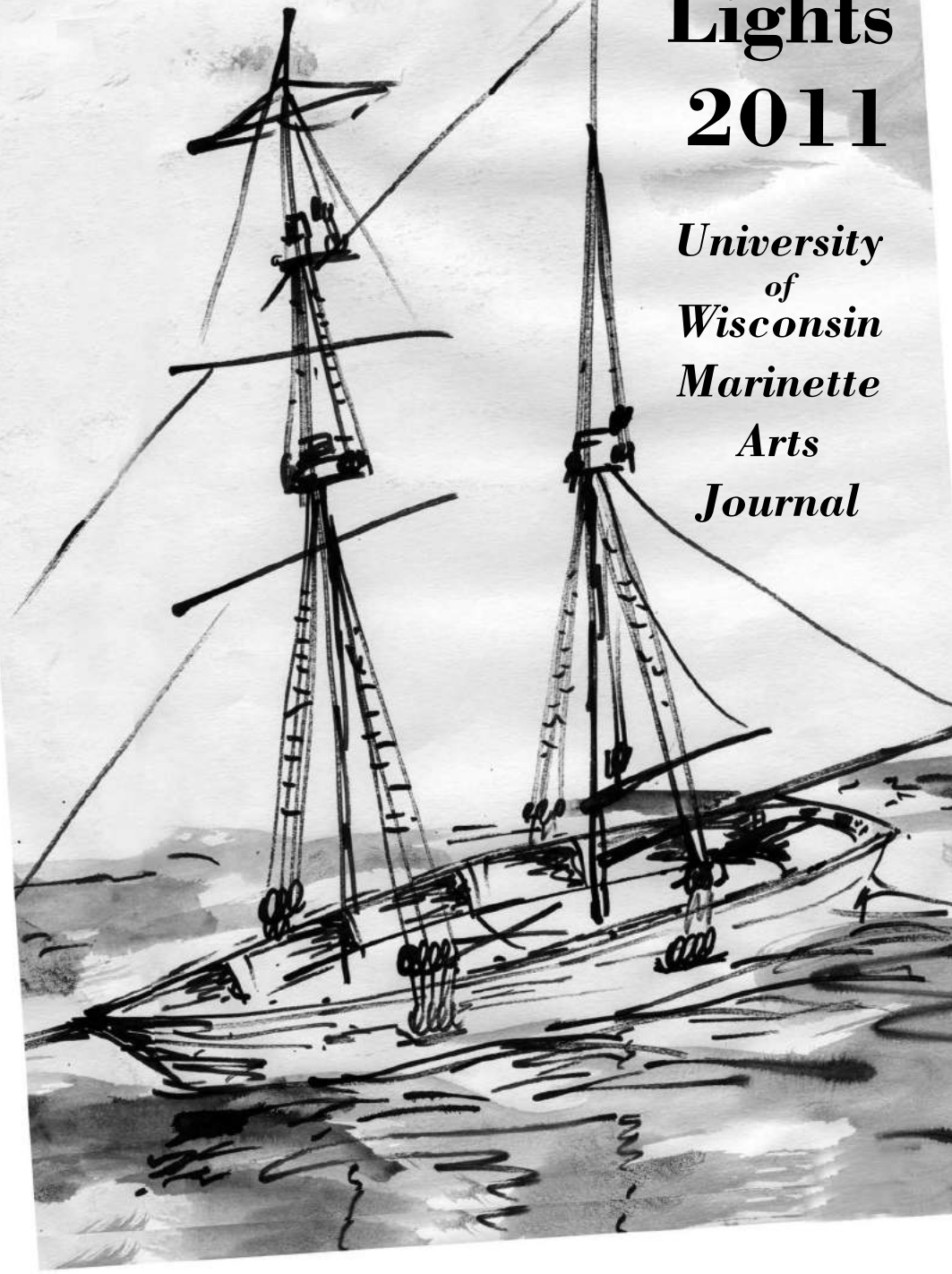
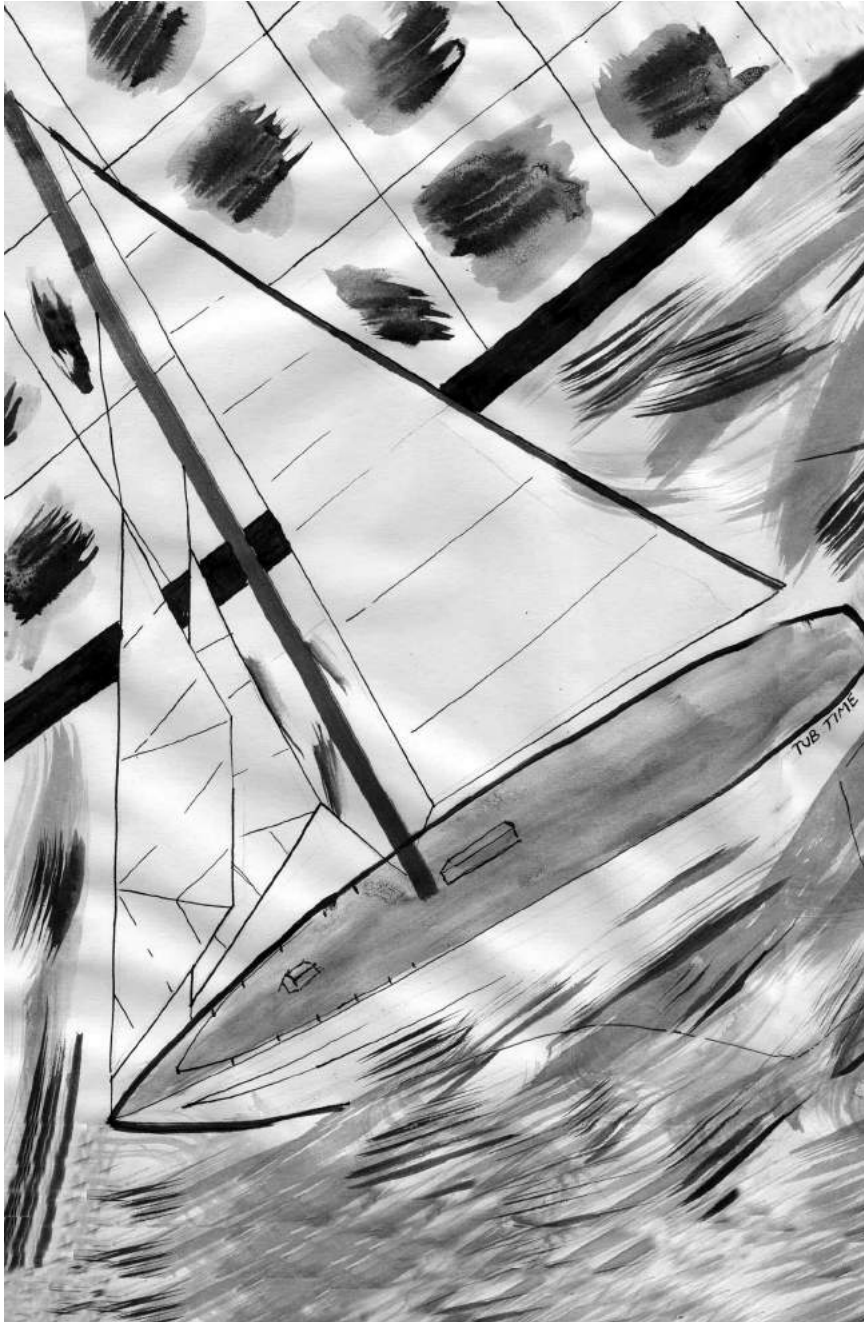


Northern Lights 2011

*University
of
Wisconsin
Marinette
Arts
Journal*





TUB TIME
by Cody Parkovich

Northern Lights

2011 Arts Journal
University of Wisconsin
Marinette



UNTITLED by Diane Kim

Volume 31

Spring 2011

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

© 2011
This publication is printed on recycled paper

Contributors

Darwin Adams	Abby Miller
Angela Buckland	Julie Muenster
Ken Corry	Alexa Olson
Tracy Diaz	Cody Parkovich
Mike Fugate	Amanda Salusky
Felicia Granquist	Amy Schaez
Sadie Hutchinson	Gabriella Sheldon
Max Hutzler	Cassie Tebo
Erica Kaufman	Jennifer Trantow
Diane Kim	Lucas Veness
Heather Knope	Mark Vollmar, Jr.
James LaMalfa	Jacob Wenzel
Trista Marquardt	

Cover art: UNTITLED by Julie Muenster

Acknowledgments

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

Editorial Committee: Amy Reddinger, Chair, Heather Blum, Jennifer Flatt, Maureen Frawley, James LaMalfa, Allen Learst, Jane Oitzinger, and Gabriella Sheldon.

Thanks also are due to Connie Scofield and John Kuhlmann for their assistance in collecting art submissions.

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

silent. In my imagination I envision myself as the last person on earth because from my vantage point I can see no other person or dwelling. It is a silly thought, so I quickly toss it aside although, since I live in a remote area, I have gone for days without seeing another human.

The wind increases in strength as snow begins to fall. I should head back to home, but I am mesmerized by the wind and the fury of the coming storm. The snowflakes increase in size, swirling all around me. Finally I step out from the maple's protection and head toward my cedar shake home. My house is on the top of a ridge, so I am climbing as I walk. The wind whips my scarf back and forth in my face. Snow falls on my nose and eyelashes. I laugh as I think of Julie Andrews singing "a few of my favorite things" with the children in *The Sound of Music*. What fun I have had on my walk on the snow. I am so glad I have found independence in the winter in the cold northern woods.



SNOWY BROOK
by Jennifer Trantow

INDEPENDENCE
by Gabriella Sheldon

Independence in the winter in the northern sections of the United States of America takes various forms. When deep snows cover roads, often schools are closed, leaving students and teachers independent of their daily rituals and travel. Those same snows make many workers dependent on snowplows to give them access to their normal lifestyles and requirements. Then there are those who, having very independent spirits, brave the deep snows to get wherever they need to or want to go. If they are lucky and have four wheel drive, they may make their destinations. There's no guarantee.

I love independence and do not appreciate deep snows that hinder or prevent my travel. However, I now have a new way of travel that, while limited by my stamina, is not limited by deep snows or drifts. I am the proud owner of snowshoes, a gift of my Army sergeant son, Pete.

Since I have lived most of my life in Michigan, I have been very familiar with shovels and snowplows. Without them much of the winter world remains inaccessible for those without snowshoes when deep snows fall. Even those who like to cross country ski are handicapped by deep trail-less snows. I know because I have a pair of skis I gave up using. I would get stuck in the deep snow. If I wore just boots, I would sink and in a very short time have very wet feet or a foot searching for a boot that came off in the deep snow. Needless-to-say my outdoor travel was limited to shoveled areas.

Now I just step outside my door with snowshoes and poles in hand. In a few seconds my L.L. Bean snowshoes are snug on my feet, and I am ready for an adventure. The whole outdoors is open to me. I just start walking in any direction I fancy. The crunch of the snow under my feet comforts me as I walk. Overhead a solitary bald eagle flies toward the lake. He goes wherever he wants. I feel a oneness with him as I head across the field. I see hundreds of tracks of white-tailed deer that have come to my apple trees, hoping for a frozen apple to fall. Their hoof prints make deep cuts in the snow while my prints are large but shallow. Sometimes the deer follow my tracks, and I wonder why.

The wind blows last night's light snow, and I cover my face with my scarf. The north wind is cold, but I continue walking, not oblivious to the cold wind. The sun hides behind clouds, and I am relieved because the sparkling diamonds are too bright, too glorious for my mortal eyes to enjoy for a long time. I continue across the field and into the hardwoods. Not a single leaf remains to remind me of summer. All are covered by deep white pillows of snow.

Overhead the branches creak as the wind continues to blow. The trees sway back and forth. I lean on the lee side of a large maple tree, watching the trees dancing above me. Except for the wind, the creatures of the earth are

THE PENCIL
by Tracy Diaz

If my pencil were alive

It would be my best friend

It has helped me through school

And some trouble with men

It has written all my secrets

And other thoughts too

Life without my pencil

Would leave me contained

Some day my pencil

Will lead me to fame



A NEW PERSPECTIVE
by Trista Marquardt



FLOWERS AT A GRAVE
by Trista Marquardt

est tree limb behind the humans, I clicked my tongue. Once. Twice. The little boy turned. Surprise, confusion, and then a smile crossed his face. And I smiled back at him, my ice blue eyes flashing, my fangs beginning to lengthen. He stepped toward me. I nodded at him, my eyes working their charm to dazzle. I could see their reflection in his own moss green eyes. He took another step forward. I crouched down on the branch, my hands on my knees, ankles poised to jump.

One more step. The boy reached a small hand forward, palm up, his tiny wrist hanging out of his coat sleeve, exposed. Thin but plump teal veins were waiting for my aching fangs, for my driving need. I jumped down to the ground a few yards away from the boy, the snow silent under my feet, as the father turned around. His son had been ignoring his questions. My eyes were only for the boy but my senses were keenly aware and yelling at me about the man. Whatever.

Such a beautiful little boy too. Pity. My red swollen lips parted, revealing my grin, revealing my ever-frightening weapons. He whimpered and pain crossed his face. But he did not move. He couldn't. The child was stuck, for me to control now. His arm was still extended towards me, and I heard his mind's voice say, *Pull back; run away, run Josh!*

"Josh!" the father yelled as I sprang forth, clamping down on the boy's wrist. Heat flowed through my body instantly as I broke skin and began to sink into the beauty of feeding. A gunshot rang and I felt a tiny prick on my forehead. The child quietly murmured, gasped, and slumped. My free hand that wasn't holding onto his arm caught him, bringing him closer to me. I tore deeper into his flesh, squeezing out every last drop. A voice yelled to me, shouting my name among other things. My sagging eyelids looked up behind the boy to see Zander feeding on the man. Son of a bitch...what was he doing here? The boy gave his last flinch as I continued to drink.

And then Zander was hovering over me, blood running down his chin, steam rolling off the thick liquid. My eyes closed and I dropped the boy.

INTRO TO SCULPTURE 131
by Julie Muenster

I wander through the wardrobe into Narnia,
Cold and gray, metallic, oily.
The white witch flares and sparks;
Look too long and she will blind you.

Dressed for battle, I am—
Leather gloves and steel-toed boots.
Make the helmet snug.

Scrap and sheet, rod and rebar, fire the forge, strike an arc,
Argon and oxyacetylene.
Write a sentence using each new vocabulary term;
I practice my handwriting.
My pen has no eraser.

Unyielding steel, Aslan's breath—whoosh and roar—
Lemon yellow Play-Doh.
Tongs and mallet, chisel and vise—
Grown-up toys stretch and squash.
Hammer and anvil, clang and clink;
Fingers tingle.
Empowering rhythm.

Spark and crackle, sizzle, snap.
Squeeze the trigger; my world is one inch wide.
Lay a bead; write my name.
My mental maiden awakens.
Twist and tack a curly crown of victory.

WHAT WALL?
by Alexa Olson

A wall is a structure made to keep things in or out.

Which is it that you are looking for, honey?

I am not sure.

I have seen the writings on the wall.

It doesn't look good here.

Stop, you are driving me up the wall.

What wall?

The wall with the writing on it?

The wall that keeps you in or keeps you out?

That wall?

This is ridiculous.

Ridiculous, like "this is off the wall"?

Honey, you are teetering on the wall of sanity.

You mean the wall that keeps things in or out?

I thought this was "off the wall."

If this is off the wall how can I be driving you up the wall?

How do you drive up a wall?

I think you are the one who is on the opposite side of this wall.

Don't wall me into something I am not.

You are the one who the wall is keeping out.

You are to be feared.

We are nothing alike.

Go to your side.

Side of what???

The wall.

very easy. And I had made no noise. Scooping the bird into my hand, I crawled around tree branches to place myself behind the tree trunk and out of the humans' view. I could smell the father's sweat as he stayed still, holding out a gloved hand to his son, motioning for him to stay where he was, to be immobile. Their heartbeats were so rapid, pumping adrenaline through their bloodstreams so fast that I could smell their fear of being caught by an animal. An animal, indeed.

The man's posture relaxed and he turned to the boy, "Must have just been a bird or rabbit. Keep quiet though," he whispered. I looked at the bird I held in my hands. Stupid bird. Fluttering your wings like you know what I am and wish to save the hunters who would just as well shoot you too. Stupid thing.

I admit I was paranoid. This was my first time hunting alone, and one of my first times hunting at all, since I refused to kill. Zander and Tayten trained me, helped me, and showed me how to be invisible. "We only kill what we are to eat," they told me. I had no idea what I was doing; the only thing I paid attention to was my fighting; it was a good stress reliever. But right now...I would let nothing give me away.

This is my game, I thought, twisting the bird's neck in one fluid motion. But...I still had to keep my cool. They continued walking as quietly as they could through the snow. And I followed, climbing through the trees, examining all the possible ways and whens of my jump down to the ground. All of a sudden I felt I could do this. I felt like it shouldn't be that hard. I was a vampire for hell's sake. I was neither cold nor sweating, worried or scared. *Okay girl, don't screw this up*.

They had no idea I was near them. No idea I even existed. Suddenly, twigs cracked, breaking, snow crunched and there was an explosion of deer bursting through a clearing in the trees up ahead. The hunters rose once more. A doe stopped, noticing them for the first time. She stamped her foot, sniffed, and stepped backwards. Tossing her head wildly, she turned back to the other deer running past her and bleated loudly. Then she took off and didn't stop again.

"Dad..." the little boy whispered. He was shaking from excitement. I could hear the man's labored breathing. His heartbeat swelled up and overtook my sanity. I *felt* it. It was like it was inside me; it was my own heartbeat, my own fear racing through my body, pushing my heartbeat up to my eardrums. That was all I heard. The steady *thump, thump, thump, thump*.

I smelled his perspiration trickling down his temples; I smelled the blood flowing through his whole body. I couldn't take it any longer. The man's pulse was loud, annoying and vibrating inside my head. I tried concentrating on the boy's body, hoping for a lesser reaction than I got. The boy's effect on me was just as bad as his father's, if not worse. It was too overwhelming.

My eyes widened, zeroing in on my prey. My restraint was slipping. I moved away from the tree and out into open view. Strolling seductively out on the thick-

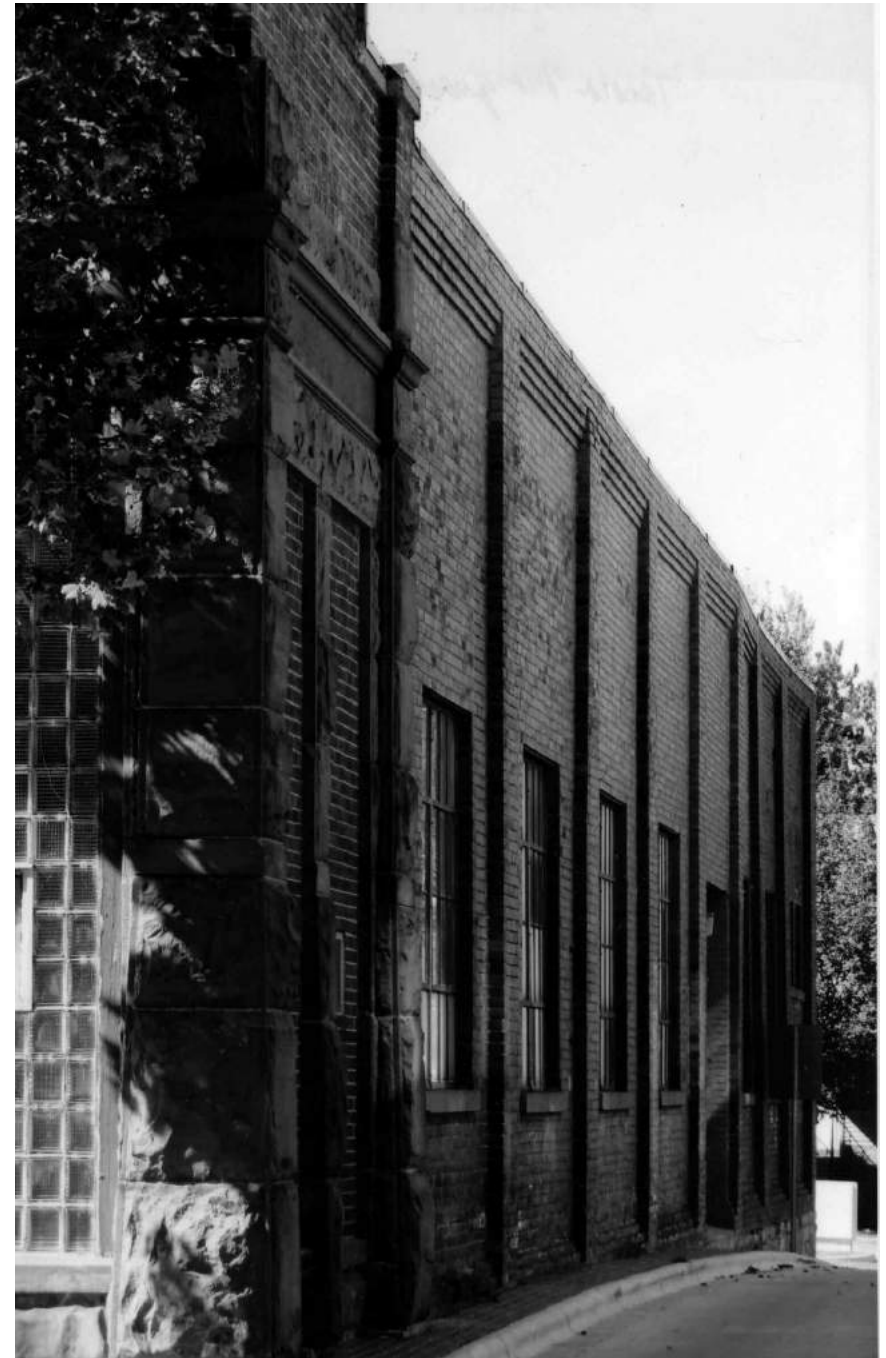
sounds. I was relying on the scent now, *this* scent. It had consumed my being—pushing me over the edge. I was in a race, a race against the moment as I shoved my way through the dark woods, to whoever was out there. To whoever would become my victim. God save them, because he hadn't saved me.

Stalking my prey, I was lethal. The hard crunching and popping of the snow beneath their feet led me closer and closer to them. How funny, the hunters were now being hunted. I crept out on the tree branch keeping my balance easily. I was directly above them; as they were sneaking up on the deer, I was sneaking up on them. Two people. Father and son. What a horrible way to die, but I didn't care. I needed it.

The wind cut like ice. The little boy shivered silently as he struggled to keep up with his father. A crow sitting in a nearby tree was watching me, cocking its head this way and that. It fluttered its wings as if to give a warning to the people. They stopped, and I could hear their heartbeats, both rapid, and I leaped from my tree branch to one the crow occupied a few yards away. A short distance,



YAWNING CAT
by Jennifer Trantow



WALKING DOWN FIRST STREET
by Trista Marquardt

IN A FOREIGN LAND
by Gabriella Sheldon

Listening attentively,
I search for familiar words,
Language that would connect
Me to another soul.
I smile at a friendly face,
But I do not speak,
For fear that I will not be understood.
I walk silently, wishing I knew
More than hello and good-by
And how are you.
I have become an eavesdropper,
Who listens but never hears.
Like one newly deaf,
My ears betray me:
They bring me no understanding.
I am an island
With waves lapping at my shore.
Even the siren's call is wasted
Because I do not understand.

branches. And with that stupid, light breeze came a powerful smell, making my head twist around faster than an arrow from a bow. Blood. No. This cannot be. It could not be. But it was.

I tried not to breathe, tried not to breathe it in. But the tantalizing gift kept grilling itself into my senses as I remembered my first-ever feeding. And how it felt, just how it tasted. The sweet welcoming of renewed strength and self-control, gushing over my gums and pouring down my throat so thick. I squeezed my eyes shut, as tight as I could, and smacked my head backwards into the tree trunk. I was so hungry.

Breathe. Breathe. Just breathe. Don't smell. Don't let the blood overpower you. You're stronger than this.

And most of the time I was. Most of the time I could talk myself out of hunting down innocent people. Of course, it made me even more crazed, irritable, not to mention weaker. I was stronger than Tayten and Zander, but only because I was younger. They were stronger because they were experienced and didn't resist what they were; so really, we were evenly matched. Tayten could never figure out why I just didn't give in. He couldn't understand how it was possible for me not to feed regularly.

Most of the time my mind was stronger than my body, than anything. But tonight my body acted against my will, against my words. And I was oddly okay with that in some small part of my mind. It was like...because I had resisted feeding all the time, my body was finally acting on its own. Giving itself up to my new instincts and going against everything right. It was like a switch had flipped inside of me.

*No, fight back, Jana.
Oh, but you poor little lamb, you need this.*

Just run the other way, my mind argued.
Now, why would we do that? screamed my body. My fangs pierced my tightly shut lips. I held my breath. I dropped my fists into the snow and grabbed handfuls of it, squeezing it into a finer dusty pulp than one could believe possible. My fingernails cut my palms.

*Go little lamb. Become the wolf.
No
You know you want to.*

I jumped to my feet, completely lost to everything around me, all sights and

THE ENEMY
by Erica Kaufman

And the next thing I knew...I was running. I shot up and bolted for the door. I didn't bother with the stairs—I ran out of the training room and into the hallway, sharply turning left. I sprinted to the window at the end of the hall and let myself fall. I crashed through it, glass pulling my hair, and digging its way into my arms and legs. The wind whistled in my ears as I dropped down, down, down. The air whipped my glass-filled hair into my face.

I landed lightly on my toes and began running again, at top speed. I didn't stop until I reached that sacred place. I don't know how I knew to go there or where it even was. When Zander stole me from the crowd...I was still mostly human—my thought process couldn't keep up with his speed. I guess when something tragic happens, you never forget it or the place where it happened. But I went there—to the tree Zander held me against as he fed off me, seducing me. To the small clearing—where Gabe last looked upon my face, and I on his.

I brushed the hair from my view, shards of glass colliding against one another. I shook my head violently and some pieces fell to the ground. I tried to slow my breathing as I picked the piercing, irritating things from my flesh, but it didn't help. Earth-shattering choking sobs tore from my throat, and I thought it would split for a moment. I looked around and saw nothing but memories replaying over and over like they had so many times before in my mind. The moonlight above did little to calm me down either. It should have given me peace, my own little sanctuary, but it only reminded me of what I had become. The monstrosity I now was. I had been fascinated beyond belief about Gabe and Zander's true identity, but as time wore on...I wasn't so sure of Zander. I wasn't sure of our "love" for one another. I would just like to assume I was his property and that's all I was to him, his human infatuation.

Gabe had been my best friend and I would just have to accept the fact that he was gone and life, well *my 'life'* would continue. Humans went through sorrow all the time, like when family members died or left you, like how Mom had to when Dad left, like—oh God. My mother. What would she think of me? What *does* she think of me, of what happened to me? I felt compelled to go to her, but I knew I couldn't. I had been resisting my hunger for far too long even though blood made me stronger in combat and hunting. I had continually refused to hunt as well. I wasn't safe.

I went to *the* tree, running my hands along its cold, crunchy bark, and sank down to the ground. I pressed myself against its trunk, pulled my knees to my chest and laid my head in my hands.

For the first time, I noticed that not only did the snow crunch beneath me, but it was falling from the sky. A slight wind blew about me, stirring the tree

BIRDER POEM
by Max Hutzler

Mourning Warbler,
seen less than others.
Between the bramble and briars,
hidden amongst all that life,
we want to see you.
Bluish grey and yellow figure,
satisfied out of sight,
with your laugh-like trill,
we hear you.
Mourning Warbler,
never seen by us.

MISUNDERSTOOD
by Rover Adams

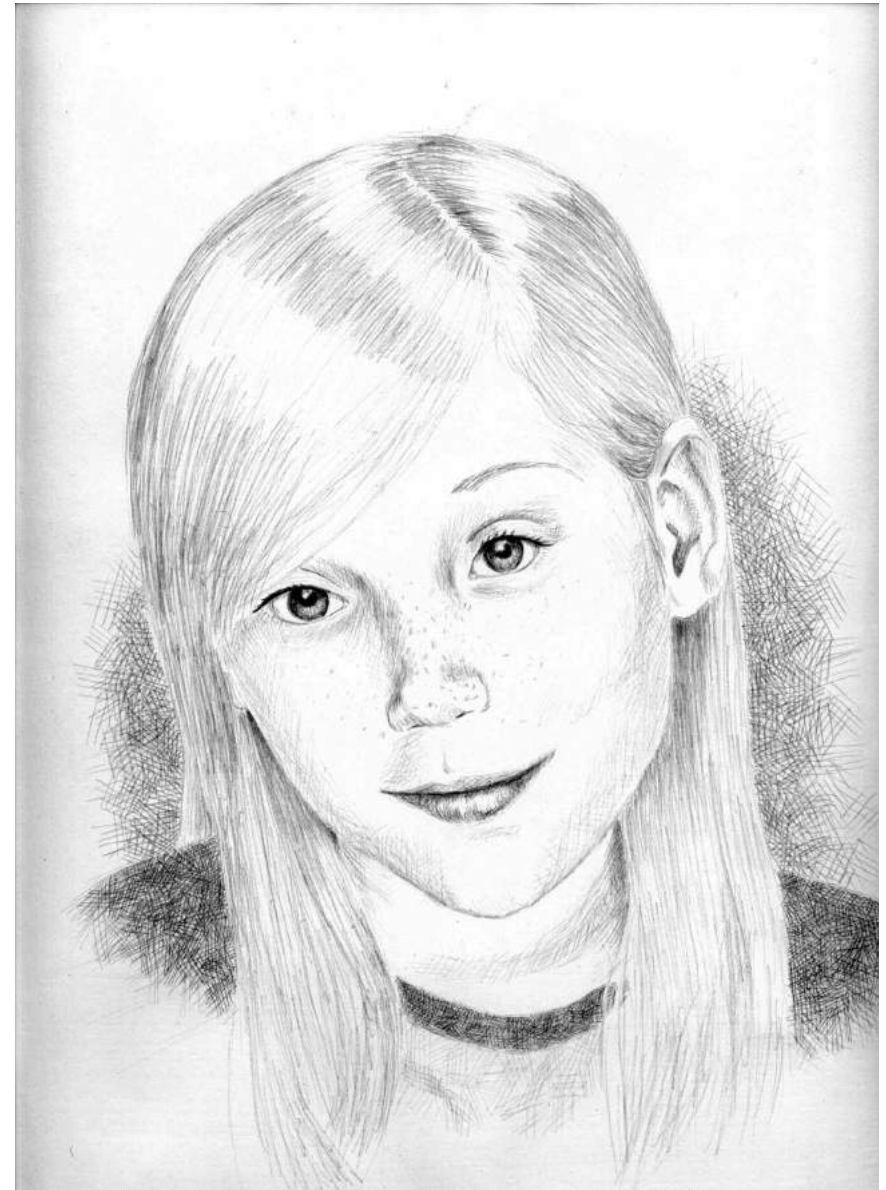
I died about forty-five years ago. Leroy shot me in the field behind the house, out of the range of Pappy's view and hearing. My best years were far behind me. Arthritis wracked my bones and I couldn't see very well. I developed a continence problem and had lost a lot of weight. Looking back, portents of my demise were apparent. Pain coursed through my joints and it hurt when I tried to walk. My condition troubled Mom and Pappy who couldn't stand to see me limp and whimper. So, on my final day, Leroy collared me, got the gun, led me outside, patted me on the head, and ended my life. Don't blame him; it was quick and painless and he was only honoring Pappy's reluctant wishes. My passing didn't upset very many people. Only Pappy, my constant companion, really missed me. But then, he was the only one who really knew me.

It's tough to be misunderstood. Some said I was snarly, grouchy, acerbic, nasty, cranky, owly, despicable, irritable, mean, ill-tempered, sneering, devious, sour, harsh, bitter, detestable, hateful, loathing, dangerous, wicked, cross, angry, irascible, unsociable, offensive, contemptible, depraved, vile, and an all-round poor sport. They attributed that to my ancestry. I was an amalgamation of dog and wolf. So what did my detractors expect?...Little Red Riding Hood?

Grandma Adams (Mom) could find good in anyone...and I was proof of that. She knew that I was a one-person wolf...er, ah, I mean dog. Yeah, dog is what I meant. As a frisky little pup, I had been adopted by Pappy and we formed life-long bonds of trust and friendship. Mom fed me and kept a lot of those pesky grandchildren away from me. She warned them to leave Rover alone because I'd bite. Her philosophy was one of détente. I was expected to leave the grandchildren alone and vice versa. Consequently, they gave me a wide berth. Usually a good growl and snap at any interlopers to my personal space would ward them off. But honest (and I'll swear on a stack of pork chops)...I never bit one of those little pests....honest....really....never did....ask Pappy....I'm clean.

A box full of soft rags was prepared for my comfort under the roll-top desk and that was my sanctum-sanctorum when in the house. I'd go there for some R & R and everyone left me alone; especially if I was sleeping. I had my own dish and was fed separate from the other dogs. Much to Mom's dismay, Pappy would sneak me food from the dinner table. Yet she never really held that against us. Because she knew that Pappy and I were a team, she could overlook a few faults.

I adored Pappy. In our time, we were the best cow herders in the Upper Peninsula...no, we were the best in all of Michigan. Come to think of it, we were the best cow herders in the United States...no, we were the world's best (no bragging). The name of the game was "Pappy and Rover versus the Cows" and

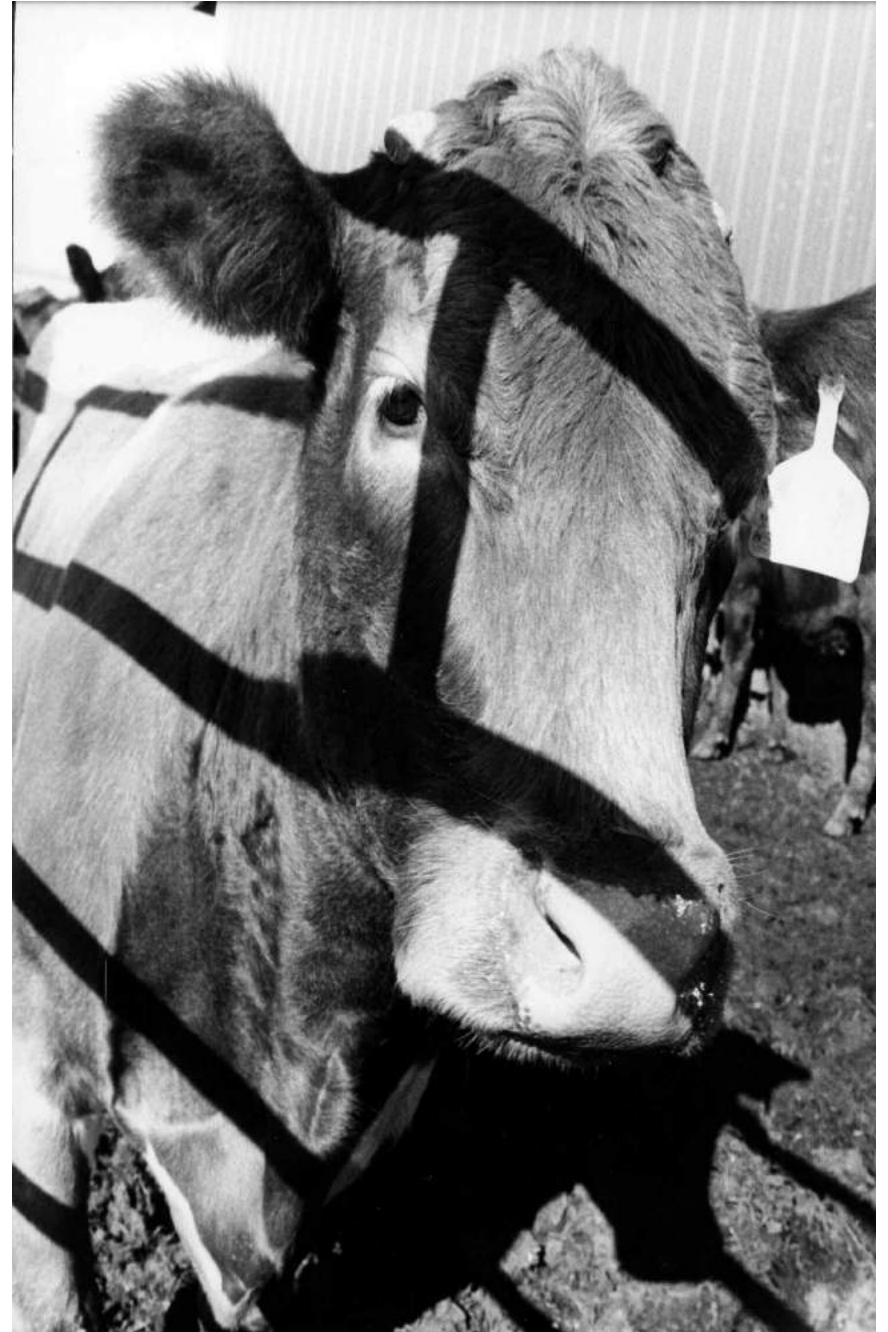


AUTUMN
by Julie Muenster

FROM FATHER TO DISTANT DAUGHTER

by Aimee Schaez

Well girl, I know it's been rough.
We may not have hit it off,
your mom and I.
You and I argue, we fight,
I'm not always right.
The three long blocks between us
seem like a million miles.
Away all the time,
in my big semi.
You and I went from
inseparable twistie-ties
to more distant than
the two poles.
You're getting older now.
No longer daddy's
little girl.
You're planning a life
away from home to go
to school and get your
dream job.
Make me proud little girl,
like you always have.
Believe in yourself
and every choice
with confidence.
Never doubt a creative mind.
As for our lives, too soon
to let my baby girl go.
I just want you to know,
I'm always here to help
and give advice.
I will help or be there
with a simple call.
I will try my best
to keep my word
with all the love
in my heart.
If only I had always
kept my word.
Maybe this once,
cross your fingers,
I will pull through.



SHADOWS
by Trista Marquardt

we always won. When I got older some critics claimed that I bit a cow or two. Others thought I lost a step in rounding them up. Not true...it just couldn't be true...I still had the desire...and besides, because of my vast experience, I could out-think the cows. But my detractors must have convinced my beloved Pappy. One sad day, much to my shock, Pappy got his walking stick and left to get the cows...without me! Like a sudden bolt from the blue, I was "retired" from what I loved best: rounding up those flea-bag cows.

While Pappy and the younger dogs went for the cows each day around four o'clock, I'd be locked up in the house. I vigorously protested with yelps and whines but it did no good. Pappy would leave the house before I could plead my case, leaving Mom to try and console me. I knew that my place was with Pappy but they didn't see it that way. Then the other shoe fell. They retired Pappy! He'd stay in the house with me while Leroy and those damn up-start pups went after the cows. Even though misery loves company, and even though Pappy didn't vocalize his dismay, I knew that both of us wanted to be getting the cows in. It just wasn't fair.

During our "retirement," Mom seemed to realize what we were experiencing. She knew that both of us longed for days past...especially when we heard the faint clunk-clunk of the bell on the lead-cow coming over the ridge from the meadow. She understood what we were going through and how we itched to be with the herd. Maybe I hadn't always been on my best behavior and admittedly, I had some faults...but she understood and accepted me for what I was: Pappy's dog.

Editor's note: Rover Adams' amanuensis for this article was one of those annoying grandchildren: Darwin Adams

A PIZZA RELATIONSHIP

by Max Hutzler

Crispy banks of dough hold a pond of gooey cheese
Lily pads of pepperoni,
Pineapples and jalapeños float lazily on a greasy wake
Sizzling sweet and bubbling hot at 425 degrees
the perfect couple of sweet and hot
on their first date in the oven,
Married in my mouth,
Honeymooning in my stomach

APPLE
by Amanda Salusky

Red, crisp membrane,
dare I sink my teeth
into your hardened flesh?
Sweet liquid floods my
mouth, dripping,
the nectar dances on
my tongue, sending
waves of excitement
to my taste buds.
The membrane is
surrounded by my mouth
once more.
As I pierce the skin,
the same climax
is reached.
Juices surge through
my mouth spreading
this ecstasy.
I continue farther,
exposing more and
more of this flesh,
the seeds are now stripped
of their cover, found
imprisoned in the core.
Exposed,
only by my hunger.

THE TROPHY
by Jacob Wenzel

In moments of rest the quiet surrounds me.
I listen to the silence.
The cold wind blows softly on my skin.
It breaks the stillness of the morning, tossing leaves,
rustling the oaks beside me.
It smells neither foul nor sweet. It smells of nothing.
It smells good.
The air tastes pure compared to my territory.
But this is not mine to judge.
It is his.
He will hear in the silence.
He will smell what is meaningless to most.
He will taste what I cannot.
That's why he's here. That's why I'm here.



BEAGLE
by Abby Miller



RAG DOLL
by Sadie Hutchinson

slowly walked away, down my usual path to the dorm that I lived in. I felt relieved.

However, my relief was short lived, for in less than a minute the boy was back outside, crying again. As he came toward me, his tears and sobs diminished the closer he came. I walked toward him and together we walked around the building to the street side. I tried to get the attention of some young women, but I didn't know how to say, "Can you help me?" I knew how to say it in Polish since I had learned the phrase prior to my visit to Poland several weeks earlier. I could say it in Spanish too, but I couldn't say it in Lithuanian.

We stood together for a few minutes and then the little boy saw his mother in the distance at an intersection where she was standing with about a dozen others. He ran to her. She didn't seem happy to see him, but she did notice that he had a small rock in his hand; she took it out of his hand and threw it aside. It didn't seem a happy reunion. Now I felt like crying. There was nothing more that I could do, so I continued my long walk home, more than ever aware of my communication inadequacy. I had no idea what I would have been able to do had the boy never found his mother. Where do you take lost boys in Klaipeda? I hope I never need to know.

I SURRENDER
by Gabriella Sheldon

Right from the start
You pulled me into your heart.
Your laughter, your smile,
They surely beguile.
I cannot escape,
For you are my fate.
Trembling I surrender
To your "Love me tender."



FIRST STREET, MENOMINEE
by Felicia Granquist



THE MIDDLE CHILD
by Julie Muenster

THE SETUP
by Gabriella Sheldon

It was a coincidental setup. Two weeks earlier while waiting for our bus to take us from Riga, Latvia, to Klaipeda, Lithuania, my colleague and co-adventurer Marcelline suggested that we see a movie since the cinema was very close to the bus station. Then she chose the movie *Slum Dog Millionaire*. I had seen a few clips about it on my online news, so I was eager to see it. The scenes were so realistically awful that she wanted to leave within minutes of our viewing. I said I was staying. We both stayed and were unpleasantly reminded of poverty and the problem of human trafficking.

The next coincidence was the topic one of my Academic Writing students chose to write about: human trafficking. I had just seen his presentation on it and also had read his paper. I had thought about the topic in general and then specifically as I thought of my nine beautiful grandchildren. Two of my granddaughters lived in the kidnap capital of the world, Phoenix, Arizona. This student had mentioned a teenage girl who had been kidnapped in Phoenix. The terrible things that her kidnappers did to her were stuck in my brain, bothering me.

But I wasn't thinking of kidnapping this day. I was thinking spring had finally come to Klaipeda, Lithuania. The leaves were starting to grow, tulips were blossoming, and I was on my way home, enjoying my two-mile walk. Then I heard him, a little boy, crying. He was standing by a door to an old apartment building. In his hand was a plastic bottle $\frac{3}{4}$ full of liquid. He was crying and trying to get in the door. I understood "Mama" between his words and sobs. He seemed to be about three years old.

I slowed down and then stopped, his sobs and words forcing me to interrupt my plans. I had papers to correct and miles to go before I slept. I looked at him, compassion filling my heart. I just couldn't walk away, so I walked close to him, wondering how I could help.

The little boy told me his story, but I understood none of it except the "Mama" that frequently was interjected between his sobs and other words. In Lithuanian, I said I didn't understand Lithuanian. I asked him where his mother was. The door he was pounding on had several buttons that he was trying to reach, but he was too short, so I tried to lift him. I tried to push the buttons, hoping my random choice might be the right code. The door remained locked. No other people were there.

After a few minutes the boy calmed down. I noticed that he was dressed in clean tan pants and a matching jacket. His hair was neatly cut; he seemed to be well taken care of. But he was all alone.

Then a man and a little girl came to the door. The man pushed a couple buttons and the door opened. I held the door for the little boy and he went in. I

THE BOY IN THE MILL
by Mark Vollmar, Jr.

The ringing of the bell from the tower in the center of the yard broke the silence that filled the kitchen. In the fading darkness of the room, a pile of moth-ridden blankets tucked away in the corner behind a massive black stove slowly began moving. A small head, topped with a tangled mass of black curls, appeared from within the pile and looked around for signs of Madame Dorsey, the house mother who always had another task for anyone she caught before work. The kitchen held signs of someone laboring away preparing breakfast but no one was to be seen. Deciding the coast was clear the boy threw off the blankets and wiped the remains of sleep from his eyes. He was a thin creature with a slight frame resembling a poorly stuffed scarecrow with little more than sticks for arms and legs. He was dressed in faded brown overalls and a white shirt yellowed with age and wear. A quick examination of his area allowed him to locate his shoes, black brogans many sizes too big and showing signs of age, cracked along the side. Adjusting the discarded cotton stuffed in the toes the boy slipped his feet in, stamped down to settle the stuffing into place, and tied the laces. From within the recesses of the blankets the boy produced a small silver hand mirror, the face having been broken long before when used as a projectile in a fit of anger. The boy tilted his head to the left and examined his face in the fractured reflection. The swelling had started to go down leaving his face a sickly shade of yellow but the gash that ran from his temple to the line of his jaw was an angry red. Trying to align the mirror so he could get an unobstructed view of his face the boy failed to notice the woman walk into the room carrying a bucket of water in each hand. Madame Dorsey was a heavy set woman in her early sixties with her iron grey hair trapped under her bonnet. She had a gentle hand with the sick and a harsh word for anyone who failed to follow the company's regulations.

"Roger!" Madame Dorsey said, "Are you going to stand there admiring yourself all day or are you going to come over here and help me?" Roger jumped and fumbled the mirror, catching it just before it hit the ground and quickly returned the mirror to its resting place in the mound of blankets.

Turning to face the woman, Roger said, "I was seeing how I looked before I go and see Elizabeth; it's been a couple of days and I don't want her to think I don't care."

"Boy, your sister knows you care and she needs her rest if she is going to get over the sickness; besides, seeing your face like that isn't going to help her one bit."

"It's getting better. Mary said I'll probably have a scar that'll make me look manly."

"A scar doesn't make you look manly; it will just let everyone know you're

not smart enough to get out of the way. You're lucky, that belt could have snapped your neck. Didn't anyone ever tell you not to stand that close to the drive pulleys?"

"Mr. Barton told me to clean around the machine."

"Around it, not in front of the pulley."

"Everywhere, the last time I didn't clean the machines like he wanted, Mr. Barton told me I had better step up and start following orders because the Irish were coming by the boat load and I could easily be replaced. The Irish will work for potatoes!"

"Well, you need to do as you're told; you are only as valuable as your ability to follow instructions. Enough chatter. Come over here and help me with this water."

"Yes ma'am," said Roger as he walked over to Madame Dorsey and took the buckets from her.

"Do you think Elizabeth will get better?"

"Give her some time and a chance to rest; Elizabeth will be fine. Now put those buckets over on the table and ..." The ringing of the second bell cut Madame Dorsey off.

"Sorry ma'am, I have to get ready for work." Roger set the buckets on the table and with a small grin plunged his head into one and sprayed the kitchen with water when he pulled his head out and flung his hair back. With a quick step, Roger slipped around the solid but slow moving woman as she reached out to smack the back of his head and he ran through the door that led into the rest of the house. Roger crossed through the dining room between the two long tables standing parallel to each other set for breakfast, and into the foyer where several of the girls who lived in the boarding house were talking as they prepared for work. Roger gave a wave to the smiling faces and a smirk for the faces filled with contempt as he weaved his way through the sea of girls and soon reached the hall leading to the back of the house.

The room for sick workers was tucked away at the end of the hall in order to reduce the noise from the rest of the house. The hallway was filled with an endless gloom, a single lamp along the wall was the only source of light and that was kept turned low to save oil. Roger moved down the hall with slow deliberate steps, each one requiring more effort than the last as he drew closer to the door. After watching his mother die of consumption, Roger's head was filled with dread. The thought of a life alone was more than the small boy was capable of handling. Roger reached out and gently rested his hand on the knob to the door but was unable to open it. The image of his mother lying in bed with her eyes sunken into their sockets, the skin stretched tight across her skull, and hair plastered to her face kept dancing in front of Roger's eyes. The memory of the ever present stink of death that surrounded his mother's last days made Roger gasp



ON THE SLIDE
by Cassie Tebo

A YEAR
by Mark Vollmar, Jr.

In January, plastic flutes raised, everyone says "Happy New Year" and with resolutions soon forgotten celebrates the birth of the year.

In February, the sun glaring powerless in the sky, throws a shadow at Phil, six weeks more of frozen hell. Not a good sign for the year.

In March, a Mississippi of green Grolsch flowing through the streets, no matter if you're Maguire or Smith everyone swims. It's only once a year.

In April, the fool dances with "I have cancer" and "Molly was in an accident." Tears pooling in my eyes, Johnny red with laughter, he got me good this year.

In May, the tulips pose for pictures. Queen of the Night and Parrots positioned, losers cleared away, no question for the cover this year.

In June, the ringing bell is silent and only memories shuffle down the halls. The echo is fading but you can still hear "I'll see you next year."

In July, bottle rocket screams fill the air and black cats piss off the neighbors. Lost in the smoke I tell Mike "You went all out this year."

In August, the smells of seared Angus and Landrace waft through the air as the squirt gun battle rages all around, "We take no prisoners this year."

In September, feral children return chained to the desk, knowledge poured into their heads until it leaks from their eyes. No one left behind this year.

In October, the Devil walks hand in hand with Cinderella. Worried parents scan for pin holes and razor blades. The fear of generosity is great this year.

In November, Tom is king, laying at the head of the table everyone compliments his glossy tan. His dismemberment starts the feast. "Oh, I ate too much this year."

In December, old men doze in La-Z-Boys and children hold their eyes open. Ten more minutes till the passing of yet another year.

for breath and started the tears falling. Roger stood there fighting to regain control of himself when the door opened and a young girl slipped out into the hall. With the girl standing before him, memories of his mother drifted back to their hiding place deep in his head and the fear for his sister faded away. Roger reached up and wiped the tears away from his eyes and forced a crooked smile onto his face.

"How's it going, Mary?" asked Roger. Mary gasped and spun toward the voice, finally realizing Roger was in the hallway.

"You startled me, Roger," said Mary. "I didn't know anyone was out here."

"Sorry. How's my sister doing?"

"She's resting; I just came to bring her something to eat."

"I wanted to see her before I went to work. It has been a couple of days since I saw her last and I'm worried that she will think I have left her for dead."

"First of all Elizabeth would never think you had deserted her and secondly to leave her for dead would require her to be dying and like I told you before she is going to be fine."

"Everyone always says that but it never works out that way. She's going to waste away just like our mother and then I'll be all alone!" The tears started to fall from Roger's eyes again. Mary reached out and pulled Roger in close to her and said, "It will be alright, she is already looking better. If you come back to see her after you finish tonight you'll see for yourself. Now come with me, we need to get breakfast before it's too late."

The pair walked back to the dining room where both long tables were filled by the girls trying to eat as quickly as possible. The practice of proper etiquette and grace was seldom seen in the dining room when the workers were trying to beat the third bell. The pair found a gap on one of the long benches in front of the tables and shouldered their way in. Bowls of porridge, chunks of fresh bread and sweet rolls, still steaming from the oven, disappeared from the table as everyone scrambled to eat their fill. Not wanting to risk the penalties for being late to work the girls began filing out the door and heading to the mill. Roger, unmoved by fear, continued to attack the contents of the table with the zeal of a half-starved dog. Mary watched amazed as the boy easily consumed his body weight in sweet rolls without slowing even long enough to taste the food passing over his tongue. Standing, Mary turned to Roger and said, "Alright, we need to go or we are going to be late."

"Alright, I'm finished anyway," Roger said before emptying his cup of coffee in one large gulp. Roger stood and stepped away from the table leaving a trail of crumbs falling from his shirt. The two walked out the door as the third bell began to ring. With a quickened pace the pair crossed over the small wooden bridge that connected the sides of the canal, through which the water diverted from the Merrimac flowed back out to the river. They met up with stragglers from other

houses as they reached the mill, trading polite greetings common between strangers with a shared destination. Parting from Mary, Roger ran along the building looking in the windows as he attempted to find Mr. Barton, the overseer who ran the spinning room. At last Roger found him standing guard at the entrance to the room to ensure no one entering late would go unnoticed. Roger stood just outside the room bracing himself for the torrent of verbal abuse, a mixture of German and broken English most of which he couldn't understand but all of which was unpleasant, he was sure to receive for being tardy. Roger, prepared for the worst, stepped lightly into the room just as Mr. Barton turned and stomped over to a spinning machine near the far wall yelling something of which Roger was only able to understand "incompetent" and "girl!" before the ever rising noise of the machines filled the room as the operators started to work. Seeing his opportunity Roger ran along the opposite wall to where the doffers kept the bobbin boxes and looked for his box. Roger could always tell which of the almost identical boxes was his. After weeks of handling all of the boxes Roger discovered the sturdiest one with the smoothest sides and promptly carved his name into it. This action led Mr. Barton to a fit of anger so great Roger may have found it amusing if he had not been sure of Mr. Barton's inevitable spontaneous combustion due to the shade of red his face turned. After many threats of termination for the defacing of company property, Elizabeth stepped in and saved her brother with a smile and a gentle hand placed lightly on Mr. Barton's arm. The incident ended with Roger begrudgingly agreeing to pay for the box at a price he was sure deposited money into the pocket of Mr. Barton. Upon locating it, Roger grabbed his box and ran to the last row of machines where he was responsible for replacing the full bobbins with empty ones. Seeing that none of the machines needed his attention, Roger placed his box in the corner and slid under the first spinning machine. The life of the scavengers, who gathered stray pieces of cotton and yarn from under the machines, while in full operation, could be short and very unpleasant if they failed to pay attention. Roger had collected the last of the fallen cotton when he saw a pair of heavy black boots walk by. Knowing those boots belonged to Mr. Barton, Roger rubbed a small amount of dirt and grease on his face, being careful to avoid the right side, and slid out from under the machine directly into Mr. Barton's path. Dusting himself off Roger looked up at Mr. Barton with a smile showing he had been hard at work all morning and ran to get his box. Roger raced to the machine at the end of the row and pulled the lever to stop the machine and raise up the thread guide so he could change out the bobbins. The day continued on in the familiar fashion with Roger cleaning around the machines between bobbin changes and trying to appear busy whenever Mr. Barton passed while making his rounds.

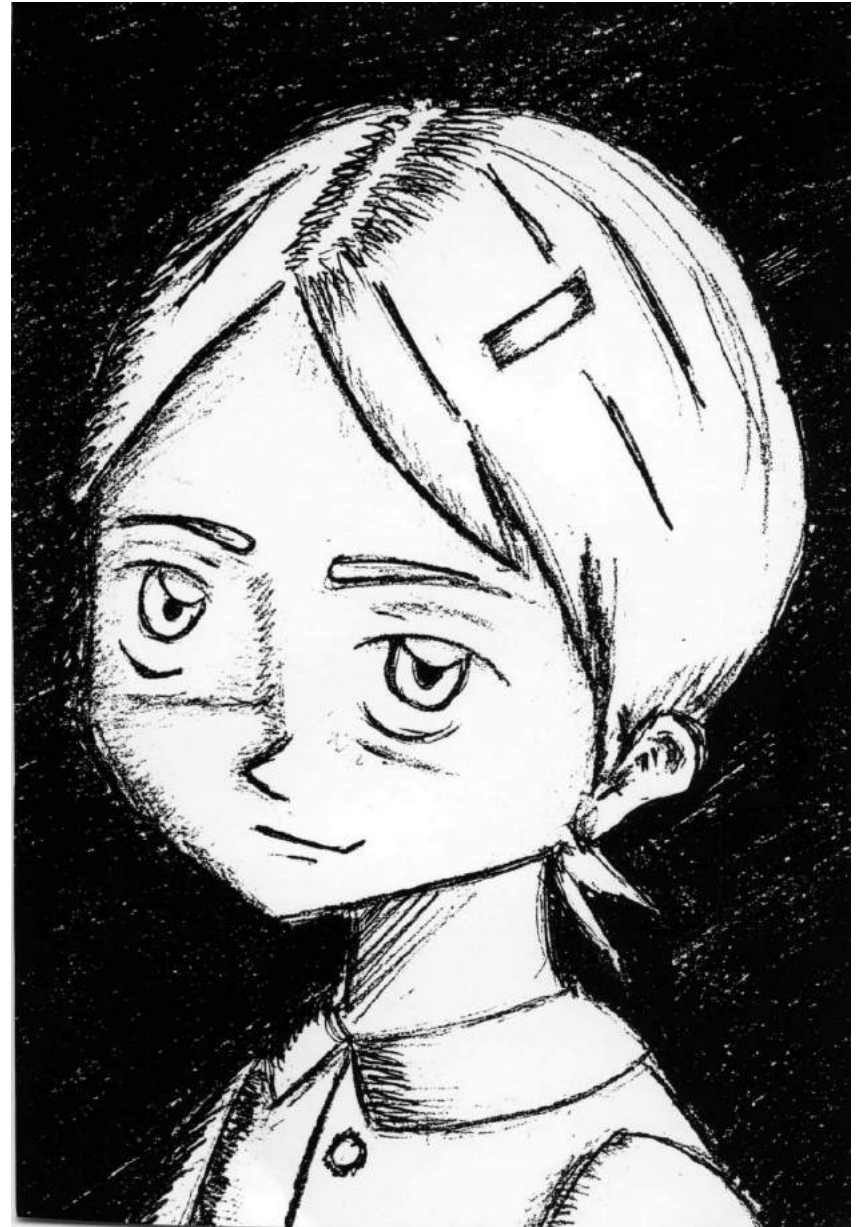
The monotony of the day was broken by the ringing of the dinner bell. Far faster than they began the machines stopped running and the room was filled



RUNNERS
by Ken Corry

TRANSCEND
by Mike Fugate

When are you going to be "secure"?
How much more self-inflicted failure will you endure?
When are you going to have faith in yourself?
When will you finally mature?
When will you stop being afraid of what others think?
When will you have courage, other than when you drink?
Talent is wasted everyday.
Forget the words the critics say.
I am no better than you.
And that fact, I will never deny.
But the difference between you and me is that you are a coward.
And all cowards do is die.
Though you may be alive, healthy and well.
You are still trapped in this prison
In this box
In this Hell.
You have tied up your own hands
And left them idle.
You threw away your honor
And accepted "weak" as your title.
I do not wish you more strife, or intend to bring you down any further.
But you are killing your future
And you are guilty of murder.
The point of this all is to remind you of your worth.
You have had the power to succeed since the day of your birth.
Now stop being pathetic.
You're so much better than this.
It's time to let the whole world know you exist.
It's time to put your dormant days to end.
It's time for you to take on the world
It's time for you to TRANSCEND.



PORTRAIT OF REIKA
by Heather Knope

with an unsettling quiet. Driven by purpose and hunger the room emptied as the workers hurried home to eat in the manner of wild animals, tearing into their food with hopes of slurping enough down to hold them over until the end of their day. Roger placed his box back in the stack and almost made it to the door when the barely intelligible voice of Mr. Barton called out.

“You were late this morning, boy.”

Roger stopped and forced the most confused look onto his face he was capable of maintaining and turned to face Mr. Barton.

“What do you mean, sir; I was here the whole time. I’m never late any more, not after the last time when Elizabeth promised you I would always be on time.” Roger hated using even the mention of his sister this way but the softening around Mr. Barton’s eyes and the slight smile forming in the corner of his mouth let him know that the overseer’s affection for his sister would work in his favor again.

“How is your sister? I have meant to get over to the Dorsey’s to pay her a visit but have been unable to find the time.”

“Everyone tells me she is getting better and should be able to return to work within a week if not sooner. Oh, and I’m sure she understands you not having the time to stop by, being an important man over here and all.”

“Good, good the room is not the same without her here.” Seeing his opportunity to escape while Mr. Barton was distracted by thoughts of his sister, which Roger was sure contained things that he did not want to think about, he began to slowly back towards the exit. With a clear shot to the door in sight and the overseer still engrossed in his fantasy, Roger made a break for the door and hoped to make it back to the boarding house in time to eat. Roger stopped just before the bridge and watched as a boy in his late teens approached him. Dressed in light grey linen pants and a new black coat the boy looked out of place among the mill workers and their families, but the battered suitcase clutched in his hand revealed the humble means the new clothing masked.

“So, you’re really going, Carl?” Roger said as the older boy came closer. “You’re really going to California?”

“That’s right, I’m going to find me a mountain o’ gold out there and never have to worry about the number of pieces I can make in a day again!”

“What about your family?”

They’ll be alright, my father just got made an overseer and mother is supposed to take over the boarding house from old Mrs. Finney.”

“But you’ll be all alone!”

“Nah, a couple of the guys I work with are going to come with me. Real solid guys you can count on to cover your back in a fight. Don’t worry about me, I’ll be just fine.” Roger stood looking at Carl not knowing what to say. The ringing bell, marking the end of the dinner break, ended the awkward silence between the



STILL LIFE
by Lucas Veness

Barton made me take care of the mess.”

“Well get cleaned up and go see your sister she’s been asking for you. There are clean clothes with your things.”

“That’s what my mother did right before she died, she asked for me.”

“Well your sister’s not going to die; she just wants to see how you’re doing. Now get clean.” Mrs. Dorsey handed Roger a bucket of water and walked into the dining room. After washing away the remnants of the girl and changing into clean clothes Roger began to feel somewhat better. However, the dread of his sister’s death, which he was certain was inevitable, did not allow his mood to be elevated much. Roger crossed to the door and walked into the dining room. Sitting with her back to the table so she could face the door was a girl of about seventeen with long curly black hair.

“Elizabeth!” Roger yelled as he raced to his sister, throwing his arms around her. “I thought you were going to die and I was going to be all alone.”

“I’m alright Roger, I was sick but I’m better now. I’m not going anywhere.” Roger’s stomach rumbled reminding him he had not eaten since breakfast.

“I’m hungry.”

“Well then we should eat and you can tell me how you got the bruise on your face.”

Roger elbowed his way on to the bench next to his sister and began his story between mouthfuls.

boys.

“Well, you had better get back to work and I need to get moving, so---good bye, Roger” Carl said and began walking down the road. Roger, his brain finally able to process what was happening, yelled, “Goodbye, Carl!” and waved. Without looking back Carl raised his arm and returned the wave. Roger turned and started toward the boarding house when the line of girls heading back to the mill reminded him of the bell. Cursing under his breath Roger turned and headed back to the mill. The rest of his shift would be unpleasant without dinner but not as unpleasant as Mr. Barton would be if he was late twice in one day. Once back in the spinning room Roger retrieved his box and prepared for the monotony. After the break Roger discovered two of the other doffers had failed to return, and he found himself covering the room by himself.

The next four hours went by in a blur of bobbins and sliding under machines. Finding himself with a rare moment to rest, Roger stood at the end of the line watching the new sparehand. The girl had the reddest hair Roger had ever seen. Long coils reached almost to her waist that seemed to be on fire every time the girl stepped back into the sun shining through the window. Each time the girl took a step back Roger was drawn closer, unable to look away. The girl produced a handkerchief from a pocket and lightly mopped her brow. Roger could not understand his fascination with the girl and continued his slow advance to where she was working. Roger’s understanding came too late to prevent anything. To obtain a better view of a complex task the girl stepped to the right. Watching her trainer intently the girl did not notice the handkerchief slip from her hand until she went to wipe her forehead. Locating the handkerchief on the ground, the girl bent to retrieve it. As the girl reached down the spinning of the pulley created just enough air current to pull the free-falling locks into its grasp. The girl’s hair wound around the drive shaft, pulling her from her feet and slamming her head into the pulley. The girl’s screams were covered by the deafening roar of the machinery. The machine operator turned to ensure the girl was paying attention, unaware of what had happened. Finding the girl pinned to the pulley the operator yanked the lever to disengage the pulley from the drive and tried to pull the girl free. Roger turned to locate Mr. Barton, who he found gesturing at a machine in an attempt to make the operator understand what she was doing wrong. Roger screamed for Mr. Barton but his voice failed to be heard more than a few feet in front of him. Frantically looking around, Roger grabbed an empty bobbin and hurled it at the oblivious overseer. Spinning end over end, the bobbin held true to its course and struck Mr. Barton in the head. When the moment of shock passed, the overseer turned to find the source of the bobbin. He found Roger jumping and frantically pointing down the aisle. Reacting faster than most people would have been able to even turn and look, Mr. Barton crossed to the machine and with a knife produced from his boot he cut the girl free. Roger



CORNER ON FIRST
by Angela Buckland

watched in horror as the girl's head, without the tension on her hair to hold it into place, fell at an odd angle not possible without broken bones. Blood from her nose and where the scalp had been torn free began pooling on the floor. The girl's damaged remains brought back memories of Roger's brother lying on the floor of the barn, his face crushed from a horse's kick. The flood of new and old emotions overwhelmed the small boy and he saw his world go black as he fainted. A sudden stabbing pain in Roger's ribs broke the tranquility of the blackness Roger floated in.

"Wake Up!" Mr. Barton yelled as he raised his foot and drove his boot into Roger's side again. Roger's eyes fluttered open and he looked up at the red face staring down at him.

"Get up boy, you act like a woman, fainting at the first sign of blood." Roger slowly rose to his feet feeling unsteady at first but quickly recovering. Roger, realizing the room was quiet, turned and saw the faces of the workers. The women stood there filled with sadness over the loss of life and acceptance of what their fate might be if they allowed their concentration to slip for even a moment. Roger forced his eyes to look at the body and drive the memories of his brother back. The floor was smeared with blood but the body was gone.

"Where did she go?" Roger called out.

"They came and got her while you took your nap, boy. Now you're going to clean that mess up and make sure you do a good job." Mr. Barton turned and yelled "Back to work!"

Roger went and gathered the bucket and scrub brush necessary for the distasteful task at hand. When he returned Roger stood and stared at the machine for a minute, afraid of moving toward it. Finally, steeling his nerve Roger walked over to the machine and began to clean. When the last signs of the former sparehand were erased, Roger stood and replaced the cleaning supplies as the final bell of the day rang, temporarily releasing the workers from their servitude. The walk back to the boarding house resembled a funeral procession. No one talked and the normal rush was absent. As the women crossed the bridge, a group of children ran by breaking the silence and returning everything to normal. Roger followed the rest of the women into the house and headed toward his pallet. The day had been too much for him to handle and he wanted sleep. Roger crossed through the dining room without evening looking at the food set out for supper. When Roger walked into the kitchen he found Mrs. Dorsey hard at work finishing the food. Mrs. Dorsey turned and saw Roger and screamed, "What happened to you!"

"What? I was at work."

"You're covered in blood!" Roger looked down at his clothing and said "It's not my blood, I'm fine." Realizing that his short answer was not going to be sufficient to satisfy Mrs. Dorsey Roger added, "A new girl had an accident and Mr.