes following me. stare after stair. up. the room, the building itself has fallen away. my only solidity is the bannister. i hold it, slide my hand along it. it leads me. takes me. higher. there is a door. it is open. the smell of paint lingers. a girl's sobs bubble from inside. bubble like the paint on the wall opposite her. young paint, fresh, but dried. yet. a word is clear. clear paint. transparent over four letters. a fresh clean white wall. except. four letters cry out, sob. MARY. the third floor. why does the wall bleed. burnt red. rich red wine. whine, whimper, cry. it won't go away. they painted over it. she came back. won't leave, they couldn't make her. the door slammed shut. the building reverberated with the force of it. shaken. the staircase gave way. all those stairs fell away. i hung by one hand from the bannister. suspended, hung. i opened my eyes. it didn't help. didn't make me any stronger. only allowed me to see the darkness clearly. darkness farther down with my eyes open. i was going to lose my grip. the bannister would let loose soon. my fingers slipped. a long autumn. on the way to winter and death. but my fall was cut short. i felt something catch me. breaking my fall. an indian summer. warm. pulled me up through the frigid air and sat me at the top of the stairs like a dried brown leaf. blown back up into the tree it has fallen from. from its life. form its death. it has become something it was. not what it might have become. my voice scratched.

WHO IS SHE  
DOES IT MATTER  
WHY DO THE WALLS BLEED  
WHY DO YOU STARE  
MY EYES ARE CLOSED  
OPEN THEM



her voice drowned me. a liquid command. i opened my eyes. ceiling. above me. tiny splatters of light. scattered from the window above the door. i lie on my back looking at the window i've nailed shut. wait. wait for the music below me to stop. wait for a rest, for an open space. open. window. a half rest. five notes and repeat bars. the half again makes the hole. and the rest? the rusty nails pull themselves up. push themselves out. opposite from in. alone. by themselves they do this and fall to the tile floor with the beat of the refrain. refrain from being nails. with the chorus of their own rusty squeals. they beat the floors like two miniature drum sticks, and the window opens. ALL OF ITS OWN ACCORD. so do the closet doors. they open and slam shut. fast. closed. the stairs have fallen away again. i know it is so. i'm trapped on the third floor. the last story. end of the trilogy. the lights on the ceiling begin to spin. to weave. to twist. like a rope. like a live rope noose. and i know which room i'm in. i listen for her. with her. for clatter. the clatter of hooves on cobblestones. on brick. for him. her civil war love. hooves. passion out of destitute. out of despair. she's stolen happiness. committed treason. listen. thunder, or cannon fire. far off. from within. without him. not a sound. he isn't coming. she stands on the bed i lie on. her necklace gleaming brown at her white throat. woven tight, not a flaw. twisted just so with a slipknot at the back. a security lock. it's an expensive necklace. not a sound. knot. no horse tonight. hoarse. no love. i push her off the old rope bed and she swings. a pendulum a metronome matched to the organ music below. refrain. from life. three stories up. three stories down. swinging.

black lace. swirls. flows across the room. slips from the darkness of the parlor.

I'M NOT SO TERRIBLE.  
EVERYONE IS SUBJECT TO  
THEIR OWN PARANOID  
DELUSIONS. A NOWHERE  
SOMEONE. THEIR FEARS  
CONTROLLED THEM. THEY  
LET THEIR GUARD DOWN.  
CAME OUT OF THEM-  
SELVES. INTO ME.

I WAS SICK ONLY TWO  
DAYS. DID YOU KNOW? TWO  
DAYS ONLY. QUITE SUD-  
DEN EVERYONE SAYS. MY  
DEATH. EVERYONE SAYS IT  
WAS QUITE SUDDEN. THOSE  
OTHERS HAVE IT MIXED UP  
WITH RUMORS AND  
STORIES ABOUT THIS  
PLACE. STORIES. THEY SAY  
THERE ARE TWO KINDS.  
STORIES. THOSE THAT ARE  
TRUE AND THOSE THAT  
SHOULD BE. TWO KINDS  
ONLY. TAKE MY HAND.





### A Walk In The Park

She was a hothouse flower--  
 something exotic, something long-stemmed.  
 He was an ordinary wayside posy--  
 nothing special except unusual  
 ordinariousness.  
 They were strolling--  
 rather, she glided while he plodded--  
 through the park.  
 They drew stares and didn't notice.  
 And I--  
 well, I thought it was beautiful.

*Teri Jansen*

### poem written in a strange mood

crouching in a small corner of  
 the universe--  
 taking a mad dash across the  
 world--  
 darting between reeboked feet--  
 making it to the other side--  
 should i check into the roach  
 motel?

*Teri Jansen*

### Night Walk

Ebon splotches dance berserkly,  
 Forms play, impose selves  
 One  
 Upon  
 Their counterparts.  
 Frisk, Then merge  
 Altamira-like-  
 One gross transformation.  
 Know the wind--  
 Wind that cares not to play,  
 But comes,  
 And fills  
 And grows.  
 Then spasm-like, I again then  
 time again  
 Double.  
 I am two.  
 Shrouded in ebon wind shadow  
 See multi-mosaic bodies  
 Splatter cross walk.  
 Ebon play.  
 Quick slivered, silver cylinders  
 Go black,  
 Quick white  
 And splash crashing to the walk.  
 Form, only, of a former self.  
 Duple now.  
 That one--  
 then me.

*Nancy Hamilton, 1964*

## The Pirate's Song

I stare blankly at the downpour  
and I begin to dream.  
I watch raindrops running together  
forming a magical stream.

A ship floats upon the rapid tides  
as the wind whips its sails.  
The waters quicken further out  
and the blackening sky wails.

Evil pirates raise a Jolly Roger flag  
while singing a terrible chant.  
A traitor steps off the splintering plank  
for a sin he chose not to recant.

The treacherous storm has died out  
and the pirates begin to think.  
The sin committed is forgiven now  
but the traitor's beginning to sink.

It is too late to save this man,  
his life has no tomorrow.  
The saddening pirates lower the flag  
while singing a song of sorrow.

I stare blankly at the world  
wet and gloomy and sad.  
I am the traitor and he is me;  
what have we done so bad?

*Lisa M. Stewart*

## The Deliberate Cold

The summer rain falls, a sweet baptismal,  
and bitter earth drinks her fill.  
Poison in the grey sky's dawn.  
Lady fortune's eyes smile,  
so the morning breaks, a liquid sun.  
Blood red tears anoint my face,  
a touch of silk the worm weaves on,  
and days like this are never over.  
In the breath of the deliberate cold.

The summer rain is driven  
like December's white children  
through the breath of the deliberate cold.  
Suffocation blanket to numb the touch of love.  
Sun, you can't drown me now,  
your tenacious touch has broken  
with lady fortune's lips.  
Liquid morning has crystallized  
on the face of an unbeliever,  
with the breath of the deliberate cold.

Silkworm weave my cocoon.  
Tomorrow is nowhere  
and today is freezing.  
The covenant is broken with  
my icicle salt rubies.  
Lady fortune whispers sweet, sweet  
with the breath of the deliberate  
cold.

*Tim Stouffer*



## To Think About You

Today...I have enough time to think about you  
to think about all the time we spent together.  
To realize that I still love you.

I remember our language . . .  
it was made of caresses and sighs.  
I remember all the places we went together,  
I was for you and you were for me.

But everything is over now.  
It was not my fault . . .  
it was not your fault either  
but because of our pride  
we lost many marvelous things.  
Today . . . I have enough time to think about you . . .

*Miguel Carrera*



Leslie Duncan

### Where It's Safe

There is no  
place to hide,  
To go and start again.  
Though escape has been tried  
It only leads to dead end.

It seems like every path,  
Leads where others were lost before,  
They have quite enough pain,  
I don't dare add more.

Time and again I sat and prayed,  
But, left knocking at the door,  
Forced to find other answerers,  
And the search goes on far more.

Sometimes happiness is so elusive,  
And, yes, so hard to describe.  
Like a mirage it draws us to it,  
But it's a lie when we arrive.

So many of us left here waiting  
For answers that may never come.  
We hate all this self-debating,  
Whether to question or stay dumb.

So many people searching  
To find a missing peace,  
What do we expect of living,  
And will this seeking ever cease?

So many endless murmurs  
Go through my head at night,  
Finally there is peaceful dreaming  
And that is how it will end all right

Now we'll find--where it's safe.

*Cindy Fehmel*

### tonight

*Night falls black  
Dark falls fast  
Stars fall bright  
I fall down  
TO THE DEEPEST SLEEP  
THE SMELL OF RAIN  
AND THE TASTE OF YOU  
I fold into myself  
and drift farther  
into the darker down  
I don't see  
the point of Light--  
morning's  
only brighter if  
my midnight dreams  
of you, come  
true*

*Tim Stouffer*

### FORLORN

And there in the midst of darkness,  
I beheld a brilliant light.  
It warmed my flesh, rested my soul.  
A warm touch upon my shoulder,  
A soothing voice within my ear.

But then the light grew dim,  
Darkness filled the room.  
The warm air turned Arctic, raising goose  
flesh.  
My shoulders became cramped under your  
weight,  
Your screams deafened my ear.

*Penny Austin*

## IF ONLY FOR NOW

I sit here and reflect. The pain we all must endure.  
We must first experience the pain to recognize the pleasures  
we are dealt in life's funny game.

These years, the best of my life, I look back on and see  
the changes from just one year ago today. The park. Our  
place. Our years of youth revolved around. Today it seems  
so barren and lonely. As if even the squirrels had vacated.  
It's coldness engulfs me. Once every tree held a memory for  
me and the South of The Border Club. That's who we were. We  
had no one else but each other. Now those memories have long  
since faded a bit and have turned into bitter tear drops.

I wonder and at the same time worry. Will my children  
feel loss, pain, will they too share a spot they call theirs?

I can remember our bluff. We had adopted it as solely  
ours. Many times we stared at the soft city lights below.  
In the distance we hardly recognized the very jagged edges  
which cut our flesh each day. In the pale moonlight it  
seemed to be at peace. So beautiful. But in the harsh light  
of day the splinters of reality stabbed beneath our tender  
feet.

*Penny Austin*

## CHINA WAS MEANT TO BE BROKEN

I was a China Doll with a severed head.  
A broken smile, on the back of your hand.

Drug down the stair, through the glass.  
My plastic heart, in hands of stickery thorn.

You locked me in boxes of web and nail.  
My eyes drank in your darkness tossed away.

Patterns of antique lace burnt in my finger-tips.  
Images of virgin white flowers which now laugh.

These are the things which fill my empty soul.  
My severed head on the floor.

NEXT TO THE POTTED PLANT.

*Penny Austin*



*Jim Higgs*

## **She and I**

We stand, face-to-face,  
searching each other's eyes,  
trying to discover the thoughts  
in each other's minds.  
I am rebellious and angry,  
She is silent and thoughtful.  
I stand proud and tall,  
She stands timid and small.  
My thoughts are cold and mean,  
Hers are warm and caring.  
We stand and stare  
and as I blink,  
I realize I am seeing  
my reflection in the mirror.

*Lisa M. Stewart*

The following dialog is a fragment from the story, "A Year in the Life."  
Written without punctuation, this particular piece centers on one woman's sexual disillusionment  
and the effects it has on her both mentally and socially.

## Margret Phillips

(From her diary)  
2-4-90

by Douglas Robert Sexton

i am what i am so why dont people understand that all im trying to be is  
myself-see thats been the story of my life and for as long as i can remember  
thats been the story of my life-just like pages from a story book my story  
of my life has been that all that i am is just that i m all that i m-  
i understand that so why dont other people understand that-lets see who  
understands that-my mother does not understand that and my father does  
not understand that and my sisters and my brothers dont understand that  
and no one understands that-nor my preachers or my priest or my principal  
who just hates women anyway or even michael who hates women with a passion  
because all that i want to do is be his friend-why doesnt he understand  
that all i want to do is touch him and make him happy so that i can be  
happy- there is nothing wrong with that because that is what i am- last  
night i rubbed my nephews toes who is only thirteen and then he rubbed  
mine and i am almost sure that he knows i am what i am and thats all that  
anyone could ever expect of me rubbing toes with someone who could rub  
me anywhere he wants-michael rub me rub me rub me please rub me like i  
need to be rubbed-you hate me so you dont eat with me every two years so  
why am i doing the talent show rehearsals-i dont know why if no one excepts  
me-look here world i m coming out and i m going to succeed-i am so frustrated  
so tiny so insignificant if only people knew that i am here if only people  
knew then i could be myself though i do except myself i do i do i do i  
do i do i do i do i do i i i i i i i i i do-you just dont know i  
do-you think that i am crazy- i saw you starring at me in the morning just  
wanting to rape me again-just wanting-but i am not going to let you touch  
me ever again because i am not that type of woman that allows you to touch  
me-you think i am and i saw you starring at me in the mirror-go away and  
i will become real if i ever was real if i ever was that is-sometimes i  
just want to take my clothes off and let everyone see me and then they  
would have to do something to make me happen-go away go away go away and  
don't come back i saw you starring at me in the mirror this morning and  
i know you hate me you hate me you hate me you just plain old hate hate  
hate hate hate hATE ATE ATE ATE ATE me up till i was nothing and i had  
my face burned by doctors who cut my toes off to make you go away-why are  
you looking at me in the mirror why are you starring at me if you keep  
that up i ll take my clothes off then you will be forced to do something-why  
doesnt anyone love me why doesnt someone touch me like i try to touch  
everyone-i am not mean and i wouldnt hurt a fly i just think that if someone  
wants to express love to another than that other should be receptive whats  
it going to hurt anyway-thats why i am helping out with the children at  
rehearsal so that michael knows and everyone know that i love the  
children-no-that i want to be excepted by everyone and i except everyone  
except when they dont let me touch them-that i dont except ever-because  
if you dont let me touch you then why are you starring at me in the mirror  
and making me take off my clothes to force-just force just rape me why



dont you-just rape me and get it over with why dont you-my mother raped me my father raped me my brother threw me in the trunk of his car and raped me for three days-i let him and i raped him back-why dont people let me touch them if i want to-my father wanted to touch me and i let him-my mother wanted to touch me and i let her-my brother wanted to touch me and i let him and soon my nephew will want to touch me and I will let him-why doesnt the other people let me touch them i ll let them i wont hurt them or-why are you starring in the mirror and killing me making me take off my clothes and rape ape ape perhaps i am an animal perhaps then i am a dog and thats why i see doctors who fix my mind where i cant see in the mirror-my doctor even lets me touch him and he lets me take off my clothes and stare at the mirror-why doesnt everyone else do the same so that i know that i am real and exist-if people only would let me touch them then i know that i would be better thats why i take my clothes off for them like the way lisas husband takes his clothes off for her and i ve even seen them hold hand with one another-if i am nice to he perhaps she will let me hold hands with richard-why shouldnt she let me i am always doing what she ask like i do for everyone i always do what they ask and i never complain except when they dont let me touch them and take my self off for them and hang it up on them-everyone lives on a flat world and i am the only one who excepts what i am that i am-when i was young i remember the neighbors would always give me candy and i knew that i was real for them because they would touch me-they loved me so much they told me to never tell anyone so as not make the others jealous-its my secret and to this day no one knows that when i was a child i was the most loved in the world but now for the last twenty years no one has loved me because i wasnt loved when i was a child-my mother hated me-my father hated me and my brother hated me like the way that my neighbors hated me-I hate them all all all all all all I hate them all-quit starring at me in the mirror just hating me just hating me because i remind you of yourself-i hate you i-do please touch me and make me live again-please touch me and i ll take myself a part for you if you do-please please please say you do please-please what are you waiting for-dont see me like renee chillingsworth and see demons and snakes see me for what i am see me for me-i bet just bet that if i had a body like peggy lee and strolled the hallways like she does i just bet that you would be interested then i just bet you would see me different-i know what it is-its because i dont have red hair and shifty hips that bounce like harlot hips grinding away with her country accent-just who does she think she is anyway with her coming here after me being here for so many years and the way everyone likes her more and she doesnt try to touch them i am the one who takes my clothes off for them and cant they see that anyway-jerks i hate them all and i dont care if they hate me-i just wont touch them any more-i am going to get out of here if its the last thing i ever do if even i am the last one i am going to get out of here-oh why are you starring at me in the mirror-i hate you i do i do i do i do-what are those tears just whose tears are those tears-they cant be mine because i dont have any tears-kleenex wheres the damn kleenex-why am i crying why why why-why are my eye lids swelling-i am so alone crying in the dark of a lonely bedroom with no one to hear or comfort just the reflection in the mirror starring and sobbing like the way it sometimes rains hard on cold gray sunday mornings when youre tired to get up and go to church or see people-sobbing like the rains that carry on for days and days-sometimes hard sometimes soft but raining all the same sobbing all the same-hard and then soft-lonliness-real and unreal-dead and not alive. Alone with no one to understand me, except the reflection in the mirror, I feel dead.

## "Untitled"

by Leslie Duncan

He awoke early, and as usual, we was beside him. But there was never anything usual about the magic of her presence.

As the first winks of a drowsy dawn gleamed through his bedroom window, he turned to look at her sleeping form. Her hair was a golden bronze; her form, sleek, smooth-the epitome of grace. Delicately, slowly for fear of waking her, he outstretched an admiring hand and ran it gently along the side of her firm body.

He remembered the first day he saw her; he was walking eastward along mainstreet, a million mundane affairs occupying his mind. Absently he had glanced at the passers-by on the sidewalk across the street, and that's when he saw her. He stopped in his tracks, paralyzed with admiration. She was walking with a controlled, yet easy grace; her carriage of herself showed a natural confidence and poise. She noticed his surveillance, and casually stopped to look at him, and then he saw her eyes, riveting and intelligent. It was love at first sight. He begged with his eyes for her to wait as he rushed to the crosswalk and hurried across. That was how they met.

He had made her his, and he was filled with awe and pride that he could share his life with such a fantastic creature as herself.

She stirred beneath his soft touch, stretched elaborately, yawned, and looked up at him out of amethyst eyes. He smiled happily, and whispered, "good morning, sleepy puss. I'll go fix our breakfast," and as he left the room he called over his shoulder; "hurry down, now!"

She did not seem to make any extra effort to hurry. She arose and yawned again, revealing strong white fangs, and, with a quick rub of one fore-paw across her whiskers, she leapt to the floor and trotted downstairs to breakfast.

## AUS TIEFER NOT SCHREI ICH ZU DIR

### The Cry of Jonah

ELIZABETH BOHN

*The title of Elizabeth's poem means,  
"Out of the depths have I cried unto  
Thee."*

**B**oth light and dark confound me.  
I see and yet not see.  
I hear me breathing  
And the crushing-in of sounds  
As I clap my hands to my ears.  
I must be conscious--  
Conscious in a dream all hollow-black.  
Is there too much light  
That I am blinded by it?  
I can feel the eyeballs beneath these lids.  
They move; they see--they must see!

Where am I?  
"Hello! Speak forth if you hear!"  
Drummed thump of an echo only--  
Alone--  
"Hey!"  
Alone.  
Cast-off and overboard into darkness,  
Do I yet live and breathe in some mystic  
vacuum?  
Standing upright in this pulpy mire,  
This bulberous tomb,  
I count three steps--  
Three short steps from life.  
I should have gone,  
But it wasn't my business.  
He should have taken care of himself.  
Hell, I'm no water-boy.  
And everybody seemed to know  
I was deserting,  
betraying His orders.  
I was cast out in the midst of my storm  
To flounder alone.  
Waves clawed at the ship.

Thunder sputtered like a quenched flame.  
 Friends turned their backs;  
 Their scorn engulfed me.  
 The waves carried me up at first,  
 And through the lightning I saw the coastline  
 (To perish within sight of land!).  
 Tall, liquid columns opened,  
 Sucking me down in eddies of scum and  
 seaweed.  
 Now I lie with the rancid smell and musk odors  
 of decay  
 How is this silence so smooth and ungraspable  
 Like the rounded belly of the earth?  
 If only I could reach the top--  
 I fell  
 And must keep falling without light.  
 Dying must be like this:  
 To die within this ribbed cage of fear,  
 To close my eyes forever,  
 To devour my life before it seeps away;  
 To go mad waiting for death in the dark.  
 How can living bones wall me  
 Away from men,  
 Away from Him?  
 If bones need be sacrificed, must they be mine?  
 I am innocent, wrongly accused.  
 So, Death mocks me.  
 He is laughing at me with his back;  
 He too scorns me and would leave me  
 To vegetate in madness.  
 I will make him take me--  
 "See, I tear at my veins;  
 Here is the blood you want.  
 Here is my throat laid bare; grasp it and  
 strangle,  
 Strangle!"  
 I am nothing;  
 Crying salt tears--not even a man.  
 Water-sounds slap the walls,  
 A heaving to and fro in a cradle rhythm.

World-songs whirl in my brain  
 Of times that mother rocked me to her.  
 In gray-green mornings soft with spring,  
 I roamed the hills with a flock of friends.  
 We wrestled on the roof-top garden  
 And climbed trees to eat our honey cakes  
 Bare-foot summers came with parching wind,  
 And we sat in the shadows on the cool well-  
 stones

Drawing our names in the dust.  
 We teased the donkeys at the inn-yards  
 And even threw rocks at crickets.  
 We sat on the porch of the Temple,  
 Reciting our lessons, scheming boyish pranks,  
 Writing lop-sided figures into words and sen-  
 tences  
 And days...  
 At confirmation my father wept  
 And took my manly hand as we left the Temple  
 That wonderful journey-- my first Passover--  
 Charging ahead with the boys,  
 Yelling and living each turn of the road;  
 At last to see the dome of the Great Temple all  
 The blood offerings, the smoke,  
 The chants and trumpets in the noonday sun,  
 The towering whiteness of that shrine above  
 me  
 The people pushing and swaying their hymns,  
 The priests always at the vortex of sound and at  
 The smell of sweat and burned blood,  
 Blood for me.

Why must atonement be continually begged;  
 New lambs slain with old sin?  
 Why must life be bought with death?  
 Why death at all?  
 Life, so minute on Time's wheel,  
 Is purposeless but to spin  
 Threads of deceit,  
 Ropes of remorse,  
 Anchor chains of agony.  
 Why dost Thou curse me--  
 Thy son?  
 Have I deceived Thee beyond all hopes of  
 forgiveness?  
 I have sinned;  
 I am no longer worthy of Thy name.  
 Thou hast made me and nurtured me--  
 That I should fling my treason even at Thee.

Jehovah, purge me of this evil nature  
 Which nets my life and shrouds me thus in  
 death  
 I grope to reach Thy pardon, yet my life  
 Depends on Thee, my just and sovereign Lord.  
 Restore a contrite heart unto Thy will.  
 Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee;  
 This darkness hides thy sun but briefly here.

## Mother, In your defense.

Life is trial without you. Yes, I see you. You over there smirking at all mankind. I see you, you entity from the bowels of Hell. Yeah I am talking to you. You with the evil grin. I smell you vile stench as you chew and vomit in your own glory of another helpless soul you have destroyed. I have seen what you have done in the wake of your mindless, callous and rampant desire and disrespect for the tender human flesh.

How I would love to lay hold of you and rip your vicious, jagged teeth from your rotting gums and ram them down your bloody throat. To tear you limb from limb and feed parts back to you. Just to give back the pain you have caused me. I curse you and yet you laugh, taunting and teasing my feelings. Ranting at me with "You foolish, weak human. You can't destroy me that easily. You may win a battle, but the war is far from over." "You're right; I concede, for now." Many ways you

have worked at destroying what you touch. Fluid of living tainted by your saliva, poisoning not only your fragile victims, but those around who must bare the waste of your demented, vile and senseless need for more flesh to claim. This you leave in your wake.

I hate you with all that I most despise. You a spawn of the most evil of all creatures. Satan himself. You, I hate the most. You are stealing one of my most loved and cherished individuals, a person so full of love and caring. One that has harmed no one--I have seen you eat the bowels where now only a bag of plastic can do what tissue of flesh can no longer do. Your teeth have gnawed at the bones and organs to where a living shell now resides. Tormented in pain and agony.

My Father in Heaven, I pray for you to end it in peace. Stay the final bite for a welcome rest, freedom from the pain. Father, I beseech thee to find and give a release. In thy Son's name, Jesus Christ. Amen.

"What is your name, so that I may know you." I ask.

Sneering with his jagged grin, "CANCER," he replies.

"You have claimed many lives through out time. Who is your next victim?" I cried.

He laughs an evil, sadistic laugh. And then he grins again and says, "Your beloved mother." Again he begins to laugh.

"NO, DAMN YOU, NO!!!. What has she done to you?" I screamed.

"Nothing," he laughed again, "I was just hungry," as he giggled in total delight.

My screams echoed in my ears. Rivers of tears flowed down my cheeks. "Momma, I can't help you. I'm helpless against this menace. Cancer is slowly murdering you and I can't stop him. I don't know how. The only way to stop him is eternal sleep, and yet he still wins." Death is his final power.

Cancer, I loathe your very existence. One day man will destroy you. But until that day I will curse you for what you have done. I will rejoice in the day that momma sleeps, for the damage has been done. You have won this battle. But, this war is far from over. One day we will get you, you bastard, and we will win.

--William Lee Sillyman March 28, 1990

## Leaves Above My Swing



Kelly Hamilton

## LEAVES

Gaudy tokens of the equinox,  
They skitter  
Across dying grasses.  
The black, jilted trees  
Deprecate  
Their frivolity

*Martha Leonard, 1956*

## Sunsets

*by DONALD MANDELL, 1964*

There's a cliff-row  
That fingers out to sea  
Seen from one place  
The sun sets there  
First strong and lewd  
Then quiet lavender  
Real Fine Pretty  
Only get up close  
Feel the rough of the sand  
The wind  
The brush against your legs  
And wonder where the pretty is  
Wonder why it's always far  
Wonder  
And then move  
Move move  
Forget the tear that says  
Stay  
It is this  
It will always be this.

## UNTITLED

Waiting, she sits alone  
striking; ignoring all  
but...  
Me also alone, waiting?  
glorying alone in her  
Leaves in slow spirals  
meeting earth  
Sky vibrant blue, empty  
soul like the sky  
waiting spacious.  
Alone I sit, she's faded  
away, and the leaves  
strike blows to the earth  
and also fade away  
all to soon, a day  
shall come and I  
'alone' shall fade  
away

*-Neal Mattingly*

## Destiny

She ventures through the woods,  
curious and unafraid.  
Her destiny is unknown,  
yet inevitable.  
Twigs crack and  
leaves rustle  
under her tiny bare feet.  
A cool breeze guides her  
and she runs her  
tiny fingers  
through her long blonde curls.  
She feels a twinge  
of suspense and excitement  
building in her heart.  
And her step picks up  
as she skips, then runs  
to meet her destiny.  
Woods fly by,  
and then she realizes  
she is running on the clouds.  
A feeling of peace  
settles around her,  
And she runs into  
the welcoming arms  
of the Almighty Father.

*Lisa M. Steward*

## Robin Horn



### ICE ONLY MELTS WHEN IT'S HOT

Neon dances in my eyes which yesterday swam in tears.

You removed my blindfold so that I could finally see. A new me.

Laughter from within which for so long was repressed.

An ice-cube glides to the base of my neck. Slowly it melts in passion.

All form of two beings lost in the collaboration of one.

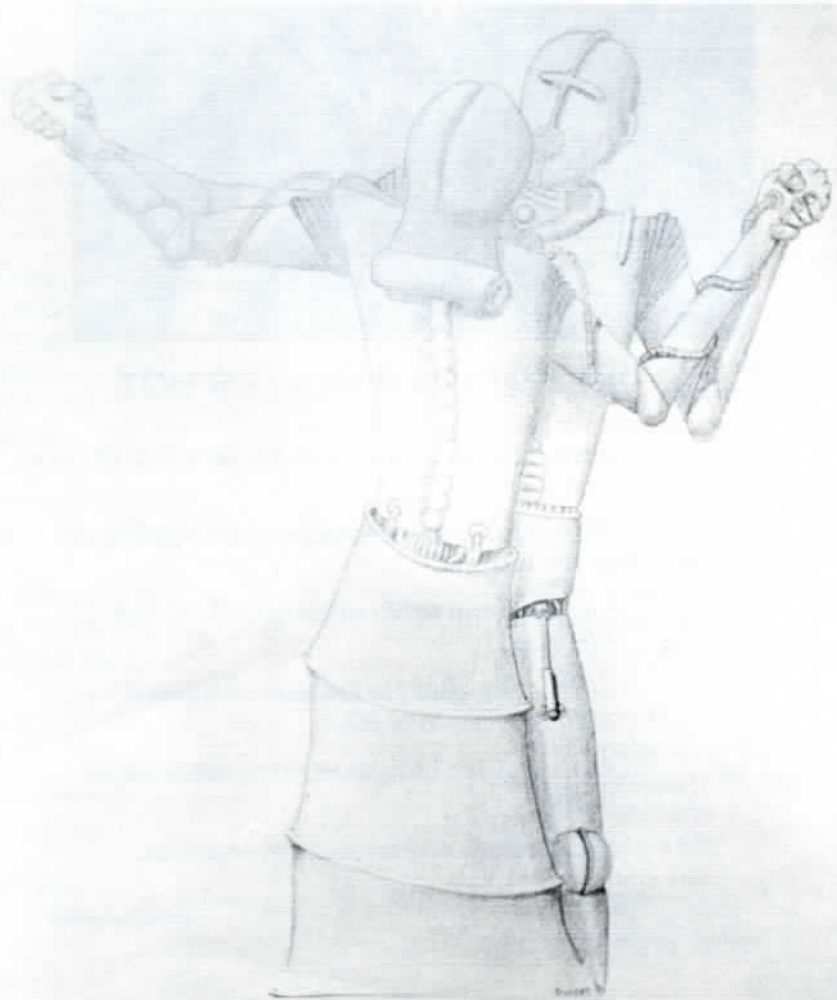
I guess that's why ice melts when it's hot.

*Penny Austin*

## Walked \* Swam \* Hunted \* Danced \* Sang

I walked there some time ago, on that little  
pathway that leads to the schoolhouse  
I swam there with the swim team in junior high,  
trying my hardest, and dreaming of 1st place ribbons  
I hunted for my innocence there, not even knowing I had  
lost it  
I danced on the street there in the rain, with my friend once;  
the smell of our wet hair, our wet clothes, lingered in my mind for days  
I sang a song there a while ago,  
That song I sang while dancing in the snow,  
And hunting for my lover  
And drowning in the sheets with my lover  
And walking there with my lover, through the park on a sunny afternoon

*Sophia Michals*



*Jason Silvers*

## RETROACTIVE MOVEMENT



**Untitled**

Will you melt me in the air  
and will you gingle; will you change?  
I ain't got wings to fly,  
But I'll find a way somehow;  
Cause my only dreams  
Are the breezes of you.

*Viktor R. Kemper, 1968*

## A MOMENT

*BETTY JOY HAAS, 1949*

Waiting between  
Sun-east and  
Sun-west,  
God poured Tomorrow,  
Spilling a drop of Time  
That isn't Night and  
Isn't Dawn.

## ICARUS

Happy is he who trusts the waxen wings  
In flight impossible, whose wish outsoars  
His ingenuity, whose longing brings  
Its poor fulfillment to the waves' and the  
shore's  
Sad wreckage, when it sought the splendid  
sky.  
Blessed is he to whom no heaven seems  
More steep or dangerous than his wish to  
fly;  
Blessed and martyred he who feels the  
dream's  
Compulsion stronger than the world's con-  
straint.  
Not outraged gravitation can recall  
His flight, nor the earth's penalty attain  
His triumph and the legend of his fall.  
We the more miserable, who justly feel  
Secure and powerful with our wings of steel.

*DOROTHY TULL, 1937*

## TRAGTHOS

I watched her try to fly with paper wings,  
but still it doesn't really mean a thing  
to have seen her slip, flutter, fall and die.  
It means she tried; I didn't. She fell  
and I watched. She's dead, I'm alive;  
where it goes beyond that is still a mystery.

*Viktor R. Kemper, 1968*



## A Prayer for Hope

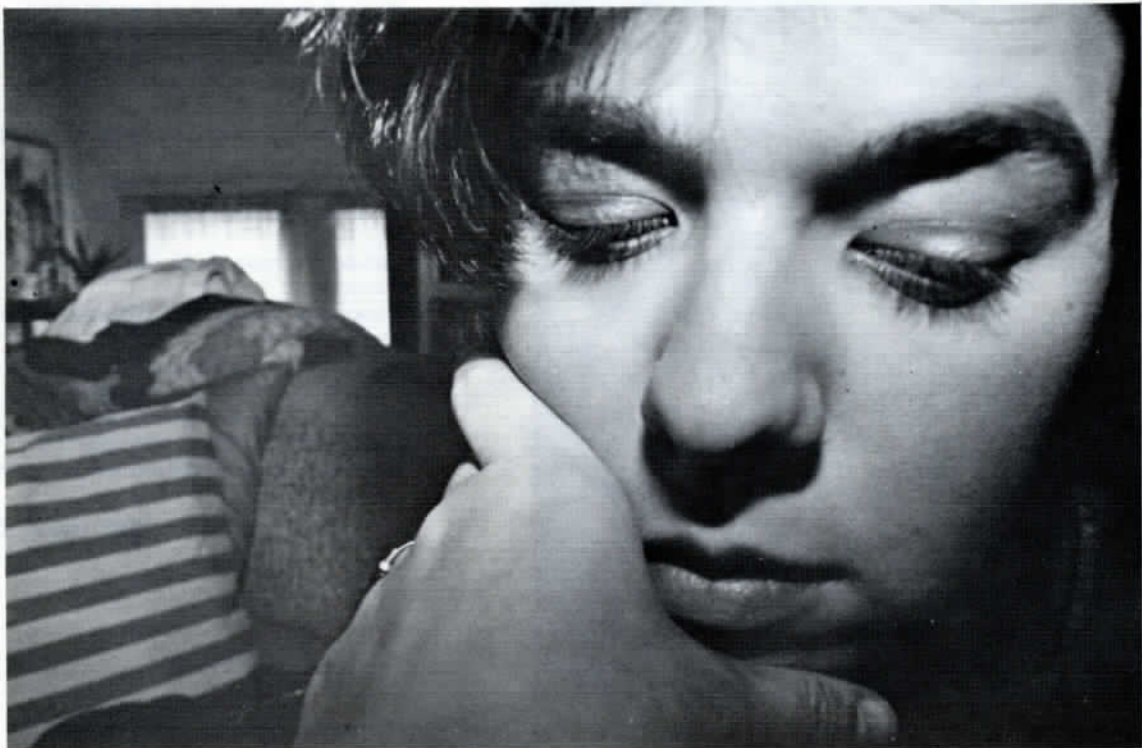
Unfortunately there is none  
else a million times a day  
I would speak the empowered  
words of such

What is this dream we call life  
What gains does it beget us  
Why cant I awaken from this dream  
Tortured by my nightmare  
unable to wake

*Neal Mattingly*

**CHANTEL**

*Kim Freese*



### --LEVELING GRAYWARE--

NYMPH OF DESOLATION  
FEMME DE LA VOID  
OH SHOULD CRAWL AN ANIMAL  
ERUPT FROM NINETEEN SEPARATIONS

HUMANITY SO WORTHLESS  
HOW BOUNDLESS THE ABYSS  
INSENSATE WASPS FROM HELL  
ROLLING FROM YOUR MIND

DOWN BRING INSATIABLE INSANITY  
PLEASE TO SURGE ALOFT  
RISE ABOVE SORROWED MIST  
COME ON CONSUME ISOLATION

ASSUAGING PANTING MINDSET  
SEARCHLIGHT FOR YOUR FOG  
TO DIE IN ULTIMATE ASSISTANCE  
ENSOUL YOUR LACKING SPIRIT

WAXING PERVERTED PROPHET  
GODDAMMIT LISTEN  
THERE ARE MANY IN THE INSECT  
A RAGE TO SOCIAL INTELLECT

*-TYBALT*

## Homage to Rod McKuen

### DUSK MOMENTS

In the early evening almost darkness  
I could smell you Iris bloom outside  
And hear you whisper a light melody  
As you sat in a rocker across the room.  
Watching me work; wondering when  
I would notice the time and ask  
You for dinner. When at last I  
Turned toward you; smiled and said  
I'd like my supper now,  
You blew a tender kiss through  
The twilight toward my cheek  
And replied it wasn't ready yet.

Which is why I cut your throat,  
You lazy bitch.

*Viktor R. Kemper, 1968*

### Pagan Restorations of a Desecrated Soul

So kiss your crucifix  
pray for thine needs  
heroin or love?  
It's just a fix  
Lick those beads

Fire fed emotion  
in your kiln of fate,  
make your excuses  
Lie and HATE

go to confession  
Be admonished by man  
Death or conscription  
Yes, they call it a plan

go and kiss your mother  
or some divine other  
Christ and I shall not be  
lovers

*Mick Eldritch*

### Untitled

Plato sat in a cave  
and jerked off  
Allegory running forth to mingle with dust  
and of this unholy union  
a plague was born  
a plague named philosophy

*Neal Mattingly*

Poor among the poor,  
hungry in a withered land,  
I walked with a child,  
hand in hand,  
with ashes on our lips  
and a dream behind  
his one blind eye.

*Viktor R. Kemper, 1968*

### Untitled

I went to hell for a vacation  
a change was needed  
The serpent and I spoke at length  
in the end I gave him a dove  
and told him we'll meet beneath  
an olive tree  
He of course declined.

*Neal Mattingly*

### Untitled

Tell me, muse of the man of many ways  
who was driven far journeys after he  
had sacked Troys sacred citadel  
and tell me muse, you lecherous wench  
how many little children died, when said  
city fell and burned

*Neal Mattingly*

## ABSINTHISM

Five deep and fluted glasses filled with  
absinthe stood  
Before me once, but since that time I've  
emptied three  
Inside myself to numb the grief which  
lies here still.

A grief which, like the absinthe, is bitter,  
green  
And new to me; conceived of flowers  
ripped up from  
The sunlit earth and catalyzed by fire into  
A liquid spider-wife who hangs and  
haunts my mouth  
While weaving coffin webs of ink that  
spread into  
Crystal and itself, then finally freeze this  
hand  
That holds a belly pregnant with its  
dreaming corpse  
Until the two are gone and one alone  
remains --

A glass of dragon moonlight in a  
shadowed dawn.

*Viktor R. Kemper, 1968*

## MISTY FACES



*Jason Silvers and Kelly Hamilton*

## Breath

Wind careens off the corner brick.  
Strong. It knocks the ash from my  
dangled cigarette.  
Lipstick red on one unfiltered  
end.  
Kiss goodbye on a cancer stick.  
Yellow, taxi.  
Meter runs all the same.  
I'm dressed in black,  
you are barely,  
And yet I feel less clothed  
tonight.

Uncovered, for all to see:  
This me,  
I have become.  
What they think, might be.  
Dangerous word, love.  
Short terms, hot day in the  
memory of an incinerated night.  
Argument.

So you have a destination  
away from my plaster of Paris  
thoughts.  
Where to? grunts the Cabbie.  
Someday my words will be bound.  
Away from here, the air is too thick.  
Destitute. Does not change anything,  
you're still a back seat driver.

A sometime man am I:  
Shape changer.  
Too ambiguous you say.  
I'll never be a constant.  
Cigarette, down to your lipstick,  
one DRAG only you asked.  
I flick it away into the street,  
gutter relationship.

Exhale

*Tim Stouffer*

I am the native knight  
alone by force  
in solitude, I sit  
on my steel horse  
singing the forgotten songs of the land  
- to a sky grey with death  
- to forests cowering from axe and fire  
- to beasts counting their days  
- and to seas lolling in polluted agony  
What have we done to our mother  
What have we done to our goddess  
Moon, Queen of the Night, shed a tear  
Sun, giver of life, strain to save  
Lord, rise up, fight for your life  
We kill you all and ourselves  
as well.

*Neal Mattingly*

## THE CRICKET

*NANCY GAINES SPANGLER*

**T**HE cricket made tiny sharp

Fingers of sound,  
That scratched the stillness of  
The summer night . . .  
Then silence surged back  
Like a great wave of water,  
And the cricket was silent,

. . . Ashamed . . .

## The Abortion

The green of the meadow picked up the shadow of the swallow and flung it along, to rise and fall, like the windswept blades of the tall summer grass. The shadow crossed the path of light that was keeping him warm. Again and again, and each time the flitting shape passed over him, another part of him froze.

He sat in the young wheat that reached just above his head and rasped with the breath of the wind. His long hair hung in his eyes and whipped about, much like the wheat. It was still young however, and wouldn't be the color of his hair for some time.

He had been rocking himself slowly back and forth. Now he could no longer tell whether the motion was attributed to himself or the wheat, or if his mind was pitching itself into uncontrollable depths again. His eyes were kelly green from crying, they always got brighter when he thought of her anyway. He flinched as the bird flew over again. The sun was just high enough to fall into the miniscule clearing he had created when he fell. Just high enough, no higher. He shivers.

He's thrown himself into another convulsion, and his body violently erupts. The shock of it knocks him to the ground, to the blanket of smashed wheat. The thing inside him is fighting. He's been losing to it for days.

The swallow dives again, screaming as it plummets toward the wreached figure, plummets like an arrow. It veers off, and grazes him again with its shadow. The heat catches the motes in the sunbeams and rises higher and higher from the field. Summer heat. So cold.

He pushes himself up and flips the hair out of his green eyes. The motion sends his head reeling. He desperately grasps for control. The swallow cries out again. This time the scream is echoed within himself. Or perhaps it is only mimicked.

He has come here to think, to breathe. To "escape" she calls it. And she is right. More correct than she has ever been. At the end of a trampled trail of summer grass, to escape.

He's recorded his actions as he goes. Like the writer he is, like the writer he once was. He's got the tenses all wrong, and most of his thoughts run together. This is a bad habit, writing his life out in his mind, and yet he continues to write it.

It's his insurance. It is what keeps him real. Solidity. It is also his failing, because of it he can never really escape.

He's finally decided what to do with the thing inside him. Actually the decision itself was made a long time past. All that remains is to act upon that decision. It can't be allowed to come out. That much is clear. It's too dangerous, too real, too alive. It would, in all probability take his sanity, what little it hasn't already devoured. So that much is clear: it can't be allowed to see light.

A calm has settled over the field. The wheat is perfectly still, except for some of the trampled blades, which are trying to rise and obscure his path back to reality. He can't describe this sensation. The closest he can come is a relation to being under a shallow lake of green water. Perfectly still green water.

The water inside him is seething; frothing with fury. The thing inside him is angry. It wants out, it's tired of the darkness, tired of being submersed. In a sense he has become the field, violently whipping about, threatening to tear himself asunder. And the screams. The screams that mimic the swallow. The shadow of the swallow. The shadow with so much cold warmth. The shadow of the thing inside him. The thing that can't be allowed to get out. Can never be free.

Screaming.

He has slowly begun to realize that it can't be allowed to remain inside him anymore than it can be given freedom. He's begun to realize that it can't be allowed life. It must die, must be killed. That is why he is where he is. Why he came to the field. And why he's all alone in the center of it, lying in a tiny clearing of trampled wheat. Why he is inside somewhere he can't get out of, trying to escape.

The wheat is still, dense. He can't see through it, not even if he were to open his eyes.

There's a shadow creeping towards him. The sun is moving. That old fallacy. The earth is moving, or maybe just the wheat field. Regardless, it's darker. He does not see it of course, he only feels it. The shadow coming for the shadow inside him. Awaiting its birth. So eager.

It will not happen though. He's determined not to give it life. It's a thing of evil. The greatest of all things, the most powerful. It must be destroyed. Love has no place in his world and despite how loud its cries resound inside of him, it cannot be delivered. And it cannot grow inside him, because it is untrustworthy.

His love is the greatest thing he has. It is also the worst. It radiates evil. provocative desperate evil that gestates inside him and tries to escape through his mind. But it can no more get out than can he; trapped in the field of green wheat. A field covered in darkness like his kelly green eyes. A field where he has come to escape.

Not from her, though some would say so, but from the shadow inside him. She'll always be there, part of reality, like the swallow still flitting up above. He has to escape from the feeling he can't control.

He stares hard into the blackness of his eyelids, of his mind, and teetering for a second only, on the edge, dives into the raging waters. The last coherent thought he has is that his mental writing is failing. Almost as rapidly as he is falling.

There's darkness and then the sensation. Cold on cold, black on grey. Sight comes from blindness and he sees the shadow of love. It is beautiful and it is singing.

He realizes now that he cannot do what he has come so far to do. So he kisses love goodbye and through parted lips lets his life escape into the deep waters. Drowning it seems is so much easier than killing.

*Tim Stouffer*

### **Arbor**

A CHILD in May's corn  
(water-young, eyes seamed shut)  
wanders barefoot down muddy rows  
egg new.  
He knows that wish-balls  
blown with seamed eyes and grapefruit cheeks  
fall true.  
That raindrops twisting down a pane of glass  
are horses straining in a race  
and lightning bugs were made to be  
his rings.  
That rain-smell runs freely  
through city streets  
and feels cool in the gutters.  
All time is today and will be tomorrow  
and August is unknown.

*Sally Snyder, 1964*



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