

Northern Lights 2009



*University of Wisconsin
Marinette
Arts Journal*

[AN EXCERPT FROM HABIB, THE PROPHET]
FATIMA, OF THE EAST
by Abayomi Animashaun

One night, after walking the entire town blessing every house. We sat along the river.

After bread and water, I sat by his side and said: Habib teach us how to talk without fear to god, your father. And he:

Say this:

As you are in my image, lord I am in yours: For in the end, we are equal. The same spirit that echoed and moved through the void, proclaiming 'let there be light'...

Echoes and moves through me giving light. And, when yours grows dim with doubt when your angels fail to reach these villagers. Recall, then, this light and lean your tired spirit on my heart.

Amen.

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Winter Wreath by Meg Allen

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CONTEMPLATING

by Adria Kaufman

Sometimes I move forward
Sometimes I bend back
To see the light of knowing
Before it fades to black

It comes and goes, I watch it
Ever lapping at the shore
Of insanity's reason
Before I become no more

Can you climb the mountain top
Does the rain reach you there
Is it just another place to go
With yet another stair

If the answer lies before me
Will I know it by its name
Can it come in many forms
Will I see it just the same

If yesterday's tomorrow
Is nothing but today
Is there still chance in seeking
A path to find our way

Am I seeking cosmos
Within an atom's spin
Is there something greater
From without looking in

As time stretches out before me
My questions pave the path
And the journey is not the knowing
But the need to always ask

WINTER'S END
by Matt Demeuse

The melting of the gleaming snow o so white.
Drip, drip, drip.
The ice is melting just like the snow.
Drip, drip, drip.
The green grass will soon be here once again.
Drip, drip, drip.
The water in the rivers is full with the melting snow.
Drip, drip, drip.
I am happy and sad to see it go.
Drip, drip, drip.
But I know this is not the end for it will be back again.
Drip, drip, drip.

WISHFUL SPRING
by Stephanie Thompson

The sound of quiet, trickling water graces my ears,
a sign that snow is being conquered.
Cheerful birds sing their yearning songs outside my window,
hoping their soft melodies will soon usher in
a wishful spring.

All the signs show, even the robin has returned,
that spring should be here, except for the snow.
It sounds like spring, but my eyes don't see it.
So I close them, shutting out my doubt that spring will ever come,
and picture the nature that matches the sounds.

THE THINGS THAT SPEAK OF SUN
by Adria Kaufman

The first days of spring
reminiscent of
a soggier sort of autumn
The trees
still crisp and bare
rattle brittle breeze
The grass does crunch
beneath the puddle
soaking muddle
But there is a smell
that carries a promise
much different
from that of the fall
Now a promise
of the green
left unseen
'til the soak
begins to seep
to feed the things
that speak of sun
that nourish and
reach forward
upward
I smell you
Chlorophyll
I smell you
spring

APRIL
by James LaMalfa

North Country traveler,

April is the great deceiver.

She seduces you with hard won sunshine

And earlier light

But sucker punches are always ready.

So remember,

Winter is king in our north country,

Only allows us summer on sufferance.

We are flim-flammed by a robin,

Listening for a doomed worm,

Flights of cranes flying north

Who should know better.

THE LONG, LONELY RACE
Modeled After: Consolations After an Affair by James Tate
by Thalia Radey

People pass and never speak

Too involved with their own details

Work, family, home,

The weekend plans they have to keep,

Lives moving too fast to care.

Flowers bloom, full and bright,

They know not the worry

Of days speeding by.

They only try to catch the eye

Of someone passing by

Long enough to share their beauty,

And put a smile on the face

Of one complete stranger

Walking so quickly

Just trying to survive

This long, lonely race.

We all got off. Some headed west, but everyone else (except for a few who got in cars or a horse drawn buggy) walked along the shore on a sidewalk separated from the Sea by a wall and huge stones.

Since the shoreline curved, I couldn't see where we were headed or how long we would have to walk. We walked for about 30 minutes. I took some great pictures of old buildings and ships on the land and cranes on the opposite shore. Literally hundreds of cranes lined the shore. I even got pictures of a tugboat and barge. The little boys climbed up on the wall and ran along it. The parents kept pushing their babies in their carriages and strollers, specially designed for cold weather and cobblestone roads and sidewalks. Finally I came to a place that said "the end," I think in French. (Or maybe it was "dolphins" in Lithuanian.) It had a huge dolphin aquarium plus a small restaurant and toilets. Since I wasn't hungry or thirsty, I just enjoyed the antics of the dolphins for a while. Then I thought: I have an hour walk back to the dorm, so I think I'll use the toilet. Imagine my surprise at finding squat toilets, the first I'd seen in Lithuania.

I saw the entrance to the Lithuanian Sea Museum, but I thought I'd had enough adventure for the day, so I headed back to the dock. Some of the same people whom I'd walked with heading north also were headed back south. They were hurrying, so I stepped up my pace too and then ran off and on as I saw the ferry heading to the dock. The man started raising the gangplank before I got there, but running I waved my hands and when he saw me, he lowered it and I boarded the ferry. In minutes we were all back on land. I planned to return when the temperature was above freezing, maybe late April. I was thinking that if I had headed west, I might have seen the sandy shore. (And I was right.)

As I headed north, I decided to stop at IKI, the chain grocery store, to get fruit for two potlucks I was going to have, so I did. In my eagerness to get my money out, I dumped a bunch of coins on the floor and the counter. Since the smallest paper bill is 10L, all the rest is in coins and I had a lot. In Lithuanian I told the clerk I spoke only a little Lithuanian. She was very patient with me and had a cute twinkle in her eyes. She actually put my groceries in my bag for me as I got my money back in my wallet. The person waiting next in line also helped me retrieve my money. Then in English she said good-by and we both smiled.

It was a little after 16:00 when I opened my dorm room door. The afternoon had given me an adventure. Now those essays sitting on the table seemed doable, so do them I did.

AFFIRMING SPRING, THE INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR
by Marilyn Stark

Affirming Spring, the Interior
and Exterior, for Myself and a Friend
Who Says She Does Not Own Lilacs
This Year and I Beg Her to Search

the free fields. First sightings,
April 18, and they call, "Pluck me,
I'm wild-scented and free." Do we

ever own lilacs or spring or May?
Were you ever May Queen in grade school?
I, April's inebriate, sit here reading

Sexton's "Young" and other poems
immoderate as this season's
perfumed blossoms. Fill your

thinking rooms with their surrounding
aroma. Steal them from yards
and secret places, these always

interpreters of beginnings
and endings. Who did you first kiss?
Where were you? In our museum

outing in sixth grade, Betty Lou
Bedalov warned, "Stay away from dark
corridors. The boys are cornering

all the girls. They caught Mary Alice
McGilligut, but she turned her
eyelids inside out

and they ran." This is our reliquary
of spring: dinosaur bones, Sister Mary
Virginelle slugging it out with the

braggadocios, and the dark mystery
of BOYS. This is a holy day. Let these
brief trumpets find you every spring

in the sacred, scented halls of memory.



MEMORY LANE
by Ashley Wehrli

THREE HOURS IN KLAIPEDA

by Gabriella Sheldon

Yesterday after my usual Saturday morning housework (two loads of laundry, sweeping, mopping, doing dishes), I started to read essays that I had to correct as part of my responsibilities at LCC International University, situated on the coast of Lithuania in Klaipeda. Then I had a terribly strong desire for adventure. (Those of us who correct essays are prone to such thoughts.) I had lunch as I contemplated what to do. I had to do it alone since I hadn't made plans with anyone and didn't have a phone. At 13:00 I dressed, complete with shopping bag and camera, and left the dorm. It was partly sunny so I wore my sunglasses. The temperature was below freezing and fresh snow from the night before whitened the ground. I headed toward Old Town or south.

Usually I wear my hair under my coat, but while working I had put it in a pony tail to the side, so I just took the tie out and had it hang out on my left side. As I was walking, a delightful woman close to my age caught up with me and in broken English, fluent German and Lithuanian, told me she at first thought my hair was a shawl and then stopped me to say how beautiful it was. We ended up chatting and laughing, communicating in German, Lithuanian, and English. She teaches German to young children, I think, at an orphanage. I found out that her mother died at age 83 in 2005, that she has two children and four grandchildren all living in Klaipeda, but no man. I thought about my man, who had told me not to cut my hair before I left the states. This part of my adventure was his doing. Considering our language difficulties, it was amazing how much we could say and understand. We even found out that we both had March birthdays and that she was into astrology, but I was not. We parted after she went her way to buy black bread and butter, and I continued my journey without Antionetta.

Since the sun kept breaking through, I thought it would be nice to see the beach. On sunny days the beach is often enjoyed even on freezing days in February. Someone had mentioned turning west at the bridge crossing the Dane River just north of Old Town, so that is what I did. I walked, all the time getting closer to the huge cranes that lined the shore. I was thinking that the prospects of seeing a crane close up were increasing but not of seeing any beaches. I was right. Then I saw several families with young children and strollers heading in the same direction. At a place called Kasa, they got tickets and boarded a ferry, which said Lithuania Sea Museum in English and in Lithuanian. I decided to follow them and for 2L got a ticket also and walked the gangplank. About 15 minutes later, the ferry headed west across the water to the Curonian Spit, formed from ancient sand dunes and separating most of Klaipeda from the Baltic Sea.

Poised now I stand over the now prostrate Retail;
My sword-tip ready to deliver the
Killer strike.
But how?
How to kill such a powerful enemy?
Death to Retail!
Retail's demise shall come first by the
Disposal of federal tender;
We must abandon money.
Return to the barter system.
Death to Retail!
This will weaken the Selling-Giant significantly, and allow
For the knock-out blow.
The final strike will be delivered by
Sarcastic poets of genius that demean Retail.
This will uproot Retail, and its hold on
Modern America,
Further freeing us from
Retail's sinister grasp.
Death to Retail!

Yes, the moment has come,
Retail is dead.

AIRBORN
by James LaMalfa

When I decided to become a student pilot it quickly became apparent that paying for an instructor and renting an airplane was adding up to be pretty expensive. Two of my buddies from chapter 535 of the Experimental Aircraft Association and I decided to form a three-person club, find an aircraft to restore and save lots of money. Like any first time home builder, I seriously underestimated the time and effort required to restore an aircraft, but that is another story.

We heard about a damaged Piper Tri-Pacer for sale near Menominee, called the owner, and agreed to drive out to his farm and look at it. A wrecked airplane is laughingly called a "Basket Case," meaning you're buying it in pieces. Tom the owner and the three of us chatted about the history of the airplane. It had been damaged by a student pilot who landed long on runway 180 at Manistique, Michigan's small airport, and rolled over highway 2 into the drainage ditch. The airplane turned turtle slowly so the student was not injured, but a perfectly usable aircraft had been turned into a wreck in thirty seconds.

My partner had brought along his young beagle, figuring a farm was a good place to give the pup a run. Tom showed us a photo of the airplane, upside down, in front of the Sleepy Eye Motel, which advertised itself with a sign sporting a drowsy bear cub rubbing his eyes.

"Okay Tom," I said, "Let's see your airplane. Where do you keep it?"

"In the barn," he replied, pointing to a pole building on his property. The three of us and the beagle walked over to the building. Tom opened the door revealing a hodge-podge of paraphernalia he had collected: old movie projectors, tools and a wingless airplane. I stared at the cabin which was missing its doors. There seemed to be a dark furry object on the instrument panel, maybe a throw rug.

"Tom," I asked, "What's that on the instrument panel?"

"Oh that," he replied, "That's my pet raccoon. She's pregnant and sleeps there when she isn't running around the yard."

"Is it safe to go in the barn?" I asked hesitantly.

As we stood in the doorway, the young beagle nosed ahead of us, curious about the brown, furry object, now awake and looking at us.

"You'll be okay," Tom replied, "But she doesn't like dogs."

By now the beagle had moved into the barn. The pregnant raccoon fixed her gaze on the dog. I turned to my buddy to warn him but the raccoon had already

sized up the situation and decided to act. With an unearthly screech, she literally launched herself, going airborne. Instinctively the three of us bolted for the door, slamming it behind us. All hell broke loose in the barn. We could hear the sound of a terrific battle. Growls, shrieks, yelps of pain reached our ears. Tom opened the door a crack and the beagle crawled out, clearly a beaten male. His nose bore scratches and one ear looked slightly shorter than before. Tom quickly shut the door.

“Well Tom,” I said, “maybe we’ll come back some other time.”

Tom wanted to sell the airplane and get it out of his barn, so he decided on diplomacy.

“Yeah, look guys, I was asking two thousand but I’ll give you a break. Fifteen hundred bucks and take everything.”

My partners and I agreed on the price, so I said to Tom, “Okay, it’s a deal, but you can keep the raccoon!”

The raccoon had unwittingly helped us by raising a ruckus. Her owner had to lower his price.



10:16 AM
by Ashley Wehrli

Part II

A Hero?

Not like we thought.

A Savior?

Not for us.

A Master?

No, but more of a master to us and a slave to the Master.

Who? Who?

Retail,

The Horse of Capitalism.

It is by Retail that Capitalism first reared its ugly head.

Retail;

The murderer of concern and now the developer

And Strong Arm

Of Capitalism.

How shall we escape?

How to free ourselves as prostrate Slaves to Capitalism and Retail?

How?

By Retail, Capitalism thrives;

By Capitalism, Retail thrives.

The answer?

Retail.

Retail is the answer.

Retail must die.

Part III

Woe is me!

For today we witness the loss of

One who is loved by many,

But detested by most.

Who?

Whose time has come?

Retail.

Retail's time is up;

Retail's life thread is set to be cut;

It is time for Retail to die.

RETAIL, PARTS I - III
by Michael Paquet

A simple "hello"
A casual "can I help you?"
And a crown, "how are you today?"
How many of us truly care how a perfect stranger
Is "doing?"
Retail. Retail cares;
Retail knows,
Because Retail asks these questions everyday.
Go to any—any Retail store—and someone—anyone—Guaranteed—
Will ask "how are you?"
Retail—the murderer of true concern.
Retail's cold-blooded slaughter of sincerity began
As harmless, casual banter between strangers,
But its overuse by Retail heads to destruction.
Retail.
There was a time when strangers cared for
Strangers, but Retail killed it.
"Can I help you?" the beginning of the end.
"How are you today?" the turn from bad to worse.
"Have a nice day," Retail's cold words, which seal our fate.
"You too," the customer's careless reply deals the death blow.
Are we then bound?
Bound to these relentless repetitious banter?
Is there a cure?
Retail.
Retail is our cure;
Retail is our Savior;
We must turn to Retail in our time of need!
From whence it came, there it should return.
Retail. Retail can save us.
"Can I help you?"
"No? Why then, have a nice day!"

THE PASTURE
by Katie Olson

Standing in the ankle high green grass is a golden, dappled palomino mare with an almost perfect white mane and tail. The sun shines down on her golden coat making it shimmer and glow as if it was spun from fourteen karat gold. Her small, dark honey muzzle plucks mouthfuls of grass from the lush ground and pulls it into her mouth. She sighs contentedly, chewing away at the grass around her. She swishes her snowy tail at a random dark fly on her sunny flank.

Playfully kicking up his delicate heels, her light cream-colored foal frolics around her. Just a few weeks old, the colt's coat color is already starting to come out from under his baby fuzz. The bright sun shines over the foal's cream coat making the honey highlights shimmer. The colt tosses his delicate little head in delight, and hops up to his mother to nurse hungrily. The mare turns her head to briefly look at her lively foal as he flicks his tail back and forth happily. She grunts contentedly and returns to graze on the lush grass.



ALWAYS ON THE WATCH
By Michelle Duffrin

RETURN TO A COLD NIGHT'S REMEMBRANCE
By Heather Knope

She sat under the moonlit sky
Listening to the trees
As they silhouetted the land
And whispered in the breeze

Her mind wandered in deep thought
Reflecting on the day
When a somber cry filled the air
And pushed her memories away

A lone wolf emerged from the forest
With fur as black as night
She stared in shock and wonder
Until its eyes met hers in the twilight

It gazed into her soul
As deep as it could see
And left her frail body shaken
On a hilltop, beside a tree

She heard a loud snap and dodged a branch
Then returned her eyes below
The wolf disappeared, as if it never was there
Leaving the girl alone in the tree's shadow

With hundreds, thousands to kill, mass murder strategies had to be improved. Lining up prisoners between two barracks and then shooting them was one way. Various lethal injections were given. Hanging also was used, but these methods were slow. At Auschwitz II gas chambers and crematoriums were built by slave labor to accommodate the unwanted new arrivals. An estimated 1.5 million people faced eternity at Auschwitz I and II before WWII ended.

The first gas chambers were an experiment. The subjects took two days to die, so the dosage was changed until everyone in the chamber could be dead in 20 minutes. Prisoners were told that they would get a shower and new clothes, so with hopes of relocation as promised, they undressed and stood in the showers. They didn't know that the shower-heads had never been connected to water. In minutes they were all dead; then other prisoners had to haul them out so that they could be burned in a crematorium. Of course, these witnesses were guaranteed a short life. They knew too much.

As I stand in a gas chamber, I feel cold and damp. I would like to cry because I am standing where martyrs stood. My eyes are dry, but my heart is bleeding.

After death, the gold and silver from teeth were extracted by slave labor. The Third Reich used everything for its benefit, including gold fillings, hair, and all belongings confiscated from the prisoners. Then the bodies were cremated. At the peak, 12,000 bodies a day had to be burned. Since that number exceeded the capacity of the crematoriums, some were cremated in outdoor facilities. No records were ever kept of the 75-80% who went straight to the gas chambers, but I saw huge piles of their suitcases, eyeglasses, prostheses, and hairbrushes. Their ashes were scattered on fields for fertilizer and thrown in ponds. The whole surrounding area is a cemetery for innocent citizens from 22 countries.

I move numbly with the tour group. A man comes up beside me and starts a conversation. I do not want to talk. I say as much and he walks off. I think he is with a woman. I want to keep silent as if my silence here somehow honors the dead. My words to him are the only words I speak until I climb back into the bus and head to Krakow.

Auschwitz now is a museum—a place of remembrance where people like me somberly walk the paths of prisoners who suffered and died here. I have come face to face with civilized man's attempt to redefine civilization. I am ashamed as I search my own heart. Even though I am sickened by the atrocities of the concentration camps, I don't want to forget. I don't want history to repeat itself. I don't want my hair to be used for felt.

TWO TONS
by Gabriella Sheldon

Two tons. My eyes survey the pile encased in glass. I can believe it is two tons, two tons of human hair that had been destined to be baled and purchased by a German business to be made into felt. But now it is a ghastly reminder of a period of infamy, for I am at Auschwitz I in Poland.

I really didn't want to come here. I wanted to stay in the beautiful city of Krakow, the birthplace of my paternal grandmother. I preferred visiting castles and churches and museums containing art and beauty, glorifying God and displaying the creativity of the human soul, but I knew that to be fair to the annals of time, I also had to see Auschwitz, where the depravity of the human soul also brought creativity, creativity gone amuck.

And so here I am. On the outside, the camp looks innocuous. The Polish military barracks of Oswiecim during 1940-1945 were converted into a prison camp. One-story, red brick barracks were converted into two stories, thanks to free labor by the prisoners. Everything looks neat and orderly, photographic simplicity and neatness that belies what went on inside the buildings and on the grounds. The barbed wire fence gives a clue that no one wanted to stay here. That it was electrified also says this place was no haven.

Few escaped, but when they did, those left behind paid for it with their lives, a life for a life. At first the prison camps were just cruel places of slave labor and medical experimentation, resulting in many deaths. In 1941, a new development changed the prison camps into death camps. So many groups of people were substandard: Jews, gypsies, Jehovah Witnesses, and homosexuals; anyone who protested Nazi rule or helped the substandard humans had to be eliminated also.

The slave labor market was exceeding demand, so new strategies were needed. One strategy was to feed the prisoners 1300 calories a day, work them 10-11 hours a day, provide them no heat and dress them in thin clothing so that many died within the first months of their imprisonment. Still train loads of men, women, and children kept coming as the Third Reich grew.

I hear the stories and see the camp. Then we get on the bus again and travel to Auschwitz II-Birkenau. Here 100s of wooden stables converted into housing still stand silently. The sanitation building has rows of holes for the communal toilets used only twice a day.

The 75-25 (or 80-20) rule came into effect: If you were healthy and over 14 and not pregnant, you went to the right and to slave labor. Only 20-25% made that cut. Twins were saved for medical experimentation, a fate worse than quick death. All the rest were killed.

A TRAMPOLINE'S SLEEP
by Kassie Evans

On a dark night with an immeasurable number of stars out, or maybe they were just airplanes, we quickly dash through our backyard to the trampoline because our bare feet are cold from the grass that is wet with dew. We hear a ribbit noise as we scurry past the swimming pool. Suddenly, someone lets out a little squeal because she feels a frog brush against her ankle, as the amphibian hops around on the tarp near the swimming pool. As a lightning bug flies past my face, I wish that I had a jar to try to catch it in. Swiftly, we toss our sleeping bags, pillows, and blankets on top, then immediately jump on. We first lay down a few old blankets since the trampoline is damp with dew, but save the soft and warm ones for ourselves. The air is very brisk and damp, with a faint smell of wood burning, even though the bonfire has been put out. Immediately, my sister Kim, my cousin Hydeia, and I snuggle inside our sleeping bags and pile many blankets on top of us. As the wind blows a little, we hide our faces under a soft blanket to shield ourselves from it. We tell each other stories from the past and talk about how cool it would be if we saw a shooting star. We talk about how hungry we are, even though not too long ago we had a countless number of s'mores while sitting around the bonfire. Awhile later, we peek out from under the blankets and suddenly see a shooting star. We all look with excitement, close our eyes, and quickly make a wish. We swat at the mosquitoes that are swarming around our faces. We then go back under the covers since there are so many bugs and we are cold, even though it is a summer's night. We giggle about how strange to see a shooting star after we were just saying how awesome it would be to see a shooting star. We attempt to get one another to tell the wish they made, but of course, none of us will tell because we all want our wish to come true. We talk about staying awake until the sun comes up, but we soon drift off to sleep because we are young and tired from a long day of play. The sound of the crickets is like a soft lullaby. We sleep relaxed and at ease because the trampoline is so comfortable, and then we wake up squished in the center.



SAFE AND SOUND
By Michelle Duffrin

Would she be more upset about the beers or about being so late? Well, the weather had decided for him, and she ought to understand that.

His mind wandered back to the sound he'd heard of the car door closing. Had it been his own car door closing? He didn't think he'd had anyone with him when he'd left the bar, but he couldn't be sure. His own door was locked—he always checked that as he turned the ignition key—but were the passenger doors locked? As a matter of routine, he always laid his coat in the back seat behind him, and so he turned around to check that door's lock. It was unlocked. His coat was there, as it should have been. But there was something white lying on his coat. He didn't remember bringing anything out of the bar, but he didn't remember coming out of the bar, either. He didn't carry a handkerchief, relying instead on a pocket pack of tissues. He had a tissue box in the car, too, for when he visited his girlfriend and her cat. But some females carried handkerchiefs. Had there been a girl with him? He didn't remember any girls hanging around him. He'd noticed one of the guys in the bar had a handkerchief. Kept it in his back pocket. Who'd want to sit on a wet slimy handkerchief, he thought? He wondered if this one was wet and slimy, but reached over the seat to pick it up anyway. It was wet, but with rain, and it was wrapped around something. He unwrapped it (stupidly, he thought later) and a finger fell out onto his lap. At first he thought it was one of those rubber fingers from the party-gag shop and someone was playing a trick on him, but then he realized it was real. He passed out.

CHAPTER TWO FROM "WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN"
A TALE IN MANY VOICES
by Kathryn Claycomb

He woke groggily, to the sound of a car door closing. Was it his car door, or someone else's car door? The wind was blowing mightily and the rain was starting to come, but there were no other sounds—no footsteps, no voices, no dogs barking. It was pitch black but he could occasionally see the shiny-wet tree trunks as the occasional car's headlights swept around the corner at the far end of this out-of-the-way park he'd driven to when he left the bar.

It had been a difficult day. All his clients had been cranky, for no reason that he could help, and at the end of the day he'd decided to go watch the game and have a few beers before heading to his girlfriend's apartment to face her crankiness. And to suffer through the endless sneezing. She had a cat. She knew he was allergic to cats. She knew he couldn't live with a cat. Yet she kept that cat around and loved it more than she loved him, he had groused to himself. And then she expected him to consider thoughts of matrimony and parenthood. She hadn't really said anything, of course, but he could tell. Anyway, he wasn't going to show up for dinner totally drunk, which is why he'd parked a quarter mile away here by the river. But what about that car-door sound? He pulled himself vertical, and looked around. No other cars—not any more, at least. No one walking.

They would have been insane to be out walking in this weather—except dog owners. But they were insane anyway. Who'd want a dog in a city, always having to take the elevator down and up sixteen times a day? And no grass anywhere to speak of, at least not enough to serve the needs of the dozens of dogs in the neighborhood. So this park got a lot of traffic from the dog owners, but not tonight. Tonight it would be down the elevator, do the dog business at the nearest curb, and back up. Neither dog nor owner would want to be out in this storm, for now the rain was coming down heavily and there was an ominously pressing feeling in the park. Branches were cracking and falling, the rain was coming down so hard that he couldn't see to the end of the park, and instead of car headlights illuminating the tree trunks, it was now lightning doing the job. He couldn't do any driving right now because it would be unsafe with the lack of visibility. That was a good excuse, he thought, and it could buy him some time. His girlfriend ought to understand that. He could sober up some more. It had been quite a convivial group watching the game, and he'd had more than a few beers.

I THINK OF YOU
by Gabriella Sheldon

I think of you when my nose runs
While eating stew or soup or cakes.
It really doesn't matter what I'm eating.
Just a few bites is all it takes
To remind me of you and your smile
And then, of course, your runny nose.
You will reach in your pocket and then unfold
A handkerchief to wipe your nose.
Yes, I think of you when my nose runs,
But I must confess while it is true,
It isn't the only time that I do.

THE ASTRONOMER REVISITED
by Gabriella Sheldon

They walked almost touching,
Their gazes skyward
full moon captivated her.
She wanted to grasp his hand,
Feel him pull her against himself,
Touch his lips with hers.
She trembled in the cool night air.
He glanced her way.
He caught the sparkle of moonlight
In her eyes.
He cleared his throat.
Her heart skipped a beat.
"The moon is so bright.
You really can't see much tonight.
Let's go inside."
She said, "Ah, you're right.
Let's go inside."
They hurried in,
Her perfume trailing behind.
They never saw the moon set.

ON WINGS OF A BAT
by Amanda Gretzinger

The silence was unsettling. Moonlight filtered through the alley, casting shafts of pale light upon the ground, on which a few rats sat to nibble on some crumbs. A lone figure began to glide through the abandoned alley, her heart beating furiously against her chest. It was past midnight...her parents would be worried sick. The dance had dragged on longer than she would have thought. It had been so wonderful though, swaying beautifully to the gentle music that flowed through the room, donned in her crimson dress.

But the night was now over, and feelings of anxiety spread within her. Being in an urban area, she knew of the dangers posed by walking home alone at night. Her date asked to walk her home, but she waved him off. His parents were more severe compared to her own. If he was any later, it would cause more harm than good.

The teen girl was unaware of two dark eyes gazing through the darkness on the building above. His eyes stared at her throat, white and bare, his main target. The scent of human blood lingered in the air, tantalizing and sweet. He licked his lips; soon he would have his meal.

Claw-like fingers grasped tightly to the ledge of the building. His parents told him he must be silent, stealthy. A gentle rustling sound behind him caused his eyes to narrow in frustration. His wings...they were such a nuisance. How could he be stealthy when he had large, gangly bat wings connected to his shoulder blades? He sighed, a stream of cool air slipping between his fangs. He must be patient. She was constantly looking behind her, obviously paranoid. When she was less alert, then he would strike.

Her eyes scanned the darkness. Something was out there, she could feel it. The question was, where was it? Her eyes lifted to the moon, a thin, gentle crescent in the night sky. Her pace quickened, she had to get home. Anxiety was getting the best of her.

The vampire watched as she turned her head and began to run. Now was his chance. Unleashing an inhuman cry, he pounced forward, great wings spreading to catch the air. With a mighty flap he dove down, hands reaching out for her shoulders. Unfortunately, his timing was off, and all he met was hard pavement as he smacked face-first into the ground, grunting in pain as he did so.

LET ME OUT! LET ME GO! You hopelessly cry
You can feel an aching feeling inside
You try to break free but your hands are tied
All of your best efforts are denied.
You can smell the smell of your flesh being fried
Whoever said death is quick must've lied
You try to scream but your voice has died...
Deliberately immediate, you open your eyes
Just in time to save your ass.
This is why you shouldn't sleep during class.



UNTITLED
By Ashley Wehrli

IT'S A DANGEROUS THING

by Sam Larsh

Setting: Middle of a jungle.
How did you get here? Currently forgetting.
Running. Being chased.
Storming through the jungle
Like you're winning a race.
Except if you lose
Something is going to eat your face.
Your life is in danger,
Rely on survival instinct
Just continue moving
There is no time to think.
Violent screeches can be heard from behind.
Scramble on, push defeatist thoughts from your mind.
You hear a dull "THUD, THUD, THUD."
Your heart you assume
An iambic countdown clock of certain doom.
You must keep moving, you must keep running
Use all of your resources, the terrain and your cunning.
You can do this! You do not want to be beaten.
Even more so you don't want to be eaten.
"THUD, THUD, THUD"
Like the beating of drums
A monotone drawl lightly hums
In the background, but life is on the forefront right now
As through the vines and tropical plants you plough.
You hear them now, they are gaining
Your heart is pounding, your strength is waning.
They pounce! You dive.
You are caught... How will you survive?
Flash Forward with no warning
The screams around you are storming.
Covered in hundreds of pygmy size cuts
These creatures are about to feast on your guts.

The girl had jumped at the cry, and whipped around to see a strange, winged figure strike the ground. He shook his head, long black hair falling around his pale face. He looked young, much younger than her. If she would have guessed, he seemed to be around twelve... What kept her transfixed, though, was the great bat-like wings caped upon his back. They rooted her to the spot in fear, even as the boy stood up and rubbed his forehead, where an angry red welt was beginning to form.

"Stupid wings..." He grumbled. When he noticed the girl staring at him, the vampire growled, "What are YOU looking at?! Go! Shoo! Be grateful that I don't try again to get my meal!"

She stared incredulously at this strange creature. He didn't seem threatening by any means, "Wh...what are you?" she asked, her voice shaking slightly from the fear she felt at the attempted attack. The boy growled and turned away, wings tightly pressing against his back, "I'm a vampire, smart person." Sarcasm was written plainly in his voice, "Learn to pick up a horror story one of these days."

Indignation was getting to him. He spread his wings, realization of his failed attempt at a meal truly setting in now, "If I were you, I'd avoid going out at night alone. It is at night that I search for sustenance." With that said, he spread his wings and gave a running start before leaping into the air. The great leathery membranes pulled taut and he soared into the sky, flying towards the moon.

The girl watched him fly with wonder and bewilderment. Part of her wondered if it was a dream, if she had imagined the entire thing. With a sigh meant to dispel her confusion and exhaustion, she turned around and began to trudge back home, wondering if anyone would believe her story about the young vampire who failed to get his meal.

EVERLASTING LOVE
by Michael Paquet

Two of them;
One an elderly man,
The other an elderly woman.
Both are gray—
The man mostly bald now—
And both portlier than their youth
(When they met).
A shining ring adorns the woman's
Left ring finger,
And none on his;
But a clear mark left by his
Wedding ring
On his Age Enlarged fingers.
She in a wheelchair,
And he gently pushing her along.
They stop, and she fumbles with her purse—
Barely able to move two of her ten fingers—
Struggling to pay the due bill to the waiting cashier.
When she obviously cannot get into the wallet,
And unable to call for help,
The man patiently takes the purse
From her shaking hands
And gives the cashier what is due.
As the man gazes lovingly on his wife,
He steals a glance at the
Cashier, who watches in wonder.
With a wink to the man behind the counter, the old man chuckles,
"It's a fulltime job."
Of course, his wife cannot hear him at her age,
But she knows his burden.
Yet
What drives this devoted man to wait upon his wife so diligently,
Is knowing this is not a job,

PICTURE PERFECT
by William Klassen

Flipping through the pages,
I think of nothing...
Nothing but black and blue linings that crease the night canvas,
While wishes roll off the tip of my tongue; crushing the hardwood
floor.

3, 6, 10... Page surfing...
You squeeze my hand... I imagine.
And whisper nothing but warm air into my ear.
To cool my brain, of nightmares I drowned in the night before.
Is this love? I am inclined to believe so.

14, 15, 16... Page surfing...
But I know this feeling is only a ghost,
Because I only find you inside of a 5.99 magazine.
So I write you to life at night, on white paper voids.
My drawer is your host, like my hands are the chauffeur.

17, 18, 19... Page surfing...
You are only a ghost,
Of all my thoughts and the ways I want to feel.
Hidden in my drawer,
I find you every time.

20, 21, 22... Page surfing
Sooner than later,
Always wanting to be found,
There you are on my paper, in my thoughts,
Here you are my love,
On
page 23.

CHANGE NEVER COMES

by Tim Demeuse

The taxman has you by the throat, you can't catch a break.
Drowning all your cares with cinder blocks at the lake.
If nothing other a strong will it does make,
When your house is caving in.

The police man knows you and he don't have to knock,
Smashing in your windows and breaking the lock,
Laying on the ground staring up at a glock,
A cold wind blowing in.

And now that Satan's gone,
Who do we blame it on?
Burn down a bush, and put up a grim façade.

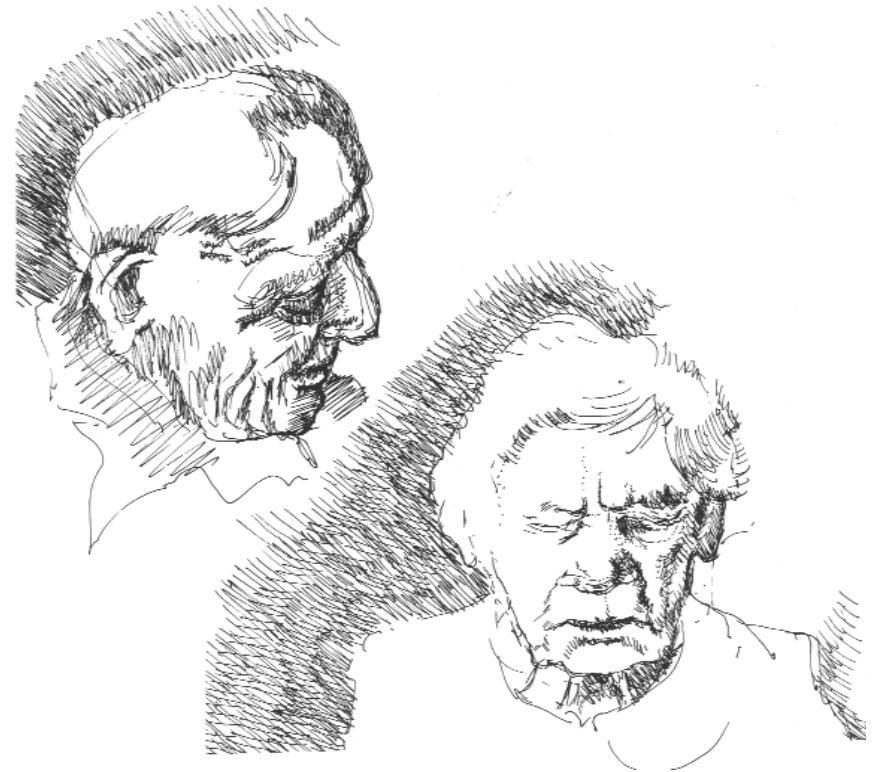
The politicians up there telling you what you want,
But when the problems hit they're playing golf in Vermont.
Me, I guess I will just stay nonchalant,
Cause you know it's coming soon.

This place is going to change at the fall of a shell,
Did you think the sins of others would land us in hell?
And if you see old Satan make sure you tell,
Tell him hello for me.

And now that Satan's gone,
Who do we blame it on?

This is not a burden,
But
That this is Love;
Everlasting Love that he gave her
When they married, and
Everlasting Love that he will give her
Until they both slumber.

The couple continues on in their
Everlasting love,
And the world envies them for it.



UNTITLED
By James LaMalfa

WHAT FRANK TOLD HARRY
by Marilyn Stark

and Harry told Mary, who told nearly all of us, who used the information sparingly, because Mary believed everything Harry told her, but most of all she believed Frank and what Frank told Harry.

It was in all the papers, the movie magazines, the songs, but it was through Harry that she hung on every word Frank uttered. She hung on to all of his songs like he'd been singing them just to her. He was like the Pope to her, but even better, but when Harry turned up dead, Mary couldn't take it anymore. She spilled everything, no concern for Harry's reputation. "It," being dead, was just one more thing that Harry did wrong. Harry looked up to Frank like a puppy but never followed his advice, but it was the brown shoes that set the whole thing off. Worst of all, Harry's brown shoes, whenever he walked in the rain, squished. What Frank told the press about the right attire to wear after dark, even if a guy turns up dead, especially if he turns up dead in the evening, was like the Pope speaking. You never wear brown after six.

When Mary read the headlines "Man Found Dead Wearing Brown Suit, Brown Tie, Brown Shoes" and who had apparently choked on a brownie, she was mortified. When they brought him into the morgue, he had chocolate all over his face. When Mary identified the body, she was horrified to find that not only was he wearing brown after six, but his skin had turned brownish, too, apparently, the coroner told her, from too many chocolate brownies. Relenting for a moment, she recalled one nice thing about Harry. He told her she looked like Grace Kelly, and she liked that, even though she was French and Native American, had dark brown hair, light brownish-olive skin, brown-green eyes and a small brown birthmark on her left cheek which she referred to as her beauty mark. She thought of herself as a blond.

After Mary left Harry in the morgue, she moved to Chicago, married a used-car salesman who always wore white short-sleeved shirts, semi-glossy black pants, and a thin black tie.

OBAMA IS MY SHEPHERD
A Scaffold poem based on Psalm 23, inspired by Darwin Adams
by Michael Paquet

Obama is my Shepherd;

I shall not want.

He lieth me down in socialist pastures;

He leadeth me past spending waters.

He restoreth my economy;

He leadeth me in paths of democracy for popularity's sake.

I sit at his table;

He anointeth my head with tax breaks;

My cup runneth over;

He taxeth it not.

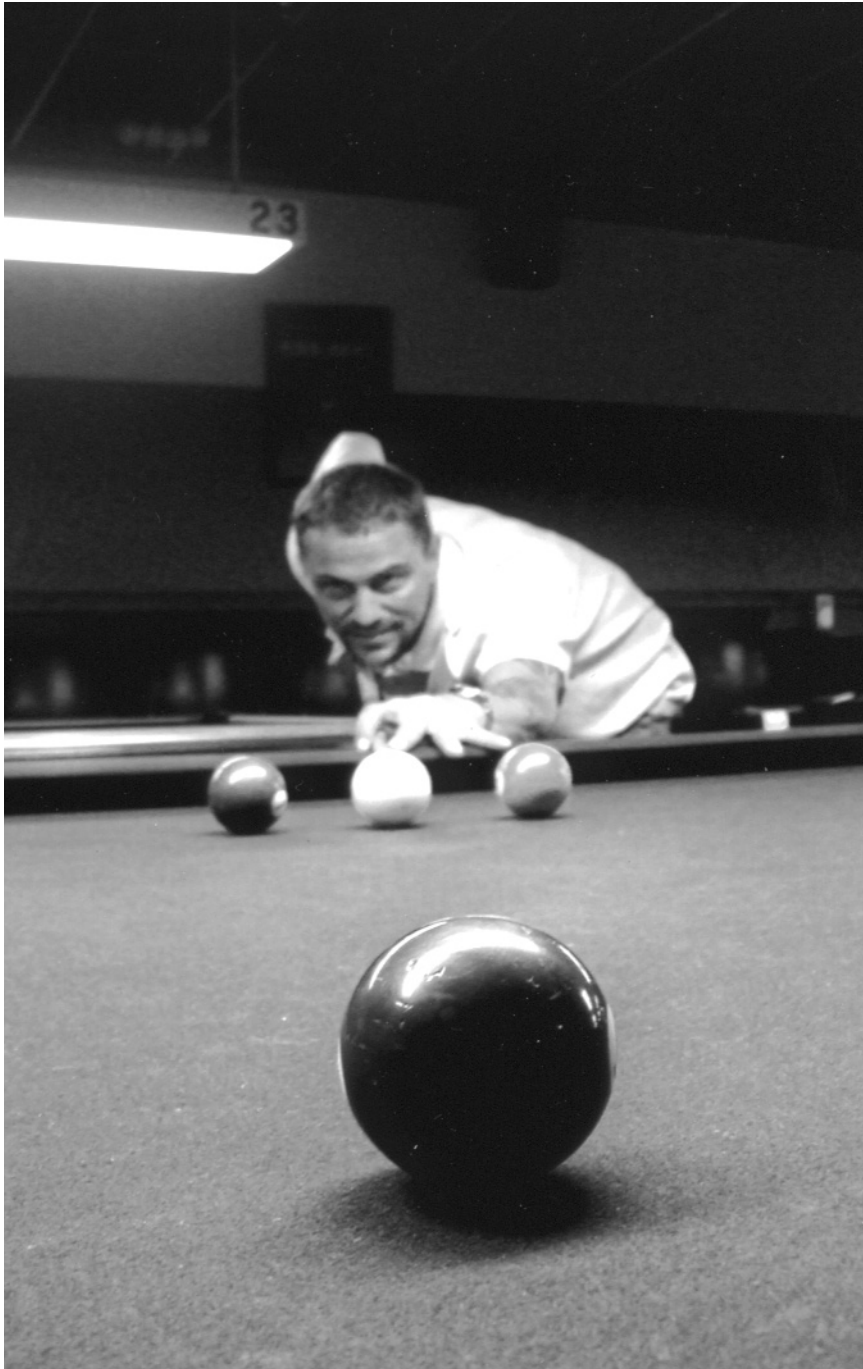
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the Shadow of the
Recession,

I shall fear no Depression,

For Obama art with me;

Thy Hope, and Thy Promises,

They comfort me.



6 BALL IN THE CORNER POCKET
By Ashley Wehrli

HEAVEN'S WAITING ROOM

By Ashley Wehrli

It's not what you think it is

Heaven's Waiting Room.

It isn't a cloudy, ethereal surrounding

It isn't bustling with people waiting to get in

It's simple

It's real

It exists.

A beautiful brick building with countless windows

None covered, of course, since it's always sunny

So you can look out and see whatever you want to see.

Want to see a couple in love?

Done.

Want to see a charming Cherry Blossom?

Done.

Anything you want

Anything at all.

There is even a bench for you to sit while you wait.

There is no concept of time, so the wait won't seem long or short

You will just be waiting

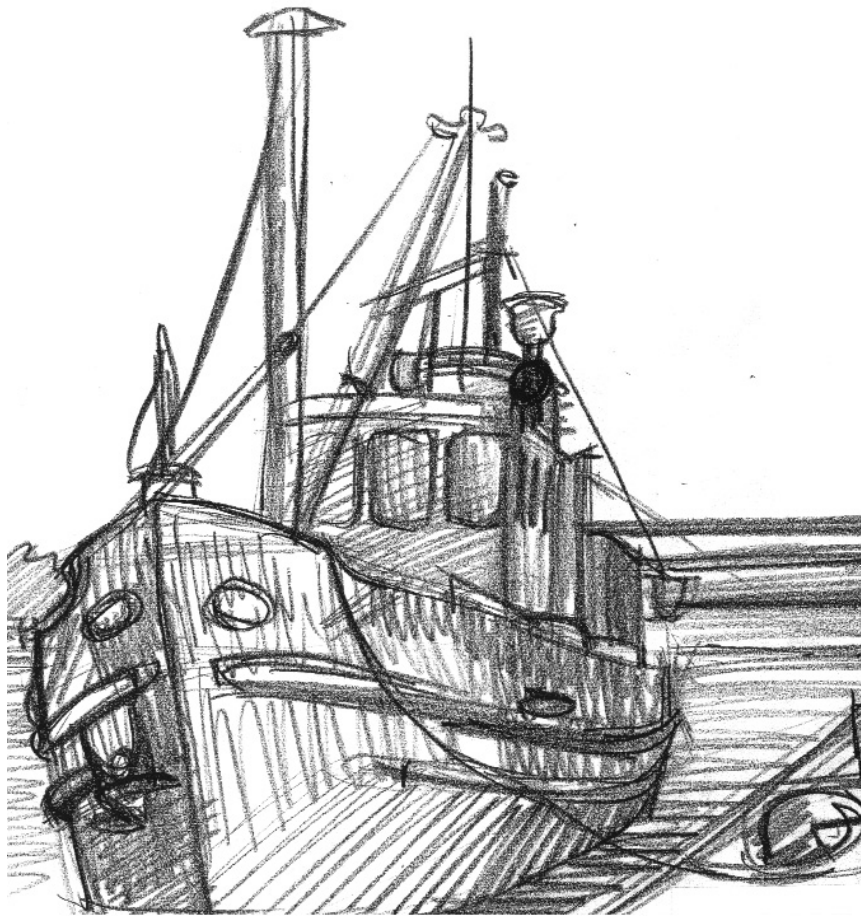
Waiting for the one you love

Your best friend

The person you can't be without

To arrive and accompany you into

Heaven.



UNTITLED
By James LaMalfa

into a tight line, grips the steering wheel securely in her hands as she reaches the end of the bridge as we head off to Burger King. My stomach lets out a loud grumble again as the strong aroma of French fries wafts through the car. I happily dig in to appease my stomach, saving my sandwich for when I get home. (Which is where I hope to be heading, but I know better than that.)

“Mom...?” I ask in the nicest way possible, my voice hinting at nothing but seriousness as I explain to her that I do have homework to do. “Mom, really. Can we please get Ty his Monster from the gas station and go home? I am tired and I have work to do yet. Please? Let’s not continue on hunting Dad tonight. I told you he’s pathetic. Who cares where he is?”

I can see her stop to think for a moment, and just as she is about to turn onto another side street, her cell phone rings in the cup holder beside us. She scoops it up quickly. I can plainly hear my brother’s voice on the other end. The prey has been captured. Apparently our hunt is over.

“When did he get there? ... Well, did he say where he was? ... Ok, Ok. I’m around the corner and I’ll be home in two seconds. Bye.” She snaps the phone shut in a huff and turns to look at me as she turns onto our street. “I’ll kill him,” She mumbles to herself.

I know she wouldn’t really. She could never commit such an act, even though the man she married is clearly an ass with no feelings for anyone except himself. I guess she really does love him and it would be her that cares where he’s at, at almost one in the morning.

I know it will occur again. It may not be tomorrow, or next week, or even next month, but it will occur again, and when it does, I know I will be back in the car, sitting right alongside her. We’ll be checking over every single parking lot, every alley, and every location where we think he may be, and I will do it because I love them both. Regardless if we are out getting food at midnight because we are hungry or we need toothpaste and shampoo for the next morning and need to run to Wal-Mart, we’ll most likely always make that trip to find him. Unless of course, he’s already home, fast asleep on the couch. If we only could be that lucky, to not have to be out, hunting for Dad.

intersection. "Change already, what the hell?" She curses.

Again, I doc the original words to protect the innocence of the reader. She probably wouldn't care, but I know for my own sanity that the words that come out of her mouth are not for the pure and clean minded.

"He's pathetic. I don't even see why you bother to look. He obviously doesn't want to be found, although he is probably sitting in the most open place and right in front of us. He usually is," I tell her, lifting my head to look at her for a brief moment.

She mutters. I shake my head again and take a deep breath. It's rather amazing how you never seem to notice how many bars there are within a 20 mile radius of your own home, until you come to terms with the fact that the person you are out looking for may be at any one of them. What makes you even more amazed is to find that the person you are looking for isn't even at one of his favorite local hangouts. Instead, he is at a friend's house just down the street and you constantly miss the unmistakable truck everytime you drive by it just because you are not looking for it there.

Things like that tend to really make me mad, especially after spending an hour of my precious time keeping Mom company while she is on a classic hunt for Dad. This happens all the time, although it's only in the last few weeks that it has it picked up again. I would know, because if he's not home and has been out for some time, and I get in that trusty black truck of my moms and we are headed out anywhere, regardless of the hour or plans, we'll find him at one of his favorites.

Naturally, this will cause an uproar, which will lead into bitter screaming matches and heated arguments over who's pathetic and who needs to pack what and get the hell out. Overall, these issues always tend to get resolved. After 23 years of it, it's kind of hard to leave, regardless of the situation.

However, there are the rare nights, the off occurrences where even after you have combed the streets and alleys near all the places that the person you are hunting tends to be found, and then you move on to the not so familiar places, the prey may still be undiscovered. It's moments like these that make you want to pull your hair from your head and go screaming down the street begging for a way out.

However, the woman sitting in the seat next to me manages to, God bless her, grin and bear it. I admire her strength and ability to not lose control over the situation as she rounds another corner and still... no Dad. She purses her lips

RELIEVED
by Darwin Adams

Every morning and every evening he sat by the shore and squinted, scanning the horizon, hoping to detect the telltale tendril of smoke from the stack of the steamer *Napoleon*. The daily vigil's silent intensity had graduated from anxiety to worry and now verged on despair. Scotie-nobbie-quon, as the Indians called the steamboat, was long overdue. The little community of Marquette, nothing more than a few scattered log cabins and a small store, depended on the steamer for crucial winter supplies to last the harsh impending season. Relentlessly, Lake Superior angrily crashed her unbuffered storms and snows onto the sandy shores as frigid weather crowded in. Usually, the last supply steamer had left to "go below" by November before the great lake iced over and trapped the vessels in a frozen snare. It was now early December and no provisions for the hundred or so human souls (and forage for the livestock) had been delivered. Each passing day without the arrival of the *Napoleon* wore heavily on the residents.

The young man keeping watch, only sixteen years old, was the de facto guardian for the women, children, and elderly left in the community. Riley Crawford, not yet fleshed out into manhood, felt the weight of the world pressing down on his slender shoulders. Despairing of waiting, the able-bodied townsmen had formed a party to attempt an overland expedition through the dense woodland of Upper Michigan's behemoth peninsula to reach Sand Point on Lake Michigan's Bay de Noc.

The great lake to great lake journey was a dangerous proposition even during the summer months; but it was particularly daring to taunt fate against an encroaching winter. Two Chippewa Indians agreed to guide the snowshoe-clad party through the entanglement of swamp, wind-falls, and an unbroken primeval forest of cedar, pine, birch, and maple. In good weather the groping excursion would take seven days. Once on the Bay de Noc, the party would travel along the iced shoreline to Green Bay and then, if necessary, a stage ran south from that town to Fond du Lac. Precious provisions from the town's scant commissary would be doled out to the men.

Before setting off, the young man's father had delegated him to look after the townspeople left behind. "You're in charge now, Riley," he said in a level voice. "It's up to you to keep spirits high. Do your best to protect and defend them." Riley gulped, and then vowed to do his best. Leaving the young man with a gun and a Bible, they promised to return as quickly as possible.

That was over two weeks ago and prospects were becoming progressively

bleak. An inventory was made of the dwindling supplies and alternatives were considered. They decided to stop feeding the horses, oxen, and the town's lone cow. Coarse meal meant for the animals would be rationed for human consumption. As the loyal beasts weakened, they would be slaughtered and eaten.

Wild game would have to supplement the meager commissary. Marten, fisher, fox, muskrat, beaver, and otter, prized for their fur, would now be sought for their meat. Greatly mismatched against the predatory acumen of nocturnal bobcats, lynx, and wolves, Riley competed for northern hares during the day. Partridge, grouse, and crossbills not claimed by preying owls, ravens, and eagles might be candidates considering Riley's limited hunting skills.

Originally named Worchester, the hamlet of Marquette was established in 1849 as a prospecting and processing center for newly discovered copper deposits and iron mines. Mining was the sole economic interest and consequently slight attention was given to agricultural or subsistence development. Now, only two years later, when their lifeline to the outside world was disrupted, the idle steam boiler and smoldered-out copper kilns seemed to mock them in mirthful silence.

As Riley dwelled on the town's plight while scanning the horizon, his mind ran off in oblique tangents. Marquette's reclusive neighbors, the indigenous nomadic Indians, were rarely seen and an aura of mystery veiled them. "What would I do if they appeared?" he fretted. Wandering parties of Chippewa and Sioux had been each other's mortal enemies for over a century. Canadian trappers had spun tales of ambush and slaughter between the competing tribes. No one, however, could recollect any atrocities committed on the new American settlers.

That didn't stop one old trapper from spinning yarns about the ferocity of the tribes he traded with. "Their usual practice is to creep stealthily on the enemy's village or hunting encampment, and wait till just after dawn," the leather-skinned pioneer claimed. "Then, at the moment the sleepers in the lodges are rising, the ambushers stoop and level their pieces about two feet from the ground." The animated old man's gravelly voice rose to a crescendo. "And then they slaughter their enemies indiscriminately!" Sensing a captive audience, the trapper finished off the gruesome tale. "If thy find one of the enemy lodges undefended, they murder all within," he growled, "and rip the scalps off their skulls. In the minds of the savages, this is exquisite vengeance."

Riley wondered if, like a prowling panther, they could sense vulnerability and gravitate to Marquette. "Snap out of it, Riley!" he ordered himself. "Stop

HUNGER-DRIVEN DAD

by Nellie Fertato

The gentle luminosity of the dashboard lights draws my attention to the clock. The bright, neon digits clearly show that it is nearing midnight. My stomach gives out a mighty lurch and then proceeds to growl loudly. I glance over at the clock again. No change there. How irritating.

I should have known how stupid it would be to ask her to drive out to get food at this hour, but I was hungry and the process of making food was too tedious for me when I had so much to get done before classes the next day. Then again, the idea of actually making food at any time seems too tedious. I guess I just have very little patience. Not to mention she said she was hungry too, and having just got home from work, she didn't want to cook. I admire that in her.

I am so tired, yet I somehow manage to keep my eyelids from drooping as I lean my head against the cool glass of the car window. I watch with very little interest as the city streets cast ghostly shadows across the sidewalks and roads. The snow piles that grace the curbs, the ones that interfere with actually pulling into a store parking lot without it looking like you're intoxicated, are finally dwindling down to small mounds instead of the classic mountains that they once were. As for those banks making it seem like you are driving drunk, I know someone who got pulled over for bumping the curb because the officer said it looked like he was driving drunk, but it just turned out that he had no choice but to drive like that, as the mountainous banks were so high, he had to run over them.

For the record, he was drinking before he got into his vehicle, but I digress. As I try to ignore my grumbling stomach, I glance over at the woman in the seat next to me. Her hands grip the steering wheel so tightly that it seems like they have paled from lack of circulation, but then I realize that it's just the reflection of the streetlights that make that image. I sigh softly, but loud enough for her to hear. "I know, I know. He just makes me so damn mad."

She speaks carefully, even though I know how angry she really is. The words that tumble from her mouth are not inappropriate, but they are easy enough to hide with pretty alternatives and I am grateful for that. She lets out another series of swear words and other various phrases of brilliant colors and shades and I just shake my head. She taps her fingers on the dash as she waits with the patience of a two year old as the red light beams down at her from the

60 SECONDS OR LESS

by Ashley Wehrli

Silence
The calm before the storm
Then...
Ringing
Starts out dull and soft
Gradually gaining speed
Increasing in volume
Contrasts of colors fade
Starting to lose sight altogether
Heart starts to pound loud enough to hear
Until all at once-
Blinding White and
Deafening Ring.
Ten Seconds...
Twenty-five Seconds...
Forty-five Seconds...
Sixty Seconds...
Heart starts to slow to a controllable pace
Sight starts to come back
Contrasts of colors define
The white starts to fade away
Ringing decreases
Gradually losing speed
Until it become dull and soft
Finally, the storm has passed
Silence

thinking up dangers. You've got enough real problems to worry about."

Other explorers found the reclusive Indians an enigma. Presenting a stoic front, they rarely gave glimpses of their true intentions. Emotions were only publicly displayed during mating rituals. When young Chippewa braves were in an amorous state, they painted themselves "bewitchingly" and offered presents to the parents of the intended. If accepted, arrangements were consummated for marriage. Riley wondered where he would begin to deal with such strange people should they appear before the relief party returned. But it really didn't matter now. No one had seen any trace of them since summer.

At dawn on December 15th, Riley, as a matter of matutinal habit, walked to the shore to scan the waters. Through the morning fog he thought he spotted a faint column of smoke! Fixated on the speck far off through the haze, he watched it long and anxiously. His heartbeat quickened but his mind urged discretion. "Don't raise the hopes of the town only to dash them when the haze lifts, Riley," his conscience advised. He turned and walked back to the house for a meager breakfast his mother was preparing. He couldn't eat it. Excusing himself, he returned to the shore. A hard, studied gaze convinced him. It was the *Napoleon!* He ran back to announce the good news to the town.

The townspeople all congregated on the shore to verify the sighting. Paroxysms of joy punctuated the chill air as spontaneous celebration wiped away the gloom evident only minutes before. One resident recalled the stranded people "shouted and swung their remnants of hats, women tore off and waved aprons, and the little bare feet of children danced on the cold shore."

An old man who lost one horse from his team to starvation just the day before now had his spirits buoyed. "Now, if old Bill is not dead, I can save him," he sobbed through tears of joy. In the distance, a staccato horn aboard the *Napoleon* blasted a welcomed acknowledgement.

The adulating crowd lingered on the shore to witness every advancing movement of the rescue ship. Greeted with a cacophony of tumultuous shouts and echoing cheers, the crew docked the steamer and disembarked. A resident remembered years later, "No wonder that men, women, and children gathered on the shores to watch the steamer push its way through the ice up to the piers; [it was] the luxury of fresh eggs, fresh meat and vegetables, medicines and tobacco." In addition, warm shoes and clothing, tools, and animal forage were distributed.

After a few days, the tardy steamer debarked hoping to clear the sheets of ice forming up to fifty miles from the shore. Though greatly relieved, Riley still

worried. His father and the relief party had not returned yet. To ease the consternation, Riley continued to set traps and visited them each day. New Year's Day was no exception from the routine. The day was mild and pleasant and the traps yielded a couple hares. Riley returned home with his quarry and placed them on the table. His mother would prepare them for the holiday meal.

Suddenly the cabin door burst open and there before the startled family was "a group of laughing Indians of all ages, from the brave old Chief Mau-je-ki-jik, and his squaw, to all the little niches and all the members of his tribe he could muster." Bedecked in elaborately embroidered beads and porcupine quills, the Chief and his squaw had donned their best broadcloth and leggings.

Riley's heart sank. Tensing up, he tried to marshal his wits to respond to the surprise. Stepping forward, he assumed a defensive stance between his mother and the Indians. Extremely frightened, the younger siblings had scattered to the cabin's only other room to peer at the proceedings through a crack in the logs.

Riley had no chance to react. The Chief quickly brushed by him, grabbed his mother and kissed her! All the others in his entourage followed the example. Riley, dumbfounded into inaction, watched in astonishment. His mother, recouping from the shock, regained some aplomb.

A final straggler, a young Indian brave with a painted face to indicate he was in love, strode forward and was presented to Mrs. Crawford. Red lines were applied to his chest and pointed to his heart. He was not much older than Riley. "His long black hair was braided and hung down the sides of his face, and braided in with it were small brass thimbles strung on a soiled pink ribbon," she recalled. The Chief was presenting his son to Mrs. Crawford for marriage.

Riley stepped forward and objected. His mother was spoken for; her mate was only away on a "great hunt" and expected back shortly. The affable Indians seemed satisfied with the explanation. Fortunately, the Crawfords were able to fix a spread of food adequate to feed the unexpected visitors. After an exchange of gifts, they all went away satisfied.

Watching the laughing Indians leave, Riley closed the door and sighed in palpable relief. His mother hugged him around the shoulders and said how brave he had been. Riley, heart pounding through his shirt, smiled, hoping the relief party would come back soon to relieve him of his duties.

to the bathroom to set the pansy
in the center of the bathtub
where we stand barefooted.
It's the most unexpected place
I hadn't thought of before
and I believe always
in the spontaneous offerings
of Kerouac and plums
and how the rain makes the earth feel
and all because I ate plums
outside sitting on a chair.

WHEN MY HEART BEATS FAST
Modeled after When I Close My Eyes by Deana
By T.J. Radey

A gentle caress, across the small of my back
Causes tingles to flow from my head to my feet
When you're not by my side, your spirit is close
The thought of your love brings me heat

Your love saved me from the fiery pits of hell
My heart knows you have no lies
The blissful comfort of your gentle embrace
Is heightened by your gorgeous eyes

From the past my heart has been scarred
But our future looks to be sublime
Floating on a sea of fluffy white clouds
Like Narnia the thing that slows is time

My white picket fence I have yearned for 3since I was young
Through you I have it at last
I will have peace and serenity
When my heart beats fast

EATING PLUMS OUTSIDE WHILE SITTING ON A CHAIR
When Kerouac Saunters Over Barefoot Through the Grass
by Marilyn Stark

First one, it is so juicy
we drain the almost sonorous
dribbling flesh, so ripe
with expectation.
I need another he tells me
and we plunge our weapons of teeth
into this purple world
held within our fingers and thumbs.
“Man, this is redolent with native secrets,” he says.
So plump, the skin like royalty,
smoothed and taut,
zippers open like cut cloth
before our mouths can press the flesh,
slips from our lips
drips deep red
veining down our fingers
into cupped palms, a pool
of ancient secretions.
How dazzled I was when I
first read your words I tell him.
Like this palpable pulp
they sing a hymn in my skin.
We watch a white butterfly flutter
like curtains in the wind
over a tired pansy,
the round eyes on its wings circle
and seem to study us
with the ennui of a target board.
“I’m gone on plums,” he tells me
and plucks the lone flower,
its yellow and brown face spent
from summer heat,
sends it into a green Tupperware tumbler.
I follow him into the house

KITCHEN SET LESSON
by Stephanie Thompson

It was a bright Tuesday afternoon and sunlight poured in my window as I happily played with my kitchen set. It was a marvelous piece of furniture no child should have to do without. Vibrant blues, yellows, oranges, and reds showed off its functionality. You could boil some tube-like noodles for Mac ‘n Cheese on one of four coily burners while baking a chocolate cake in the tiny oven for your doll’s birthday party all at the same time. A young girl like myself could slave away for hours to create such delicacies.

Today’s special was a hamburger with fries served with a nice cool glass of pink lemonade. Content in my cooking zone, I hardly noticed Mom come into my room. I continued frying the beef patty, listening to the crisp sizzle as I pressed the meat into the yellow pan, as Mom sat down on the other side of my kitchen. I assumed she was ready to pick up her order, and I panicked because it wasn’t quite ready. But when I looked up and under the short roof to give her the news, her countenance revealed something other than patient waiting. Her face had a look of motherly anger. When you see this expression you know you did something wrong and you are afraid of what’s to come, but you also know that Mom still loves you and is not about to completely destroy you. That was the only comfort I could hold on to.

Forgetting about her beef patty that was probably scalded by now, I lowered my eyes to the floor. She asked me why I had told Daddy to shut up, but all I could do was give my tense shoulders a defeated shrug and say, “I don’t know.” After a dramatic pause, she began explaining to me why that’s a naughty thing to say and that those words are not to be said in this house or outside it. As she talked, I lowered myself behind the oven and began to make mocking faces at her, absolutely sure she had no clue of my secret defiance. But what I learned that sunny afternoon behind my kitchen set was that mothers don’t need to see the bad attitude to know that it’s there.

VEGETARIAN EVOLUTION

by Adria Kaufman



Deep down inside, I knew something was wrong. Something was making me rather unhappy. It wasn't my choice in a mate. It wasn't my choice for a career path. It wasn't my family life. On closer examination, I came to realize it was the diet I had inherited. The foods I was raised on and their manner of preparation continued on into my adult life changing only in minor ways. I began incorporating a few fresh foods that I came to recognize I had secretly longed for. I was a vegetarian trapped in a conventional omnivore's lifestyle, though I wouldn't fully recognize it yet. It was my first time out on my own, living in a vaulted ceiling studio apartment with windows to match the immensity of the walls. The sun coming into my life was abundant and the air was refreshing.

Somewhat detrimental to the evolution of my concept of a meal was my cousin's attempt at vegetarianism. I imagine it was a success on the grounds of her accomplishing her choice of consumption desires, but to the older generation in the family she was deemed a black sheep, an outcast, if you will. She had stepped out of the boundaries held by a small town family whose only gathering times were centered around the dining table and who also held strict boundaries for what sort of lifestyle would be recognized and tolerated by the group. A vegetarian life style was clearly unacceptable.

Afraid to join the ranks of the chided and ridiculed, I shied away from this idea, though it was a concept that was brewing within me. At the time I was working in a deli and was constantly handling meat. I stunk of it in the evenings and had to wash the smell of it out of my hair. This was to be the year I gave up chicken and pork (except for the occasional piece of burnt bacon which eventually developed into a weakness for prosciutto).

It wasn't until I moved away a year later that I felt able to become a full ovo-lacto vegetarian (still eating eggs and dairy). I was twenty years old and was living on tourist-thriving Mackinac Island. It was an exciting time in my life, my first real adventure away from all that was familiar. I was living in dormitory-style housing and was sharing one kitchen with twelve other women. Eating in was

not the best option as my food stock seemed to mysteriously diminish whenever I was not around (which was a lot). The general distrust among the housemates, combined with my total lack of interest in cooking, was the perfect recipe for the makings of a junk food vegetarian. It lasted for only a year. I moved back to my hometown and began my old fanfare of turkey and seafood coupled with salads and veggie platters. Three years later, I became a mom, and finally, a cook.

I became a domestic diva, keeping house (by this time in Madison, Wisconsin), raising a brilliant daughter, and experimenting with my stove for the first time in my life. I had a few staple vegetarian dishes, but had hit my new comfort plateau. I did, however, have the influence of our friend and neighbor, the ever vivacious, Miss Christina who was a devout vegetarian. I was successful at keeping a pork and chicken free diet for the next five years while we moved to the suburbs of Detroit and then back again to our hometown. Something happened to me while living in Lower Michigan though. I had found my passion in terms of career paths. It was exciting and liberating. I was connecting with myself and my own truth like never before, breaking through my own boundaries of whom I felt it was acceptable for me to be. I was afraid of moving back home and slipping back into the superficial contrivances of living very much inside the box. That didn't happen.

Instead, I went back to school to follow that newly discovered passion. Somewhere between childcare and homework, an old *Vegetarian Times* magazine fell into my hands and onto my kitchen counter. I quickly became fascinated with cooking exciting vegetarian dishes that I had never been exposed to as a non-cooking, junk food vegetarian. My life had evolved to the exact point where I could enjoy this new delectable discovery to the fullest. I have now transformed my refrigerator, my kitchen, and my life. There is a certain peace and wholeness in this evolution coming almost full circle. The next step is my coming out vegetarian to my family! And if all goes well, I'll be sharing some fantastic dishes at the next table gathering!