

# *LITERALINES*

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**Literalines**

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**Statement of Policy and Purpose**

The *Literalines* Editorial Board accepts original works of fiction, poetry, black and white photography and line drawings from students at IUPU Columbus and IUPUI. Each anonymous submission is reviewed by at least three members of the English faculty and is judged solely on the basis of artistic merit.

Cover Art: "Cloud," Abigail Brown  
Pen and Tablet Medium

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## Perfect

Perfect lived on Seventh Square  
Next to Circle Road,  
And owned a unicorn in  
Pleasant City where he strode.  
His golden house had ivory gates  
And diamond windows mighty,  
An Eden yard of emerald blades  
And wife named Aphrodite.  
Morning blazed a butter sun  
And evening showed the moon,  
As sterling silver that is found  
In the miser's spoon.  
Perfect had a dazzling time and  
Nothing did he lack, until the clock  
Alarmed to find his name was really Jack.

Shawn Wilson

**I used to be a rose**

I used to be a rose  
Sweet fragrance for the bees  
Nectar for their senses

But now I'm a weed  
Corrupted with my selfish roots  
Strangling the Master's garden  
Only to be pulled up and cast into the fire.

**Amanda Eaton**

## The Seeds of Youth

Tracey Green

Every summer when the watermelons are ripe, I drive to a country roadside stand to buy the biggest, reddest melon I can find. Two hours later, back in the city apartment, I put this glorious harbinger of summer into my small white refrigerator. The beers, juice, and water bottles wait on the counter while this large green blimp settles in their space to chill and come alive with sweetness. A few days later as I bite into the wet, juicy piece of red flesh, I stare at those black seeds and feel the days of my childhood wash across my tongue.

For fifteen years my family spent two weeks every summer in the mountains of northern California vacationing at the Trinity Alps Resort. It was not a resort by today's standards—just a two-room log cabin with running water, an icebox, four rustic gas burners, and a fat wood burning stove for mountain mornings. We kids loved it because it meant bathing in the river, eating at picnic tables under the fir trees at the river's edge, and lots of freedom.

The icebox was very small so we kept the watermelon, beer, and soft drinks in a pool dug from a mountain spring near our cabin. Dad dug the pool. The bottles and cans floated freely in the clear, icy, water. The watermelon sank luxuriously into the coal black spring soil beneath the water. The snow and flooding river washed out the pool every winter. Dad would bring a special short handled shovel from home in our jam-packed, woody station wagon just to dig out the spring.

Digging out the spring was the third thing he did when we arrived after our ten-hour drive—the last two on a single lane, dusty, red clay lumber road. The first two things he always did were for my mother's peace of mind. He would spray all the cabin corners with insecticides to kill the spiders she was sure were hiding there. Then, he would tie to several trees a rope "fence" along the rushing riverbank near our cabin. This was the boundary marking how close to the river we kids could go when our parents weren't with us. Then, the march to the spring. Dad whistled an Army marching song as we three little kids paraded behind him—my four-year-old brother carrying the treasured shovel on his young shoulder. I'm sure the mountain scent of evergreens, the feel of dirt on his hands and the glee of our voices was music of joy for my father's first few hours of vacation.

The year I was thirteen I didn't want to go to Trinity. I didn't want to leave my friends in the city. The thought of two weeks with my family in a rustic cabin surrounded by dirt and trees and nothing to do was bleak. My parents cut no slack. I went along but had excuses for not being part of the family activities. I think I missed out on the digging out of the spring that year. But, I do remember the fanfare of putting the biggest watermelon we had ever bought into the icy pool.

A few days later I was still grumpy—Hadn't made any friends, my bathing suit didn't fit right, and I was mad at my mother. Dad sent me to the spring for drinks for dinner while he chipped ice from the block of ice with the forbidden ice pick. (We kids were told there were certain things we could not touch—and the ice pick was one). I remember carrying five drinks, tripping over a tree root, falling and getting very dirty. Returning to camp mortified and angry, I was determined not to cry, but cried anyway. Poor Dad was the recipient of my tantrum, skinned knee and bruised ego, as I threw the drinks at his feet. I stomped into the two-room cabin, screaming in frustration that there wasn't even a private place for me to clean up.

The next day I was still in a mood of gloom—hating my family, my life. I had chosen to sulk in the cabin alone while my family went fishing. Bored, but also feeling rather brave and

rebellious, I took the ice pick off the wall and walked through the firs and pines to the spring. There in the shade of tall firs and cluster of maidenhair ferns hugging the pools edge, rested the prized watermelon. I leaned in and gingerly lifted the melon out of its safe harbor. The beads of water dripped down the green mottled rind and left silvery mini-pools on the sandy, dark dirt. I ran my hand across the smooth icy victim wondering how it had become my enemy. I gripped the ice pick, raised my hand and came down hard as I stabbed the solid, oval melon in a zillion places—leaving dark pock marks on its clear green rind. Then, one by one, I took the cans out and stabbed them too. The cans sprayed in all directions. Boldly, I even had a few timid swallows of the squirting beer. Feeling released and avenged, I threw the pieces of melon and the bullet-like torn cans back in the pool. I vaguely remember confessing when confronted by my Dad, but I don't think I paid a heavy price. (I do remember I met a boy the next week and life was better for the entire family.)

I can still hear the river rocks rolling in the swirl of white water and smell the early morning dew on damp dirt. I feel sure I will always know the child's joy in the first taste of our mountain-chilled watermelon. Despite the noisy city, the diesel bus smells, the treeless view from my tiny apartment, the mountains soar in my mind with that first bite. My tongue works the icy, sweet red fruit and, then, prepares to spit out one of the treasured wet, smooth black seeds.



***One Day I Woke Up Dead***

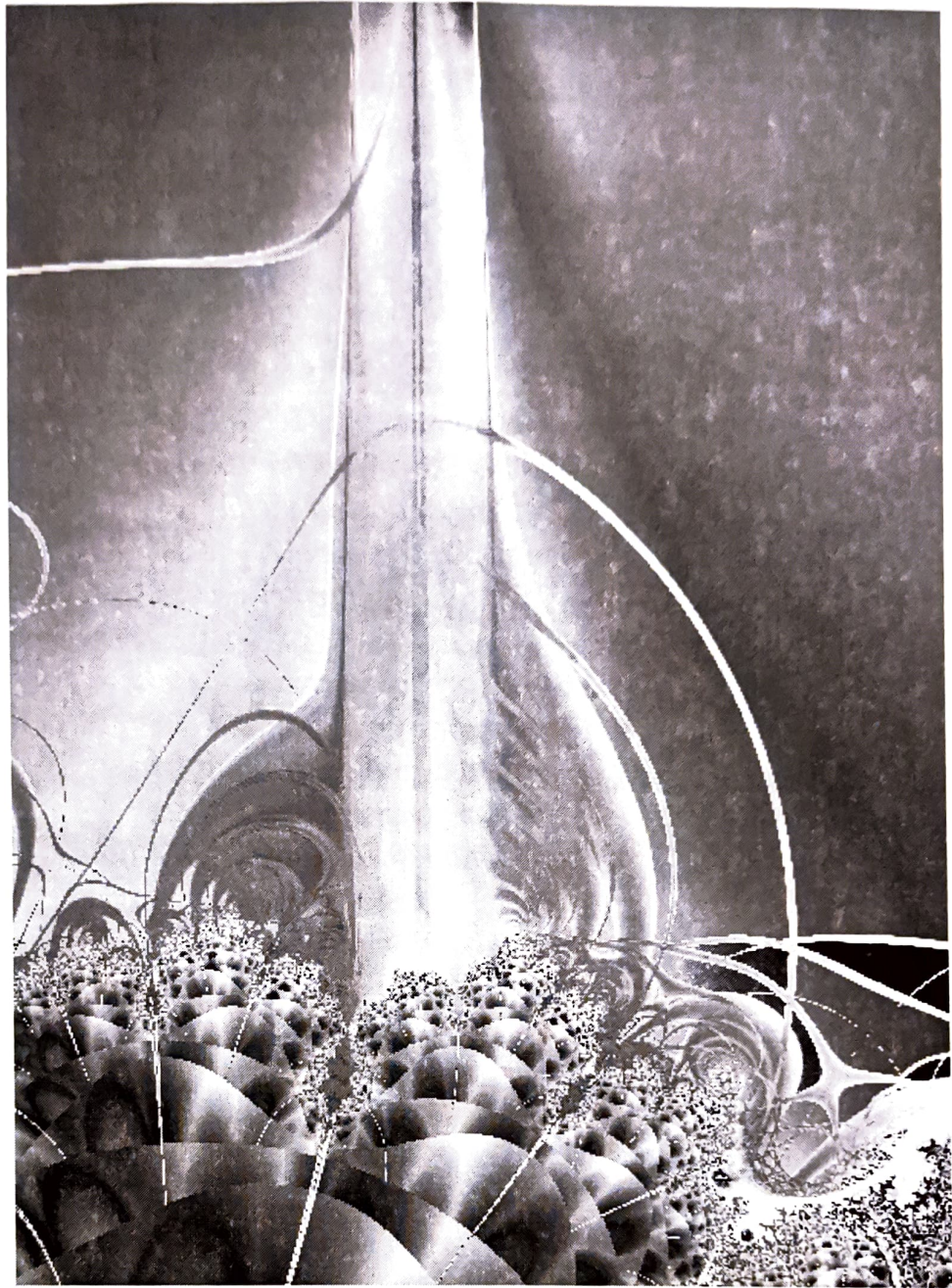
*"One day I woke up dead," she said  
and her teardrops fell like rain.*

*"What do you mean?"*

*"What can you mean?" he asked,  
but nothing further came.*

*How do you describe a desert,  
a barren wasteland,  
a dry and dusty mind,  
to someone who isn't dead,  
Or at least doesn't know it at the time.*

***Debbie Sexton***



*Shaun Watkins*

## JANE DOE

Arvilla Ater

I'm the one who found her. Later I wondered, "Why me?" Anyone who worked at Trimble County Memorial Hospital could have found her. I was only a third-year resident—just an average guy named Jeff Haven trying to achieve his dream of being a doctor. In the end, though, I answered my own question based on one of my oldest philosophies, *Everything happens for a reason*.

It was bitter cold that day, and I could hardly stand the walk from the parking garage to the front door of the hospital. In spite of my heavy coat, gloves, scarf, and boots, the cold stabbed at my flesh. I kept my head bent down to ward off some of the driving wind. An inch of snow had fallen the night before, and it swirled crazily from the ledge of the garage's cement wall and into my face, making it hard to breathe.

I walked faster, my only mission being to reach the warmth of the hospital lobby. Then I tripped and almost fell. Damn boot lace. It had come untied again. I didn't know how many times I'd told myself I'd get new laces, but I never had, and the thick, round laces that had come with the boots were a constant nuisance.

As I bent to tie the lace, something caught my attention out of the corner of my eye. It looked like a shoe—partially hidden behind the tire of the blue Dodge Ram that I'd squatted beside. I paused as I realized that there was a leg attached to that shoe. I lay flat against the cold concrete and found myself staring at a still form beneath the truck. She lay on her side, facing the interior wall of the tires, her eyes closed.

"Ma'am, are you OK?" I asked, knowing she wasn't. She looked too dead to be OK.

Very slowly, I crawled under the truck and checked her pulse. There was none, of course. The woman wore only a thin, blue blouse and a long white skirt that was nearly transparent. Her feet were clad in dirty, white canvas tennis shoes. And I couldn't help but notice that her shoes had no laces at all.

I stared at her for a moment, shivering from the cold. There was no need to rush her inside, but I'd have to go in and tell my boss, Dora, and we'd have to call the police. The lady didn't look like a murder victim. She was probably just some crack head that didn't get her fix last night, but that'd be for the police to decide.

I crawled out from under the truck and walked quickly toward the hospital, my mind filled with questions. It didn't take long to find Dora. And it didn't take long for the police to join us in the garage. Dora and I had pushed an empty gurney to the garage, and I found myself thinking that we had enough live bodies to work on without worrying about the dead ones. Officer Kelly and Detective Anderson of the homicide squad questioned me about how I'd found her. I didn't have much to tell them.

Dora and I watched silently as Kelly and Anderson did their thing. They took down the license plate number of the truck, checked the truck for prints, took several photographs, and did a lot of scribbling on their notepads. In the end, they agreed with me, that foul play did not seem to be a factor.

"Well, guess you can move her out now," Anderson said.

I helped Dora scoot the body out, and we gently lifted her onto the gurney. The body seemed fragile—almost breakable.

Detective Anderson crawled under the truck for one more look. “Hey,” he said, “I think I might have found something.”

The three of us waited for him to crawl out.

He emerged holding a dirty notepad by the corner of its bent, spiral binding. One sheet of paper was still attached. He dropped it into a plastic bag. “It has words on it,” Anderson said, holding it out in front of him so we could see.

I looked over Anderson’s shoulder as he read it out loud.

*“Darkness descends. Like a blanket it will cover me, but it will not keep me warm. Naked and alone I came into this world. Naked and alone I shall leave. The circle of life and death is complete. Let my tears freeze upon my cheeks. Then at last, I shall weep no more.”*

Anderson shrugged. “Some kind of poem maybe. Bet the Doe wrote it, but it doesn’t tell us anything.”

I read the paper again. God, it was morbid.

“Well,” Kelly said, “let’s get this down to the station. We’ll at least see if we can get a print off of it.”

“Hey,” I said, impulsively, “let me know if you do.”

“Sure,” Kelly answered.

Dora and I pushed the gurney into the hospital, found an empty ER room and set up for an exam. The words of Jane’s poem kept nagging at me.

After a complete exam, we found no bruises, needle marks, or abrasions. She wasn’t a junkie. She didn’t seem to be anything. Jane Doe had no purse, no wallet, no ID, no jewelry, no scars and no unusual birthmarks. She was average—with shoulder length, light brown hair, an oval face with high cheekbones, and she was maybe around five foot six and 120 pounds. She probably wasn’t much older than I was—twenty-seven, twenty-eight. I lifted one of her eyelids for another look. Her eyes were blue. I tried to imagine them alive, but it was hard.

Dora shook her head. “Crazy woman! She must’ve been out of her mind to be out on a night like that.”

*Crazy*, I thought, but why? And where were her family and friends? For some reason, I wanted to know everything. I knew Dora would give me a hard time if she knew what I was thinking, so I kept my mouth shut. Dora had told me more than once in the past year that I would make a damn good doctor because I could block out the bad stuff and still sleep at night. I knew Dora’s secret: treat the patient, don’t get to know the person.

All that day, and the next day, and the day after that, the true identity of Jane Doe haunted me. I’d reached the point of near obsession, and there was just no explanation for my feelings. I’d never seen the woman before. I hadn’t lost her to death on an ER table. She wasn’t my sister or my girlfriend. But I had found her, and maybe that’s why I had to know who she was.

On the fifth morning after I’d found the body, Bonnie paged me to the phone. When I picked up on line three, Detective Anderson’s voice spoke to me from the other end.

“Doctor Haven?”

“Speaking.”

“I have some news on your Doe.”

My heart picked up a pace. “Yes?” I answered, waiting for him to continue.

“I guess her real name is Rebecca.”

I listened silently, letting the name sink into my head. Rebecca.

"You there?" Anderson asked.

"Yeah," I answered, my voice cracking a bit.

"Well, we couldn't find anything on file, so we did some poking around down in the homeless area. Some old coot that calls himself The Captain finally told us that he'd seen her around. He said most people knew Rebecca by the name of Mouse because she was so quiet, but he'd somehow found out her real name. 'An odd little gal' is what he called her. She didn't have family or friends—at least none that she ever talked about."

I cleared my throat. "Did you find anything else? Do you know where she stayed?"

"No," Anderson replied. "I guess she moved around. The Captain said he'd seen her a few times at the old Barringer train station. We checked it out—nothing but a bunch of trash and boxes over there."

"OK. Thanks for calling. I figured she should at least be buried with her real name."

"Yep. Know what you mean," said Anderson.

I thanked him again and hung up the phone.

That evening I knew I'd stop by the Barringer train station before I even pulled up in the old, abandoned lot. It looked just like Anderson had said it did—trashy. I didn't know what I was looking for, but I got out of my Jeep and poked around. There seemed to be a lot of newspapers. Most were crumpled and yellowed from age and sun.

As I bent down for a closer look at one particular paper, I noticed there was handwriting in the margins. My heart jumped. It was the same handwriting Anderson had found on the tablet beneath the truck—only a little smaller. I picked up another paper. More handwriting. The next paper had some, too, and the next. I soon had a whole stack of them. As dusk fell, I loaded my Jeep with the papers, filling the passenger seat. I thought about driving to the police station, but instead, I drove home.

Over a cup of black coffee, I began reading the papers one by one.

*Why did you leave me, my love?*

*Did you not know that I could not find my way?*

*You were my lighthouse, my guide through the dark.*

*Now I wander aimlessly. I cannot reach the shore.*

*Where are the rocks? They are hidden from me.*

*Why did you leave me, my love?*

*Why did you leave me in the dark?*

I shook my head, wondering what jerk had left her then picked up the next paper.

*Today I saw an old man, very old, maybe one hundred.*

*"Where you going, Miss?" he asked me in a voice course with age.*

*I just looked at him, his crumpled suit, and his dirt-caked beard.*

*And I could not tell him where I was going.*

*I could not tell him that I was going nowhere.*

*"What is your name, Miss?" he asked when I did not reply.*

*I still could not speak; I did not want to speak.*

*I could not tell him my name was Homeless.*

A lump formed in my throat. I hadn't cried in three years—not over gunshot wounds, children with cancer, or over pregnant women losing their babies. So why should I cry now over a few words written in the margin of a newspaper? I took a deep breath and continued.

*Do you know what I'd like to do someday? Someday I'd like to visit a farm. I've never been to a farm, but I've seen pictures of them. I'd like to walk barefoot across the hardwood floors of*

*a big farmhouse. I'd like to hold a baby duck in my hand. I'm sure the feathers would be soft. And at night, I would like to sit on the long porch and stare at the full moon and count the stars. You can't count the stars in the city. You can't even count the people. The people don't count.*

"Yes they do, Rebecca," I said, angrily wiping my eyes with the back of my hand. "We try to save people every day. They **do** count."

But I knew what she meant. The human heart could grow hard to the real needs. Look at Dora. She was the best at her job. But she never stopped to talk to the patients; she never looked them in the eyes. And I'd followed in her footsteps.

Oh, I had helped save lives, but I'd never bothered to find out if Mrs. Crane had any grandchildren. I'd never asked Mr. Dunn what his favorite baseball team was. Someone else had, but to me they were all Jane and John Doe's. They came in, I helped them get better, I patted myself on the back when they came through, and I called it a day. That was the only way to survive as a doctor.

I picked up the next paper. I'd have to read more.

*The line was long at Penn's today. I hate waiting in that line. There is always a fight. Today someone named Eddie punched someone named Randolph because Randolph made a wisecrack about Eddie's hair. Someone broke up the fight. No one got hurt. I think Eddie and Randolph were just hungry. Randolph didn't really care about Eddie's hair, but he had to say something to be heard. And Eddie wasn't really angry at Randolph's words, he was angry because he was down in the soup kitchen wearing stinking clothes with no where to sleep and no where to go and nothing to do. I got my soup. I got my bread. The lady behind the counter didn't look at me. I stood in the corner and ate. That's how it is down there. That's how it is at Penn's. I hate it.*

On and on I read, paper after paper until I looked up at the clock with bleary eyes and realized it was three o'clock in the morning. I felt I knew Rebecca as I had known no one else in my life. That's because there was something solid there, something genuine, something that had agony, pain, and emotion.

I'd read how her fiancé had left her long ago for another woman. I read how she'd been evicted from her apartment because she'd lost her job in the factory shut down. I'd read how she'd gotten raped on the other job that she'd found and how she'd fled for her safety. I'd read it all, and I slept and dreamed—dreamed that her voice was calling to me.

That was almost eleven months ago. If someone were to ask me now, were to ask me ten years from now, about the incident that changed my life, I'd have to say it was the discovery of Rebecca. She sparked more drive into my soul than any other factor ever had or ever could. I compiled her poems and had them published under her name—something that was amazingly easy to do because of her talent. A copy sits on my nightstand. I wish I could tell Rebecca how much, even in death, that she has meant to me.

Maybe, in a sense, I have found a way to tell Rebecca and give something back to her in exchange. I'm still a resident. I still admire Dora. But I'm not like her anymore. I stop and talk to the patients. I know that Mrs. Grant with a broken hip has two cats named Thimble and Spanky. No one had to tell me. Mrs. Grant showed me pictures of the cats. Dora doesn't really like my change of heart, and she warns me that I won't be able to sleep. But I do—maybe even better than before.

In Sierra Vista Cemetery there lies a grave. I didn't win the lottery or anything, but I saved enough money to put a nice, little headstone on the grave. These words are engraved in the stone:

**Rebecca**

**Know that you will  
always count.**

And she had. Rebecca had made me see the world in more colors than black **and white**.  
She'd made me see people—the real people, not just the Does.

TWO SETS

Sarah Goss

CHARACTERS

LANG *housewife*

IVY *housewife*

VICTOR *Lang's five-year-old son*

TWO *Ivy's six-year-old daughter*

RICK *Lang's husband*

SCENE

*Lang and Ivy are having tea at Lang's home. Ivy has brought her six-year-old daughter, and she is fighting with Lang's equally immature, undisciplined son. Lang and Ivy are dressed as Geisha, with white make-up and full kimono.*

IVY: So Lang, I was telling you. Bob came home last night and he was like *so tired* we didn't even do it.

LANG: Really, yes. Uh huh. VICTOR! (she screams) Quit pulling Two's hair.

IVY: Sometimes I just don't understand our role as women. You know? So it's like we feed the men and the kids, and we mop the floor, and we look pretty. Not to mention changing diapers and doing dishes and for what? What?

LANG: Sometimes I wonder what it would be like if I'd stayed single. No stretch marks and no mouths to feed. But, Ivy, *we're women*. It's our destiny.

IVY: All right. If I have to accept my destiny what can I do about my love life?

LANG: (sweetly and sincerely) Do enlighten me, dear.

IVY: Well, you see, we haven't done *it* in at least five months. Bob's been very preoccupied with work, stays out late. I've hardly seen him all week he's had so many business trips. And how he spoils Two. It's hard being a single mom.

*Victor is kicking Two and trying to punch her in the face. Two is screaming like a banshee.*

VICTOR: ARRRRAHHHH! ARRRRRRARRRRRARRRH! RAHR! RAHR!!!!

TWO: AHHHHHH! AAAAHHHHHHH! AH AH AH!

LANG: Stop it you two.

VICTOR: (at Two) I hate you! I'm going to beat you up! You smell bad!

TWO: If you try to hurt me, Victor, my daddy will gouge your eyes out!

VICTOR: (scared) Nun uh.

TWO: Uh huh. With a spoon.

IVY: Now now. Stop saying such mean things to Victor. You'll give him nightmares.

LANG: To be honest with you Ivy dear, Rick has seemed a little preoccupied too. It's like all he thinks about is work and golf. Before we got married I thought everything would, you know, work out.



IVY: (dreamily) Like the fairy tale.  
LANG: Exactly. Maybe we just aren't trying to fill our roles as women hard enough.  
IVY: Well I do. I vacuum, and I mend, and I do laundry.  
LANG: And what do you think I do all day? Eat bon bons and read romance novels?  
IVY: Only after you've cleaned house, dear.  
LANG: When I first met Rick I used to feel.  
IVY: When I first met Bob I used to get sick to my stomach.  
LANG: Like bad sick?  
IVY: No silly. Good sick. And I felt tingly all over.  
LANG: Have you thought about feng shui? Maybe you have the cat box in the romance corner.  
IVY: What is feng shui?  
LANG: It's eastern tradition, dear. I read about it in Cosmo last month.  
IVY: Maybe I should start reading Cosmo.  
LANG: Oh absolutely dear. You see it says (picking Cosmo off the table) right here that different corners of the room affect different aspects of your life. For instance, if you want to increase the romance in your life, you should put red sheets on the bed and some fresh flowers in the romance corner.  
IVY: Well, one mustn't knock it until she's tried it. Do you mind if I borrow your copy?  
LANG: Certainly. (screams) VICTOR! Where have they run off to? I must stop at the florist before Rick gets home.

*Lights dim. When they come back on, the scene is set at Ivy's apartment. Lang is wringing her hands in a nervous gesture. They still have on geisha make-up, but they are wearing sports bras and exercise shorts.*

LANG: So, tell me. How did it go last night?  
IVY: (ecstatic) Lang, how can I thank you? Last night was so fantastic I felt like I was falling for Bob all over again.  
LANG: Really.  
IVY: Oh yes it was marvelous. I don't know if it was the sheets or the flowers, but it certainly did the trick.  
LANG: Unbelievable. Rick came home and saw the flowers and asked if I paid cash for them, because I seem to have maxed out our Visa. He was snoring like Rip Van Winkle by the time I came out of the bathroom. Maybe I should get some sheets.  
IVY: Oh you must, you must. But first we have to do these exercises I was reading about. (they lie on the floor with knees bent) Now, Cosmo says we must do these exercises daily for three weeks before we try them out on our husbands.  
LANG: What exercises?  
IVY: Pelvic thrusts. We do four sets of those and then we do Kegels.  
LANG: (squeezing her butt in the air) What are kegels?  
IVY: It says here they are for your love muscle. We do five sets of those, and then we take a break and drink some water.  
LANG: Whatever it takes to bring my marriage back from the dead. Ugh. My butt is sore already.  
IVY: Two more sets.

LANG: You know, I'm not as young as I once was. Maybe it's not my housework or my cooking. Maybe Rick has met someone else.

IVY: Last set. Lang, don't be silly. Rick isn't as young as he once was either. Besides, who is he going to meet at a business meeting?

LANG: You're probably right. I'm just being over imaginative. I'll stop and pick up some red sheets on the way home. Victor and Two are being awfully quiet.

IVY: They are probably playing doctor.

LANG: Wonderful. My five-year-old gets more action than I do.

*Lights dim. When they come back on, Lang is lying on the couch with cucumbers over her eyes. She has been crying. She is wearing a bathrobe and messed up geisha make-up.*

RICK: Lang. Lang. Lang, dear please stop crying. It's pathetic. Look, I'm sorry. It just didn't work out. But don't worry. I have every intention of remaining a father to Victor.

LANG: (sobbing) Get out of my house.

RICK: Lang, don't take this so personally. Honestly, I think you have some issues. There is no reason to cry and carry on like this. It was fun while it lasted. My life is moving on and I have no choice but to follow it.

LANG: (under her breath) You bastard.

RICK: Cheer up, doll. You have to put on a happy face for your son. He'll be home from his friend's house soon, and he'll be hungry. You better put dinner on.

LANG: Yes, yes. I mustn't neglect my role of good mother as well.

RICK: You look a mess. I suggest you do something with that make-up before Victor sees you. He'll be scared of his mommy. Well enough of this drama. I'm leaving. My lawyer will be in touch.

LANG: So leave. (*Door closes.*) (screams) WHY? WHY? What ever happened to my DESTINY?

*Lights dim and come back on. Lang is sitting up, sniffing. She holds a box of Kleenex. Door opens. Ivy enters with Two and Victor.*

VICTOR: I said DON'T TOUCH ME! I don't want your cooties.

TWO: I can touch you if I want to. My daddy says I'm a princess, and I get to make all the rules. You better go and clean your room so I can mess it up.

VICTOR: No girls allowed in my room.

TWO: You better be nice to me or I'll turn you into a toad.

IVY: Two, take Victor outside and teach him to do somersaults.

TWO: NO! Besides I don't know how.

IVY: Well cartwheels then, I don't care. You better go outside right now, or I'll tell your daddy you've been a bad little princess. NOW SCOOT!

*Two and Victor exit, torturing each other out the door.*

IVY: Lang, dear?

LANG: Yes?

IVY: What happened?

LANG: Rick is leaving me.

IVY: He's met someone else?

LANG: Yes.

IVY: I'm so sorry, dear.

LANG: Ivy?

IVY: Yes?

LANG: Did you bring the Cosmo?

IVY: Certainly. (pulls it out of her bag) Why?

LANG: Because I want to know.

IVY: Know what dear? How to be a better lover? A better cook? Maybe redecorating would cheer you up.

LANG: Oh no. No matter how many pelvic thrusts I do, Rick will never come back. I'm beyond Feng Shui.

IVY: You've given up hope already.

LANG: I've never felt so alone.

IVY: Do you mind if I ask?

LANG: Ask away.

IVY: Where did he meet her?

LANG: Her? He didn't meet her at the office.

IVY: Did he meet her at the gym?

LANG: Oh no. He met him at the country club. He is a golf pro. And he has a tan.

IVY: I don't understand.

LANG: I don't understand either. My husband is leaving me. And it has nothing to do with my cooking or my technique in bed. He has moved on. To MEN!

IVY: You mean he really is leaving you for a man?

LANG: Leaving? He's already left. Rick and his boyfriend took off for the Virgin Islands to get away. I can't believe it. I thought maybe I should do something different with my make-up or something. But it's got nothing to do with my looks. Rick's after the same sex. Appalling, isn't it? Well, apparently I need a lawyer, because Rick's will be contacting me soon.

IVY: I can't believe it.

LANG: Believe it sister. I'm a single mom for real now.

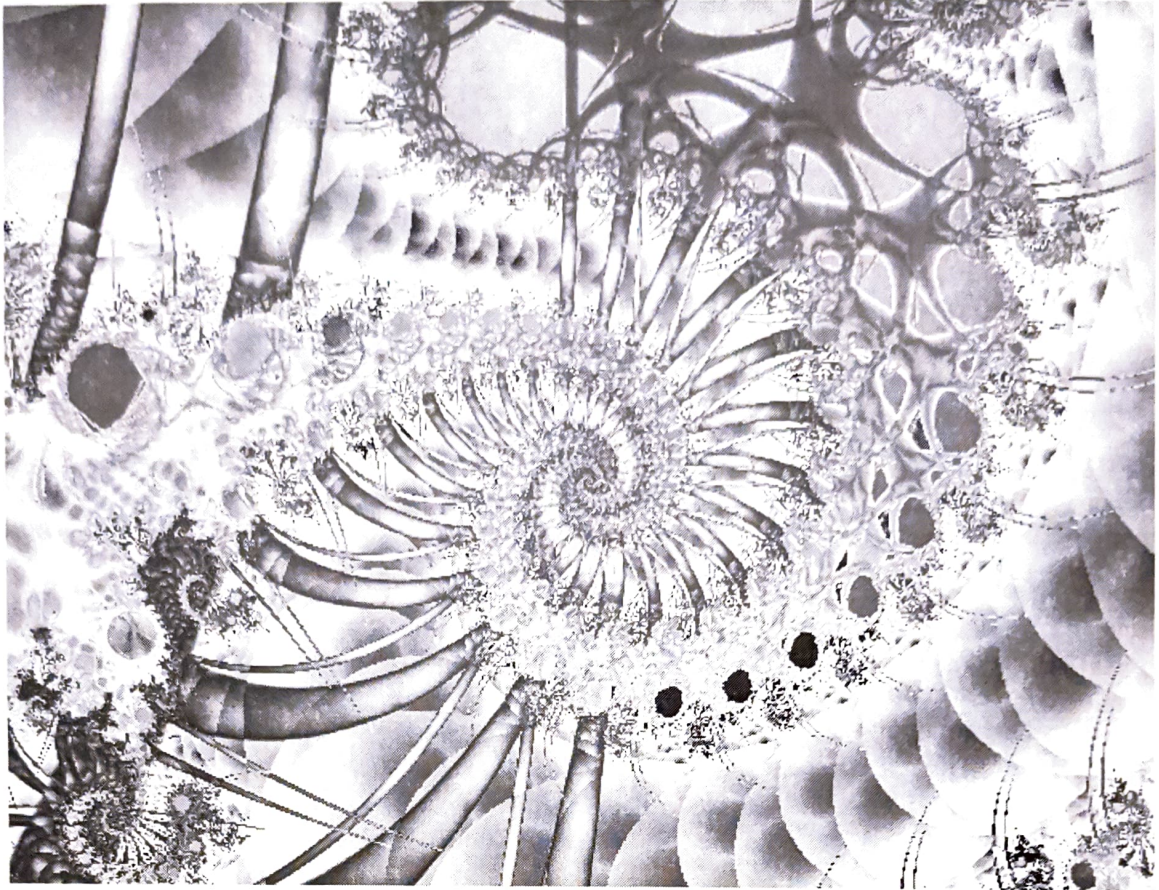
*Ivy gives Lang a long hug.*

LANG: Let me see that Cosmo.

IVY: Why, dear?

LANG: Because I need a hot date by Saturday.

*Lights dim.*



**Voices in the Wind**

*Softly spring days speak  
The listening person knows  
Its chorus is life*

**Shaun Watkins**

## **The New Storm**

You wait...in solitude  
for the sharp white lightning  
and rolling cloud of thunder  
the 'new' storm  
and cool rush of wind as ancient breath  
blowing in your ear  
seducing you to electricity  
to tempting God by a fearless run  
into open fields spinning, laughing, falling  
as the drenching squalls wash your spirit clean  
you rise from earth's wind swept mantle  
and take your place 'mongst the  
flowering heads of eternal gardens  
you wait.

**John Whitcomb**

## AMONG BLOSSOMS AND CRABAPPLES

Arvilla Ater

Its bark had been worn smooth by dozens of feet making thousands of trips up and down the aged trunk. Its branches spread like welcoming arms, offering comfort to all whom would come. And nothing said spring more beautifully than its rich, green leaves and dark pink blossoms. It was my library, my hiding place, my place to dream, my place to pretend – it was my crabapple tree.

From the time I could climb, that tree stood in our front yard, and I thought it to be one of the most wonderful places in the world. It was as though God Himself had created it especially for my brother, our friends, and me. Its perfectly divided fork near the bottom of the trunk was just right to give small feet a boost, and the branches were wide, sturdy, and spaced evenly enough to advance any climber.

There was plenty of space for all, so we each had our own “room” in the tree – a special branch that we could claim for our own. My branch, the “room” on the left side of the tree, had a dip in the middle of it, which fit my behind perfectly. I would sit in that dip, lay back on the branch, open a book, and read for hours. As I slipped away into the world of words, the green canopy of leaves shaded me from the sun and stirred gently with each puff of the wind – providing unsurpassed tranquillity.

Spring was my favorite season. Millions of blossoms would sprout from tiny buds, shrouding the tree in a thick veil of coral pink. The tree in bloom was like having a three-month long sunset sitting in my front yard, and there were no crayons in my box that could come close to its glorious color. Lying on my branch among beauty that was tangible enough to taste, I’d spend whole afternoons writing in my diary and listening to the humming of the bees that shared my paradise. During those times, the world went on without me as I yawned and stretched and drank in the intoxicating smells around me.

Then came the crabapples, which offered a pleasure of a very different kind – a good, down and rowdy FIGHT! Three or four kids would line up on one side of the street with a hefty supply of crabapples and another three or four of us would stay beneath the tree with a bountiful supply at hand. ZING, ZING! My relentless army and I would hurl our ammunition across the street, then duck for cover. A shower of crabapples would soon be returned from the enemy forces. Amid the shouts and screams, we’d toss the solid red balls back and forth—until the enemy’s supplies were gone or our arms got tired. The battle over who’d won or lost sometimes lasted longer than the game itself.

Even after the crabapples were long gone, the tree sufficed for other things. It served as a fort that protected us from the Indians – or cowboys – whichever side we happened to be on that day. It was an orphanage when we were “poor, deprived children, long forgotten by our cruel parents.” And there was no finer restaurant either! We consumed bologna sandwiches, potato chips, and Kool-Aid like it was all shrimp and red wine, because eating in the tree made everything taste like the food of the gods.

No matter what form the tree took on any given day, it was always an adventure and a challenge. Who could climb the highest? Who could hang upside-down by his or her knees the longest? Who could jump from the crabapple tree to the nearby maple? Who could hold onto the scariest branch and jump to the ground? We dared each other, conquered our fears, and had the time of our lives. Fortunately, not one broken bone ever resulted from our escapades.

Naturally, the years passed. I grew older, I grew taller, but I still climbed that tree. Oh, I didn't fit on my branch as well as I did when I was little, but that didn't matter. I still had my "room," and I could still read a book and listen to the wind whispering through the leaves. The leaves still sheltered me from the sun, the blossoms still smelled as sweet, and I could still throw a crabapple – though the enemies were gone.

I touched my crabapple tree for the last time when I was seventeen. My dad had remarried, and we were going to move into my stepmother's house. As funny as it seems, saying good-bye to that tree was like saying good-bye to an old friend. I ran my hand down its smooth trunk, looked at the familiar knots and curves, put my feet in that perfect first step, and climbed up to my branch. As the tears slipped slowly down my face, I thought about how things had changed. Why couldn't everything stay the same – just like my tree? Sure it was worn a bit, but it still stood in the same, old place just like it always had for as long as I could remember.

As time passed someone else moved into our old house, and that someone cut down the crabapple tree. I was angry at first, then sad. But I knew that tree meant nothing to John Doe. He had not climbed in that tree. He had not sat among its coral blossoms or fought with its tiny crabapples. He did not know he could read in the tree or play cowboys and Indians. He did not know that bologna sandwiches tasted great if you ate them in the tree. He was a grown man. So I let it go.

The stump is still there, but I've never walked up to it. I've never run my hands across the remains of what once was. It's better to remember it standing tall and proud, with outstretched branches full of leaves and blossoms. It was beautiful – and it was mine.

## **Holding the Bag**

**And so you left me holding the bag—  
the bag that contained all of me and you—  
and I wondered what to do with it...**

**Should I hold it and wait for you to return?  
Should I toss it into the trash and forget?  
Should I recycle it and create something new?**

**Undecided, I put the bag on a shelf  
and let it collect dust, never touching it  
only glancing at it once in a great while...**

**Then you stopped by...and asked me  
If I'd kept the bag...I pointed to the shelf  
and you took it down and looked inside....**

**You looked at all that had been me and you—  
it was dusty but there, just like you'd left it—  
you smiled your soft smile and put it back....**

**kissed me for old times and walked away...  
I watched you go...then looked at the bag  
sitting again in its place—where I'll leave it  
until I decide to clean house.**

**Arvilla Ater**



**Beneath the color gray sky**

Covered walkways  
Cement boundaries  
Buildings stacked of brick  
January it rains  
Between days of  
Ninety and eighty degrees  
All the trees  
Dripping water from  
Their forgotten leaves  
Students walk by  
Fast paced and slow  
Some mutter to themselves  
Money, class, that girl  
The one that just passed them by  
Out to the parking lot  
Wet from the rain  
To the old car  
Color pale green  
Rust on the edge  
Open the car door  
Get behind the wheel  
Slowly turn the key  
Power to the radio  
A pink man named Floyd  
Speaks his provincial mind  
“We don’t need no”  
Set the gear  
Start rolling to the rear  
Out of the space  
Numbered thirty-three  
Turn the wipers on  
Trapped by the  
Left worn out wiper

Seen through the  
Smoke-lined windshield  
Moving back and forth  
A small piece  
Of paper sogged  
Roll the window down  
With the stripped window knob  
Left hand chasing  
Right hand clenching the wheel  
Taken from the wiper  
Brought into the car  
Seen with my Very eyeballs  
That little piece  
Of paper with The X in the box  
Puts me just a little further  
Into debt

**Larry D. Cross**

## **The People I Knew and Loved**

I lingered around a while after I died.  
No one said much and nobody cried,  
And there in the casket my body laid out,  
The people walked by.

“She looks so natural,” some of them said.  
Others walked by just nodding their heads.  
My corpse cold and rigid  
As the people walked by.

The people walked by me all of my life.  
I endured quietly all of the strife,  
Nobody cared.  
The people walked by.

The weight became too much for my shoulders to bear.  
My spirit cried out, my body despaired.  
I gave up the fight,  
As the people walked by.

**Serah Crossland**

## A Feline Anecdote

Amanda Eaton

I had just finished my morning bath, and watching the hazy fog withdraw from the garden, eyed my first victim of the day. What an honor for you. You will not die in vain, for you are to become a meal for the lion. The small white moth was not as enthusiastic about this venture and flitted away before my small paws could grasp it. I gazed up into the wide sky and studied the leaves that floated slowly, twisting, turning to the ground. I felt that incredible urge inside to attack them. My claws were pulsating, my adrenaline pumping, and my tail twitching, as my body engaged itself for the offense. I have a hard time controlling this surge of energy, unless, of course, my hunger is stronger. I heard the door to the quaint gray house open and shut quickly. "Breakfast!" With my small, but eager tongue, I prepared myself for ecstasy. I took one more glance at the leaves, which had settled to the ground, and ran up to the house.

I sprang up to the giant and called to him. "Meow!" He never looked down, but almost crushed my long, beautiful, gray tail. Puzzled, I watched him as he was swallowed up by the humming machine and whisked away in a flash. The gravel sounded like claws on sandpaper as it spilled over the banks of the road. I used to worry I would never see him again, but I know he will return when the fog sets in again, in the same monster that took him away in such a hurry.

The sounds of the small rural farm were echoing hunger. I knew I would have my reward soon. I heard walking in the house, sounds like thunder to these little ears. The door crept open as one of them peeked her head out. "Burr, it's cold there this morning!" the smaller one said and slammed the door shut in my whiskers. Shaking my round head I stared at the glistening, brass doorknob. Then I turned and three giants stepped out, wrapped in warm cloth, and put on their wet "outdoor" shoes. Ah! Shoes! I love shoes. They make for good hiding places, and the strings make great prey.

I ran beneath their bulky bodies and through the dew-infested garden. My hunger grew more with each light step I took. Inside the drafty barn, I watched in anticipation as they pulled the horned creature up onto the wood block and secured her in. I wish she would not make those dreadful noises. She often sounds like she's dying. She continues this annoyance until sweet, sticky grain is placed in front of her. Then the fun begins. I drop down beneath the milk bag and wait for nourishment. Usually the giants squirt the warm milk into my mouth and whiskers. For some reason, though, they failed to do that today. So I helped myself to the bucket. The sweet nectar is like mother's milk, soothing my throat. Suddenly I felt myself being elevated from the bucket and tossed outside the barn into the icy dirt. That's never happened to me before. I shrugged it off and after cleaning my soggy whiskers, hurried back into the yard to scan my kingdom. Everything seemed in order, but I had to look twice when I noticed the three giants running back to the house. Where are they going in such a hurry? I leaped through the cold, wet grass that stung my toes, and up the porch to meet them.

Usually the giants would cuddle me before going inside, but now it's different. I hear the word "time" a lot. "Not enough time. So many things to do and not enough time to do it. No time for you today, kitty." Stepping over me as if I was invisible, they left me alone on the cold, wood porch. I stared at my steaming footprints in disgust. I thought I had trained them so well. Mutual grooming is required in this hierarchy. Who has this "time" and where did he come from? He is ruining my life!

I remember hearing how felines used to be respected. We were mummified and honored. Now, though, we are merely stress relievers and pest control. What went wrong? Maybe "time" is to blame for this as well. If I were a black cat I'd put "time" in his place, I'd cross his path from the left. That would show him. He has changed everything! My giant used to quote me these colorful words:

*Pangur, white Pangur,  
How happy we are*

*Alone together,  
Scholar and cat.*

Do you hear such celebration of my kind any longer? I think not! "Time" has corrupted our giants into forgetting us. Do they not realize I have feelings also? I am as much an individual as anyone else. With my tail erect, I voice my complaint. It seems I scream these things to them, and when I think I've got their attention, they place a dish of dried who-knows-what, in front of my wet nose. I overlook it, and being the forgiving soul that I am allow them to stroke my fine fur. I need social development, but "time" does not allow it. I need encouragement, but "time" does not allow it. I need satisfaction, but again "time" does not allow it. How do I begin to understand it, and know how to defeat this foe?

I believe myself to be courageous like Puss in Boots, whom I heard about listening to the stories of the giants. I wish to meet this servant of Marquis of Carabas someday. I believe also that I have the wit, not to mention the enticing smile, of the Cheshire Cat. With all of these qualities of the great leaders, you would think I would not be underestimated. Although with these strengths, I do have weaknesses. I'm not ashamed to admit that. Yes, I do catnip occasionally, but I do not inhale! I do not expose my belly, or make myself vulnerable to attack, but my real weakness lies in my dreams. Most cats do not dream--we sleep and eat and play. I do all those things, but I've longed for more.

Sometimes I believe I could actually fly if I really tried. I could escape this punishment, and search for time in all its hiding places. It could not hide in the shadows because the darkness is my best friend. I would conceal myself in the air and "time" would never know I was coming. I could rise above all of the problems of this world and fly like the angel I am, but I'm brought back to reality as the chilly wind seeps through my fur and up my spine.

In my despair and confusion I return to my dusty cushion to nap. As I drift off, I hear the clouded voices inside. Talk of schoolwork and housework and just *plain* work and dealing with other giants. I thought my life was complicated. Basking in the warm sun, I enjoy just being a cat. I could feel the penetrating heat breaking through the icy feeling inside.

Suddenly, my sleep was disturbed as my giant ran out the door with a huge bag. My goodness, the frantic way they move from place to place, especially when the leaves fall off the sad trees. They should learn to purr--it relieves stress. Struggling down the steps, she mumbles something about "school" and glancing at me said she wished she had "time" to get me snipped. What does this mean, snipped? Does this mean I'm in trouble, or does she finally realize my importance and wishes to reward me? I shake my head and curl my toes beneath my warm body. Snuggling myself into the cushion, I dream of flight and of "time" begging for mercy from the wrath of the lion.

## **Rain Drops**

**A million miniature dancers**

**Bounce effortlessly from the ground,**

**Laughing joyously and playfully**

**As they fall back down.**

**Each one bathed in sparkling**

**Jewel-like colors**

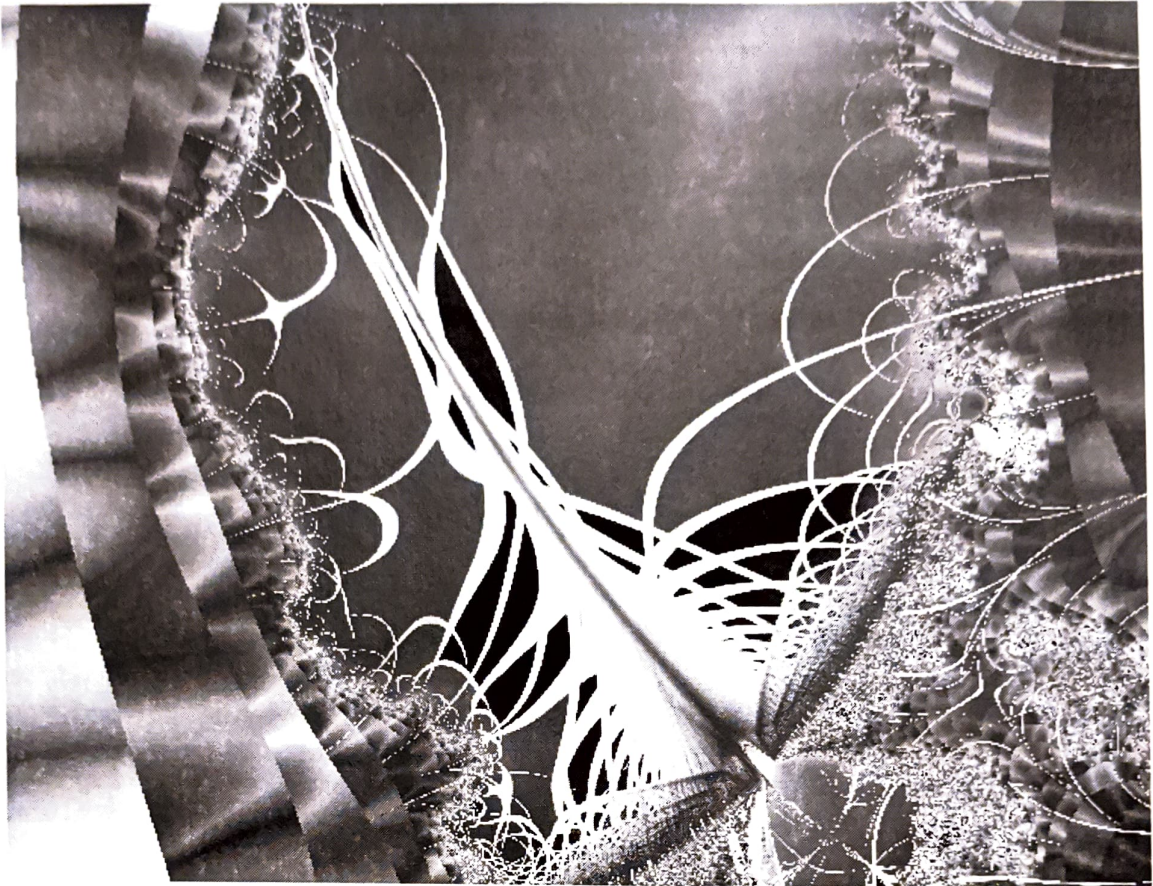
**As they tumble, frolic**

**And chase one another.**

**Large beautiful rain drops**

**Bouncing on the ground.**

**Paula F. Madden**



*Shaun Watkins*

### *Freshman Essays*

For the first time, *Literalines* is pleased to include  
a selection of essays by the finalists in  
the spring 2000 Freshman Essay Contest.

## The Burial of Wine and Soul: The Role of Irony in "The Cask of Amontillado"

Stephanie Cummings

Edgar Allan Poe is a master of bringing characters face to face with unspeakable horror that is overwhelming for the reader as well as the characters. Irony is the tool Poe uses throughout "The Cask of Amontillado" to weave a horrifying tale of deceit. Poe allows both the reader and the characters to expect one thing while the story unfolds to reveal something unthinkable different. Irony weaves and connects the underlying meanings of the names of the characters, the carnival, and the short story genre to create the horror of this tale.

Irony in literature is defined as a technique of indicating an intention or attitude opposed to what is stated. There are three types of irony Poe uses to connect the characters, the carnivalesque world and the short story genre. The first is verbal irony, which uses words to show a major discrepancy between the words used and their intended meaning (Barnet 50). The second is dramatic irony that makes the audience aware of information unknown to some of the characters. This may involve the true identity of a character, his intentions or the probable outcome of the action (Shaw 208). The third type is situational irony, which shows the contrast of what a person says or thinks and the true state of affairs (McMahon, Day and Funk 1140).

The reader can see Poe's use of all three types of irony in the text. Montresor's referral to Fortunato as "my friend" five times rings clearly of verbal irony (Poe 149,150). Montresor speaks of Fortunato's health six times in the tale, and each time he implores Fortunato to go back and not risk his health. At one point Montresor toasts Fortunato "to your long life" (Poe 151). Poe uses Verbal irony in Montresor's spoken concern for Fortunato, which the reader knows, is void of feeling.

Poe uses dramatic irony when Montresor meets Fortunato at dusk during the carnival. Montresor expresses his delight in seeing him: "I was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand" (Poe 149). The reader, however, knows Montresor's reason for being pleased is at the thought of Fortunato's death. Poe also uses a hyperbole that is an exaggeration not to be taken literally to also weave irony in his tale. The narrator begins by expressing his indignation: "*the thousand injuries* of Fortunato I had borne as best I could, but when he ventured upon insult I vowed revenge" (Poe 149; emphasis added). Montresor has not possibly suffered through thousands of injuries, and this obvious exaggeration is used to allow Montresor to justify his premeditated murder.

Finally, situational irony is shown when Montresor tells the reader that the smile he gives Fortunato is "*now* at the thought of his immolation" (Poe 149). Fortunato makes the Mason's gesture and Montresor shows Fortunato a symbolic trowel, which he intends to use in his murderous plot. The irony is in Fortunato's belief that Montresor is joking about the proud brotherhood of Masons, whereas, Montresor is very serious about his proud family's motto which is "*Nemo me impune lacessit.*" This motto is Latin and means "No one attacks me without paying dearly"(Poe 151).

To further connect the entire tale through the use of irony, Poe cleverly chooses the names of his characters. The name Montresor, the character telling the tale, translates from French, *mon trésor*, to English as "my treasure." The "treasure" of Montresor is Fortunato who he buries in his catacombs. Fortunato is described as "a man to be respected and even feared" (Poe 149). The name Fortunato means "lucky one" in Italian. Poe uses verbal irony when Montresor greets Fortunato at the carnival: "My dear Fortunato, you are *luckily* met" (Poe 149; emphasis added). Fortunato, in fact, is unluckily met when he comes across Montresor at the carnival.

Furthermore, the irony is seen as Poe places the characters of his tale in the midst of the "supreme madness of the carnival season" (Poe 149). The carnival is a time when the world stands on its head. There is a complete reversal of the social pyramid (Merriman 18). Ordinary people act out the misdeeds

of the wealthy and poke fun at the behavior of the king, judges, nobles and clergymen. By wearing costumes and pretending to be powerful, the peasants have new identities. This ironic setting serves as a disguise for Montresor's vengeance and murderous plans. Montresor not only puts on the outerwear of another identity, but also wears the deceiving appearance of a friend to Fortunato. The great Fortunato who is respected and feared wears a jester's outfit. He is the carnivalesque King who is costumed as a fool.

Another point of irony that ties to the carnival is seen in Poe's selection of alcohol as the means in which to lead Fortunato to his death. Excessive food and drink allow inhibitions to fall down during the carnival. Alcohol is overflowing and represents freedom. Being inebriated, Fortunato feels no danger in going with Montresor to taste the Amontillado. It does not appear to be a threat, although it is as Montresor explains a weak point for Fortunato: "He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine" (Poe 149). Fortunato expresses great interest in the Amontillado that Montresor has supposedly purchased. Poe's choice of this sherry as bait is significant. A true Amontillado that is named after the mountain village, Montilla, is a basic Fino wine, which has been aged for many years to become a completely dry sherry (Robinson 30). A wine of this rarity during the carnival season excites Fortunato and draws him into Montresor's gruesome plans. Fortunato refers to the Amontillado eight times in the text. Poe contrasts the "dryness" of a true Amontillado to the damp catacombs, its sweetness to Fortunato's bitter experience, and its mountain name to the depths of the catacombs in which he is buried (Meyers 201).

In this midst of the carnival chaos, Poe shows the madness of the celebration matched by Montresor's madness of retribution. During carnival season the role of individuals change, but there is an understood set of rules to be followed by everyone: carnival is pretending, and conflicts are only an act. Death and life are not real and cannot be distinguished from one another.

After being chained to the wall in the catacombs, Fortunato finally realizes the *uncarnavalesque* situation in which he is an unwilling participant as Montresor puts the last stone in place. Montresor is breaking the carnival rules of pretending. The circumstances feel too real for Fortunato and he tries in vain to get Montresor back into the carnivalesque world: "Ha! ha! ha!-he! he! he!-a very good joke, indeed-an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo-he! he! he!-over our wine-he! he! he!" (Poe 153).

Finally, Poe makes use of the short story genre to intertwine irony throughout the tale. A sudden change of events is a hallmark of the short story genre. When Montresor's intentions become clear to both Fortunato and the reader, the reader sees that Montresor makes life and death absolute. Being chained to a damp wall in the depths of Montresor's catacombs makes Fortunato realize that he is no longer a part of the carnival celebration where there is an ambivalence toward death and life. The carnivalesque world stops and the real world begins abruptly for Fortunato as well as the reader. When this happens, Fortunato who is wearing the fool's clothes now *becomes* the fool. The leitmotif of the jingling bells on Fortunato's cap is repeatedly mentioned in this tale. The bells serve as a reminder of the irony of Fortunato's costume; the powerful Fortunato *becomes* the powerless fool. As Montresor lays the last stone, the "furious vibrations of the chains" by the strong Fortunato in the end comes forth from the crypt as "only a jingling of the bells" (Poe 152, 153). The Amontillado, which has beckoned Fortunato to the depths of the catacombs and will never be tasted by Fortunato, also shows the reader his weakness.

In the end, the reader can see "The Cask of Amontillado" is a maze of twists and turns as Poe puts the reader in the mind of a diabolical madman. Poe skillfully uses irony throughout the entire tale to show the reader that Montresor's world is not as it appears. First, Poe intentionally uses the character's names to show the irony in their meaning. He further uses the carnival for his purpose of irony. The carnival that is an escape from death and suffering is now used to bring about the very thing it serves to hide--death and suffering. Finally, the irony in the "U-turn" of the short story genre is used to bring the unexpected to light. Through this, Poe unfolds a chilling tale that only the darkest recesses of the reader's mind can accept.

(Written for L115 Fall 1999, Instructor: Nikita Nankov)



## The Voice of Regret

Camille Rowland

I remember when the world was not complicated. It was easy for me to be happy. There weren't any deadlines, children, places of employment, or college courses to worry about. I was not required to be any more than who I was: a child. Now that I have all these tasks in front of me I lose sight of what is really important. In Erma Bombeck's poem, "If I Had My Life to Live Over," she communicates an important message: "Life is too short to let it pass you by. We have one shot at it and then it's gone." I struggle to ignore my conscience daily. I pretend that the previously mentioned tasks are required of me and are not negotiable; but my heart tells me otherwise. The following paragraphs will explore my past regrets, my current regrets, and the fear of future regrets.

I took a walk with my father the other day. He reminded me of the person I became after I was no longer a happy child. I tried to explain to him that I became unhappy for a reason. I told him, "Daddy, you and Momma sent me to the best school possible. You two loved me and modeled what it meant to be a proud Black person. But, Daddy you did not tell those people at that fancy school that I was raised to speak my mind and be proud. Daddy, you didn't tell them that I was your little girl and I should be cherished. Daddy, they hit me and told me I was evil. I wanted to tell you then, but I didn't want to get in any more trouble. I did not know that grown-ups would paddle kids with wooden boards without a reason. I just accepted that image of myself. The older I became, the more it seemed to suit me. I kept running away because I felt that I didn't belong. I am glad that you always came and found me. But, what I don't understand was the reason you left. My heart was aching from the void you left. Momma said that my pregnancy didn't cause your heart attack. She said that it was something that had developed from your diet and other factors. Daddy, if I was not the cause of your heart attack, why did you wait until Momma told you I was pregnant to have it? The truth was that you could not look at your little girl who would soon be someone's Mom. The pain and anguish that I caused you left you feeling like a failure as a parent. Daddy, you were not a failure. You were my hero when I was a happy child and you were my hero as a troubled teen. I miss you." I watched my father continue the walk alone. The regrets of the past still haunt me. The longings for my father were communicated best when Erma wrote, "There would have been more 'I love you's....more I'm sorry's'."

I watched my father until I could no longer see him. As I turned to continue my journey, I was sidetracked by another person from my past. She was young and pregnant. She looked so sad and bitter. Her eyes appeared as if she had been crying for weeks. I stepped closer to her and tried to comfort her. She refused my help and wrapped her arms around her swollen belly. I stepped even closer to her, which placed us face to face. I scrutinized every detail of her face. I saw the confusion in her eyes. I saw the resentment she felt for the unborn child she carried in her womb. I also saw the love she had for the child. I finally saw who she really was: an image of me at sixteen years of age. I then tried to tell her that she would be just fine, but she would not listen. "Little one, put everything else out of your mind. Love the angel God placed in your belly. She will one day be a source of strength when you feel like you cannot go on. She will

inspire you to accomplish great things." The girl just shook her head and walked away. Perhaps, if I had explained to her using the words of Erma Bombeck, she would have understood. Erma wrote, "Instead of wishing away nine months of pregnancy, I'd have cherished every moment and realized that the wonderment growing inside me was the only chance in life to assist God in a miracle." I shook away the need to continuously ponder the whisper of Erma's words.

I proceeded quickly, reassuring myself that I would escape any further encounters with the past. I entered a familiar town. My instinct led me to the door of an even more familiar house. I listened closely at the door. I heard wishes of "Merry Christmas" and several "thank you's" from the conversations inside the house. I was compelled to go inside and be a part of this scene. I went inside without being noticed. I felt the love in the room warming my entire being, confirming that I was in the right place. A badly injured young lady entered the room with assistance from what appeared to be her brother. She took her seat on the couch and whispered to another young lady. "Justine, did you get Elizabeth's toys for me?" Justine responded, "Yeah, I told you I would." "Well, I wasn't doubting you; I just wasn't sure if I had given you enough money. And you didn't return my phone calls all week." Justine said, "I just wanted you to get some rest and from here on out, try to keep your car on the wheels, not the roof." The young lady smiled and gave a slight chuckle. The young lady abruptly stopped smiling as she caught a glimpse under the Christmas tree. She eyed two of the boxes suspiciously and did a quick survey of the rest of the living room. The young lady asked, "Where are the presents I asked you to get for the baby?" Justine said, "There they are!" as she pointed to the two small boxes. The young lady angrily said, "I gave you money for a play stove and a refrigerator. Now, where are those gifts?" Justine looked dumbfounded and said, "I ran a little short of cash myself this year, but Elizabeth is only two and she won't notice." Then the most beautiful little girl I'd ever seen came dashing into the living room. She shouted, "Is it Christmas? Is it Christmas?" Her big brown eyes and thick eye lashes sparkled with excitement. She didn't give anyone a chance to respond to the inquiry before she pounced into the next question. "Did Santa Claus come? HUH! HUH! I was a good all week and Mommy said I'm goin' get some toys!"

Justine grabbed the little girl and swung her around and said, "Yes, Auntie's baby, Santa Claus did come for you." She led the little girl to the small boxes. Elizabeth ripped both of them open without another word. She looked around and realized that those were the only presents Santa Claus had brought for her. She ran up to her Mommy with tears in her eyes and asked, "Mommy, wasn't I good enough? Didn't Santa think that I was good enough?" The young lady in the injured body took her leave, and I was left looking into my daughter's shimmering eyes. As I was snatched back into that memory, my heart ached more for the child than my body ached from the car wreck. I vowed to myself at that moment: I will never let her down again as long as there is breath in my body. Erma Bombeck wrote, "I would have never bought anything just because it was practical, wouldn't show soil, or was guaranteed to last a lifetime." Erma whispered another philosophy that I hold dear when considering not only the needs of my children, but their wants as well. You cannot put a price tag on the happiness of the people you love. My sister forced my daughter and me to learn the hard way.

It was difficult for me to continue after passing that moment of my life. However, I still continued the journey. I guess I must have fallen asleep along the way because I awoke in my bed with my eight-year old daughter staring down at me. She said, "Momma, I'm sick and I feel like I am about to hurl chunks all over the floor." I jumped out of the bed and onto the floor in

record speed. I instructed Elizabeth to get back in the bed and pulled her wastebasket close to her. I groggily stumbled down the stairs into the kitchen. I fumbled with the cabinet door, looking for soup to give her. She would have to settle for chicken broth because I thought that would be the easiest to clean up in case it didn't stay down. I prepared the soup and carried it in to her bedroom. There she was, dancing around in her fuzzy gown with the headphones on-- looking like the picture of health. I pulled the cord to the headphones out of the stereo. Elizabeth turned around with a look of astonishment across her face. I was very angry and stared her down like a warden in a maximum-security prison. She looked at me with those big, pretty saucer-like eyes and said, "Do you want me to cut the radio down?" I did not respond. I just kept looking at this child in disbelief. She then said, "So, is the soup ready for me?" While gritting my teeth, I directed Elizabeth to get dressed because it would not be safe for her to stay home. She quickly responded, "Good idea, Momma," and rushed into the closet for her school clothes.

I was so angry with Elizabeth that morning, but I blame myself. The time I spend with my daughters is limited because I work a full-time and part-time job. I attend school full-time, and there isn't another parent in the household to pick up the slack. I created these circumstances myself. I am the only one responsible for the life I live right now. I tell myself that I am doing what will prove to be the best for everyone in the long run, but my heart tells me that I am missing out on precious moments in time that will not be able to be regained. Erma Bombeck recalls several small details throughout her life that she wished she had made priority. What am I doing now that I will regret in the future? Will I echo Erma Bombeck with regret? Erma speaks for my conscience with the thought-provoking voice of reason. I just pray that my actions reflect the fact that I listened and took heed. "Life is too short to let it pass you by. We only have one shot at this and then it's gone."

(Written for W131 Fall 1999, Instructor: Terry Dibble)

# EGO

Steve Green

How many times have I come away from a social interaction and wondered, "Who was that person that just had control of my body?" It happens to me all the time. What is the component that drives these two personalities that appear so conflicting? The answer is not easy to come by, but Borges addresses this same situation in "Borges and Myself." Borges recognizes the complexity of the human personality. For Borges, the ability to let his two personalities co-exist enables him to achieve artist success and also find time for his introverted self. These two personalities often appear to be in conflict, but in truth they are tied to one another so tightly they cannot be separated. There is actually a third personality that binds the other two together. Borges has left a body of written works that seals his fate as a vital human being that contributed productively while alive. I, on the other hand, look to my children as my reason for living. Though Borges and I attain justification for being alive by different means, we do still share in the knowledge that our lives are of value. When writing, I must also look for my artistic persona. This is my writing voice, but it is not the persona that is revealed to society on a daily basis. My artistic side is tied to a person I was introduced to twenty years ago by a good friend of mine.

Twenty years ago, at the age of twenty-two, I was on the verge of discovering what living a double life was all about. After wearing out my welcome at home, and having botched my first attempt at higher education, I headed West in search of self-realization. I wasn't sure what awaited me, but I knew that life had more to offer than what was available in my hometown. Upon arrival in Colorado Springs, Colorado, I immediately began employment as a real estate salesman under the supervision of an ok'd high school crony who had acquired his real estate broker's license and opened an office selling rental contracts. It was immediately apparent that we had a problem. I didn't have a real estate license. My friend, Jim, offered a quick and easy fix. I could become "Eddie Mulrainey," a former employee whose license was still prominently displayed on the office wall. This began my life as Eddie Mulrainey, real estate salesman by day, nightclub hopping "New Waver" by night.

While the name Eddie Mulrainey started out as an alias that supplied me a means to making a living, it soon became the name of a "New Wave" rocker that frequented the weekend club scene. Under the guise of Eddie Mulrainey, I was no longer bound by my small town religious upbringings. Steve Green was buried somewhere beneath the Goodwill jacket and dark sunglasses. At the clubs, Eddie soon became my full-time personality. At work I lived that part of the respectable real estate salesman, but this was much more of an act than the weekend persona was. How had such a rapid metamorphosis transpired? In retrospect, it is obvious to me that the club hopping Eddie was an expression of my uninhibited personality, free from twenty-two years of acquired baggage. But if this was the "true" me, who is this person that walks around in my body?

The person that walks, talks, and occupies my body, is the product of the need to feel justified as a human being. If I were to carry on as Eddie Mulrainey, I would be taking risks that could be harmful to my children. In this respect Borges and I are quite different. Borges allowed the flamboyant, creative persona to exist for reasons of justification for living. His works were extensive and are living on, even after his death. He has numerous web pages dedicated to his works, and in South America he is looked on as a literary genius. Obviously, I must look for

other means for my justification. My kids have provided me with a mode of continued existence. Hopefully, they will live long lives and have children of their own. With my kids' best interest as my important obligation, I have learned to suppress Eddie Mulrainey. He is not the sort of fellow that I want to introduce to my children; but he is inside my head and occasionally makes an appearance. As I continue life's journey, I wonder who will dominate when the kids are gone. What will keep me in check after they are gone? Maybe nothing! Maybe that's a good thing!

Oh yeah, what about finding one's writing voice? Well, in my case I have to step deep within. I have to go looking for Eddie if I want to produce anything worthwhile. I can't just sit down at a typewriter and create a worthwhile paper. I must relax, but at the same time I must concentrate deeply. You see, Steve isn't very creative or insightful. Eddie is the one that has exciting ideas and experiences to draw on. Initially, I try to approach a topic from the perspective of, "What does this topic mean to me?" It is much easier to write about a subject that is familiar, but it can be more rewarding to write about a subject I know less about. When dealing with a subject that is less familiar to me, I slip into a role-playing mode. It is then that Eddie takes control and Steve is discarded. Borges also used this dual personality method to aid in his creativity. His ability to step outside himself led to many highly acclaimed works. Borges considered himself a man of simple tastes, with an appreciation for things such as the smell of coffee and the look of an old archway. But when producing his written works, he had to become Borges the flamboyant artist, who is known for his habit of falsification and exaggeration. Like Borges, I go looking for my other self to aid with creativity. By donning the mask of Eddie, I am able to free myself of worries that might stifle my writing voice. Eddie doesn't care if anyone is offended or if someone's feelings are hurt. He rises to the challenge and grabs it by the throat. If my instructor says, "Change this and change that," Eddie is able to step forward and throw the curveball back to the instructor. The challenge of change is welcomed. The opportunity to escape is an excuse to go visit an old friend. Eddie is my evil twin, but he is also my writing partner. You see--Steve is the breadwinner, the good father, and the loyal son. Eddie is looking for something more, like a new band to pogo to.

(Written for W131 Fall 1999, Instructor: Terry Dibble)

## How to Mix Cats and Paint in Four Different Ways

Jamie Lawalin

### Original Story:

She was painting her bedroom blue. Her cat walked in and looked into the paint can. The cat tipped the can over; spilling blue paint everywhere and then ran out of the room.

### First Version (Feminine):

I was only paying her a visit, I mean, how was I supposed to know that she was picking that particular day to paint her bedroom. Do you know what color she painted it? Blue, and not just any blue for that matter, but a dark, navy blue (why she didn't use that light, country blue gets me; it has to be that husband of hers, always bossing her around, probably didn't give her a say so on the color) with a white border near the ceiling. So I walked in to tell her about the new quilting contest (a sure winner she would be for she can sew like no other) and that cat of hers walked in. You know how she loves that cat; I swear some people treat their pets better than their own kids. She comes strolling in like a queen and looked into the paint can. You know how cats are, always sticking their noses in something, (dogs are so much a better pet, cats are just too independent) and that cat tipped that can of paint right over. Oh my, what a mess it was, blue paint everywhere, and on her new white carpet, too, poor dear. Then that cat just ran out of the room, don't blame the poor creature, scared it half to death. As if that wasn't all, the cat left a trail of little blue paw prints all over the house! Her husband is going to die when he comes home. I swear the things that happen these days.

### Second Version (Scholarly):

#### Do Domesticated Feline Favor a Dominant Paw?

Cats, *felis catus*, are found in the family *Felidea* and are small, carnivorous mammals. The archetypal domesticated felines that we think of today are about 3 to 8 pounds in size and believed to have originated back from the Caffre Cat found in Africa. This native cat is small in size and theorized to be the species of cats that were subdued by the Egyptians around 2500 B.C. Although that cat as a whole is a marvelous creature, the researchers at Harvard University are particularly interested in their paws.

The paws of the cat are well padded, the forefeet having five toes and the hind feet containing four with retractile claws. The thought of cats preferring a forepaw, having a dominant paw, like most humans, led to an experiment performed by this team of researchers. They felt that there perhaps was a real possibility that cats favored a particular forepaw when reaching for objects in bottoms of containers. After receiving a large grant from the government, they experimented with a little over a thousand cats in a controlled environment. They found that 90% of all domesticated short hairs preferred their right paw, while 93% of all domesticated longhairs preferred their left paw.

Taking the study further, they observed a typical, longhair housecat in an ordinary setting. The surroundings included the cat's master, who was in the act of daubing a wall, and a can. The results were as predicted for the house pet placed the left forepaw into the container, spilling the container, spilling its contents, which in this case happened to be paint of blue tint.

The researchers at Harvard University proved that felines, like humans, favor a particular forepaw. Although their hypothesis proved to be correct, an unexpected outcome was presented in the experiment that while the short hair domesticated felines favored the right forepaw, longhair domesticated felines favored the left.

### **Third Version (Blurb):**

One would think that cats and paint would be hard to mix, but this author has done just that in this simple, charming little tale. This heartfelt story of a housewife and her beloved cat's unfortunate experience with a paint can will reach readers of all ages. Not since *The Cat in the Hat* has there been a more action packed narrative of a gallant feline, a story that any reader will find most enjoyable.

(Written for W131 Fall 1999, Instructor: Nikita Nankov)

## From The Bottom of My Feet

Abbey Nolting

My journal sits on the prefab oak-looking bookshelf Dad assembled last summer when I moved back home. I have always wanted to have one entire room of nothing but shelves. I like them to be organized, enabling me to notice if anything is missing. The floor on which the bookshelf sits is not level; in fact, there are very few level areas in this entire farmhouse. Compact discs, jewelry, magazines, letters, a bottle of sand from France, and a music box are on four of the shelves. But only books are on the bottom shelf. The books have migrated from the middle, eye level shelf to the bottom one, for I am not allowed much time for leisurely reading or writing. On one side of my journal is Zander's baby book. I write in it every month on every line. I was the second child, and I followed my miracle two-pound sister. The only marks written in my own baby book are the ones I made with a blue crayon when I was six years old. I guess I am trying to give Zander a history, to give him something I feel I never had. I think this is the goal of many parents. On the other side of the journal is a Bible. I have been given so many Bibles that I cannot remember where this one came from. There are still elementary Sunday school papers scattered in the pages of the Bible. I haven't read it in a long time, although I always mean to. Some things, like dieting and exercising, I genuinely want to do, but I never have the time. The Bible is a good neighbor turning its cheek to my journal.

The cover of the notebook is made of slick, heavy cardboard. It's heavier than the pages in order to protect them. Sometimes I wish for my own slick, protective cover. Written in white are the words "sketch diary." A sketch is above the words, which appears to be drawn in a computer generated charcoal. The sketch is of a hand holding a wide pencil. It takes much practice before an audience can fully appreciate an artist's work, be it drawing or writing. The pages of the journal are made from recycled materials. Trees are so friendly and encouraging, reaching up to their source of nourishment, the sun. And they are so strongly rooted and stable; how could I sleep at night knowing each page I write forces another new tree to be chopped? The pages are almost white, but not bleak white like the sterile walls of a doctor's office. The pages also have no lines to fence my musings. I have a freshly washed blackboard; I can leave my mark on the paper without rules of how to form it. The pages of the notebook are the normal size of paper. There, I have contradicted myself. I do not want lines because I do not believe there should be one "normal" way to write, yet I have categorized my paper's size as "normal." We all make mistakes; we all contradict ourselves. The key is to accept them and move on. The spiral holding the pages together is very strong. It winds through thirty-two small holes on the left side. What a compulsive act, to count the number of holes. My pen is often housed in the clutches of the spiral for easy access. Often, if I'm experiencing writer's block, I will run my pen up and down the length of the spiral. The music seems to please the muses; they bring the words I could not before find.

Although my journal has a special place, it is often mistreated when taken from its home. Countless times it has been placed on the green or brown grass, dirt, and gravel. I would ordain nature its second home. What an honor: to have a home as vast as nature, enabling the dweller to feel safe, secure, and comfortable in almost any area of the world. Nature's arms span much further than any mother's. Some of the paper has been ripped, bent, or folded, despite the cardboard cover. Many of these pages were wounded in battles of climbing trees, crossing



rivers, and dancing in sunbeams. No other hands have ever touched this journal except mine. It is my creation. When I think about its pages I hold it close to my chest and close my eyes. Unfortunately, in spells of anger or sadness, I have neglected my journal, tossing or throwing it in random directions. During these scenarios, my journal is the ideal friend. It takes the abuse I give it and still welcomes me with a blank page when I am apologetic. It knows all of my thoughts and secrets—both good and bad—yet still offers its pages for my use. I have never encountered a person who could provide such comfort, strength, and counsel for me.

Although my journal has been neglected at times, it is also highly valued. Each entry is written from the bottom of my feet. If I wrote from the bottom of my heart, I would only be putting one-third of myself into my writing. By writing from the bottom of my feet I am putting my whole self into the entry. No, I don't believe I have coined a phrase that will be found in my son's history books, but it is my own. Some entries are short, yet other are long. My self-expression cannot have a minimum or maximum word count. Some days I write with the journal turned upside down, sometimes to the side, other times slanted, and still other right side up. Who declared which is the "right" side? Probably the same person who defined the "normal" size of paper. When I'm trying to put an event or time behind me, I will usually skip a page or two in my journal. Some entries are in red, some blue, others black, some green, and occasionally some are wearing pink. Both capital and lowercase letters can be found; I frequently underline and use exclamation points. Drawings are scattered throughout the pages, providing inspiration when I cannot think of the right word or cannot put my thoughts in logical order. In fact, there is no logic or order to my journal. Only one characteristic is constant: it is honest.

(Written for W131 Fall 1999, Instructor, Nikita Nankov)

## Anarchy in W131

Mary Cummings

When the word “anarchy” is heard, people think of conflict and craziness that everyone involved experiences, but individuals can also experience anarchy. My experience of writing and finding my voice over the course of the semester has led me to anarchy within my own life. It was anarchy that Greg Graffin discusses in his essay “Anarchy in the Tenth Grade.” The result of anarchy can be pleasant or unpleasant depending upon how people involved deal with it. The experiences Graffin had mostly made him a better person in the end. I am going to relate these things he tells to my own account of quiet and personal anarchy.

Graffin describes dealing with growing up as a poor child who had to confront the terrible thing called divorce. Things did not get any better when he had to move to a new school in California. He did not fit in. He looked different from the rest of the kids. He did not understand their overall lifestyle either. He did, however, have a strong will to find a place with someone; so he took it up with the “nerds and wimps.” There is where his feelings of anarchy start to emerge from inside himself. His association with the nerds gives him a place to belong to, and if nothing else, gives him shelter from his feelings. After realizing he is different and does not fit into the “California crowd,” he decides to turn punk. This gives him feelings of being wanted and needed. During this time, however, he experiences many different voices of punk society. Some are harmless, while others lead to trouble later in life. His conformity to the punk world makes him feel truly individualized. He feels as though he has a true place to belong.

This is where my story comes in. I have, in some ways, declared anarchy in my own life throughout the course of writing these five papers in W131. Each paper has given me insight into my true voice and personality. Just as Griffin had to move away from his father and go to a new school, I had to move on from high school and go to college. This, for me, was a time of fear, anger, and submission. On the outside I was a typical teen going to college, but on the inside I was lost and scared and angry. I had to leave my friends and go some place foreign to me. I really did not want to go to college in the first place. I just wanted to get a job and go later. My parents saw things a little differently, though.

I signed up for my classes feeling pretty down. My first class of the day is W131. When I walked in to discover that students already knew one another, I felt even more like an outsider than before. I felt my voice just shrivel up inside of me. My quiet personality hid just a little more. Then, when I discovered that the initial theme of W131 is finding your voice, I thought, “That will never happen in the class.” As Graffin discovered, the beginning was the hardest. There were people who talked to each other but did not bother to talk to me. Although I was not hurt, I knew that if I wanted to enjoy this class I would have to identify with someone; so I did.

The results were somewhat mediocre. I decided to do my best work and just be myself. This was a semi-sweet victory for me. I tried my hardest and got good grades on my first two papers. I was proud of myself for doing so well. Then the trouble started. I am also in a COAS class that meets right after W131. The people in this class have come to be the ones I talk to the most. The problem was that they did not do as well as I did on the first two papers. So what did I feel like now? A big smart nerd! This was when I really went into anarchy. About the time our third paper was due I really started looking at what I was doing. Even though I thought people liked

me, I was not content with myself. I saw how others did things, so I decided to try out their style. Maybe that was the answer: stop doing things the way I was. For a while I did not turn things in on time. I even skipped class once, just for the heck of it. But after that I began to feel like I was disrespecting myself. I did not belong to this group of people. This was an obvious fact that anyone who knows me can see. So I had to struggle with getting back to doing my work on time and shutting out the voices that told me to let things slide. Even though it was a struggle, I feel I have come out of this class a better, more individualized person.

As we reached the end of W131, I feel that my efforts have not all been in vain, I have come out of this anarchy with a feeling of individuality. I see that even though I may not always do the work I know I can, when I chose not to it was for myself, not for others. I have found a voice inside of me saying, "I'm sorry, I am not perfect, nor do I want to be." When I was in high school, I only wanted others to look at me and think good thoughts. I did not care if this meant altering my real personality. Now in college I see that it is all up to me. No one cares if I am myself or not. If I don't want to go to class, I don't have to. I now want to be myself and do the things I have hidden throughout my high school years. This thing called anarchy has brought me to a new level of understanding and acceptance of who I really am. I feel like my true voice is really starting to emerge from inside me. I learned from Graffin that anarchy really does have an impact on my life. I feel that my little time here on Earth has just now started to really get interesting. I feel like a great adventure has started to unfold before me. This might have never happened if it were not for my own personal anarchy in W131.

(Written for W131 Fall 1999, Instructor: Terry Dibble)

## Biographical Notes

ARVILLA ATER is working on a bachelor's degree in secondary education. She will be a senior this fall. Her goal is to teach high school English, hopefully within the realm of creative writing, literature or poetry. A single mother of two children, Kara and Kyle, Arvilla works full time and is also a substitute teacher. She's been published in *Literalines and Children's Digest*; this spring Arvilla will be published in a magazine called *Verses*.

ABIGAIL BROWN finished high school thirteen years ago and has wanted to attend college ever since. This year she finally did and is hoping to find a field of work that will feed her creativity. Her drawing, *The Cloud*, was done on a computer using a pen and tablet system. This is a completely new medium for her, and she's happily obsessed with it.

LARRY D. CROSS is majoring in Business Corporate Finance and has aspirations to be a commercial lending officer in a bank. His interests range from American Literature to stock investing. Larry is currently a freshman at IUPUC.

SERAH CROSSLAND is a math education major in her junior year.

MARY CUMMINGS is a freshman at IUPUC. She is currently majoring in education.

STEPHANIE CUMMINGS remembers sitting on the bus writing scary stories as a young girl. After fourteen years out of school and two children later, Stephanie decided to jump back into the role of a student to finish her degree in Elementary Education. She enjoys writing poetry and uses her children as critics (she claims they are tough!).

AMANDA EATON has lived in Indiana most of her life, but as the daughter of an Army Lieutenant she has lived in several other locations as well. Amanda has instructed a literature workshop for home-educated junior high school students. She is also an ESL (English as a Second Language) certified teacher. She is currently in her sophomore year as an art and music major.

SARA GOSS is a transitional student seeking to find a major that will last longer than a semester. She enjoys kickboxing, reading novels recommended by Oprah Winfrey, and cuddling with her three cats. Sarah is currently employed as a waitress and tanning booth operator. Current plans for the year 2000 include travel abroad and reinstatement at IU Bloomington.

TRACEY GREEN has raised five children and now lives on a lake in southern Johnson County with her husband and a black lab. Ever since graduating from college years ago, she has wanted to have the time and peace to write poetry and fiction.

STEVE GREEN says he uses writing to escape the drudgery of everyday life and as a challenge to his own creativity. He enjoys music, go-carts, shooting hoops with his son and reading. Some of

his favorite authors include John Irving, Kurt Vonnegut, and John Steinbeck. Steve is currently a junior here at IUPUC.

JAMIE LAWALIN is a freshman at IUPUC who is majoring in Elementary Education. She says she is a person with multiple interests and personalities; one minute she's a writer, working on an emotional piece of work, the next minute she's a "hick" out working in the barns with her cattle. She loves animals and kids, and her Christian beliefs along with her relationships with family and friends are the things that she cherishes the most. Her goals include being a teacher in a small agriculturally based school and doing free lance writing on the side.

PAULA MADDEN was born in Missouri but raised in Columbus and Bartholomew county where she comments, "we were monetarily poor, but lovingly rich." She served in the United States Air Force and works at Cummins Engine Company in the Chemlab. She has three children, two boys and one girl, and four delightful grandchildren. She is pursuing a General Studies Bachelor degree with a major in history.

ABBEY NOLTING divides her time between working and going to school, as well as being a full time mom. She is a dedicated Writing Center tutor and adds her organizational skills to both the Writing Center and *Literalines*.

CAMILLE ROWLAND is a first year student pursuing a degree in social work. As well as attending IUPUC full time, Camille works full time at Atterbury, part time at Quinco, and is raising two daughters. She credits her ability to manage such a full schedule to the support she receives from her family and God.

DEBBIE SEXTON continues to pursue her degree in English while balancing her home and work life. She is enjoying her third session as a Writing Center tutor, and has once again added her talents to the pool of editors and contributors of the spring 2000 issue of *Literalines*.

SHAUN WATKINS is a junior here at IUPUC. He is interested in psychology and philosophy. In his spare time he likes to read, play euchre, and tell jokes. He currently works as a student mentor in the IUPUC Learning Communities program. He is also exploring fractal art. As well as being an aspiring artist, Shaun has been instrumental in handling many of the technical aspects associated with producing *Literalines*.

JOHN WHITCOMB is a resident of Nashville, Indiana and a current Art Education major. A life-long musician and songwriter, John has traveled the United States and Europe playing a wide variety of musical styles. He has a wife and three children.

SHAWN WILSON is a sophomore at IUPUC pursuing a degree in history. He is a lifetime Hoosier, as well as a veteran of the United States Air Force. He believes writing to be an expression of the world we see and must have a meaning to be fully appreciated. Shawn is a tutor in the Writing Center and has donated his time and talents to this year's issue of *Literalines*.

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**Abbey Nolting**



**Bridget Holler**



**Debbie Sexton**

**Shaun Watkins**



**Shawn Wilson**