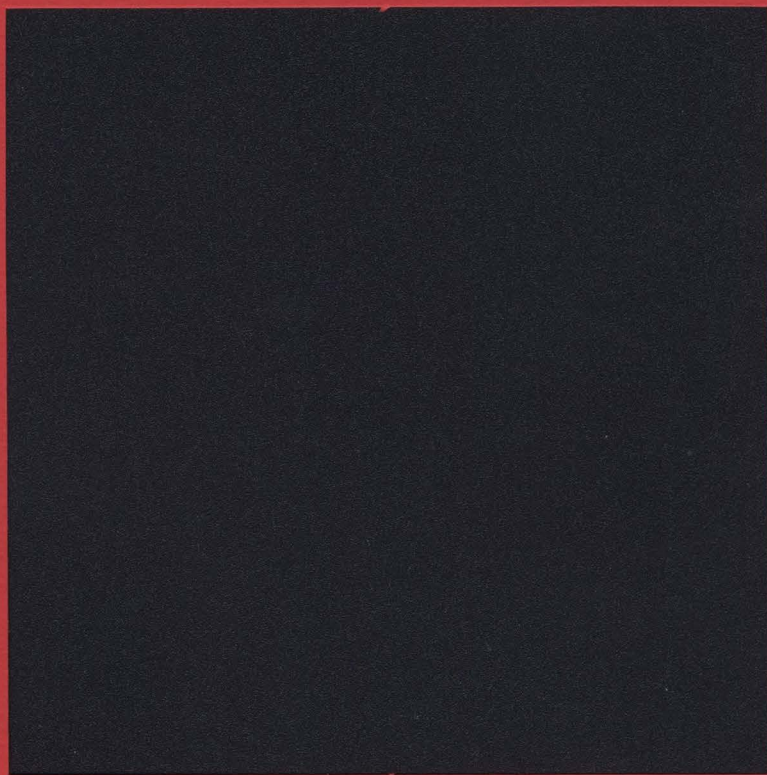


REF  
O L  
TCE



Reflector Literary Magazine  
Reflector Literary Magazine

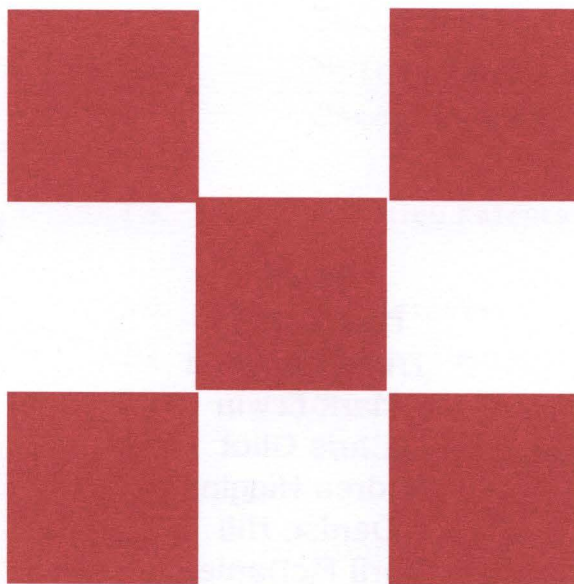
2  
0  
0  
0  
/  
2  
0  
0  
1

R	E	F
O		L
T	C	E

REF  
OJ  
TCE

# Reflector Literary Magazine

2  
0  
0  
0  
/  
2  
0  
0  
1



# Reflector Staff

---

## **Editor-in-Chief**

Kate Landry

## **Fiction Editor**

Briana Finui

## **Production Editor**

Anna Umbreit

## **Poetry Editor**

Dana Monlish

## **Faculty Advisors**

Dr. John Taggart

Dr. Dev Hathaway

## **Staff**

Paul Canary  
Tricia Carbone  
Mark Erwin  
Chris Gliot  
Andrea Higgins  
Denise Hill  
April McDaniel  
Amanda Metz  
Shawn Smith  
Amanda Weller

The Reflector is an annual undergraduate publication released by Shippensburg University. All genres of writing are considered for publication. The Reflector staff can be contacted at: *Reflector, Cumberland Union Building, Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, Pa 17257*

# Table of Contents

---

Shawn Smith	5	This Page Intentionally Left Blank
Melissa Flick	6	The Lake
Dustin Coover	7	After All
Chris Gliot	8	Passing in the Night
Dana Monlish	10	Nag's Head
Chris Purcell	11	The Journey Is the Destination
Ryan Phillips	12	Next to Come
Leshia Roberts	13	Caged Animals
Briana Finui	14	A Fallen Fairytale
Jamie Fleming	20	Til Forever
Dana Monlish	21	Another August Evening
Shawn Smith	22	<i>Untitled</i>
Dana Monlish	23	The Spirit in His Portrait
Karen Kegley	24	Door's Open
Leshia Roberts	30	Letter to H.D.
Michael Hay	31	fade out
Chris Gliot	32	The Self
Landry & Roberts	33	Interview with Harryette Mullen
Michele Giarrusso	39	Nero, Verde, Bianco, Rosso
John Suhre	40	Silent Slavery
Ryan Phillips	41	Antietam

# Table of Contents (continued)

---

Tricia Carbone	4 2	Reduced Fat Links
Shawn Smith	4 5	<i>Untitled</i>
Jamie Fleming	4 6	Motel 6
Leshia Roberts	4 7	<i>4 Poems</i>
Tricia Carbone	4 8	Bedroom Window
Mark Erwin	4 9	How Egor Got Him Some
Chris Purcell	5 2	Twenty-Four Hours
Chris Gliot	5 3	Cigarettes and Coffee
Michele Giarrusso	5 4	Who Says? Who Sees?
Chris Purcell	5 5	Panthalessa
Mark Erwin	5 6	John
Jennifer Gill	6 1	Concrete Poetry:
	6 2	Homage to Pierre and Ilse Garnier
	6 3	Wanda
	6 4	Images
	6 5	<i>Untitled</i>
	6 6	Where are you going?
	6 7	City Fun
	6 8	Distortion
Chris Gliot	6 9	Essay
Contributor's Notes	7 0	



# This Page Intentionally Left Blank

The blank page.  
There is nothing more insulting than  
the blank page.  
It sits here smugly  
screaming wordlessly,  
"I'm bigger than you.  
No matter how long you sit here  
or how hard you try,  
you can never fill me."  
The blank page.  
The blank stare.  
The tired rage.  
The torn hair.

The blank page:  
A ravenous dragon on a bare hill  
consuming all my words  
and still demanding more.  
I thrust deep into his side  
with my sword of a pen  
and force him to bleed truth.

The blank page:  
A pale, pure virgin  
demanding to be ravished.  
I take her to me  
and we wrestle and meld,  
striving to discover who we are together.  
It ends with a sudden burst.  
I, exhausted and sweaty.  
She satisfied and spattered with ink.

The blank page  
is filled.

S  
h  
a  
w  
n  
  
S  
m  
i  
t  
h

# The Lake

Upon entrance to the Lake's surrounding community, a person becomes overwhelmed with some sort of supernatural spirit. Lifting one from his physical body, that spirit carries its visitor on a free tour. All newcomers become exposed to the countless memories enwrapped in the Lake's history.

M

Along the banks, he can see the many fishing trips conducted. A father teaching his eager son one of the vital survival skills; two sportsmen friends seeking their largest catch; a young couple in love, perhaps more involved with each other than with the objective of their trip; a single person finding the surroundings a source of a mental utopia.

e

l

i

s

s

a

Nestled practically in its own water, though overall a portion of the whole, resides a different volume of remembrance. Tiny fingers manipulate every single grain to create their individual masterpieces; small limbs secured in inflatables, ensuring a continuity of life; elderly sharing joys with each other, as well as those left to carry their family name; feet maneuvering quickly to hold their owners engaging in lighthearted activities. Periodically, a free-spirited individualist wades into the liquid, escorting a floatation device. Around waist level, the single soul rises above the surface to be supported by the companion. Drifts far beyond a human height level in the water, carefree from a troubled world, surrounded by God's creation, inaccessible to the time-rushed economical pest.

F

l

i

c

k

Around the enlarged oval-shaped water source are situated personal accomplishments, get-aways, material possessions. These buildings have stood through many storms, meteorological and emotional. Children have been raised here, left, and brought their children here.

As for the revisiting type, they do just that. Return to reminisce of childhood memories; toes massaging the warm summer sand, screaming from bee stings or snakes, chasing or being chased with a frog. Visiting those who are no longer physically existent in our world. Visiting the memories had with them; learning to swim by them, accompanying them into the deep waters, throwing a frisbee with them.

The Lake nurtures the mind more than the physical body with a single visit.

# After All

We get up...early in the day

We feed our children and send them on their way

We are tired we have worked for what

Nothing that is what

All our lives...we have sweat and saved

Saving for our shallow graves

After all...we're just passing time

And in our loved ones here

And we don't act very sincere

And why should we

After all this time

We have enough pennies

To finally make a dime

But so what...what can we buy with it

And yes we do admit that we're slaves

And we always were...

And our future is a blur...after all

D

u

s

t

i

n

C

o

o

v

e

r

# Passing in the Night Passing in the Night

Chris Gliot

\*Hello my dear. Is this seat taken?

-No, stranger. Sit and join me.

\*So, what is this place that you have found?

-This? This is my place. I have haunted these walls for many years, unseen with my presence. My words and thoughts fall unheard upon these pages, waiting for the people, who truly listen.

\*And what, you've never found these lost people?

-Yes, I must admit that I have found them a few times, once in a while in the men and once in a woman, but they have all long since left me.

\*And where did they go?

-Well, the men, they left following their own paths. Together we all walk apart, similar paths, yet miles away. And maybe one day we will walk together again. And walk as friends we will, but for now, my words ring out unheard by those around me.

\*And what of the girl?

-Well, she came and she listened. She understood and we loved. Together we shared in it all. We held the world in our hands and I thought nothing would ever change that.

\*So, what has happened to her?

-She heard and she felt my words, but never did she share her own. She never gave the truth that lay within her. Time and distance kills all eventually.

\*So what now? You wait endlessly for another to come and share your table?

-Yes. I come and write filling the pages, haunting this place, as a shadow of the past. Waiting for another; waiting for the one who will listen.

\*And how will you know when you find this person?

-Oh, I will feel it. I will understand and she will understand unsaid what we have. As to the distant friends, they are sanity, my fall-back, and my reliance that I will always have them to share the thoughts.

\*But that is not the same. We both know it to be true.

-Yes, I admit you are right. In them, there is a friendship. But what this ghost searches for is what can never be found. The special one, who will share in all thoughts and words; equally as one. The one who sees and feels passions as I do. The one who brings solidity to all my ghostly hauntings.

\*Ah, I know of this woman for whom you search.

-And who might this woman be?

\*She is me.

-Hah, so full of yourself. I doubt that you are her.

\*Ah, but I do not. Don't you worry. One day you shall see that I am her. Maybe not today, and maybe not tomorrow, but one day you will see that I am yours, just as you are mine. Look below my skin and see my soul. I am her. You know it. If only you will look within yourself. One day you will wake and realize that I have filled the shadow of the woman that you have laid down within your soul. I may not have the same face or even the same words, but my soul will be hers. Mark what I say, one day not so far I will fill the void that you have created. I will listen. I will see it all and I will balance your soul against mine. Together the world will not hold us down. In my own soul, you will one day end your waiting. And as for now, I must depart. You are not ready for me yet, and these hauntings; your hauntings disturb me. I must leave you to walk your dark and lonely path. The path that you now walk and the path that you must walk alone. In your life, it is what you are and what you must be, but trust in fate and I will return. You will see. Good night my dear.

-Yes, good night to you stranger.

-What an odd girl to meet at a time like this. At a place like this. The randomness of the world, with wandering souls searching for their attachment...I wonder, what was her name? Ah, but in the end that never matters. I wonder if I will ever see her likes again, or if I will

even recognize them. We are, as people eventually become, two strangers passing in the night.

\* \* \*

And so you all ask if this really happened or if it could ever happen. And to that I must answer, could it not happen? The chance meeting of strangers, driven by the power of the soul and fates unseen by the eyes of the weary, is a powerful thing. At times, the line between the waking moments of life and the dreaming moments of slumber is extremely thin. We should all ask ourselves to evaluate each and every moment of our lives. Sometime ask yourselves the question, am I awake or am I dreaming? And you may come to realize the powerful answer; that we can never truly tell.

REF  
O L  
T C E

# Nag's Head

D  
a  
n  
a  
  
M  
o  
n  
l  
i  
s  
h

Stepping onto the sandy shore  
seagulls cackling above me I begin  
to walk further from the gritty sand  
of my old life & closer to what  
I become when you are near  
like a smoothed coral shell, peach, blue, pink  
shaped slowly over time (I enjoy our walks  
searching for the lavender shells  
each summer evening  
the breeze warm calm — fresh, the waters cool  
against my worn ankles & dancing upon  
my feet.  
a lighthearted, jittery feeling comes over me with the water  
reminding me of our first date, the awkward conversation  
slowly nibbling at our dessert (the strawberries, juicy  
& sweet with all of their redness  
frightened us  
so we laughed  
you told me you don't eat purple grapes,  
only the green, gemstone green  
like the warm peridot glow in your eyes  
& the heat of the summer sun as you appear  
through its blinding light,  
standing before me – my light  
warning me: "Go inside before you burn  
your beautiful nose"  
(I always stay until  
my skin is pink, my knees, arms  
back on my feet  
your hand in mine,  
I return with sand between my toes.

# The Journey is the Destination

I took blurry pictures out the window, and we laughed and smoked along the way...Speeding landscapes frozen in stride, my camera held them so they couldn't run away...

I read a book called the Journey Is the Destination, by a young man who lost his life...And weaved sweet tales of Africa, thread with portraits of its strife...

And when we'd sit beneath verandas and rest in our separate ways...I'd recite my dreams and experiences, and thank the stars for these fleeting days...

I wore a jacket four weeks ago, when we left from home by air...And ended up leaving it on train seat last, cause I could never leave with weather this fair...

And my friends and I burn our fires with fury by night, and wait for the chill to recede...Spreading our bedrolls with the sky as our roof, asleep and alive hoping our plans succeed...

In taking us around the world and back, remnants of our former selves...Shrinking violets left untouched, in the back corners of dusty shelves...

Where the old thoughts go to be replaced, by journeys, maps, and friends...the road goes on forever I guess, a means to the greatest of ends.

C  
h  
r  
i  
s  
  
P  
u  
r  
c  
e  
l  
l

## Next to Come

R

y

a

n

P

h

i

l

l

i

p

s

Cobalt capes visit awakened morning  
Positioned stratus fleets  
Unwanton expectancy tosses,  
Turns amongst cotton sheets  
Warm accepting gesture-  
For sin has slain its last victim  
Oblivious while raising masts into the inferno air  
The cost of freedom lives where the Baroque are afraid to  
venture  
Rows of houses, aluminum wealth  
Lavish expansion immersed by indenture  
  
Stretched seconds masked as eternal lapses  
Devastating silence crawls up each spine  
Clutching crucifixes that crumble to dust  
Murmuring promises elevate above this occasion-  
Vows never intended for sharing by normal persuasion  
Picnic grounds and backyard sunshine  
Short allowance-vision of the sign  
Hustle, bustle, minds immovable  
A more conclusive ending had yet to be cherished  
It was all so beautiful



# Caged Animals

We are fed up  
We are claustrophobic.

Everyone watching, every direction  
Every angle, crack, crevice, and  
Position until at last  
There is a pause before us  
From the other side of the  
Cage

We are fed up  
Corners- metal, floor- metal, ceiling  
And bars.

O for a chance to stretch-  
There is no room for running  
In this cage,  
No tall weeds, of the rainforest,  
Lush, comfortable-  
Only metal on metal dens

Why not let us run freely  
Through these unrecognizable lands.  
All of your taming will only make  
Us untamable-  
Let us wander the way the goddess Eirene intended  
To rest and move without force  
Freely

O to rid this zoo  
To vacate, to seek new beauty  
In us, in our  
God- given homes.

L  
e  
s  
h  
i  
a  
  
R  
o  
b  
e  
r  
t  
S

# A Fallen Fairytale

## A Fallen Fairytale

Briana Finui

Annie heard the leaves rustle beneath her little bottom and a twig snap as she sat down on the bank of the ripply stream. Her feet dug into the moist dirt as she tried to scoot herself up away from the water until she got her old sneakers and her favorite bobby socks off. She pulled them with her stubby fingers. She loved the feel of the soft cotton and pink lace that ran around the top edge of her socks. She gently laid them inside her sneakers so they wouldn't get wet or dirty from the mud underneath the leaves. The bottoms of her jeans were rolled up her calf, leaving the goose bumps exposed to the light air.

The ground was a rainbow of yellows, oranges and reds creating a mural for the birds to see as they flew above in the clouds. Annie loved the crisp smell of leaves as they floated off the trees like snowflakes from the sky. She knew that her mother would probably yell at her for putting her feet into the stream at this time of year, but she missed the feel of the cool water pushing its way through her toes and ripples of water rushing past her ankles.

The water was waiting. Pushing herself up from the ground, she slowly inched her feet into the cold water. Her heart tightened, and she shook with a chill from the initial shock. She knew it would be cold but not bone chilling. After she finally placed her right foot in the entire way, she took her other big toe and circled it around on top of the water to create a ripple effect that sent circles bouncing larger and larger. She stared at the little waves she made, imagining that the little creatures living in the water probably thought the ripples felt like tidal waves. Her smile gave way to a slight sigh as she tilted her head to one side. She was trying to experience the serenity of the stream as if she

were one of the imbedded rocks shaped by the continuous flow of water.

The bottom of the stream was covered in rocks and pebbles coated with slimy green muck that made her toes tingle. She liked how smooth the rocks felt, as if she were walking on air. Annie took baby steps in the water so she wouldn't slip and fall and get her clothes all wet. She shoved her hand into her blue hooded sweatshirt, the one her dad said was the same color as his "little princess'es" eyes, and crunched up her shoulders to try and keep warm.

Her dad had gotten up early this morning to go hunting for deer with his buddies from the neighboring farm. He said it was doe season, and he was going to bring home some meat they would freeze and have later for Christmas dinner. Christmas was a little ways off, but he said he had to take the meat somewhere to get made before they were able to eat it for dinner. She really didn't ask any questions about hunting because she thought it was like shopping at the grocery store. You went out into the woods and picked the deer you wanted and then you marked it and sent it to the meat maker.

"I wonder if he found the one he wanted yet," said Annie out loud, irritated that she never got to see the one he picked because he always took it over to the neighbor's farm and they would take it to the meat maker for him in their truck. But today he told her that she would get to see because he was bringing it home.

While thinking of her dad and the deer, she played with the lint in her pockets and wiggled her toes underneath the rocks. The mud squished between her curled toes, as if she were a monkey grasping at food. As the breeze caught her blonde, choppy hair, she lifted

her head so the wind could brush it off her face so she wouldn't have to take her hands out of her pockets. All around her the leaves fell as the tree branches creaked and waved at her. The sound of the trees creaking made her a little frightened because it was an eerie sound. It reminded her of Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz when she got lost in the forest. Annie knew, though, that trees don't come to life and grab you and steal your apples.

The twinges of pain in her toes made Annie realize she was still in the stream. Turning around, she found herself a good ways from her neatly placed sneakers. The bobby socks laid limp inside her shoes. She would only walk a little bit farther and continue to stay hidden in the thicker trees that surrounded the stream. Up ahead was the clearing where her mother could probably see her from the kitchen window that overlooked the front wooden porch of the log house. The house was camouflaged well in the woods. It was made of all hand cut logs that her grandfather lumbered by himself almost eighty years ago. He shaved the bark off the logs on the porch to create a smoother appearance that would contrast with the background of the house. The shutters were a deep hunter green, and the windows were large to look out into what seemed like a framed oil painting of a forest, the intricate curves and lines of pine trees and old oaks, all with a rugged texture.

She remembered sitting with her grandfather, before he passed away last summer, on the wooden rocking chair near the fireplace in the house. The chair fit her grandfather perfectly. It had a slight groove in the seat that allowed his body to slide right into the rocking motion. The arm rests were the length of his sturdy arms. And the back of the chair came to just the top of his head, so that he could lay back and rock his whole body all in one push from his camel colored slippers. When he saw Annie run by his chair, he would pick her up and bounce her over his knee and

hum little tunes in sync with the movements. Her favorite was "Good night, my love/Sleep tight, my love/Close your eyes/Tomorrow will be sunny and new. She giggled and squirmed until his leg got too tired. Then he would cradle her body, with her head rested in the nook of his shoulder and elbow, and they would nap together. Her mom had so many pictures of them together in the old rocking chair.

The water was running in the same pattern across her feet. Annie looked up from the water and realized she was standing right in front of her house. Crashing her knobby-kneed legs down into the water, making it splash up onto her jeans, she quickly scampered back into the thicket. By now, her heart was beating rapidly from the sudden movement. The stream carried away her worries and fears, pushing them to ride the small ripples out of sight. But the open part of the stream in front of her house created a barrier for the water she touched to ride past. It was as if once the protective covering of weeds and jagers around the stream disappeared, the openness could grasp the innocence in her.

Just then she thought she heard her dad's blue Chevy truck come over the covered bridge. The truck made a distinct rickety sound as it hobbled over the bridge before sputtering when the engine was turned off. She waited a few seconds, turning her ear closer to the road, but it must have been the wind.

Back in her sneakers, she struggled to get up the bank. The earth was a little slippery, and she grasped at the ground to pull herself up. Some mud trickled down the bank and plopped into the water, making a splash. When she was finally able to sit down to try drying her feet off with the sleeves of her sweatshirt, her toes were so numb and tinted red that she had to pull hard on her socks to get them over her feet. She unrolled her jeans and placed the bottoms neatly on top of her broken shoelaces.

No leaves were rustling together, and no twigs

were being broken. She scanned the other bank of the stream, looking for any squirrels or chipmunks, but she didn't hear a thing. The boringness of the day was making Annie impatient. She wanted some excitement, an adventure, or at least for her dad to get home, but the day was still early. The sun was just overhead, peeking through the clouds as if it were trying to blanket itself with a white, fluffy quilt.

Her stomach growled; the pancakes that she had for breakfast didn't fill her up. But she didn't want the peanut butter and jelly her mom told her she was making, as if it were a meal made for a queen. Her mom was more excited about it than Annie, probably because she was going to cut out some stupid cartoon shape, like that would make it more fun to eat. She was ten now, and she would eat peanut butter and jelly, but her mom always told her stories of how they would cut the shapes together and then have a picnic lunch under the apple tree. Annie didn't feel like a story today. Instead of going towards the house, she decided to go to the old apple tree at the edge of the front yard. Her grandfather planted that tree when he lived here. It had the best wild apples, and she knew there would be some to eat unless the deer had got to them all already.

Inside her sneakers her toes were finally warming up, but she kept her hands inside her pockets. Trudging back to the apple tree through the fallen leaves, Annie thought each branch looked like a wriggle snake lined with bright red apples, ready to be picked by a wicked old witch. She was going to be the princess that snuck the red apple and was magically thrown into a deep sleep.

Under the apple tree she leaned over, placing her hands on her knees, looking for an apple with only a few brown marks or freckles, as she called them. She picked one up that looked nice on the side she could see, but when she grasped it in her small hand, it was wet and mushy from lying in the grass for so long. There was even a rotting odor that lingered in the air.

Scrunching up her nose, she tossed the apple aside, making sure she wouldn't look in that direction for an apple. The deer must have missed that one. She didn't understand why they had to be so picky with their food; an apple is an apple to them, she thought. But for her, she wanted one that had no worms or mushy spots.

All the apples that lay beneath the tree were not good enough to eat. She stood up and raised her eyes towards the branches above her, arching her back and placing her hands on her hips to balance herself without straining her neck. That was where the good ones were. The deer can't reach up there. Well, they could. She had watched with her mom and dad how the deer would fling themselves up onto their hind legs and pull apples off the tree. Then they would fall back down onto all fours as they chomped on the little red apples, squirting juice from the sides of their mouths. The deer became servants in her kingdom. She felt in charge of the forest, stating who could come and go. And if any one of her animals got hurt, then she would bring them into the castle and fix them with magic spells. The deer were part of the kitchen crew. They were out getting food for her and would bring it back into the kitchen and make her a big feast with all kinds of wonderful treats like pies and candies.

She stopped looking for apples and scanned the woods surrounding the back yard. Her dad was still not home and she couldn't wait to pet the deer and make him a new member of her kingdom. To show him kindness as a princess, she could feed him apples with her hand. She had seen people do that before at the petting zoo in town. They have baby deer that you get to feed with a bottle, so she thought the big deer would be able to be fed apples. Apples, yes, she was hungry. She marched over to the apple tree with a crinkled face and biting her bottom lip, trying to figure out the best way to climb up to those branches that had the good apples on them. The twists and turns of the bark made for a difficult climb, but Annie found the best route,

grabbing the rough bark and gripping the grooves for support. Placing her feet in the grooves that her hands had been in allowed her to climb more steadily. She made it to the branch with the round, deep red apples wrapped her legs and around it as if she were giving it a big bear hug. She scooted herself out onto the limb, then looked down and stopped. Her little heart was beating faster and faster, and her palms started to get sweaty. She had to blink a few times to refocus on the spinning ground below her.

"A little bit more, just a little bit more," said Annie with quivering lips.

With all of her effort, Annie reached for one of the apples that was closest to her. She stretched her fingers until her whole hand was shaking and, extended her legs to give a push, when suddenly she heard a crack! And a snap! Behind her the branch was splintering at the trunk of the tree. With a force from inside her body, she grabbed the apple and struggled backwards. Her mind was so in tune with the fear of falling, she mechanically reached for another branch to grab on to, but she was in such an awkward position that turning around to the left or right meant only using her legs to keep her steady.

She heard another snap and felt the branch slant downward. Fear hit her. What if she fell? Maybe if she screamed her mom would come running out. Maybe it would be too late. Without thinking the plan through, she stretched her torso around and gripped the branch beside her. Her little hands were not fully encircling the branch because it was too large, but she had a good enough hold that if the branch broke she wouldn't fall. Only her legs would dangle until she swung her legs up around the tree. She could do this, Annie thought, without having to call her mom, who would yell at her for climbing the tree like a boy to begin with. As she tried lowering herself to the next branch, her head was jerked back. The hood of her sweatshirt was caught on a twig above her. If she let

go to unloosen the hood she wouldn't be able to hold the other branch good enough. She felt her legs sliding away from her and she tightened her grip. The zipper from her sweatshirt was digging into her neck and made her cough. Annie prayed to herself, please let me not fall.

Just then she heard her dad yelling from across the yard. In all of her adventure seeking in the apple tree, she didn't hear his truck come across the bridge. He looked like a giant, thundering through the fallen leaves, hitting the ground with a lead foot on each stomp. Annie screamed with tears running down her face. How could her favorite apple tree be letting her fall? The branch broke and her legs came swinging forward, making Annie regrip the branch with her little fingers as her legs went back and forth, like a pendulum of a grandfather clock. She could feel the skin scraping off her hands with each back and forth movement as the grooved bark dug into the palms of her hands, and she could feel the stinging air on her broken skin under her neck.

In the midst of her tears and screaming, she suddenly felt something squeezing her legs together. Her dad held her legs with his massive arms. He looked like a lumber jack in his red and black plaid jacket. Annie warmed up inside. She had stopped screaming and let go of the branch, lowering herself into his arms, while he rocked her from side to side. Her arms flung around his neck, she buried her face into his jacket, wiping her nose on his shoulder. He petted her head and carried her towards the front porch.

Inside the house, he took off Annie's sneakers and her sweatshirt and noticed that she was bleeding a little under her chin from where the zipper had scraped some skin. She held up her hands in his face. He winked at her and nodded, then sent his wife for band aids and some bactine. Annie was starting to calm down. Her eyes were enveloped with a redness from crying, and she had a defined smile that looked like the

permanent mold of a smiling doll.

As he tried to get Annie to tell him what she was doing up in the tree in the first place, she just sipped her hot chocolate. She didn't want to tell him that she was looking for an apple for lunch, because her mom was standing right beside her rubbing her back and that might upset her that she didn't want to come in and eat the peanut butter and jelly sandwich. So she just shrugged her shoulders and stared into the mug. She could feel the steam creeping up on her face, covering it like a warm blanket.

"Well," he said, "with all of this excitement I didn't get a chance to show you our deer yet." He looked down on his daughter, waiting for an expression, a squeal. She had forgotten, too, but suddenly jumped off his lap and ran to the kitchen window to see the back of the old truck, expecting the deer to be standing there aimlessly looking for food. She stood on her tip toes, craning her neck to see if it was lying down from the long ride.

"I don't see him, dad. What did you do with him?" she said, in a confused tone. "Is he at the apple tree? I bet he got hungry and saw all of the apples on the ground and wandered over to them."

Her dad sat back in the rocking chair and looked up at his wife. His eyebrows crinkled, leaving him to stare blankly at her. He just shook his head in slow motion, lowering it with each turn. She turned around and looked at him, waiting for him to answer her.

"You said you were bringing a deer home for me to see. Now are you going to let me pet him and feed him apples, or what?" she said, pursing her lips together.

"Honey, I explained to you that I was going hunting today, right?

Annie shook her head yes.

"And you know what that means, don't you?"

Annie crinkled up her cheeks and shrugged her shoulders.

"I mean, I thought from living in the country all your life, you would know what that means. Did you think I was going to bring home a live deer for you to keep as your pet? How do you think it gets made into the favorite deer bologna you like so much on crackers with cheese?" Her dad had such an understanding look on his face. He had his hands gripped together lying gently in his lap, with his elbows resting on his knees as he sat in the rocking chair. He was trying to get on Annie's level to not scare her, she could tell.

Annie glared at him, turned around and looked out the window. Yes, she knew what hunting meant. Why is he sitting like that, does he think I'm a child? Tears started to fill up in her eyes. If she wanted to act like an adult, she had to quit thinking about "her kingdom." Her hand quickly wiped her eyes and she sniffed. She knew he respected the woods, and he always talked about hunting being a major part of the environment. But she never paid that much attention to what he really meant.

Outside the wind was blowing the leaves, throwing them around, pushing them with an invisible force. The old Chevy truck sat in the driveway blocking the view of the covered bridge. It was a barrier for Annie. She was locked behind the window of her castle. She could see everything: the stream; the truck; the apple tree; the cobble stone driveway, but the only way out of her kingdom was gone. With a clenched fist, she banged the window scaring the birds that had migrated around the bird feeder. Their wings fluttered with a violent speed, and they scattered into all different directions.

Her dad's footsteps on the wooden floor behind her made her fold her arms across her chest, and she started tapping her foot. She could feel the light breeze from his arm coming towards her. As he went to gently grip her shoulders, she pulled away running to the front door. Opening it and letting it fly back against the wall made Annie feel tough. She gritted her teeth and

pushed her body into the screen door, letting it bang a few times behind her. She stumbled off the front porch and wanted to run towards the apple tree, but instead she stopped. Her head was down looking at her feet. The leaves blew around her and the cold grass enveloped her bare feet. Her whole body shivered and her hair blew wildly as it slapped her forehead and face like little whips. She could turn left and return to her imaginary land of royalty, servants and magic fruit, or she could turn right and acknowledge what was lying in the tailgate of the pickup truck. Her parents stood on the porch with their arms supporting each other's backs. Neither of them said a word, unsure of what Annie was going to do next.

She lifted her head and turned it to the right towards the truck. The huge limp deer had its head placed on the tailgate of the truck. It was light brown with white ears and a prominent black nose, except for the pink tongue that flopped to the side of its mouth. Its face had no expression. Annie wiped a tear again and ran to the apple tree, tripping over her own feet and stumbling into the tree trunk. She grabbed her legs and held them against her chest, rocking back and forth, hitting the trunk each time she leaned back. Her face was buried in her arms, and she tried and tried to imagine she was back in her grandfather's arms rocking in the chair while he hummed her favorite tune to her, but she could only hear her parents walking toward her with each crinkle of the leaves beneath their feet.

REF  
O L  
TCE

# Til Forever

J  
a  
m  
i  
e  
  
F  
l  
e  
m  
i  
n  
g

It wasn't easy for us to say goodbye  
when we were little kids.

I remember us standing in the  
middle of the dirt road.

You were making circles in  
the ground with your new keds.

You couldn't look at me.

You couldn't say goodbye.

I remember your long brown  
hair blowing in the sad summer  
wind.

I remember your dirty face  
streaked with tears and your  
scabby knees clotted with your  
blood.

I remember you looking at me  
with those sad eyes and that  
summer tanned face.

Knowing we would never see  
each other again.

Knowing though that long distances  
will be shortened by memories.

Voices captured by far reaching wires.

You looked at me, right through  
my eyes, straight into my soul,  
and said, "It's not forever."

But we knew it was.



# Another August Evening

That lipstick is unlike any  
other shade I've ever  
seen you wear. How

stunning you look!  
This is what you would  
say to me if you were here

tonight but you had to  
leave – thought it would  
be a good thing for the

both of us if you worked, *moved*  
nine hours away for  
The Entire Summer.

("a good experience," I  
believe, is the phrase  
you chose      The deep wine color  
                         a perfect blend of  
                         crimson, maroon, burgundy,  
& plum, too – wasted  
as I sip pink lemonade on  
another August evening

Your remark never to be passed.

D  
a  
n  
a  
  
M  
o  
n  
l  
i  
s  
h

## Untitled

S  
h  
a  
w  
n  
  
S  
m  
i  
t  
h

I dare you to take me apart.  
This million-piece puzzle of me  
scattered across the aged card-table.  
I will wait there patiently  
for your steady hands  
as piece by piece I feel myself rejoined.  
You need not hurry;  
Not clock nor calendar  
will bound our play, our quest, our pilgrimage.  
And maybe if you seek,  
you will find  
the true arrangement  
of these scattered parts.  
And when I feel that final piece  
click into perfect place,  
I will rise once more.  
I dare you to put me together.

# The Spirit in His Portrait

-for H.M.

As you stare at him, the image of  
 His face, his eyes – warm and brown  
 you notice the fiery

hazel flecks they possess you  
 are his possession, believing his  
 smile, the sly grin he greets you with  
 the essence of

love? sweet tender true  
 the carnations on the table their reds, pinks,  
 whites, (he always did appreciate

the whites) all dying a slow death, withering as his  
 love for you withers

painfully – for you,

he does not mind

the fire once blazing

kept you content excited once again  
 like the reds of his passion now fizzle leaving only a  
 glint of orange

in the remaining flicker, small, yellow, like yourself  
 unable to face the reality  
 of his temperamental love,  
 your undying devotion blinds you

D  
 a  
 n  
 a  
 M  
 o  
 n  
 l  
 i  
 s  
 h

# Door's Open Door's Open

Karen Kegley

For about two seconds I thought it was a very large insect. During that startled glance I actually entertained the idea that a monster cockroach had crawled up there. Well, we did get some pretty big ones in that house.

I just stood there that morning in the front room and stared up at the top of the blind in serious doubt of my senses; in that place where your rational mind doesn't want to confirm what the optic nerve is telling it to. I squinted against summer morning sun that unkindly highlighted the permanent film of grime on our old windows and the various stains that marred our tired carpet.

Damn. It definitely was not a cockroach.

I went back upstairs and retrieved Ben from the office-his euphemism for our sole walk in closet where he banged around on a typewriter all day- and pulled him down the cracked wooden deathtrap we called a staircase. I led him to the middle of the living room.

"Notice anything different?" I challenged him.

"Is something missing?" he asked, as he cut his gaze around the room. This did not take long, as it was not a very big room; nor did it hold much -- two mismatched couches, TV and stereo, coffee table.

"Nothing's missing," I said, as I folded my arms and leaned against the right side of the archway that separated our dining room and living room. I looked up at him and cocked my left eyebrow.

Ben ran a hand through his hair and swept the room once more with his big baby blues. I could tell he thought he was in trouble, thought I'd rearranged something or refinished the oak coffee table or maybe hung a new picture, and that his failure to notice had me all up in arms. I saw the proverbial wheels turning.

He looked back at me and met my expectant stare.

"I give up, Jo," he admitted, laughing. He sounded a bit nervous.

I jerked my chin upward in the direction of the front window. It was a tall, narrow window, one of those old-fashioned ones that you almost have to press your nose against if you want any sort of panoramic view. "What's that up there on the blind?"

He looked up and recoiled with a reflexive twitch of disgust, the way you do when someone unexpectedly starts puking on the floor or something. "Is that a bat?"

"That's what I was afraid it was," I said. Ben stared in disbelief at the rather surreal sight of a bat hanging in standard upside-down position from the blind rod, a tiny black silhouette with two telltale points protruding from its head.

Childhood warnings from my mother and from summer camp counselors, among others, danced in the back of my mind: "Rabies! Hepatitis! Nothing but disease vesicles, those creatures." "They have sticky feet; they'll get tangled in your hair and we'll have to cut it all off." I clutched my shoulder-length auburn locks protectively.

"How the hell did it get there?" Ben muttered. The usual soft, mellow voice did not waiver. He backed up a few steps, still studying the visitor.

"Probably flew right in." I nodded toward the open front door. We didn't have AC yet, and Avery Road, our street, wound through the more rural areas of Indigo County. We didn't worry much about intruders -- apparently someone had told this to the bat. "You never did fix that hinge on the screen door. Doesn't shut all the--"

"Yes I did," he protested.

I once again cocked my left eyebrow; couldn't help it.

"Jody, I did too. I fixed it weeks ago, as a matter of fact. Remember? We were on our way to the Quarter Moon Grille? You were pissed cause you spilled wine on that little, white, strappy thing you always wear."

"Uh, you might mean my sundress?" I answered his question with a rather snotty one of my own.

"Yeah, well, whatever you want to call it, but the point is that I fixed the hinge while you changed that night."

"OK, OK, yeah yeah yeah, you're right," I relented as I strode across the room to take a look. The outer screen door gaped open about half a foot. "Great job, Bob Vila." I yanked it shut, but it yawned back at me in refusal to stay put.

"I'll take another look at it today," Ben said.

"After you take care of that thing."

He eyed the bat, freakishly hanging square in the middle of the blind's top--motionless, soundless, the enemy. It was a black blemish on the cream-colored backdrop of the old Venetian blind.

"Think we could trap it in a pillow case and let it go outside?" he asked.

"Personally, I think we should kill it."

"Kill it?" Ben looked dismayed by my proposition. His eyes never left the blind. Typical, I thought. He was probably envisioning a children's series; "Bobby the Bat," or something cute like that. Well, the setting would have to be somewhere other than my house.

"Hell yeah, we should kill it. I don't want it coming back and nesting in here, for God's sake. Unless a horrific notion struck me then. Ben finally turned in my direction.

"What?"

"Unless we already have a colony living in the basement or something; who knows what's down there?" I shook my head in utter disgust. "I can't believe this. Now I'm sharing my house with Dracula's relatives; last winter it was mice and now this, for Christ's sake. I cannot stand this fucking house." I spoke this last sentence quietly and lowered my head.

"I haven't seen as many roaches; maybe the bats are taking care of that for us," Bed said.

"Great. Outstanding. It's the circle of goddamn life right here in my living room. I'm so thrilled." I could hear the attempt at humor in Ben's comment. The smoothing-over quality, the trying, the desire -- no, the need -- to make it all better. But my own smart-ass remarks leapt into the air between us like darts headed for some kid's birthday balloons.

I tried again. "Anyway, I'd rather have roaches than bats. You have any idea how much disease those suckers carry?"

"For my money, I'd welcome the bats before anything. I think they eat roaches and mice, actually," Ben contributed. He moved past me where I leaned once again on the archway and sat at the dining room table, which sported one of my few attempts at home decorating: a wide-mouthed glass vase that held a bunch of wildflowers from the meadow in back of our house. Daisies, Black-Eyed Susans, and some pretty unidentified species of tiny blue and pink flowers.

"No, at least roaches don't have fangs and leathery wings and --for the love of God. Do you know what we are doing?" I sat down across from him at the table. "We're arguing about what varmints we'd rather have living with us." I laughed, a little sarcastically, a little desperately. A high-pitched, forced giggle that made no sound like a maniacal high school cheerleader.

Ben took my hand then. "Just these three chapters, Jo, and I get my advance. And when I'm rich and famous, we'll have a house so big with ceilings so high you wouldn't even notice a couple of bats flying

around."

I pulled away, but I did smile. A little. His eyes were so soft, so liquid-blue. I envied the long curly lashes while I considered whether or not to revive the tension. "It's just you're up there all day every day; it seems as though you've been on these three chapters forever, and --."

Ben leaned back, released a big sigh. "And what? What, Jody? You think, I'm up there, day in, day out typing. All work and no play makes Danny a dull boy or something?"

I looked blankly at my husband.

He explained. "You know, Steven King. The Shining? Writer goes psycho and tries to off his family? Never mind."

"Jack," I said. Ben looked so puzzled. I quoted for him. "'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' Danny was his son's name." I got up and walked into the kitchen, opened the basement door. We used the landing as a closet. Old houses are not known for their vast amounts of storage space.

"What're you doing?" Ben called. I didn't answer, but returned with the red-handled broom.

"Uninviting our guest." I marched toward the offending creature, toward the interloper that hung unaware of its intended fate. The lifeless springs of our orange plaid couch, circa 1978, refused to support my bare feet as I stepped up for a viable angle of attack. My feet sunk into the cushions up to my ankles; I fought for a stable stance.

"Jody, wait, get down from there," Ben said. He approached the couch, hand extended. "What are you gonna do, bludgeon the thing to death?"

I redirected my attention, looking down on him from my point of vantage on the couch. The foot-and-a-half boost actually only gave me a few inches on my husband.

"Look, Ben," I told him, "first of all, I want this thing dead. Secondly, I want it dead as soon as possi-

ble, before it decides to wake up. And third, I certainly do not want to waste a pillowcase--."

"Oh come on, Jodes, it's called a washing machine, and may I remind you that we actually do have one of those in this, this shack that we live in." He chuckled. It was a mocking chuckle. "Anyway, just--I'll take care of it; come on, give me the broom. Please."

I hopped down. "Fine. Thank you." I sat back down at the dining room table; Ben backed up and assessed the situation.

He stood framed in the archway with his back toward me, the top of his head nearly brushing against the lowered beam. He was really thin, Ben was, but the white T-shirt did strain a little around broad shoulders and a decently muscled back.

He stood with his feet planted shoulder-width apart and wielded the broom diagonally across the front of his body, tapping the handle gently, slowly, against his palm. I thought of a hunter with a rifle.

Finally he moved within striking range.

"Hit it with the stick part, not the bristles," I said, directing them, as I got up for a better view. Ben positioned himself a little to the left of the window and stood as close to it as the plaid couch would allow. "You've gotta make sure to knock 'em out cold right off the bat. Ha-ha."

"Funny, Jodes," he said. He never took his eyes off the bat. I still couldn't get over how the thing just hung there. Sunlight golden and sparkly as a late summer hayfield lit every dusty corner of the room, but it was still an eerie scenario. Those pointy ears. My God.

Ben kept aiming the broom handle at the bat, measuring, calculating his blow as carefully as a pool player judging his shots. To be honest, I was still gearing myself up to take over; to do the deed.

When Ben was little, he and his sisters rescued a litter of kittens from the side of a busy highway. The

local paper did a human interest piece on it. "Not a whole lot going on that weekend, huh?" I had joked when Ben showed me the clipping. There was a big picture accompanying the story; Ben at age six, cuddling a kitten protectively to his chest. His eyes were lowered, the lashes appearing longer on his baby face. My now sisters-in-law stood behind him. The caption went something like "ANIMAL LOVER -- Ben Newhouse, 6, plays with his new friend, while sisters, Cassie, 8, and Mira, 9, look on." It went on to quote Ben's mom professing that her children cried whenever they saw dead animals that had been hit by cars in the street.

So I was a little doubtful as I watched my husband stalling. I was about to vocalize somethoughts along the lines of let's get on with it when, slap-SLAP, slap-SLAP--someone came shuffling up our sidewalk in flip-flops and stopped at the door. Ben froze, broom aligned with the bat; I craned my neck toward the open door as our neighbor, Larry, came bounding in. Larry was somewhat of a character. He worked the docks for a trucking company; big as a bull, Larry was. He lived alone with only Bud, his pet python, for company. I think Bud was short for Budweiser.

"Mornin' folks. I just wanted to borrow some milk--what in the hell are you doin'? Hey, is that a bat up there?"

Question of the day around this place. Larry's bellowing vice sort of paralyzed both Ben and I, and we just stood there. Larry roared with laughter, absolutely lost it. He bent double and slapped his knees, the whole bit, as his face turned dark red and he pointed from Ben to the bat and back to Ben. After he practically rolled on the carpet, he settled down and eased himself into a chair in the dining room. "Aaahh-ha..ha-haaaa! Oh boy, I tell ya'. If that don't beat all," he said. "Well, are you gonna' kill it or look at it?" Yeah, I always thought Larry was a pretty sensible guy.

"Milk's in the fridge, Larry. Help yourself," said

Ben.

"Thanks, man. But I'm gonna' stick around a while if ya' don't mind. This, I gotta' see."

"Say Larry, what do you know about bats? I mean, do they like nest in people's houses?" It was a point I was becoming very concerned about.

"Oh, I've heard of 'em sometimes settling down in attics," he answered. He launched into a tale about an uncle with this very problem, punctuating his story with gleeful clapping and more raucous laughter. Not exactly the comforting answer I was looking for.

But then he added, "This little fella' here probably just sailed right in a winda' or somethin,' seein's how he's down here in the living room. Matter 'a fact" Larry lumbered over to the screen door and pulled it firmly shut, then watched as it swung right back open again. "Here's your answer. You know this door don't shut all the way?" He looked at us in earnest, brows raised.

"Yeah, uh" Ben glanced at me. "Jody did point that out to me."

Larry was inspecting the hinges with furrowed brows. He genly rattled the door back and forth. "You wanna' grab a screwdriver; I could probably take care of this now" his voice trailed off as he fiddled with it.

"Oh, no, no, Larry, don't bother. Ben'll take care of that, really," I said.

Ben cleared his throat. "Yeah, well, speaking of taking care of things." He addressed the bat, pursued his lips in determination.

Larry forgot the door as clapped his hands together like a high school football coach. "Yeah, yeah, yeah!" he chanted.

Oh God, testosterone's a funny thing.

Larry moved in and stood at the other end of the couch under that window; I resumed my lean against the archway wall. Ben took a few practice swings, while Larry hunched over with his hands on his knees and spouted advice. My heart raced. He would do it, I

knew now. I suddenly had to pee.

Finally, Ben did it. With arms raised over his head he brought the broom handle back, then swung directly for his target. His back was to me, but I know he gritted his teeth and probably squeezed his eyes shut at the last second.

We all jumped--Ben got his bat, but he also got the top pane of glass. It shattered surprisingly loud as the little bat dropped. Ben, Larry and I followed its movements with our eyes as the creature fell straight down and bounced off the couch, landing on the floor.

It lay still for a few seconds under our scrutiny. "Whack 'er again. Make sure she's dead," Larry instructed with quite a bit of enthusiasm. As if agreeing with him, the bat extended its wings for the first time since keeping our company. They unfurled slowly, tentatively. It was like watching a perverted flower open its petals in time-lapse photography. It really was ghastly.

This time Ben did not hesitate even a half second. *Whack! Whack! Whack!* He brought the broom down savagely, eyes now wide open and nothing akin to baby blue, jaw set in man's primitive determination to kill. he jumped around and swung over and over at the bat, like some crazy frontiersman in a wood chopping contest. The bat flopped around rather pathetically at first, a fish on deck, until Ben's third or fourth stroke left it once again motionless.

All the while, Larry howled with laughter, pointing at my husband in battle. I stood as frozen as the bat lay. Ben finally stopped his furious pounding and wiped sweat from his forehead. He looked from me to the creature dead on our carpet. I said nothing.

Larry bent toward the bat and pointed his finger at it. "Yeah, bat! Looks like you started with the wrong hombre!" He glanced at me. "Huh, Jody?"

"What? Oh, yeah..." I murmured. The formerly soft, whipped-butter sunlight was not stifling. I switched on both floor fans.

Larry pinched one of the bat's crumpled wings

between his left thumb and index finger and slung his right arm around Ben's shoulders. The bat dangled inches from Ben's face; I watched his body stiffen a tiny bit.

"Well, boy, nothing left to do but stuff it and mount it, huh?" Larry broke into more laughter.

I didn't get what the hell was so funny to him. His laughing didn't annoy me though. He was just one of those big, jolly guys with rosy cheeks and a good sense of humor. *Larry*, I thought. As I studied him joking around with my husband, I thought of Santa Claus for some reason.

Ben was chuckling with unease as he angled his head to avoid the bat, bobbing back and forth in Larry's fingers. The thing had more motion in death than it had when we saw it alive.

"Actually, you mind if I take it? Gonna' feed 'er to Bud," he said, smiling at the thought of treating his python to a snack.

"You go right ahead, Larry," Ben said. Larry pocketed the thing like it was a tin of chew and strolled out with a cheery goodbye. We could hear him laughing all the way down the hill to his house. He forgot his milk.

Ben and I eyed each other. "I guess that's that," he said, at the same time that I uttered a hurried, "Thanks, Ben." We laughed.

"What did you say?" he asked.

"Oh -- nothing. It was nothing. Just -- I'll clean up the glass."

"Thanks, Jo. We'll get that repaired next week." He was already on his way up to the office. I sat at the dining room table, a bit restless and at loose ends. I never liked coming down after a climax. The ride home from the beach, the day after Christmas -- not popular with me.

The bouquet of wildflowers I had picked almost two weeks ago were dead, I noticed, in the vase in the center of the table. They stood stiff and brown and dry.



Their petals littered the table. I would go pick more later on today, I decided. I glanced at the staircase. I could hear the rattle of typewriter keys coming from upstairs.

I walked up the stairs. Why didn't we hang pictures on this wall, I thought. It would really brighten our dark stairway. I slid my hand above the railing along the wall as I approached the top step...I had an old calendar of scenic photos somewhere. Maybe I would frame a few.

Ben had the door closed. I knocked. There was a pause in the fervent typing. "Door's open," he said.

I pushed it open gently, as if a baby lay asleep on the other side, and poked my head in. There wasn't room for much else of me in this glorified closet. "No, it wasn't," I objected.

"Well, unlocked is what I meant."

"Oh." I felt awkward suddenly. "Ben..."

"What is it, Jody?" He was still intent on the typewriter.

"Thanks for getting rid of that thing." He turned his eyes to me and leaned back in his chair. I wedged my way around the desk and lightly perched on his lap. It was so stuffy. I couldn't believe he spent so much time up here. Ben pushed the chair back so I had more room. He kissed my cheek. He didn't seem to mind the intrusion. I rarely came in here; always figured he'd resent the interruption.

A bulletin board hung on the wall facing the desk. Ben had it crammed with stuff: pictures, old and recent; clips of quotes he liked; scraps of paper filled with his scrawl. Ideas for stories, I guessed. There was a list titled DO THIS! I read it idly. The last entry on his list read "fix door again." I looked sidelong at Ben. He was busy scanning pages of old material.

The miniature fan on Ben's desk ruffled a "Quotable Quotes" page from Reader's Digest that was tacked on the bottom right of the bulletin board. As the page flapped back and forth, I saw something hanging,

forgotten, underneath.

HE LOVES ANIMALS. That was the beginning of the caption some reporter had written over twenty years ago about my husband. I looked from the picture of the little, blonde six-year-old, proudly holding a rescued kitten, to the man sharing his chair with me. High cheekbones and five o'clock shadow replaced the smooth, chubby face in the photo.

But his eyes were the same. Lowered attentively toward the kitten; lowered to his typed pages. Now they focused on me. I heard a statistic somewhere that the nose and mouth continue to develop from birth to death, but eyes don't change. Supposedly.

I plucked the top paper from the pile to the right of the typewriter. "Do you mind?" I asked him.

"Go ahead, babe," he murmured into the hair that fell across my ear. I relaxed into Ben and read his words carefully.

REF  
O L  
T C E

## Letter to H. D.

L  
e  
s  
h  
i  
a  
  
R  
o  
b  
e  
r  
t  
s

I need not a garden to make things grow  
Or seclude things in my world in order to understand

Them, that lived during the time of Helen  
Relate to me and yet I treasure them through living --

Living, now like a shadow --  
A reflection appearing in my time

An Imagist in my own announcement,  
I thank thee -- respond later.

# fade out

i fade away from the world

i may have never known

to search for the answers

that I may never find and

discover lands that don't exist

i leave the friends

i have forgotten and

hope for a love that

is

always

a

step

behind

M

i

c

h

a

e

l

H

a

y

# The Self

C  
h  
r  
i  
s  
  
G  
l  
i  
o  
t

Shadows fall long  
Upon the wintered grass.  
My beauty passes by  
Unknowingly seen,  
And I am happy  
With life.

In winter's dead,  
I see clearly.  
For once in my life,  
Or maybe twice.

It feels right.  
The tread I make is definitely my own,  
And I leave nothing behind,  
But long shadows,  
Falling upon the  
Wintered grass.

# An Interview with Harryette Mullen

## An Interview with Harryette Mullen

Kate Landry

Leshia Roberts



Photos by Amy Irvin

Harryette Mullen presented a reading of her poems on campus at the beginning of the Fall 2000 semester. Her works include: *S\*P\*eRM\*RK\*T*, *Muse & Drudge*, and *Sleeping with the Dictionary*. Prior to her reading, English majors Kate Landry and Leshia Roberts had a chance to sit down with Mullen to talk with her about her writings.

**Q: What is your personal writing process? Where and when do you feel you work the best?**

A: Basically, I like to work in the comfort of my own home, in my familiar space. I often work at night, but I'm not necessarily very regular or disciplined.

**Q: The poems in *Muse & Drudge* were influenced by many musical styles. You have said that female rappers influenced some of these works.**

A: Right. I wouldn't say it's a deep influence, but in *Muse & Drudge* there is a quatrain that refers to the group Salt n' Pepa: "Hip chicks add glib/ glib script/spinning the discs/tighter than dick's hat band." That quatrain, actually, contains a folk saying I used to hear from my mother and my grandmother: "tighter than dick's hat band," and it got mixed in. The idea of sampling is really what influenced *Muse & Drudge*, not so much a particular rap artist. The principle of using sampling, and the texture that is created with different sounds, different voices, different tracks going on at the same time within the poem—going on in a sort of parallel structure.

**Q: How do you feel about the use of black dialect in poetry in general and in your own work?**

A: I've used it from the beginning, but I feel I use it differently now. I have a more self-conscious and self-critical way of thinking about it because it's one possible register of speech. When transposed to the page, it creates a certain image.

Language is one of the things that allows other people to at least think they know who we are: our nationality, our cultural background, our economic background, our level of education. These are the things people hear when we speak, and one of the things that has been so challenging and interesting to me is this African-American vernacular, which is based on the speech of slaves who were denied access to education—we're no longer in that position. That language used to say things to us—you're uneducated, poor, enslaved, you haven't had proper exposure to standard English. Now it says you're a hip black person. It has a whole different meaning, and we now use it sometimes to establish a sense of community, intimacy, familiarity.

Remembering the South, the culture of the South, your past, the burdens of your family, their experiences. It can take you to a time and place, it can establish those bonds of intimacy, community and family, but it can also be limiting if it's the only channel that you have. I think we need to be more and more flexible—all of us—because we are living in a global village. We have to be able to speak different ways with different people.

**Q: Speaking of globalization, what are your feelings toward the traditional western literary cannon?**

A: The traditional western canon is historical. It was created by human beings who have different interests and different values. The more diverse the contributions of the people who create and write and think about literature, the more diverse our canon will necessarily be. It will be there for more different kinds of people, to receive whatever kind of enhancement and enrichment art and literature provide for human beings who are always developing and growing.

**Q: What poets inspired and influenced your work the most?**

A: I was inspired by the poets of the generation ahead of me—the Black Arts Movement. Those were people who were young, available. They were coming to my college campus when I was an undergraduate. They were a kind of living example that someone like me, someone with my background, could actually be a poet, and there's something galvanizing about that. You can read poetry in a book and enjoy it, but when you actually see someone who has had similar experiences, who is right there in the room with you, there's a kind of electrifying effect. That was something that really made poetry seem a lot closer and more immediate.

**Q: Are there any new, contemporary poets who have caught your attention?**

A: There are a lot....there's a wonderful magazine called Chain that's edited by poets who used to be graduate students at SUNY Buffalo. Julianna Spahr and Jenna Ossman are the main editors. It's a big, thick journal put out once a year now—there are lots of new, interesting, often younger writers collected there. It started out with the idea of a chain letter. They were trying to encourage more women to send work to their magazine. They said that one of the things that happens when you start a literary magazine is that lots of men send their work, but women somehow aren't as assertive. They wanted to be able to focus on women's writing, and they also wanted to be able to reach women that they themselves didn't necessarily know. For the first few issues they wrote to people they knew and said "we'd like to get your work and the work of a friend." Through the principle of a chain letter they were able to reach some voices, some writers, that otherwise they might not have been able to find. I thought that was an interesting principle. The magazine's going in other directions now, and there are men published there, too.

Also Rene Grant and Giovanni Singleton, partly because I'm thinking about their energy in organizing a conference in San Francisco on expanding the repertoire of African-American writing. It was through them, because of their efforts, that I actually met Mark McMorris who had just come from his campus, having been invited to read. Someone puts something in motion and it ripples down and has other effects. It was the first time I had met Mark—I had read his poetry before. He's another very interesting poet. The book I taught in one of my classes, which was called the Black Read, is a meditation on African Diaspora culture. The poetry involved these great distances that people have crossed historically—still with some sense of cultural continuity, tenuous as it may be. Those are some of the people I've been thinking about these days, because I've had these contacts with them.

**Q: Could you talk about your view of women in your work, particularly *Trimmings*?**

A: *Trimmings* is a book that looks at the popular representation of women. I was thinking about how women are represented in visual art. One of the poems refers to a painting by Manet called *Olympia*, with a nude white woman and a black woman in the background in the shadows. And also a little black cat—kind of a witty touch. In *Trimmings* there is also reference to fairy tales, to Cinderella, to the Little Mermaid. There's reference to some popular songs, "Someone's in the Kitchen with Dinah," or even jokes like "what's black and white and red all over?" Josephine Baker is there, Gertrude Stein, Ma Rainey, the blues singer. There's a poem about the girdle—I use that as a way to give a tribute to Stein and Ma Rainey.

At the same time there is an investigation of language; the poems become very playful and pun-filled. There are also reflections on particular characters and historical women. There were Blue Stockings, that's what intellectual women were called because of what they wore. It wasn't about their brains, it was about what they were wearing. Also, the Bloomer Girls. Again, they were suffragists, but they were labeled according to what they wore. It's a way of diminishing what women are doing, to always refer to them externally—what they're wearing, what they look like. It doesn't necessarily always have to be demeaning, but it often is. I was thinking about that as a kind of double bind, because women are often told that we need to pay attention to our appearance as a part of our power. And people like Madonna have effectively exploited that to create an image of a woman in control of her own body and sexuality. It can be kind of a two-edged sword.

I think it's possible for us to have a sense of ourselves as being powerful, but often we're not educated or expected to feel that. But I think that's changing, and I'm all for that change. Men are also now writing about how boys are feeling left out. The pendulum is swinging to the opposite side. A lot of boys are feeling that they're not doing as well in school. Many more women are going to college than men now—not that salaries always reflect that. But something has definitely changed—girls are feeling better, but boys are thinking, "what about us?" We have to make everyone feel okay.

**Q: Do you feel more comfortable working with certain themes in certain types of writing? Do you think certain themes lend themselves better to poetry than to fiction, for example?**

A: I think that throughout my work there is an abiding interest in the lives of women and in examining the world from a feminine perspective. I think my work can be very different—I write literary criticism, essays, articles, short stories, and poetry. I have a story, for instance, in an anthology that just came out. It's a story about a little girl, a coming of age story. The little girl is going through a transition in her life, and I chose to set the story in a beauty shop. The little girl is getting her hair done, and the first lines of the story are "Something was wrong with our hair. We had to get our hair fixed." That's a colloquial expression that means the hair is straightened. The story is about how the little girl doesn't want to go, but eventually she gets curious about this ritual that women go through, and by the end of the story she's changed from a semi-wild little girl to a tamed lady. There's another woman in the story who's part of this experience—she herself doesn't get her hair done, she's just there as a spectator, and she's really a



catalyst for this little girl. It's a story about a female experience that could be very familiar even if a person never had their hair straightened with a hot comb. Some version of that happens when you find out that you're supposed to act a certain way, look a certain way because you're a girl. I think those kinds of issues are present in my mind as I'm writing, but that story is very different from my poetry.

Poetry allows me to explore language, and to me it seems a more fluid form. One reason I haven't written a lot of stories is that I used to send them to magazines as a way to make some money (laughs), and I sent one to *Essence* magazine. They sent it back with a little editor's comment that said "This isn't a story, but she could write one if she wanted to." I thought I was doing some experimenting with the short story format. Sometimes the short story format does seem very limited—you can sometimes read the first paragraph and already know how the story will end. And that's what's called a well-made story—one that announces how it's going to end.

I experimented with stories that didn't have plots or didn't have characters. I wrote one story called "Bad Girls" that was told in the form of a Greek chorus. All these voices gossip and whisper about these girls who are supposed to be bad. Girls who are wild or who don't fit in, something about them is not acceptable. There are no named characters. The story is a chant: "they did this, they did that, can you believe what she did?" You can see that I have obsessions (laughs). I have issues. They get expressed different ways according to the format.

My literary criticism doesn't just look at the work of women writers—oh, I have to tell you about a book I found that has been out of print since 1974. It's by an African-American woman. I had never heard of this novel, I had never heard of this writer. It's her only published novel. She was trying to finish another one when she died. Her name is Fran Ross, and the book is called *Oreo*. It was published in a fairly small edition—I have two copies of the original edition, and I wrote a forward for a new reprinting that will come out in November (2000). I've given a couple of papers about this, and I'm working on an article for publication, as well. I've found the original publisher, I've found surviving relatives and friends of Fran Ross who sent me some information, we've e-mailed back and forth. It was just so exciting—not quite like bringing the person back to life, but giving her work a chance for another audience.

I think people really didn't understand this book—it's an interesting, unusual book. Some of the African-American characters speak in Yiddish. The main character is bi-racial. Her father is a white Jewish man, her mother is African-American. She grows up with her black family and then she goes out to look for her father. It's based on the Greek myth of Theseus—he looks for his father, he completes heroic feats. Everything this character does is based on this myth, but it puts this Greek hero into a contemporary black woman. It's funny on a lot of levels, there are a lot of jokes in it. It's very strange because you see Yiddish words all through the text, and there's also black vernacular, standard English. It really challenges your ideas of what an African-American woman would be writing in 1974. You would not expect this—I'm very excited about it.

The writer also worked for Richard Pryor briefly. He had a very short-lived TV show, it lasted about four weeks (laughs). This poor woman had lived in New York. She got this job, gave up her apartment, flew out to California, lived in a motel in LA. Then Richard couldn't meet with her, wasn't sure he wanted to do the show after

all. And she's thinking, "wait a minute! I gave up everything I had to come out here!" Then the show was over. She had hoped to use that to earn some money so that she could take some time off and write, but it never really happened. But it's interesting that she had that role in popular culture, and she's still so obscure as a novelist. I went to a group of African-American scholars, and none of them knew this book or this author.

**Q: You've done a lot of work to ensure that children are exposed to literature. Do you feel that poetry and literature should be taught to children at a younger age?**

A: Oh, yes. Definitely. As early as possible. My sister read to her children in utero. She wanted to get into the habit of reading aloud, so she started before they were born. It was a well-established pattern. She would do it every night before going to bed. She likes to read anyway, so whatever she was reading, she would read aloud. From the time they were infants, and even before, they've been hearing her reading aloud. They had a family reading time. They love to read. My nephews have more books than some adults I know. That's how you get kids—you have to start when they're young, impressionable, and eager for anything. They want more information. If we want people to be TV zombies, just sit kids in front of a TV at two years old. If we want people to be literate, if we want them to be creative, they have to be given the opportunity to establish those habits.

REF  
O L  
T C E

# Nero, Verde, Bianco, Rosso

Anthony is in love  
with Charmaine.  
But he is jealous  
that Charmaine loves  
a busboy named Lee Fung,  
who works at Yun Fat's Hunan House—  
on Aurora Street.  
Aurora Street is where  
the blacks live  
and there is a lot of fighting  
between the blacks,  
and us,  
the Italians.  
Daniella got caught  
kissing a black boy once,  
and her Mama  
and Daddy beat her so bad  
she looked like an old plum for three weeks.  
Since then  
there has been  
a lot of fighting  
and no one is allowed  
to eat Chinese,  
or ride their bikes,  
or play at the park,  
because everything  
is past Aurora Street,  
where all the blacks live.

M  
i  
c  
h  
e  
l  
e  
  
G  
i  
a  
r  
r  
u  
s  
s  
o

# Silent Slavery

J  
o  
h  
n  
S  
u  
h  
r  
e

Fireworks light up the sky with color  
But the fire in the sky  
Can not match the fire in my belly  
Nor the flames swelling in my eyes

Independence Day – maybe  
Freedom – I don't think so

Before I can have my cake  
And eat it too  
There will always be Anger,  
Fear, and Shame in all that I do  
This is Society's hold on me  
Its Silent Slavery

I am so very angry  
But it does not end with me  
Or the angle at which I have fallen  
On the double-edged sword of Independence

Others Bleed  
And thus they feed  
A shared seed  
That will one day blossom  
Into the know-how we need  
To combine our powers  
And defeat the majority

America may have won a war  
But in so many important ways  
She is not the land of the Free

# Antietam

Diverged possibility in recognizable passages  
Antique designs of the men with drab overcoats  
Crowding around a coffee pot  
On opaque Hessian campgrounds

R

Abundant moss seeps into crevices  
Hidden realms resembling time  
And light crawls swiftly-  
Over trickling water

y

a

n

As to not stir or invoke,  
The travelling martyr

Now is the moment that apathy does split  
Is it all more imaginary than tangible?  
The way the shadows refuse to fit  
They are not placed for judgement

P

h

i

Taken down to Angora, though nothing served as a guide  
To watch watery sailors across the underbrush  
And comment on the shortcomings of tomorrow  
What looks to be a castle's shelter has come undone

l

l

i

Hickory leaves, wind thieves  
Climb death backward  
Then point to the rolling sky  
Remembering how sweet it was to hang

p

s

# Reduced Fat Links Reduced Fat Links

Tricia Carbone

"The buttons aren't shiny enough. I want them to be seen from across the field."

He adjusts the uniform coat, shaking out the cuffs, as his wife fixes his belt and takes a cloth to his nine medium-sized, brass-colored buttons, perfectly aligned from top to bottom.

"Well, don't you look dapper?" she says, as he stands proudly--posture just right with his right hand placed nicely inside his uniform over his heart, just like Napoleon used to do, and his buttons now as shiny as can be.

He knows he looks good. For fifteen years he's been doing this. Fifteen years of getting up at 5am to join the rest of the troops (a week before July 1st through the 3rd or whatever dates the weekend falls on -- reenacting the single most important battle in Civil War history), taking a shower and pulling the vintage uniform out of the cedar closet. He loves it when he draws it out of the plastic dry cleaners bag. It smells like cedar trees--a sort of musty cedar smell--very manly. The important part is that there are no moth holes on any part of the uniform. He even keeps moth balls in the pockets during the non-reenactment times to make sure those pesky buggers don't cause any trouble. Since the uniform is wool, it's hard to keep it in tip-top shape, but he manages to look the best every year; the best out of those hundreds of men.

"You should take a picture, Maggie."

"We already have pictures of you in this uniform, ten million of them, all in that one photo album," she snaps.

"Ah, just do it, will ya'? This is an important day."

She takes the camera out from the top dresser

drawer to humor him, moving all of the clothes around, detangling the strap from some shirts, rolling her eyes the whole time.

"Adjust my belt again, I think it's crooked," he says, as he looks in the full-length mirror hanging on the back of the bedroom door. He still manages to fit into his uniform -- the buttons of the jacket barely stretched enough to where they pull and tug at the button holes. His wife has adjusted them three or four times in his uniform career. But she's made sure to tell him not to gain any more weight, as it is not possible to move the buttons over yet again. Where once his pants fit just right, there is now a small beer belly, which hangs just over the edge of his pants, slightly obscuring the view of his belt buckle; a nice bulge of a stomach showing his age. It was a very good thing for those suspenders or else he would have a hard time keeping his pants on. He shrugs his shoulders as if he doesn't care much. He's ready for the field.

He envisions last year's event in his mind. Boy, he looked good. If only he could wear the uniform all of the time. He would have so much confidence, feel like a significant and productive member of the male species: a gun carryin,' uniform-wearin,' brutal-lookin,' fight-lovin,' soldier of the Union Army. He could swagger around the house during the week and fix up all the things Maggie complains about, even do work in the front yard, perhaps. All, with the whole neighborhood watching. Ah, yes, that would be the life, he thinks.

With a sly grin on his face, he moves from the bedroom down the hallway to the living room and starts with the yearly ritual of the "preparing of the rifle." His wife sits on the couch, fixing her well-coifed brown

hair with her fingers, as he strolls to the chest and pulls out "Bessie" from underneath a white sheet, folded and manipulated to the exact shape of the rifle. At times, he has thought Bessie a better companion than Maggie. She's never complained about getting up so early on the single most important day of his life or nagged him about gaining too much weight and having to fix the buttons again. Good old Bessie has made him feel whole. He's had larger smiles on his face with her in his hands than with Maggie in his arms. The smooth metal around his fingers feels like silk against his skin. He is excited just thinking about the power of the weapon and the damage it could do, and the slight bulge in his pants says so.

"Why don't you put your gun down and eat some breakfast? I'll make it low-fat and small portions so those buttons don't get any more taut than they already are."

"No, no. I'm cleanin' Bessie. Just look at her barrel, Maggie. Isn't she beautiful?" He takes a special shining cloth out of the hidden compartment in the chest along with the anointed rifle oil and begins rubbing the cloth against the metal, shining away.

"I don't understand your fascination with that gun. It's just a hunk of metal. You treat that thing better than you treat me, and I'm your wife," she sighs.

"First of all Maggie, it's not a gun--it's a rifle. Second, this hunk of metal helped defeat the Confederate Army to keep this country in one whole piece. Don't knock it, okay? Now, how does she look?"

He holds the rifle up, admiring it as if it had a body and mind of its own. The metal now gleams in the sunlight shining through the bay window, directing and reflecting rays of light onto each wall of the room as he turns it every which way. He looks down the barrel one last time to make sure all obstacles are clear, as he would be firing blanks from it later on that day. An obstacle down the barrel would make him look bad

in front of his reenacting counterparts and he didn't need that. After all, he's practically a legend and needs to be an example for all the new recruits.

"Those newbies have no idea what they're gettin' themselves into," he whispers to himself.

"What honey? Did you say something?"

He ignores her questions and continues probing the rifle. He rises off the living room couch and walks toward the kitchen, still fingering his barrel. The clunking of his boots on the hardwood floor is a sure sign that he is in his fighting mode. He makes his way through the archway leading to the kitchen and paces back and forth, sweat slowly beading on his forehead, showing his anxiety over the upcoming events of later that week.

"Bessie and me are all ready for those traitors this week, Mags. Goin' to knock 'em down all over the field, she and I. Nobody's gonna' stop us."

"Yes dear, I know. Come and eat. And don't scuff up these floors with those boots. God knows all I do is clean. No need for more work, ya' hear?!"

"Oh, forget about that stuff, Mags. This is a big day. One last time...how do I look? Pretty proper, huh?" as he fumbles with the reduced fat, Bob Evans sausage links lying on his plate next to his Egg-Beaters.

Maggie bends over to get the orange juice out of the refrigerator. He notices her shape has widened over the past fifteen years, still curvy, but with saggier breasts and a bigger bottom. It looks funny on such a petite frame. Twirling the fork in his hand, he continues to poke and prod at the sausage links, disgusted because Maggie knows that they have less flavor than the regular ones. But she gives them to him anyway. All in the name of his figure. Bullshit. He picks up Bessie from his lap, not letting her out of his sight.

"Will you please stop fidgeting with that thing? I am sick of seeing it! Always shoving it in my face. 'Look at this, Maggie. Ain't she pretty, Maggie?' You know, it wouldn't hurt for you to compliment me once

in awhile."

"Ah, Maggie, not this again. Come on, stop it. You pluck my nerves too. Feedin' me sausage that has no taste. Runnin' around all bothered because this is what I like to do. Geez Louise, you're acting like a child!"

"I'm acting like a child? Who's the one toting around his gun all day long like it's his best friend in the world? Not me! Why don't you just go off to your camp for a week if it's so important to you! I will just stay here in the house all day and clean up after you, that's fine."

"Fine. I'll leave," he declares, as he turns facing the back door of the kitchen and marches out with his gun over his shoulder, jerking the door behind him so it closes with a slam--smile on his face, almost snickering to himself. Stupid woman.

The red Ford Ranger pulls out of the long gravel driveway, loaded with all of his necessities for the week. Maggie removes the yellow and blue plaid curtain from her field of vision and glares out the kitchen window, watching him drive up the road, seeing the smile on his face. Stupid man.

She paces forward three steps, then turns and paces some more in the opposite direction. Picking up the plate from the kitchen table with the cold sausage links still whole, she moves slightly and glances at the crack between the curtains to see if he's really gone. Then she strolls toward the phone located on the counter next to the door. Staring at the numbers on the keypad, she picks up the phone and dials a local number.

"Hello Terry. It's Maggie. He's gone for the week," she says, smiling devilishly as she twirls the phone cord around her fingers. "Yep, a whole week."

REF  
O L  
T C E



# Untitled

Hunger.  
We saw it in each other's eyes:  
Hunger.  
Hunger to be satisfied now.  
We both wanted—needed it.  
We needed.  
And so we took.  
We grasped and groped  
ripping through every barrier in our way,  
in frenzy, in need.  
We pioneered a new skinscape  
and gathered everything we were  
into one ball.  
Spark.  
Fire—fire!  
Ashes.  
Ashes from which no pyromaniacal  
five-hundred year old newly nascent bird  
will ever rise,  
because nothing was burned;  
nothing was sacrificed . . .  
yet somehow  
everything worth holding is gone.  
The fields lie fallow.  
For the only seed we planted was desire.  
The fruit harvested was pleasure.  
And that we consumed ravenously  
only to discover that we are still empty  
and the unripe fruit sweet to taste  
is bitter in the stomach.  
Hunger.

S  
h  
a  
w  
n  
  
S  
m  
i  
t  
h

## Motel 6

J

White room card,  
scratched,  
scraped from use.

a

m

Black letters hanging  
haphazardly from  
dirty siding-room 302-  
-smoking room.

i

e

Small white ice bucket,  
looks pretty new.

F

Switches that do nothing,  
complimentary soap  
that smells like room,  
and hard towels.

l

e

m

Next door a big blue van,  
two men who look like  
they are lost,  
and a girl who  
loves my boyfriend.

i

n

g

5 minute trip to the ice machine  
turns into 10 minute  
confusion at the payphone-  
-local calls are free-

## Four Poems

Chanel behind the ears, between the thighs  
Of a woman wearing  
Nakedness earth tones  
Entice the bees that swarm  
Around her nurturing nectar.  
Smell so seductive,  
The empress'es new clothing  
Confines the kingdom in awe.

"When a dress is red, is there a happy ending"  
Satin, silk, swaying like the smoke from the cig, Jump  
Back Jack, juke joint night! Red dress-  
Heels, nails, color stick- red light!  
Whore of Babylon

"Jeans so tight, she pants."  
Men like- try it, tighten, size  
Seven, come...one come all  
To the roundness of my thighs  
Succumbed to leopard skin  
Trapped in the seduction of men.

*Night Clubs in Philly on a Wintry Eve*  
Red Orange Yellow  
Through the sax, through my drums  
Green blue purple  
In my drink down my spine  
Red green red green  
Halt bass go keys  
Yellow blue  
Through the horns, someone sneezed  
On time to the beat of the drummer's solo!

L  
e  
s  
h  
i  
a  
  
R  
o  
b  
e  
r  
t  
s

# Bedroom Window

T  
r  
i  
c  
i  
a  
  
C  
a  
r  
b  
o  
n  
e

Elaborate with me.

Compassionate one.

Of souls...

You reek of love and sex

And smell of roses

Like Spring,

When March brings the leaves upon the trees.

The scent is unmistakable.

Seek out the rest of your story in me.

Elongate your life.

Spread pollen like the flowers,

Like the Lonely Rose outside my

Bedroom Window.

# How Egor Got Him Some How Egor Got Him Some

Mark Erwin

This is the story of Egor, Egor Trollson, and how he got him some. All of his life, all that Egor wanted was to be well liked, have a date most Saturday nights, but fate hadn't smiled on him. He was downright ugly. Had Egor lived in the seventeenth century he would have been a common henchman for some feudal lord or vampire, or something of that nature. But Egor lived in the twentieth century, make that the twenty-first century. And he was no common henchman; he was the executive assistant of a well respected lawyer.

Egor always wanted to know what it was like to be smart, handsome, or even tolerable to a normal person. His employer was always very popular with the ladies, but poor Egor had never been a person anybody wanted to be around. His physical appearance was classically grotesque with his hunchback, his lazy eye, and his dark black unibrow. His stutter and lisp, along with a slight spitting problem, made conversing with anybody, let alone a woman, virtually impossible. His wardrobe was functional with its white shirts, brown pants, and all purpose brown trenchcoats. While Egor wasn't about to win the Nobel Prize and was even slightly below average in intelligence, he did know how to do his job and handle the inner workings of an office.

Egor was hardly the man that his employer was, though. Mr. Vlad might appear somewhat unsettling to the untrained eye. He wore the clothes of a 1970s pimp: the purple fur coat, stacked shoes, and bellbottoms, even a fuzzy green fedora with a long peacock feather. But his appearance belied a somewhat suave persona. Mr. Vlad was a straight up, no jive, playa. Where Egor was deficient, Mr. Vlad was proficient. His appearance was desirable to all woman and many of the men that had started emerging in the

neighborhood recently. His lines seemed hokey to the unobservant bystander.

Most nights Egor stayed late at work finishing up for Mr. Vlad. Then Egor would go home to a bowl of soup for one by way of the subway. He always scared people on the streets with his appearance, but on the train he appeared normal. On the subway everybody looked strange and unsettling with the lights flickering, creating shadows on their faces. After he had eaten, he would flip on the tv and watch sitcoms until time to go to bed. He wanted to be like Joey on *Friends*: smooth and handsome, or even like Drew Carey on his show: an acceptable alternative to jerks.

This wasn't most nights, though. This particular Friday night there was a full moon, and it just happened to be the thirteenth day of October. Egor knew Mr. Vlad sincerely liked him. So Egor was not caught totally by surprise this Friday when Mr. Vlad called him up as Leno's monologue ended, and wishing Egor could meet some people, Mr. Vlad asked him to tag along to a club. Egor was reluctant at first, but he figured maybe some of Mr. Vlad's charisma would rub off on him, and he would meet somebody. And meeting someone was all Egor really wanted, that and to get him some.

\* \* \*

When they showed up at the club there were already a few attractive females there. Taking no time at all, Mr. Vlad walked up to a girl and told her how he had always loved spooky days like Halloween and Friday the thirteenth. They started dancing, and he started kissing her neck.

"What are you doing?"

“Ain’t no big thang baby, I just wanna suck on your neck.” She laughed and they continued to dance.

Egor had wanted to try talking with a couple of girls, but he had no success this evening. The night went better than he had thought it would though. One woman accepted a drink he had sent her. She was polite enough, but Egor didn’t have the nerve to talk with her. He ran away to the men’s room, comforting himself in the thought that she was just a lush out for a free drink. So with defeat in his heart, he observed all of Mr. Vlad’s actions from a quiet booth in the corner: Mr. Vlad was always successful.

It was from this dark corner in the back of the club that he saw Mr. Vlad leave with his companion. This fortress of solitude is also where Egor decided that there was absolutely no way he could ever be as smooth as Mr. Vlad. He would have to do something more drastic to get him some. So with this resolution, he set forth in his task and slipped quietly out the service entrance.

\* \* \*

Egor went back to his apartment and meticulously gathered the things he would need. First, he got the bottle of ether which he used to anesthetize the mice he fed to his pet python Monty, then he went and got the old rag he used when he cut himself shaving. He considered trying to get a gun, but he decided that would be pointless for what he had to do. He stuffed the things in his brown trenchcoat and headed for the subway stop.

Egor, as I have noted, loved the subway, he felt at home there. There were always people playing with themselves, shouting obscenities at the walls, somebody up getting high, or down getting stoned. Every freak in the world used the subway, even Egor.

Egor had made his way to Mr. Vlad’s apartment by 1:30 a.m. and he cautiously waited outside. He did

not want the girl from the club to see him there. After she had left, Egor slithered up the stoop and buzzed Mr. Vlad’s.

“Hello, who’s there?”

“It’s me...Egor.”

“What do you want, Egor?”

Egor had to see Mr. Vlad tonight, tomorrow he wouldn’t have the stomach for what he was about to do. “I need...to talk to you....It’s important.”

“Oh, all right...come on up.” With this there was a buzzing sound and the door opened.

Egor carefully fingered the bottle and rag in his pocket. He was apprehensive, but he knew it had to be done. He ascended the stairs, paying no attention to the amount of noise he made, for Mr. Vlad knew he was coming. He carefully doused the rag with ether at the top of the stairs and put both back in his coat pocket. He then walked into Mr. Vlad’s third floor apartment and greeted the other man with short hurried breaths.

“Hello...sir.” Between gasps Egor looked around the apartment to make sure they were alone.

“Do you need something to drink?” asked Mr. Vlad as he lounged on the couch.

“Thank you sir...I would...appreciate that.”

Mr. Vlad got up and headed for the kitchen.

“I thought you went home with someone...sir?” Egor asked as he followed Mr. Vlad down the hall.

“She just left.”

“Oh,” replied Egor as he pulled the ether soaked rag out of his pocket. “How lucky for me.”

“What did you s...” was all Mr. Vlad could get out before Egor had the rag over his mouth intoxicating the man with the sweet, oxygen-depriving ether.

\* \* \*

Mr. Vlad awoke someplace he didn’t recognize. Nobody was around, so he tried to assess the situation. He was tied up with what felt like metal chains, and

was lying flat on a table. His head was tied down, so he couldn't see anyone, but he thought he heard Barry White music playing in the background. Then he realized he was completely naked, and there was a jar of hand cleaner on the small card table next to him. At this exact moment Egor walked into the room carrying a ball gag like the one that Mr. Vlad had seen in Pulp Fiction.

"Where...am I...Egor?"

"This is my apartment," said Egor as he placed the gag on the table next to the hand cleaner.

"How did you get me here?" asked Mr. Vlad.

"You'd be surprised how much a person looks like they're passed out from drinking when they've been rendered unconscious."

"What are you going to do to me?" quivered Mr. Vlad as he looked back and forth between the gag and hand cleaner.

"I'm going to get me some."

"What does that mean...friend?" asked the very scared Mr. Vlad.

"You'll see." Egor let out a laugh that would have made Bela Legosi and Boris Karloff proud.

After he composed himself, Egor bent over the other man and placed the ball gag in his mouth. Mr. Vlad tried to struggle but there was nothing he could do.

"Time to go nighty-night...again." Egor then knocked Mr. Vlad out with the ether rag again, and commenced his elaborate plan.

"Now I'm going to get me some." And Egor cackled the rest of the way through his procedure. Egor grabbed the jar of hand cleaner and spread a generous dollop on...his hands (where else would he put it you dirty little pervert), he just hated his hands smelling like ether.

Mr. Vlad would never leave this apartment until Egor got what he came for. Egor reached into Mr. Vlad's pants, fished around, and grabbed his wallet.

Then Egor logged onto his computer and transferred Mr. Vlad's overseas bank accounts to his own measly accounts. They had measured maybe ten thousand dollars before the transaction: now they were closer to ten million. Egor knew the codes were in the wallet because Mr. Vlad couldn't even remember his own mother's birthday and he didn't trust them to be out of his possession.

After Egor had all of the finances in order he allowed Mr. Vlad to wake up, so he could tell him the plan, and then put him back under.

"Where are you, Egor?"

"I think I'm going to change that. How's Julio sound? No matter, I'll think of something. I just wanted to tell you now I'm going to be the one everybody wants to be around cause now I have what it takes."

Egor put Mr. Vlad under again and slowly headed toward his taxi and then the airport where he was hopping a flight to Rio. Now he had him some... some money, and that meant he had all that it took to get him a woman. In fact, he noticed the taxi driver was a woman: not too bad looking either. He looked at her, from head to toe, then did something he had never done before: became confident. He took a deep breath, and uttered, "How you doin'?"

REF  
O L  
T C E

# Twenty-Four Hours

C  
h  
r  
i  
s  
  
P  
u  
r  
c  
e  
l  
l

We gotta leave this city, you and me...seems it just rains here all the time...Feel that wind, we won't feel it soon...It'll be different though and maybe that's worse.

I saw you out there last night, another roof-top cry...I'm not gonna tell ya it's the weather or just a bad time...we'll just sit together, let it rain on us...take the blessings with the curse.

See the way the hills meet the sky...there's a place out there somewhere, anywhere, but I don't wanna see it tonight...put your hood up, I'll wear my hat lower than usual...We'll wait for this storm to pass.

The stone's so cold, it'll take the hope right outta ya...sit on your hands, we're helpless either way...goodnight trouble, twenty-four hours is just too much...thanks for this rain, it's the only thing that seems to last.



# Cigarettes and Coffee

Fire blue,  
Burning so hot.  
White steam,  
Turned to black  
Smoke yellow,  
Filling the lungs.

Drive me home  
In my own car.  
So that I may see,  
The truth tomorrow,  
The pain that I am in.

Water brown,  
Tastes so good.  
Gray stones,  
Turned to clear.  
Tears of red,  
Falling to the ground.

Drive me home now,  
In my own car.  
So that I may see,  
Tomorrow.

C  
h  
r  
i  
s  
  
G  
l  
i  
o  
t

## Who Says? Who Sees?

M  
i  
c  
h  
e  
l  
e  
  
G  
i  
a  
r  
r  
u  
s  
s  
o

I hear my Mama is in a better place—

that is what the priest *said*,

that is what the nuns *said*,

that is what the ladies who sit on their steps all day *said*, but

that is not what *I say*,

or Esmerelda *says*,

or Ada, or Dafne, or Marta, or crazy Renata *says*.

Renata thinks my Mama didn't love my Daddy enough,

and Rodrigo said women just get what they deserve.

And when his sister Frederica disagreed with him—

he smacked her right in front of everybody,

right in front of the church,

right in front of the nuns

and right in front of Father Bracciano—

who turned his head and pretended not to see.

# Panthalessa

Let me sing ya some **twelve bar blues**...  
I wanna hear my thoughts like a **siren, Wail**....  
Across this **nighttime sky**...  
Over the calm **sea of distance**, between you and I.

There's this break in the trees, in the forest of my  
**dreams**...  
A breach into the void, speckled with **dust** of bright-eyed  
hope...  
**Silent** house where we sit back and cope...  
And the leaves rustle as the **satellites flash by**.

Shhhhh...real quiet, **in a silent way**...  
We'll kick back, cut slack, and drift away...  
Then Shhhhh, listen...**in a silent way**...  
First light's, just right, racing towards the day.

C  
h  
r  
i  
s  
  
P  
u  
r  
c  
e  
l  
l

# John John

Mark Erwin

The sun hadn't yet risen when we left that morning. There are few things as wondrous as the first light breaking through the quiet pines. The sunrise always came late in the narrow, deep valley. The mountains added coolness to the half-light of our adventure. I remember passing through a buzzard's shadow as it looked for its breakfast. That morning of our fishing trip, I witnessed the glory that is daybreak as I rode with my father and brothers to my grandfather's farm. The sun danced oranges and red off the clouds and made the sky transform from darkness into the deep blue that rides in with autumn's cool dry air.

My father sat at the wheel not thinking of the actions of driving; he was just going through the motions, right turn then left then right again, and letting his mind wander. My brother Larry sat beside him, playing with the radio trying to get a decent reception in the valley that's deep enough to block out most stations. He finally picked the local country station and settled back into his seat. Bobby was sitting next to me as he dozed, probably dreaming of the fish that he wanted to catch. As we passed the little white Brethren church on the hilly road, I realized we were nearly there.

The morning was still in its waking moments when we arrived. Even though it was only early September, there was a slight chill in the early morning air as the four of us piled out of the car and readied ourselves for our outing. I rubbed some warmth into my hands as I unpacked my rod, vest, and my old wicker creel I'd had since I was twelve. I looked up the hill at the smoke coming out of the sleeping yarn-weaver's chimney.

Regardless of what anyone says, the best and most fulfilling part of any trek into the great outdoors is

the camaraderie of it. This begins on the road, but like the anxious excitement one feels, it comes to its peak between the car and the stream. While we walked we discussed fishing, and life in general. We joked and teased and taunted each other about how many fish we were going to catch, and how few the rest of us would catch. "Betcha I catch my limit before you get two!" jeered my Dad. "Not a smart bet," replied my brother Larry. My father always told us of yesteryear, and people like old Jim Duncan. He had been from two farms up the valley, but he died before I was born, in that war my Dad simply called the big one. My brothers and I talked of previous family outings, and I could tell from Bobby's uneasy smile and the half-bounce in Larry's step that we were all glad to be there but I could tell there was still some anxiety about what had happened in July.

As we always did inevitably, one of us brought up a memory of my departed brother John. We talked about the last time we all went fishing together, a few years before he left us. And we laughed out loud when Bobby reminded us of how John had thrown a rock at a fish that had snapped his line. Upon this memory we split up and went off in our own directions to catch our fish in the solitude that lies in abundance along the muddy banks and in the intricate willows of the quiet little creek. We used to always fish together before John died.

I made my way to the remote little section of stream that no one knew better or could fish as well as me. It was late in the year and I could taste the burning hickory in the old wood stoves that used to lie in a multitude up and down the valley; now there are hardly any of them left. I noticed the water was low at the

fording my great-grandfather had built as I crossed the stream to get to the side that housed my secret entrance. After I crossed, I had to head upstream twenty yards or so to where the willow bushes parted ever so slightly. From here I entered and waded downstream to just above a big rock.

When I was just a kid my grandfather told me how that big tabletop-sized rock got in the creek. When his great grandfather first cleared the farm's fields of rocks, he put this one in the middle of a narrow but deep hole to give the fish some cover. The hole was so deep that the six foot square rock was completely submerged until the low water of summer came. The hole was good for other things too: John used to swim here when he was a teenager.

From a rod's length away, I sat on the bank and hid myself from the fish who waited on the other side of the rock. I began to tie on a fly that I have used since my first adventures in fly fishing. Then I saw a fish, and I made roll cast after roll cast, going about the hardest goal in all of sports: to catch a fish with a little bit of feather and hair. I cast to where the water broke at the upstream side of the rock, and I let the current take the number twelve Adams dry fly to the waiting fish. Eventually, I caught that trout; it was a little brook trout, maybe six inches, but no less glorious than the biggest salmon in the streams of the West. I reeled him in quick so he wouldn't spook the other fish. I went on to catch a few more, and of course I missed a few more than I should have. But I knew a greater catch awaited me when I was done for the day and sitting with my grandfather on his porch: the stories.

\* \* \*

We always made our way back to my grandfather's front porch one at a time. I, being the least patient of the family, usually arrived first. It was the same that day. The old wooden desk that opened up to reveal God

knows what had set in the same spot for as long as I could remember, just beside the front door. It always had bailing twine and old Hills Brothers coffee cans full of used rusty nails sitting under it. I sat down on the metal glider that was next to the desk, and my grandfather sat at the other end of the porch on a folding metal chair. We had ice cold water in metal glasses the paint had worn off of and we talked.

"Catch any?" he asked as he turned the bug zapper off.

"A little brookie, maybe six or seven inches, and a couple of bigger brownies. Nothin over a foot though," I said as I took off my wet boots and socks to reveal my water-wrinkled feet.

"How's school goin'?"

"Can't complain....Been cool lately."

"Yeah. Used the furnace last night." I saw the wood chips lying around the corner of the porch. He must've brought some billets of wood from the pile on the far side of the house. I looked over to see him rubbing his hands and his eyes examining the ground.

He looked over at me and asked, "So how long's it been since he passed?"

"Who's that?" I asked the question even though I knew perfectly well who he meant.

"Your brother John."

"Ah." I looked over at the lilac bush that hadn't had flowers for three years thanks to the late frosts. The dog seemed a little skinny. His ribs were almost poking through. I could feel my grandfather's stare so I spoke up after I'd had a few seconds to collect myself. "Five years come November."

"That so." His voice wavered now and then since he had gotten older.

"Yup."

"You gittin along with the rest of your brothers okay since then?"

"We do the best we can, but there's always somethin comin up: jealousy usually. Other things at

times.”

He chuckled as he said, “Your Daddy told me about the ruckus the other two got into.” My oldest brother, Bobby, got a new house the July before, a real big one too. Right after that my other brother Larry asked him for a loan of fifteen hundred dollars. Bobby didn’t have it to spare because he just got the new house and the payments were about all he could handle. They got into a shouting match. Larry kept complaining about how Bobby had always had things easier, and Bobby said it was because he’d always worked harder than Larry. It ended up that they got into a pretty good fistfight and settled things like men do. Bobby knocked Larry’s bottom left front tooth out, and that settled it. They never fought before John died, but since....

“Maybe why we fight is because we all have different interests, or maybe it’s because we’re all so different....I don’t know. But we all like to fish; it seems to be the only time we get along very well. Know what I mean?”

“Did I ever tell you bout how my uncle Johnny died?” I thought he was trying to change the conversation, but I didn’t mind.

“Nope, don’t believe you have.” I replied between a sip of the water and a bite of some beef jerky I had brought along.

“Well...haven’t told this here story in a good long while, so I may be a little rusty.” Then he looked me square in the eye with a look of humor and hardness as he added, “That okay?” Then, before I could answer, his voice slowly drifted into that of the storyteller he became when he tried to teach something. His eyes got a little glazed over as he looked off at something just beyond my grasp: the past.

“My grandpa told me this story some time back, ’fore you daddy was born I reckon.” He pointed off in my father’s general direction down at the creek, and then continued. “It seems Jack, that was my pap, was real close with his brother Johnny; that’s who your

brother was named after. Pap wasn’t too close with his other brothers though. Sorta like you was with John, and how you is with them other two, Bobby and the other one...what’s his damn name...Larry.” I’d noticed my father was getting like that too: forgetting names, even my mother’s and mine. Maybe it was because they were both getting older, or maybe not.

“Well one day Johnny up and died: loggin accident I think; not sure though, nobody really talked about it much...not to me anyway. Pap made some efforts to get close to his other brothers, they’d be my great uncles Frank, Eugene, and Harold.”

He paused as he took his big red hanky out of his back pocket and blew his nose. “Funny thing is, none of the rest of ’em had a damn thing in common. They got along with Johnny real good cause of somethin in his way; Pap never could put a finger on exactly what that was though. Maybe he was likable was all...I dunno,” he said as he put the hanky back in his pocket.

He looked at me, and I wondered why he was telling me this. In my twenty some years on this good earth before then, he never once told me a thing that did me a bit of good in my life (we usually just talked about my father’s childhood, laughing at the stupid things he had done). As a matter of fact he’d told me some stuff that did nothing but keep me up at nights. One Christmas, when I was a little kid, he told me he shot Rudolph. Then, to prove his point, he took me out to the barn and showed me a buck head with its hide still attached. The thing was, it had a red nose. Later, after it kept me awake for a couple of nights, my dad told me that it was just a regular deerhide with a nose that had been painted red with some cheap dollar store paint. Now it seems pretty funny, but then it scared me bad.

He looked at me and I knew he could tell I was thinking something, “You listenin to me? I don’t wanna have to repeat any of this. Okay?” I nodded my understanding and he continued as I peeled some leaves of grass and let them fall on the sun-faded boards of the

porch.

“Johnny was like the horsehide on a baseball: he held all the messiness that comes with bein a family together. And when he died, well, it was like that hide come off the ball and and all the string came off leavin the bare naked cork just layin there. They got along okie dokie for a little while. But, it bein man’s way to stir things up, after a while all the nastiness that had been built up over the years spilt out just as that string had. All that was left was the blood they shared, just like that cork center. Ya understand boy?” I nodded, but I could tell he wasn’t sure. “Lookie here,” he said as he took a baseball from the old wooden school desk next to the door. “Hold this.” He came over and sat down next to me then whipped out his Imperial pocket knife and opened up a broken blade, “Ah, dammit!” He put that blade back in and got out the little blade. “Gimme that.” Then as he cut away the seams of the cover, it fell away like a dissected orange peel. “Take it,” he commanded as he took hold of a string end and pulled all of it away from the cork core. “Now...” he said as he balled up the string. “Clear off a dirt spot down there on the ground and burn this.”

I waited a second or two, and then I looked at him. I looked him right in the eye. He must have seen my uncertainty.

“Just do it.” So I did as he said without asking. I cleared all of the living grass off a little foot square plot of ground that was about two feet in front of the porch. Then I got the dead grass, and moved it to the side, feeling its brittleness in my palms and fingertips. I tried to sweep some of the little pieces of shale away, but realizing they wouldn’t burn, I gathered up the string from my grandfather. I looked at him, and he just nodded in the direction of the clearing. Placing the string in the center of the square, I was careful not to let it get near the grass. I took out a pack of waterproof matches from my fishing vest and lit one. The sulfuric smoke was strong as I lit the string ablaze. It burnt a little

darker than I had thought it would: it must have been coated with something.

“Now,” My grandfather instructed. “Go get me that marker in the house.”

“Where is it?”

“On your grandma’s old Singer.”

I got the marker and dropped it in his weathered hand. He wrote something on the cork center of the ball and laid it between us. “Okay, where was I? ...Oh. When all this little shit that had been storin up, I mean real little things like somebody gittin somethin of their Daddy’s that the other one wanted, things of that sort, my Pap tore off and beat the livin shit outta Frank. Eugene didn’t take kindly to this, so he ripped my pappy a new one. Then old Harold got pissed and layed into Eugene. They went back and forth like this a long time.”

I noticed Pap was still pretty muscular for an old man, and all this talk of fighting made me wonder how bad he would kick my ass if the situation should ever arise.

“Pap, Frank, and Eugene got back together and put their differences aside after Harold died, but there was a spell of thirty some odd years when they weren’t talkin to at least one of the rest.”

Looking at the ashes on the ground he remarked, “Now that there string we burnt is like those little things my granddaddy and his brothers fought about. You either have to get rid of ’em or they eat ya up inside.”

“I’ll have to remember that.” I smiled as he continued on.

“You know that horsehide I give ya?”

I looked down at the ball cover in my hand. “Yeah.”

“Give it here.” He took it and wrote something with the red Sharpie I’d gotten him. I couldn’t read it because it was upside down. “Take this here horsehide with ya. Keep it close to ya. When you get on down the road...read it, not till you’re outta the valley either

dammit, and remember what it means.

“Now you take that and never let go of it. Whenever you get mad at your brothers, you just look at that and remember this story. And if that’s not enough, just come back here and look at what’s important: this little piece of cork.” He held it out so I could see the heart of the baseball, what all the string’s intricacies wound around.

He pulled it back, and put it in the old wooden school desk. “It’ll be there when you need it.” I nodded and got up to go to the car where my Dad had just arrived and my brothers were putting their stuff away so we could go home. I wanted to share my new found wisdom with them.

\* \* \*

My brothers and father talked of their day the whole way home...of the big one that got away. Larry even said he could see teeth on an exceptionally large brown trout. Through all of these stories I kept to myself and listened until we neared the valley’s wide exit. “Hey Dad?”

“Yeah.”

“Pap ever tell ya about his grandfather’s brothers?”

“Whatta ya mean? His Pap didn’t have no brothers.”

“Oh...my mistake.” I laughed to myself as I pulled the little piece of horsehide out of my pocket and looked at the message my grandfather had given me. Slowly...I turned the ball’s skin around in my hand and noticed the fraying of the red stitches, the little nicks on the leather cover, and the red ink my grandfather put there. The ink formed four letters. Four letters I could never forget. They would always be a part of me: a part of this family. Not just four little letters: a baseball cover. I examined the letters with my finger tips. And I remembered him...my brother: John

REF  
O L  
T C E



# Concrete Poetry

Concrete Poetry

Created By:

Jennifer Gill

REF  
O L  
TCE

*Homage to Pierre and Ilse Garnier*

actressactressactressactressactressactressactress  
sactressactressactressactressactressactressactre  
ssactressactressactressactressactressactressactr  
essactressactressactressactressactressactressact  
ressactressactressactressactressactressactressac  
tressactressactressactressactressactressactressa  
ctressactressactressactressactressactressactress  
actressactressactressactressactressactressactres  
sactressactressactressactressactressactressactre  
ssactressactressactressactressactressactressactr  
essactressactressactressactressactressactressact  
ressactressactressactressactressactressactressac  
tressactressactressactressactressactressactressa  
ctressactressactressactressactressactressactress

Wanda

On location

Characters

SETTING

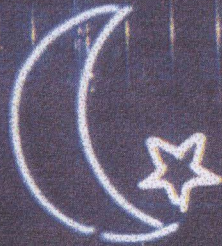
The picture shows.

CAMERA

Directors

Julia Roberts

Actress



Play

Costume

Actors

movies

CLIMAX

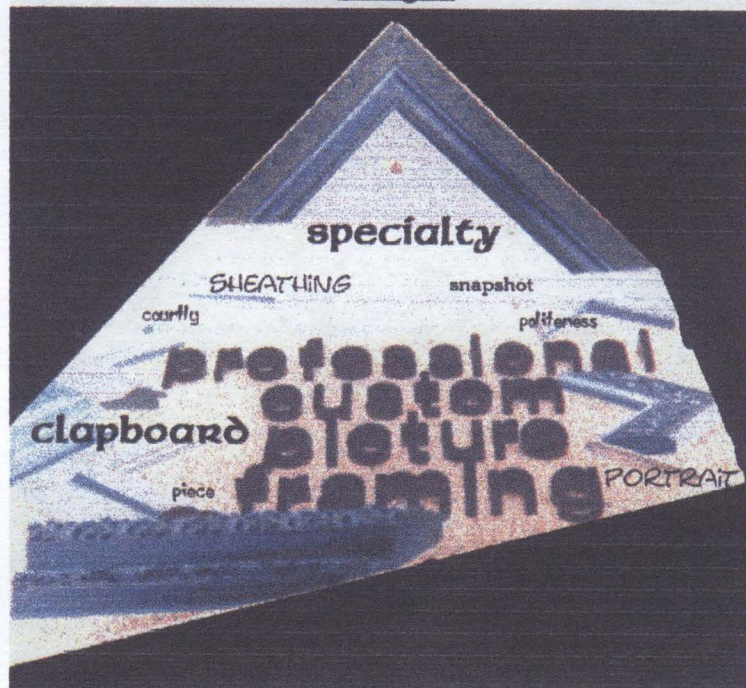
Studio

The big screen.

Too Wanda!

Plot

Images

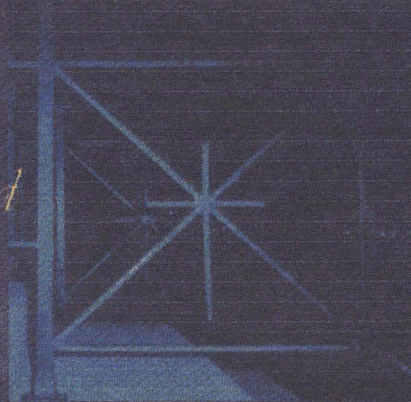


*A symbol  
is to be  
symbolic.  
A rep-  
resentation  
of our larger  
world.*



**WEST HIGH  
STREET**

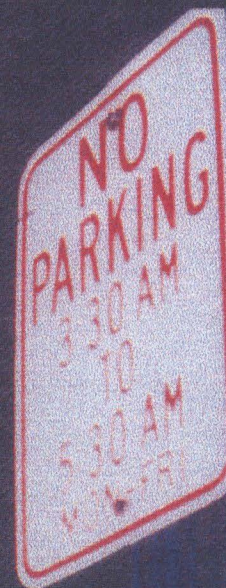
*To symbolize  
is to stand  
for meaning.  
To rep-*



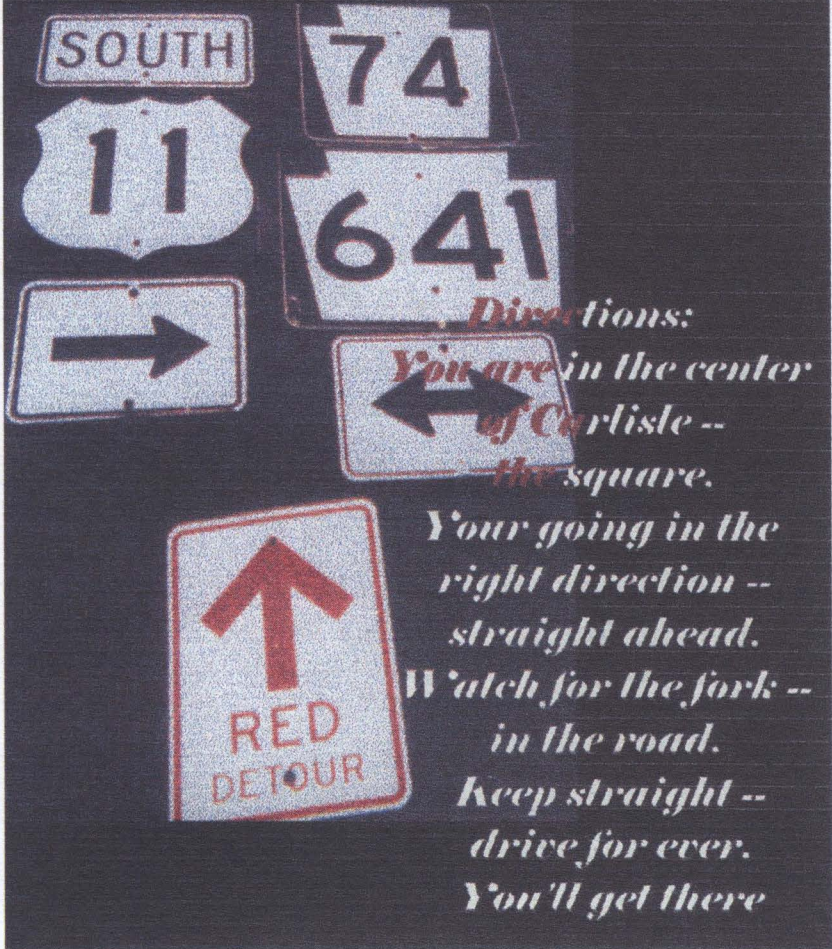
*resent who-*

*we are-*

*our spirit-  
signifies our world.*



*Where are you going?*



*Directions:*

*You are in the center  
of Carlisle --  
the square.*

*You're going in the  
right direction --  
straight ahead.*

*Watch for the fork --  
in the road.*

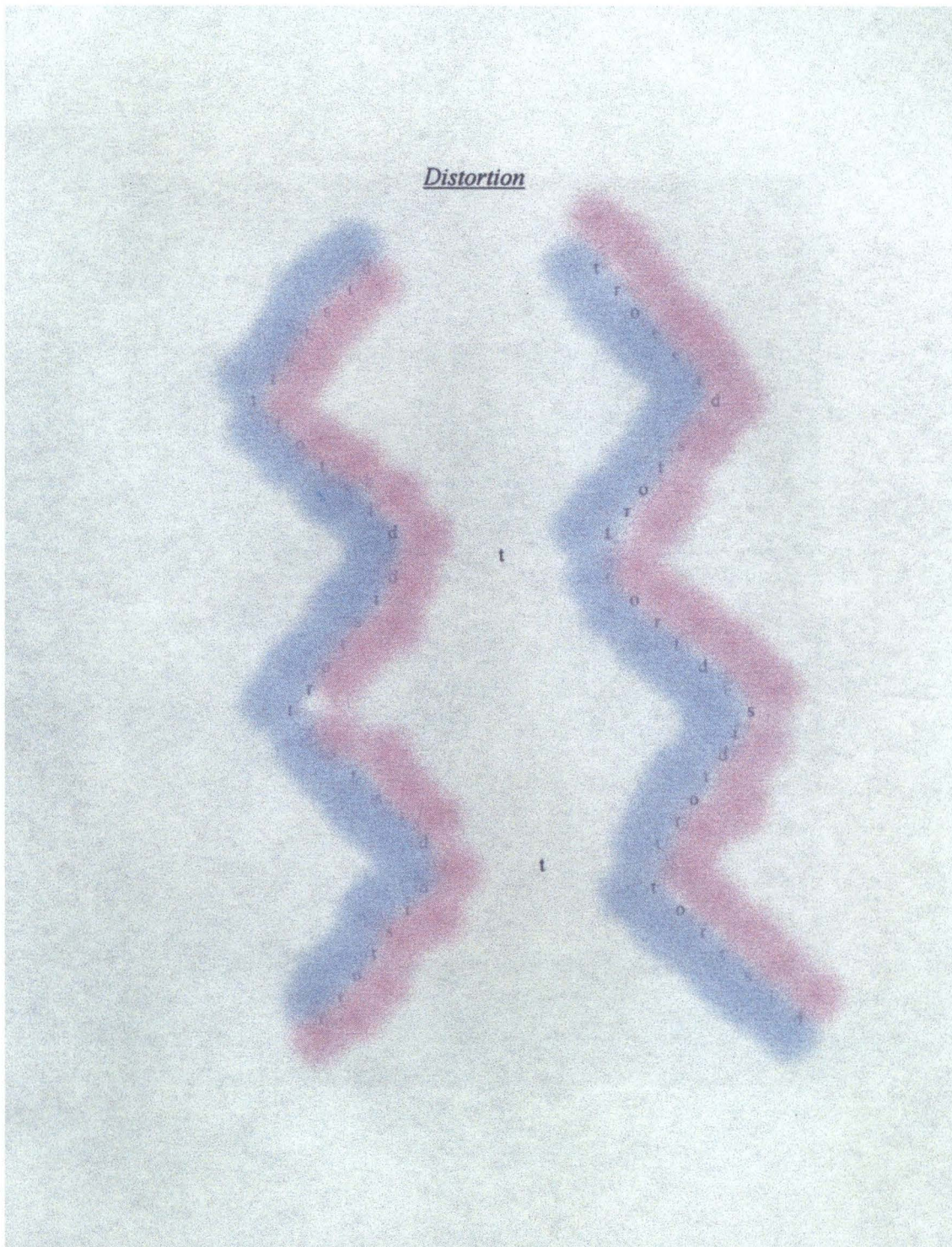
*Keep straight --  
drive for ever.*

*You'll get there*

City Fun



Distortion





# An Essay An Essay

Chris Gliot

And so, the story continues, as all stories do, with no beginning and no end; no original creation and no eventual demise. There is nothing but a culmination of the past and the future rolled into one, which is now. Like a pinprick of light encompassing all yet encompassing nothing, all things are tied together, an endless string of events leading onward to more events. One event reflects the other; made of the others, even those yet to occur. The others reflect the one yet also include the one. Everything is connected, tied together delicately by a small thread that in and of itself is nowhere near small nor even a thread. All is one. One is all. Past, present, and future the same yet held in complete opposition of each other. And so the story continues, but at the same time, it is ending and already gone. The story is life and life is the story. I could sit and tell you of great un-thought things, but they have already been thought of or at least they will be thought. It does not matter. I could tell you of far off distant lands, but they are the same as the ones found deep within our own souls. I could tell you of love, loss, and heartache, but it is the same as all of the joy ever felt, felt now, or that will ever be felt. And I could tell you of great personal change, dreams held, found and lost, but they too already lie deep within ourselves or at least one day they will be. But in telling you these stories, I am telling you nothing and everything at the same time. So, what is the point you may ask? But in and of itself, that is the point. To make you ask what is the point. Because one day you shall reach enlightenment and realize that all things simply are and are not. That is my story, the story of existence, which through its own existence is non-existence. All things are made and not made of four parts that are equally encompassing. The right, the left, and the combination of both, and the lack of both, all of which is everything and nothing tied together yet still separate. It is the pinprick of light that encompasses eternity and nothing simultaneously. Just like the star that dances when seen through peripheral vision, but is lost when viewed directly. All creation is constantly moving slightly out of our reach. This is the story, the story of truth. The perfect nirvana that is and must always be imperfect.

REF  
O L  
T C E

# Contributors Notes

---

**Paul Joseph Canary**, a recent graduate of HCC, is currently enrolled in the English program. He views writing as a suggestive art that transforms the ideas of society into a collective consciousness.

**Tricia Carbone** is a senior English major/Spanish minor. She feels she expresses emotion best through writing, so it's rare for her poems not to have affected her in some way.

**Dustin Coover** is a twenty-one year old junior at Shippensburg University.

**Mark Erwin** is a senior at Shippensburg, and will graduate with his B.A. in May of 2001. He is from Orbisonia in southern Huntingdon County. His favorite writers include Mark Twain, Robert Frost, and Norman Maclean.

**Briana Finui**, is a senior English major. After she graduates, she plans on pursuing a career in editing or publishing.

**Jamie Fleming** is a senior English major at Ship. She has an associate's degree in Communications from HACC and has had work published there.

**Melissa Flick** is a senior Elementary Education major with an English minor. Her writing has been influenced by the French poet, Francis Ponge.

**Michele Giarrusso** is a first year graduate student. She is majoring in Communications/Journalism and received her undergraduate degree from Mount St. Mary's College. Her poems are part of a larger work entitled *The Moon Over Chew Avenue*. Her influences include Sandra Cisneros, Zora Neale Hurston, and Ines Arrenendo.

**Jennifer Elaine Gill** is an Elementary Education major with an English writing minor. She grew up in Mogadore, Ohio, near Akron. She writes: What I enjoy more than writing for myself is teaching children how to write. Seeing the poet/writer/reader come out in them is something that will never grow old.

**Chris Gliot** is a senior English major and Earth Sciences minor. He is interested in both fiction and poetry.

**Andrea Higgins** is a junior Communications Journalism major / English writing minor.

**Michael Hay** is a junior majoring in English. He is originally from Philadelphia.

**Karen Kegley** recently graduated from Shippensburg University.

**Kate Landry**, our faithful editor-in-chief, is a senior English major at Shippensburg University.

**April McDaniel** is a senior from Phoenixville, PA. She is double majoring in English and Psychology. After graduation she is heading to graduate school to become a counselor.

**Dana Monlish** is a senior English major/Psychology minor at Ship. Her poems are stylistically similar to Hilda Morley's, the poet she spent a semester studying. Her favorite collection of poetry is *To Hold in My Hand*.

**Ryan D. Phillips** is a junior Journalism/Philosophy major. He writes: Poetry has been the ultimate release for me for years and I wouldn't trade its freedom for anything.

**Christopher Purcell** is a sophomore transfer student at Ship pursuing a degree in Business Information Systems. He is originally from Harrisburg and has been writing for the past four years. In addition to writing poetry, Chris is an avid singer/songwriter. His writing stems from a number of influences in poetry and prose, including Bob Dylan, Kerouac, Hemingway, and Auden.

**Leshia Roberts** is a student at Shippensburg University.

**Shawn Smith** is a senior English major with a Communications/Journalism minor. His favorite poets include John Donne, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Gerard Manley Hopkins, C.S. Lewis and Gregory Corso.

**John Suhre** is in his junior year at Ship as an Elementary Ed major/English minor. He writes: To me "Silent Slavery" is meant to serve as a reminder that the clause in the Declaration of Independence ("life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness") is being compromised in favor of what is deemed moral by society.

**John Taggart**, our ever patient faculty advisor, is a professor in the English Department. After the Spring 2001 semester, he will be retiring. This saddens the Reflector staff, but we wish him health and happiness in all of his future endeavors.

**Anna Umbreit** is a junior majoring in Communications/Journalism and minoring in English Writing. When not designing in the Art Lab, she likes to spend time reading with her cat, Simyn.





