

The cover of the 'Northern Lights '93' Arts Journal features a vertical, jagged-edged design. The top half is a dark, textured area with a white, glowing aurora borealis effect. The bottom half is a solid black area. The title 'Northern Lights '93' is centered in the upper half in a white, sans-serif font. The publisher information is centered in the lower half in a white, sans-serif font.

**Northern
Lights '93**

**The University of Wisconsin Center
Marinette County
Arts Journal**

Northern Lights

1993

Arts Journal

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Snow Cub by Tamara Sietlaff

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Editorial Committee: Jane Oitzinger, chair; Maureen Molle, Brian Cashen, Charles M. Clark, Jr., Katie Harpt, Katherine Holman, James LaMalfa, and Herbert Williams.

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Sandcastles

by Sandye Olson

Warm breeze blowing
Water lapping gently
Alone at six I sit
building sandcastles

Cool currents dancing
Frothy waves rocking
Alone at sixteen I sit
designing sandcastles

Strong winds rising
Blue waves beating
Alone at twenty-six I sit
watching children build sandcastles

Icy wind whipping
Black water crashing
Alone at thirty-six I sit
remembering sandcastles

The castle of my dreams
became the nightmare
of my reality.

The Mahogany Angel

by Kathi Pollard

It was over 100° F. on August 8, 1972, in Las Vegas. I remember that temperature because I actually burned one of my fingers when I reached for my car keys, which I had left in the ignition while I ran into the store for a six-pack of Coke. I remember that day quite vividly for another reason. It was on August 8 that I met Angelique for the first time.

To define her beauty would be to do her a grave injustice. She was a stunningly beautiful young woman. Her skin reminded me of an exquisite and flawless piece of polished mahogany. Her face was set off by high, chiseled cheekbones and Mediterranean blue eyes. There was a hint of auburn in her black, wavy hair which fell gracefully to her perfectly-square shoulders.

Her usual attire of tank top, mini-skirt and sandals revealed a well-proportioned body, firm but feminine. She wore ordinary clothes with extraordinary grace, a remarkable feat for a woman in her profession. Angelique was a prostitute.

I had watched her, every afternoon at 4, walk past my apartment complex and stand on the corner of Sunset and Meadows to wait for the bus to take her to work in the downtown area, "the strip." It was common knowledge, among those in my neighborhood, that Angelique was a "working girl," though no one had ever dared to sully her own reputation by befriending Angelique to verify the story, much less, to offer companionship or friendship. But I was drawn to her, and on that day, I allowed the mysterious beckoning I felt to be satisfied.

I waited for her to pass the front lawn of our complex and then purposely walked into the sidewalk area, forcing her to walk around me. I excused myself for being in her way and, without waiting for a reply, introduced myself. She did likewise, and with no further comment, proceeded to the corner. I asked her if I could tag along.

She gave me an off-the-cuff, "It's a free country," but her eyes clearly acknowledged her suspicion of me and, simultaneously, begged for an explanation that would alleviate her concern.

We talked casually about superficial issues that afternoon, and for many more to come, eventually developing a relatively healthy and stable friendship.

On one of her "off" nights, she and I sat in the backyard polishing off a large bottle of Chianti. Because it didn't matter to me, I had never asked her about "work," so I was caught off-guard when she abruptly asked, "I s'pose you've been wonderin' why I'm a hooker?" Did you know I'll only 'pepper' white men? Wanna know why?"

Angelique's father was a white, wealthy industrialist from California whose picture she had seen in over a dozen magazines, but whom she had never met. Her mother was a black model who had worked part-time secretarial positions, including a four-month temp position with Angelique's father's corporate headquarters in Silicon Valley, eventually taking a secretarial position for him.

Her father immediately took notice of her mother. She was a beautiful woman. Private lunches between the two became more frequent; late hours and quiet suppers eventually led to working weekends, and the fact that he was married became more and more obscure in her mother's memory. When she announced her pregnancy, she was replaced as his secretary, and eventually her job was terminated altogether. She was blacklisted as a temp because she demanded financial help with the pregnancy. He denied paternity and threatened to harm her if she persisted in bothering him. Pregnancy ended her modeling career.

Odd jobs and welfare provided the bare necessities of life to Angelique, her mother, and her grandmother with whom they lived.

Alcohol and depression took its toll. Angelique's mother committed suicide when Angelique was 2 1/2 years old. Grandma died when Angelique had just turned 12. Still a minor, she became a victim of the system and was shuffled from foster home to foster home, apparently never fitting in at either white or black homes. She was too light to be accepted as black, and too dark to be acceptably white. Angelique ran away to Vegas at 16 years of age. She was now 21.

Angel, as I had affectionately nicknamed her, stopped her story at this point, and stared off into space. This was more than a typical pregnant pause, and I intuitively knew not to fill the space with comment.

She turned to me unexpectedly, and with tears streaming down her cheeks said, in a hollow voice, "He raped me, ya know."

"Who raped you, Angel?"

"My father."

"Your father? You mean one of your foster fathers?"

"No, I mean, the man. He killed my mama, and he raped me."

There was a finality in her voice. The conversation, as far as she was concerned, was over. It was never brought up again, by either of us.

As I grew more and more fond of Angel, I found former associates drifting further from me. Those friends who chose to remain a part of my life remained primarily on the perimeters of it, occasionally asking the kinds of questions which suggested their concern for my choice of company.

Meanwhile, my husband was developing quite a drinking and gambling problem. The stress in our marriage became palpable and finally, on confrontation, grew into a violent verbal and physical attack which left me emotionally and physically bruised.

The attacks became more frequent, but my elitist neighborhood looked away, and so did society and its non-existent system of care for battered women. It was during this struggle for my own life that I discovered I was battling for two. I was pregnant.

Angel knew. Angel cared. It was finally Angel who intervened. "Girl, we gotta get you outta here, once an' fer all."

"Angel, I'm broke, and except for you, the people I know won't believe this is happening to me." (My husband was a professional of high standing in the community.) "My folks live in Michigan, but I don't know if I can go home. I still have younger siblings living at home."

"Listen, girl. Your mama's alive, and your daddy, he loves you. You call 'em. You'll see." It was December 13, nearly Christmas. I missed my family. I ached all over and longed for a refuge. I called home, and under the pretense of wanting to spend Christmas with my family, planned to leave Las Vegas in a few days.

I spent the next two days surreptitiously packing my things, choosing carefully only necessities so as not to draw attention to my activities.

It's interesting what becomes valuable to you when you measure your life. My art collection was left behind. Several sculptures remained on undusted shelves in the library. I packed only those treasured volumes of literature I could squeeze between clothes in my suitcases. My jewelry case remained on the top of the bureau, several expensive trinkets still nestled in its velvet lining.

The evening of the second day Angel came over. She had taken the night off. We silently packed my '69 Mustang with my guitar, a box, and

several pieces of luggage. Then we went into the library and sat in silence for several minutes, staring at the envelope perched against a desk phone which contained a letter of explanation to my husband.

Angel was the one to shatter the tomb-like atmosphere. "Never thought I'd miss nobody, ever. But I'm gonna miss you, Salty."

At the sound of the nickname she had given me, I began to giggle, remembering the afternoon she chose that name for me. I could still hear her, sitting next to me in the bathroom comforting me through my siege of morning sickness, and chiding me for not eating the crackers she kept offering me between my bouts of nausea.

"Girl, you as thin and white as these here Saltines. I ain't never seen nobody as white as you; ain't nobody as thin as you. Yessir, you just like these Saltines. Dat's what I'm gonna call ya. Mama Saltine... maybe Salty for short."

Angel's voice interrupted the daydream. "You all right?" I assured her that I was, and asked her if she'd like to take something to remember me by, assuming she'd choose a painting, sculpture, or book.

She thought a moment. "I always wanted to learn piano. We never had no money for music lessons, ya know. Know what I'd like to remember you by? For you to play dat piano over dere."

And so, I played for Angel, *Rachmaninov's Variations on a Theme by Paganini*, my favorite piece. As I closed the piano, I knew I was closing the book on this season of my life forever.

We walked silently to the carport. I hugged Angel goodbye. As I was getting in the car, she handed me an envelope filled with cash. Before I could protest, she said, "Dis for dat baby of yours. You take it now, girl. You gonna need it. You love dat baby good, you hear me?"

Quietly, almost to herself more than to me, she said, "And don't you never let nobody rape you again."

Angel never answered my Christmas card or any of my letters. Several months later, my letters began returning stamped, "Occupant moved. No forwarding address."

I have no idea where Angelique is today. But of this I am certain. Some woman, somewhere, who is hurting and without aid, is finding refuge under the wing of a beautiful, mahogany angel, whose framed picture hangs over the bed of my first-born child, lest either of us forget what an angel looks like.

Broken Dreams

by Myra Mueller

Awake at 4 a.m.,
the review of the puzzle pieces begins.
Thinking about our courtship, bowling and horsebackriding.
A wedding day with ice blue satin, and soon,
five children in the living room, doing the twist.

Sorting the pieces into happy and sad times.
What went wrong?
Some things don't seem to fall into place.
They simply happen.

Each person has their own picture of who they want to be.
One wants the drab scene to change.
The other clings to the worn, familiar frame.
With the change of scene comes chaos.
Should I stay or go?
Staying means losing shining eyes and sunny smiles.
Going means molding new images.

I keep turning the pieces,
Gathering the ones that are still together.
Gently, I pick them up.
Being careful not to lose any.
For if I do, I'll lose the only picture I have left-
The picture of me.

Developing: A Feminist Fable

by Carol Frost

"Once upon a time there was a woman. She was invisible. She wasn't really invisible; it's just that she wore the same clothing as her husband and fit so nicely behind him that no one noticed her.

She always felt that something was missing from her life, so with permission from her husband, she bore children. The feeling she derived from this was wonderful. But soon, the children grew so big they shadowed her existence. There was nothing left to do but resume her invisibility.

One day, almost by accident, the woman discovered that she was in possession of an underdeveloped body part. She had been conditioned to believe that this body part was fully functional in females as it was, but needed to be developed by the male. The small school in her area, the advertisement said, would help her develop this body part, disregarded by her, until now.

At first, using this newly discovered body part was difficult for her. Hers didn't seem to work as well as the ones that were developed when the women were of an earlier age. She also found it difficult to exercise her body part, for she quickly learned that when she was with her husband and children, she was required to resume her invisibility.

One day, they decided to go to a museum - the father, the children, and the invisible woman. She began to recognize certain things in this place that they had explained to her in the other place, the place where they were helping her develop her body part. She started to explain some of these things to her family. As she swelled with pride, she began to grow. They passed a window and she saw her reflection. She was no longer invisible!

But her visibility did not reap the reward she sought. It seems that they had forgotten to warn her. Those body part developers forgot to warn her of the side effects: the law that states that only one of the people in a marriage can be in possession of the developed body part. If the woman develops the body part, the man will turn green.

She was then faced with the dilemma of her life. If she went on

developing her body part, her husband might turn so green that all he could do would be to go and live with other green men, away from her. She decided to once again become invisible.

Withdrawal was so very hard. Her body part ached to be used. And every so often, as she passed a mirror while doing her daily chores, she thought she would see bits and pieces of herself.

The craving grew so strong that she started to sneak off and read books in secret places when no one was around. Her body part invented thesis statements that her hand did not dare write down. She began to notice her reflection more and more until she could no longer hide her visibility.

She approached her jade-colored husband with her plan, and explained to him that perhaps living among the other green men for a while was something he needed to do.

They caught a train, her visible self, her thesis statements, and her developing body part. She wasn't sure how far she was going, but she knew that no matter where she was, she would always be seen.



Little People Big Hands by Lisa Christensen

Ménage à Trois

by Brian Cashen

He sped down the street, running a stop sign as he rounded the corner. He was anxious to get home; he had a romantic evening planned.

On the door steps his trembling hands fumbled to get the key in the hole, letting out an involuntary sigh as the bolt slid back and the door opened. Stepping quickly through, he relocked it, including the deadbolt and chain. Some things require the utmost privacy.

Gazing around the room slowly, he cracked a smile for the first time that day. Safe. Scanning the room he felt at ease, surrounded by his true friends, joyously basking in their compassion and companionship.

Who should he shower his affection on tonight, an old friend, or a new acquaintance? Perhaps a ménage à trois? Yes, that was just what he needed to take the edge off his dreary day, the day spent on all those dull, disgusting people. Yes, just he and two close friends, ones who wouldn't thrust unreasonable expectations upon him. Ones who wouldn't trammel his feelings or reject him. Two friends he could have his way with, yet love and cherish, enhancing each other's existence, making life worth living.

But which two should he select? They all just sat there, silently begging to be chosen. He knew he shouldn't lavish too much attention on the same ones too often, lest the others get jealous. Ah... there were two worthy playthings, perfect complements to make up the other sides of his love triangle. He'd neglected these two for much too long. Now was the right to make amends.

He walked over, embraced the first one, caressing the album as he gently placed it on the turntable. Lovingly, he fondled the volume knob to just the right level as a shiver traversed his spine from top to bottom. Then he turned and selected a dust-covered book from the shelf before reclining on the couch. With the deliberate ease of a man undressing his lover, he opened the cover and began to read quietly.

Once again, wrapped in the embrace of his only love, a tear slowly rolled down his cheek. Just as it had the night before. Just as it would tomorrow.

continuum

by Emma F. Erekson

...emotions, resting on the wings of a nighthawk,
floating perilously through darkened space
beyond reach
and barely discernible—
welcome the passion that colors this existence
into ambiguity—
surrounded in shafts of brilliance—
transported toward infinity
where time is not measured
and a moment exists
only in the singleness of a heartbeat
that once was two.

Listening

by Danny Erekson

A brightly colored maple leaf
nudged loose by a crisp fall breeze
flutters gently into a tumbling
mountain stream.
Riding atop the crisp cool water
it first floats gently,
then tumbles rapidly over
small cascades.
Turmoil next as it twirls rapidly
caught in an eddy pool,
breaking out to continue on
as the stream grows larger,
floating peacefully off to its destiny.

Despertar

by Ana Flores

Abrir mis ojos quiero y al meditar,
en la naturaleza deseo encontrar
la grandeza de las pequeñas cosas;
que se esconden en la claridad del sol.

Darme cuenta de la hermosura;
de un árbol que con el pasar de los años
sus ramas levanta al recibir el calor
del sol, y lo fresco de una lluvia
que al pasar,
alimento le han dado.

Cuan grande es el amor de Dios
que al hombre naturaleza ha dado,
y en ella la vida ha regalado.

Que tristeza y melancolía,
que mis ojos no quieran ver
lo que con grande amor ha sido construido;
y en el canto de un pájaro
cantar mi dolor quiero, y
en su vuelo encontrar la libertad
que da paz y gozo a mi alma;
para poder ver la hermosura de
lo que a mí paso hoy está.

Sin olvidar el pasado
y sacar de él lo más provechoso;
para vivir el presente con fortaleza,
de esta nueva vida que con amor
se me ha regalado.

Awakening

Translation by Mónica Irlas and Danelia Guifarro

I want to open my eyes; and when I
contemplate nature, I want to find
the greatness of the small things
that are hidden in the brightness
of the sunlight.

Make me aware of the beauty
of a tree which, as the years pass,
raises its branches to receive
the warmth of the sun and
the coolness of the rain
which nourishes it.

How great is the love of God
who has given nature to man
and the gift of life.

How sad and melancholy
that my eyes do not want to see
what has been made with such great love.
In the song of a bird,
I want to sing my pain, and
in its flight find the freedom
that gives peace and joy to my soul,
to see the beauty of
what I find in my path today.

Without forgetting the past
but taking from it what is most useful,
I want to live in the present with strength,
with this new life that has been given
to me with love.

The Master of Light

by Katie Harpt

Claude Monet: Impressionist, the two are synonymous. Monet is considered by many to be the personification of Impressionism. Throughout his life, he devoted himself to the Impressionistic ideal: the study of nature and light.

An art critic sarcastically coined the term "Impressionist" as a scathing criticism of Monet's oil painting *Impression Sunrise*. This work was included in an 1874 exhibit, along with work from artists Renoir, Degas and Manet. These paintings were ridiculed because critics felt the techniques the artists used were crude and their colors were too bright compared to the traditional realistic style of the academic artists of the day. The traditional artists promoted a style based on the classic principles of the Italian Renaissance. Though the art critic sarcastically used the word "Impressionist" to describe all of the artists' work, a more appropriate term could not have been used!

One of the unique aspects of Monet's career was his series paintings: all done of the same object, under a variety of light conditions, at various times throughout the day. *The Rouen Cathedral Series*, a prime example of Monet's Impressionistic philosophy and technique, is composed of thirty paintings which he completed during a three-year period.

Monet chose the subject of the Rouen Cathedral for its historical significance. The cathedral, located in Normandy, was revered by the French as a national treasure. Its Gothic architecture had been emulated throughout Europe during the Middle Ages, and by using the cathedral as a subject, Monet paid tribute to France's greatness in architecture. Monet was adamant in regard to painting *en plein air*. However, for this project, which he worked on during the winter months, he rented an apartment across from the cathedral, thus protecting himself from the elements. He chose a vantage point that allowed him to view the luminous effects of the sun upon the facade from dawn until dusk.

Monet's philosophy was to record an immediate impression of light upon an object and to depict what the eye sees, not what the mind knows is there. According to Monet, light and atmospheric changes on the subject were primary to the subject.

As an illustration: the mind accepts the fact that grass is green, but the color green is altered by the reflection of color emanating from it,



Butterfly by Joe Evans

and also from reflections from surrounding objects. Monet painted not only what the mind knows, the color green, but the reflections of the many colors he saw.

To translate his impression of various light effects on the cathedral to his canvas, Monet departed from the traditional techniques. He dissolved the image of the building with short individual brush strokes. Line is nonexistent. This was a contradiction to the smoothly blended paint and realistic genre of the day. The composition is innovative since Monet has focused his rendering of the cathedral on the facade. He has eliminated reference to the ground and, in some instances, the sky.

Artists such as Corbet used the time-honored technique of chiaroscuro, the modeling of light and dark to suggest form. In his *Rough Cathedral Series*, however, Monet used color contrasts to suggest form. Because warm colors advance and cool colors recede, he applied warm hues of yellow to depict the stonework shimmering in the sunlight, and cooler blues to deepen the recesses. Rather than mixing the colors, he laid complementary colors next to each other; this intermingling of color created a sense of shimmering atmosphere that seems to be enveloping the cathedral.

The traditionalists used dark earth-tones and black in the shadowed areas. Black being the absence of color, Monet refused to use it. He introduced purple and violet in the shadow area of the building. He painted on a light rather than a dark ground, which helped to create a luminous effect and an illusion of light. Furthermore, he built up layers of paint, dragging wet over dry, creating a weblike structure that resembled the rough, rugged stone work of the cathedral. Like other Impressionists, he actually soaked the oil from the paint to create a thick chalky substance that was excellent for the heavy impasto techniques he favored as opposed to using layers of thin glazes. He did not use paint straight from the tube, but mixed all of his colors with lead white to create the lovely pastels that are associated with Impressionistic paintings.

As Monet aged, saddened by the death of his wife and son, his eyesight failing, he turned inward and focused on his home and his beloved water garden. Here, for twenty years he painted his most memorable works: his *Water Lily Series*. Until he died in 1926, they were to be his only subject. By this time, his work had become more abstract; there is little perspective. He has dissolved the form of the water lilies into a blend of glowing color and luminous reflections.

Throughout his life, Monet pursued the Impressionistic philosophy

of the study of nature and light. He attempted to artistically capture a moment in time. He succeeded, for to experience the magical works of Monet, "The Master of Light," is indeed to make time stand still.

The Crying Earth

by Tonya Hile

Slipping through my fingers
So goes Life.
Never caught, never free.
The earth cries for Life;
"Give me Life, save me!"
The earth bleeds, asking for my
healing touch;
"Save me, I want to live!"
Yet I do nothing, and leave the
earth
Bleeding through my fingers.



Winter Creek by Katie Harpt

Off the Beaten Path

by Kim Hupy

The cruise ship made its last stop of the ten-day journey in Bridgetown, Barbados, an island much like many others in the Caribbean: warm weather, bright sun in a cloudless blue sky, sand as white as the sand found in an hour glass, and local vendors setting up their carts anxious to sell tourists anything from fresh fruit to handmade rugs and baskets. I tucked a pamphlet about Barbados into my shoulder bag, knowing I would not look at it until I returned to the ship that evening. I had already made up my mind to venture past the tourist spots and into the local domain.

I didn't have much time, as our lay-over on this island was only six hours. I squeezed my way through the mass of people on the dock which conveniently ended in the tourist section. This area, only four blocks long and two blocks wide, was filled with tourists standing shoulder to shoulder trying to get the best deal on souvenirs. Small booths were set up on one side of the paved roadway while large, old brick buildings, built side-by-side, lined the other. As I looked toward the end of the four-block stretch, I noticed a group of small children going through a narrow opening, which was the only exit I could see to take me out of the tourist area.

I had second thoughts about entering this alley, but quickly dismissed them; this was the only time I would have such an opportunity. The passageway was dark, cool, and damp. On one side rose a ten-foot wall of stone with broken glass embedded in cement at the top. On the other side were tall, dark buildings connected together. A truck suddenly barreled through the narrow alley, and if I hadn't jumped into a doorway, I might have been flattened against the wall.

One-half mile later, I stepped out of the alley into an entirely different world. Far fewer people were here than at the dock; and although several shops sold souvenirs, most stocked items for everyday life. There were food markets, fruit stands, small clothing shops, and hardware stores. The majority were small with dirt floors and open in the front. At night, the owners would simply pull down a wooden door to

lock up. To my left was a residential area. The homes were not much more than shacks without doors or windows. Children, wearing only dirty shorts, ran in and out of these homes. One house had an old picnic table in front near the only tree in sight. Men in stained t-shirts, ripped jeans and straw hats were gathered there, drinking rum out of a bottle they passed around.

As I wandered in and out of the stores, the people were extremely friendly. I felt welcomed in every shop; however, I didn't stay in the food market very long because the smell of rotting fruit, vegetables and meat was overpowering! I looked down the street and saw a small dilapidated trailer with the word "SANDALS" in large hand-written letters sprawled across the front. At the same time, I noticed three black men walking towards me with big, bright smiles on their faces. I pretended not to see them and kept walking towards another shop. But soon, they were standing directly in front of me, and in a Jamaican voice, one said, "Hey, mon, how 'bout a pretty pair of sandals for a pretty lady?" Before I could answer, I was being corralled in the direction of the shop.

By the time we got to the shop, my mind was whirling with thoughts of the ship leaving without me and my family not noticing I was missing until breakfast the next morning; I even wondered if my life insurance was paid up. One of these men ushered me into the open trailer, one stood outside by the door, standing guard I assumed, and the other one left. Inside the trailer were two more men. One sat next to a bench that was covered with strips of leather and tools while the other sat opposite him, reading a newspaper. The one sitting at the bench was obviously the "boss." When he stood up, he stooped to avoid hitting his head. He was at least 6'9" and wore Levi jeans, a black tank top, a baseball cap, and, of course, sandals. His muscular body made Arnold Schwarzenegger look like a wimp yet his voice was low and smooth sounding.

My imagination raced. After being slipped some money, one man left, another stood guard outside, and I was trapped inside facing the boss and his helper. Sweat ran down my face, and the sound of my pounding heart rang in my ears - I thought this was the end.

The boss began measuring my feet. The helper, however, must have

noticed by the color, or lack of color, in my face that I was a little uneasy. He started asking, "Where are you from?" "Did you come in on the cruise ship this morning?" "How do you like Bridgetown?" and so on. Finally, I started to relax and unclenched my shoulder bag when I noticed my knuckles had turned white. I then asked the same questions as the helper and the conversation seemed to flow. Maybe this was a legitimate sandal shop after all, I thought, as I looked around.

The smell of recently smoked marijuana still hung thick in the hot, stuffy air and Reggae music was blasting from a portable radio. The furniture consisted of an orange crate, which I was sitting on, and an old telephone wire spool that had in its center a rusty hub cap overflowing with stale cigarette butts. There was also an unpainted milk can, which the helper was sitting on, and of course, the bench with leather and leather tools on it. In the far corner was a filthy mutt, panting because of the heat, but otherwise oblivious to his surroundings.

It took the boss an hour and a half to finish the sandals. They were made of thick, dark brown leather and had a pattern stamped into them which the boss said he threw in at no extra charge. I oohed and aahed over his craftsmanship, took off my tennis shoes, tossed them into my shoulder bag, and put on the sandals. The boss beamed with pride because I had put them on right away. He stood in front of me, hunched over, comically took off his hat, and took my hand to kiss it. When he took off his hat, his "dread locks" bounced up all around his head.

After we had visited for a while, the Boss invited me to have lunch. His wife had prepared sandwiches and lemonade, which the three of us, along with their two small daughters, ate at the picnic table just outside the trailer. After lunch, the boss brought out his guitar. Within minutes about fifteen people, several with bongos, had gathered to sing.

I finished a roll of film while we were singing and visiting. When I finally looked at my watch, I realized I had only half an hour before the last call to board the ship. After exchanging addresses with the boss and his wife, I got caught up in a round of hugs, handshakes and thank you's, then took off running towards the narrow alley. Just before entering, I turned for a final look and saw everyone waving and shouting "good-bye." I waved back and ducked into the alley.

The alley seemed extremely dark after being in the bright sunlight

all day. I welcomed the coolness that surrounded me and also noticed how sunburned I was. I could hear the ship's horn sounding the second of three calls. As I picked up speed, I could hear the sound of my new sandals, which by this time were killing my feet, echoing a slap down the alley. I slowed down as I reached the end of the alley so I could catch my breath, and coming out of the alley, the long line at the dock told me that there was no hurry.

When I reached the ship, I remembered I needed my pass to get back through the gate. At the same time I opened my shoulder bag, a sudden gust of wind came and picked up a small piece of paper that was inside and blew it into the water. As it floated under the dock, I figured out what it was. It was the address of my new friends in Bridgetown, Barbados. There was no way to get that address again, but at least I had pictures, memories, and a pair of sandals from the best day of the entire cruise.



Breeze by Lisa Christensen

The Pain of Friendship

by Renee Baldwin

We have all experienced at some point in our life
The pain of rejection inflicted by a friend.
We will never be able to quite understand
How it could happen, why it won't end.
We wonder alone what could have led to this fate
Of the cruelty we're enduring by one who was dear.
Communication has ended for she won't listen;
Apologies do not matter for they fall on a deaf ear.
How can friends be so cruel in the hard times we share?
How can the mind games we promised never to play
Be so easily justified in her mind?
Am I really that bad of a person for a true friendship to find?
I hope and I pray till the day is quite old
That the anger will weaken, the cards she will fold.
If my opinion still touches your heart,
Just come back, my dear friend,
We can make a new start!
My heart is not closed to you, honest it's true;
It's only empty, lonesome for you.
The pain is now healing; although it's still sore,
You have the power to erase it.
Will you help me to heal; can we close its door?
My friend, for you are, though all we've been through,
I miss your laughter, your smiles, your closeness,
you!

A Different Spin

by Lyle Espenscheid

I was monitoring the A.C.T. recently and answers to two of the age-old questions of the Universe came to me. The two questions?

(1) How did sandstone from South Africa wind up in Wisconsin? and
(2) Why are there bones of Canada geese in Uganda? Before I reveal the answers, a bit of explanation is necessary.

The A.C.T. is given five times a year and usually 120 or so students chew their pencils through three hours of "English usage, mathematics usage, social studies reading, and natural sciences reading." The monitors are minimally paid for the three hours and normally are bored beyond belief...some diversion is absolutely necessary, such as scanning the sweatshirts for hidden messages, or pretending to notice some new detail in the yellow, two-year-old display on the bulletin board, or counting the dots in the leak-stained ceiling tiles.

During the last test, I spotted a dented globe which some bizarre student had, of course, placed upside down on its stand, effectively reversing the poles and causing all compasses to point south. I was led to hypothesize that some jokester angel had done the same thing about 10,000 years ago - or was it only 10 days ago in angel time?

My attention was not impaled on the poles, however. The most noticeable attribute of the globe was that it had split apart at the equator, and the student, now endowed with god-like power, had reassembled it with Brazil under Kenya and the former Congo below Vietnam and Guam residing north of the Indian Ocean. A wave of Gestalt insight swept over me...I knew the answers to those two questions above.

The angel previously mentioned had not simply tipped the earth upside down, but saw the planet as a spherical Rubik's puzzle. (Those longitude and latitude lines circling our classroom globes really do exist on the planet!) The angel simply spun the segments of the Earth along these circles and effectively but capriciously rearranged the Earth's land forms. Canada became a neighbor to Botswana. China and Honduras shared a common boundary. Borneo and Columbia ended up on top of each other...

But happily for all us twentieth-century armchair geographers, the Lord noticed that sparrows were falling to the ground in the wrong places - sparrows are supposed to die kind of close to where they were born - not continents away. So the twisted angel was found out and made to restore Earth's land masses to their former positions. But the buried bones and sandstone and other leftovers remained where they shouldn't have been.

This new insight also has helped me solve the puzzle of the dinosaurs' demise! They were twisted into the wrong areas of the globe where they couldn't cope with the weather. Maybe that's also why, in my inner core, I cry out for the Caribbean in wintertime!



People and their Cars by Lisa Christensen

First-Day Jitters

by Joe Evans

As a child, I grew up in an all-white community in the state of Illinois until I was ten years old. My parents then purchased a home in a west suburb of Chicago, Illinois.

Ninety percent of the students at the school my brother and I were to attend were black. The other ten percent were mixed races. I had a fear of black people because as a youngster, I was always told by my parents and other family members to avoid blacks because they were nothing but trouble.

In preparation for school, I was racking my brain thinking of some reasons I could not go. I thought of a sudden bellyache or maybe the flu, but I knew nothing would work. I thought it would be better just to go, and if I were found slaughtered, it would be my parents' fault.

When we arrived at the school, my mother held my brother's and my hands as we walked up a long sidewalk leading to the school. As we approached the door, I was thinking in the back of my mind that the other kids must be saying, "Look at the baby," or "He's a little sissy." I kindly asked my mom if I could walk without having my hand held.

As we walked inside this huge school, I felt the queasiness in my stomach and the weakness in my legs. We finally made it to the office where I was met by a lady who looked at me and said, "Hi, my name is Jenny. You must be Joe, my new student, and who is this with you?"

In a shivering voice, I said, "Th-this is my younger brother, Jerry. He's going to be attending the first grade."

Jenny then replied, "Let's take a walk to our classroom." Walking behind my teacher, I could hear her mumbling some words, but I couldn't understand what she was saying, so I just walked along and didn't utter a word.

We reached the classroom and the first things on my mind were, "Am I going to get beat up?" and "Am I going to start stuttering if I have to speak?" Jenny introduced me to my new classmates, saying, "I'd like for all of you to meet Joe. Joe, you will be sitting in this desk behind Jeff." Feeling like Charlie Brown, I was hoping I wouldn't stumble or trip over

my shoe laces. Finally I sat in the chair behind my desk. Jeff turned around to face me and asked if I was a Muhammad Ali fan. I didn't know who the hell this person was; for all I knew, he could have been talking about a murderer. Trying not to feel like a stupe, I said, "Yes." He said, "So am I. He's a good boxer. Don't you think so?" I just agreed with him.

Then Jenny put at least fifty math problems on the chalkboard and by the time I had finished, it was time for lunch. I assumed we were going to go to a cafeteria, but instead we were going to eat in the classroom. After we had finished eating, we could leave the classroom and go outside to the playground. So I gulped my sandwich as quickly as a gunfighter could pull his gun from his holster. Then I split for the outside with the others. Knowing no one except Jeff and my teacher, I still felt like a total stranger.

Unsure what to do, I walked over to the basketball court where about twenty black kids were playing. After standing there gawking at them, I gathered up the courage to ask if I could play, but a kid who stood about six feet tall and looked like a bean pole replied hostilely, "No way, white boy." A few others called me, "Pip squeak" and "Honky." Being scared out of my mind and wondering if they would beat me up, I began to walk away until I heard someone yell, "Hey kid! Come here; you can be on my team!" I thought, why not, so I joined in. Throughout the entire game, I didn't get a chance to even touch the ball. Despite that, I asked if I could play again next time. The kid who said that I could be on his team said, "I can see you need the practice. Sure, you can be on my team in tomorrow's game." The boy then introduced himself as Everett.

When it was time to go back inside, I said, "Well, I have to boogie so I can get to my class on time." Everett replied, "Wait up and I'll walk with you. We're in the same class." When I heard that, it gave me more confidence in myself. After a few hours, it was time to go home, and I could hardly wait until tomorrow to get to the court and play some basketball with my new friends.

i
by Carol Frost

when i
was born
a nurse looked
through the
glass and said
who is that indian baby

when i
was a small
child in school
a teacher
said do you
know you have
an indian name

when my
father died
at age 55
of heart disease
and diabetes
my cousin
said it's the
indian in us

when the
drops of
indian blood
in me boiled
until they
reached the
surface and
manifested
themselves
as visions
and visits
from creatures

i stood
before my
"people"
in search
of understanding
and they said
who
is
this
white
woman



Spring Thaw by Katie Harpt

Darkness and Bad Dreams

by Charles M. Clark, Jr.

Last night, while I awaited sleep, the night-light burned out. I couldn't breathe until I found the light switch. I stared blankly at the night-light and wiped the sweat from my brow. I stood tense, breathing hard, wondering what had just scared me. I didn't hear or see anything – I was just suddenly terrified. My face felt dirty, so I went to the bathroom and cleaned it with a cold, wet washcloth. As I looked in the mirror, I thought to myself, "I didn't have a beard back then."

I rubbed my side and wondered why it was tingling as I headed back to bed. I stopped for a glass of water. My mouth was dry. So very dry. As I crawled back in bed, I remembered a bad dream I had twelve years ago.

Peering into the darkness with intensity, I still couldn't see a thing. I held my hand out in front of me and moved it towards my face until my thumb touched my nose. Blackness. I couldn't even see my hand in front of me! It had been several minutes since the lights went out. I was scared.

I could feel my pulse surging through my body and a buzzing feeling in my temples. The fear was intense. It seemed I couldn't get enough oxygen. My jaw was starting to hurt from the tension.

Suddenly, I heard it again. I held my breath for what seemed like eternity, listening with all my might. I knew there was someone else in there with me. He was real close. I wasn't sure how big the cave was or how it was shaped. He could be anywhere!

Trying to be quiet, I slid my bayonet out of the scabbard. It sounded like coarse sandpaper being slowly drawn across bare metal. I slid the finger guard over the barrel by feel and snapped the handle onto the locking latch. It seemed like the sound was amplified a hundred times. He knows where I am now!

Ever so slowly, I took a step to the left, easing my weight over and following with my right foot. One more step. The sweat was pouring off my brow, burning my eyes and salting my lips. I was shaking so much, I could hear the metal clips on my equipment vibrating. I was so scared,

my body hurt. My right thumb found the safety switch and I held my breath again sliding the switch from semi to automatic. The click was as loud as a sledgehammer. "Shit – he'll know where I am again!"

Suddenly, I heard him move – off to my left front – coming towards me! I lowered my rifle and turned, facing where I thought he was. I held my breath and waited – forever! I wanted him to move again so I could hear where he was. I still couldn't see a thing! I just wanted to scream and lunge at him. The terror of waiting for what I could not see! The hair on my neck was tingling. My mouth was dry, so very dry.

I heard the rumble start deep and low, rising in his chest to a growl, culminating in a blood curdling scream as he leapt toward me. I felt him impact with the bayonet as the flesh-tearing sound echoed through the cave. I slammed the trigger back with the force of a ram! My body went totally numb as the bright, pulsing red flashes forced my eyes closed. My jaw was clenched, my lips drawn tight as his warm blood splattered my face.

The seconds seemed like hours as my rifle pulsed, jerked, and kicked in my hands. The thirty-round ammunition magazine went empty and the rifle went still, but the thundering sound continued to echo. He was too heavy, hanging on the bayonet! I lowered the barrel and he slid off. My ears were ringing so badly that I put a hand over one. My legs gave out and I collapsed across his body. I began crying, crying loudly and convulsively from deep down inside.

I noticed my arm and side were stinging and burning. I was shaking so violently that I couldn't get my flashlight unclipped from the shoulder strap. I gripped it tightly and yanked it loose, then shone it on my side. There were gaping holes in the side of my shirt and sleeve. I hadn't realized he had fired. I was so shaken up, I couldn't focus enough to get a good look at the damage as I trembled uncontrollably. I turned the light on him. He was younger than me, only 17 or 18. He had a shotgun. "Damn," I thought. "he could have blown me away!" He was wearing a regular uniform with corporal or sergeant stripes on his shoulders. He must have been older than he looked. I felt like crying again; I felt bad that he was so young. Was he married? Did he have brothers and sisters? What did his mom look like? I pushed the thoughts aside, thinking to myself, "It was me or him – besides they can be proud he died in the

line of duty!"

I got up and shined the light around wondering how I would get out of this hole. There were stacks of weapons and ammunition all around the cave. I shuddered knowing that one of my bullets or the shogun blast could have triggered a chain-reaction that would have killed me. "What a fucking way to go! Shit man, what am I even doing in this fucking place?" I felt sick and my knees were shaking with each step. Stopping for a minute, I shined the light on my side and arm again. A lot of burns, but not much blood. "Fucking lucky," I muttered to myself as I continued on. I started to feel real weak and noticed the flashlight was going dim.

I woke up in a hospital. "How are you feeling?" asked the major bending over me. "We'll be sending you back stateside as soon as your blood pressure stabilizes. A C-131 air ambulance will take you to Fort Meade." I closed my eyes. "Bad dream." I thought to myself.

Lightning Flashed

by Andy Schark

Lightning flashed and thunder rolled
And all the Earth stood still.
For a demon had come upon the land
To ravage, steal and kill.

He rode a beast of fire and death
That was scaled from head to toe.
It burst from the clouds and dove to the Earth
Thrashing to and fro.

People ran from the terrible two
Trying to avoid the pain.
Some bravely stood and fought the fiend
But fighting was in vain.

Suddenly from above the clouds
Came a brilliant white light.
An eagle soared into the sky
Carrying a pure, white knight.

The eagle flew down to the Earth
And the knight jumped to the ground.
As he landed, a Voice came forth,
A most beautiful and awesome sound.

The scaled beast spit forth a flame
Scorching the oncoming bird
But the eagle flew, straight and true,
Without even uttering a word.

The eagle bit into the beast
And drew a drop of blood,
But that was enough to kill the beast
And it sank into the mud.

The demon fled from the Earth.
Never to return.
The knight just stood upon the ground
The demon had wanted to burn.

The demon's name was hate
And he came from the sky above.
And as you may already know,
The fair knight's name was Love.

Dreamer

by Charles M. Clark, Jr.

I closed my eyes and a memory screamed across the sky.
I turned away and encountered a fire-breathing dragon.
I could remember the eternity of a rocket's red glare.
I opened my eyes - it was still today in another land.
And I wondered if the sun ever shines warm in Galilee.
Maybe I will take a trip some other day to go and see.
I close my eyes again and envision a beautiful sunset.
I see the silhouette of an old man on a tall mountain.
As the golden hues fade orange, serenity drifts slow.
Relaxation ebbs softly as tender sleep kisses my mind.
I see the dream of a mounted knight in shining armor.
And I begin to dream about the dreams of sweet dreams.



Mermaid by Mary Kelly Mayhew

Fondly

by Gabriella Sheldon

the tide came in
together we watched the stones appear
we saw the crabs dance
and the tide went out
remember when we walked in the garden
and picked red roses for Mother
tears falling fingers pricked
to lay upon her coffin
lilac frills
immobile brow
divided her dishes
fingered meagre fabric remnants
smiled to papa
straightened our shoulders
said a rosary together
talked about tomorrow
why didn't I do that for her
with our children in our arms
dance the czardas
violins wild
hearts throbbing to yesterday strains
sea covered the stones
together we watched the stones disappear
we saw the crabs dance
and the tide came in

Shades of Gray

by Penelope Hanson

Stepping outside was always a shock after the stuffy, overheated office. Turning her collar against the ragged wind, Dr. Anderson strode across campus toward the College of Nursing. Everyone else had long ago scurried for shelter, but she didn't notice she was alone or the isolated flakes of snow hurtling past.

Inside, she paused to run strong fingers through vigorous white curls blown silly by the wind, then headed for the administrative offices. She wasn't surprised it was nearly dark in the reception area since it was well past normal business hours.

As she entered, a petite, thin-faced woman came out of a back hallway, struggling into a tweed overcoat. The woman stopped, penciled eyebrows arched. The roots of her strawberry-blonde hair were white.

"Why, Carol, I was just on my way home. Would you like to join me for dinner?" She continued to struggle with her coat.

"We have an appointment for this time, P. C.," Carol said sternly, pressing her lips together.

P.C. cocked her head, looking blankly at Carol. "Well, I must have forgotten to write it down, and it's been so long since we talked..." Her voice trailed off at Carol's look.

"We set this up this morning, P.C.," Carol said levelly, enunciating each word through clenched teeth.

"Yes, this morning..." P.C. frowned in apparent confusion. "I don't know what I'm thinking," she said half to herself. P. C. shrugged out of her coat and started back down the hallway, talking over her shoulder. "I just can't tell you how proud I am of your new position. How's it going for you?"

Carol followed, frowning. "I've been Vice President of Academic Affairs for over three years, P. C. You've been Dean of the College of Nursing for two and a half."

P. C. turned to look at her but said nothing. Entering her office, she pawed through papers and files on her desk, pulling out an appointment calendar. She ignored the small avalanche of papers that spilled

onto the floor as she settled her glasses onto her nose.

"Ah, yes, the baccalaureate satellite program. If I don't write everything down these days, I forget it." She laughed the light, self-deprecating laugh Carol remembered from school.

"That's for last month, P. C. This is November."

Again P. C. stared at Carol, expressionless. Abruptly she asked,

"Would you like some coffee or tea? I'm going to make some for myself."

"Some herbal tea would be fine." Carol sighed and shook her head as P. C. left the room, then closed her eyes as though she were very tired.

Ten minutes later she went looking for P. C. She found her in the faculty lounge, humming softly as she straightened magazines on the coffee table.

P. C. looked up, startled. "Why, Carol, how long have you been there? I was just thinking about you. Arthur and I found the most exquisite antique shop last weekend with a wonderful collection of garnet jewelry. You and I will have to go back there soon."

Carol sat carefully on the edge of a chair. Arthur had died the previous year. Everything began to fall into place. Her voice shook slightly as she finally said, "P. C., I have to advise you that I can no longer overlook your performance. There are just too many instances where you are not meeting expectations. You've made more mistakes in the last three months than in your entire career. I cannot allow the College of Nursing to be jeopardized in this way."

P. C. gazed at her, a fine tremor agitating her head and hands. "Yes, it's certainly in jeopardy. Both the Ag department and the pharmacists are fighting our reorganization proposal."

Carol's voice raised a notch, becoming strident. "The reorganization proposal was approved by a resounding margin months ago."

Tapping the chair arm for emphasis, she continued: "I have yet to see even a draft of the implementation plan which was due two months ago. Not one of the faculty projects has been started. Faculty complain you don't appear at meetings you call or that when you are there, nothing is accomplished. The minutes show that. P. C., this cannot continue."

P. C. carefully pressed folds in her dimed skirt. She stared at Carol

as though searching for an answer. "The faculty always complain about the preliminary draft for the NLN surveys. The students should be involved in the faculty meetings."

For a long moment, Carol stared at P. C., a muscle in her jaw twitching. Her shoulders sagged and with a sigh she asked, "P. C., who is President of the United States?"

"Why, Reagan, of course," P. C. snorted. "What is this, Carol, the old orientation times three routine? You know my granddaughter is going to Washington this spring."

Carol nodded, and they talked of the old times when they met as college freshmen. As she left an hour later, the wind howled and beat against the doors behind her.

Despite the late hour, she drove directly to the university president's house. Preparations took only two days.

The faculty were told. There was a special student assembly. The Board of Regents was duly informed. The local and state newspapers carried the announcement on an inside page. Few people noticed. The Vice President of Academic Affairs cried when she read what she had done:

P.C. Czisny, Ph.D., RN, has resigned as Dean of the College of Nursing. She will remain on faculty as a consulting associate professor for the balance of the academic year and then retire. Dr. Czisny, known as P.C. to her friends, assumed the Deanship in 1990. According to Dr. Carol Anderson, V.P. of Academic Affairs, a longtime friend and colleague, Dean Czisny enjoyed a brilliant academic and professional career...

Mr. Rynesh and the I Should've's

by Thom. J. Richards

The room was dark when I first entered. The blinds had been shut to keep out the early morning light. It was my turn to go into Mr. Rynesh's room and to suffer the wrath of the most vulgar, obnoxious patient on our ward. "Who the hell are you and what the hell do you want?" came a voice booming out of the darkness. I immediately ducked; the last person who woke Mr. Rynesh had a bed pan hurled at him. "It's me, Petty Officer Richards," I answered, "I've come to open your blinds this morning."

"Get on with it," he grunted, "and be quick about it!" I hurried to do so and to leave as fast as I could. No one wanted to be in the room with that tyrant any longer than necessary.

Mr. Rynesh was in his late nineties. He had been a small, wiry fellow, but now his body showed the scars left from too many stabbings and gun shots to remember where they all came from. He had snow white hair and steel blue eyes that seemed to look through and not at you. He had probably seen and done more in his lifetime than most people dream of. He had buried three wives, fought two wars and engaged in untold conflicts around the world. Now, his body was used up, old, wrinkled, and full of cancer. His days were numbered and he knew it. He made it plain that he didn't care much for people in general and us specifically. Most of the corpsmen, myself included, just wished he'd hurry up and die and get it over with.

"I don't suppose you have any idea how to play chess?" he snarled. The question startled me. I don't think until that moment he had said more than two civil words to me. "Of course, if you did know how, you probably aren't worth a damn anyway. Not worth the time it would take to set up the board." His piercing eyes challenged me. "Don't count on it," I retorted. "I've been playing chess since I was six or seven and consider myself pretty good." I knew even as I spoke, I had started something I wasn't sure I could finish. I had grown tired of listening to this crotchety old man carry on day after day, and it was time to show him a thing or two.

It didn't take long, about half a dozen moves, for me to know we were not even in the same league. I had played in many chess tournaments and had presented a fair showing of myself, winning some, losing some, but never did I get the stomping I got that day. This guy was not a chess player, he was a master. We played three or four games before he finally delivered the biggest blow to my ego. "You come back when you learn how to play this game instead of wasting my time," he said coldly. "Now get out of here." I left like a whipped dog with his tail between his legs. I swore to myself I would return and beat this old man and thereby regain some of my lost dignity.

Many times over the next few days we would play again. Each time I would leave wondering if he could be beaten. Each set of games would end with the master telling the pupil that never in his life had he seen someone who could play so pathetically. Each time I would leave more determined than before that I would return and beat him.

Finally after the third week, it began to happen, not at once but slowly with each game. I was beginning to give him a run for it until finally with a quick feint and a sucker move to one side of the board, I had him and we both knew it. "Checkmate!" I yelled with excitement. "Finally," he said, with a full-faced grin. From that day on our relationship changed; never did he yell at me again or treat me like some kind of idiot.

After my hard-earned victory, I started to really get to know him and became amazed at the life he had led. I started spending hours of my off-time just talking with him. He no longer wanted to play chess. It was like the game had been some sort of test that I had to pass in order to gain his respect and enable him to decide if I was worthy of his time and the sharing of his life story.

He had left home before the turn of the century at age sixteen. He shipped out to sea on a tramp steamer, not really caring where he would end up. He fought in the Spanish-American war of 1898 and World War I. Between the two he had been involved in some type of conflict in Africa as a mercenary. He told me at one time he had been a professional boxer and helped cut roads through the jungle in Central Africa. He tried to make a living, first digging for gold, then diamonds in South Africa. When the second World War broke out, he returned to the States.

but being sixty, he was too old to serve. That didn't stop him; somehow he ended up in England and was in London during the bombings there. He described the sound of the V2 bombs as they came over: "First you'd hear the air raid sirens, then the engines of the bombs. Everyone would hold their breath as the engines cut off; then would come the whistle as the bomb fell to earth, and the explosion rocked the city."

As he grew sicker and weaker, I started spending more and more time with him. We both knew his time was near. Except for me, only a grand-niece came to visit the old man. She visited once and never came back. He didn't talk much about his family except to say he had buried three wives and out-lived any of the rest of his kin that had been worth a damn.

I finally realized after spending all this time with him that he wasn't such a bad sort. He was just angry that his body was giving out when there were still so many things to do, so many places to go. Our friendship grew those last few days of his life. I was able to work up the courage to ask the one question that a young man most wanted to know. "Having done all that you've done, seen all that you've seen, do you have any regrets?" There was silence and at first I wasn't sure he had heard me. I started to ask the question again when he answered with a soft, quiet voice I had never heard from him before. "It doesn't matter how much money you have made. It's not how high in the company you get. It's not the number of degrees or honors you have that determines success. It's how many 'I should've's' that you have left over that decides the success or failure of your life. The 'I should've' gone there, 'should've' done that, 'should've' tried this or 'should've' tried that. It's the 'I should've's'." He turned his head and looked at me with moistened eyes and said, "Yes, I have some 'I should've's'; then he smiled, "But not as many as I once had."

Two days later, Mr. Rynesh died and started a new adventure with a clean slate on which to keep track of the "I should've's." I still think he was a crotchety old man, but I guess he deserved that right. All I know is since knowing Mr. Rynesh, I've tried to keep track of my own "I should've's"