


# ODYSSEY

A hand with white nail polish and a gold watch reaches up towards a glowing orb in a blue sky. The orb has a bright light source and a dark, textured interior. The background is a blue sky with a dark horizon line.

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# 98



# ODYSSEY

Lake-Sumter Community College

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# 98

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The opinions expressed herein are those of our contributors and do not necessarily represent those of the editors, faculty, staff, administration or trustees of the college.

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# ***And the winners are.....***

## ***Computer Graphics***

First Place

Westmonte Festival

Ron Reese

## ***Drawing***

First Place

Howey Mansion

Stephen J. Simon

Second Place

Chapman

Michael Pierce

Third Place

Untitled

Jennifer Hall

## ***Painting***

First Place

American Cowboy

Stephen J. Simon

Second Place

Reach

Justin Evans

Third Place

Germany

Michael Pierce

## ***Mixed Media***

First Place

The Walrus and the Carpenter

Michael Pierce

Second Place

Ireland

Kimberly Stevens

## ***Three-Dimensional Art***

First Place

Trinity

Deanne Davis

## ***Fiction***

First Place

Straighten Up and Fly Right

Laura A. Walton

Second Place

Birthday Memories

Pat Shafer

Third Place (tie)

Routine Embellishments

Janet Lee Soucek

Third Place (tie)

Morning Rendezvous

Linda Florea

Honorable Mention

The Labyrinth

Janet Lee Soucek

## ***Poetry***

First Place

The Poet Sleeps Under Stones Not Turned

Clint Bryant

Second Place

Guilty

Laura A. Walton

Third Place

Disorganization

Lynn Crandall

## ***Black & White Photography***

First Place

Big Bird

Linda Florea

Second Place

Married with Children

Linda Florea

Third Place

Sentinel

Linda Florea

## ***Color Photography***

First Place

Intensity in Green

Jeanette Blackshire

Second Place

Spin Doctor

Linda Florea

Third Place

Hopper

Linda Florea

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## Birthday Memories

*by Pat Shafer*

How could I let January 15th go by without bowing my head and my heart for a few moments of thoughtful reminiscence for Dr. Martin Luther King?

Dear Dr. King, We've never met, but I want to tell you that every time I heard you speak during the 1960s, my life changed in some way. As the sixties raced by, and I became more involved in the Civil Rights Movement and saw some of our workers tortured and martyred, my heart took a turn for the worse. I began to hate prejudiced white people, some of whom were my own family, friends, fellow church members, and sadly, even some clergy.

Thank God for you, Dr. King. Because above all the other things you were -- civil rights leader, statesman, speaker, strategist -- you were first and foremost, a pastor, and a minister of the gospel. You were God's man for the hour of America's greatest spiritual need.

I didn't realize it then, but now, thirty years later, there's something I can't help but notice. There were many statesmen, politicians, philanthropists, militants, and scholars on the scene in the sixties. Yet not one of them -- not back in the sixties, nor any time since your death -- ever became the single, undisputed leader of the movement. You were the only one who EVER filled that role.

Instead of a powerful man of politics, commerce, or the military, the man God chose as the undeniable leader of the Civil Rights Movement, was one of His own -- a previously unknown, young minister from a small town in the deep South. God called, and you responded, "Here am I Lord, send me." (Isaiah 6:8), And He not only appointed, but anointed -- and you became a man with a mission, a man of destiny.

Being a man of God, you quoted and paraphrased generously from the Bible's pen of inspiration in your every communication. This gave a weight and authority to your pronouncements that hitherto had been unknown in the volatile national civil rights arena of the sixties.

The movement never lacked for speakers. And most of them were men of good will. Nevertheless, the majority were civil leaders of one ilk or another, with only intellectual human reasoning to rely on. But this was inadequate for the gargantuan battle of nationwide, nonviolent, civil disobedience to which you had pledged yourself.

It had become apparent that this battle wasn't to be won by might or cleverness. This battle could only be won from the lofty height of moral integrity. An integrity that was willing to be hurt, to be beaten, to bleed, and even to

die, without retaliation.

So, because your speeches came from those lofty heights, and had the power of the universe behind them, many of them convicted me that hatred can never be justified. I began to realize that my hatred of evil white people was just as evil as Bull Connor's hatred of black people.

I could no longer fool myself into believing that my hatred was somehow "alright," because it was in a good cause. The time of conviction I remember best, though it was only one of many, came in a speech you gave in Montgomery in 1965. Remember that poem you quoted:

Truth forever on the scaffold,  
Wrong forever on the throne,  
Yet that scaffold sways the future,  
And behind the dim unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow,  
Keeping watch above His own..

Reluctantly at first, and with much pain, and oh so gradually, I began to learn from you how to work in the movement without hating, though our workers continued to be beaten and martyred.

And now, thirty years later, I see that God has worked on the hearts of nearly every one of those dear folk I was hating in that other lifetime, so very, very long ago.

Of course, your non-violent commitment had to be, and was, more than lip service. The time came when you proved beyond the shadow of any doubt that you believed and lived what you preached.

Yes, the time came Dr. King when, not only did you give up your life for your mission -but you even stated publicly, on the very night before you died, that you were willing to do so. In the last sermon of your short life, and still leaning heavily on the Bible for inspiration, you paraphrased the experience of Moses, likening your own to it.

Moses too, like you, didn't live to reach the Promised Land with the people he had so laboriously, and at such great personal cost, led to the borders of the kingdom. But he, like you, was taken to the mountaintop. He, like you, was allowed to look over at Canaan. Like you, he also saw the land he'd been longing for for forty years.

Yet, like you, he could not cross over Jordan with his people. He too, knew that they would have to enter without him. And like you, Moses too, made a final speech to that effect to his people, to prepare them to go on without him.





Dr. King, in retrospect, the comparison you made between yourself and Moses is breathtakingly perfect. Remember how you summed it up in that last address:

“...It really doesn’t matter now because I’ve been to the mountaintop. I don’t mind -- like anybody, I’d like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I am not concerned about that now. I just want to do God’s will. And He’s allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I have looked over, and I’ve seen the Promised Land.

“I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, **WILL** get to the Promised Land!

“So I am happy tonight. I am not worried about anything. I am not fearing any man.

“Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!” (Excerpt from Memphis speech, April 3, 1968)

You mentioned, Dr. King, in the earlier Montgomery speech, that Alabama, and the nation, had a date with



destiny. I've learned over the years that each of us has a date with destiny. You were ready for yours. And this nation owes you a debt it can never pay.

There are many in the United States today, both black and white, whose lives, fortunes, and commitment to the dream are swimming upward in the mainstream of American life. Many who, without your sacrifice, would still be nameless, faceless phantoms washed up on the shore of despair in a still-segregated and soul-dead land.

May it never be that Martin Luther King Day would become just a day that the schools, courthouses, and banks are closed! No! This is the day that the soul of America stops to remember -- and to thank you, Dr. King, for what you did. Not just for your death, but for your life!

And most important of all -- your "dream" still lives. It lives in my heart, and in the hearts of all those for whom you died.

As inadequate as it is, I personally want to thank you today, on the anniversary of your birth, for your sacrifice.

And I want you to know today, Dr. King, that you are not forgotten. Your sacrifice was not in vain. Just as Moses' people finally made it to the Land of Canaan, so are your people, one by one, and family by family, making it to their Land of Promise.

And I am a just one of many people who can say today that I am a better person because you lived. Our lives and motives are purer and deeper today because of how you died, and your willingness to lay down your life for your friends.

We can never forget that your mission meant so much to you, that even if it cost you your life to continue working to fulfill it, you were determined to do so.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13

So, Dr. King, January 15th will always be a special day, "deep in my heart."

***Deep in my heart, I do believe,  
We shall overcome, some day.***

*Untitled, Drawing  
by Christopher Woods*





*Robyn, Drawing  
by Jennifer Hall*

## *Disorganization*

*by Lynn Crandall*

What is the color of what frustrates you most?  
By what means would you render?  
Try to color "Disorganization."

Impressionism would suit it least...  
indeed, and insult of art.  
Cubism is fair, for objects aren't what they appear  
or located where they belong.

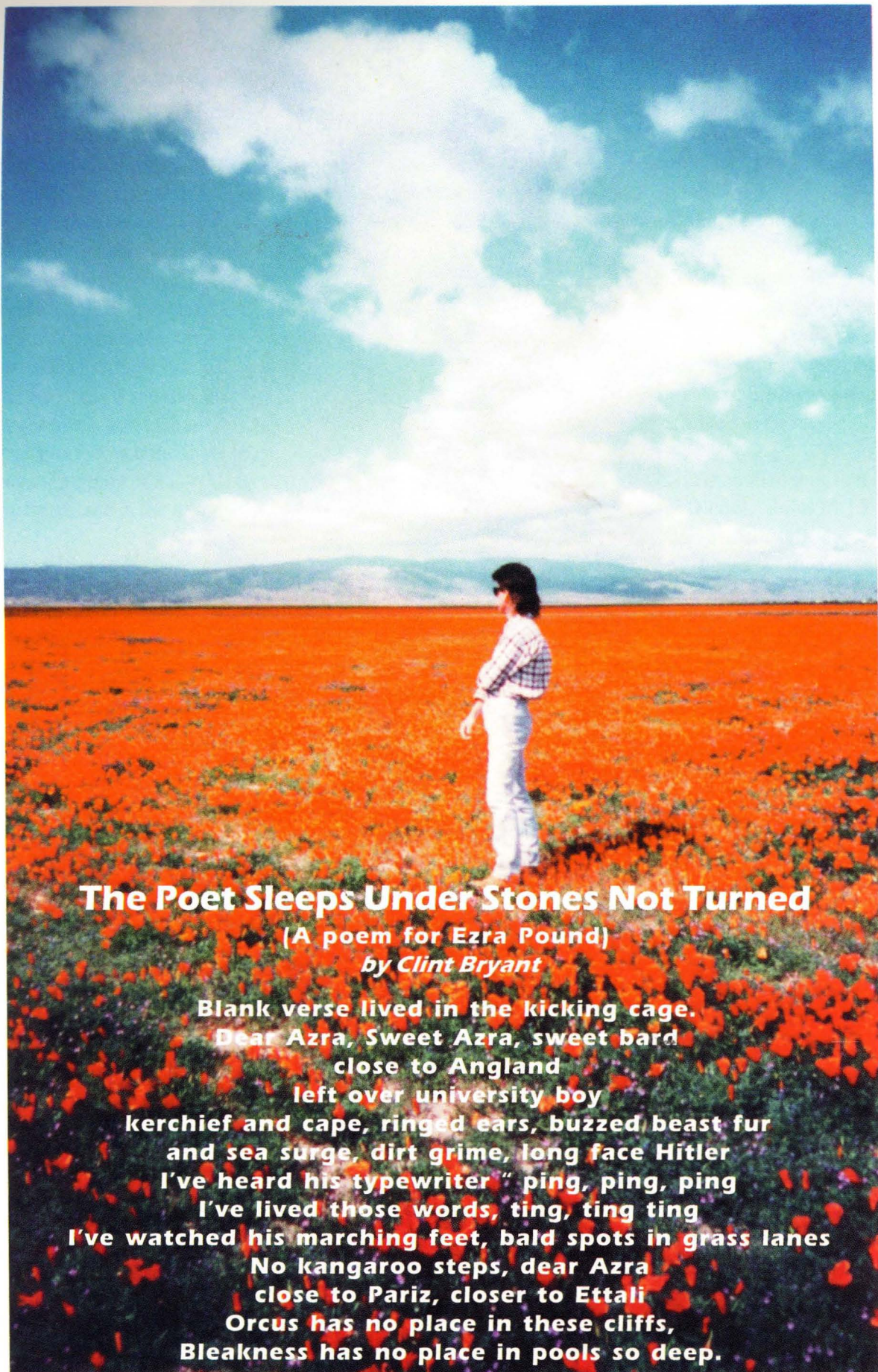
Livids, vivids, the reds, oranges, greens...  
These are the colors of my inadequacies.

Reds are of anger, discord, inharmoniousness, fatigue.  
Colors they are and colors they'll be.

Greens by gradation are moments of envy. A monster shows itself,  
bearing its talons and fangs... hyperventilating,  
filling the air with jalepeno breath.

Were I to color the torment associated with poor organization, I'd be at a loss.  
I just wouldn't be able to put my finger on it at this time.





## **The Poet Sleeps Under Stones Not Turned**

**(A poem for Ezra Pound)**

**by Clint Bryant**

Blank verse lived in the kicking cage.  
Dear Azra, Sweet Azra, sweet bard  
close to Angland  
left over university boy  
kerchief and cape, ringed ears, buzzed beast fur  
and sea surge, dirt grime, long face Hitler  
I've heard his typewriter " ping, ping, ping  
I've lived those words, ting, ting ting  
I've watched his marching feet, bald spots in grass lanes  
No kangaroo steps, dear Azra  
close to Pariz, closer to Ettali  
Orcus has no place in these cliffs,  
Bleakness has no place in pools so deep.

*Wildflowers, Color Photography  
by Russ Toth*



# Straighten Up and Fly Right

by Laura Walton

A warm soft breeze gently caressed the face of the late middle-aged (yet still surprisingly handsome) man as he raised the frozen mai-tai to his lips. The light beat of a Latin swing came floating across the verandah, followed by a beautiful dark-skinned waitress, better yet, a beautiful dark-skinned servant girl wearing a flowered lei and not much else. She bowed to the surprisingly handsome late-middle-aged man and smiled coyly. She was just about to ask him if he needed anything, like a drink or a massage, when...

"... Dr. Powell? Are you awake?" The man's eyes popped open to find a round, stony face only inches away from his. After a moment of horror, he recognized Ms. Melva. She was definitely not the servant girl, and she did not have on a lei; the harsh fluorescent glare in which she loomed made her appear larger and more frightening than any dream. As it was, the woman leaning over him was a large, ill-tempered nurse whose sizable hooked nose was thrust directly into his vision.. Dr. Powell looked around and found himself propped against the wall, sitting on an examining table in Room 7. He decided he'd better speak, if only to persuade Ms. Melva to withdraw a bit.

"I'm fine, Ms. Melva, really. I've had this cold, you know, and with it being lunch and all, I thought I'd sit down for a minute and I guess I fell asleep, heh heh..." he smiled hopefully. The frowning countenance seemed to draw back a few inches, then she zoomed in closer and frowned harder. The doctor could see the individual hairs on her mustached upper lip which were the same steel gray-blond color as her hair straining in its severe bun. He tried to shrink himself further into the wall.

"Are you sure you're okay?" she scowled. He could smell her breath, which smelled faintly of roast beef. Probably ate a cow for lunch, Dr. Powell thought and couldn't help but giggle. Melva withdrew completely with a skeptical stare and gathered her charts. "Well, if you've had a nice nap, it's time to see some patients now. That will be alright with you, doctor?" she spoke, her bushy eyebrows raised in disdain. "Straighten up and fly right, or some upstart will be replacing you before long!" She turned to leave with a grunt of undisguised disgust.

"Yes, yes, of course. I'll be ready very shortly." the doctor waved her away and stood up. As she left the room, he couldn't suppress shudder. Ms. Melva, as she preferred to be addressed, had "been around a while", a fact that she reminded everyone of regularly. She was overbearing, strict, rigid, hu-

morless, not to mention physically intimidating. She reminded him of one of the huge cold-hearted Viking matrons that one sees in second rate operas; her arms were like a fullback's, her neck like a tree trunk. She was not what he would have chosen to see upon waking. He straightened his coat and rubbed the bridge of his nose where his glasses sat, squinting his eyes and shaking his head at the thought of the long afternoon ahead. An old man can't even sneak a nap with her around! he thought. He reluctantly left the room.

The waiting room was typically full, Dr. Powell noticed as he peeked over the receptionist's head and through the clear edge of the frosted glass window. He had washed his face and straightened himself up, preparing for the afternoon of coughs, fevers, and rashes.

"Feeling okay, Doctor?" Sandra the receptionist smiled up at him with her ever-pleasant countenance. He smiled back at her.

"I caught a bit of a cold this week, but it's not bad at all. Nurse Melva's been after me, that's all."

Sandra's smile widened. "Well, you better not let on you're sick; she doesn't see much use in you doctors anyway," she laughed, and Powell joined her.

"I tell you, I'd welcome it today, but she'd probably have me out of a job in no time if I let her loose," he said, and the receptionist nodded in commiseration. "I'm going to find out what we're up against this afternoon. Try to keep them under control, won't you?" the doctor smiled and turned to leave. Sandra called after him.

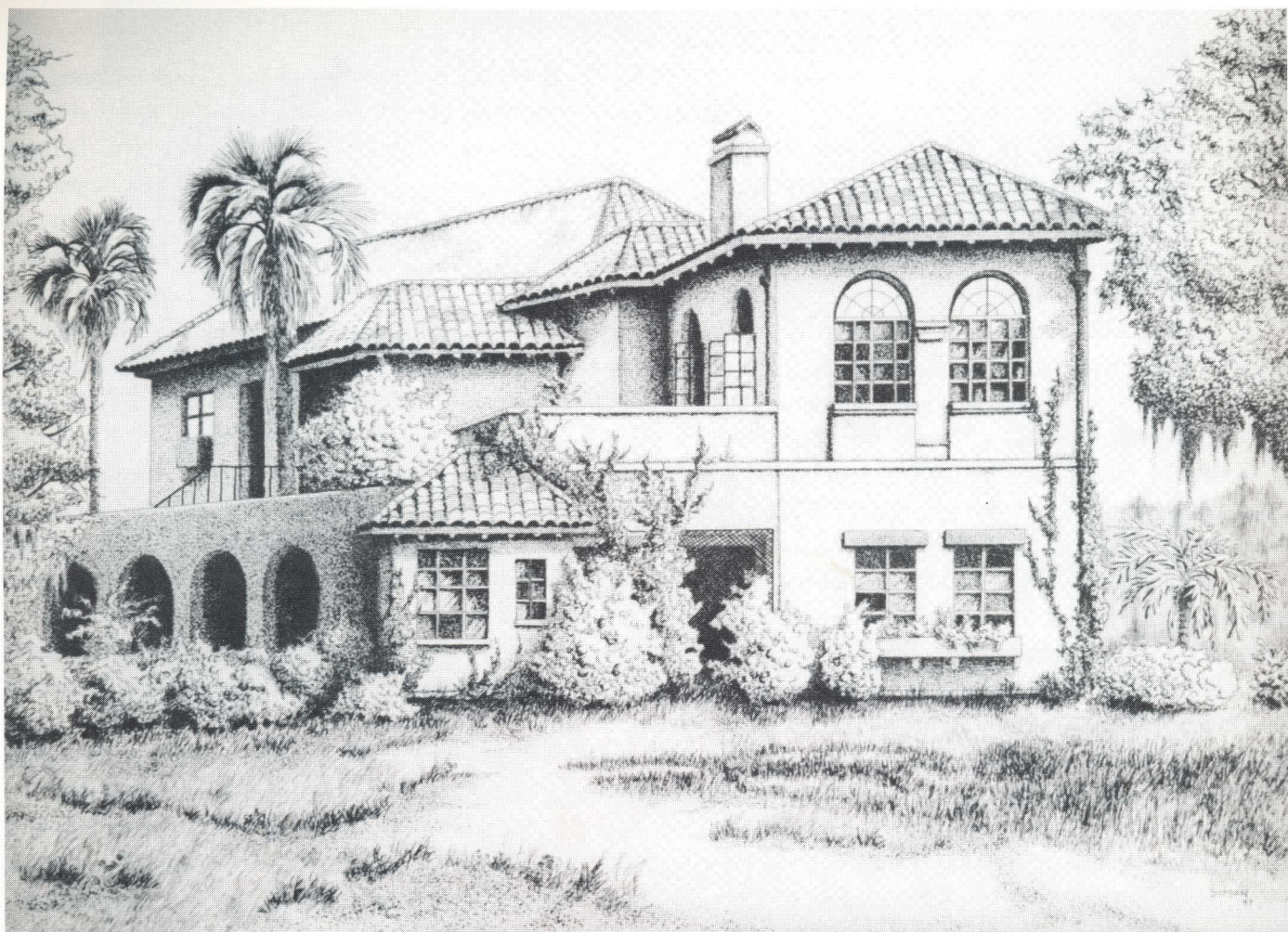
"I've got one more piece of bad news for you, I'm afraid. Mrs. Huntley," she said. "She signed in about fifteen minutes ago as a walk-in. Didn't we have the pleasure of her company only three days ago?"

Dr. Powell groaned. "Oh no. I don't know if I can deal with Mrs. Huntley. How long before she'll be up, do you think?" Sandra looked at the chart in front of her and grimly reported that she would probably be fourth. The doctor, now stripped of any pleasant memories of his stolen nap, slunk back to the nurse's station. Why did I want to practice general in the first place? he thought and shook his head. I could have been a surgeon!

His other full time nurse Rachel tapped him on the shoulder as she walked by. After briefly outlining

*Continued on Page 10*





*Straighten Up continued from Page 10*

the first three appointments, she went to call the first patient back, and Dr. Powell bent to study the file, but he could not stop thinking of his upcoming ordeal with Mrs. Huntley. He could not suppress the strange cold feeling of foreboding that had started in the pit of his stomach when he had heard the name Huntley. On the surface, she would appear to be every small practice doctor's dream; she was very wealthy, very healthy, and she came to the doctor's office very regularly. In reality, she was Dr. Powell's worst nightmare. She came waltzing into the office with complaints of such variety and creativity that he had been tempted on more than one occasion to refer her to a mental health specialist. There was never anything wrong with her, and she insisted that it was he who was to blame when he could find nothing. He had seen her for imagined illnesses for over four years, and at some unremembered point he had given up arguing with the old woman. The man who had spent eight years in school, twenty years in practice, who had taken an oath before God and fellows, was reduced to prescribing potassium pills and other useless remedies so that Mrs. Huntley would

go home thinking that she had been treated. The only thing that eased his conscience about charging her for his "services" was the fact that he had tried over several years' time to convince her that she was a very healthy sixty-odd year old woman. Mrs. Huntley wanted no part of that. Her imagined illnesses ran the gamut of the imagination. She had been convinced at one point that she had contracted a type of exotic sleeping sickness and that this disease caused her to fall into deep sleeps every afternoon between two o'clock and five o'clock. Dr. Powell tried to convince her that she was simply worn out after a long month, but she would hear none of it. In that particular instance, Mrs. Huntley had insisted upon a full blood screen, and Dr. Powell did notice a slightly lowered iron level in her blood, so he prescribed a low-dosage iron supplement with a complicated name and told her that it should clear her "sleeping sickness" up within a few days.

Late last week she had come into the office complaining of "chest affections" and "severe blockage of the head". Dr. Powell made a note of this (finding the "head blockage" ironically apt) but upon examining her found no con-



gestion or inflammation anywhere. After nearly an hour he had managed to convince her to go home and drink plenty of fluids and see if her illness wouldn't clear itself up. He had heard no more from Mrs. Huntley since and had mercifully forgotten her existence. But she was back. Like a persistent case of chronic bronchitis, she was always back.

Nurse Rachel helped him through his first appointment, which was a simple case of head lice on a darling six year-old girl. He left the little girl beaming, with the solemn assurance that she need not cut off all her beautiful long hair, as she had feared. Ms. Melva was in Examining Room Four with the second appointment, checking vitals and trying to make the patient feel at ease. As he approached the door, Dr. Powell overheard her using her special brand of making patients feel at ease.

"....know, there's not many doctors that are any good. But Doc Powell's not too bad, as they go, so don't you worry..."

The doctor shook his head and rubbed his eyes, which were beginning to hurt. He took the chart off of the wall and reviewed. Another simple case, mild flu, it appeared to be, and it would be a breeze. That is, of course, if Ms. Melva didn't scare the patient to death.

The flu case went relatively smoothly, without too much interference from Ms. Melva. She was obviously still disillusioned with him, and kept sending him glares and scowls over the patient's head. At one point, she told the patient that he was a healthy grown man and he ought to "stand up and fight like one!". Powell was glad to be out of the room with her when it was over; between her abrasive

nature and the thought of Mrs. Huntley....

Mrs. Huntley! Ms. Melva! There were only two nurses on today and Ms. Melva would be in line for Mrs. Huntley! Dr. Powell cringed. He had managed to avoid this in the past by scheduling Mrs. Huntley on the burly nurse's days off, but today it would be unavoidable. He could only imagine what could come of this meeting. Visions of Ms. Melva telling the hypochondriatic old lady to "straighten up and fly right!" leaped into his mind. He could actually envision her huge Viking hands shaking Mrs. Huntley's prim, plump shoulders, trying to shake some sense into her. Even if they managed to get through without physical violence, Melva was sure to react quite vocally to the old lady's quirks. Dr. Powell was near a state of panic as he blindly stumbled down the hall to Examining

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***At one point, she told the patient that he was a healthy grown man and he ought to "stand up and fight like one!"***

---

Room 2 where a patient with ear trouble awaited his arrival. He heard an all-too-familiar voice pass in the hall near the nurses' station.

"Toodle-oo! Good day, Dr. Powell!" the immaculately dressed, blue-haired figure trilled as she waved a handkerchief at him. Ms. Melva had her by the arm and was herding her down the hall to Room 7. He hoped he managed some semblance of a smile in return, and flopped his arm limply in her direction before ducking into Room 2

with the ear infection. Nurse Rachel gave him an odd look, but continued speaking to the patient about his symptoms. Instinct took over and he consulted and treated the patient in a sort of fog; it was over all too quickly. Dr. Powell was propelled out of the room by Nurse Rachel, and was alone in the hall.

At the end of the hall was Examining Room 7. He found it cruelly ironic that he had been having such a lovely dream in there only two hours ago and now it would probably be the room where he would end his career. It wasn't a very big town, and word got

*Continued on Page 12*

*Rugged, Drawing  
by Kara Volovski*





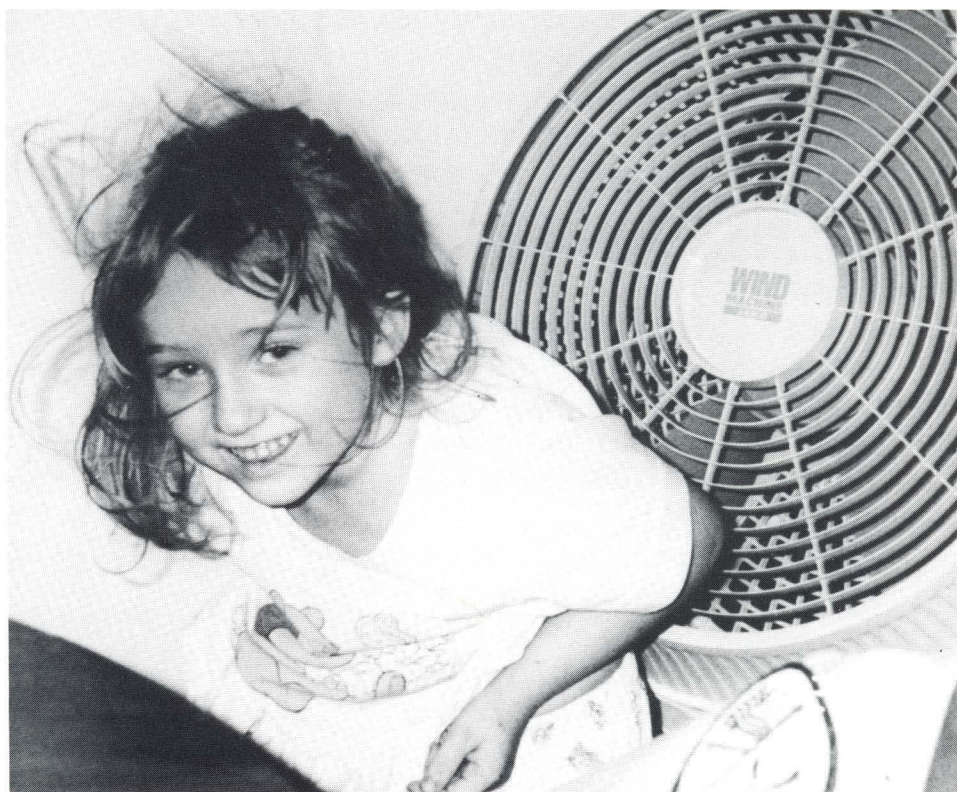
around quickly, especially with Mrs. Huntley to spread it. He floated down the hall as if in some other body, and then the door was there, enormous, in front of him. The door seemed to open on its own.

The scene in the room shocked him to his senses. His mouth fell open. His eyes gaped. His still surprisingly handsome graying hair went a little grayer. Mrs. Huntley, sitting on the examining table, with her arm around Ms. Melva! They were laughing and chatting like two old friends! As he entered the room unbelievably, the two women burst into a new fit of laughter, and the big nurse actually slapped Mrs. Huntley on the back, threatening to send her rolling, laughing onto the examining room floor. The look on his face must have been comical indeed, because it took quite a few minutes for them to compose themselves. Melva finally stood and, with one last pat on Mrs. Huntley's back, spoke to Dr. Powell.

"Well, Dr., nice of you to drop in! Mrs. Huntley and I have been having a nice little chat. Oh, I took her vitals earlier, but you were dawdling with the other patient, so we started talking," she grinned at him. Dr. Powell found a voice with which to speak.

"That's great, Melva. Just wonderful. And how are you, Mrs. Huntley? What's your trouble? Still the head and chest problems?" Not knowing what else to do, he moved as if to examine her, but she pulled back. She looked down her nose at him and smiled.

"Actually, Dr. Powell, your wonderful, charming nurse has already identified my affliction and I can go now, I'm sure," she looked at Ms. Melva with an adoring expression. Melva beamed back at her. Dr. Powell's mouth dropped open again. "Well, you see, Dr. Powell, as you know, I have been having chest afflictions and head blockages for over a week now. When I was here last week you sent me back home, as if my illness were in my imagination. Oh, don't look grim, Dr., Nurse Melva explained that these things were very hard to find sometimes, and I



*Fan Fun, Black & White Photography  
by Kimberly Stevens*

don't blame you. You have cured me of many terrible illnesses, and I am grateful, but this problem took a woman's touch to solve!" Mrs. Huntley looked at Melva again and giggled. "You see, Melva found out that I was wearing a new perfume from France and that the time I started wearing it coincided with the onset of my disease. She and I deduced that it must be some foul toxin in the otherwise good perfume that is creeping into my head and chest! It must be so; I am sure that when I dispose of the perfume I will be cured! I have no way to thank this kind woman enough," she finished.

Dr. Powell stood, unable to speak. Ms. Melva looked at him and made a small shrug. He mumbled a goodbye to Mrs. Huntley as he stood numbly in the center of the room. Ms. Melva was helping her gather her things and was ushering her out when Mrs. Huntley turned to him and with a devilish look, spoke.

"By the way, Dr. Powell, I heard about your napping habits," she smiled wickedly. "Straighten up and fly right, or this good nurse will replace you before long!" She and Ms. Melva laughed as they walked down the hall, arm in arm.



# MY BELOVED

*by Martin Paszkiewicz*

O where, O where could My Beloved be?  
 For last I saw her, she dove beneath the sea  
 I sit in silence with the night whispering tragedy  
 My heart is a void with out My Beloved embracing me  
 Tears run down my cheek and splash upon my knee  
 For My Beloved traveled beyond my eyes could see

O where, O where could My Beloved be?  
 Her warmth, her light, her soul full of fire  
 Do not think of me false, or that of a liar  
 My Beloved held the heart of every man, and easily filled there desire  
 Life would cease if hers would retire,  
 And I sit here waiting for My Beloved's return, and My Beloved's pyre

O where, O where could My Beloved be?  
 Wait! Wait! What is this I see?  
 It is My Beloved, but on the other side of me!

Oh but you see, don't you understand??  
 My Beloved is the Sun rising and shining on to the land  
 Giving life to all that look upon her,  
 as she touches them with her warm hand

My Beloved dries my tears,  
 and soon after dives back into the sea  
 I sit upon the sand and wait cheerfully,  
 knowing that My Beloved  
 will soon return to me.



*The Walrus and the Carpenter, Mixed Media  
 by Michael Pierce*





Germany, Painting by Michael Pierce



# Fax Me Lord

*by Tina Clark*

I don't mean to sound ungrateful  
 Lord for I know that it is you,  
 Who gives me the strength and  
 power to accomplish the things I do.  
 But I cannot talk with you right now  
 for I must be on my way,  
 I've got lots of shopping to finish  
 before SANTA arrives in his sleigh  
 I'll talk to you another time,  
 I'll put you in my calendar book,  
 But really I must hurry now –  
 I've got to shop, clean, then cook  
 I know that it is you dear Lord  
 who spreads the table fare  
 But I've just got to get that Elmo doll  
 before someone else beats me there.  
 Traffic is so heavy these days,  
 everyone rushing to and fro;  
 I wish I had the time to talk,  
 but you understand - I must go!  
 If it is an emergency,  
 then you may give me a call,  
 I can't promise you that I'll be home,  
 I might still be at the mall.  
 But, I leave my answering machine on –  
 twenty-four hours a day,  
 I appreciate your leaving a message,  
 I'll get back to during the day.  
 Please forgive me though,  
 Lord if I forget to return your call,

It's just that I'm so busy,  
 I don't mean no harm at all.  
 Sometimes you have to keep trying  
 for your message to get through,  
 The more messages you leave me,  
 the quicker I'm likely to get back to you.  
 You know that you're welcome  
 to camp at my front door,  
 That's a sure way to catch me,  
 an alternative you should explore.  
 But I know that you get busy too,  
 for so many call upon your name.  
 And if I weren't so busy myself,  
 I'm sure I'd do the same.  
 Let me give you my beeper number,  
 this is with good intent.  
 And whenever I can spare a moment,  
 I'll schedule you an appointment.  
 Christmas is just around the corner,  
 Of course you know - it's Your Birthday!  
 I'd sure love to sit and chat,  
 but I must be on my way.  
 Perhaps a better time to catch me,  
 will be in the coming year.  
 I'll be finished giving gifts  
 and spreading holiday cheer.  
 Things cost so much money now,  
 I sure am glad I'm blessed.  
 Otherwise, I couldn't buy it all,  
 and then I'd be in a mess.  
 You've been so good to me and mine  
 and we're happy as we can be,  
 For this and more,  
 you certainly deserve some of my time,  
 so I tell you what Lord—FAX me!!!

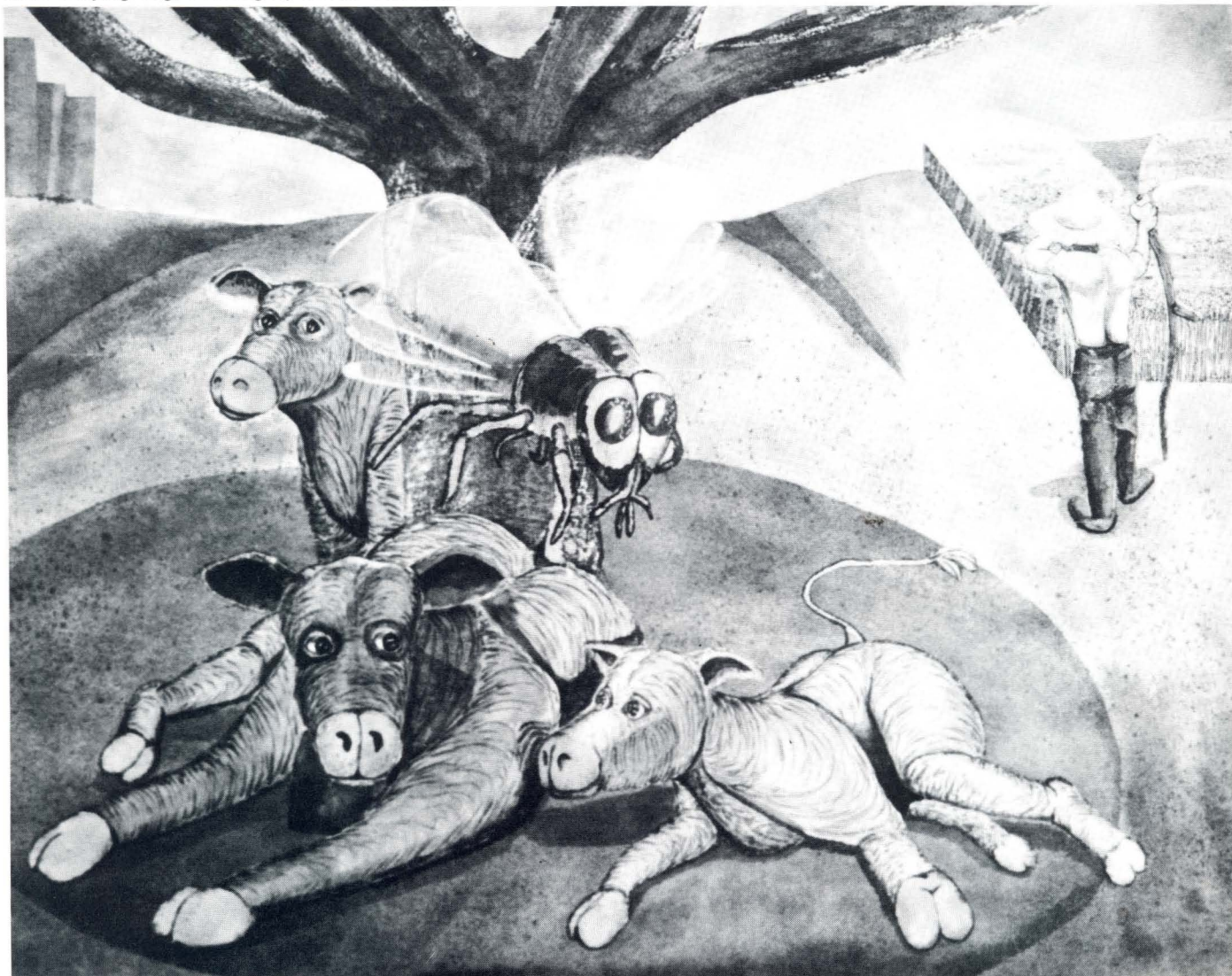


## Guilty

*by Laura Walton*

The newly-calved cow lay dying  
her short breath sent in groans  
each sound appeared as smoke-breath  
in the air of the frozen pasture  
as children we played smoke rings  
with this moldable winter air  
we held cigarettes of elm to our lips  
and pipes of sycamore leaves  
we captured the breath as it left us  
small gods learning creation  
now we stand here, in sacrilege  
the heifer's smoke-rings have stopped  
my own pipe seems to continue on  
as well as yours  
and the calf's.

*Cows Playing Tag, Drawing by Albert Stintsman*







*Untitled, Drawing by Jennifer Hall*

## Love at a Glance

*by Justin Soucek*

As her slender figure appears, it subdues the beauty of the distant sunset.  
 I brace myself to be lost in the vast oceans of her light blue eyes.  
 Dull from the days' wear, my senses are awakened,  
 As my mind takes in the beautiful details of her every move.  
 Her smile warms the deepest depths of my heart,  
 as her gentle voice embraces the rest of me.  
 "Hi," she says, as her lips enthrall my mind.  
 Millions of words to describe my feelings,  
 Useless words, no one or group worthy of expressing my emotions.  
 Hidden emotions, expressed only in dreams and "I wish" thoughts.  
 If she only knew, if I only had the courage to profess,  
 To profess my love and admiration, then I would be happy.  
 She passes by; her shadow falls long with the length of the day.  
 As she fades into the distance, the gentle evening breeze dances through her soft brown hair.  
 She again turns and smiles, knowing that I am still watching,  
 Her blue eyes pierce my soul.  
 My heart tells her to wait, but my mind is too lost to listen.  
 Lost in thoughts of "I wish" now joined by thoughts of "I should have."  
 As I smile and head in the other direction, my mind begins to speak,  
 It speaks to my heart saying that someday my dreams may come true.



## Colors

*by Carlo Gentleman*

When the lights are turned out,  
You cannot see my skin.  
For just a moment I am free,  
From the hurt that penetrates within.

Being in a dark room is a protective place for me.  
Eyes cannot judge what they cannot see.

The world turns its back on a creation,  
From none other than Him above.

If the world hates me, it's O.K.,  
My Father showers me with His love.

*Chapman, Drawing by Michael Pierce*







*The Infinite Void and the Prostitute Who Lives There, Drawing  
by Justin Evans*

## **I WAS SAD, I WAS WEeping**

*by Ye'vette M. Leone*

**I saw a vision of me.  
A much older woman, years past sixty.  
I was sad, I was weeping.  
Tears of incomplection.  
A salty dew of love lost, or never found.**

**My face was painted with bight blues and reds.  
Paint that was to shelter all my hurt.  
Tears washed away that cover.**

**I saw a vision of me.  
A much older woman, years past sixty.  
I was sad, I was weeping.  
I was remember my adolesent love.  
My wounds which never healed.**

**For years I kept it all in a bottle.  
Kept hidden high on a shelf.  
It had come to be my only wealth.**

**I saw a vision of me.  
A much older woman, years past sixty.  
I was sad, I was weeping.**



# A Teacher's Prayer

*by Pat Shafer*

O God

Who hung the stars on nothing  
And set the planets whirling perfectly in space  
to be as signs and seasons  
for transients on this speck of dust called Earth ...

O God

Who said if there be minds that search for Truth  
There must also be teachers -  
Those who are instant in season and out of season  
Those who groan and stagger beneath Truth's weight, and  
Those who, by Its sheer weightlessness, fly on wings as eagles ...  
Now that You have called me, unworthy though I be,  
unto this endeavor for which I am so ill-prepared,  
Open O Lord, not only my mind to the meaning of the mysteries  
But, Lord of the Universe, open my heart also  
To the yearnings  
the needs the expectations—  
and the vulnerabilities of all Your children

So that as Truth is imparted, not one of Your tender plants  
will be bruised at the hand of Your servant.

O God

Help me to see and share  
the seeds of growth hidden in passing storms  
the Daystar that lightens the dark night of the soul  
the new higher life born of every death to self  
the eventually emerging kernel of healing nestled in every sorrow.

Lead me, Eternal God, within the bounds of Truth, to emphasize that which  
enlightens, encourages, and enlarges each soul as it journeys toward You.

O God

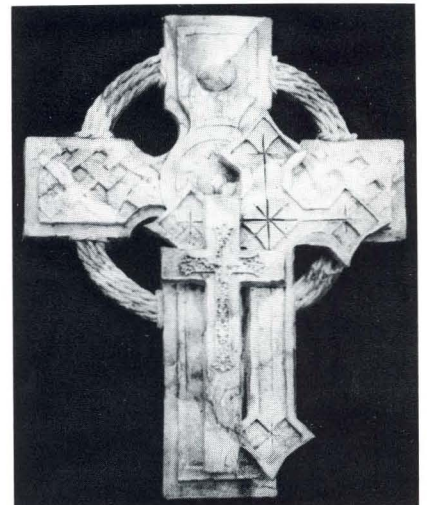
Help me, amid the giving and sharing,  
To retain my own direction and perspective;  
To live each day knowing that the countless joys, sorrows,  
fears, failures and victories of all my years are as  
a  
single  
drop  
In the bucket of Eternity

But That Not One Drop Goes Unnoticed, Uncounted, or Unused.

And finally, O God |

Help me, through my finite attempts to help others  
climb the Mountain of Truth,  
To attain Its rocky, illusive heights myself  
And there to find, not only the Ultimate Truth  
But the Infinite Love, that has ever been my consuming Quest.

*Trinity, Three-Dimensional  
by Deanne Davis*





# What Is A Mother?

*by Tisha Wallace*

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Someone who's got your back when it's stabbed in by the world  
Someone who checks you for a fever and cools you down with TLC  
Someone who gives you hell to keep you on a heavenly track  
Someone who gave birth to you so you could make a life for yourself  
Someone who calls you "Baby" no matter how grown you get  
Someone created by God to be half of one of the strongest bonds on earth  
Someone who needs you as much as you need her  
Someone who loves you unconditionally for the rest of both your lives

## All That Touches

*by Holly Rouse-Rizzo*

A hand patting mine for reassurance  
I look into your eyes  
They say, "I am here."

An arm around me for support  
I lean into you  
Your body says, "Feel my warmth."

A quick breathe escapes you lips as I am speaking  
I look at your face  
It urges me, "I feel the importance of you."

A peel of laughter rolls out of you as I am sharing a joke  
I watch your body as it sways; your entire face as it glows  
It tells me, "This moment joy is all I fell with you."

I stand next to you not seeing you and we are silent  
We do not look at each other, but we share in surroundings that are the same  
I know your peace and goodness are with mine, saying, "Together we can be free."

All that touches and is felt  
Touches many,  
And gives meaning to understanding and being.



*Passion, Drawing  
by Jennifer Hall*



## A Friend's Prayer

by Tina Clark

Please dear LORD  
hear my prayer,  
bless my friends  
with special care.

Please dear LORD  
guide their tongue  
help them sing  
the song unsung.

Please dear LORD  
hear my cry  
watch my friends  
with your trusting eye.

Please dear LORD  
speak the words  
in their heart  
that they've not heard.

Please dear LORD  
guide their feet  
help them please  
with all they meet.

Please dear LORD  
so high above  
touch my friends  
with your finger of love.

Please dear LORD  
bless them today  
help them please  
along the way.

Please dear LORD  
with special care  
bless my friends  
here and there.

Please dear LORD  
hear my call  
bless my friends  
once and for all!



*Shoe, Black & White Photography  
by Kimberly Stevens*

## Freckles

By Lynn Crandall

"May I play," I ask with marker in hand.

"May I connect one dot to another?"

One small speck here-

to one over there.

A few on your forehead and some at your ear.

"Please give me permission to draw a picture,-

two maybe three or so."

Wrinkle your nose and shake your head no,

while a smile grows, crossing your face.

You wouldn't be you, nor I, myself me

if I didn't ask and receive,...

Your cute little no with that certain pink glow

"And Yes!" I'll still ask to play.





*John Travolta, Painting  
by Stephen J. Simon*



## MORNING RENDEZVOUS

by Linda Florea

Prudence opened her eyes to predawn gray painting her bedroom with soft light. Older sister Melanie snuggled under the covers as Prudence slipped from her cocoon and into the hallway. Father's heavy, rhythmic breathing grew fainter as Prudence crept downstairs and over the kitchen's icy linoleum.

With child's delight, she opened the back door. Prudence paused in wonder at the newly water colored day. She jumped off the porch step and huffed dragon smoke into the air, shuffling her bare feet around the yard, leaving a wake of bright green grass in the dew.

Prudence saw a rainbow's sparkle from the corner of her eye. As she turned her head, the rainbow vanished. Desperate to see the magic rainbow, she dropped to her knees and crawled into her mother's snapdragons.

Wide-eyed, Prudence watched the first rays of morning light turn into shimmering colors on the spider's web. On each strand, morning dew hung like tiny pearls, waiting for an elfin princess to claim her treasure.

Prudence's trembling finger reached to touch the morning's magic. As her warm finger softly pressed the spider web, it melted away, leaving a few strands of the once perfect web.

Warm tears welled with the realization she was the one responsible for the web's destruction. Her wet feet now felt cold and she wanted her home's certainty and security. With bowed head, Prudence walked back into the house where a puffing dragon had escaped a short while before.

*Spin Doctor, Color Photography  
by Linda Florea*



*Peek-a-boo, Color Photography by Russ Toth*









## Pigeons - A Bit of Nonsense

by Al Stintzman

Recently while channel surfing, a bad habit that I have fallen into, I stumbled upon "Harry and the Hendersons." This is a movie about the comic misadventures of a family when adopted by a sasquatch otherwise known as big foot. The scene featured Don Ameche playing the part of an anthropologist who defended his belief in big foot by saying he had never seen a baby pigeon but he was pretty sure they still existed. This would be the logical assumption. This would also be a mistake. The terrible truth about the pigeon can now be revealed.

Before human beings stood upright and whales became endangered, pigeons ruled the sky and land and corn was plentiful. Once the pigeon defense against hawks, falcons and the rest of their ilk was perfected, and with the threat of being eaten removed, the pigeon society was left to flourish. There were pigeon lawyers, doctors, scientists, philosophers and artists. The pecking order had been removed and all pigeons lived as equals.

Contentment reigned among the pigeons. There were no visible signs of want or need. No pigeon had to face life without shelter or corn. Mock ledges were constructed and wires were strung to give pigeons homes. The pigeons also had statues, albeit small ones, which sadly have not withstood the march of time, but no roosting was allowed. They were kept as immaculate as the day they were installed.

As is often the case, the very contented pigeons began

to grow complacent. Since their defense strategy that consisted of massing together and sounding an early warning was working so well, the challenges in a pigeon's life had disappeared. The pigeons needed a rallying call to bring that spark of excitement, which had begun to wane, back into their lives. They could find no more enticing enigma to roast their hearts and bring some fire to their lives than to live forever!

The pursuit of immortality gave the pigeon society a cause celebre and jarred them from their complacency into action. All the best pigeon brains set about solving the problem of how to become immortal. The pigeon scientists explored gene splicing as the pigeon doctors experimented with serums and vaccines, and all the while, the pigeon philosophers speculated on the purity of their lives and how like gods the pigeons would become once immortality was realized. Of course, the artists had no idea what was happening and the lawyers did nothing as they are apt to do.

It finally happened. The greatly anticipated news was delivered with much fanfare to the pigeon population by the doctors, who oddly enough conceded, that the scientists had discovered how to make all pigeondom immortal. The procedure was not very complicated and did involve some minor tampering with the pigeons' genetic make-up, but it could be administered to all pigeons, young and old alike, with the same eternal results. Upon completion

of the treatment, all baby pigeons would continue to age normally until they reached adulthood when the aging process would stop and the aging process in adults would stop immediately. Pigeons were so excited with the prospect of immortality that they completely overlooked the one side effect of the treatment that the scientists discovered which was sterility. Since the pigeon population numbered in the billions, there was absolutely no thought given to replenish-



*Big Bird, Black and White  
Photography  
by Linda Florea*



ing that population in the event of accidental deaths.

These deaths were inconsequential and would not affect pigeon society as a whole. The pigeons flocked to the treatment centers with wild abandon and enthusiasm. All pigeons received their treatment in a relatively short time in spite of the large population.

It was only after all pigeons embraced immortality that a second side-effect of the treatment emerged. In a very small segment of the population, one hardly worth mentioning, the price of eternal life was madness. A portion of these now god-like pigeons started wondering around aimlessly scratching and pecking at the ground and occasionally roosting on the statues. They made no attempt to

were going to become mad already had. Once **27** the hawks eliminated the defectives, there would no longer be any madness among the pigeons.

This was not the case. Each passing year brought more cases of insanity. As the number of insane increased, the pigeon infrastructure began to be affected. The hawks could not be held at bay and attacked healthy and sick pigeons alike. Civil defense was gone. The proclamation went out that all the pigeons would eventually become insane. The great age of the pigeon swiftly came to an end.

Perhaps if the pigeons addressed the problem of the madness in those early years when it first began to appear, they would still rule the earth. If they had treated their insane with more compassion, pigeon society may have survived. Having discovered immortality; surely the pigeons could have mounted a similar effort in finding a cure to the madness. They did nothing and paid a high price.

Eons have passed now, and the immortality of the pigeon has gone virtually undetected. Nobody pays any attention to the lowly pigeon. However, those of us who know the secret of the pigeon, we few on the fringe, have notice recently that some pigeons have started to reproduce. There are not very many; but, baby pigeons have indeed been spotted. There is also evidence suggesting that the pigeons are emerging from their collective fog. There are now lucid pigeons. Unlike my compatriots, I do not believe these events hearken a new age of the pigeon. Pigeons could never regain the stature they once had. What do you think?

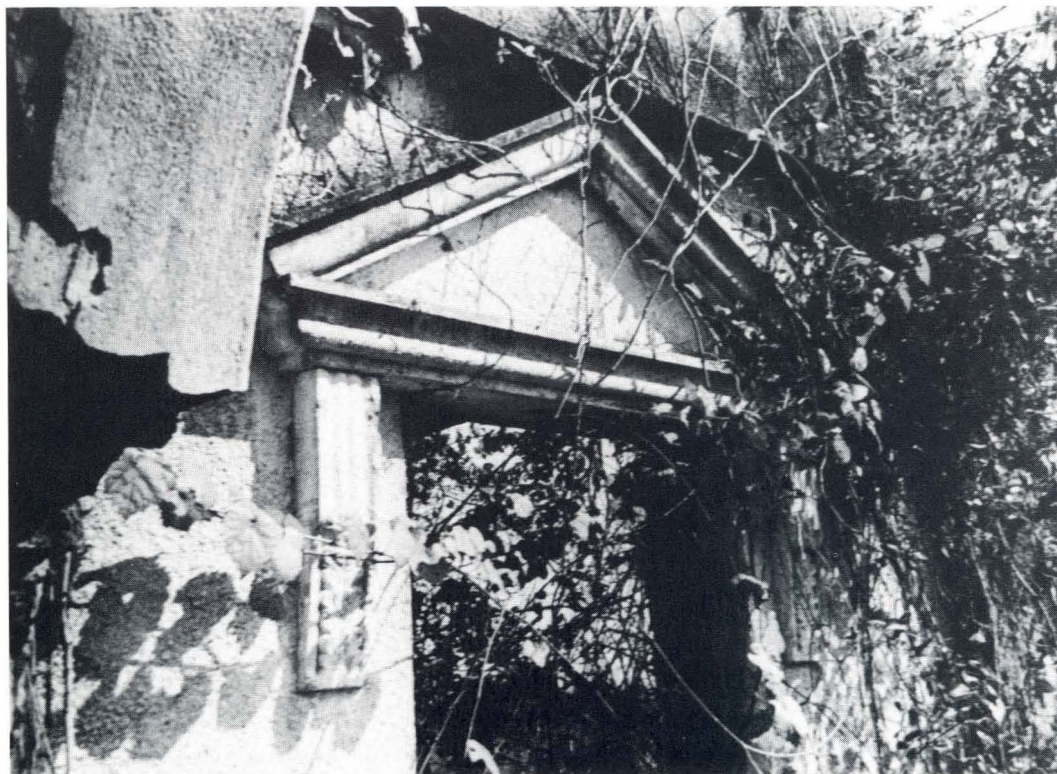
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***There were pigeon lawyers, doctors,  
scientists, philosophers and artists.  
The pecking order had been removed and  
all pigeons lived as equals.***

---

seek traditional shelter, and when directly approached, they would scurry away. They would still group together for defense that must have become instinctual, but their acuity had diminished to a point where they could not always see a threat. This latter characteristic of the insanity renewed within the hawks the desire to hunt pigeons. After all, hawks are opportunistic.

Pigeon society, as a whole, saw no cause for concern in the unfolding events. The small element of the population that became affected by the madness soon became shunned by the rest of the pigeons. There was no effort made to care for the sick pigeons. The scientists did show some concern and wanted to try to help these unfortunate pigeons. It did not happen. Pigeons being, well pigeons, the effort was holed up. It was commonly believed among the pigeons that those which became insane were deficient in some way. As the years passed, the doctors reassured the pigeon population that those who



*Relic, Black and White  
Photography  
by Kara Volovski*



## A FALLEN SOUL

*by Jonathan Paets*

Who are you?

Get up!

Get up!

Child, why have you fallen?

Why have you engaged your soul in such dishonorable actions?

Do you not have any guilt, any shame?

Aren't you a least bit disgusted?

Get up child!

Rise from the dirt that so rightfully seized you of your balance.

Is there any faith, optimism, or perhaps even glory left in your tattered heart?

Have your parents not instilled in you the meaning of triumph?

Where is your tenacity?

Where is your pride?

Where is your dignity?

My! My! My!

Child; I'd say your lost!

I ask you one more time?

Child, who are you???

Here child, reach for my hand.



*M-60 Team, Drawing  
by Stephen J. Simon*



## Everything Goes Full Circle

*by Carlo Gentleman*

I run to the place that my heart first seeks.  
To my inner being, where my life first began.  
To the beginning of my youth,  
From where my heart, so far it ran.

Just like a child, we run while we are young.  
Until our age finds us wishing,  
For the songs our mother sung.

We grow old in the uniforms we wear,  
Yet our hearts stay young in the memories we bear.

*Tennessee Farm, Painting  
by Stephen J. Simon*





## Sea-Tale

*by Rhonda Bariteau*

Surging forth,  
As if to slap the sand,  
The surf is alive and vigorous,  
With each wave of its hand.

Yearning to tell us its story,  
It rolls to the coast,  
Fighting to arrive with a tale,  
With which it will boast.

Many suns have dawned,  
From which many moons have shown,  
Treacherous waters from many storms,  
Reach our ears and groan.

Telling the tale of woe,  
For life at sea has surely eaten,  
Youth and years for the man at sea,  
Who finds himself old and weather-beaten.

The women he left at port in his youth,  
No longer wait.  
He chose to leave them all,  
At the sea's gate.

(For with the sea, he made life's mate.)

*Intensity in Green, Color Photography  
by Jeanette Blackshire*





by Janet Lee Soucek

Woody ran his wrinkled hands across the smooth gray Formica tabletop. The cold frame that encircled it was as reflective and transparent as his own life had been. He surveyed the shipyard that was framed in the breakfast room window. The bay was swollen with a lifetime of his own work stretched out before him. Rows of ships bobbed up and down in the water, their masts poking at the islands of clouds in a blue sky. His eyes veered west to the battered bait shop, it was a brown husk of a building that housed the only spark of life on the dying island. He felt his flesh rise for the proprietor, Marianna-his soon to be mistress. He determined the money he had spent buying the shack was a worthy investment. His eyes followed the line of yachts in the harbor and then moved south to the peninsula.

It was then that he decided to pick up the binoculars. He placed the hard steel up to his eyes, adjusting the lenses to magnify the private settlement of affluent retirees. The beach was littered with their weary brown skeletons. Old women with voluminous leather breasts lay baking in the sun. A smile spread across his face as he marveled with the concept, that these women wore their breasts like inflated pigskins; medals of honor pinned to their chest walls. Off in the distance their husbands played Boca ball, and were no doubt discussing the morning's financial news. From this distance they appeared like misplaced white-haired schoolboys. A smile escaped from the corner of his mouth. To hide it, he grabbed his dentures that were soaking in a glass next to his orange juice, and pushed the dingy porcelain into his mouth. He then chugged the sweet swill in one swallow and wiped his lips with the back of his hand. He wondered how many times he had performed this act over the last eighty years.

Woody picked up the lenses again to watch the men on the beach. Their testicles hung low and were bronzed from the sun. The thought occurred to him that it could also be from lack of use. A slow chuckle started low in his throat and spilled out across the table. If only he could escape the morning routine he could lie awhile in Marianna's arms, for her youth would chase away the cold fear of death.

Although Dorothy couldn't hear the sound of Woody's laugh, she felt the vibrations. She looked up from her morning crossword puzzle and screamed across the table. "Are you spying on that nudie beach again?" Woody put the binoculars down and looked at his wife of sixty years. He loved and hated this woman with all the fierceness these

two emotions could bring. "No dear," he replied. "Just watching the ships in the harbor." He glanced at the clock on the wall trying not to appear obvious.

Woody picked up his pencil and scratched the graphite across a yellow legal pad:

"Old men play on the beach of life watching the grains of sand wash out to sea, as the waves carry their days away." What a writer he was, this was true poetry, wasn't he Bohemian? He hoped Marianna would appreciate what a well-rounded individual he was. Wasn't that what young girls wanted these days? He picked up the lenses and continued the voyeurism, while imagining other people's lives.

Meanwhile, Dorothy appeared to be studying her puzzle.

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***If she were dreaming, she would be hearing his voice echo from the corridors of her memory, not watching his lips move.***

---

She wondered where her husband would be off to today. She watched the way his eyes wrinkled in the corners and she knew he was gaining far too much pleasure to be watching the shipyard. It occurred to her that she hadn't put her hearing aides in this morning. She wondered if this was a deliberate act, or perhaps some quirk she had discovered years ago to annoy Woody. She drifted in and out of reality so much, she wasn't quite sure what was real, and what she was imagining. A smile crept across Woody's face. She reached across the table and pinched him, hard.

"Ouch!" "What was that for?" Woody put the glasses down.

Dorothy figured she must be lucid. If she were dreaming, she would be hearing his voice echo from the corridors of her memory, not watching his lips move. It was justified that she pinch him and not herself. After all, he'd been the one with all the affairs over the years. She was smiling inside, but refused to let him know that she was 'with' him.

"What did you say dear?" she screamed across the table. Her voice pierced the silence and broke Woody's mood.

"Oh God." Woody thought, "She's forgotten her hearing aides again." He wondered if she had done this on



purpose, or was it a ploy to aggravate him and upset his morning plans? He studied her face, but could glean nothing from the mask she hid behind.

He yelled back across the table, "Dorothy, have you taken your medicine yet? Where have you left your hearing aides? I'll go and get them for you?"

Inside, Dorothy was laughing. Careful, steady, she thought. She couldn't let him see that spark of pleasure in her eye. "I don't know if I've taken my medicine, is that what you said? I can't hear you; I must've misplaced my hearing aides. Be a dear and go and look for them won't you?"

Damn. Woody thought. This could take all morning. Where would she have left them? Just then a fresh breeze opened the screen door, and SallyJane stepped through carrying her pail of cleaning supplies.

"Thank you sweet Jesus!" Woody said out loud. Cleaning day, he thought. This meant that his niece would be able to keep Dorothy company for the next four hours. If he played his cards right, he could be out of the house in a half-an-hour. He just had to stay calm, now where could she have left those hearing aides? He walked over to SallyJane, unencumbered that he was still in his boxer shorts.

"Feel the muscles in my legs, Sally Jane. "How about these thighs? I'm eighty years old and I'm still fit as a horse." The redness rose from the girl's neck and up to the tips of her ears. She loved her uncle and aunt and

came once a month to check on them, but it was getting more difficult to make the trip over from the mainland. She never knew what she would find or hear. She gave his leg a firm squeeze.

"Good uncle, strong as an ox." She walked across the pantry and filled her pail at the sink.

Dorothy smelled the Murphy's oil soap and turned her head. Oh, her niece was here. What a Godsend, she was. The warmth of the sun filled the old woman's body and limbered her bones. She got up from the breakfast table to make Woody his lunch.

SallyJane marveled at her aunt's dedication. She loved both these people and was in awe after all the years of Woody's shenanigans the old woman still fixed his lunch. She brushed her aunt's cheek with a kiss.

Dorothy opened the refrigerator and took out three hard-boiled eggs. She peeled the skins making sure to clean off every shell. Expertly, she chopped the eggs fine, added a dollop of mayonnaise, and an entire teaspoon of salt. After this was accomplished, she spread the whole concoction on a slab of rich bread. She shuffled over to the cupboard and took out a jar of peanut butter. When she was at the grocery, she would have to remember to read the new labels. Perhaps there was some brand she could purchase with higher cholesterol content. She slathered the other slice of bread with a full inch of peanut butter, and topped this with two sweet pickles. Her bony

hands trembled as she pulled the parchment paper through the cutter and wrapped his sandwich. She filled a Mason jar with soured buttermilk and handed the container to SallyJane to secure the lid.

"What a loon." SallyJane thought. "How could her uncle eat this stuff?" SallyJane slipped the sandwich and the buttermilk into a paper sack, and placed it near the door by Woody's hat. She picked up her scrub brush and swathed the floor with the lemony suds, praying that her marriage would last as long as theirs had. Content with their happiness she busied herself with the task at hand, and



*Reflections, Color Photography  
by Rhonda Bariteau*



hummed the melody to "The Old Rugged Cross." She was thankful for God's blessings.

Woody came around the corner. The sun was streaming through the windows. It danced on the strands of his niece's honey-blond hair. He watched her scrubbing the floor, and for several moments he felt at peace. He looked at his wife busying herself with the puzzle book, and thought about the full head of hair she still had. The sun's rays made the braids wrapped around her head appear as a silver crown. He saw his lunch and hat sitting on the counter, which reminded him of Marianna and the day's events at hand. "Time to go," he thought.

"Dorothy! Have you taken your pills yet? Dorothy!" He barked. His voice was beginning to take on the hoarseness of a trader from the stock market floor. He walked over to Dorothy and handed her the hearing aides that he'd found in the bottom of the clothes hamper. The places she would lose them never ceased to amaze him. He watched as she put the aides in her ears. "Dorothy, have you taken your medicine yet?" Lord, would he never get out of this house?

A smile crept over the old woman's face and her eyes lit up. "What's that you say Woody? I can't hear you, I haven't got the hearing aides in." Dorothy couldn't help the smile, she knew she was getting the better of him. Woody grabbed his wife by the shoulders and yelled six-inches from her face, "Then, turn the darn things on! You have them right in your ears."

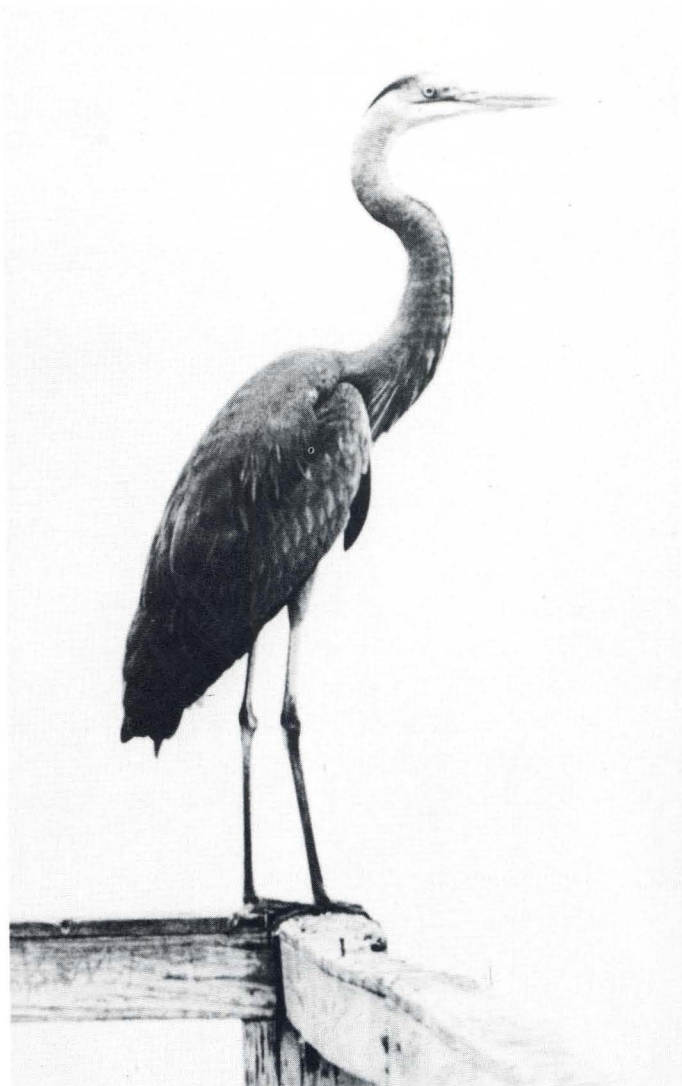
Dorothy turned on the aides. "What dear? Oh, that's better. Have you seen my pills? I don't remember if I've taken them today." Woody looked at the pill container. The days were marked off in a procession, like the remaining days of their lives.

"No, you haven't taken them today." He walked over to the sink and poured a glass of water into an old jelly jar. The Flintstones were painted on the front of the glass. He'd remembered when they had entire sets of these glasses. Dorothy had bought dozens for the grand children; now, these off spring were grown with children of their own. The sturdy glasses had been broken, one by one. All that remained was this solitary glass with the crack in the center, and Dorothy refused to let him throw it away. Woody walked to the table and handed her the pills; she obediently took them and drank all the water. Dorothy gently placed the glass back in his hand. Woody patted her head, and told her he'd be back in a few hours. He placed his hat on his baldhead, picked up his lunch, and headed out the door.

He hated the lunches his wife made for him. **33** What would ever possess her to serve him garbage like this? He remembered what a good cook she use to be. Woody walked across the lawn to the ship building barn. The cable and pulley hung empty from the main beam, swaying ever so slightly. It reminded Woody of the gallows, and he wondered when death would be knocking at his door. He made his way to the porch of the building and sat on the stoop. He wasn't sure if Dorothy was still watching him from the window. Carefully, he put the sack lunch on the ground out of her view. "Sassy. Come girl." He called. The redbone hound crawled out from underneath the stairs. She'd grown so fat from Dorothy's lunches that her belly dragged on the ground. Woody opened the bag and fed the dog the sandwich. He watched as she ate, and laughed as the dog tried to tongue the peanut butter free from the roof of her mouth. He spilled the soured milk out onto the ground and waited as the dog lapped up the last drops.

Suddenly, the breeze carried Sallyjanes voice to Woody

*continued on Page 34*



*Sentinel, Black & White Photography  
by Linda Florea*



from the house. The barn was filled with a holy resonance as the girl finished the last bars of "Amazing Grace" and started singing, "As I come to The Garden Alone." Woody knew she was brushing out Dorothy's hair, for it was part of the morning routine. He sat and listened awhile. A lump surged in his throat at the thought of Dorothy alone all morning watching the niece at work. Yet, Marianna was waiting...He patted Sassy one last time, then he set off for the skiff.

His steps were heavy, as he walked the narrow gray length of the dock. Now inside the boat, he lifted the sailors' knot over the pier post to cast away. As the coarse hemp scratched through his grasp, Woody thought of the gallows again, and the hang mans noose, he looked to the barn...

Sallyjane heard the door snap. She looked up from attending her Aunts hair and saw her uncle standing in the vestibule. Woody walked across the freshly scrubbed heart pine floor; his eyes were rimmed with tears. None of the three spoke. Woody took the brush from his niece's hand and finished the gentle stroking. He lifted his wife from her chair, carried her out to the garden, and placed her on the glider. The two sat silently watching the boats in the harbor.

Dorothy felt the drops of Woody's tears as they splattered onto her withered hands. She reached to touch his face. "Was this a dream?" In that same instant, Woody's body flinched waiting for the expected pinch. Instead, Dorothy brushed the tears from off his cheeks and laid her head upon his shoulder. They sat like that on the swing the remainder of the day.

Meanwhile, Marianna waited for Woody at the bait shop. The business was hers; she made sure Woody had put the title in her name. Yet, a deal was a deal. So, for three hours every Wednesday, she waited for the old man to carry his feeble bones through the door. Months had passed and she had never seen him once.

Marianna watched the truck driver's tanned legs as he inspected the shiner bait. His sleeves were rolled up to reveal bulging muscles. She knew he wasn't a local and she wondered if he were married. She grabbed a pen from her apron pocket and scribbled across a brown paper sack fastened to her clipboard, "Young women like hard bodies for spiritual retreats." She smiled. That was poetic! Wasn't she Bohemian?

*Say What?, Color Photography  
by Russ Toth*





# Speechless

by Kari Kathleen Caulk

35

There are so many things I wish I could say.  
I think of you, wanting you to be with me day after day.

I wasn't looking for this; I wasn't looking for you.  
Though so many laughs, so many smiles, with you I could never feel blue.

I never wanted to get close; truthfully I never thought I would,  
But the more I looked at you and every little thing you'd do,  
I knew I easily could.

At first all I saw was someone like me.  
I thought you and I what great friends we would be.

Now after all this time, I see so much more when I look in your eyes.  
No matter what whenever I am with you my heart flies.

These feelings I have, will you ever know?  
Will I ever be strong enough to let them show?

I've tried to tell you time and time again,

*Piece, Drawing  
by Dennis Panzik*



## The Stalker

by Paulina Peltola

"I am forever your man," he said,  
"no one else will ever love you again".

But you are the monster in my dreams.  
The vampire,  
sucking away my love, my joy, my safety.  
I am left in isolation with abject terror.  
Like the boogie man,  
I never know when you will strike.

As dusk approaches,  
apprehension grows, adrenaline flows.  
I am cold-I can't get warm.  
Locks, chamomile tea, an electric blanket,  
a gun, a knife, and mace-  
I will survive.

Anxiety flares into full-blown panic.  
The shades have long since been drawn.  
I missed the setting sun-  
the last curtain call of my existence.  
No more husband, no more children, no more life,  
reduced to pathetic lies of safety.



## Beckoning Call

*by Rhonda Bariteau*

Rolling in loud and abrasive,  
The rough edge of the sea has arrived.  
Announcing its impending departure,  
As the waves to the sand have dived.

Receding, as if in defeat,  
Lapping the edge of the shore,  
Returning out to gather more strength,  
Generating the power of its very core.

Energy of many sources,  
Old tombs and watery graves,

Hold their treasures and skeletons,  
Buried as in a deep, dark cave.

Shells, driftwood and artifacts,  
Tell the tale below,  
Providing clues and evidence,  
Of tragedies, murder and woe.

Scavenging off the shoreline,  
Man digs, and finds real soon,  
His opportunity of golden treasures,  
Yet does he seal his doom?

*Cosmic Cleanup, Painting by Michael Pierce*

