

Literalines

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Statement of Policy and Purpose

The *Literalines* editorial board accepts original, previously unpublished works of fiction, poetry, black and white photography and line drawings from IUPUC students throughout the entire year. Each submission is reviewed by the entire board anonymously and judged solely on the basis of artistic merit and the standards set forth in the Guidelines, a copy of which is available upon request.



*Crystal Forest
Marge Bruns*

Eternity

"What nature delivers is never stale. Because what nature creates has eternity in it."

Isaac Bashevis Singer

Its stretched and stooped appendages reach to the heavens,
Lime green hands spreading out in webbed, warped ways,
Growing loftier, greater each year that passes.
Old, weathering stumps reveal rings that
Disclose ages past—while roots,
Like arthritis-stricken fingers, cultivate the soil
And things that died years prior.
In canyons created by growth,
Within dew-dipped earth
Worms and bugs
Make their dwelling-place.
Winged creatures weave nests of
Weeds and skeletons of ancient ancestors to
The maple, oak, and sycamore.

Joseph T. Anspaugh

Night Time Visitors

By L. Keith Loyd

Tom Garrett prepared to close his general store for the night. The odor of stale pipe and cigar smoke left by the recently departed loafers and the smell of newly applied linseed oil soaking into the rough hewn wooden floor mingled with the aroma coming from the barrel of bulk peanut butter. In the bin by the cash register, the oranges were growing a little overripe, and the St. Paul Bakery sugar cookies on the counter were beginning to take on their second day appearance. The drip-pan under the meat cooler had been emptied, and the plinking sounds of the melting ice droplets played their melodic tune on the metal bottom. As he shook down the ashes in the big base burner and lowered the gas-light, the merchant shivered at the thought of the sleigh ride home on this frigid January night. Putting on his heavy wool coat and sheep-skin hat, he opened the door to the sting of the winter wind.

The grocer could hear the sounds of the young people coming from Harding's Hill where they were undoubtedly gathered around the big bonfire or were sledding down the steep slope. He visualized them with their mucous mustaches, red noses, snow-covered clothes, and half-buckled boots. Tom had known most of these youngsters from the time of their birth except for three: the boy and girl, Bruce and Julie, whose father was

Carr's new farm hand, and Arley Hanson's granddaughter, Sarah, who had been pretty much abandoned by her parents. This had become more and more common in the hard depression days the country had been reeling under.

This trio had joined the future leaders of the community sometime during the past fall. Sarah was a beautiful girl with long dark hair and penetrating eyes. The two younger children were small for their age, but they appeared to be more cuddly than undernourished. Reflecting the classless attitude of children, these three newcomers had been accepted as equals by the youth of the community.

As Garrett turned to lock the door, Jenny, his horse, stirred at the side of the building, knowing that she would soon be in the barn with plenty of hay and oats to fortify her against the cold. Even though a solitary gasoline pump stood in front of the Garrett General Store, the owner still opted for this familiar but disappearing form of transportation to his farm on the outskirts of town. Then the unbelievable happened, and Tom Garret took his place in the folklore of the town of Far-A-Way.

Unnoticed by the departing loafers who had spent the evening listening to the political news on the grocer's community radio, a dark-colored four-door LaSalle sat quietly in the shadow of the bank directly across the street from the grocery. As the

"Then the unbelievable happened, and Tom Garrett took his place in the folklore of the town of Far-A-Way."

store's proprietor inserted his key in the front door lock, the sedan came alive. With the engine started, the driver negotiated a U-turn that placed the car right in front of the gasoline pump before the door key could be turned. Tom, startled, turned to see if he recognized the driver of the car. In the very dim light, he could make out the silhouettes of five occupants. The rear door opened, and a man wearing a long overcoat and a snap-down brim hat stepped out. "How about some gasoline?" he asked.

"Well, I was just closing. Can't you come back tomorrow?" The grocer, leery, responded.

"We're on our way to Chicago, and we can get there tomorrow if we have enough gas to get us through the night," the driver, who was a slight-built man with a mustache, offered as he came around the front of the car. A suit coat was his only protection against the chilling wind. "We'll be glad to pay a little extra, and buy some cigarettes, groceries and stuff if you'll consider opening up.

"You don't have to turn on the lights and waste any gas. We can see well enough to pick out what we want."

With sixty percent of his business on credit, Tom was sorely tempted by the possibility of extra sales on what had been a very slow day. Still, there was this foreboding feeling that these men were not the usual travelers who filled up, bought some candy bars, a few bottles of pop, paid cash and proceeded on their way. By this time, one more man was out of the car, and now they were positioned on either side of the small porch with one man confronting the grocer as he stood in front of the unlocked store. Visions of mob executions and cement shoes began to take shape in his head. What were his alternatives?

"Fellers, I would be happy to oblige

you, but I've been here all day, and my wife worries if I'm too late getting home. How about letting me put a quarter's worth of gas in your car, and that'll be enough to get you to the county seat? There's two or three places there that will still be open," the hesitant grocer tried sidestepping.

"No, no," replied the man with the suit coat as he started up the steps. "They may not have the groceries we want. This shouldn't take us long."

"Okay, but there are people expecting me," the reluctant grocer warned, hoping to impart some sign that his absence would be noticed.

"Why don't you fill up the tank first?" asked the driver. "That way we can keep the car running so the other guy won't be cold."

"Yeah, sure," said Tom thinking, "and it will make for a faster getaway after you rob and shoot me."

Stepping to the gasoline pump, the unwilling merchant unlocked the handle and proceeded to pump gasoline into the overhead dispenser. As he inserted the hose into the car's tank, he nonchalantly peered into the back seat. In the shadows, all he could make out was the outline of the passenger covered with a lap-robe and also wearing a snap brim hat. The thick glass of the limousine-type car seemed to magnify the slender cigarette holder the man clenched between his teeth. Little was known of godfathers in those days, but everybody, especially small town bankers and merchants, were aware of the Dillingers, Touhys, and Barkers. "Oh my God," Garrett thought. "With a big time mobster like this in the car, they will never let me live long enough to call the sheriff." His mind shifted to the twenty-two rifle kept under the counter for shooting rats in the seed bins. Discounting this option after considering the possibility of going

against real killers, the desperate man began to consider flight.

At this point, a fourth man emerged from the car. He appeared to be holding something at his side. He stepped into the shadows of the trees that covered the sparse lawn beside the store building. This effectively cut off Tom's remaining escape route.

"Don't get lost there Bill," called one of the men. "Remember, no messes."

"This isn't going to take too long," came the reply from the darkness.

Drained, the grocer allowed himself to be led back into the store.

"We'll take a dozen oranges, a half a dozen of those big sugar cookies; by the way, you don't have any way to make some hot coffee, do you?" asked the man with the overcoat, obviously the leader.

"No this is just a poor country grocery," Emphasizing the word "poor," Garrett continued. "Maybe you could use a quart of milk? Of course, you would have to pay a deposit on the bottle."

Some smiles appeared on the previously solemn faces, and overcoat replied, "I don't think this is the right crowd for that."

The rest of the group had collected some individual items from the shelves and were standing around the cash register. The store-keeper thought uneasily of the change bag he routinely hid under the meat cooler, and he hoped that his customers had the right change, if indeed they intended to pay at all. Figuring the bill on a brown paper bag, Garret said, "That'll be eight ninety-five." His heart sank as the men all reached in their pockets at the same time, and he closed his eyes. He was startled back into reality by a loud troublesome voice.

"Open the door and let us in." Sarah

Hanson commanded.

The teen-aged girl stood in the dim light, but Tom could see that she was holding a small body in her arms. Her normally positive eyes now appeared frantic. "We need the use of your phone to call for help. Something's happened to Julie. She isn't able to move her legs."

The small boy beside her added, "She ain't been feelin' good all day, and Mom thought she had a fever. Somebody went for Mom and Dad. We don't have a phone."

"Bring her over here to the counter," demanded the overcoat. Then, as if to explain, he went on, "I'm a doctor."

After a brief examination, the alleged doctor turned to one of the hatted men and whispered something. The man went out of the store and to the car where he apparently relayed a message. Before he could return, a young couple, obviously farm folks, rushed through the door.

"My God!" the mother exclaimed. "What's the matter with my little girl?"

"I'm afraid that you have a very sick child, ma'am," the stranger offered.

"What's wrong; who are you?" The parents spoke in unison.

"It appears that your child is in the acute stage of infantile paralysis," he continued. "I am a physician who deals with this type of problem. Your child will need some immediate attention to limit the damage, and then some long-range therapy to aid with recovery."

"We can't afford anything like that. I just got this job and about all it pays is food and rent." The father was distraught.

"The Boss wants to talk to you," said the hat, returning from the car and addressing the man examining the child.

"My God," the mother exclaimed. "What's the matter with my little girl?"

Tom looked around the room at the worried couple and the three young people and made up his mind. "I'm going to plead with them to let the others go, and I'll be their hostage so no one will tell about them being here." With this, he bent over and pulled the change bag from under the meat cooler and threw it on the counter for the men to see he was hiding nothing.

The overcoat returned, and before Tom could speak, the man said, "The boss sees what's going on here—".

Before he could finish, the shaken store keeper stammered, "H-h-h-ere, take the money, take the gas, hell take me, but let these poor people look after their child."

"Mister!" the man started over. "If you would let me finish, I wanted to tell you that the Boss has the same problem as this child, and after he visits the mayor in Chicago, he plans to go to Warm Springs, Georgia for therapy on his legs. He is going to fly down there from Chicago, but if your local doctor can have the girl and her mother ready Wednesday afternoon, the plane will land in Indianapolis and take them along at no expense. They can stay at the Little Whi- - - uh, Boss's house while the girl is getting the treatments."

"But why?" asked Tom.

"Just say because you took the time to accommodate some strangers on a cold night," offered the doctor.

"You know, young lady," the man turned to Sarah. "If you hadn't brought that child here right now, she may have been ill for some time before receiving the correct treatment. The Boss has been thinking that it might be a good idea to have some sort of foundation or national organization to help people out with this disease. You, Mister Garrett, and Julie may have started some-

thing big. Now we'll take our leave. Bill, where did that dog go?"

From the darkness, Bill could be heard coaxing, "Come on Fala! Come on, boy, it's cold out here."

About that time, the county sheriff's car pulled up in front of the store. The sheriff, a big man, came into the store past the departing strangers. They nodded at one another as if they were acquainted. The officer greeted the grocer. "Howdy, Tom. I hear you have somebody here who needs transportation to the county seat hospital."

"We sure do, Bill. This feller says he is a doctor, and Julie has that infantile paralysis. Her parents work for the Carrs. She needs some treatment right now. You must have been right in this area?" Garrett answered, part anxious, part suspicious, still cautiously eyeing the other men.

As the grocer spoke, the sheriff stopped one of the strangers. "You tell him," the law officer nodded toward the car, "That all departments are alerted, and that he should have plenty of security the rest of the way to Chicago."

The man replied, "Thank you, Sheriff. Maybe we can return the favor someday."

With this, the party left the store, and the merchant, noticing a forgotten package, rushed after them. As the men entered the automobile, the lights from the running patrol car illuminated the inside of the sedan. For a brief instant, the confused store-keeper was able to see the face that he immediately recognized from hundreds of newspaper photos. The car began to roll. Tom Garrett, standing on the front steps of his general store, waved feebly, and then remembered, "Oh, Mr. President, you forgot your St. Paul Bakery sugar cookies."



No Reply
Richard Lasky

February '91
(for Pop)

How did you tickle me
the whole night through
and still wake with the roosters?
There was reason to live
when you fed me the assurance
of rainbows after the storm.
Twangy voices blare on the a.m.
in an old rusty red truck
with tales of BBQ chips and root beer.
"What will she do without her Pop?"
he asks.
No reply.
Carry me upstairs on your back when my eyes are shut.

Jodi Brooks

*Listening To Her Undress
(For Jerry Garcia)*

*From nine to five
she's pristine and seventeen,
her black hair pinned up
above the collar
of a plain brown dress—
the very model of maturity.*

*Five o'clock comes:
Ties loosen, purses come out
for a trip to the grocery before heading home.
She slips into the bathroom
next to where I lick envelopes
for the evening mail.*

*I pray for a sepulchral silence
but defeat my own aims,
shuffling around so she won't notice.
There are no petticoats rustling
behind the bathroom door.*

*Inside,
one shoe drops,
then the other.
Barefoot now.
Only the whisper of a zipper and the sound
of pantyhose drawn down.*

*I imagine her
nearly naked.
She opens a bookbag.
I hear the zip of cut-offs
and slap of leather sandals
against her bare feet.*

*The bathroom door opens.
(As if an inch of wood is all that keeps us apart.)
She is a mass of rainbows,
a tie-dyed dream—idiotic bears march across her breasts.*

She loves him more than me.

Matthew Grubaugh

My Mona Lisa

In a studio flat, ten by twelve, I prepare my pallet
wet with oils that will angle, shade and soften a callus
canvas I have come to know and needle often
under my breath. She will arrive soon, late as usual.

She says she prefers strawberries at break,
a loaf of fresh bread, cheese, and a bottle of wine, red.
I provide peaches and cream, day old pumpernickel
and white wine. She arrives, filling the room with her scent.
Quiet, she eyes a peach and disrobes.

The rains relax her evening; she eases
carefully on the cloth of her own impression.
I eye her for a moment, suggest, wrinkle my brow
till the light is perfect. I make a playful gesture,
squeeze my shoulders inward — and then begin.

An hour into our session the rains stop.
Her body tightens slightly; I hesitate. Tree branches in need
of pruning bend and tap the glass. I open the
window with a slight push, pause, and begin again.

A salty nervousness drips as she grows impatient.
The tension tempts me to guess as she bites her
lower lip. I stay careful to the task.
She tassels a loose thread tight round one finger.

J. Michael Buchanan

A Face

Everyday, I face the same old face,
the face with no love,
the face that does not believe in me
and that has no feelings.
The same old face
laughs at my mistakes,
tries to ruin my achievements.
For every imperfection
that is put on my face,
your face grows more beautiful.
The same face smiles
when tears run down my cheeks.
The face is one of a friend,
a friend that
is only there when convenient,
only cares
when she gets something in return.
Forever, I thought
I could learn to love the face.
But I cannot.
You,
the old face,
will not let me get the satisfaction
of loving you.

Danielle Boyce

Rest in Peace

Hands clasped together,
Staring skyward,
Hopeful,
Vigilant,
He soothed his sores.
Praying for relief,
A crucifix in his hand.
He ended up in the grave.

Veiled and sandaled,
Facing east,
Placid,
Devout,
She sought an answer,
Looking for hope
In Mecca's swirling sand.
She ended up in the grave.

Bearded in black,
Living kosher,
Pious,
Restrained,
He searched for strength
Wearing David's star
On the advice of a rabbi.
He ended up in the grave.

Separated by belief,
Pointing fingers,
Persecuted,
Persecuting,
They never expected
To become desperate companions,
Citizens in rot,
Whose divided beliefs
Ended up in the grave.

Travis Fendley

Louisiana Medicine

By Lori Morell-Lasky

I was born on the kitchen table of our home in the bayou right after the clock struck twelve midnight on the morning of November first. Mine was a joyous birth, being the first girl after the five boys my mother already had delivered. My momma told me that I had come quick and easy and that is how she knew I was gonna be a girl. She said the boys' had been long and difficult births, but not mine. She named me Cassandra, Cassie for short, after some character she had seen in a picture show.

I was born seconds into All Souls Day, and this was a good sign to my momma who believed in signs, talismans and such things. She would sit at our kitchen table for hours and mix up all kind of herbs and medicinal remedies for whatever ailed us or our neighbors. Momma was kind of famous in the neighborhood, for she had a cure for everything and a totem for about every evil spirit that lurked.

Some called her a *traiteur* or healer, and called upon her to do all sorts of rituals, from blessing a new house to bringing luck to an

oyster or shrimp fisherman. Young brides unable to bear children called her to do whatever she could to make them fertile, more often than not, they became pregnant. All of her totems and bottles of water and assorted herbs and plants were kept above the kitchen stove in a split-oak basket. The prayers and incantations she kept in her head.

Daddy wasn't much into the spirit world, but he let Momma do whatever she liked because the extra money or items given in exchange for her services kept our family afloat. There wasn't much industry or anything in the bayou to keep a man working full-time, so Daddy got by with part-time work here and there. His specialty was hunting and fishing tours of the bayou. He knew our section of the swamp like the back of his hand. Daddy grew up in the house we now shared with Grandmere Kate and Grandpere Dan. Grandpere taught Daddy everything he knew about the swamp and how to

be a good swamp guide, and in the spring and the fall it paid off.

Grandpere Dan had built our house himself over forty years ago when he and Grandmere Kate had first been married. Like most Cajun homes, our

house was set on posts to keep us above the crawling animals and give us some protection from the dampness and floods. We lived in Houma, Louisiana, which was in Terrebonne Parish. Folks said the parish was only two hours away from New Orleans by car, but I didn't know if that was true since I had never been outside of Houma.

Grandmere Kate had taught my momma all about being a *traiteur*. She had no daughters of her own, and since I was the only girl, the tradition would be handed down to me. Now that I was getting to be a big girl, I was going on fourteen, it was time I started to learn the trade. "Ain't nothing more important than a *traiteur* in Cajun country, girl," my Grandmere was always

"The prayers and incantations she kept in her head."

telling me. "You gonna be a special one, Cassie, because you was born on the All Souls Day and come quick, which is a good sign." I always wanted to ask why being born on November 1 was such a good sign, but I never did.

One evening a loud and desperate rapping on our screen door echoed through the house and drew both me and Momma's attention from the work we were doing upstairs. The rest of the family was out in the swamp fishing with Daddy. I held my breath. The knocking came again, louder and more frantic.

"Go down and see who's there Cassie," my momma whispered loudly. "If it's someone you don't know, do not open the door, but grab your daddy's hunting gun and come right back here." By the way the person was knocking, you thought the world was coming to an end.

I hurried down the stairs and through the narrow hallway that ran straight from the rear of the house to the front. The sight of Tammy Henderson's face with her nose against the screen stopped me in my tracks and turned my feet to lead. She looked as white as the feathers on a heron, her coffee black hair wild and her eyes full of terror.

"Where's your

momma?" she cried frantically.

I called out to Momma and then stepped up to the door. Tammy was a tall, lean girl about two years older than me. At sixteen, she was the oldest of three children. I knew her mother was soon ready to have the fourth. "What's wrong Tammy?" I asked, putting my arm around her. "Is it your mother?"

Immediately, she burst into tears, her shoulders heaving and falling with the sobs, her hair falling into her face. I looked back into the house in time to see Momma come out of the kitchen with her basket. She took one look at Tammy and made the sign of the cross across her breast.

"Speak child, quick," Momma said, rushing up to the girl.

Between her sobs Tammy said, "My mother... gave birth . . . too soon and the baby's . . . dead."

"Oh my Lord!" Momma said, and made the sign of the cross again. "I felt it," she said, her eyes turned to me. I recalled the moments during our work when she had raised her gaze and listened to the sounds of the night. The cry of a loon had sounded like the cry of a baby.

"My pa sent me to fetch you," Tammy wailed through her tears. Momma

nodded and grabbed my hand and said, "Let's go Cassie. I can't leave you here alone, and it's about time you had some experience."

I was confused and frightened, and that lead feeling came over my feet again. "What can you do for them now that the baby is dead, Momma?" I asked.

"Get the lantern," she ordered, instead of answering. I hurried to do so, forgetting the question.

We followed Tammy back to her house across the gravel highway and further into the swamp. All around us the air seemed to come to life in the dark. Night birds cawed, frogs croaked, and snakes slithered over the cool grass.

"Why are we going to the Henderson's house, Momma? Isn't it too late?"

"I guess you are old enough for me to tell you," she said so quietly that I had to strain to hear. "An evil spirit, called a couchemal, lurks about when an unbaptized baby dies. If we don't drive it away, it will haunt the family and bring them bad luck. They should have called me as soon as Mrs. Henderson started her birthing," mumbled Momma.

"Momma, have you done this before?" I knew that Momma was called away to do many rituals, but this was the first time I had ever heard of a couchemal.

"Many times, child," she replied. "Just like Grandmere Kate and her mother before her and like you will in the future, so watch carefully."

"Have you always been able to chase away the evil spirit?"

"I always have, but an inexperienced traiteur could do more harm than good. That is why it is so important for you to learn from the best," she answered.

Before I could respond, the Henderson house loomed in front of us and the sounds of crying could be heard. Mr. Henderson was sitting out on the galerie waiting for us.

"Thanks for coming so soon, Liz. The women folk are all inside."

Momma had been in the house several times before and knew right where to go. She went straight to the bedroom to comfort Mrs. Henderson. She lay on the bed with her eyes closed and her hair fanned out on the pillow. Momma walked over and took her hand, and she opened her eyes.

"Oh Liz, I'm so glad you're here," said Mrs. Henderson in a loud whisper. She clutched Momma's hand. "I felt it. I felt the baby's

heart start and stop, and then I felt the couchemal slip away...." her voice trailed off.

"Rest Emma," she said patting her hand. She rummaged through her basket and came out with a bottle of holy water. She

turned and looked at me and said, "Grab the lantern and take me through every room in the house so I can bless every doorway and window. We've got to get the spirit out

of the house."

We started with the bedroom and worked our way from the front of the house to the back. As we came to the last window I thought I saw a small white mist shaped like a baby fly out the window. I gasped and jumped back, but Momma went forward and said a final prayer at the door. We then went out to the front of the house and Momma gave Mr. Henderson a bottle of the holy water to sprinkle around the house, especially around the windows, for the next ten days.

On the way back home, I asked Momma if the white mist had been the spirit. She stopped and looked real hard at me. "Cassie, did you see some-

thing leave that last window?" she asked me, her fingers digging into my hand.

"Yesssss," I said shakily. Momma shook her head, "In all my years of healing, I ain't never seen the spirit. I felt it, but never did I see it. Did you feel it, Cassie? Did you feel something in that house that wasn't right when we first entered?"

I thought about it and said, "Yes, I felt something. I don't know how to explain it, but it felt like when you can't sleep at night and you're real restless."

"Exactly," said Momma. "But you not only felt the spirit, you saw it leave the house?" I nodded my head.

"It was like the smoke from Grandpere's pipe when it curls around his head, but this had a form to it . . . it looked like a baby." I started to cry.

"Why you crying child?" Momma asked.

"Because you said you ain't never seen a spirit, and I did without even trying," I wailed.

"Cassie you stop it this minute. Just because I don't see the spirits doesn't mean I don't know that they are there, but because you can see them means that you have a very special gift." She smiled at me and bent down to hug me.

"All traiteurs have different talents and gifts, and

"The Henderson house loomed in front of us, and the sounds of crying could be heard."

your healing powers will be different from mine," she reassured me. "Now you need to learn how to use this gift, this third eye as some may call it. We will talk about it in the morning," she said to me as we approached the house.

That night as I lay in bed, all I could see was the white mist in the shape of a baby. All at once, I thought I saw the shape turn back and come after me. It chased me throughout the house and was just about to grab my hair when I woke up in a cold sweat. My heart was racing as I recalled the scene. What did it mean?

I had to go back to the Henderson house and take another look at that window. So, as quietly as possible, I slipped into my clothes and out of the house. I grabbed a lantern on the way out, but waited to light it until I was well on my way. As I walked, it appeared to me that a white mist covered everything. I knew it was my imagination playing tricks on me, but I did start to walk faster. I didn't know what I would find when I got to the Henderson's, but I knew I had to go back.

As I approached the house, I saw what appeared to be a fog surrounding it, and out of this fog appeared several images. These images kept circling the house

and trying to get in through the windows and doors, but the holy water must have been holding them off. All of a sudden, I saw one of the spirits leap up onto the roof and race toward the chimney. Oh no! We hadn't blessed the area around the fireplace. As I watched, I wondered if the spirits could get in that way. The first spirit appeared to be beckoning to the rest as they all headed for the roof. I stifled a scream and dropped the lantern. Just then a small, misty white spirit looked at me. It was the baby. It started towards me, like in the dream, and I ran.

I ran and ran and ran. I ran through the marsh grass down to the edge of the swamp. I was too scared to turn around just in case the spirit was still after me. I ran to where my daddy kept a spare pirogue and jumped in and started to pole through the water. I knew this area as well as any of my brothers for all the times they dragged me fishing with them. I pushed and polled the pirogue as far as my tired arms would let me, and finally I sat down to rest.

I looked around me and all was quiet, but how could I be sure that some-

thing wasn't lurking in the mist surrounding the swamp? I laid my head down and began to cry. If I hadn't gone along with Momma and seen the spirit, this would never have happened. I must have dozed off, for the next thing I knew the sun was burning down on me, and I was drifting.

I rubbed the sleep from my eyes and looked around. I didn't recognize this area of the swamp, but that didn't mean anything. As long as I steered myself south, I would eventually find home. Home, I had to go back and get Momma and Grandmere Kate to get me out of this mess. I picked up my pole and started pushing the boat

back south. I was hot, tired and hungry, and it took me forever to get out of the area I was in. Night was upon me, but I still knew the way, remembering all the tricks my brothers had taught me about using the stars for direction.

Finally, I saw our docking area and pulled over. Our other pirogue was out, and I figured that the rest of the family was out looking for me. As I climbed out of the boat, Grandmere Kate came running down the dock. "Thank goodness you're not

"It chased me throughout the house, and was just about to grab my hair when..."

hurt, child," she said. "When we found you gone, we figured something must have spooked you. When they didn't find you in the spare pirogue, they knew you had to be somewhere out in the swamp."

"Oh Grandmere, it was the most terrible thing. First, I dreamed the baby spirit was chasing me, and then after I went over to the Henderson's house, it did start chasing me. I was afraid, and I couldn't come back here and bring that awful spirit with me." I cried as she held me.

"It's all right girl. After the Hendersons found the lantern, your momma and I went back to cleanse the house and the surrounding area of the evil spirits. Now get into this house so we can find a way of cleansing you of the spirits!"

"Is it okay for me to come into the house?" I asked. Grandmere just nodded her head yes.

The next morning, after a good night's sleep

and a reassuring prayer from Momma, I told them what I saw at the Henderson's. "This time there was more than one spirit, but only the baby spirit came after me."

They looked at each other and then at me, and then started to speak. "This is way above us, Cassie. We know of others who can see spirits, but we don't know how they control them. Maybe we need to send you to someone more experienced than we are."

Grandmere Kate said, "I once knew a lady in New Orleans who practiced voodoo, and maybe she can help you. Her name is Nina, and she has a place on the edge of a cemetery off the French Quarter. This is clearly a sign that it is time you left the Bayou to explore your gift outside us."

Momma smiled and nodded her head. "It's time for you to learn more than we can teach you about being a traiteur. It's time you became an apprentice under someone else. The combina-

tion of the two powers will make you a great healer one day, Cassie, but it is outside of our realm to teach you."

I was nervous and excited all at the same time. I did want to be a great healer and understand how to deal with seeing spirits, but going to New Orleans was a frightening thought.

"Don't you worry none," said Grandmere Kate. "Nina will take good care of you and teach you what you need to know, and the sooner you get started, the better. I'll go into town and call her and get it all set up." She leaned over and hugged me, "We'll miss you, Cassandra, but we know what these gifts will mean to the people of this area when you get back."

"I just knew you were special the moment you were born on All Souls Day," said Momma as she patted my hand. "You are growing up Cassandra and things will never be the same."



The Road Home
Travis Fendley

Since You Left

Since you left,
the red,
strong
grape juice is poison,
the wood rigid,
ice-blue cold.
Flowers are poor, cracked
and vain,
like lonely, hollow shells
on shore.

Rita Fisher

Maturation

Out-stretched spiny fingers
soiled and rough
Cling to a trim jade stem,
Support velvet tear drops
Kissed with vibrant hues.

Withering feeble fingers
brittle and cracking
Search for a sagging earthtoned stalk,
Scatter black leather flakes.

Heather Pangburn

If the Flowers on the Front Porch Died

I have a lovely vase that sits
like a queen above the small,
glass figurines in the china case.
And what a treasure I've found
in a certain leather-bound book, rich
among the classics in my collection.
I dust the case and the hardwood
shelves with a lonely sort of caring.
I keep the floor neatly swept;
the long, cold counters
of my kitchen are clear,
the flowers on my porch
watered each noonday, for you.

You nod, and smile in your
usual way. I am quite, and quietly, familiar
with your disinterest. I needn't mention
that the blinds are newly-scrubbed,
the sinks bleached white, the sheets
stretched taut. I suspect
I needn't mention anything at all.
I'd expect no change in your nature
if these chores were left off, my diligence
discouraged as it is by your indifference.
I'd expect no more reaction from you
should I stand here and shout
obscenities, shake my fist
in desperate anger.
I'd expect no more reaction from you
than if the flowers on the front porch died.

Janet Nielander

Sixteen

I force back a quick shot
and press close against the cool wall
waiting for the burning to subside.
Music seeps thick
through stale air cluttered
with muffled laughter and bodies
pressed too close, swaying
in a human, pulsing rhythm.
I light a cigarette and hold it loosely
between my lips that still yearn
for the smooth taste of you.
Across the room a man turns;
his coal eyes catch and hold me still.
Silently pushing his way through the crowd,
he comes close.
Pressing his body hard against mine,
he replaces my cigarette with dry lips
and the familiar scent of burnt weed.
His hands travel freely; I lose myself
in the music and movement,
wishing his callused fingertips,
tense, gripping hands, and strong arms
were you: tender, kind and long ago.
He pulls me, in directions I cannot fight.
Past a closed door, to an open bed,
he pulls me. My eyes sting
from the heat, and salty tears swell
as he pulls me close, streaking
my white skin scarlet
when he pulls too hard.
I know nothing but surrender.

Sarah Malcomb

The Rats Have Won the Race

Careless, the lab attendant exits, lights out,
A single cage unlocked . . .
And though only one rat escapes,
A brutal plan is unleashed.

First one, then four,
The word is spread.
And the pack is soon free.
Cageless now, in sinister swarms,
They descend on man's cities.

Urgent, seeking revenge.

They storm the streets,
A great river of rodents,
Laughing rat laughs,
Their time is now.

A man working on a cable is cornered,
Confronting the swarm.
Five rats hold open his eyes,
While three more aim the syringe.

A woman is pinned
In her own bathtub,
While furry fiends
Lacquer her face with hair spray and shaving foam.

A worker dangles, in flight,
Having escaped atop an electrical pole;
They ascend by the hundreds,
But the voltage gets him first.

Rats in the shopping mall,
Performing impromptu autopsies.
Rats in the kitchen,
Making meals not fit to eat;
Rats in the pool,
Testing man's ability to grow gills;
Laughing rat laughs,
Their time is now.

The lab attendant, crippled, caged,
Stares as they thrust sticks through the bars.
His last thought:
the rats have won.

The rats have won the race.

Travis Fendley

Virtual Dichotomy

I.

Clothing perspires in the hamper
while dishes float in stagnant water.
Bills lie unopened on dusty bureaus.

Life as I know it continues
monotonous and mundane,
each day a repeat of the previous.

One foot after the other
I trudge, maintaining—
simply maintaining.

It is winter.

Death and decay hover,
challenge — daring—
stilling my being.

Like a spring bulb, I emerge
new and fresh, wanting to
feel, to live again.

But the late winter frost
crushes my existence
just as reality crushes
with thick, leather boots,
leaving an imprint deep in my soul.

II.

A world exists where
spring lasts forever:
A spectrum broad and colorful,
the laundry forgotten,
the dishes ignored.

Bills? What bills?

Flowers are brimming in this bed of lively blooms —
Tulips, pansies and forget-me-nots.

It is like being in the city—
lights—excitement—
Christmas in February.
Each present opened with glee. . .
the unwrapping brings as much pleasure
as the gift found within.
Who cares if it is winter?
I wrap myself in blankets
of new-fashioned friends.

III.

Reconciliation.

Can I blend my two worlds?
Can winter be synchronic with spring?
With each keystroke, I try—
speaking from one world to the other.
Introducing new blooms to old,
A hybrid emerges,
giving me the desire to
launder those clothes,
to rid the sink of its staleness.

My flower garden is a blending
of exotic and familiar friends.
My winter is my spring.
My reality is mixed with virtuality.
And I like this place . . .
My soul is losing the imprint
of bootmarks.
I dare anyone to challenge this.

Dara Tormochlen



o d
 e
k

Yesterday
I went fishing.
The fun began as he
jerked, pulled, swirled,
Swished, and splashed.
I enjoyed reeling him in!
Today, another goes fishing.
The fight begins as I jerk
pull, swirl, swish, and
splash. He's enjoying
reeling me in.
This is what
keeps those
bait
sellers
in business.

John Posey

Priorities

Dishes
crusted over
with last night's dinner
are balanced
beyond the boundaries
of the kitchen sink.

Traces
of the world outside
are tracked
across the pale, gray carpeting.

Piles
of dingy,
sweat-stained laundry
lie waiting to explode
like an inactive volcano.

A bright orange fruit loop
is permanently glued
to the small, kitchen table.

A purple stain
lingers
in the shape of an amoeba,
confessing the story
of spilt Juicy Juice.

Visions of beds unmade
and floors unswept
haunt the occupants
while they play
their roles in life's scheme.

Frantic schedules,
bellowing bosses,
and squealing children
do not permit housecleaning
on their time.

Tonya Bower

Childhood

Discarded, crumpled Tee-shirts,
unceremoniously dumped on the floor.

Sweat-soaked socks
stiffen in the corner.

Dusty, once-treasured trophies
sit neglected on the shelf.

Cleats encased in petrified mud
leave droppings behind.

Noble pennants with crinkled corners are
painstakingly stapled to the wall,

Crushed splinters of sunflower shells
spat out in a cracked Shoney's cup.

A lonely laundry basket
lies hollowly empty.

These remainders left recklessly behind
are the essence of childhood.

Cindi Foster

Etiquette

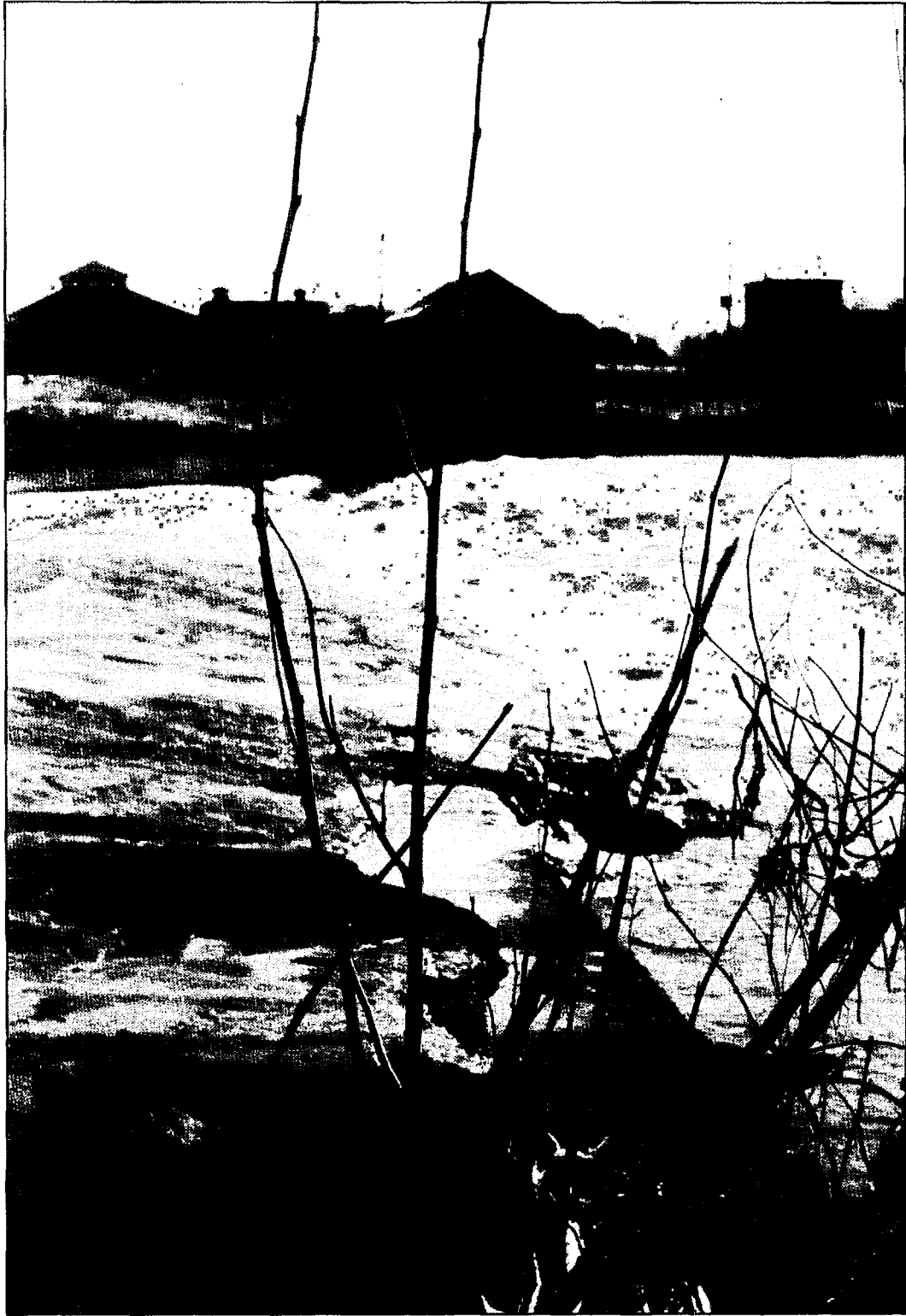
"Nature has an etiquette all her own."

Ludwig van Beethoven

Upon clifty stone walls
I visualize your elegance.
Your work is art,
Your beauty is brilliance.
As I look down, I see
Radiant, intimidating landscapes—
Trees topped with green grandeur,
Snow-dusted, palatial mountain tops,
Rippling rills of energy—
Etching courses through you like veins.

Upon this natural earth,
I experience your allure.
As I stand here I feel
Great displays of power—
Relentless gusts of winding winds,
Pounding, pulsing rain,
Striking bolts of electricity—
Creating hands that hold the world.

Joseph T. Anspaugh



*Ankle-Deep
Mary Jordan*

*Recollecting:
From Bent-willow Rocking*

*From bent-willow rocking
I perceive through the porch screen
past low green of clover cool
a rolling and rivering route
way past my presence.*

*Its cadence kisses my ear,
whispering its time,
its place, its name
small within me.*

*I have known its frothy white,
its rumbling rhythm,
its frenzy.*

*Here - I discern through the depths,
constant crystalline.
My way is here.*

*Collected, holding my breath,
gently holding my skirt,
ankle-deep, pebbled sand cradles sure.*

*I have made this way before, yet
virgin waters wash me.
Memory plays part,
seeps up sudden under foot
solid, smoothly flooding the stage
if I sweep it up with the skirts.*

*If I sweep it up with the skirts,
chance to right is mine.
If I sweep it up,
it composes white water,
it warms icy shards,
it soothes the quaking,
it hushes the hail.
If I sweep it up,
it rocks calmly and carries
me to the other side
to unknown, and
to this launch again,
If I sweep it up.*

Julie DeVine Phillips

Cough Drops

A Short Story

By Travis Fendley

Coffee over the snif-
fles. Pick hated
this time of year.
The bacon and
egg brunch lay
cold and un-
touched on his
plate; his meal
today consisted
of Hall's medi-
cated tablets, the
wrappers strewn
convincingly around the
table. Pick sniffed and
snorted and wheezed. The
fifth of January, Christmas
past, New Year's gone, and
already Pick could sense the
way the year was going.
Pick blew his nose in a nap-
kin and signaled for the wait-
ress to bring him more cof-
fee, the only thing he'd been
able to taste in three days.

Dingy sunlight
through the glass, the clatter
of cooking implements, dis-
jointed conversations, dis-
jointed thoughts, disjointed
people. Milo's at nine-
thirty. A group of construc-
tion workers sat in a corner
booth. People at the counter
perched like birds atop the
worn leather stools. Pick
had been coming to Milo's
for brunch every weekday,
like clockwork, for the past
three years, but not for food.
Milo's served as a connect-

"Gullet had told him the man had money, plenty of money, money to burn."

ing place, a place to meet and
discuss business.

P i c k
checked his
watch. Gullet had
said nine, nine-
thirty, and here it
was, come and
gone. His ap-
pointment would
be here soon or
not at all. Pick
sipped his coffee, watched
the door.

Gullet had told him
the man had money, plenty of
money, money to burn. Pick
found himself unconsciously
looking for a well-dressed
man, the lawyerly type, the
doctorish type,
even though he
had no idea
who this man
was. Gullet
had spoken of
wealth, of a
simple request
(to be defined
later), and easy
money. Pick
lived for easy
money.

At twenty to, a man
in a brown cashmere over-
coat walked into Milo's, into
the din of the daytime restau-
rant traffic, and into the gaze
of Pick's scrutiny. Pick half-
stood as the man passed,

thinking he'd found his man,
but the man in the overcoat
whisked past, oblivious.

"Hey," Pick said, his
voice hoarse and fragile.

The man turned
around.

"You Amstel?"

"Excuse me?"

"Amstel. Jonathan
Amstel."

"Uh, no. I think you
have the wrong man."

Pick sniffed harshly
and sat down again. Maybe
Gullet had gotten the best of
him. Maybe his breakfast
had gotten the best of him.
Maybe his cold had gotten
the best of him. Pick was

ready to go
home and call it
a day, curl up in
bed and forget
this morning
had ever hap-
pened. Screw
it. It was time
to go home.

L e a v -
ing a five on the
table, Pick hit
the door and

felt the full sour taste of
January fill his lungs. To
warm them up again, he lit a
cigarette. Downtown traffic
always pissed Pick off, but
today was getting to be
worse, much worse. Did

"The man had obviously been burned, and badly. His face looked almost molten, twisted forever into a sick death grimace."

Gullet think he had all day to waste?

Pick's Dodge, parked across the street, wedged in at a meter, flagged red in expiration, a yellow slip of paper tucked under the wiper blade. Pick hissed smoke through scorched nostrils and tried to calm himself. Yes, today was turning out

great. Maybe he'd die in his sleep and it would all be over. Pick slipped the ticket into his coat pocket and reached for the car door.

Abruptly, a gloved hand slipped persuasively over his own.

In sunlit reflection, in the car door's glass, Pick could see the distorted face of the man behind him. Dark suit. Face twisted, mangled somehow, framed by a dark-colored fedora. The grin the man wore could only be described as maniacal.

With slow trepidation, Pick turned and countenanced the man.

"Pick? That is your name, yes?"

The face -- the reflection hadn't been far off. The man had obviously been burned, and badly. His faced looked almost molten, twisted forever into a sick

death grimace. As Pick stared, the man's face transformed into the semblance of a smile.

"Pick?"

"Yes." Pick's voice came out a rough gasp.

"My name is Jonathan Amstel."

And the hand, gloved, extended in a gesture of greeting, of invitation.

"A Snow globe?"

"Yes. I believe that is what those things are called."

"One of those little plastic things that you shake up and snow swirls around inside?"

"That's it exactly."

"Bullshit."

Pick, even through his cold-medicine haze, through the sour taste of cough drops, through his empurpled nostrils, even through all that, Pick could smell bullshit. Gullet had sent him a flake. There was no doubt of that now. The man looked like he'd recently emerged from the grave, or a plane crash, or some horrible catastrophe, and here he was, back in Milo's throwing Pick some hard-sell line about (of all things) a *snow globe*. One

thing was certain, above all others: Gullet was a dead man.

"A snow globe," Pick repeated.

"It's a family heirloom. Of sorts. My wife -- my *ex-wife*, she has no idea how important it is to me. To my family."

"And all I have to do is go in and get it."

"That's right."

"If this . . . *heirloom* is so important to you, why can't you just go and ask your ex for it back? Why do you need me?"

"It's complicated. It's a long story."

"I have all day."

"Well, suffice it to say that my wife and I are no longer on speaking terms."

"I suspected that."

"And she's changed the locks. Not that that matters. I can't even get near her place—*our* place. Our old place. She has managed to get a restraining order against me."

"Okay—listen. Gullet must have told you that domestic troubles are not my specialty. I'm an indoor man; I'll give you that. But not this shit. It's out of line. It's not my style. If you need money, I'm your man. Drugs. Guns. I'm the guy to talk to. But this...I just don't know."

The man — the *freak*—seemed to tense up.

"Here he was back in Milo's throwing Pick some hard-sell line about (of all things) a snow globe."

“Look—I’m not leaving. Not yet. I’m not saying no. You obviously convinced Gullett that this was important enough for him to send you to me. But, me? I’m just not convinced.”

The man sensed his cue. “This job...this task. I’ll pay you dearly.”

Pick’s watery eyes brightened. But only a little. “How much?”

The man told him. Pick had to ask him again. The man repeated the same figure. Pick sat there, stunned. The figure—the price: Pick off the top of his head didn’t know how many zeroes there were in it. It was too big. It was ridiculous.

“And all you want is...a *snow globe*?”

“It’s very important to me,” the man said, a sentiment of significance, of resignation. Pick suddenly felt sorry for the man, for his distorted features, for his family troubles, for his loss. The man had money, obviously plenty of money, but still he *needed*; he needed something completely in Pick’s grasp to deliver. It was easy money, sure, but for Pick, money was something that comes and goes, a perennial tide. This was a

chance, however small, to help someone, to *truly* help someone. To Pick, the job was so easy it was nearly insignificant. To Pick, it was almost *legal*.

“The figure, the price: Pick, off the top of his head, didn’t know how many zeroes there were in it ...it was too big. It was ridiculous.”

“I’ll get it tonight,” Pick heard himself say. He’d done it. He’d signed on. “Meet me here tomorrow at ten.”

Twenty-to three. Pick, in the rain, in his rusted Dodge, the car he’d bought for jobs like these, an inconspicuous car, a car that blended in. Unfortunately, it was getting to be a car that didn’t want to run. Lately, Pick’s Dodge had begun to act as sick as Pick felt, refusing to start, refusing to stop.

The wipers thudded rhythmically. Pick sniffed harshly and began to wonder about this job, about the money: what was he going to do with all of it? First off, Pick thought, the car would go. Next, better duds, a better lifestyle. Maybe he could pay somebody to help him get rid of this cold.

His throat felt like someone had gone at it with a cheese grater. Pick swallowed, a thick guttural void, and felt razor blades dance down his throat.

Pick leaned over and

popped the glovebox, and a cascade of Hall’s fell onto the passenger floorboard.

* * *

Jonathan Amstel heard the sound of the front door and picked up the telephone. He dialed three digits and waited.

“Yes. I’d like to report an intruder.”

Pause.

“411 Childress Court. This is Jonathan Amstel. Please hurry.”

Jonathan put down the phone. He could hear the footsteps on the stairs, quiet footsteps, the steps of someone who doesn’t want to be heard. Idiot. Jonathan could hardly wait to spring his plan, could hardly wait to see the look on Pick’s face. This was going to be one night he wouldn’t forget.

The door to Jonathan’s bedroom crept open. The lights in the bedroom weren’t on, so Jonathan knew that Pick wouldn’t see him, at least not right away. He’d planned this out. Everything was to be to his own advantage.

A silhouette appeared at the door. A face. A dark figure. Jonathan smiled and, like a magician, switched on the bedroom light, revealing the illusion, revealing everything.

Pick stood in the doorway, awash in light.

His eyes narrowed, focused.

"Pick," Jonathan said. "Come on in. We've been expecting you."

A loaded word: *we*. Jonathan was not alone in the bedroom. He knew Pick could see that now. Jonathan's wife (not *ex*, of course not, many lies had been told today) lay on the floor beside him, her throat ripped to shreds. She'd been stabbed thirty-four times. He'd kept count. Each one had come with its own particular bliss, its own ecstasy. Ding dong, the bitch is dead. Jonathan couldn't remember a happier time. His whole life had been leading here. And now the final player had arrived: the court jester, the scapegoat.

Jonathan could see Pick's face, watched with delight as Pick saw the scene, took it in, began to understand. If Pick was surprised, Jonathan thought he held it in; he played it well. Pick stood there, undaunted, with an expression of understanding. Pick knew now what was happening, why he'd been brought here, but refused to allow Jonathan the pleasure of gloating, of sensing shock, surprise. Pick played his part well, but with a poker face.

This disturbed Jonathan.

"You see? Do you

understand? The police are on their way, Pick. And I'm about to have a nervous breakdown. All for play, of course. Except for you. Do you understand?"

Pick said nothing.

"You have to admit, even now, that it was a pretty good plan, don't you? Even you -- especially you -- can see beauty in trickery, can't you?"

Pick said nothing. He stood, stoically, unfazed.

"What's the matter, Pick? Am I to believe I've shocked you into silence?"

Pick reached into his pocket and withdrew a box of cough drops. He looked down at it, in his hand, considered a moment, then said: "No. You'll have to believe me when I say I've recently grown unshockable."

Distantly: the sound of sirens, of oncoming police.

"You hear that, Pick? Unshockable? I doubt that. They're coming, Pick. They're coming for you."

Pick pulled a cigarette from his shirt pocket and lit it. He crossed to the bed and sat on the edge, smoking quietly.

"That's it, Pick. There's no way out. I'm glad you understand."

"I don't think *you* understand."

"What do you mean?"

Pick held up the box of cough drops. The word *Hall's* was written across the top. "Do you see these?"

"Yeah. So?"

"My mother always told me smoking would kill me someday. But I didn't listen. I've smoked two packs a day since I was sixteen. But she was wrong. Cigarettes would never kill me. I mean, I guess they might've, but they never got the chance."

Jonathan tried to smile. There was a joke being played here somewhere. Pick was trying to trick his way out of this.

"I'm afraid I don't understand."

"I figured. Look, these cough drops, they should come with a Surgeon General's warning, the way I see it. This is dangerous shit."

"What are you talking about? Have you lost your mind?"

"My mind? No. Quite frankly, I think that's all I have left."

"Pick, you've lost me. I don't think you understand the situation you're in. You are going to *jail*, Pick. Murder One. The police are almost here, and you are going to the pen. All right? Do you get me now? Are we clear?"

The sirens blared, closer now. Jonathan felt

they were right outside. The police were here. This was almost over.

"Listen to me, Amstel. On the way over here, I, uh, had a little accident. You see, it was raining and the roads were slick. I leaned over to pick up my cough drops. And that was it. It was that simple. Can you believe it? That was all. The End. The next thing I knew, I was here at your front door."

"What are you telling me? You're dead?"

"That's about the size of it. So you'll have to excuse me if I don't seem too surprised about all this. I mean, it's been a hell of a day."

"I get it now. I understand. You're insane. You've gone nuts. That's good. Maybe you won't get life. Maybe they'll ship you off to the loony bin instead."

The doorbell rang.

"They're here, Pick. No more games. Your time is up."

Pick sat on the edge of the bed, a statue, smoking.

From below: the front door opening. Voices. "Police officers! We're coming in!"

"Up here!" Jonathan

said. He reached to the end table and picked up the bloody knife. He was a homeowner, holding a murderer at bay. He had to slip into frantic mode, had to get excited. Everything had to be believable. "He's up here! He murdered my wife! Hurry!"

***"You're insane.
You've gone nuts.
That's good.
Maybe you won't
get life. Maybe
they'll ship you
off to the loony
bin instead."***

The first policeman emerged into the bedroom, a second one behind him, a third. Jonathan contorted his face into a grimace of pain, of disgust. "There he is, officers. I held him off. Thank God, you're here."

The first officer scanned the room. His eyes found the body of Jonathan's wife, a bloody mess on the floor. "Mr. Amstel?" the officer said.

"Yes. Here he is! Get him!"

"Where is he, Mr. Amstel? There is no one else in the room."

"He's there! Right there! Sitting on the edge of the bed!"

Jonathan found himself pointing with the blade of the knife. The tip was six inches away from Pick's chest. Pick looked up at him with a quiet expression, a sad expression.

"They can't see me,

Amstel. I tried to tell you," Pick said.

"Mr. Amstel?"

"I don't under --"

"Put down the knife, Mr. Amstel."

Jonathan looked up at the officer. "You can't see him?" he asked, his voice weak now, growing weaker.

"Put down the knife," The officer said again, withdrawing his pistol.

Jonathan heard the second officer speak into his radio, calling for an ambulance. The third one reached for his handcuffs.

Things were happening too fast. This was not working out like he'd planned. Jonathan felt an enormous sinking feeling in his stomach. The cops -- they had it all wrong. These stupid cops -- they weren't playing their part correctly. Why couldn't they see? Why didn't they understand?

Jonathan found the eyes of the first officer as the handcuffs slipped over his wrists. "You -- you don't think I did this . . . do you?"

As he was escorted out of the room, Jonathan turned and looked at Pick. "This is all your fault, Pick. You did this to me."

"I can't help it, Amstel. You gotta understand -- dying's the best thing that happened to me all day."



1945
Jackie Fischvogt

Diner

How about you and I go to a diner
On the right hand side of an asphalt road?
A diner that resembles an aluminum Twinkie
With a row of continuous windows down one side.
The light from the diner emits an erie white glow
That can be seen a mile away.
It's a beacon,
A beacon for the lost and the hungry.
Truckers with nicknames like "Big Red" and 'Lil' John"
Dressed in their flannel shirts and ballcaps
Sit at the counter and ask "What's good?"
They gossip and tell bad jokes
Talking to an attentive ear about how trucking has worn them down,
About their "old lady," and the kids back home in Tucson.
They come for the "Trucker's Special:"
Four pancakes, a side of eggs, a slice of toast and a slab of bacon.
But most of all, they enjoy the company of a waitress that
Calls everyone "Sweetie."

Just you and I and . . . and
We'll drink coffee,
Black tar in a white mug,
Three creams and five sugars please!
I don't want Nutra-Sweet, I want the real deal.
Sugar from Florida!
Sugar cane cut by a guy from Jamaica . . . yeah Ja-maica!
He started to work in the sugar cane fields forty-seven years ago.
Now he's fifty-nine and walks with a limp when it rains.
Must be arthritis.
I think I put too much sugar in my coffee
But that's OK.
I have plenty of cream in little white plastic cups;
The ones with the smiling cows on the lids.

We can sit in the corner booth
Underneath a photograph of the owner
Taken when he won the "Amateurs Bowling League Championship" in 1945.
We can be two strangers in the shadows,
Invisible to the world,
Talking to each other,
To ourselves,
Clinging to our words,
Our confessions.

I can tell you that everything will be OK,
And you will accept it as truth.
Rain starts to fall
Lightly tapping against the diner window.
I think the rain wants in.
Here people can drink coffee and talk.
Yeah. . . that would be nice.

Alejandro Figueroa

Attic Explosion

Driving the highway
I glimpse

Glassware: jars, lamps and lights.
Hardware: hinges, nuts and bolts.
Flatware: forks, knives and spoons.

Imagine,
strewn over asphalt and curbs,
life
left exposed.

Crocks, pots and hats,
swings, tables, chairs
with trunks, cloths
and jewels strewn everywhere.

Vendors call out their goods
from decaying lawn chairs
hidden behind rotting booths.

Fragments of moth-eaten clothes
piled high on weathered tables
marked with a price,
capture me.

Gawkers shuffle, a trickling stream
in and out
in front or behind.
They push and search
for a bargain,
a treasure to claim.

Scanning the site,
I see the remains of existence
on display

And I need to escape
this explosion of life.

Lori Morell-Lasky

Shadows of the Past

Small, rolling hills
carpeted in plush green grass,
trees in the distance
cast their burly shadows
on a warm sunny day.
Wildflowers grow about
in random bunches,
adding sprays of color
everywhere
in sharp contrast to
the strategically-placed bouquets.

A tiny, narrow brook nearby
catches my attention.
The water sparkles clear blue
in the sunlight.
A hummingbird feeds
precariously on blossoms
that seem to drip with
the vitality of life.

I walk toward you.
My heels sink
in the rich, moist earth
that harbors both life and death.

I stroke the hard, rough
shiny stone that now bears your name
as I remember the
smoothness of your young
beautiful face and the smile that
always put my mind at ease.

A tear rolls down
my cheek and lands on a
slender, green blade of grass.
Sunlight, matriarch of nature,
quickly wipes the tear away.

I wander away quietly
like a whisper in the wind
so I don't disturb the tranquil serenity
you have become a part of.

Shannon Allman

Ebb and Flow

I return to these shores
A decade since life
Interrupted and angled
A way inland,
Where necessity fused a passion,
Where reality lived in stone
Monuments, where life was built
On paper promises.

I return to these shores
To remember familiar
Sounds that soothed
At days length and lingered
Long in dreams, till dawn
Found me locked in tender
Limbs, where dreary eyes
Meet with wonderment.

I return to these shores
Remembering a broken promise
To bathe her in the
Light of full moon,
Moving our bodies,
Burying our impressions
Perfect in wet sand.

As she sleeps, serenity
Waits the lull of low tide.
I bend easy, as waves
Recess. I rise to release,
Returning her to these shores.

J. Michael Buchanan

Dawn: The Fourth Year
(November 5, 1996)

The day is young, but the season peppered.
I walk the side of the road.
Under the crisp and creaseless gray sheet,
over grinding, pebbled grit,
beside closely shaved fields left nubby,
a black mirage moves in bubbles.
I feel the flicker of a solitary flame
as I pass a frostbit mobile home,
its lone light burning over kitchen sink.
The steeple stands alone and black.
I go in, guided by a rough-roped alley.
In the solitary stall, my finger finds the way.

Back to the blacktop, my homeward path reaches
past a pomeranian tail waving in a wheat field
caressed by the first gold of day.
A lopsided ringer washer slumps beside stale
ghosts and withered jack-o-lanterns by
a riverside cottage peeling gray paint.
The river sleeps, but the flame still smolders
as I detail decisions made.
The bubbling mirage before me
bursts freeborn skyward
into stacks of unfettered starlings,
a guided swarm that fills
the seamless sky.
Led by one and then another,
I walk the side of the road.

Julie DeVine Phillips

I Held Dennis

*I held Dennis in the first few hours
When he came into this world.
I held his hand when he took
His first toddling steps.*

*When he was fevered and crying,
I held him.
I held him
While the surgeon prepared.
I again held Dennis
And told him stories,
And I tucked him into bed.*

*His mother and I parted,
But still he sat on my lap, and
I held him.*

*But one day, when
No one was around to hold him,
Death came.
And now I can only
Hold Dennis in my heart.*

Randy Koerner



*Garden of Love
Star Gaither*

Your nails were polished

Your body limp
and lifeless, weak,
your strength to fight
used up long ago.
You are so thin
that your spine sticks
out from your back
in gross contrast
to the bed sores that surround it.
Your limbs dangle, listless,
no vigor left to serve,
like a scarecrow
alone in the winter wind.
I polished your nails, though.
They shine brightly
the way your eyes once did.
I watch intently
as your chest rises and falls.
I know soon
it will rise no more.
I am torn between
my need to hang on
and the wish I made
that God might end
your pain.
Your nails look good, though,
because I polished them.
You've not drunk
nor eaten anything
in several days.
The crow of death
picks precariously
at your torso of straw.
I watch as your body
begins to grow colder.
I grab your hand to squeeze it.
Your nails shine with sheer brilliance
because I polished them.
Alone with you at night,
I listen to you breathe.
Suddenly, you stop.
Your body is now motionless.
You are off to a better place.
Free from the pain
that tormented you.
And your nails were polished.

Shannon Allman

Vegas: Lost in the Desert

*"As a remedy to life in society
I would suggest the big city.
Nowadays, it is the only desert within our means."
-Albert Camus*

Midnight.
Glaring neon lights
Shout.
Laughter in the street
Competes
With the anger of taxi-cab drivers
And
Blaring horns from limousines.
Tuxedos and slippery smiles
Catch sequins
And winks between strangers.

I swallow the pills dry
And lie
To watch beams of light
Travel across the stained ceiling.
I wish that I
Were in the crowd
Laughing, winking, stealing time.
TIME:
It is a dagger, clutched
Menacingly
In a stranger's hand.

I lost last night
To the sound
And light
Of this southwest oasis.
But I have seen
Beyond laughter -
Where drawn faces
Jeer and snicker and frown.
To me,
It is a ghost town.

Sarah Malcomb

Rear View

I soar down black, beaten country roads
faster than the limits allow,
ignoring preachy road signs while
a mix of music pollutes the soft silence
of the dark, solemn paths,
along where corn is sown in with beans.
I drive on, wondering what roads
would take me to this or that place –
searching from my car's tinted windows,
now distorted by fog from my breath.

It is from the odd-shaped mirror just
so slightly above my dizzy head
that a myriad of mindless things
fly by in a blurring second:
the crimson glow of my tail lights
on the back of a 'Stop Ahead' sign,
the tattered, tangled heap of a barn,
a glimpse of the car I just passed,
the mess of a possum splattered,
and your driveway with his car
which prompted my pointless trip.

Joseph T. Anspaugh

Barbed Beliefs

Gray and brown with rust is the thick rope that binds cattle.
Sharp projections
 shoot out
in each direction,
the sharp entanglements of sin.
Like a plastic bag hooked by chance,
the gnarled twists wrap around a
newborn child's soft skin,
out trickles the blood of hatred.

Jodi Brooks



*Water Gods #2
Star Gaither*

I Succumb

Brutal injustice,
I leap and fall short
As the flashbulbs of failure
Secure my position.
A circus clown, a carnival freak,
Center stage to a roaring audience of one.

My body a prison,
I'm safe while I hide.
Only when I can't find me
Am I really alive.
Torment by torment,
Punishment by punishment,
A claustrophobe's hell
A glib future, once removed
By my own hand.

Crippling gestures
Erosion without measure,
A pinprick grown vast.
They say nothing ever changes,
But everything I've touched
Has never stayed the same.
Now I'm hollowed, listless, useless,
And inside
Only echoes resound.

Siphoning energy,
Siphoning motive,
I don't reach so I won't miss.
Distorted,
I seek release, relief.
I succumb.
I succumb.

Travis Fendley

WILD HORSES

A Short
Story By
Ryan
Owens

"Earl, quit your day dreaming. Go get Bob and finish cleaning out those stalls. When you're finished with that, brush down the horses. There's a show tomorrow, and I want their coats shining."

"Yes, Mr. Peterson," Earl said as he jumped down from the hay loft. That is where Earl spent most of his time dreaming of the future, but now there was work to be done, so Earl ventured out into the early morning light to go get Bob.

"Bob, Bob wake up! We've got work to do."

"Ah man, just five more minutes."

"No, we've got to hurry. Tomorrow's the big show and the horses have to be ready."

"Why do you care? You don't get anything out of it."

Just as always, Bob stayed in bed until noon while Earl slaved away trying to do work meant for two. It was an everyday routine. Bob slept all day while Earl worked all day. Earl didn't care, though, since one day he would own his own horse ranch and would have to work twice as hard. Besides, the pay was good, and what money Bob didn't spend on whiskey, he gave to Earl. Bob didn't need the money; after all, Mr. Peterson was his father. They didn't get along, but they had an understanding that as long as Bob worked with the horses, he could live there rent free. Earl did most of the work while Bob took the credit because, of course, Bob couldn't look bad in front of his father.

"Bob, good to see you finally got up."

"What's left to do?"

"Well, Misty still needs to be

cleaned up, and we've got to start breaking that colt that Mr. Peterson bought."

"Well, I'll let you break the colt Earl; I'm still hungover from last night. Besides, you're going to need the practice if you want to own your own horse ranch, not that you'll ever get that far."

"What the hell do you mean by that?"

"You're just like your dad, that old drunk, constantly daydreaming. You'll never make it."

"I'll make it okay, and besides, you're more of a drunk than my father ever was."

Earl's dad had died a miserable old man. He spent more than half his life chasing an old Indian folk tale. Legend had it that an Apache chief was granted a second life to prove his loyalty to the gods and his trust in their judgment. One time in battle, the gods told their chief to stand his ground, but his tribe was losing terribly, so he ordered them to retreat, and he ran away in defiance. The gods were angry and turned his spirit into a horse. He would have to run for an eternity until the day he would stand his ground like a true Indian warrior. They named him Gray Cloud because the clouds never stopped moving just like a coward never stops running. Earl's father spent his life looking for that horse. It is supposed to be the most beautiful horse in the world. A few have seen it supposedly, but no one has ever caught it. Earl's dad, however, died trying. He was found along the countryside. Apparently he had gotten drunk and fallen off his horse while looking for the gray stallion.

"Earl have you got that horse

broke yet?"

"Just about. Open the gate and I'll ride him around the ranch."

You better change saddles first. If I'm not mistaken, that is my dad's Western saddle. If he catches you with it, he'll fire you for sure."

"Well, I've broken three girths trying to break this horse, and this is the only one thick enough to stay on him."

"Still, if he catches you, he'll fire you."

"Then Shadow and I'll just have to ride along the countryside so Mr. Peterson won't see us."

"Alright, see ya in a half hour."

"See ya later," Earl said as he rode off into the deep grass that encompassed the countryside. The land was beautiful out there. It was open, untouched land as far as the eye could see. The ground was rich with grass and clover, perfect for grazing horses. For the most part, just the horses from local ranchers graze on these lands. The wild horses are always running off because they compete with the others for food, and if it comes between the survival of the wild horses or turning a profit, the local ranchers always choose to turn a profit. It is illegal to kill the horses because they are protected, but it is all too common to find dead horses scattered across the plains. No one wants them around because they eat all the grass that ranchers need for their own horses. Most of the wild horses are thin and poorly built, not good for showing.

While Earl was riding, he came across one of the casualties of this sickening war. He got down off his horse to inspect it. Yes, it was shot, probably by Mr. Peterson because it was on his land and probably eating his profits. Earl always thought that this was a selfish act, to kill an innocent horse for such a small price. As Earl got back up on his horse, he caught a glimpse of a gray coat behind the tree line. When he was able to get a better look, there

"The Gods were angry and turned his spirit into a horse."

was nothing there. As he was riding back to the ranch, he felt as if something was following him, but every time he turned around, there was nothing there. Earl could not shake the feeling that something was there peering at him. Then suddenly out of no where he saw a gray cloud of dust, coming toward him in the wind, and out of the dust Gray Cloud appeared, rearing up his hind legs and threatening to kick. He came down to rest on top of a rattlesnake, killing it instantly, almost as if saving Earl from that poisonous venom which was sure to have been his fate. When Gray Cloud landed on top of the snake, he spooked Shadow, causing him to throw Earl to the ground. He hit his head hard as his body came to rest on a small rock bed. As his glazed eyes began to close, he caught a glimpse of Gray Cloud standing above him.

Earl woke up the next day in his bed, with Mr. Peterson and Dr. Martin standing over him.

"Did you catch him? Did you catch Gray Cloud?"

"What are you talking about young man?"

"I saw Gray Cloud."

"You hit your head pretty hard, Earl; you were probably seeing things."

"I wasn't seeing things Mr. Peterson; the legend is true."

"Just get some rest. We'll talk to you when you get your senses back. Until then just rest. Bob will take care of your work while you recuperate."

Earl had been recovering in bed for a week before Dr. Martin released him to go back to work. Mr. Peterson was kind enough to take care of the Doctor's charges. But he was also kind enough to take it out of Earl's check. Mr. Peterson never gave anything to anybody. That is probably why he is so successful.

"Mr. Peterson, Dr. Martin said I can start working again."

"Great there's a lot of work to be done."

Bob is gone, and I couldn't find any one to replace him, so I'm counting on you."

"Where's Bob?"

"He didn't get any of the work done while you were laid up, so I kicked him out. We had an agreement, and he broke it by not doing his work. Oh by-the-way, you did an exceptional job on that colt, but next time use another saddle."

"Mr. Peterson, I was wondering, could I get off a little early tonight? I'd like to work on that colt a little more. He still had a little attitude that I have to work out of him, and I've got the bump to prove it."

Earl had always been a hard worker. Many times he would work extra hours which Mr. Peterson never paid him for, but he did not care. He loved the horses, and besides he didn't have anything better to do. This time was different, he was using the colt as an excuse to ride out and try to find Gray Cloud.

He didn't imagine it. He couldn't have. Gray Cloud existed, and he was going to catch him no matter what. After his work was done, Earl rode Shadow to the exact spot where he had seen Gray Cloud the first time. The countryside was beautiful. It was spring and all the flowers were in bloom. The trees were full of busy birds singing while they built their spring nests. Earl could see why Gray Cloud came here. It was perfect for a man or beast. He sat there for hours, simply because he did not know where else to look. Just when he was about to give up, he saw something in the distance. Whatever it was, it was coming straight for him."

"Bob is that you?"

"Yeah!"

"What are you doing here? Did you and your Dad patch things up again?"

"Don't we always? Anyway, we've got work to do. The judges from last week's contest called, and Misty has made it into the final show. We have to get the truck loaded

so they can head out tonight. The final showing is tomorrow at eight. What are you doing out here anyway, Earl? You're not looking for that damn horse, are you?"

"So, what if I am?"

"That horse ruined your dad's life. I just don't want to see the same thing happen to you."

"It won't. Besides, if I catch it, all my dreams will come true. I could sell him for more than two years wages, and with the money I've already saved, I will be able to buy that horse ranch I have always wanted."

After getting everything ready and loading the truck, Earl went to bed. It was already one in the morning, and he had been up since five the previous morning.

The next morning Earl set out to look for Gray Cloud again. It was Saturday, and he had the day off. He rode all day on the trails bordering the ranch, but he did not even catch a glimpse of Gray Cloud. He continued his search for months, but he did not find even a trace of Gray Cloud. One morning, just before dawn, he found a herd of wild horses grazing on Mr. Peterson's land. These horses were not like most wild horses. They were not skinny and frail. Not a one of them even looked sick. They were all beautiful horses, the like of which he had never seen before. They were more graceful than twenty of the best show horses. Earl was so intrigued with the horses that he didn't notice the gray pillar approaching him. It was Gray Cloud. Earl sat there mesmerized by the great beauty of the horse. He didn't realize what was happening until Gray Cloud was galloping off. He quickly grabbed the lasso attached to his right side. He threw the lasso around Gray Cloud's neck. Gray Cloud pulled him off his horse as he ran off. The rest of the herd followed their mythical leader as Earl let go of the rope. He was not hurt except for his bruised pride. He quickly pulled himself back onto Shadow, but it was too late to chase Gray Cloud. The only

"Just when he was about to give up, he saw something in the distance."

thing left of him and his herd was the dust that was quickly settling. Earl managed to pull himself together and head back to the ranch. Tomorrow he would get up early and wake Bob from his drunken slumber. Maybe if he had some help, he could catch Gray Cloud.

The next day when Earl woke up, he searched for Bob, but he was nowhere to be found. He was probably hunched over a toilet somewhere puking up last night's pay. He probably would not have gone anyway, so Earl set out alone again to search for his prize. He spent the entire day searching but could not find anything. He spent every dime he had on this obsession, and Mr. Peterson was growing impatient with him. He had missed many days of work to look for the horse, so Earl decided to go out one last time, and if he did not find anything, this would be the end of it. Again he had spent the whole day searching and he was about to give up when he spotted Gray Cloud. He was with his herd grazing in Mr. Peterson's pastures. This time, Earl would not be caught off guard. He reached for his lasso and pulled it off his hip and began riding toward the herd. He had his eyes set on one horse, Gray Cloud. Eh closed in, still hidden by the trees. The horses grew restless but did not run. Earl rode as fast as he could out from behind the trees on Shadow. The rest of the horses began to run, but Gray Cloud stood his ground. When he was right on top of Gray Cloud he threw the lasso, but he missed. Gray Cloud reared up, kicking violently, but Earl was persistent. He threw the lasso again. This time it came to rest around the horse's neck. He pulled the rope tight and for some reason instead of fighting Gray Cloud just stood there. As Earl got closer, all he could think about was his father's stories about the uncatchable Gray Cloud. When he was right next to his prize he loosened the lasso and let Gray Cloud go.

"Go on, boy! Get out of here! You're not mine to catch!"

As Gray Cloud galloped off, Earl felt better than he had ever felt before. He was

finally free and he hoped that his father was finally free now, too. Earl rode off back to the ranch. As he approached the ranch house, he saw Bob sitting on the fence bordering the main house.

"Where have you been, Earl?"

"Oh, just out riding."

Bob was about to respond when his face went blank.

"What the hell's going on here?" Bob said. Earl looked back to see what Bob was talking about, and he saw a giant cloud of dust accompanied by the sound of hoofs pounding on the ground. It was Gray Cloud. He was leading his herd straight for the ranch. Bob opened the gate and jumped down from the fence.

"Let's go get them, Earl."

"No, wait a minute," Earl said as Gray Cloud marched his troops forward. He led them straight into the corral, but he did not follow. He reared up and let out a cry and then disappeared. Bob quickly shut the gate as Mr. Peterson rounded the corner.

"What the hell is all the noise? Who brought these horses in?"

"Earl did," Bob said.

This was the first time Bob had given him credit for anything.

"These horses are worth a good chunk of change," stated Mr. Peterson after admiring them for awhile. "I'll buy them from you, Earl."

"I'll let you take all of them except for two. All I ask from you is a nice piece of land in order to build my own ranch. You have more land than you know what to do with anyway."

"Done."

Earl could not believe his dreams were finally coming true. As he walked off, he thanked his Dad for this miracle. He knew his dad had finally found what he had searched so long for, and Gray Cloud was finally free to run wild.



Tracking Time
Mary Jordan

Stormy weather

sitting naked in the half-light
i watch the rain fall
and can't help but wonder
what secrets lie hidden
in your eyes, in your mind
in your dreams, in your tears
words we never say
have haunting meanings
mental masturbation
weakens me with each climax
but the desire remains strong
the rain has passed now
it changes little
about how i think or how i feel
because the clouds linger on

Jerry Glascock

Shade Tree

Thick, wrinkled fingers
reach under the ground for nurture.
The ripe crust reveals years
of rich rain and generations of tree-climbers.
Each vein pours
life into a smaller one.
Tall, bold arms reach down —
engulf me with splendor.
Burnt sienna and orange leaves
trickle onto the ground —
create a warm quilt on which to lie.

Amy Bowman

A Vermont Sun Rises

After the sun rises and eases
its way upward, piercing shades
half-drawn, she slips from under
wrinkled sheets, leaving her scent
where I roll to lie and linger.

I wrap her pillow round, drawing
it close to my breast, to breathe,
to dream, till she returns in a robe
that molds and shapes her body wet.

*Today we'll plant our souls on a
hillside that juts and slopes long
with green grass that combs the edges.*

*We'll throw caution, inch our bellies,
with hands clasped, till tilted, overlooking
the gentle mouth of a valley —
stream-creased and still.*

*We'll stare silent, shift our sides
parallel to prop our thoughts.
Our palms will press, the tips touch,
our fingers thread . . .*

The soles of her frame step lightly;
footsteps prophesy her presence.
I rouse, clutch the cloth, a gentle
breeze carries the moment. Long strands
of cool wet caress my flesh, smooth droplets
soothe our heat as we seek to spend ourselves.

J. Michael Buchanan

Break

I.

Stationed by a rose bush
close to the fat, calm mud-puddle

your tired, glazed-by-the-sun
wavy hair is like a windmill,

your eyes are broken,
gathered by time.

II.

The tool to eternity mumbles
in your hands
as you swing to strike down
another rose-bud
for the vase.

Rita Fisher



Small-town Stability
Star Gaither

Reunited by Chance on a Starry Night

A little past dusk
and the diamond sky
spreads smooth like a soft
canvas where promises
are drawn true.
Take my hand and remind me,
in a sudden uplifting moment,
that smiles shared in the moonlight
are cast perfect
and new.

Sarah Malcomb

bi·og·raph·ies \ n, pl \ ¹Accounts of peoples' lives; ²accounts of the chronology of some-
things (as animals, coins, buildings). — [Gr. *bios*, life, *graphein*, to write.] ³"There is properly no such
thing as history, only biographies"—Emerson. ⁴Right now, who we are.

Shannon Allman enjoys writing, especially poetry. Most of her poems contain a lot of emotion and most of them are inspired by her mother who died of cancer at age forty-four.

Joe Anspaugh loves his friends on Litera- lines and thinks "friendship is gravy". Joe is a senior elementary education major. He is a collector of all toys, junk. Joe spends most of his time working, listening to music, drawing and playing his saxo- phone.

Tonya Bower is an English major in her second year. This is her first attempt at creative writing.

Amy Bowman is a senior, majoring in marketing and computer information systems at IU Bloomington. Her involve- ment in the Student Ethics Committee and the Campus Crusade for Christ take up all the free time she has.

Danielle Boyce is a college freshman majoring in education. Having lived in Columbus her whole life, she is definitely ready for a change. She has written po- etry since high school but feels that she still has a lot to learn and is willing to take the time to do so.

Jodi A. Brooks, a sophomore at IU Bloomington, majoring in telecommuni- cations/theater major with a minor in English and Women's Studies, enjoys reading and movies. Some of her recom- mended picks for authors are Jack Ker- ouac, George Orwell, and J.D. Salinger.

Marge Bruns has now finished her stu- dent teaching and is currently in search of a full time teaching job. In her free time (which she presently has too much of) she plays volleyball, coaches high school softball, and practices her photography

skills.

J. Michael Buchanan wrote these poems last summer. Since then, his energy and creativity are at a loss. He thinks he is spent.

Travis Fendley is an English major, a poet, fiction writer and photographer, but he does not write bios.

Alejandro Figeroa was born in Guatemala, Central America. He began attending IUPUC where he is making a life for himself and pursuing a degree in secondary education. His philosophy of life: "What good is a bottle of wine if no one drinks of it? What good is a guitar if no one plays it? And what good is a romantic if there is no one to romance?" This pushes him to live.

Rita Fisher is a secondary education major with an emphasis on foreign lan- guages. She is from Hungary. She has been in the United States for three years and has only been speaking English for that long. She thinks that English is a very easy language to learn.

Jackie Fishvogt, an elementary educa- tion major, will be graduating from IUPUC in the spring of 1998. Her loves are her family, (she has one daughter and one currently on the way) writing, and drawing.

Cindi Foster wrote "Childhood" for her son Brandon. She is a loving mother, a devoted wife, and an absolutely outra- geous member of the LiteraLines editorial board. She enjoys cooking and decorat- ing bulletin-boards and identifying bugs.

Star Gaither is a nursing student at IUPUC and also the mother of two boys, Hahns and Rusty. She is currently em-

ployed at Columbus Regional as a hemodialysis technician. She enjoys the little things in life like her children and nature.

Jerry Glascock has had poetry published in two previous issues of *Literalines* as well as several other publications. Jerry is kept very busy trying to attain his degree in criminal justice, managing his two children, and dabbling in the world of pro wrestling.

Matthew Grubaugh loves writing fiction and has an infatuation with poetry which led him to make submissions to *Literalines*. When he is not writing, he works as a journalist for the *Jackson County Banner*.

Mary Jordan was a student at IUPUC in the Fall of 1996. Her published photos are entitled "Ankle Deep" and "Tracking Time".

Randy Koerner graduated in December of 1996 with a degree in general studies. He and his wife, Linda have two children, Tracy and Christina. A third, Dennis died two years ago. He has an A.A.S. in computer technology.

Richard Lasky has taken several courses through Continuing Ed at IUPUC. Two of his favorites are Conversational Spanish and Blues Harmonica. Richard enjoys visiting his five children, reading, and traveling to New Orleans to explore voodoo with his wife.

L. Keith Loyd received his B.G.S. from IUPUI in 1976. He is now a graduate student. Keith returns to the pages of *Literalines* after a one year absence. He enjoys historical settings for his writing, and he tends to introduce some comedy into each situation. This is his first attempt at fiction/mystery.

Sarah Malcomb was sixteen, visited Las Vegas, but was never reunited by chance on a starry night. She likes romantic poetry, bright blue eyeliner, Nihilism, pleather, Noble Roman's pizza, and hair combs. She has enjoyed her senior year of college and is looking forward to the next one.

Lori Morell-Lasky is finishing her sophomore year. She is in the secondary education program, pursuing a major in English and a minor in computers. She is married and works full-time at the hospital in the Cancer Care Center as an Office Coordinator. The joys of her life (besides her husband) are her three girl cats, Bianca, Mithra and Trixie. Her cats make her laugh and see how wonderful life could be if we all took on the attitudes of our pets.

Janet Nielander is a sophomore who does not write poetry very often.

Ryan Owens is an English major at IUPUC. He lives in Batesville and spends his time with his wife, Carrie, and his son, Austen.

Heather Pangburn has been a student at IUPUC for a year and a half. She enjoys school and hopes to continue in the upcoming semester. She has a two year old son and works in the Continuing Education office.

Julie DeVine Phillips had a son eight years ago. Four years ago, she did the same. This year she produced poetry. She has decided to stick with poetry here on out. She lovingly dedicates her last year as *Literalines* Editor to her wacky Lowell, Indiana family, her warm North Vernon family and her wry IUPUC family.

John Posey has a masters in theology and is currently working on his secondary education degree in English. John is a devoted husband and father. He enjoys life through the eyes of his three young children and delights in taking them fishing, bike riding and sightseeing.

Dara Tormoehlen is a senior English major from Brownstown. She is the mother of three and works full time at a trucking company. And, NO, the truckers do not appear in her poetry....yet. Upon completion of her undergraduate work, she would like to attend graduate school and perhaps study anthropology in order to finally figure out what mankind is really all about.

The 1996-1997 *Literalines* editorial board dedicates this edition to our Faculty Advisor, Robin Kares. Over the last four years, Robin's commitment, concern and expertise have guided the production of this magazine. This year in particular, Robin's patience, creativity, and positive, supportive attitude have fostered an editorial board, production process, and magazine striving for a standard of excellence.

Without Robin, there would be no *Literalines*, and we feel strongly that no one could ever take her place. Thank you Robin.

Sarah
JH Train
Joseph
Cindi
Aara
Julie