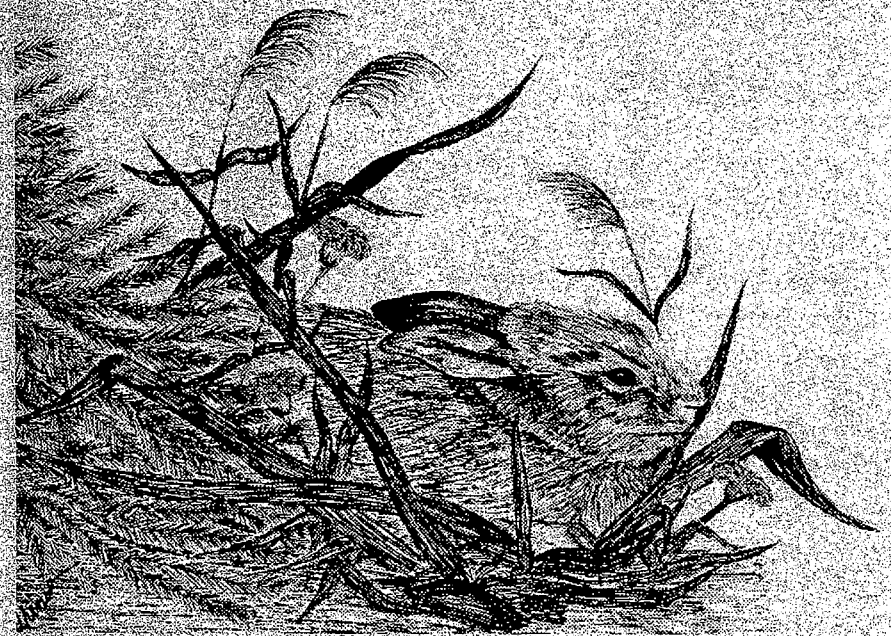


Northern Lights '03



University of Wisconsin-Marquette
Arts Journal



The Critic's Catechism

by Dr. Doug Larche

With imagery like mergéd rose,
Avoiding purple, turgid prose,
Rejecting foolish witticism,
I write the Critic's Catechism:

The scientific, surgical,
The purely dramaturgical;
Expressly apolitical,
Exact and analytical;

The fiercely unemotional,
Devoid of the devotional;
Yet, anti-intellectual,
While accurate, effectual;

Respectful of the paradigm,
But still, I do not care if I'm
Perceived to be a visionary,
Heretic or missionary.

The muse in me doth not reside,
Creative souls I can't abide,
So I will grind their works to dust-
Adore and praise me if you must!

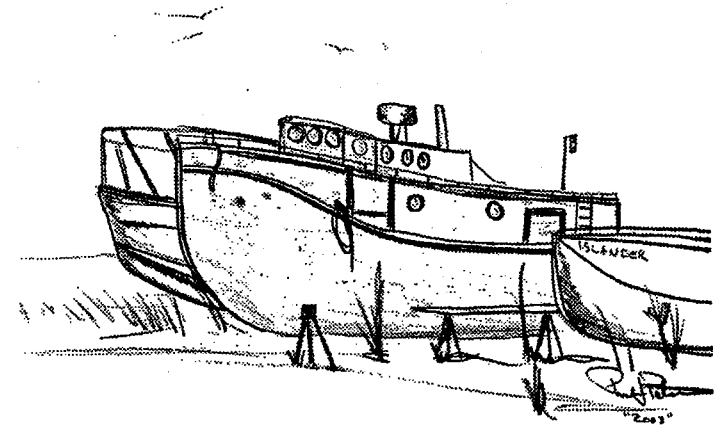
I am the reader's oracle,
Artistic and rhetorical.
I write to safeguard Shakespeare's art
From poet's pen and playwright's heart.

I, alone, ordain the choice;
I will kill your wondrous voice!
Abide forever, criticism;
Proclaim the critic's catechism!

Northern Lights

2003

Arts Journal
University of Wisconsin
Marinette



Retired
by Paul Peterson

Volume 23

Spring 2003

University of Wisconsin
Marinette
750 W. Bay Shore St.
Marinette, Wisconsin 54143

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This publication is printed on recycled paper.

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Cover Art: Hide and Pray by Jill Ahrndt

Acknowledgments

We were not able to publish all the entries submitted this year, but we wish to thank everyone who contributed. Thanks also to Printers Plus for their printing assistance.

Editorial Committee: Katherine Holman, chair; Maureen Molle, Shirley Evans, Jane Oitzinger, James LaMalfa, Elouise Rossler, Jennifer Stolpa, Jessica Larsen and Michael Radloff.

Northern Lights is funded by the UW-Marquette Student Senate.

My Father, My Friend

by Dominic Mulzer

Billboard after billboard, sign after sign, car after car. They all seemed meaningless. All that mattered was my dad. The drive seemed endless. When would I get there? I wanted to see him, to hug him, to tell him about my day, how school was going. For the past 18 years, my dad had been the center of my life. My reason for being who I am today was slowly fading away.

When I got to the hospital in Milwaukee, I was devastated. My dad was not there. Instead, a frail, skeletal, small man took his place. We began to talk and I realized that beneath the tortured frame was the dad I've always known. We talked about many things: cars, the weather, who had come to visit. We got caught up on everything. The evening went by, and I went back to the place I was staying. Around six in the morning I received a call. It was my mom and she sounded very sad. She told me to come quickly because my dad was doing poorly. When I got there, my dad looked even worse. The blood tests had come back, and it wasn't good. The tests showed that his liver was failing and he would likely die. In an instant my whole world fell apart. My dad was confused because of all the poisons in his blood. When he at last realized he was going to die, he was more worried about us than himself. We sat with him all night as his blood pressure spiked and bottomed out. He would get horrible headaches. At last he became stable, and I went back to the hotel.

Early in the morning I got another call from my mother. She told me it wouldn't be very long now and that I should come quickly. I arrived and my father had turned yellow. His breathing was shallow, and he couldn't speak. His mouth moved and we could tell he was trying to say he loved us. We held his hand and kept telling him we loved him. This went on for half an hour. His breathing stopped and then started again. It did this many times. Finally he looked at each of us, and died.

I left that hospital room both devastated and proud. I was devastated to have lost my dad and friend. I was proud to have known him, proud to have spent time with him, and proud to be his son. I was proud of my whole family to have stuck by him the eight years of his illness. I love him more than words can say. He inspires me to do great things. I would be happy to turn out to be just half of the husband, father, and friend that he was. I know now that I can do anything, because I have one hell of a guardian angel.

school. Along with the chance to show viewers how special Ricky was, the group was also awarded one hundred dollars.

The summer after fifth grade I visited Ricky a couple of times. He seemed to be doing much better. We all expected to see him in school the following year, but when our sixth grade year began, Ricky wasn't there. He still didn't feel well enough to come to school, so I decided to go visit him with a couple of friends. His presence was ghostly and it looked as though his disease had got the best of him. It seemed like just the other day he had been doing fine.

A couple of weeks later, I was sitting in Mr. Bruszynski's third hour math class. A friend of mine from elementary school walked in and told another student that something had happened to Ricky. My friend Jenny left the room while I sat there. I knew that second what had happened. My heart started racing and I couldn't sit still. I sat there for what seemed like forever, but it had been only a few minutes when she came in to get me. I walked out into the hall and the counselor was standing there. She told me that Ricky had died earlier that morning in his home surrounded by his family. My heart dropped. Just a couple of weeks ago I had been sitting in his kitchen, and he was right in front of me. We went into the library to join the rest of my fifth grade class. I had to call my parents but couldn't remember the number. My friends and I left school to try to get our minds off what had happened. It was a very difficult time for all of us.

The next night was the funeral, and I didn't want to go. I had never imagined the first funeral I would attend would be my best friend's. I couldn't believe his disease had gotten that bad. I was actually beginning to think he would be all right. I don't think I would have gotten through that painful period of my life without the help of my other friends. It took me a long time to get back to my normal self. This was the hardest time of my life.

I still think of Ricky. I think of his wonderful smile, his love for sports, and most of all, how great he treated others. He was so brave and never stopped fighting. I think of what it would be like if he were still alive today and how different my life would be. I visit his grave on occasion. I will always remember all the good times we shared. We had a lot of good memories together.

Time Marked

by Elouise Rossler

Buried in the bosom of the bay,
A village of ten thousand years ago
Comes to life through history.
In this near perfect place
Of cooling summer winds,
The Menominee lived.
Preparing for next generations
By teaching the gathering of the rice,
Catching fish from the waters,
Preserving language and art
Within a small, close culture
Cloistered among the tall pines,
Splashing freely on a sandy beach.
Centuries of strife and suffering,
Victories and changes
Have ensued.
Today a small village
Located deep in the sand
Among the pines on the beach,
Retrieved to prepare its new young
In language and art
Of an earlier culture,
To teach them to appreciate
Their original people
Of ten thousand years ago.
How will the icons of today
Be perceived in ten millenniums?

Upon Dreams
by Shaina Marcin

Upon the clouds I dance with thee
with flowers in my hair
rainbows leap upon the sea
and fill the morning air
I feel your touch, your warm embrace
upon my skin so soft
Heaven is upon this place
for dreams do go aloft
For why, my dear, must I wait
for dreams to come so true
when in his world you walk with me
and I, I walk with you.

Butterfly Whispers
by Jennifer Klatkiewicz

What do you do when you fall for someone?
Fall for them hard and they don't even know it.
Those endless nights, you stay up and think,
thinking about those deep, dark eyes that pierce your soul.
Thinking about his angelic voice,
The voice that melts your heart like butter.
Just being near him makes your stomach flutter.
Fluttering butterflies that say it's meant to be,
Meant to be together they say, they say.

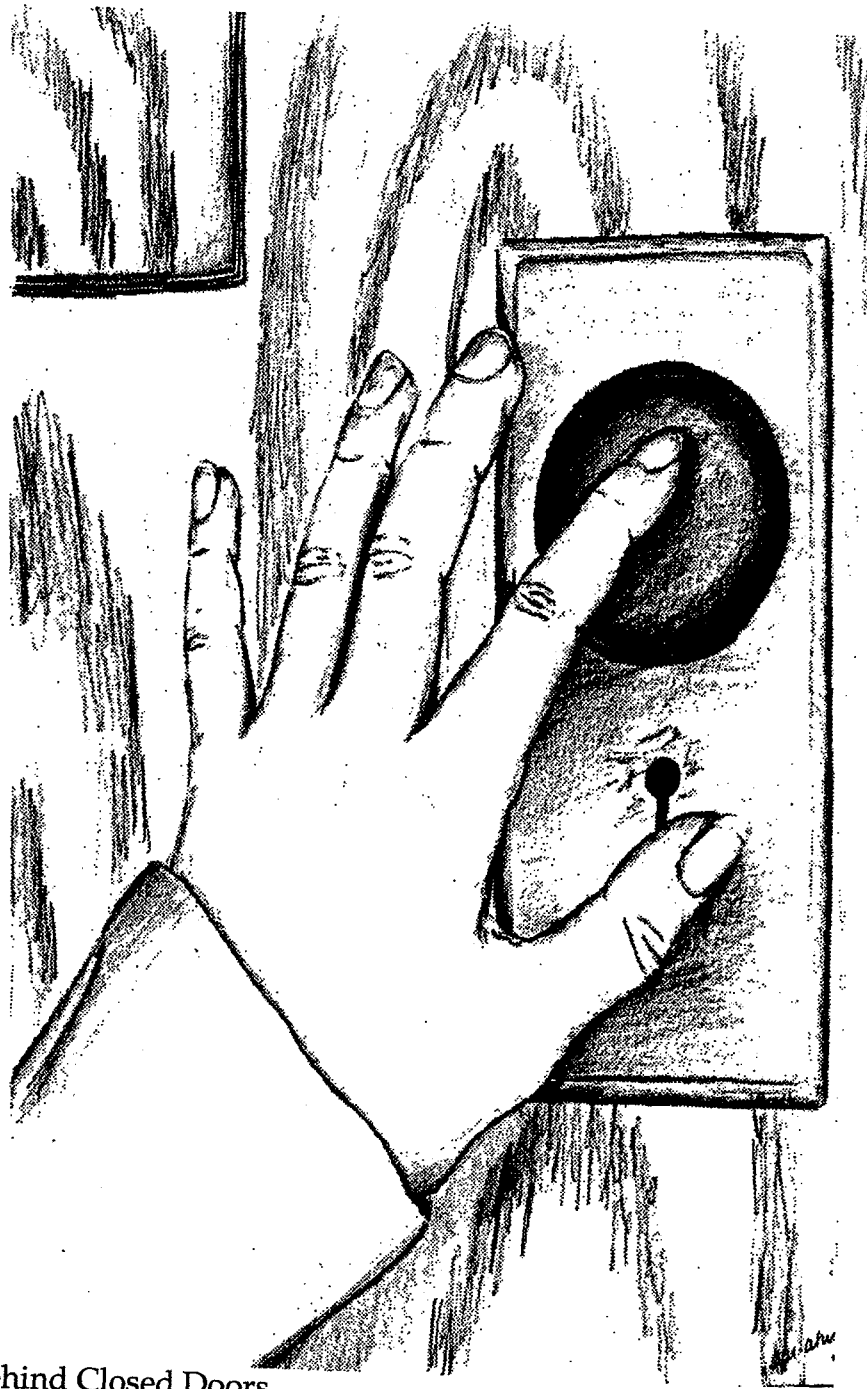
Hard Times
by Kristin LaForest

Ricky and I first met in kindergarten; we became good friends a few years later. Ricky loved sports. The Dallas Cowboys were his favorite team; everything he owned had Dallas Cowboys on it. We would spend our recesses playing soccer in the field behind our school. He was also a wonderful artist; he could draw anything you asked him to. He really had a way of making other people feel special.

Fifth grade couldn't have started off any worse. Ricky was diagnosed with rhabdomyosarcoma, a form of cancer that develops in the muscles. He had two small tumors in his lungs, along with another tumor in his right hip that was the size of a grapefruit. Ricky immediately started chemotherapy, radiation shots, and also needed multiple surgeries to remove the tumor in his hip. He had to take many trips down to the University of Wisconsin Children's Hospital in Madison where his treatment took place. Our school put on many bake sales to help pay for all the trips. Ricky usually felt too sick to make it to school but managed to show a few days a week. He had come to school the day of our fifth grade picture and was looking much better. His hair started to grow back; he got some color back in his face, and he was feeling well enough to stay at school for the day.

Our principal entered a group of people, including Ricky, into a radio contest for amateur writers. It was the Norman Michie Young People's Radio Festival. Seven people were picked to write a ten-minute radio documentary on the topic of our choice. We decided to discuss Ricky's disease. The documentary was titled, "Where's Ricky?" Our story won the contest and we were awarded a trip to the Wisconsin Public Radio Station in Madison, where we recorded the documentary in a professional studio. When it was aired on the radio, later that month, our principal allowed everyone to hear it over the loud speaker.

After the radio show, the seven of us were also given the opportunity to make a television special based on Ricky's struggle with cancer. The show was called "Get Real" and was aired on Wisconsin Public Television. It included an interview with Ricky discussing how he lives with the disease from day to day. The station sent their cameramen to tape the show in the playground behind our



Behind Closed Doors
by Jill Ahrndt

Ode to Ancient Music
by James LaMalfa

My love,
I think you are
a Grecian harp,
Apollo's choice
when playing
to his shepherdess.

But in this uncouth age
you are badly served
by ill-trained rustics
fit only for sounding brass.

Let I be Harlequin
and you Columbine,
for I am schooled in subtlety.

Then we will sing new songs
of our fidelity
and once again
sweet harmony shall reign
in Arcadia



Ancient Music with Steam Boiler
by James LaMalfa

A Never to be Forgotten White Day

by Joon-Won Cho

In Korea, we have both a Valentine's Day and a White Day. On Valentine's Day, all girls give candy to their boyfriends. On White Day, on the other hand, boys give these gifts to their girlfriends. Accordingly, all the girls who have given some presents to their boyfriends, look forward to receiving a surprise. And, of course, my girlfriend was one of them. Four years ago, a week before White Day, she asked me what I was preparing for her. I told her it was a secret because I wanted to make that year's White Day a never-to-be-forgotten one. My secret present for her was a huge chocolate house which had three floors, ten rooms, a garden and a swimming pool. She was to have the biggest gift among her friends. To make this gift, I had to get everything in readiness for a whole week.

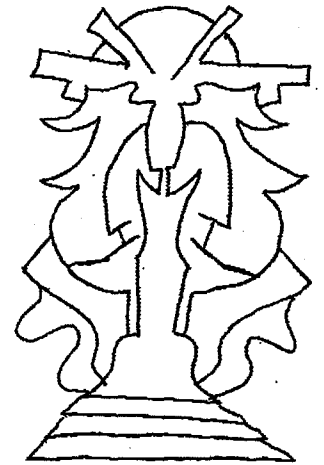
However, from the very first day, I was stuck with a problem. I had no idea about assembling a house, so I asked my best friend, who majors in construction engineering at his university, to help me. I knew I could rely on him because he had won several gold medals in many construction matches for university students. I just needed to tell him what kind of house I wanted. He had the talent to create my dream house for my girlfriend. He asked me how big I wanted it, what color I wanted, and how much I wanted to spend for the house. I said, "The cost does not matter. But the house should be white, because she always mentions a white house with a garden and a swimming pool. I will decorate the garden with green chocolates and make a swimming pool with blue candies." After he figured out what I wanted, we started to sketch the blueprint of the house.

The next day, we went to a large stationery store which had plenty of construction tools and materials. I had never seen such a large stationery store before. There were hundreds of colored papers, all sorts of drawing tools, etc. The store was equipped with everything necessary for art. However, I was too overwhelmed with the store. There was too much stuff. I didn't know what to buy. Like a professional, my friend found everything we wanted such as extra-thick, heavy paper, some cellophane paper for the windows, and other things necessary for building our house quickly. When we had purchased everything we needed, we went to my house to start working. This job was not going to be completed in a day. We had to get started if we wanted to meet the deadline.

Until the fifth day of that week, we were engaged in heavy labor. To reach the stage of perfection for the house body, we had to make sev-

or take that oath that seals your mouth
or seals your fate
for the glory of futility
or hypocrisy
for some great country

When you're knee-deep and scared
nothing is left of that momentum you shared
with all the cowboys
when you were six
fighting each other with rocks and sticks
and felt right then but it don't feel right now
you got lost some how
and ended up here with a gun in your hand
aimed at a man you don't even know
a man that you can hardly see
and they're telling it's for glory
and they're telling you it's for peace
to hold bayonet
to throw a grenade
to kill a man with dirt on his face
and a cross on his neck
that could not save him.
But shall always save him.



Temple

by Kristopher Enderby

Or dead somewhere?
Or broken like the men out here?
Or filled with fear?
No, you don't see him anywhere.
and it isn't fair
he feeding you the rage that'll dig your grave
but you're willing
willing to fight and willing to die for your country
without asking why
and we thank you

But your mother asked why
in the new of spring
poppies break'n the ground
But your father asked why
as they lower you down.
Why'd they take him away from us?
stick him in a uniform
and on a bus
to a ship and to a plane
that took his name and his head
and he wound up dead in a trench
for the glory of a cause you never got
to be buried in the soil you never touch again
your name on a slab of cement
with a thousand other names
and they'll build you monuments
and make you kings
and your family will defend your honor
and your country will mourn for you in vain
letting weeds grow over your name
And they're telling you it's under GOD
when you put up your right hand

eral attempts. The project needed delicate work because we soon discovered that a hand-made house of thick papers was too weak to stand. We failed at every step until the last try. When it collapsed the third time, I wanted to quit and throw it away. However, I had to keep working because I had a girlfriend who wanted to be surprised and who had been anxiously waiting for White Day for the past month. On the fifth night, finally, we obtained excellent results. The house did not budge even when we pushed it with our fingers; it stood like a rock.

A day before White Day, the sixth day of our preparations, we had to be in a hurry to decorate the house splendidly. I made a model of a tree and swimming pool for outside the house. After building everything that I wanted, I had to shop for chocolates and candies which were to be put inside each room in my perfect house. To buy the right chocolates and candies, I went to the biggest grocery store in southern Seoul (the capital of Korea) which took me an hour by subway. As I expected, the store was full of men because of White Day. However, they were not that careful in looking for the goodies for their girl friends. Most Korean men are not used to buying presents for their girl friends or wives. Such thinking originates from Confucianism which is often characterized as a system of social and ethical philosophy rather than a religion. Confucianism generally seeks sound virtue but it focuses too much on the role of the male in society. Accordingly, men are expected to do more important things. Thus, it was normal for Asian men to work for a living while women did housework. In this sense, Korean men thought it was unmanly to do little things for women in the past. Things have changed a lot these days, but still most Korean men are not that good in expressing their feelings for their partners. However, I was not that kind of guy. I did my best to find special chocolates and candies. After spending two hours in the shop, I was able to get everything I wanted.

On White Day, I could not cover my enthusiasm on the way to meet my girlfriend. Every minute felt like an hour. Finally, I grabbed my jacket and my gift for her. It was too big to wrap, and I also wanted everyone to admire it, which they did. Nearing the promised place and time we would meet, I could see her from a distance. When she came to me closely, she looked like a gorgeous swan; she was wearing a white jacket, a white sweater, a white skirt, and even matching white boots.

As soon as she saw my work and its great effort, she started to cry in joy. She was unable to contain her happiness. At that time, I also felt a great pleasure in my life. I was so happy to see her feel good. Though it was a pretty hard week, it was worth it. Now, I think that preparing something for that special person is the most delightful thing in the world.

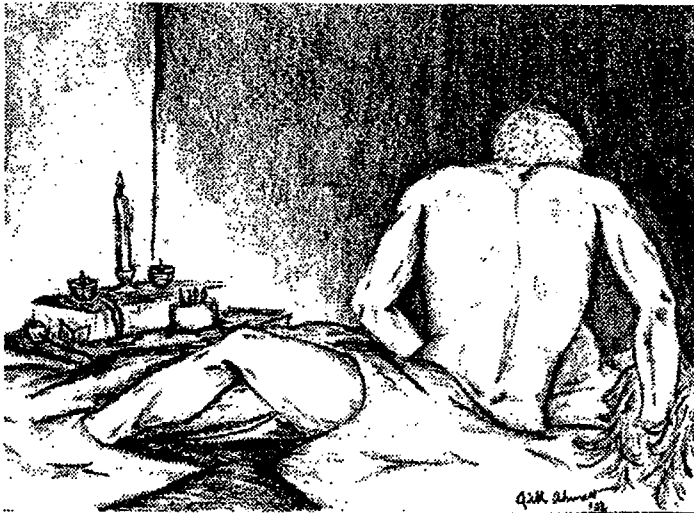
I'm a Version
by Kristopher Enderby

Bit by bitten
Warmer mitten
Coolest layout in the world

Say you're smitten
Cat or kitten
I just got the kite unfurled

Will you be there?
Hold my headwear?
Tell me I'm the darndest thing?

Couldn't care, bear
Take this bus fare
Leave me be so I can swing



Burn
by Jill Ahndt

Trench
by Alexandra Barnes

There is no time in a trench they say
the end is in your face and blocking your way
and the sun has left you hot and burned
by bullet or bomb

You can't judge the man that wants you
or the man you want
in the rotten scents and washed out hues
of the ground
and the men all around
you shouting and yelling
wounded and bleeding
No you can't judge the foe
with your gun
who's eyeing you down
with sweat on his back and his body to the ground
and you can't wonder if he's scared too
when it's him or you
you or him
with that shak'n finger on a cold metal trigger
hold'n a bullet that'll take his life
send a letter to his wife
to read to his sons
about how brave he was
about how his country thanks him
for being a soldier and not a man
be it Germany or France

But where's the man that started this?
Gritting his teeth or clenching his fists?

War

Tom Noppenberg

Who would think that such a small word could do so much destruction?

Wars have been fought throughout history, mainly for land.

However, the threat of war is upon us all in the present.

It did not remain buried in the past.

It rose above the surface and is raining its havoc right in our faces, like some kind of smart-aleck kid.

My big brother will be a part of this terrible word, as he is forced to fly to Kuwait.

I feel like my world has been turned upside down.

I feel like I am in a maze and there is no way out.

I am caught in between two forces.

One force is telling me to rely on my faith in God and not give up courage, while the dark force inside me is telling to me to give up the battle, to surrender my weapon of faith.

I try and listen to the first one, but cannot block the other one out of my subconscious.

I have immense hatred for this three-letter word.

I want to tear the word WAR into little pieces and throw them into my fireplace, where they will burn and remain obsolete.

Why cannot there be peace on Earth?

Must we always resort to violence?

There are so many unanswered questions.

War is a three-letter word that could keep my brother and me apart for quite some time. It has already been almost a year since I have seen him last. Now, with the threat of war, that time could even stretch out for a couple of years.

It has jeopardized my hope of seeing him again this summer.

Oh, how I wish WAR were a real object that I could get my hands on and never let go.

Well, all I can do is continue fighting this battle within my soul.

I cannot give up faith and hope.

For if I do, this evil word will win and then I will be forced to raise my hands and surrender. I have lost all hope if it comes to that.

War, you may have won the battle, but in the end, I will be the one who raises the flag and shouts, "Victory!"

Journey

by Ashley Simon

I slip into the darkness, making not a sound

On to my love, that is where I'm bound

Only having your image, and some items that I packed

I left my life and family, never looking back

I journey on and find my way

Some by light, and some by day

Never sleeping, wide awake

So tired but no rest to take

Must be dreaming wide awake

Must be real 'cause it's not fake

Must be love 'cause it's not hate

To be with you must be my fate

I think it's light that I despise

I see the love within your eyes

I see your picture; start to cry

In the dark I wait and lie

Will I reach you before I die?

I push on and start to cry

I collapse before you on your lawn

In the future the coming dawn

"No More," She Said

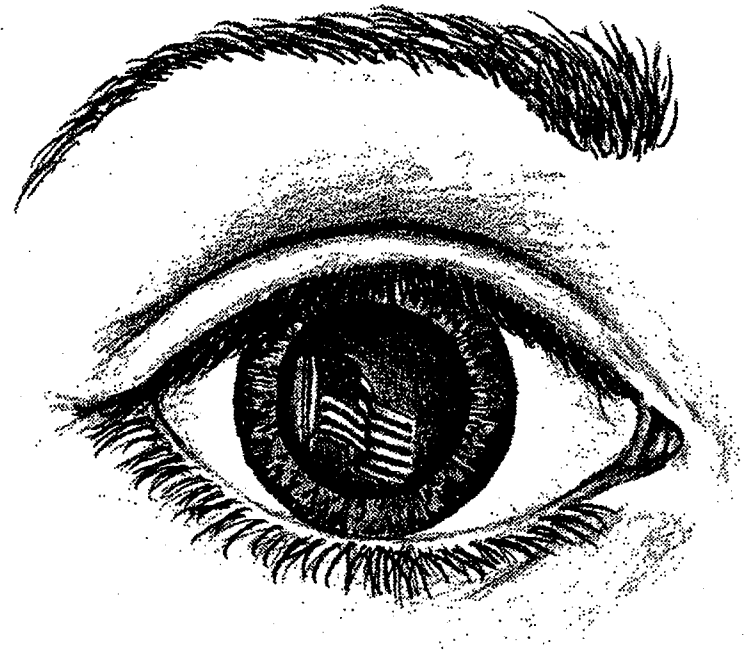
by Alexandra Barnes

"No more," she said,
As she waved with her hand
Hand on her hip
Equipped
With what the future held.
What could be brought on
by destiny
The bittersweet infamies
Imagined in her big
Imaginative head
Dead
For so long
But now so strong
As she waved him away
"Come back a new day
My love"
"Come back a new man."
As she waved with her hand,
Hand on her hip
"Should you decide
To not return
The burn
In my heart will simmer
And die,
The tears I cry
Will kill the flame."
"I had so much in store for you."
She called out to the purple hues
Of the sunset
His back set
Away from her
As he walked down the dirt path
All the wrath
Of the salty seaside winds
Blowing his hair
No, she wishes she were there
Beside him again
As the wind
Or the rain
'She could touch him secretly,

"He would not run from me."
She mumbled to herself
"Be a good man."
As she waved with her hand
Hand on her hip
By the seaside shores
The sandy beaches
The cream of the moon
He was gone too soon
Just a grain
Of the beach in her eye

She gathered her hair
She gathered her dress
And walked the shores
For an hour or more
Alone
Her hands at her sides
Her eyes too wise
To the tears we cry

Through the day she stands
Outside her castles of sand
Her hand
On her hip
Watching the sea
Watching the sky
The tide comes high
and the tide comes low
His memory goes
Away from her
Drowning in the salty seas
Taken by the wind
to the trees
That she can't reach
Set with the setting sun
Buried by the false beasts
Of time.



Glory
by Jill Ahndt

The rain comes down, Temperature at freezing

by Annie E. Burie

I step outside with out hat,
Without so much as a mitten or scarf
It's hot
For the past week, for the past month
My head is swarmed with sauna rocks
As the cold rain hits my face, it steams off
I can see it.
In black pants and ugly sweater
Workman's coat
I stand on the sidewalk
I have no one waiting
No important place to race and sit
Slowly my legs begin to lift and move me along
Behind me a woman walks brisk with large brim hat
Passes, and smiles some comment on the weather
the balls of my feet push me past the busy intersect,
Past the little shops of leather, used books, fantasy dresses, French cuisine
Victorian homes facing the bay
Past the last stop light
Walk, comes a voice, one step, then another
You don't ever have to turn around
I keep at it.
There have been friends that I have not met
There are towns I have not soaked in
Towering masses I have not awed
I walk.
My head still hot
You can turn around at anytime I calm myself
I see little bridge, stop to watch rain meet creek
What is my destiny?
Walk. Walk on
Walk until I escape the sauna of my mind
When the voice stops prompting
Until the steam stops lifting
I will walk in the rain, temperature at freezing

...and what's with him

by Meaghan Schroud

...and what's with him,
anyway
since when was he like that
(like that?)
I liked the cocoon
but the
butterfly emerging
is a monster
irrational
grating on my
self

I Don't Write

by Alexandra Barnes

I don't write
Anymore
Silent
Rhythms
Patterns
It's too hard to lay my emotions
Down
To throw myself to pieces
On the floor
In a second
In a day
To say
"Pick me up
With those cigarette hands
That burn
But please,
Watch where you step."

Beautiful

by Tonya McGee Bowers

I am beautiful
I have a beautiful heart
filled with beautiful love
I have beautiful dreams
of a beautiful world
I have beautiful thoughts
for all mankind
I have a beautiful smile
I have a beautiful mind
I have a beautiful understanding
that's a beautiful fact
I have a beautiful sense of humor
I am a beautiful act
I have a beautiful spirit
kind and free
I also have a beautiful personality
I love beautiful people
and beautiful people love me.



Rose
by Maggie Stuttgen

People come, people go
You've loved some
And others you'll never know
And they'll never know you
all a part of a cycle
A balance, a trance
We're in
Society, democracy, insanity
He needs me
He doesn't want me anymore
Out the door
and down the road
Who knows where you're gonna be

"We all have choices"
She says to me
Front porch
Swingin sweet
Discussin religion and belief
and whatever Hope really achieves
I don't know her and
she don't know me
I say, she don't own me
But I'm lying through my teeth
and it's okay
I am reborn every day

With every vague and silent God
that comes my way

It's these strange days
that have me beat
Head in the gutter
Body in the street
Rearranging my belief
I kill and I scream and I swear
but she don't go anywhere
And life is fair
Again

Lady Jane and me
Sittin on my front porch
Jivin
Swingin sweet
Like the queens of everything
I don't know her and
she don't know me
I say, she don't own me



Arrival
by Kristopher Enderby

Strange Days

by Alexandra Barnes

Lady Jane and me
Sittin on my front porch
Jivin
Swingin sweet
Like queens of everything
discussin peace and need
And whatever Love really means
I don't know her and
she don't know me
I say, she don't own me
The past, lazy days
Have let us be
And we're lonely
But we're free
She answers the questions in me
With her laugh
I am only half
The person I was yesterday
These strange days
Have me beat
Head in the gutter
And body in the street
Thinkin about Fate
And the Christ Child
These strange people I see
Talkin at me
Aren't on my side
I feel the need to justify
Those crazy eyes
All of daddy's money
And mamma's Audi too
I have no more anger towards you

Lady Jane and me
Sittin on my front porch
Speakin about desire
I get higher
Tempter, temptress
And bodies we want to caress
About how this world's a mess
But people are beautiful still
About sensuality and skin
I begin
to understand
The Love Drug

Addiction, Affliction
This throb of passion
This burden to the soul
My whole
Heartbeats
To the rhythm of the streets
But beyond the trash of the city
She numbs the pains in me
My Lady
To the left
Draws me away
From the strange days
And life is sweet.

"Nobody knows me"
I think
But it don't matter at all
We fight to stand, we fall,
We get back up

Cricket the Laundry Basket Cat

by James LaMalfa

Cricket the laundry basket cat
eyes me with open wonder,
her deer-in-the-headlight stare.

"Did you really make
that scratchy, mouse sound
on the back of the chair?"
she silently enquires.

Aptly named, she chirps
at colored bits of birdfluff
beyond the glass,
forever out of reach.

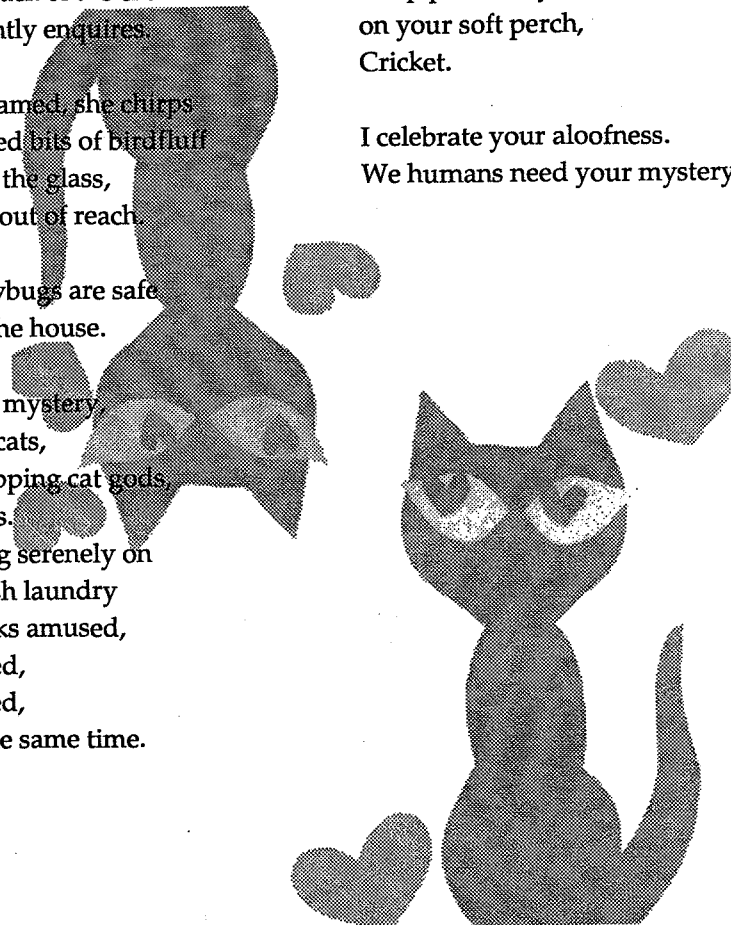
Yet ladybugs are safe
inside the house.

She is a mystery,
like all cats,
worshipping cat gods,
not ours.
Sleeping serenely on
our fresh laundry
she looks amused,
bemused,
confused,
all at the same time.

She manages, effortlessly,
to look wise and imperious,
but may be just contemplating
the odor of fish suspended
in the damp air.

Sleep peacefully
on your soft perch,
Cricket.

I celebrate your aloofness.
We humans need your mystery.



Nana's Valentine
by Karen Garcia

Experience of a Lifetime

by Gina Guarisco

The dogs jumped and barked excitedly as my dad produced a 12-gauge shotgun from the black gun case in the back of the Expedition. The sun had just risen and the dew still clung to the grass. The last of the fall leaves held frailly to the almost bare branches. I climbed out of the passenger side to load my own gun. There was a cold breeze that numbed my fingers as I slid the shells into the action. The two black labs bounded around sniffing at the ground for any fresh scent. My dad filled a large bowl of water and placed it on the ground for the dogs; drinking was not in their interest at the moment. I gazed around at our surroundings. A long and narrow grassy field lay in front of us. A sorghum row ran down the middle and a line of trees stood guard at the end.

"We should get a couple of birds out of this field, hey Dad?" I asked cradling my 20-gauge with one arm and adjusting my hat with the other.

"Yep, looks like a good place to start," he said, his face beaming with enthusiasm. "Sarge! Moose!" he called at the two dogs. They came running, eager to start the hunt. My dad pointed towards the field and instructed the dogs where to go. They took off without hesitation. Both dogs criss-crossed in front of us as we walked down the field. I walked along one side of the sorghum, Dad on the other. We both intently watched the dogs work. The ground was uneven and my clumsy snow boots made it hard to keep up. Moose, the younger of the two dogs, had to be reprimanded once or twice to remind him we were not here for the field mice.

"Moose! Come round!" My dad barked the order to keep the dog in distance for a good shot. I watched Sarge, the older dog nose around to my right. With his experience he knew he did not have to run madly around to catch a scent and he calmly searched the grass. My trigger finger was now frozen and the thought of having to use it hurt. The shotgun felt as though it had gained twenty pounds and my shoulder started to ache. The length of the field never shortened as we stalked on. *Come on!* I thought, picturing a rooster flying from the brush.

"Get 'em up!" I shouted at the dogs as if they weren't looking hard enough. The dew had soaked through my first layer of pants and made them heavier. The scent of a burning woodstove was in the air, making this fall day complete.

"Watch when we get to the end of the field; if there was anything here, more than likely we pushed it to the end," my dad instructed. I nodded bracing myself for any possible action. There was no change in the dogs' body language; they said *nothing's here*. When I looked down at my feet, I saw two empty shells half buried in the frosted ground. *Someone had some luck*, I thought, as we continued on.

"Watch Moose!" My dad yelled excitedly. "He's hot!" Blood pumped

Poor Mother Earth

by Gina Guarisco

Why do we take from Mother Earth

More than she can give

Polluting her oceans, her rivers

Her streams with our refuse?

Letting our soiled clouds of

Unnatural chemicals

Crumble our very protection

From the sun's deadly rays

Chopping down her fruitful forests

So we can house our

EXPLODING population

Living things around us die

Because of some mysterious malady

But she is wise and wisely knows

In the end we will get what is deserved

Her destruction will lead to ours

Life is Cheap

by Alexandra Barnes

Life is cheap
In the dirt air
The cracks and nicks of the coal wall
Hundreds of men live with in these cracks
Swing
The
Pickaxe
Black faces
Rows of these faces
Made hard like rock
We take the man
And grind him into fine dust
Upon which we build empires
Of metal
And glass
The man's spirit becomes ash
Take his heart and put it into the crevice
10 cents
15 cents
20 cents
Swing
The
Pickaxe
Eyes white beneath the cap
Children and men
Not yet machines
Let me lay my burden down
Boss
Before my heart turns to steel
Before my veins pump gasoline
And the black air envelopes me
Screaming
I am still a man
I am still a man

through my veins as we both quickened our pace. Moose weaved back and forth quickly and methodically. His tail waved at max speed; he was on the trail of a bird. Sarge joined him and now both dogs were on its trail.

"Remember, rooster only!" Dad said, not taking his gaze off the two labs in front of us. Suddenly a bird exploded from the grass; both of us shouldered our guns.

"Hen!" we both shouted in unison watching her fly free. *Shit!* I thought, *too bad.*

"No bird!" Dad shouted to the dogs. "Good boy," he said as they both trotted back to him for approval.

"Go get 'em!" I said hoping maybe they missed one that still hid in the deep, yellow grass. The dogs returned to the spot where the hen had been and we continued to walk on. My pulse had quickened and I forgot that my shoulder had ached only minutes before. I knew my dad had felt the same jolt of excitement. Sarge and Moose also seemed to be more determined in their search. We approached the end of the field; *only a couple more feet* I thought. We reached the end of the field, walked a couple of steps over to a new section of field and then continued back. To my right I noticed that Sarge had taken particular interest in about a foot of space on the ground.

"Sarge is on one!" I cried excitedly. Dad looked over and approved my observation. "Moose, get over here," I commanded hoping that he could help the older dog.

"Stand still for a moment," Dad said. "Let them work." We both stopped and watched the dogs work within feet of us. It felt like forever before the tell-tale cackle of the male pheasant graced my ear. As the bird lifted from the grass, its long tale hung outstretched in the air. The sun made the rooster's brilliant green, teal, and tint of purple plumage shine brightly. *Boom, boom.* Dad took the first two shots before the bird was out of range. I took aim and shot once and missed.

"You're behind him!" Dad shouted. I adjusted my aim strategically and shot again. The rooster wobbled, folded, and then fell to the earth; I beamed with pride from ear to ear. Dad smiled at me.

"Good shootin'!" he said. Both dogs ran to find the downed bird. It was Sarge who proudly pranced back to us with the rooster in his mouth. Moose tried in vain to steal the bird from him. Dad scolded him and then took the bird from Sarge. *That was so cool!* I thought to myself, but Dad seemed to know what I was thinking.

"Cool, huh?" he said; I nodded. We headed back to the Expedition and gave the dogs some much-needed water. I unloaded the left over shell, put the gun in its case and climbed back into the passenger side. Dad climbed into the driver's seat.

"You wanna go to the clubhouse for a soda?" he asked.

"Yeah!" I said. "Sounds good." We drove down the gravel road to the log cabin-like clubhouse. As we opened the door, a welcomed, warm breeze hit our chilled faces.

"What do you want?" Dad asked, already ordering himself a soda.

"Hot cocoa," I said, as I made myself comfortable by the fireplace. I peeled off my first layer of clothes. *Much better*, I thought, letting the fire warm my damp legs. I took my hat off and my long brown hair fell to my shoulders. The long underwear top I wore hugged my slim figure. I noticed that I had caught the attention of the young bartender. *It is great to be a girl!* I thought to myself appreciating his gaze.



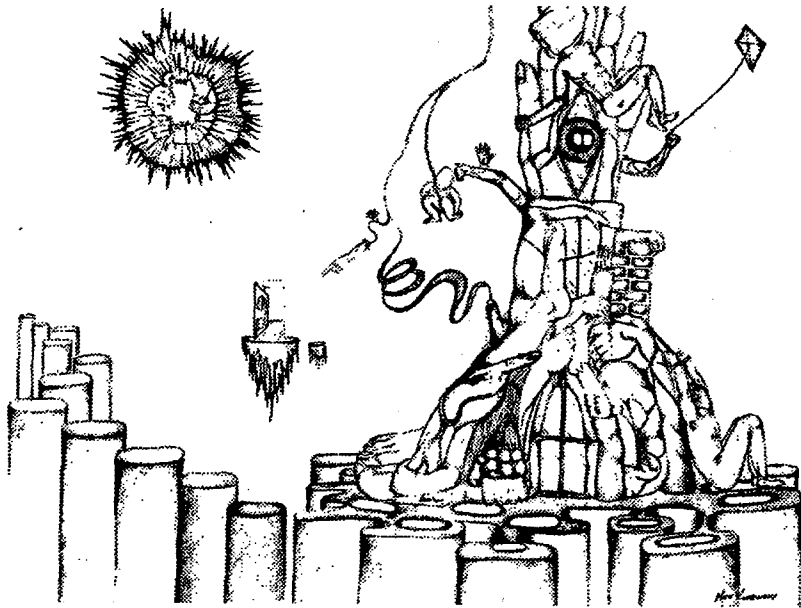
It Takes a Weary Man

by James LaMalfa

Closing In Again

by Michael Radloff

The first of the month
comes too soon
when you're poor
and bills are late
because you had to choose
between eating
and buying stamps
and you have no money
anyway.
but you've got cigarettes
and a bed,
a cup of coffee.
It is cold outside
so you go somewhere warm
because the walls
are closing in again
and being crushed
by the ceiling
seems
a very real
possibility.



Utopia
by Nick Lukowski

On the Side
by Michael Radloff

Those vegetarians
wouldn't last a week
in Minnesota's farmland.
Everywhere
every meal is served with meat:

Sausage.

Bacon.

Ham.

Pork.

You'd think the whole state
was overrun with pigs
and they need to thin the herd
so they're serving them up
with everything.
Waffles-bacon.
Pancakes-sausage.
Grilled cheese-ham.
And at the Cup 'N' Saucer
in Sherborn,
even a salad gets a side of meat.

It Isn't Always About You, You Know

by Michael Radloff

Don't suffer me through your sob story
about fatty prime rib.
I'm starving
surviving on coffee and bite-size candy bars
with the occasional cup of tea.
and it doesn't matter to me
that you had to carve away fat with your knife
while I can't even buy butter to spread on my toast.
I don't need to hear about your hate
for all those people who aren't the same pasty white
as your living room walls.
You better not start talking about
how hard it is to be pretty like you did yesterday.
People stare at me all day too, and I'm certainly not beautiful.
But you find some worthless words
and keep spewing skewed perspectives
and I keep wishing
there was some way to strangle you legally.

at my job. I like to take a sticky situation and make it funny. I like to bring smiles to their faces. To be able to give them a little feel of being alive is unbelievable, and I'll do just about anything it takes to do so. Have you ever stood up on a chair in an alzheimer's unit and put on a one-man circus show? How about walking circles on your hands, while singing, to make a grumpy old man laugh? Trust me, when you work with the people I do, it's easy to come up with outrageous things like this. One thing I haven't quite figured out is why they call *me* crazy.

One of the best things about my job is talking to the people I take care of. Have you ever sat down and talked to someone who has been around for the last one hundred years before? It's pretty amazing. It's like looking through a window of history. For instance, some residents, when using the restroom, will take but one square of toilet paper and then try to save it for the next time. Sounds pretty gross, right? The reason they do this is because their mind has them stuck in the depression. At one time I took care of a lady that used to be a school teacher at the little red school house out on Shore Drive. She told me that she had to put one of her students in the corner for misbehaving, and the next day, when she arrived at school, there were live snakes wrapped around the door handles. The boy thought that it would scare her away and then they wouldn't have school. He was wrong.

Do any of you ever think about angels? Do you ever wonder if they're real? I never did until I met a lady in a nursing home that was 104 years old. This lady was near deaf and blind. The only thing she ever talked about was the three new dresses her mother made her for school. One day, I stood in the doorway of her room silently, just listening to her. Suddenly, she looked directly to where I was and told me to come closer. I did so and when I got by her, she asked me what that was behind me. I looked and saw nothing. She then said, "You're going to be all right here. You've got a guardian angel with you." Immediately after she said this, she returned to telling me of the three dresses her mother had made for her for school. I still, to this day, find myself wondering from time to time if she really did see something behind me.

In my job, they stress the fact to never get attached. How can you not when in a lot of cases you're all they've got? Working in a nursing home is more than giving care to people in need. It's becoming a friend to them, and loving them when they need it the most. It's keeping their spirit alive when their light is almost out. It's about people you never knew, but that you'll surely never forget.

Perfessional Ass Wiper by Angela Kisner

"Who's the new resident? That one over there. The one in the wheelchair, with the white hair and glasses."

"Ha, ha, ha," they all laugh.

They are young, loud, and talking about everything from what they did last night down to the rambling gossip that women of our employment seem to have as a hobby. Nowhere else than in a working environment that is made up of 99.9% women will you hear a larger range of topics come up in a fifteen minute period. You'll hear anything from the weather, to video games, to who was with whom over the weekend. It gets better. Some days the discussion may consist of how many different words they can come up with for the human reproductive organs, or who can come up with the classic caregiver license plate. Could you imagine having a license plate that said "PERFESSIONAL ASS WIPER" on it? They can. I guess they forgot that you can only fit a few letters on a license plate.

They've also forgotten the meaning of caregiver. They think the meaning is the incredible ability to know every last detail of everybody else's life. If that really was their job, I'm afraid to say they would all be fired.

Did you ever play the telephone game? If you have, you know that by the time the message gets to the end of the line, it has been revised into something ridiculous. When you work with 99.9% women, you can see that that is their key source of communication. The rumors fly, and the outcome is somewhere between annoying and insane. First you're cornered by one and then the other in an attempt to defend yourself. Then you get bombarded by them and their disciples. If you've never been picked apart by vultures and want to give it a try, get a job where there are 99.9% women.

On the flip side, I can tell you that it is one of the most real jobs I've ever had. You know that stuff you see on TV? It really happens. I've had people die in my arms, their last words being, "Please help me, it hurts!" I've had people ask me to help them die with the utmost sincerity that it rips your heart out. I've even had a gentleman, who wasn't so gentle, grab me around the neck, and attempt to throw me. Luckily for me, my co-worker caught me by my ankles before my face hit the floor.

I think I can assume that you're all wondering why the hell I work where I do. Despite the things I've already told, for the most part, I do have a lot of fun



The Green Man
by Maggie Stutgen

Blackberry Tea

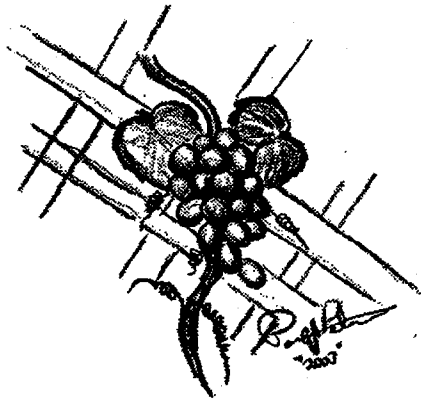
by Elouise Rossler

Blackberry tea,
My dear friend,
I think of you and me
Sipping and chatting.

A really good book,
My dear friend,
Remember how we got hooked
And read all night long?

Leisurely strolling the shops,
My dear friend,
Didn't we make all the stops
Rarely buying anything?

Blackberry tea,
My dear friend,
Brings alive memories
Of times and talks and walks.



Hanging Out
by Paul Peterson

One Last Wring

by Michael Ceccarelli

Convoluted Platonic dialogue,
grumbling against the modal and mundane; the process and the possible.
Hammering at the fringes of culture.
Pounding the shine and finish flat, expounding and exposition of their newly-
honed edge.

To stand against conformities advance, brandishing their words with menace.
In confrontation with the faceless foe; the blameworthy them.

From this lofty plain

Pursuing knowledge

Promoting justice

Creating Beauty

The Dedicated formations yield.

Fading veteran ranks, their temporary stasis melting,
strip mined trappings fanning away the fog of war, revealing an empty field.

At a distance the glint of reality tosses back lines of care worn faces,

that longed to step where none had trod before;

to find themselves upon the well worn path

To some the visage brings madness

To others dread despair

Still more find solace in servitude.

As the thought of Them expands and changes

from micro to meta to micro consciousness.

Them to whom I own.

Up the ladder one last wring,

to receive the humbled victory,

and bow before conformity,

as you tie your child's shoe.