

Odyssey1995

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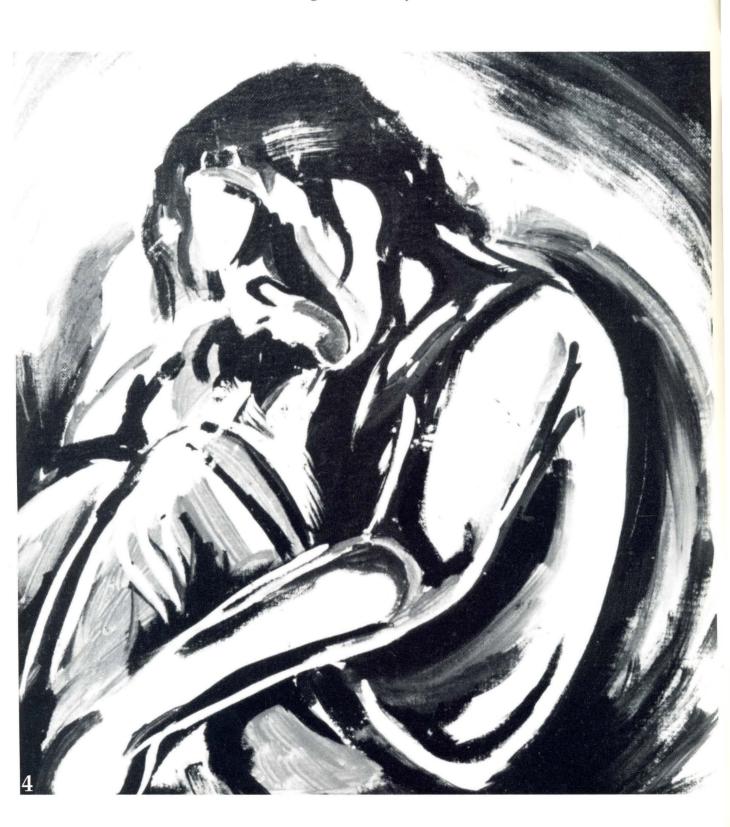
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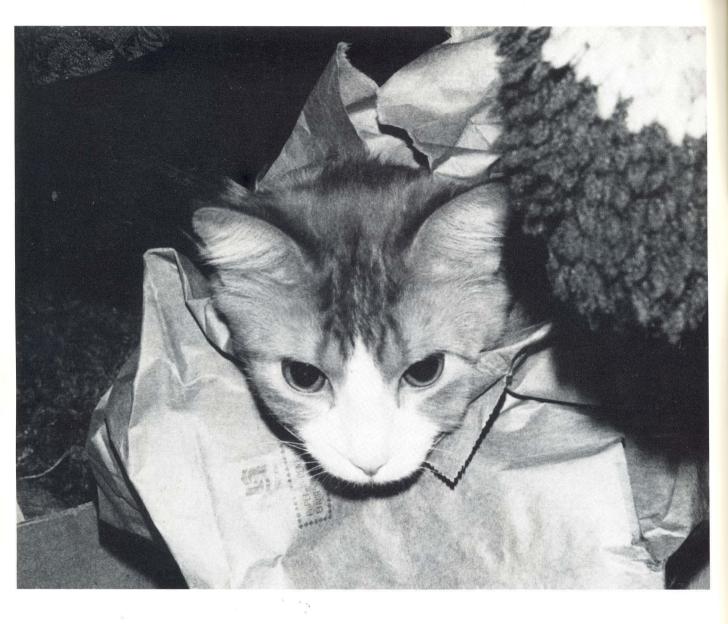
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Smiles
The Sun pisses on the earth- to which the lusty bathers cry "More!" and for all its shimmering fineries, it brings to man only waste.



Twist

My body is a closed music box. Inside, the spirit is bent over like a patient ballerina waiting to dance to the songs of my silent heart. Another's hands squeezed the sweet harmony out of me like juice to feed his hungry self-esteem. I endured while fists painted me with more colors than in the flowers of his apologies. It was the words that held me tighter than hands ever could, and bruised me inside where no one could see. Still, I danced for him a willing partner at every turn in our painful coupling. Arms could not hold him. They were wrapping paper decorating his ego. I crumpled as he tore me away and discarded the shards of this sharp refrain. In searching for a graceful recovery, I find I am left with the task of picking the lock that holds me bent over, an emotional cripple. There's no judge and no jury. I alone must sign the papers of my own release and write the next verse of my unfolding composition.



lickem boy

oh the terrible things we say
of our cats,
becaused we think they do not
understand but beware the wrath
of our sleek courtiers;
for those narrow, yelllow eyes
never cease to find us
and hidden close behind
each condescending purr
and tiny be-fuzzed paw
is sheathed a symphony of daggers.

"Tafy Cat" by Cynthiia Potaczala (Fall contest) 2nd place photography

"lickem boy" by Bobby Phelps (Fall contest) Honorable mention poetry

Weeds

All, proud of our ancientness, worried for its authenticity, guarding its darkness focusing its light.
Searching for Their mysteries, Their triumph, Their passion.
Believing in the power of the past.
Becoming as yesterday, just as faded, and just as useless.



"Weeds" by Howard H. Hewitt II (Fall contest)

"Centurian" by Bertie Sue Smith (Fall contest)

Ophelia's Day Off

I never knew why I was supposed to be excited about going on vacation. I felt I was excited because everyone at the restaurant was excited for us. I must say that our family traveled a lot of places but not to relax and have fun. When we packed to travel, it was because work had played out where we were, and we needed to find a new place to start our business. This traveling took us from Mississippi to places like Panama City Beach, Columbia, South Carolina and finally to Fruitland Park, Florida. Now we were packing to actually travel for fun and relaxation. To this day I think I still have a phobia about vacations because of the work and worry involved in preparing to leave and the surprises that may be waiting with the return home.

I never heard my mom say it, but I don't think she had ever left our business with other people, so that she could take a much deserved vacation. So, for Mom, leaving the restaurant was like leaving her right arm, which was exactly what Ophelia was to her. Knowing Ophelia would be there was probably the only reason Dad was able to pry Mom away.

To most people Ophelia was just a young nigger woman who worked in the kitchen at Raley's. Although it was never actually said, the other employees, Dad and I knew there was more of a bond between Mom and Ophelia than was noticeable to other people. It was almost unexplainable how the two of them were able to work so well together. Mom was not the type of boss that ordered people around, and Ophelia never did ask many questions; they just both seemed to know what the other one needed done.

Even though Ophelia was competent enough to know how to run the restaurant, there is no way we could leave a young black woman "in charge" of a white establishment. Besides, someone needed to do my dad's job, which was to be in charge of the money and the customers. It just so happened that Mom's brother, Howard, was in from Mississippi for awhile and had been around the restaurant enough to have a basic idea of how things should be handled. Even though to ask him, he would convince people that he knew everything about anything.

Just before we were ready to leave, Dad summoned the employees together for last minute instructions. I could see in Mom's face that she wasn't quite sure about leaving. Now that I look back it was probably because she knew her brother a little too well to feel comfortable about letting him think he was in charge of a business. "I know all of you have been with us long enough to know how things should be handled, so I'm sure there won't be any problems for Howard," Dad said confidently. He never did worry much, probably because Mom did enough worrying for both of them.

Howard ushered us out to our car that was out front, packed and ready to go. He seemed a little too eager to see us off. Howard tried to reassure Mom. "Mag, don't you worry, I'll just over-see things and let the crew do things as if you were here. Just relax and have a good time." Now, for Howard, being in charge of a business like Raley's would fit right into his lifestyle. For one reason, Raley's stayed open late and turned into a happening night spot with music, drinking and women; plus, being in charge was a sure-fire way to impress the ladies. Mom always said, "Howard's goal in life was to have just enough money to support his drinkin' and ta keep the women folk interested."

"Raley, Sonny and I would like to do some fishing while you men folk hash over the new market and how things are going there," Mom chimed in as she seemed to relax a bit. So, it was settled, we would work our way toward Columbia and do a little sight-seeing on the way.

Things at the restaurant had a pretty smooth beginning. Howard stayed out front and greeted the customers coming and going. About the time the dinner was winding down and the employees were feeling confident that things would go smoothly with us gone, Howard strutted back to the kitchen. It was pretty apparent to the help that Howard had gotten a head start on getting primed for when the kitchen closed and the night life started. With a drink or two under his belt he made the announcement, "Since things went so well tonight, we're going to start cleaning up a little early and get ready for the night crowd." Right about this time, Ann came into the kitchen with an order from a couple who came to Raley's on a weekly basis. Just as Ophelia hung the order to start preparing it, Howard marched over and snatched the ticket off the board. "Ann, go tell these people that we're closing the kitchen early tonight, but they're more than welcome to order drinks." It was as if suddenly, time stood still. Who was going to tell the owner's brother that this was something that would never be considered at Raley's? It could be midnight and if Madge was still there and someone came in and said they were hungry, she would stay and feed them. Not to mention, turning away a regular customer at normal serving hours was not the thing to do.

To everyone's astonishment, Ophelia was the one who spoke up. "Boss man, I's gonna stay over and feed dees folks. They be some a Miss Madge's regulars."

It seemed everyone's breath was held as Howard replied instantly. "I said to start cleaning this kitchen so I don't have this mess to worry with all evening."

Ophelia seemed determined to do what she thought was right. "But this ain't what..."

When Howard angrily cut her off. "Look here, you're Madge's nigger when she's here, but I'm the one in charge now and I ain't gonna have no nigger girl tellin' me how to run a business!"

By this time employees where scurrying to do what cleaning was left to do for the evening, and Howard was on Ophelia's heels as she was heading for the back door.

"Don't fergit, I'm gonna be here for awhile sos you'll know not ta be bringin' your smart, black ass back up here." Howard growled.

We had made it to Savannah, Georgia, in our first day of travelling. The next morning as we were getting ready to do some sight-seeing, Dad decided to call the restaurant to let them know our plans for the next couple of days.

"Good morning Lil, this is Charlie. Is Howard around?" Dad asked. By this time even the day employees had heard of the happenings the night before.

"Uh, well, sure, Mr. Raley, I'll get hum for you. I hope you all have a nice time." Lil answered, unsure whether to say more than that.

"Hey, Raley. How far did ya'll git last night?" Howard said, almost too cheery.

"Well, we made it to Savannah and we're gonna see some sights around here than head on to Columbia. We'll probably stay there a day or so, so if you need anything you can get us at Paulk's. "Everything's O.K. there?" Dad asked hesitantly.

It was obvious that Howard was trying to sugar-coat something. "Everything's great here. The restaurant business isn't so bad. I might look into startin' me one when I find a good place to hang my hat. Oh, by the way, tell Madge I went ahead and got rid of the smart talkin' nigger that worked in the kitchen. All she seemed to want to do is sass somebody," he exclaimed.

"O.K., Howard, we'll probably talk to you in a couple of days if nothin' goes wrong." Dad hung up abruptly. By then, Mom and I knew something wasn't right, by the change in Dad's voice.

"What happened?" Mom asked calmly.

"He fired Ophelia." Dad said reluctantly. By the quietness I knew plans would be changing. Mom slowly got up and started puttering around the motel room. It became evident that

she was packing.

"Raley, put this stuff in the car, we're going back to Fruitland Park." Mom said, softly. Dad didn't say anything, we both knew that this was all we would ever see of a family vacation away from the restaurant. Needless to say, the drive home was long and quiet. I knew one thing though, I definitely wanted to hear what Mom would say to Howard.

Although Mom was normally quiet, when she got real angry, there was no telling what she might say, and it didn't matter to her who she said it to. As I saw her face kind of scrunch up the closer we got to home, I knew this was going to be one of those times.

Actually, Howard didn't seem real surprised to see us come through the kitchen door that evening, nor did he seem surprised about the cussing out Mom gave him.

"Howard, you crazy son-of-a-bitch, I didn't even get a days drive away and you go and run off the best help I got. I swear, you don't have sense enough to pour piss out of a boot!" Mom yelled as she glanced around to see if there were any other changes that she could jump on Howard about.

He just squirmed in his chair a little and whined, "Aw, now Mag, you know I can't just sit back and let some nigger gal be tellin me how ta do things."

"Well then, how 'bout if I tell you what to do by startin' out and tellin' you to git your crazy ass back on the road sos I can try an' straighten out the mess you wuz so good at makin' in such a short time." Mom never looked up to see how Howard responded. She immediately put her apron on and got right back to work as if she had only taken a short break.

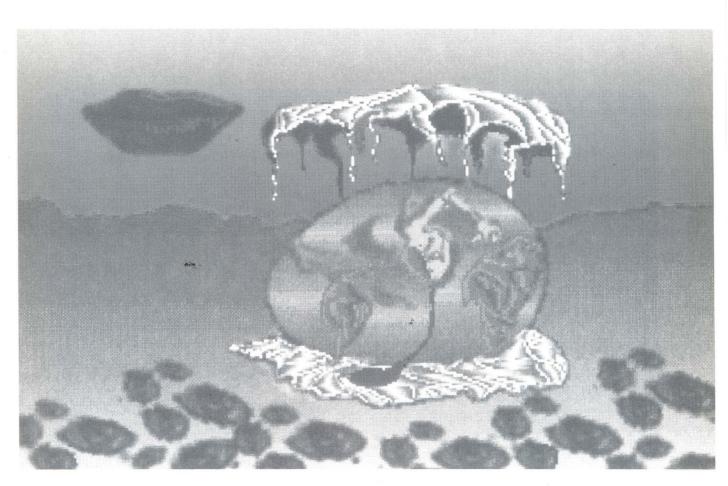
The next afternoon it was as if we had never gone anywhere. At the normal time Mom told me, "It's time to go pick up Ophelia." So I headed out, hoping that I wouldn't have to be the one to explain.

When I pulled up to Ophelia's place, she was sitting outside shelling peas. To my surprise, she got up, went in the house and came out with her apron in hand. Again, it was like she already knew, and I never did have to say anything other than the usual, "Hey, Ophelia."

With her usual reply, "Afternoon, Mister Sonny."

When we returned to the restaurant I followed Ophelia into the kitchen. I was curious to hear if there would be any other explanations or questions. The only thing that I recall hearing was when my mom said. "Ophelia, Raley will pay you for working last night, since I know you weren't intending on missing a day's work."

"Thank you, Miss Madge."



Circles...

It is in your head, burning, aching like a long lost dream. A sensation of deja vu and amnesia, both at the same time.

Knowing without understanding.
Understanding without knowing.
A vicious enigma that keeps people busy for eons.
A circle that has no meaning, but it is the reason.

No logical answers.

Just questions derived through illogical means.

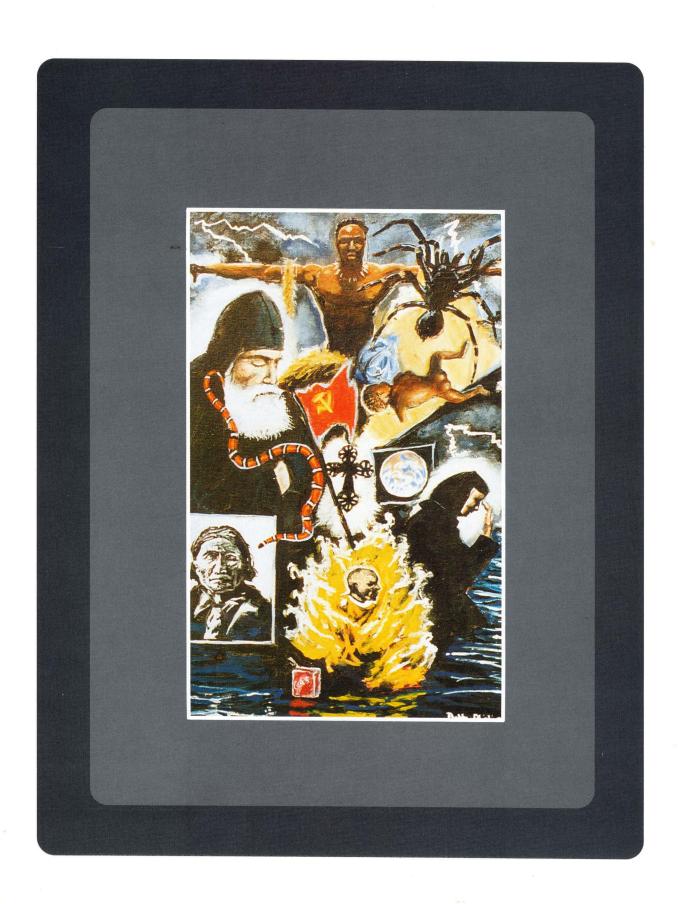
Spinning wildly through a gambit that will never end and has no beginning.

This paradox is a strange thing we call life.

"New Life" by Thomas Long ((Fall contest) Honorable mention computer graphics

Hope and Shadows

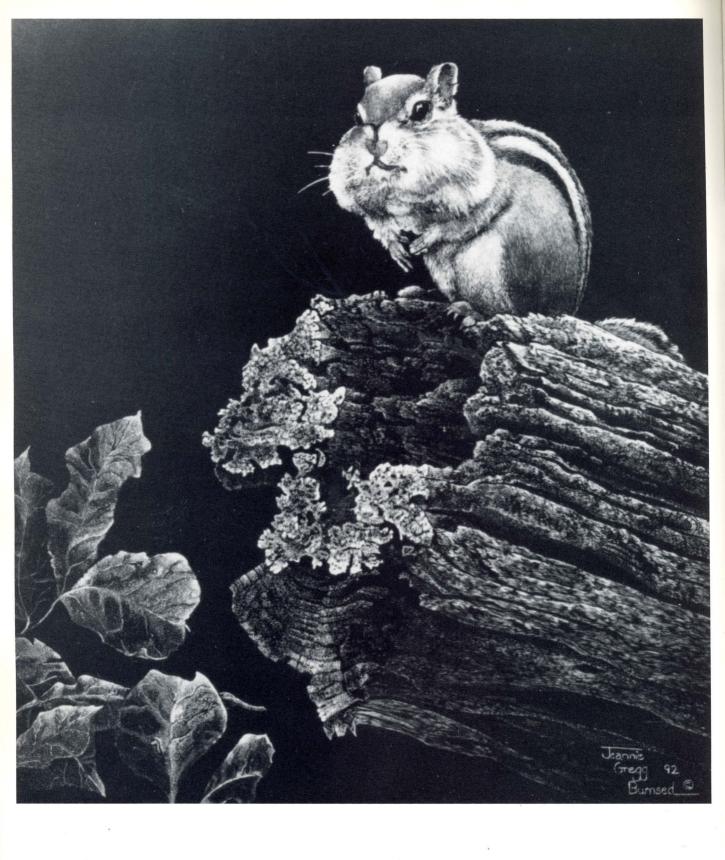
In the abyss of darkness I once called a life, trapped within a self-made cage, I watched the world go by, anchored in my unknown fear. As I remained fixed in dispair, I was enlighted one day with a glow, a glow that was a door. As the door opened to a new world, I hesitated and withdrew, atraid of perceptions I had discounted and hid from for many years. But as I opened that door, I saw a male From afar I saw him stand, not some shining Knight ready to rescue me, but a self-spun, intelligent man who dressed like he lived on the edge of reality, one who knew the trails of life and didn't try to explain them. By some strange luck we met one day, scared as I was I managed the courage to speak, and gladness ensured for the friendship he showed me. The once wary thoughts I had toward him melted as we seemed to become friends, and my cage began to rock and my chains were taken off. He helped me OUT and now I fear less of the unknown. For by his side I feel secure because I venture now not alone. He has gained my respect and gratitude for unleashing me from my prison; there is so much thanks inside me. But quickly as he appeared he was gone, becoming a shadow that lingers in my mind and heart. his shadow sometimes crosses my world, but only briefly. As he left, the ground beneath me gave way and my supports fell, dropping me back into my abyss. But it had changed, the darkness was replaced by twilight, and the confines were no longer. That shadow that entered my life still lingers on, and with it stays a pain of sorrow, but for who it's for, him or me, I'm unaware. I question if I'll ever try that illusionary door into his world again, and I fear the answer...





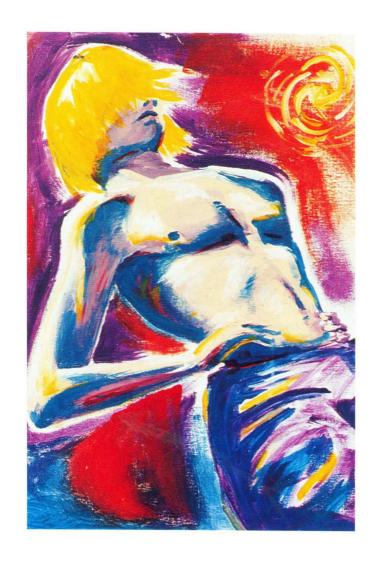
A Butt is a Butt

- Although just a toddling two year old with tousled tresses, the tot was a terror in Taunton Township.
- By mid-morning or Monday, she had managed to mastermind many mishaps and magnified the misery of multitudes of men and women alike.
- A peach pie perched precariously on a porch to cool, was found to possess a pudgy palm print perfectly pressed into a golden crust.
- Horrendous havoc was wreaked in the hen house; and the horses ran helter-skelter with their harnesses hanging down, as the hellion hooted and hollered.
- Daring deeds and deviltry dotted every hour of her day as she darted from door-yard to door-yard, all up and down the street.
- But, lo, the lax arm of leniency had lingered long enough, and the luck of little Lois had likely lapsed.
- Permanently pictured behind the picket fence, with her pal poised above the upward pointed posterior, Mama proceeded to mete out punishment; although it pained her pitifully to do so.



"Cheeks" by Jeannie Emack (Fall contest) 2nd place painting















The Day When Science Failed

The metal and glass skyscrapers stretched high into the sky. Steel and concrete covered the landscape. The sounds of machines, factories and vehicles filled the atmosphere. The automated world, one of machines and technology, had been rapidly advancing for 700 years, with the heavens colonized and the World conquered, literally.

Plants? No proper water supply. Animals? Mostly extinct, due to expansion. Yet some managed to survive, scattered in small, unpopulated places. Slowly dying, slowly decaying. The Great One had slept for too long and was almost too late.

Humans seemed to have populated the whole world, leaving destruction and desolation in their wake. Uncaring, unemotional they continued unstoppable, or so it seemed.

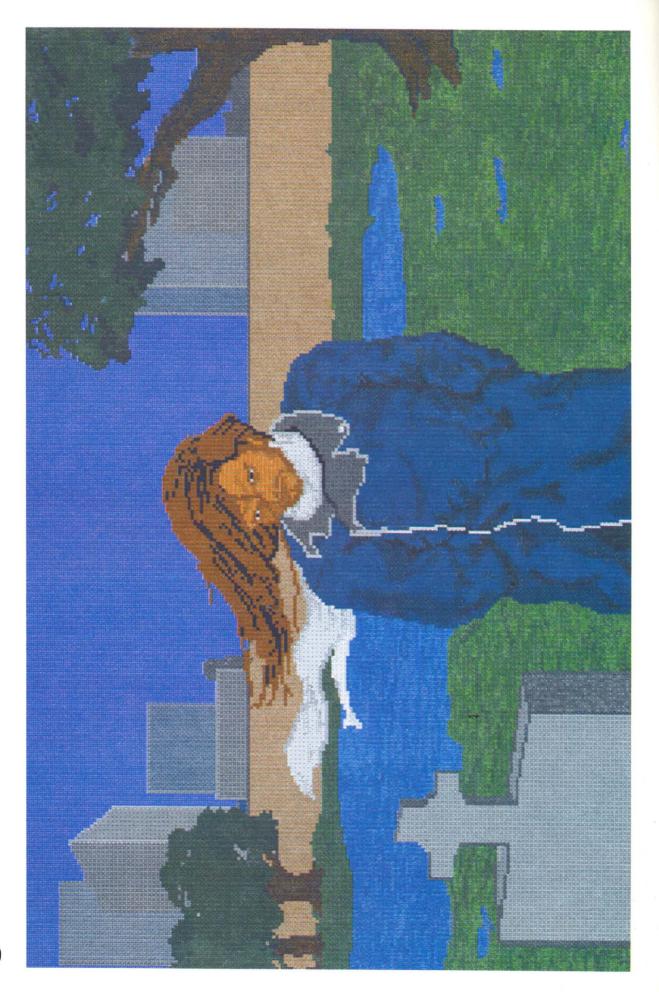
The Great One- the last of the druids, his name lost in timehad awoke from his energy sleep, to find the world in chaos. He quickly viewed the acts of the humans and sighed. Few had risen to stop this mindless advancement, but none had enough power to help. Now they threatened other planets and had even made contact with other life forms. The Great One had to protect their innocence.

The "hustle and bustle" of the steel cities rang out across the land. But slowly, the power behind the chaos started to fail. Motors slowed and stopped. Flying vehicles lost altitude and returned to Earth. The life line to space colonies slowed from warp and headed aimlessly into space. By night, Science had failed.

The druid emerged from his home and walked upon the Earth's surface again, the first time in over one-thousand years. As he walked, plants grew from his footsteps and the air flowed behind him. Clouds appeared in the sky, and rain began to fall once more. People watched from their steel houses as the clouds raced across the sky. Disbelief and confusion fused with amazement as they watched. The Great One walked on.

Earth was being reborn as the steel cities started to crumble and shake. It took three months for its Renaissance. From the remains plants sprouted and animals were born. The Great One rested; his job was over. Humans were no more, and intelligent life... was everywhere.

Untitled drawing by Chad Lockwood (Fall contest)



Air

Painful silence consumes us with no laughter, and no light, only the void and colorless to keep company. Not a silence of the intimate, or familiar, but one of knowing the familiar too long; made heavy by the fear of motion, unmoved unless courtesy be required. Thoughts never spoken, only their presence, known and felt; radiated, by eyes that never meet, but only the averted gaze of others desperately trying to do the same. How many stifled cries? Illuminating observations? How many poetic symphonies? Lost.

Standing, as bloodthirsty soldiers on the edge of battle; Turned back by the impotance of a weak commander, fearful of disturbing the air.

Destroying all but the distance.

"AquaChick" by Bobby Phelps (Fall contest)

"Alone and Cold"

by Nate Wooten (Fall Contest)

2nd place Computer Graphics

"Air"

by Howart H. Hewitt II (Fall contest)

Honorable mention poetry

Whippoorwill Nightmare

A card came in the mail today, But I couldn't read a word, For on the front was pictured The image of a bird.

Though the sender had no knowledge,
Of what it meant to me,
My mind was hurtled back in time,
To the year when I was three.

Please, Daddy, shut the window, I'm scared to go to bed. I can't get that awful sound, From inside of my head.

Sandy says it's hot in here, Without the summer breeze. Don't she care 'bout why I cry? 'Splain to her, Mommy, please.

I know you keep telling me, To come and have a look, But I think it's a monster, Not a picture in a book.

I blink my eyes and now I'm back, Although I remember still, The fear a little child felt, When she heard a whippoorwill.





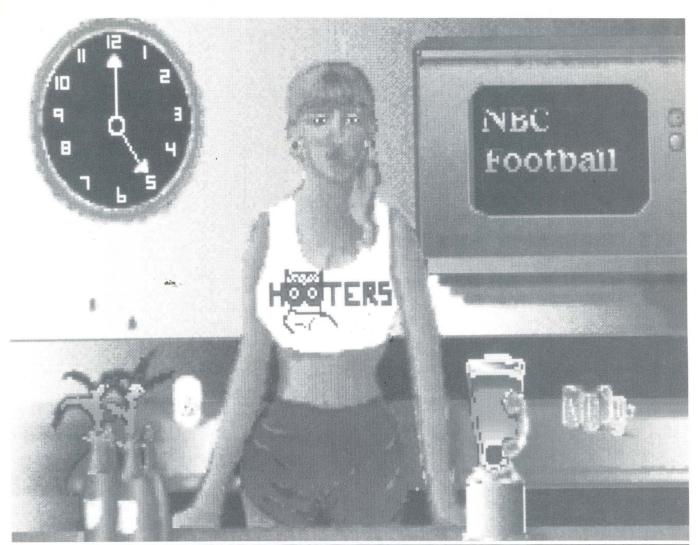
Modern Philosophy In Twenty-Five Lines

The relics of an old mind; the tatters of a reality implicit, wave as a hazy gray blanket in the air. Ground uncertain; faith abandoned, or in the process of being so. Doubt is all. All that remains of the once proud and certain. Before, standing resolutely above the filth, now proudly bathing in it. Hearing no cry for direction, and obeying no rules. Abandoned, by all, but the sordid or plain, Embraced, by the most common. Ruled, by the lowest rungs of the unemployable. That scurry from any sign of light. Preferring instead to live in the hazy fog of the halfway, the almost, the just about. Striving to be misunderstood, Toiling to be controversial, Standing at the dawn of their ideas pretending not to see the bodies.

> "Pepper" by Phyllis Bustillo (Fall contest) Honorable Mention painting

"Modern Philosophy In Twent-Five Lines" by Howard H. Hewitt II (Fall contest) 3rd place poetry "Bar Maid" by Jeannie Emack (Fall contest) Honorable Mention computer graphics

"Friday Morning at the Cafe Forlorn" by Cheryl A.Lackey (Spring contest) Honorable Mention poetry



Friday Morning at the Cafe Forlorn

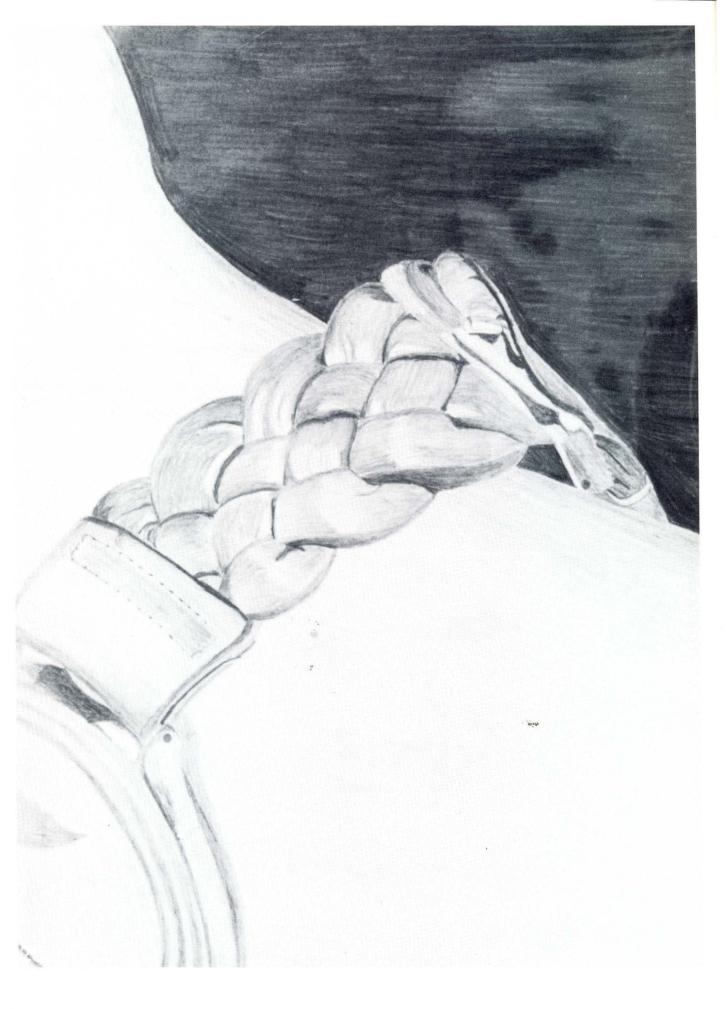
Wearing their woeful, though not altogether unwinsome, expressions, Winifred and Willie slouch wretchedly against the wrinkled upholstery of the booth.

A tiny hat perched primly on Winnie's prudish top-knot contrasts her pouting expression. Her dirndl skirt and sandal shod feet give off a somewhat comical

Willie, on the other hand, appears as nondescript as the dark, dismal attire he has donned. The one daub of color lies in the glass of deep burgundy wine, resting atop the table, barely within reach of the dour, dejected gentleman.

These forlorn figures from a long forgotten era have made their final trek to a place where memories never die.

Alas, it is Friday morning at the Cafe Forlorn.



Ahead...

Streaking forward without feeling into a new unexplored region.

Looking back to nothing, but an empty space, a void hungering for something more.
Knowing that the past is too far gone to change.

Looking upon the future with the eyes of a child, full of wonder searching new horizons for your goal.

Believing your tomorrows will only be as bright as the day that proceeded it.

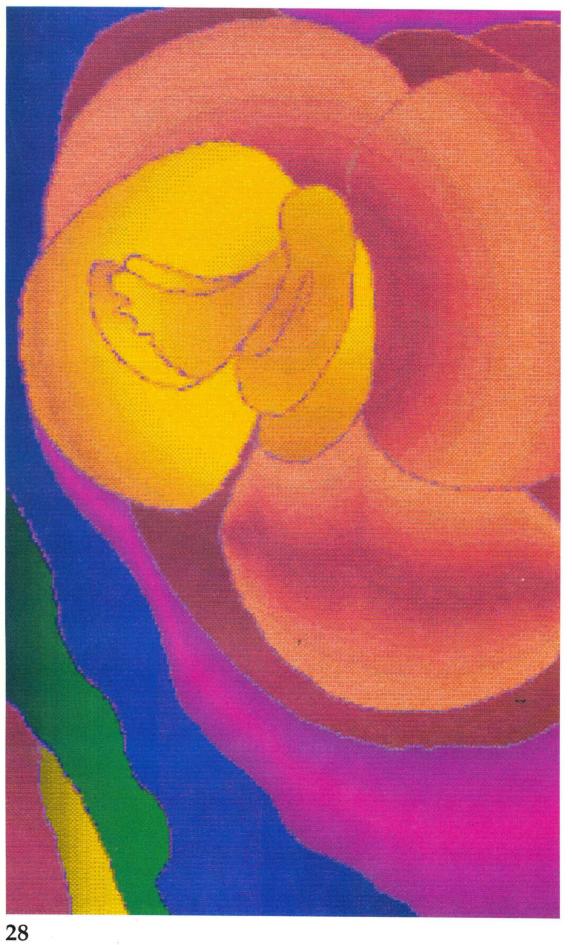
A storm brews on the other side of the mountain.

Prepare to catch a falling star.



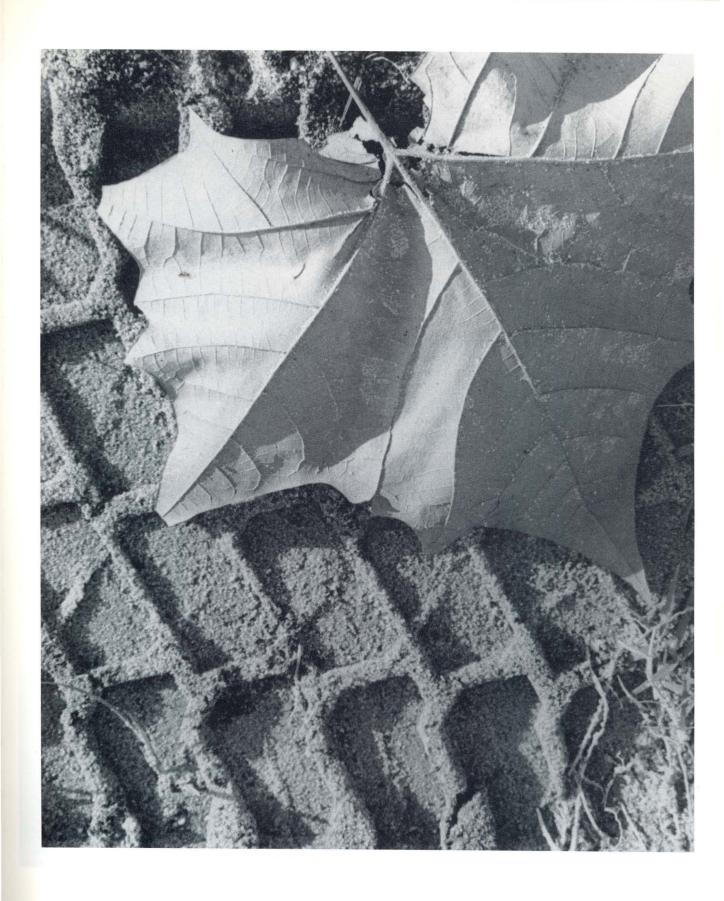
"Ahead" by Brian Rider (Fall contest)

"Icarus' Last Flight" by Mark McKinney (Fall contest) 2nd place drawing



"Blossom" by Thomas Long (Fall contest) 3rd place computer graphic (Left-sideways)

"Autumn" by Jeannie Emack (Fall contest)
1st place
photography
(Right)

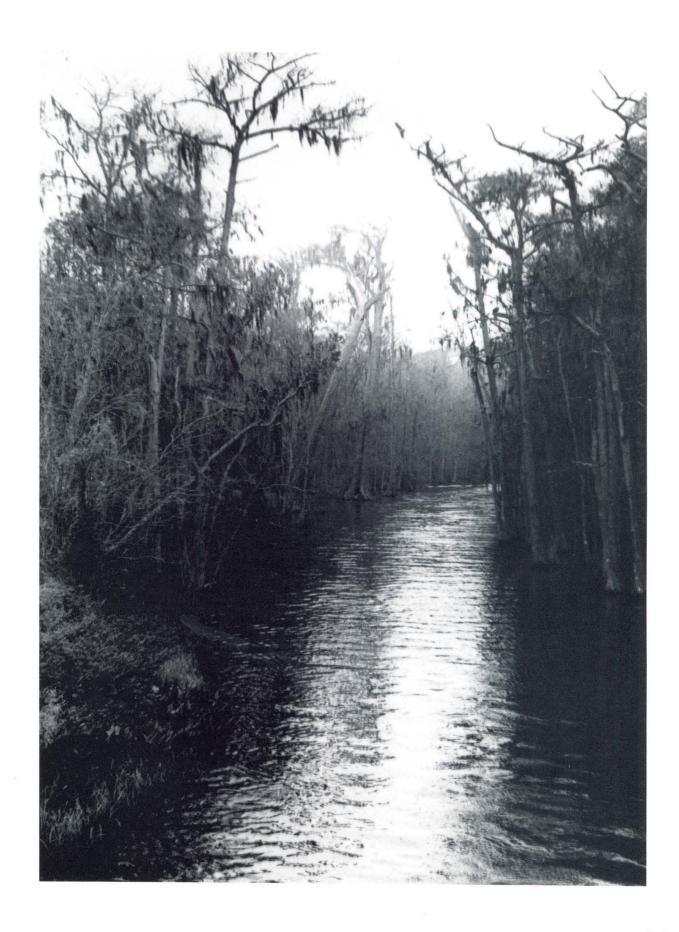


blow

the Greater sense of things, the bond
with the demon and the world i knew so wellis clouded in a memory disfigured by the sweet
observations of my childhood. even then i saw more
clearly than now, and realized the value of such things, but
i had no guide- save my own ignorance, to lead me along
the narrow path from this world to the next and last. the
most Holy truths of time and destiny can be sought
within the misunderstood recollections of a pure,
undiluted, unpolluted awareness- such as is found in
children.



"blow" by Bobby Phelps (Fall contest)





Shattered Images

Like a leaf upon the wind My dreams have been swept away. Gone and never to return, Lost in forever they stay.

The shining lake that was my life
That used to mirror my thoughts
Now has waves to completely shatter
The perfect image I sought.

The fragile rose that slowly blossoms As nature creates its art Now has become a lonely thorn That has left its scar upon my heart.

> "Reflection" by Jeannie Emack (Fall contest) Honorable Mention drawing

"Shattered Images"
by Judy Craig (Fall contest)
Honorable Mention poetry category



ALONE?

The sounds of the city filled the night air, but in apartment 2B only the rhythmic creacking of a rocking chair was heard. Every now and then the sound of another page turning could be heard in the old apartment. Only one person lived here, the occupant of the rocking chair.

Hester sat in the rocking chair flipping the pages in her old photo album. Her husband had bought her the rocking chair when arthritis had set in. She dusted her chair three times a week to keep it glossy. She watched the light bounce from spot to spot on the well worn chair.

Her frail hand caressed the wood as she rocked. Her bleary blue eyes fell onto the pages of the photo album. Facing her was a picture of Charlie, her deceased husband, on her wedding day. He had been so handsome. He'd towered over her own five feet and three inches. His hair had been cut the day before the wedding, but it was still full of waves. His hair had been a golden blonde back then, It had receded some by the time it turned white.

His brown eyes sparkled in the picture. She took a ragged breath as she remembered the day. Her hair had been a light brown back then not the iron gray it was now. Her skin had been smooth and soft as a baby's, Charlie had always told her. Now it was rough from old age and sagging as if her skin were two sizes too big for her body. Old age spots covered the hands that used to be the color of peaches.

She'd turned eighty last week. Every new year had taken its toll on her body. All she had left of her loved ones were her memories, and even those were fading with time. She had outlived everyone she'd ever loved. She was alone in the apartment except for an ugly stray cat that kept sneaking in.

Hester heard a muted crash come from her bedroom as if her lamp had fallen. The cat had gotten in again. She felt sorry for the little fellow. Someone had mistreated him; cutting off his tail and abandoning him. It was a skinny black cat with brown splotches of fur. One ear was torn and tattered, as if it had been damaged in a fight. The cat reminded Hester of the picture of the starving Ethiopian child she'd seen at the grocery store one day.

"Here Kitty. I'll get some nice milk and a bowl of tuna," Hester called into the next room as she tried to get her tired body out of the chair.

She heard a noise from the other room and looked up. A tall dark man came running out of the bedroom. Hester screamed as she tried to run for the door, but her old legs were no match for those of the young robber. She felt his large hands biting into her flesh as he threw her against the wall. Slowly she slumped to the floor. Her weak eyes focused on the man. His hair, was as black as coal, it was pulled back into a pony tail and hung midway down his back. He wore a black T-shirt that had a skeleton on the front. His leges were encased in black jeans with a hole in the knee. Hester looked up into eyes that were a beautiful shade of emerald gree. She felt as if a cold hand had gripped her heart. His eyes were devoid of all feelings, except for a crazed look. Hester knew that these were the eyes of a man capable of doing horrific things without one scrap of remorse.

She lay on the floor, too weak to get up. She heard him rummaging through here belongings. Her eyes strayed to the window next to her chair. Looking in at her was the ugly stray cat. It's green eyes shone, as if with an inner llight, as the darkness surrounded it. Hester looked at the floor. It was littered with pictures from her old album. She stretched out her hand and was able to grasp Charlie's picture. She held it tightly, no one was going to take it from her. The floorboards creaked and Hester knew that the man was back.

No one heard the fatal gunshot. No one heard Hester's agonized scream. No one saw the picture clenched in her dead hand. No one saw the man bump against the old rocking chair as he fled from the old apartment. No one heard the rocking chair creak as it rocked back and forth. Only one ugly stray cat knew what happened to Hester, and it disappeared into the dark and noisy city.

The End

"Alone" by Peggy Picallo (Spring contest) 2nd place short story Looking Onward Towards Insanity

Blue Sky, searching... Bright Moon, searching...

Lost down a path of social despair, looking towards the sky for help...
Seeing only clouds,
Seeing only stars.

No answer lies there.

No secret remedy to an ancient ailment.

Ribbons of conscience streamed across a universe where it is common.

A disease rampaging over hills and deserts, amidst forests, and through castle walls.

No barrier holds back insanity,

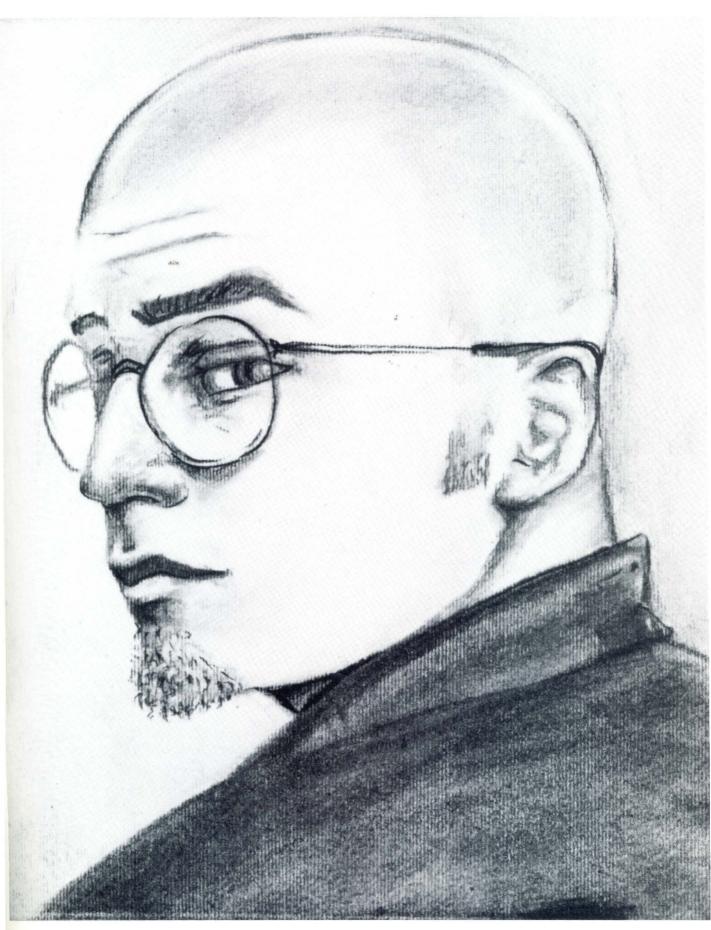
not you... not me...

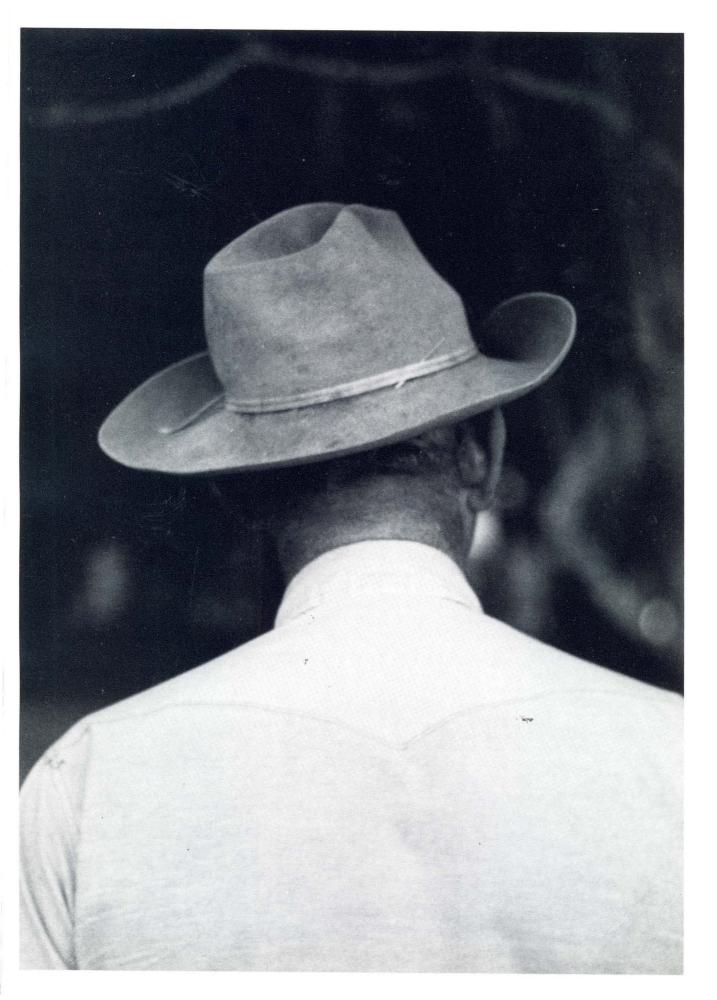
Are you insane? Am I insane?

Most likely, it is natural.

Insanity lies dormant until it can be held no longer.

It runs like a wild beast, and consumes you like the flame.





William Shakespeare once said, "Tis the mind that makes the body rich."

I want to thank the college for allowing me to work on this magazine. The experience has been priceless. Along with learning about publishing, I've come out of this Odyssey experience knowing more about myself. I want to thank my parents, family, teachers and friends for their support. Extra special thanks goes out to my man K-dawg. I love ya' babe. I'd also like to thank everyone who submitted work to the contest. Without you there could be no magazine.

- Julie

Working in the realm of art has always been something that I found interesting, working with the Odessy this past year, has allowed me to come in contact with other artists and observe their goal in art. Although it is not a professional goal of mine, working on this magazine has given me a greater appreciation for art and for the artists themselves. I would like to thank each and every submittee for their work and devotion, I would like to thank the school for the opportunity to work with such a talented group of people, more importantly, I would like to thank Julie for working on this to try to produce something that not only the artists, but the whole school (faculty and students) can be proud to have.

-Brian



Odyssey

The Odyssey is an entirely student produced publication. All art, photography, prose, and poetry is submitted by LSCC students for consideration in two contests designed to collect material for the annual Odyssey magazine. Winners receive cash prizes, however winning does not guarantee publication. The Odyssey magazine is free to all students, faculty and staff of Lake-Sumter Community College. The magazine is intended to showcase student artists, writers, and photographers. Any of the opinions expressed in the student works do not necessarily reflect those of the editors, school faculty, staff, administration or trustees.

1995 Cover Dirty Birds by Jeannie Emack

