

Reflections

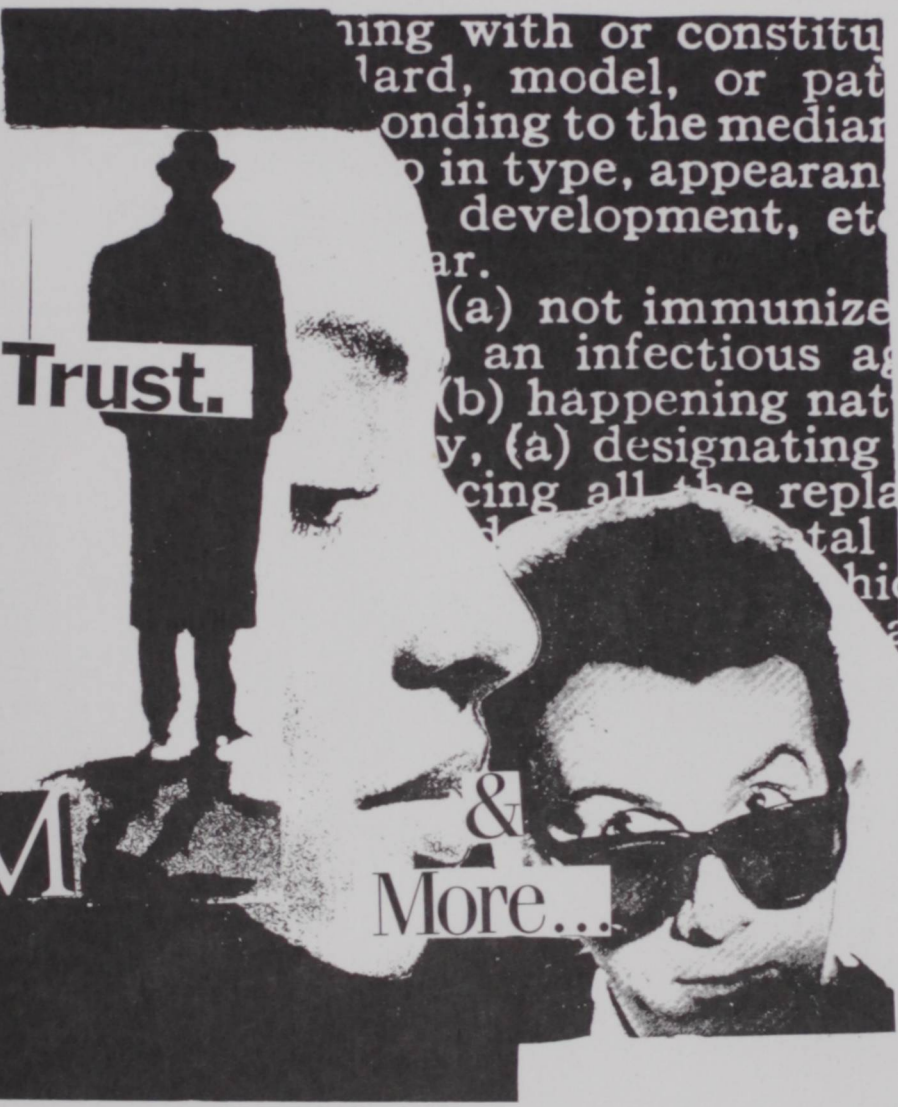
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Trust.

Trust

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J the Jason

Willamette University
Literary and Arts Magazine
SPRING 1989

“What one has written is not to be defended or valued,
but abandoned: others must decide significance and value.”

William Stafford,
from *Writing the Australian Crawl*

SPRING 1989

J^{the}
Jason

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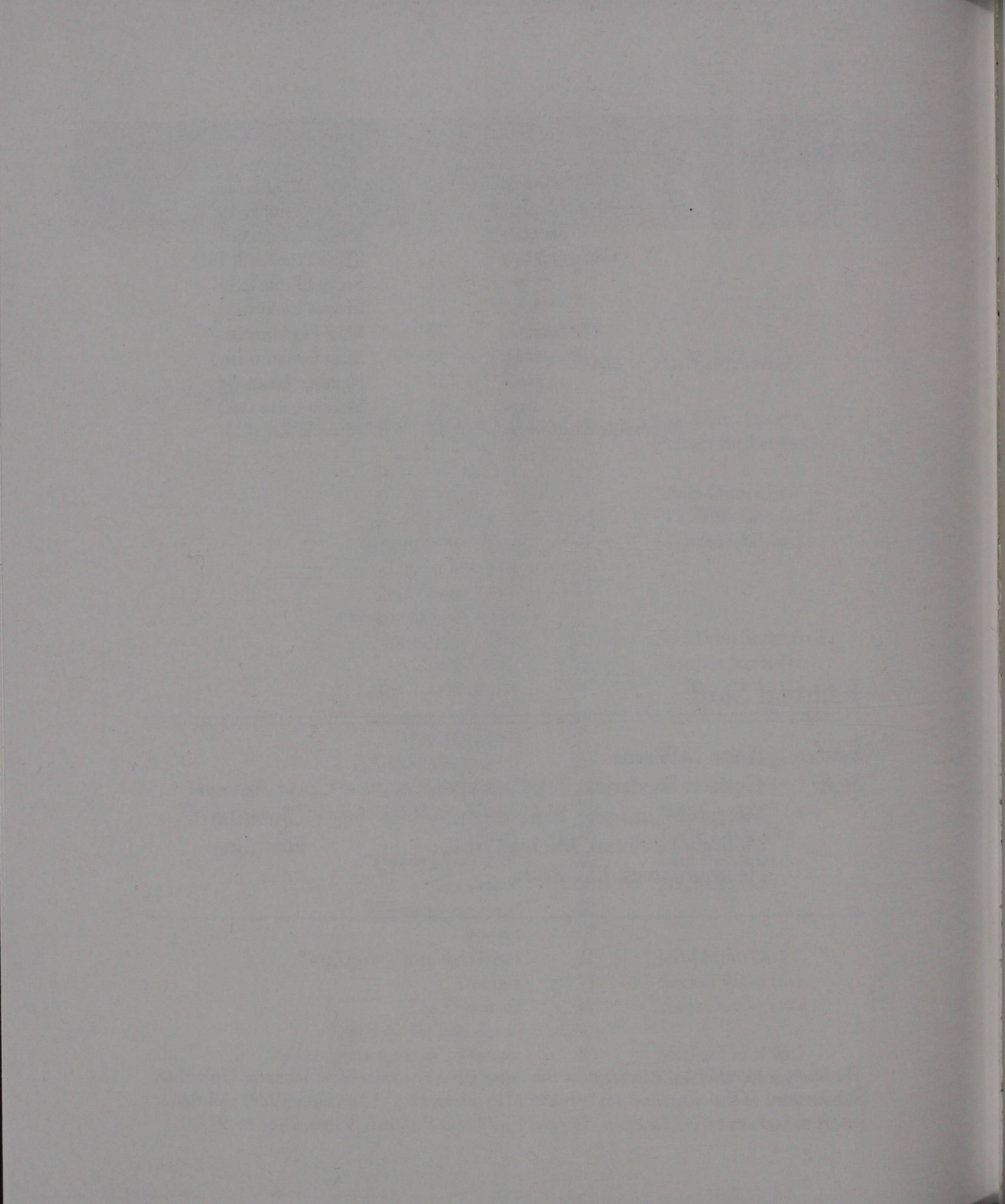
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a trip to the mall for winter shoes

I want to stop and look at the mushrooms
but you hurry on
and make me do a skip run to catch up
you say you need to get back and study
But I get even when I dart into the street
you wanted to wait for the sign to change
such a law abiding citizen
I forced you to follow or be deserted
I can tell you are disgruntled by the way
You hold your lips

I know how to make you happy again
So I talk about the leaves on the pavement,
they are soaked with rain to papier mâché layers
and others applaud in the wind as they run down the street
I try to wait for a flock of yellow to cross my path
But I trample through them because you are getting
too far ahead

you can name all the trees on the block
but I can pick up the perfect leaf
red and orange and yellow and brown
kiss its smooth surface
and tuck it in your hair

Kristen Becker

He Said

He said: All she wants
to do is write poetry
and feed the ducks.

This
was said into the phone
and I eavesdropped
it.

He said: Duck fetish.

It
was mentioned in between
Things of Great Importance
(post-modern thought,
his sense of self,
elections.)

He said: You adore
them, don't you?

I said: I suppose
that these ducks
are uppercrust ducks.

He said: Yes. I suppose
they are.

I said: They like me.

Treachery

My lover is a keeper of the flock.
With a straight staff of faith,
he stands before the fold.
The cane is more for
guiding than for flogging.

His farm is of a common stock.
By dust and dirt they become stained;
he has them shorn
and with warm water scrubs
the white wool sweet.

He toils towards this purity.

And I am the rot of the crop,
of the foot, of the milk.
I am the sore mouth,
the worm, the hungry dog.

I chase them
into barbed wire.

James Osmer

Insomnia

I am the seductive succubus who lies with men
 Before they go to the chair
I am the sadistic strobe light that stays with parents
 When their children are gone
I am the memories of lovers
 Washed clean by bleach and time
I am your dead brother
I am your ex-wife
I am the money you owe
I am the noise downstairs
There will be no sleep under my roof
Tonight.



PNW Brunch, Steve Nichols

Bill Wilkerson

Description 3

Rolling
pounding
shaping themselves
the low hills
are like
waves

Michael Ishii

Rainsong (for Kara)

Before dawn, I'm awake and
crawling around the room in darkness.
The rain's song — calm, steady,
strong as a lover's voice —
plays through drainpipes and gutters.
If I was a smoker, I'd have gone
through two packs this past half-hour,
I'd be crushing out the last ember in a
burnt-bottom ashtray.

Tonight you are two thousand miles away,
in Syracuse.

Don't ask why I listen to the rain.

When it falls like this, I can't help
but think I'm the only person left
in the world. My cold, weary body's
curled on the window ledge like a cat's;
over my shoulder, a kinescope of rain
rolls off the tops of cars.

I think of the miles in between us,
of an article in *Pacific* magazine
on I-90, which runs coast-to-coast,
east from Seattle (through Syracuse) to Boston.
The magazine's creased back on that page,
sits on the nightstand
with my glasses

while I blindly watch the
rain fall. If I had a deck of cards,
I'd play hand after hand of solitaire
to keep my hands busy, the way I remember
you at Silver Falls, picking apart flowers
and leaves, applying biology to them,
naming the stems, the individual petals.

I remember how you scattered them
along the open path —

that's the first thought

I had when I awoke tonight, my stomach
knotted as if I've just stepped off a plane
after being in a holding pattern for hours,

as if I'm searching the streets of Syracuse,
confused, lost in a muddle of footsteps —
no luggage, only what I carry with me.

Soju on the rocks

The last lamp light fading
four hundred meters behind,
we're walking down
a dark, two-lane road
that's supposed to lead down to the
beach.

Carrying bottles of
Korean whiskey — called soju —
we sing *West Side Story* songs
we remember from our
childhood. Think of Tony
down some dark alley
after the dance,
and how his eyes were full and
lost in song of Maria.

That's how we must look,
blindly following
the road, Mt. Sorak behind us
— we're drunk with the idea
of making a fire
on the beach,

but perhaps too drunk
to walk that far.
Instead, we've settled
on the rocks

mortimer gabriel's hands

I grab hold of those hands,
 all bones and stiff joints,
 and help him from the front
 of my rust-colored Colt.
 The dew-tipped lawn, a path
 leading uphill to the cemetery.
 He gathers a brown bag of flowers
 from the front seat and leads on,
 cutting through the grass.

We walk slowly, as if
 not to disturb the rhythm of
 the dead, or the morning sun.
 This place is one for whispering.
 His fedora mashed between his palms,
 he talks to me as if I were
 his closest, only friend.

Which I'm not.

I met him only a month ago
 while volunteering time at
 the care center, Candalaria.
 I remember waiting for him this morning
 in the driveway, staring at an
 unvarnished fence, a bed of
 yellow and white azaleas.

I stand for some time in silence
 over his wife's grave, and even though
 I don't know her, I can understand
 his love for her by the way he unwraps
 the azaleas, peeling away the green crepe paper
 and placing them to rest
 at the foot of the headstone, "Grace Emily."
 His fingers find their way along
 the stone's edge like a
 blind man reading braille,
 brushing back overgrown grass

while bands of sunlight break through
 the branches of autumn poplars.
 A bird cries, then all is silent
 once more.



Steve Elliott

Schelleen Scott

Her Flemish Tear

Freedom, the eyes
Gently close, closed eyes. The eyesight
Searching through the soul's fog
Words of The Book as trumpets in the soul.
It is my haven,

This quiet tender
Sight, with the gently reaching hands — babies' breath.
There is a calm in the heart,
Alone, together,
He carries me patiently.

I am distraught and sure,
I think I may be between,
I am so eagerly searching,
My Guides
Waiting and waiting through the sanctifying fog.

This is my life.
Many thoughts an hour
I seek Him, wanting
The ultimate understanding with His sure
Meaning, assured Rock,

And the heart of intense devotion.
I need Him.
I need Him like water.
He has no medals,
Ponder it —

My two hands
Reaching their peace-driven fingers
To a pure white dove,
Their persistent
Golden touch life and me.



Girl By Herself, Chris Bernhardt

Heather James

Tout à Vous

Je rêve toujours de vous . . .
 I'm making a kite with material
 flexible and light.
 But I attach to it a cross
 sort of a brace (just in case)
 your hand falters once you realize
 its grace. A cunning kite
 ensconsed for navigated flight.

streams of colored sun
 beams pulse air through the kite giving it life
 up, away . . .
 whistling like a fife.
 (and its tail showers radiance) To duck between
 clouds (hiccough-ly) To dart among the high
 To cartwheel across blueness dip
 (softly)
 along low hills, skimming mint,
 crushed fields with the breath of ascent.

Ho, ho! grinning with ease, each
 moment to seize! And I clap musical
 time alive and I catch
 my breath that was once suspended
 inside spirals of clouds: (dream-clouds untended)
 Vous tenez la corde, beyond this world.
 flaming — your eyes reflect a
 blush as they dance to witness me flush.

Nous affirmons quand
 nous donnons tout à Vous.

Je donne tout à vous et
 je tourne à toi:

Do you realize? Est-ce que tu réalises?
 Tout à toi.

Oui! your fingers slipping . . .
the string tugs free, so the kite
begins tipping — like a saucer pouring
out grace down from
Heavens! unleashed — the kite now
shrieks in sharp angles
warning shades near the earth's surface.
(l'ange des nuages) From her fortress
she falls
I dive
and I recover.
so its chin lifts to discover:
tu tiens la corde et nous
sprintons . . . our kite rises
you unwind more twine and pray
we're wiser.

Nous affirmons parce que
nous donnons tout à vous:
notre Dieu.

Talkin' to a Musician

Jazzish boys following noise
trunking it up
along grey bays
of tired souls.
They play not
for a mouthpiece that is worn
or to hear the applause.
Smiling, curling horn
dips and turns
its polish blinds the audience
who can only listen to
Brass flashing

I fell
 head over heels for you
 and skinned
 my heart.

The Amaranth

Tonight I crack my window,
 night-time is passing thru
 as leaves amalgamate against
 the wind and
 weepy dew.

I peer beyond this pane
 into the mesmerizing presence
 of a grey night —
 whose floods of whispers
 (neither black nor white)
 sashay over
 a rare blossom.

He fondles her slippers and ahhh, how they
 ache

to leap or tango by
 moonlight, (faded twilight).

Her velvet petals sigh,
 and begin a low sweep.

The lashes of the Amaranth
 on her violet stem so fine and slim
 by rain slashes
 were stripped off
 as they dance

as she breathes his intoxicant. All — (save the moon's glance)
 appeared pliant within her trance.

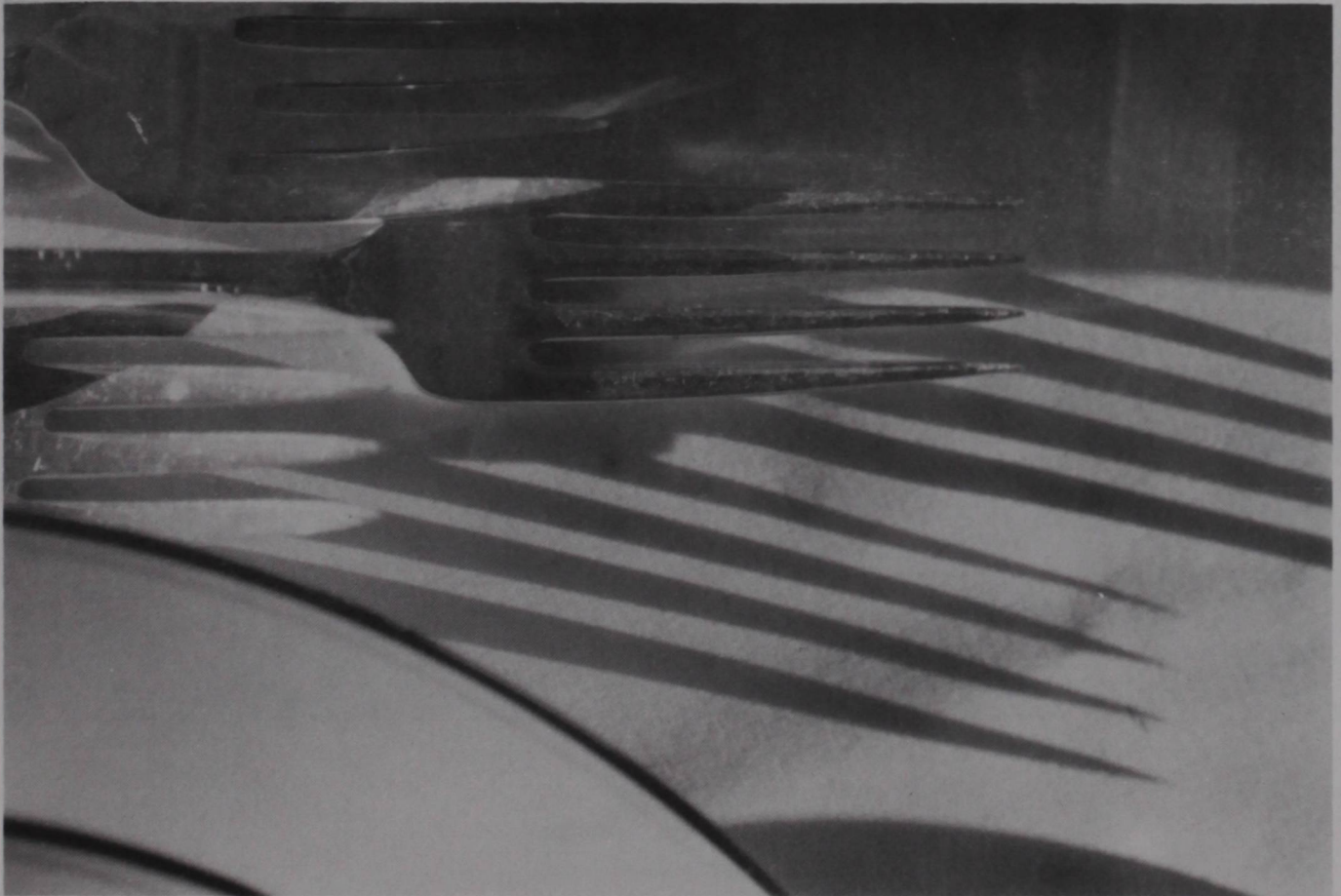
I see beyond this pane, and I cry
 at the straight trees so eager and deciduous:

"hush . . . rustling boughs!"

But they too — hypnotically
 sway. Unearned, the knight accepts her
 vows.

Moon's glow unseen: for she is lost in the knight,
and all his whispers
sashay out —
by dawn-light.

Dear amaranth, Now, I know what you do.
Cloaked in swirls of amethyst,
satin robe that slipped
once you sipped his
breaths. They left
a satinet wealth:
lashes a-flutter, (though they're salt-dried)
you bewitch yourself
each time those velvet slippers leap —
or begin a low sweep.



Steve Elliott



Marcia Latta

Greg Mulhauser

A Dream Come True

the other day i had a dream
where everything is peaceful
and people don't grow old
and there are no taxes to pay
there is no overpopulation or
crowding in the cities
and we have all been made equal
and i wonder why i struggled
to get ahead
because no one is ahead now or behind
and things are quiet and easy
and it is a little bit cold
but i don't mind
Because the fires keep me warm,
And the fallout
Makes beautiful sunsets.

Eric Hammer

a whispered america is
diverting our lives into a
thousand delusions of today:
sweating rhymes (now) of un-lived histories
 post-beat skyscraper missionaries
 concrete underground windows
 dime-store ginsbergs
 floating whitmans
existing in a neurotic guttural
interplay-intestines of the pre-fab urban void)
mystical reconciliation — a cairo of several souls

Tara Campbell

The Trials and Tribulations of Essay Writing

1:59 p.m. Friday. A classroom. 1:59. Sixty eyes, anticipating, locked on the clock. The hands stubbornly refuse to register 2:00. It's 1:59. 1:59. One pair of eyes disengages from the clock and looks over its Quarry. "By the way, Class, you have a 20,000-word Essay on the effects of the ancient Mu Mu tribe on the Writing of the Novel *Wuthering Heights*. It's due on Monday." R-r-r-ring! "Have a nice weekend."

Okay, so it was a tad overdone. The Assigning of an Essay is rarely that impromptu or severe, but the shock value and sense of hopelessness is the same. A Teacher (we shall call him the "Antagonist," merely for the Sake of Argument, I assure you) will tell the Student that Writing an Essay is really the simple matter of forming a Thesis and proving it. The search for a Thesis, however, has been known to transform the brightest Conscientious Student into a gibbering lump of confusion. I say the Conscientious Student gibbers as opposed to the Nonchalant Student because the Nonchalant Student simply doesn't care. He is content to spend twenty minutes on a Sunday Night writing his Essay, possibly taking the time Between Classes to Polish it. You see, this Student has better things to do on Weekends than Writing Papers. But have no fear, this seemingly Twisted Sense of Priorities has no detrimental effect on the later life of the Student; seeing as how nine times out of ten, he will either Inherit a Fortune or Marry Into one. This pleasurable life of Essayless Decadence will be perfectly satisfactory to the Student, because he, as he puts it, "was never much good at Writing anyway." At any rate, we shan't worry about the Nonchalant Student anymore. We shall instead focus on the sorry plight of the Conscientious Student.

The Antagonist proposes (rather, demands) an Essay. What Fun! The Student is approached with one of two Options: (1) to Write on a Specific Topic, or (2) I'm a Liberal Kind of Guy, so pick your Own Topic. So, here we go, let us first take the route of the Antagonist Designated Topic.

We are at the Glittering Center of the Vast Universe. Stars twinkle in the velvet curtain of Space amidst luminous multi-colored Ball-planets. The radiant glare of a nearby sun casts a cold light on

the Signpost suspended in a Nebulous Cloud of Gas. Scripted in block letters of black paint, the Sign reads: "SO WHAT?"

This is the typical effect of the Essay Topic on any Student. But the Conscientious Student, despite having to face a Topic with all the Impact and Aesthetic Appeal of a Spitwad, cannot subdue the Compulsion to Write. The first step is to Collect the Information, which is usually not difficult because the topic has been Examined and Re-examined to such an extent as to inspire the Question of why none of these people have been accused of Plagiarism. On the other hand, the Topic is sometimes so Obscure that the Student would have to travel to another dimension to obtain any Credible Facts. This explains the rather large amount of Educated Fabrication (commonly known as B.S.) found in so many Papers. In fact, part of the Satisfaction in receiving an Outstanding Grade is to figure out the ratio of B.S. to Fact and find out how many Points may be attributed to one's Literary Schmaltz.

If the Antagonist is in a generous Mood, he might bestow upon the Student the opportunity to Choose his Own Topic. As generous as the Antagonist thinks he is being, he is, in reality, unleashing an untold Plethora of Anxieties upon the Student. The first Problem is obvious: "What shall I Write about?" The Student's mind quickly becomes a Whirling Vortex of Ideas, none of which could be deemed Suitable for Print. At the very last minute he sighs and, deciding on the Least Trite Topic or Personal Experience, formulates his sad little Exposition.

This Essay is often a Travesty; shaggy with Loose Ends, rambling pointlessly in Hurried Script, with a Premise as thin as the paper it is scrawled upon. The only redeeming quality of the Paper is that it Exists. But then again, provided it is executed skillfully enough, a Thesisless Paper does not have to be a Horror. This very Exposition might be used as an Example of the success of Thesisless Papers depending on two things: (1) how well I adhere to anything not resembling an Orderly Chain of Thoughts in the least, and (2) whether or not I can inspire enough Confusion in the Reader to make him think this Piece has any Literary Merit whatsoever.

Success! The Student finally reaches the end of his Essay. The Sense of Accomplishment is immense; for, if nothing else, he has at least demolished quite an Impressive Amount of paper. Now all that is left is the Conclusion, or the Final Paragraph. Relax, this part of the Essay is so ridiculously easy, the Essayist could do it with his Pen tied behind his Back. In fact . . . well . . . often the Essayist will put it aside and come back to it later. And this brings me to an Important Point: when Writing an Essay, one must never Forget to complete the —

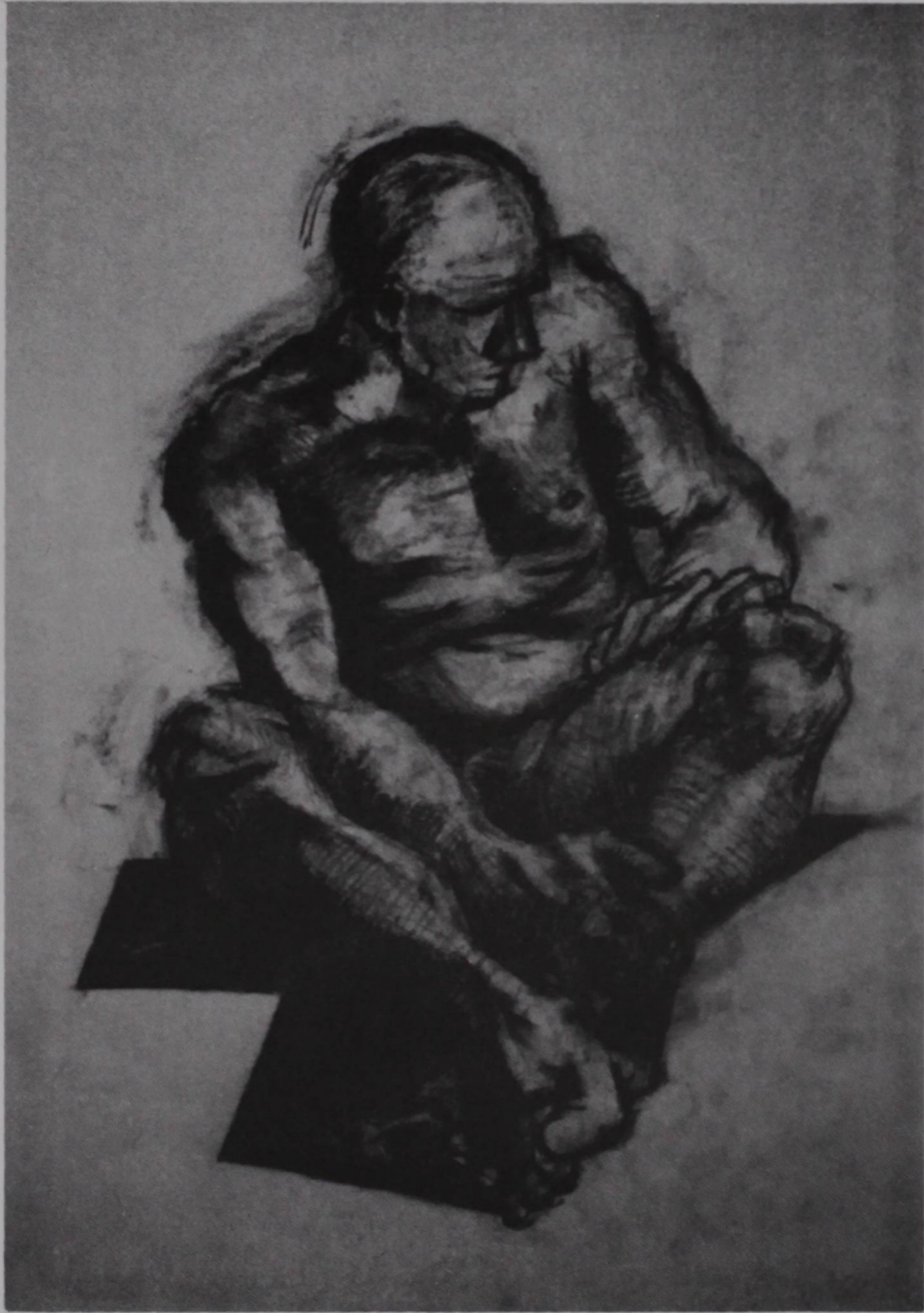
Karen Lovre

Study

Sitters in a room bent
over pages reflected pale
in flourescent light
that hums quietly,
or is that the brains
at work making the
serious sounds of study
as the acquisition of
facts continues late into
Sunday night what should
have been done earlier,
but it was raining then
and that is a different
sound altogether.

John Rehm

I want to say it is,
and write is, is, is as if is
might be be one
or the other,
as if is could tell me yes or no
as if is
could rest its strong arm upon my shoulder
and tell me surrender,
leaving really would be
is all and
ever be



The Squatter, Matt Ferranto

J.D. Roth

i
on
esco
was right,
possibly
hem
in
gway, too;
words have
lost their
value.
hell:
today (imagine)
a sawbuck
can buy
an:
i love you?

if i move my eyes
in just the right circles
i can watch the blades
of the fan as they spin
around and around
and i can feel the
thoughts in my mind spin
around and around
and suddenly: i am in
a dim and smoky cafe
you know the kind
paris, munich, old movies

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she sits across from me
all dressed in black
and she drinks from her cup
like a lady and her laugh is
soft like the whirl of a fan
around and around
if i move my eyes
in just the right circles.

october

Knock knock So i let you in wet drip drip shiver from the rain cold night outside face red corners hang frowning angry i close the door wind howls outside warm fire inside you pull back hood hair is anyhow wet long and black and shiny like onyx shiny hair i love to stroke when i hold you nakedly your weight pinning me to the earth But you are not naked you are here and wet and say *give it to me laura* your words like needles prickly prickly hurt me poke me lose my balance teeter but i will not fall i catch myself turn on my heel and flutter to the couch leave you drip dripping on new rug looking like melting popsicle silly I sit skirt floats to knees dainty dainty o so pretty you tell me you love when i wear skirts i lift camus note the place look at you thoughtfully say *to what are you referring dean my love* voice good like rich woman high class perfectly perfect gaze stare your eyes as black as coal god i love those eyes when we make love deep i float in them floating like in peace in time in space But now they burn fiery gaze do not drop my guard do not fall you stony faced angry drip dripping sniffy nose *dont play games with me laura* so serious your voice like you are an adult a man you are only a boy dean so young so pretty your hair your eyes your arms a net your back an anvil your thighs a vice your hips mine you are firm you are soft you glide when we make love you glide Sigh ease air gently i look at you just the right face drop my rigid eyes youre disap-

pointed cant i be trusted lightning flashes boom thunder boom crashes you are standing in my doorway
 dripping on my rug puddle of wetness beneath your face tense is full of passion red your eyes hair are black
 and wet and you are wet and smooth i will make love for you i stand *come here dean* i say retrace my path
 stand before you stare eyes black fiery burning im falling falling catch myself hold on will not fall my arms
 around your wetness calculated seconds waiting your eyes unchanging falling am i help me Kiss him laura
 i kiss you biting your lips are so beautiful but you do not kiss back dripping on my rug i look your eyes are
 burning black fiery my blouse my skirt wet not dripping soggy like cornflakes you stand before me still face
 still red no longer from cold face still red angry angry raise an arm i turn my head cheek cracks meets hand
 pain falling crying i fall *o dean o dean* on the floor crying dripping crying crying i fall crying tears and rain
 drip dripping face is burning only want to love you only want you to love me *I didnt mean to take it* i
 sputter crying dripping myself curled on the floor you tower above me tall and handsome so young you are
 a boy *you bitch* you scream you say eyes burning you glare i cry eyes burning *give it back* no need to yell and
 i am falling nothing to grasp nothing to catch *fuck you dean* i am crawling to the bureau oak drawers oak
 frame shiny shiny like your hair your eyes your nakedness Third drawer up slowly open reach inside crying
 falling still slowly like an instant replay i pick up your heart your heart red bloody muscle organ pump giver
 of life hamburger raw your heart you must love me *you must love me dean* o i cry i cry you stride wetly to my
 side footprints black on the hardwood floor you watch i lift your hamburger heart take it out im falling
 wont you catch me dean my love hold me catch me do not let me fall im falling you grab my wrist grab
 your heart snatching it stealing it o dean please dont leave me only a piece i beg you take you hold you
 swallow it and stare at me once more eyes burning fiery fiery *o dean please dont* I feel you bursting feel your
 violence and You whisper *come laura lets make love* I lift my skirt and you gently catch my fall.



dingo, Matt Ferranto

John Miho

The Saga of Phred the Great!

ONCE THERE WAS A DUDE NAMED PHRED.
HE WAS A REALLY GREAT DUDE.
SO GREAT, IN FACT, THAT HE WAS CALLED:

PHRED THE GREAT!

TALK ABOUT A REALLY GREAT DUDE.
PHRED WAS A MEGADUDE.
BY THE WAY, PHRED WAS ALSO A BARBARIAN.
HE USED TO BE PHRED THE BARBARIAN.
BUT THAT WAS BEFORE HE BECAME SO GREAT.
NOW HE'S JUST PHRED THE GREAT.
I SUPPOSE HE COULD BE CALLED . . .

PHRED THE GREAT BARBARIAN!

BUT ALAS, HE IS SIMPLY PHRED THE GREAT.
PHRED HAS DONE MANY GREAT THINGS.
THIS IS PARTLY WHY HE IS SO GREAT.
PHRED SOUNDLY TROUNCED THE DREADED HIGGLEDY-PIGGLEDY BEAST
OF MANJOOJOBEE.
THIS WAS A GREAT THING.

HE ALSO FLED IN TERROR FROM A CALC II MIDTERM.
THIS WAS NOT REALLY SUCH A GREAT THING,
BUT IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE.

PHRED ONCE SPOKE TO PLATO.
THIS WAS A GREAT THING, AS PLATO WAS A GREAT GUY.
NOT THE PHILOSOPHER PLATO, YOU UNDERSTAND.
THIS WAS PHINNEAS PLATO, THE PLUMBER.
BUT A GREAT GUY NONETHELESS.

SPRING 1989

ONCE, LONG AGO, PHRED SACKED THE VILLAGE OF POTATO.
I GUESS IT COULD BE CALLED A POTATO SACK.
THIS WAS NOT A GREAT THING, BUT IT WAS BARBARIC.
PHRED WAS JUST A BARBARIAN THEN.
HE SACKED THE VILLAGE, BURNED THE HOUSES, RAPED THE FIELDS, AND PILLAGED THE WOMEN.
I NEVER SAID PHRED WAS VERY SMART,
JUST EXTREMELY GREAT.

NOT ONCE, BUT TWICE, DID PHRED TRULY THWACK THE BOOGA-BOOGA BEAST FROM BURBANK.
THE BOOGA-BOOGA BEAST CAN NEVER BE KILLED, BUT IT CAN BE THWACKED.
PHRED DID THIS NOT ONCE, BUT TWICE.
THESE WERE BOTH GREAT THINGS.

PHRED ONCE WENT THUSLY INTO VALIANT COMBAT AGAINST THE MALIGNANT HEATER BEAST OF MOHL IN THE LAND OF WU.
HE TRIUMPHED, OF COURSE.
THIS IS ONE OF THE REASONS HE IS SO GREAT.
THE HEATER BEAST WAS THUSLY AND THEREBY PUT ON ICE.
THIS WAS A GREAT THING.
YET ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF GREAT THINGS.

IN THE DIM, DIM DAYS LONG PAST,
PHRED DECEIVED, DEMORALIZED, AND GENERALLY DEFEATED THE DREADED, DASTARDLY DOOHICKEY DUDE.
THE DOOHICKEY DUDE WAS A DUDE.
NOT A GREAT DUDE,
JUST A DUDE.
A DUDE FROM THE DEMENTED, DARK DESERT OF DETROIT.
PHRED AND THE DOOHICKEY DUDE ONCE WENT TO WAR TOGETHER.
THE DOOHICKEY DUDE DESERTED.
THIS WAS NOT A GREAT THING.
THIS WAS A BAD THING.
THEREFORE, PHRED DECEIVED, DEMORALIZED, AND DEFEATED HIM.
THIS WAS A GREAT THING.

BUT WHAT DOES PHRED DO FOR FUN?
LONG AGO, BACK WHEN PHRED WAS A BARBARIAN,
PHRED USED TO BARBARICALLY BEND, BASH, AND BOOT BLUE MEANIES AS A SORT OF HOBBY.
THIS DOES NOT REALLY COUNT AS A GREAT THING,
BUT IT WAS A HECK OF A LOT OF FUN.
IN THIS, HE WAS AN ALLY OF THE BEATLES.

THE BEATLES WERE GREAT.
NOT THE MUSIC GROUP, OF COURSE.
THESE WERE ACTUAL BEATLES.
THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT THEY WERE NOT GREAT.
THIS IS. THEY WEREN'T.
THEIR NAMES WERE SCHLEP, JORJIE, PAW, AND RINGWORM.
PHRED GAVE THIS UP.

IN HIS TRAVELS PHRED ONCE MET GUIDO THE KILLER PIMP.
GUIDO WAS A SWELL DUDE.
NOT A GREAT DUDE, AS PHRED IS,
BUT SIMPLY SWELL.
TOGETHER THEY MET AND MALIGNED THE MALICIOUS MCFUDPUCKER.
THE MCFUDPUCKER WAS A MEGAMONSTER FROM NEBRASKA.
HE WAS REPORTED TO HAVE LEFT NEBRASKA DUE TO BOREDOM.
AFTER ALL, WHAT IS THERE FOR A MEGAMONSTER TO DO IN
NEBRASKA?
IN ACTUALITY, WHAT IS THERE FOR ANYONE TO DO IN NEBRASKA?
NOT MUCH, I THINK.

(Note: The Management wishes to apologize to anyone who is from Nebraska. The state was chosen arbitrarily. Honest.)

Rachel Ward

Decision

Her body says yes
Her mind says no
He says, "come on,
what harm can it do?"
Her body says yes
her voice says no
But it is an
unsure no.
A persuadable no.
Her body says yes
he says yes
the paper with
the advice
and the rules
says,
"Ice Cream has
Ten Thousand Calories;
say no to Ice Cream."
But she ignores the
paper and eats the
Ice Cream
anyway.



greed, Heather James

Scott Durbin

The Priesthood

My only regret is that I didn't kiss her.

As I sat at the breakfast table mixing the remains of the grape jelly from my English muffins with the scattered pools of yolk dispersed asymmetrically on my plate, I gazed unknowingly at my mother's rear end. It was a nice bottom. Certainly a woman of her age could have taken better care of herself, but I suppose pumping out two children puts a damper on the body and spirit. It wasn't that I was sexually attracted to my mother, Lord knows that's a sin, but the simple fact that she and my older sister were members of that glorious opposite sex did bring its benefits.

"Lloyd, you're going to be late for school! Hurry up, dear!"

After the few seconds needed to adjust from daydreaming to reality passed, my mind came back into focus.

"Mom, I'm quitting school and becoming a priest," I said laughingly as I grabbed my books and headed for the door. She squinted and replied, "Whatever, Lloyd!"

School for me was a needless social institution that tried reinforcing such basic family values as unity and loyalty by having those ever-important and endless pep rallies. In other words, patriotism for one's school was a great excuse to view numerous cheerleaders frolicking in specially-designed outfits that left little to a young man's imagination.

As the bells rang, concluding the day's activities, I ventured into the schooyard hoping I could catch a glimpse of the woman God had so graciously sent to me for all my years of constant prayer. Her name was Priscilla Tanner. Ten consonants and five vowels of glowing beauty, numerous freckles, and the only girl in eighth grade who knew how to properly wear a bra and to fill one.

"Hey, Lloyd! What are you looking for — your personality?"

I turned around, and there to my amazement was Riff Shoemaker, otherwise known as "The Big Shoe." Supposedly, last summer he actually felt a girl's breast, but that's only hearsay.

"What do you want, Riff?"

"Don't call me Riff, you raff!" He burst out laughing. And there I stood, watching an overgrown eighth grader laughing at his own stupid jokes.

"Have you seen Priscilla? I need to get a homework assignment," I said, searching for a conversational tool or any other weapon I could use to hit this silly guy.

"Yeah, she acted like a banana and split!"

I sighed and thought how if Riff's dad wasn't on the school board, Riff would have been in a home for juvenile delinquents by now. I did the small talk and headed off for home. Although I was a little disappointed with the day's progress, my big sister gave me the greatest news a thirteen-and-a-half year-old kid could receive next to finding out that Priscilla Tanner liked me. My sister's best friend was going to spend the night with us.

It was closing in on six-thirty and in light of the numerous phone calls that were exchanged between my sister and her friend, I knew her arrival would be soon. The reason I was so excited that my sister's friend was coming over was because she was a real woman. I mean she wore make-up, had a boyfriend, and most of all had the biggest knockers I had ever seen. Mrs. Miller, my piano teacher, did rival her, but Mrs. Miller was old, real old.

She finally arrived at ten after seven and the whole house was in a fix. This was the first time one of my sister's friends ever slept over for the entire night. My mother, being the busybee that she was, prepared fried chicken with mashed potatoes and gravy. Mom is a great cook and the food was delicious, mind you, but the supper wasn't what I was paying attention to. By some unknown force in the cosmos, my dad had placed me directly across from my sister's friend. As everyone dug into their food, my eyes feasted on the cleavage that lay before me. My pre-pubescent loins made for a squirmy few minutes, but I enjoyed it.

"What's on your mind, son?" asked my father.

"Breasts!" I blurted out without thinking.

Everyone suddenly stopped what they were doing and I became the focal point of our beloved little dinner. This was my first real pressure cooker. What else could I do? I had always thought if there

was one thing a kid like me would do, it would be something like this — For Crissake, I was thirteen-and-a-half! But never mind that, my sister's friend laughed, and what a laugh she had.

"I mean these are great chicken breasts," I added quickly, saying the first thing that popped into my head.

"But you're eating a chicken leg, Lloyd," said my mother, dumbfounded.

"You're exactly right, Mom!" Fumbling for something to say, I came up with the very logical, "Chicken's chicken any way you look at it, right Mom?"

The rest of supper became exactly that — supper. No talking, no eye contact, just eating.

We left the supper table, and seeing as I was in a rut, I offered to wash the dishes to save face with my mom. I finished my domestic chores and waddled into the living room. Everyone was settled in front of the television, laughing periodically, a "ha ha" here and an "oh my" there.

"Boy, am I stuffed!" I spoke loud enough to make sure everyone heard me. "Sis, how's school coming along?" I asked with a sarcastic edge to my voice.

My sister turned slightly to face me. Surprised that I had actually spoken to her, she replied with what she always replies: "Lloyd, don't you have something else to do — elsewhere!" For whatever reason, my father chuckled, making my sister's friend laugh. Paranoia struck. Was she laughing at me? No, she couldn't be laughing at me, she liked me. I decided she was laughing at my father. I peered at "dear old" dad. There he sat in his lazy boy recliner, a simple desk clerk, an obnoxiously subtle human being, and a cigar smoking philosopher of life, who was doing nothing more than chuckling. I mean, the police could bomb our house with laughing gas, and while everyone was on the floor dying of laughter, my dad would be chuckling.

At nine-thirty, Mom decided it was time for bed. The girls took their showers, Dad made his usual manly man sounds before hitting the sack, and I prepared for the most important night of my life.

"Lights out!" yelled Dad, and as usual the lights obeyed. However, this night was going to be different. Waiting patiently, I tiptoed over to the window. In two hours, the bathroom light at our next door neighbors' house would go out. It was a natural phenomenon dating as far back as I could remember that whenever midnight came the Richardson's bathroom light would go out. There I sat. I thought two hours would be just enough time for my sister and her friend to fall asleep, and just like clockwork the bathroom light joined the rest of the neighborhood in darkness.

My sister's door was ajar, making it easy for me to enter without disturbing her or her friend. I took three giant steps and two baby steps and stood crouching over my sister's bed.

There she lay, with the beauty of Priscilla Tanner and the breasts of Mrs. Miller. I became hypnotized with the way the moonlight caressed her eyelids, nose, and mouth. She was sleeping on her side, facing me. Her boobs. I was never comfortable with that word. Her knockers were so anticingly close that I forgot about kissing her and instead decided it was time I touched a breast. In hope of future advantages, I reached outwards cupping my hand. At that moment she rolled over to lay face down, and as things would go, my hand was caught! I stayed there crouching, hoping to God that I wouldn't be signing my death certificate soon. Tears slowly ran down my cheeks, but I knew it was time to be a man, or at least a good liar. I tried pushing her over, but she didn't budge. I asked God why he was doing this to me and then I remembered why. It was fourth grade, and I stole Mary Friedrickson's lunch. I thought God might have forgotten about that time because the sandwich wasn't even that good.

As I struggled with my composure, I began wondering what Priscilla Tanner was thinking of, dreaming of, or doing at that precise moment. I did know, however, that she surely didn't have *her* hand caught between the bosoms of her older sister's best friend.

My worry began to double as my hand fell asleep. I thought now was just as good of a time as any to make out my will, when she finally turned back on her side. As soon as I had my chance, I slowly eased my hand away. I stood up, thanked the Lord, and calmly walked to the door. When I reached the door, I ran as fast as I ever have to my room, waking everyone up in the process.

The family congregated by my sister's room.

"What's happening?" asked my father, still drowsy from sleep.

"Dad, I could swear I heard a burglar in the hall just a second ago!" exclaimed my sister.

"Don't swear, dear," said my dad. "If there's a burglar in the house, I'll check it out. Lloyd, go fetch me a flashlight."

I brought my father a flashlight, knowing that for the moment I was safe. I thought it ironic; the night I envisioned as the time when I would finally enter manhood ended with a sleepy man roaming around our house in his underwear and slippers, looking for a burglar that wasn't there.

I returned to my room, and tried to fall asleep. As my mind wandered, I just wished that I would have kissed her like I had planned. I am still not even sure if I actually felt her breast.

fishy dont'cha play de sax

an de rag-tag black jazz playin fool
dun grabbed hiz sax jazz fat cat playin' fool
gonna make dat sax singin' in 'sippi tonite
dancin' an de swingin' by de road sowed,
an swam back he dun did
cause I sang lik a fishy jumpin', hollarin' in my mutters pan
suun to be ate'in by a rag-tag jazz playin' man



Marcia Latta

Drawing Frankenstein's Monster

I'd work by candlelight
 if I thought it'd help.
 I'd tear open my windows, my doors
 and let the wind whip through,
 circle the room
 as if winding down the
 stone stairs of a castle tower.
 A Gothic lair,
 rising out of dust. A new moon.
 Everything dark as I've
 imagined before in nightmares.

On the desk is my sketchbook,
 folded and creased back.
 Let me put a hand to the candle
 to shield it from the wind, the night
 as I pace back and forth,
 deeper into the stone floors,
 remembering the story.

Mary Shelley must have had a bad night.
 How did she come up with that tale to tell
 Shelley and Byron? How I long
 for a story now. I've been silent;
 the wind gives away how silent I've become,
 working on the drawing all evening,
 standing at the incline desk
 like her "student of unhallowed arts"
 beholding the creation. The creaking and shivering
 of bones as it comes to life.

I feel like

Frankenstein, alone
 on a driftlog of ice in the Arctic,
 cold with weariness, one part,
 and lunacy, two.

Michael Ishii

Winner, Frankenstein drawing contest, Fall 1988



Frankenstein's Monster, Anne Kohtz

Cinda St. John

Odyssey

Glorious Penelope, oh dear and blissful Penelope,
 How long must I flounder in this tumultuous sea
 Of primordial chaos before I find thee, before I can
 Taste your sweet pleasures and feel your serene warmth.
 Peace, contentment, faith security —
 Oh, such elusive and tortuous desires!
 I am a slave to Poseidon's wrath, caught up in
 His violent maelstrom of dark ambiguity and uncertainty,
 A victim of his vindictive mockery. A shipwrecked seaman,
 Alone and desperate, broken and disoriented,
 I struggle to cling to the battered shell of my vessel,
 A solitary crusader pursuing a vast and immeasurable abyss.
 Almighty master, you've pierced my soul with your trident,
 Impassioned and impregnated me with ardent desire, and
 Thrust me into a whirlpool of impervious incomprehension.
 These unanswerable yet unavoidable questions leave me powerless.
 Release me, oh —Release me! Heaven, paradise eternal,
 If thou exist, open your gates and blind me with your beautiful light
 So that I may believe. Show me how to be free —
 Lead me to my Penelope, lead me to my salvation.

A creature ravenous, flaming with query,
 I am fated with future uncertain.
 Yet, how peacefully and whimsically my voyage began!
 The sky a perfect map and Æolus a cooperative guide,
 I set out to experience the origin of the cosmos
 Through the cosmogonies of ancient lore. Scientifically,
 Methodically, I charted the foreign waters,
 A historical drifter, curious, ignorant, and distant.
 From the elemental inferno of the forgotten Teutonic isles
 Emerged Ymir, a Polythemus gargantuan of brawn and might.

Forever immortal, he is father to all.
Out of his flesh sprouts the land and from his blood spurts the sea.
Next I am transcended to paradise abloom,
To God's raptuous Garden, his celestial home.
Omnipotent and supreme, compassionate and just,
He commanded, "Let there be light," and everything began.
Bedazzled, I soon watched the black Nyx of old Grecian lore
Hover, loom, and lay Gaia's great egg. As the queen of fertility,
The lover of Heaven, and the mother of all, it is from her
Womb and her breast that all life is born.
So magnetizing, alluring, and tempting the blurring twirl
Of the Chinese Charybdis, the Yin and the Yang,
Dualistic forces, one light and one dark,
Together are responsible for love, life, and law.

Oh, how appealing are the songs of the Sirens long forgotten,
Intoxicating to my spirit and nourishing to my mind.
They had captured my soul, and ignited my imagination
With a thirst for explanation, for truth, and for why.
What a magnificent orchestra, so glorious and so proud!
The music of the miracle, was triumphantly exalted
By a resplendence of rainbows, angelic and divine.
But then to myself the Sirens' song I did sing,
Asking but only one question: From where didst I come?
But no chorus of rainbows nor symphony of stars
Joined my lone voice. Instead, only Poseidon's vicious wrath
My ship overwhelmed, defenseless and weak,
I am left helpless in an alien ocean.
Its hull splintered by desire, and its sail torn by doubt,
My safety, my security is gone. Abandoned and afraid,
I am isolated, alone. It is now that I must choose,
Choose something to deliver me home.

