



manuscript

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Volume LII
MCMXCIX

.....

winners.

poetry award: john schoen. "sailor's song."

prose award: dora lam. "another unlit cigarette."

drama award: joseph cortegerone. "the execution of the condemned."

art award: michale loverdi. "untitled."

staff.

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debbie brandt.

marcie herman.

michael loverdi.

thom mayka.

colleen mckinnon.

elizabeth pisano.

john schoen.

"this book is dedicated to every closed door i see."

. . . jim.

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The Manuscript Society solicits submissions from Wilkes University students, faculty, and alumni. Manuscript meets every Thursday at noon in Chase Hall. Manuscript also sets up readings and presentations on a regular basis as well.

. . . thanks.



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cover. *ENTER Foggio*. by michael loverdi.

* a translation of a Catalan poem by joan salvat-papassiet.

people not Neighbors

The Man in the Moon once danced with the Spoon
that the Cat ran away with you see,
and the birds in the sky sang sweet notes high
in the songs that they sang for me.
A tree and a rope or some snow and a slope
kept long summers and winters fun.
Spring and fall were spent with a ball
and somewhere wide open to run.
Cool quiet nights were lit with no lights
but the Moon and the stars in the sky.
With a big soft bed, pillow under head,
eyes closed, and I could fly.

If there was ever nothing wrong
that was Then but Then's now gone.

We have men on the moon; not in it. I can fly 'round the world in
a minute. Places that were Far are Near. Places that were There are
Here. But we live next to people not Neighbors, and poems don't rhyme
anymore.

by matthew himlin.

The Show

California baby, passing out jaded dreams at the door
To mopey dope heads scootin' to the beat down below.
 Pretty girls, and nowhere to go--
 The notes wane in the air, breaching the hallway,
 And slowly drift through lips and souls
 As time taps, your feet taking over.
 Toy-like silhouettes spin and jig
 In illuminated halls that billow yellow smoke.
Purple circle skylights reflect in the tears the fog had drawn.
 Miles of smiles and patches and heads
 Sporadically flash in thousands like
 Blind fireflies in summertime.
And it ends as oddly as ends could ever begin,
 With the crinkled stub and exhausted smile
 Lasting to the car and a good concrete mile.

by john schoen.

In My Sleep

I had a dream. Mine wasn't quite so elegant or profound as Dr. King's. I saw my parents once again united and happy. My older brother was married and responsible, no longer existing for the moment with women and friends. Two of my younger sisters enjoyed sharing one another's company. My youngest sister found contentment in being, playing with Barbies and applying herself to school work. As for myself, I had long since left college heading for a life that was both exciting and fulfilling. Maybe I had a wish.

by julie salko.





untitled

by craig b. morris.



Another Unlit Cigarette

Squinting in the candlelight, I bent down trying to distinguish my clothing from the discarded pile on the floor. The sweat on my back hadn't even dried yet. I heard the sheets shuffle behind me as I felt for my jeans and brusquely pulled them on in silence.

A tight voice came from behind me, "You are the high priestess of mood swing." I could tell he was upset with me--with the coldness that had flooded his bedroom.

Turning, I wanted to kneel and kiss that troubled forehead. God, I wanted to reassure him that everything was ok. Instead, I just looked down in silence, unable to find any words of comfort, unable to dredge up any sort of compassionate phrase. Odd, that I should feel this way. My mouth moved to smile as those pained blue eyes searched my face, but all that came through was a wrinkled newspaper grimace.

Suddenly, the room became too much. The bare, square corners and crooked blinds were threateningly confining. The crumpled Kleenexes littering the floorboards made my skin crawl, compounding this feeling of panic I

couldn't love him back. Breathing this stale air, breathing *his* air, seemed contemptible--almost obscene. Grabbing for my coat, I floundered with the last button on my blouse and muttered something about going out for a smoke. Not that I need to provide an excuse; his slow breathing betrayed his sleeping nakedness. Men don't look good sleeping unclothed. The contrasting pureness of new snow was refreshing as I stepped outside. Breathing deep, I cleansed my lungs, surrendering to the sweet night air. It felt good, virginal. Why was I here, anyway, when I wanted to be as far from here as the next bus could take me?

Maybe it's that charming wink he tosses so casually. Or maybe it's just that I was so tired of standing alone in this damned Jerry Springer-sex-will-sell-any-story world. Trying to fill that void, to just not feel alone for once . . . Yet, even while lying in his arms, I was still alone as ever. That feeling of being incomplete had only been masked, not replaced. And keeping the facade up was draining whatever spark of true passion had existed.

The thought of another tender kiss from those lips exhausted me. I sighed into the street, a cloud of breath fumbling confusedly. *In love with the idea of being in love.* Same old, tired story.



I don't even know what love is.
A cynical
chuckle escaped--I must have bad
karma.

The stars watched in a distant
understanding. This is it. It's time to
end this mad parody. Looking up to
his bedroom window, I gave a silent salute
of farewell and headed back inside.

by dora lam.

Violations

my heart and mind aren't always linked
neither are my vocal chords

sometimes, perhaps often,
i try to say the things that sound

romantic,
sexy,
seductive,
true?

well, as true as they can be at the moment,

if ever.

by ralph w. middaugh, jr.

.....

From The True Adventures of Ned Casteel

I

(increasingly allegro)

Nothing like this manuscript ever has been sold.
Nothing like the hundred times dead men have been told
that the joy in heaven beats out the pain of the cold.
Here a simpler story. Hear a tale I'll unfold.

In reel I must tell you of protagonists three:
Ned Casteel, Red in teal, and Statler, that's me.
We found the third victim in blood, you could see
his hands clutching feathers and mud and a key.

"Well here's the murder weapon," Ned held Lizzie Bordon's axe,
you know, the one with which she gave those fatal whacks.
Added to the handle, held on with tinker's tacks
a plaque was readin' "voodoo master", yessir, them's the facts.

The G-men were skeptical, they said that he had gone
to a canyon near the mountain that Roosevelt was on.
They seemed to think the murderer was linked to Al Capone.
— The voodoo master could hex a man just talking on the phone!

Red was triangulatin', Ned was doin math.
My favorite thing was sittin', just looking at my staff.
At four o'clock I drew my tea from a Russian Tsar's carafe.
I knew that things were still unknown when I heard Casteel's cool laugh.

(andante)

Ned looked with disdain as Red juiced up the plane,
"These dead chickens better get washed down the drain."
So off without warning, the whole thing insane.

'cause the voodoo master is out of control,
and the local police chief's clear on the dole.
Casteel keeps us focused on the ultimate goal
before another poor madman loses his soul.

II

(increasingly allegro)

Red followed the railroad tracks, flying south-east
then water and island, about time for the feast,
lead by our contact, straight up a crease.
He gave us blue beads and warned us at least
to "behave near the cave of the most dangerous beast."

He would go no further, but we went pressing on.
Should we just have let him go? Was he just a pawn?
A sign outside the lair where the voodoo master'd gone,
was readin' "Stars are right outside, and minutes left til dawn."
Casteel couldn't stop to wait it out, he was stifling a yawn.

Inside zombie men were lurchin', the voodoo master stood
lookin' like he knew his role, I wondered if he could
turn us into zombies. I wondered if we should
join the voodoo master and his zombies in the hood.
I shook, his grip was awesome, but it could be withstood.

A zombie snuck up on me, it wasn't total loss,
with a silent hail to Mary I gave my rightest cross.
He'd need to check up from the neck, his brain was blessed with moss.
As he fell I felt him feeling like he had hit the sauce.
But enough with fighting zombies, my beef was with his boss.

Chicken blood was everywhere, feathers in the air.
Red's Irish voice was screamin', "I've got entrails in my hair!"
I just stood there smiling, lookin' suave and debonair.
The voodoo master looked at me and didn't seem to care.
My cockney smile faded as he vanished into air!

(andante)

Casteel's voice was circumspect. "Red, come please and inspect
this mechanism to project images which then collect
on mirrors which must then deflect to create illusions I suspect."



'cause the voodoo master is out of control,
and those on the island just do as they're tol'.
Casteel keeps us focused on the ultimate goal
while another poor madman looses his soul.

III

(increasingly allegro)

Red peered from permanent wave; she could really see.
"Statler, you get along and radio the G."
Ned knew her move and for his part array'd out the key.
Her hands were full. "Turn and push, on a count of three."

Sliding down a panel read: "Enter if you dare."
When pushed aside, the door saw Voodoo in his lair.
As he mimed his odd blue line made us glare a stare.
Red pinned it down - "Get out of town! Beads inside his hair."

But Number Four lay right before us, fomenting pox and pus.
Casteel was really angry, I could almost hear him cuss.
Red stepped up and over, she didn't make a fuss.
Fightin' voodoo masters; a proper job for us.

Takin' bead to ragdoll, Casteel found it on the floor.
Lookin' mighty nervous, our foe bounded toward a door.
Casteel chanted, maybe ranted, using arcane lore.
On the lawn dawn brought out a shout calling the Great War.

Spilled out zombies, G-men stood, lookin' quite confused.
No threat the dizzy master could; the doll was clearly bruised.
Islanders in tizzy massed, would know that they'd been used.
Casteel was not triumphant, though we'd surely solved the clues.

(andante)

At the end, in the plane, we flew back to our base.
Time, as Red dead-reckoned, I thought about the case.
Soon the Salt Lake beckoned, I fought one last embrace.



But the voodoo master is under control.
The G-men set up some kind of island poll,
shifting Casteel to a penultimate goal.
While echoes of madmen roll off of our soul.

by harry porter.

Recipe for Everyguy (see also Male in index)

Page 67

You Will Need-- Lies (these work well in pairs)

Excuses (as many as needed)

Empty Promises (see above)

Active Hormones (testosterone mainly)

Good Looks (to complicate things)

One Brain (for decoration purposes only)

Begin by gathering all ingredients. In large bowl (and you'll need rather large bowl . . .) sift together lies, excuses, and empty promises. Do this several times until they all seem to blend together. Next, obtain an even larger bowl. (If a larger one is available . . . it may be necessary to gather several medium sized bowls.) Mix the lies, excuses, and empty promises with active hormones. It will not take long to blend these. (They tend to cling very well together.) After this mixture is made, generously add good looks. (The more lies, excuses, empty promises and active hormones, the more good looks you will need to add.) Place concoction in freezer and chill for hours. (The active hormones tend to chemically heat mixture rather spontaneously at any give time.) This dish is usually served cold. (Especially when many people are present.) Toss brain' on the side. (It's only there for decoration anyway.) Enjoy!

by nina kocylowski.

.....

Because You've Come

Because you've come
The lilies have bloomed
And spoke their jealous joy to the roses:
See the girl, traversing the stairs, winning you over
Pretty and young with a shadowy complexion;
So young, she's worshiped in her stride,
Who doesn't know her is enamoured by love upon first sight of her.
Because you've come I return, now, to love;
I'll say your name,
And the nightingales shall sing it.

By Joan Salvat-Papassiet
translated from the Catalan by Joseph Corteggerone.

Sailor's Song

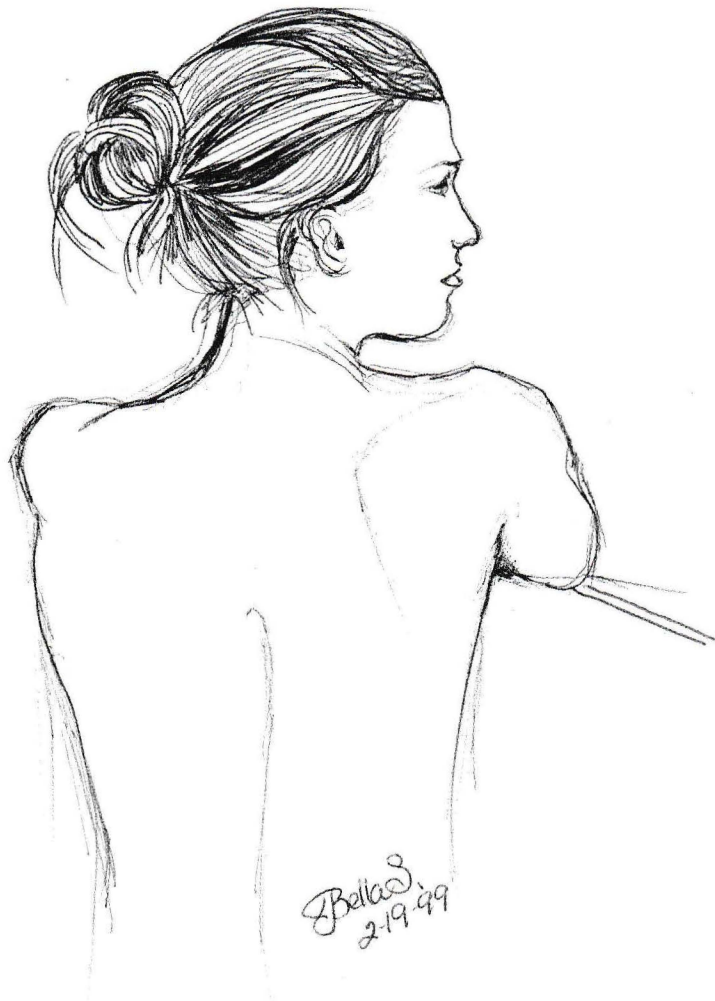
The sailor clutched the fractured mast
His anomalous stance only grew stronger against the glacial surf
That lashed his balanced face with the sharp froth
Stirred from the deep blue.

Stiff finger tips sprung from unfurled arms,
Reaching for docile shipmates being pounded against the slippery oak.
Heads shatter like brittle hawthorn berries in winter,
And off the sides to hungry teeth, waiting in the cold arctic.

The Greenland waters were a brilliant red that day.
Littered with shards of maroon timber--
He rigged the hawsper rope to four dead planks
And trekked to an inland haven.

To the day of his death,
He remained an old heckler perched on the edge of cobblestone roads,
Only to harass fawning youths about that cold day at sea.
And warned that gold piercing sinks like the stones on which they walk.

by John Schoen.



untitled sketch

by bella shvartsman.



The Dark End of The Street

"Dark end of the street,
that's where we always meet--"

Who the fuck sung that anyway?

-- The Commitments?

-- Fuck you! Fucking Commitments. Soulless soulless bastards--that's what they are.
Can't you hear it? Can't you hear it?

Monday through Friday was a run-on sentence the jumble of thoughts and images blur together like some train rolling through Bowling Green @ 10:29. Did you ever feel that life is moving by and leaving you standing at the station? By Friday train cars become distinguishable and individual again--life at my pace . . .

The neighborlady was biting her fingernails inside her windowpane world. What does she think of me? Of us? Two brothers bitching poetics and watching episodes of *21 Jump Street* and *The Price is Right*. Eighteen years in the same GODDAMN home and now here he is again--sleeping on my sofa falling asleep to his favorite album, "The Best of 3 Dog Night." The WORST part--the fucking skip in the song "One."

Over and over--"number one" sung in that lilting Chuck Negron falsetto. He's going to ruin the stereo--at least the cd player. Chuck fucking Negron, junkie. I remember watching VH1--how he made this deal with some crooked dentist. The gig was that he traded Chuckie false records (hiding the fact that he was riding high on the white horse) for becoming a science project:

"when I left that dentist I had 13 teeth in my mouth--" poor wretch.

She keeps looking at me--every day on the dark end of the street.

10:27 pm: almost showtime. Every night since she's moved in. Sometimes she has her hair in curlers/sometimes--Thursdays, she's usually wearing gym clothes. Tonight, a bath robe. It's a rosy-colored terry cloth thing--looks comfortable--

probably been with her since college. She stands there, brown hair, soft blue eyes. Her face is slightly chubby--rosy cheeks, windburned smile--no Campbell's Soup Kid smile: mile wide and wonderful. Makes me wonder where did she go to keep an innocence alive in such an age.

The white building--the blue period--it always seems that there are no other windows in the apartment other than hers. The street--that asphalt border--my brother falls asleep earlier nowadays . . .

The closer I look, the deeper I feel and the further she gets away.

. . . lately I think I hear the street exhaling. The widening sidewalk--the continental shelving of different experiences . . . the ivory tower overlooking this . . . Do you know that the sun rises behind her and in front of me? . . . obsessive . . . compulsive . . . obsessive . . . compulsive--Do you know I haven't masturbated in five days? I haven't got laid since . . . well . . . well I believe *Alf* was still on the air, but I feel . . . satisfied, sexually . . . this is big--we're talking a two-time-a-day habit . . . now . . . now I don't know . . . it's all different.

DIFFERENT

the opposite of same . . .

patterns blur--

FUCK THE RITUAL! THIS IS HABIT!

. . . and she feels it too, maybe she thinks I'm a freak of some sort--

"hey it's the guy that stares at me--" or

"hey, let's see if the stalker's looking at me--" or

"HEY RETARD, I'M KEEPING A RECORD OF EACH TIME YOU LOOK AT ME SO THE POLICE CAN TAKE YOUR SORRY ASS AWAY FOR GOOD!"

. . . or maybe she likes me . . . maybe she knows me . . . I feel that way too.

.....

. . . I feel like I know her just from watching her . . . I know her favorite clothing is from the Gap (sweatshirts, plus a lot of shopping bags) . . . but she's not a yuppie is she?

. . . nah . . . of course not . . . maybe a bit too innocent--too innocent for her own good.

Did she have sex? Somedays I think she's been done over/somedays no--a virgin/ somedays I shudder to think that someone would do that to her--put so much of themselves in her--what the FUCK am I saying?!! Ron Jeremy would be rather disappointed . . .

. . . I want her, but not to fuck her . . . but yet I want to push her down and press myself hard and fast against the grain . . . I want this but not this--

No. I want to meet her when the sun is shining down on the street--when the pavement exhales and contracts, bringing these two sides of the street together.

I love high noon. The balance of the shadow--they first seem to disappear, slouching off or better yet lying in wait like a Mod Squad ambush. I have never seen the sun at high noon--I always miss it . . . no . . . not true . . . I've seen it a few times--that exact moment--the pin point. It lasts only a second, comes and goes like a train.

Like a train.

I've got to move out, don't I . . . my brother says so . . . what's he know, he's always off at work.

One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . .
One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . .

GODDAMN cd player! Chuck Negron is my hero-- a junkie in blue. Why is she pulling my teeth? How many days . . . the train . . . blurs in my mind life is a run-on sentencewhattimeisit10:25

:26

:27

:28

:29

showtime.



Somewhere in Bowling Green a train passes by--
the sun moves past noon--
a guy and a girl fall in love--
All these connections--all this useless beauty. Let go of it . . . cd skips . . .
interuption in blue . . .

I saw her today getting groceries at a shop below my window
she seemed different, maybe because the sun was setting
she bought some milk--whole milk

The craving doesn't go very far away.
The craving for her
for the sun . . .
in circles . . .
in circles . . .
in circles . . .

At night, we don't see each other anymore . . . the street yawns now . . . shadows
appear right after high noon . . . the sun sets closer to me and rises farther away . . .

All that's left is One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . . One . . . #1 . . .

by james warner.





Bucket

by todd vinovski.

Failure

There is no real importance for my existence.
I have failed even before I have started
Mediocre dreams . . .
Shattered desires . . .
Fear keeps me from starting
Failure in the shadows
I won't start the race because I'll come in last,
Or lose somewhere in the middle.
Never even trying, just to say I did
Excuses aplenty to avoid the inevitable.
Frozen here on a plateau
Nothing will get better.
Hope, a faint glimmer, dies out.
To stand by myself,
Is to cower behind you.
Doubt envelops me,
Embracing my soul and thoughts.
A great figure chastising my faults
Berating my child-like mentality.
A decision is the hardest to make.
Fate my only stronghold,
Praying it will guide me.
I will not be remembered for great things,
For there will be nothing I have accomplished.
And thus I shall die a nobody,
That someboy once knew.

by debbie brandt.



The Dignified Man

He was like that ever since he could remember. Even in grade school he carried himself with an air of sophistication. Sure the other kids didn't like him very much, but he didn't value their opinions about anything so it didn't matter. There was the time whe he was dared to eat paste, and almost considered it to earn the respect of his peers. But he didn't and the teacher had been watching him and congratulated him on being a very grown up boy for the first grade. Compliments from teachers, dignity was always good for that. Dignity was all he ever wanted. He could dress more carefully than anyone else in his school. Jeans and a T-shirt didn't cut it for him. He needed effort. Shirts that you had to button proved that he took his time getting dressed in the morning. The more buttons, the better. Ties added more effort to the process. A nice tie (under a button down collar of course) and he was ready to face the world. He spoke with proper grammar at all times: may I go to the lavatory, to whom did you wish to speak. Hell, he never even cursed.

He didn't like the music his peers did, effort again; Mozart put effort into his music, three guys with guitars and a drummer wouldn't know the definition of effort. He didn't act the way his peers did, mainly because it consisted of listening to effortless music and getting drunk; apparently the high school equivalent of eating paste. So consequently, he was not very popular with those peers. But he didn't need them. Why go to a party to listen to noise surrounded by people he considered undignified when they were sober let alone trashed off their asses? There was a short time when he did consider going to his senior prom. The thought of all those tuxedos and prom dresses made him almost forget whom he was really thinking about. In the end though, he decided it didn't matter how nice they were dressed; they would never act dignified enough to suit him. The music would be wrong, and the whole point of prom night was afterwards you'd get drunk, eat paste, smoke something, get laid, anything but act the way intelligent human beings were supposed to act.

So dignity didn't win him many friends, but it didn't make him any enemies either, and it had gotten him his job, and then his promotion. Yes, dignity had done it all. He loved his job. They were so impressed at the interview that they hired him immediately. He was the youngest employee ever to be promoted to management. Now almost everyone who worked there had to call him sir, and he thought (correctly) that he made more money than all of his classmates combined.

.....

Which is why he found it odd that dignity left him when it did. Not when he was old and could no longer take care of himself, as he had seen happen to so many who were dignified in the past. The past was where he wished he lived. A good suit from the Twenties had a vest to button, a jacket to button, and even a hat to straighten. But no, dignity didn't leave him when he was forced to buy a meager meal with food stamps, as he feared he would before he got his job. No, instead his old friend left him while he was walking to the bank in his favorite suit with his best power tie around his neck and his big, fat dignified check in hand. That is when he met some drunken, fat slob who had apparently long ago decided that dignity didn't mean anything and recently decided that neither did red lights. And as the dignified man laid there on the street (his legs now quite an undignified mass of bone, blood, urine, and Italian silk) all he could think was, "this will not do, this will not do at all." But he was wrong, death suited him well and everyone who attended his wake agreed that he was the most dignified corpse they had ever seen.

by matthew himlin.

Untitled

I feel grossly inadequate,
Like a wooden rowboat in a sea of gilded galleons.
I don't long for golden timbers,
And I am not envious of the advantages that a gilded galleon provides,
However I am in a constant hunt for the blessed majesty,
That the adorned ships thrust upon you.
I am constantly spinning clockwise with my arms extended
And without an axis, hoping to bump into someone,
That I can only pray would look at me twice.
Once for curiosity.
Twice for sincerity.
But if they only look once,
With me standing, patiently anticipating a second glance,
I am reminded that I am nothing but a wooden rowboat,
In a sea of gilded galleons.

by jason kauwell.



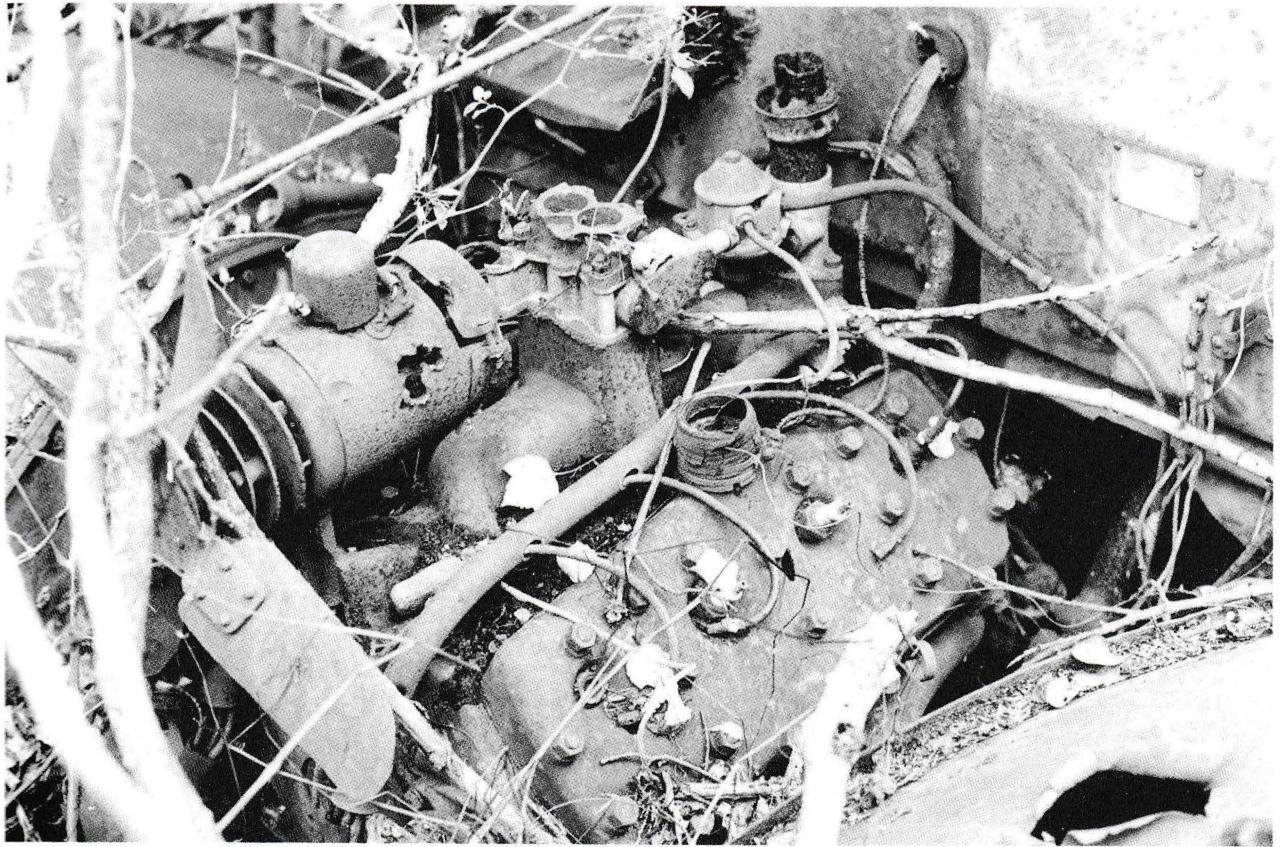
A Crooked Halo In Daylight

I'm a low and lonesome angel--
with broken wings
and a broken heart.
I'm one of the grounded,
the first to fall in love--
the last to know it's not mine.

I'm misguided and blinded by the day--
I'm earthbound and foolish--
I was Heaven sent,
Now I'm Heaven-sentenced
to the salvation
of lost songs--
the strings of my harp
warped under the weight of lover's lies.

The wind kicks up under my overcoat,
I harness my wings.
I walk between the shadows
knowing
there's souls to save,
souls loveless, Godless,
lonely and tattered,
upon whose dim lights I stretch out
tired hands
and twisted arms.
And I can only help, hope or
try to fly
when the winds blow around me
when the sky opens up around me
and lets me go.
And once they take to flight,
they soar without me
for I am built to break,
without wings
and without someone to sing to . . .

by chris bell.



Flatheads Forever

by craig b. morris.





untitled

by colleen mckinnon.





Hombolovi

by michael loverdi.



My Favorite Thing That Never Happened

Lonely skies, Lonely songs,
Lonely eyes, and Lonely arms,
All I see is all myself--
No person, no place, no thing.

But--
I know that you know
that
we know there's more.

But--
I know I could crawl,
and slink
into a shell--that old comfortable place.
where solitude is misguided,
and "I"
is the solution to grandeur.

Or--
I could tear this
weatherbeaten heart
from my threadbare sleeve,
hang it out on parallel lines,
and ready it to be picked up by another
and ready it to be adored
and ready it to be happy
and alone no more.

But--
such are boomerang hearts,
belonging to boomerang lovers,
that in the end
it all comes back to being lonely--

It all comes back to being me.



So--
you can be
my favorite thing that never happened,
and
I can be
your favorite thing that almost did
and
we both can go home happy (?)
and alone (!)
and unhurt
(. . . almost)

There's a boomerang with your name on it
and there's a sleeve to mend.
We both have things to do,
We both have things to say,
Like
goodbye
or hello
or nothing at all.

So--
here I sit
and there you stand
and what happens next
is whatever we are,
nothing more
nothing less.

by chris bell.



Untitled Narrative

One of my earliest memories is my near death experience at the Knoll. The Knoll is one of those wonderful places that everyone in town knows about, a safe place to take the family when it snows. There are three different hills for you to slide down, some of them less steep for those less adventurous souls who were chicken of the big hill. After a good snow it seems like half of the town would show up with a wide variety of sleds: rudder sleds, disc sled, toboggans, and everyone's favorite, the simple plastic sled. My personal favorite has always been those flimsy paper-thin pieces of plastic; they always seemed to go faster, and when you wiped out there was no . . . well less danger involved than when you took a spill in one of those others. Anyway, on to my story.

I could not have been much more than three, maybe four, and there had been a good snow. So of course my family and I bundled up and headed off to the the Knoll. This was of course the highlight of my week, Hell, my whole month. Outside of Christmas this was the best thing that could happen in the winter. (Until I learned in later years about school delays and cancellations.) This is how a very excited me showed up at the Knoll. Imagine a fat little kid, all wrapped up in one of those ridiculous-looking snow outfits that my mom always made me wear, racing out of the car, sled in hand, not hearing anything except laughter, not seeing anything but the top of the hill, racing up the side of this monstrous hill. Of course I fell down about every fifth step, and slid about two or three feet down this glorious hill. But none of that mattered; it just made the ride down all the more worthwhile.

I can still remember some of the strangest things about this. I have no idea how long I sledged that day, or who (if any) of my friends were there, but I have a great memory of the sled. It was fire engine red and had flames running down the sides of it. The sled seemed to be faster than any of the others that we owned; maybe because of its space age design, or because of the polymers used in its construction, or maybe it was those flames that were on the side. Probably it was because one of my older brothers had run it over some gravel in an alley right next to our house and had torn a hole in the front right corner of the damn thing so whenever it was used it shot a steady stream of snow in your face. It doesn't matter anymore, the hole got too big one year and my dad unwittingly threw out the greatest sled ever. Back to the story.

Eventually my fateful turn came. I started down the hill and true to its nature the sled picked up some great speed. About half way down I started to pick up the one edge, to try an advanced maneuver (for a three or four year old at least) and turn the sled in mid-slide if you will.



To make a long story short I tipped the stupid sled and literally flew out of it. I promise you that I was airborne two solid seconds. When I hit the ground I slid for what seemed like forever, more likely for a couple of seconds. When I finally came to a stop I just sat still trying to figure out if I was hurt. By some freak of nature I was totally fine. I had just realized this when I heard somebody screaming,

"MOVE KID. LOOK OUT!"

I looked up (I had been turned one-hundred and eighty degrees during my tumble.) and saw some skinny Greek-looking guy coming at me at about fifty miles per hour in a ruddder sled. I froze up, all I could do was the ostrich approach to danger, and I buried my head in the snow. After about five seconds I looked around myself and I saw that the tracks of the sled were to my left and my right. I swear to you that I am not making this up, when I looked around the tracks were on either side of me, the damn sled had gone right over me! I know it's impossible, and that I probably rolled into his tracks after he had passed, but in kid logic I had cheated death, sort of like Samuel L. Jackson in *Pulp Fiction*. The tracks on either side said I should be dead, but there I was. But unlike Sam Jackson's character all I did was a double take, then jumped to my feet and raced back up the hill.

by matt nied.

The Execution of The Condemned

Personages:

Krzysztof-- A person (Male)

Ewa-- A person (Female)

A Person Smoking-- A person (ad libitum)

Four Extras-- Stage hands

The stage is dark.

Krzysztof

I am in a room. I am alone. My name is Krzysztof and I am alone.

A slow hazy light is manifested and one can barely see the images of the things on stage. Krzysztof is in the center of the stage on a wooden chair. There is a table to his left. There is a book on the table. In the back of the stage one can see the outline of a person but is impossible to tell whether this person is a boy or a girl. One minute passes.

Krzysztof

The chair on which I sit is not very old. It was brought into this room by someone to whom I gave something once but this chair was not as sat upon then. Now I am here with it and perhaps I am not alone. There is a book on the table, which is next to me. It is very dark but perhaps you can see it anyway. Can you see it? Yes, I can see it but I am not looking at it.

Krzysztof looks only forward until now, when he looks at the table.

This is a book I once read. It is not very old.

Ewa walks into the room stomping furiously. She is carrying a doll by its arm and it swings and swings.



Ewa

Krzysztof! What are you doing?! What are you doing?! What are you doing?! Get up, get up . . . now!

Krzysztof

No! I will not go with you! "Will," not "shall," is imperative.

Ewa throws down the doll and stomps on it.

Ewa

No! No! No!

She bends down slowly to the floor and weeps.

Krzysztof

Do not cry.

Ewa

Do not talk to me.

The person in the back of the room lights a cigarette.

Krzysztof

Please finish.

Ewa slowly rises and turns to Krzysztof.

Ewa

I am done.

She stops crying.

Krzysztof

I will not move.

.....

Ewa walks in front of Krzysztof and kneels down, pushing his knees apart quickly. She is very close to him. Her back is to the audience. She is kneeling very upright. She stretches out her arms and puts her hands on his shoulders leaning between his legs. She speaks warmly.

Ewa

I have something for you.

Krzysztof

I will not move.

Ewa rises quickly and walks around Krzysztof and the table stopping before Krzysztof again. The person smoking coughs twice softly.

Ewa

Are you pretending?

Krzysztof

Pretending what?

Ewa

You know?

Krzysztof

I don't. What are you talking about?

Ewa

I won't put up with this any longer!

Krzysztof

What are you talking about?

Ewa speaks calmly, almost with sadness.

Ewa

I have to go now.

.....

Krzysztof says nothing. Ewa gives him nothing. She walks to the back of the stage and disappears through a dark door. She leaves the doll on the floor. One minute passes.

Krzysztof

I said nothing but now I am speaking. I am alone.

The cigarette is done by now. It should be extinguished. Four people wearing all black with white masks bring in a bed on wheels. The bed is taken to the area behind Krzysztof but is then put in the corner of the room opposite the person who has just stopped smoking. Krzysztof is speaking while this happens.

Krzysztof

I am sitting in a chair but I am not wearing boots. I want to read another book but there are no other books.

He is now silent until the bed is in place.

Krzysztof

I have no place to go.

The person in the back of the stage goes into the bed and pulls a white sheet over their whole form. The lights suddenly come on very bright.

Curtain.

by joseph cortegerone.



what have you heard?

i have
heard
despai
r
echo
from
the
abyss,
i have
heard
the
brush
of a
butter
fly
kiss.

the
moon
crying
out
to
bask
in the
sun,
the
stars
fade
away
when
night
is
done.

i have
heard
fire
leapin
g to
the sky,
i have
heard
wind
breath
e a
lonely
sigh.

the cynic'
s
brittle
laught
er
shatte
r in
the
air,
the
liar's
heart
pound
ing
drown
ing in
fear.

oh
passio
n and
pain
these
inade
quate
words
.
how
can i
explai
n
the
things
i
have
heard
?

i have
heard
need
hunge
ring
for more,
i have
heard
joy
a
cacop
honic
roar.

-the
silent
lake
yield
a
silver
ripple,
-the
trembl
ing
vine
softly
giggle
.

i have
heard
yearni
ng
a
tender
ache,
i have
heard
destin
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conspi
re
with
fate.



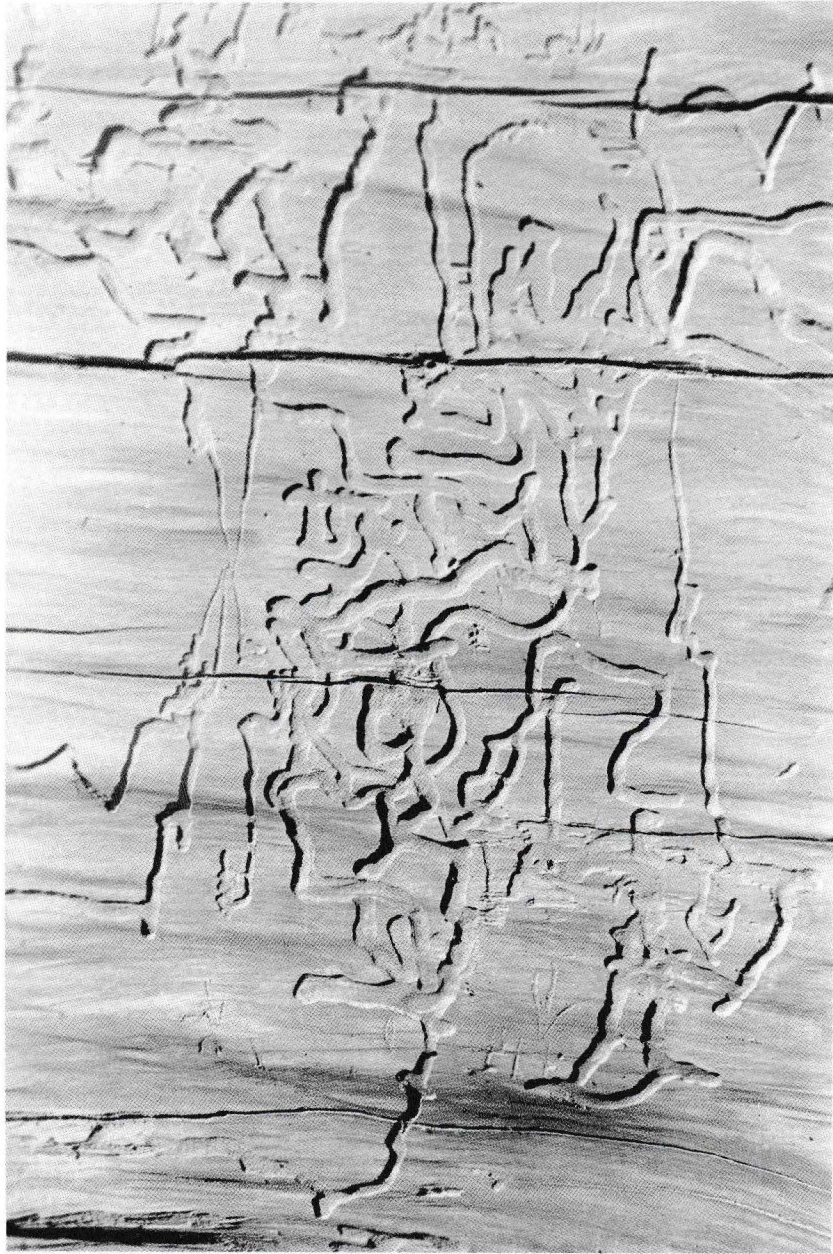
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oh
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beaut
y
these
impot
ent
words

how
can i
explai
n
the
things
i have
heard
?

by dora lam.



Worm hole

by todd vinovrski.



*An Examination of the Potential Cause of Mass Acceptance of Commercially
Produced Beer with Reflection by Investigator*

By lanquid lips

d

r

i

p

amber unpleasantries

s

u

eo

and pass vile gass

re ma i ns

of the Gods and Kings

pleasure (they had many)

bore upon (buffalo)w_i s of past grandeur.

g
n

Emperors Adolph

(Heil Hitler) and Bud====

laugh from their ===

thrones "Ha" they ==

exclaim "Our Queen ==

Temperance (that bitch) ==

and the bearer of rations ==

has laid for us over ever ===

lightening amber carpet"====

Evermore the automatons

drink their value never

shared by the hue (don't you do it too)

their constitutions do s

i

n

k

Repent in your brew!

micro to you!

.....

B E E R

(B)e(h)a v e

r e p (ent)!

(Don't) s (i)r e

y(ou)n (g),

(n) o t

(o) n (e)

(imbicil)e (more[please])!

by chad pletnick, principal investigator.

Your Words

They float through the air at me,
For I am their lonely target.
Sometimes they flow past like gusts of wind.
Sometimes they stab with the sharpness of daggers.
Sometimes, the best times,
are when they caress my ears
and nestle into the crevices of my heart.
It is pointless to run, they always find me.
Silent stalkers ready to pounce when I am weakest.
Moaning ghosts whose restless souls cannot be settled.
Old friends that comfort me when I am at my lowest point.
If I welcome them forever,
will I finally be rid of you?

by deidre blake.

.....

Boardwalk Blitz

I feel so dizzy, but not dizzy enough to miss everyone's stares . . . What's the matter?

Are we walking the wrong way?

Some of us seem to have forgotten our shoes.

I GUESS Krista's water bottle is cute . . .

. . . though I don't feel it was meant to cleverly disguise rum and coke.

Maybe a ride

on the Ferris Wheel . . .

. . . no, it's too breezy, I wish I changed into pants.

The SALT WATER AIR tickles my NOSE.

Jessica gives a "Heeeyyyy" to the group of guys walking by.

They smile at our sneaky dispositions concealed well by sunglasses.

Colors and colors, billions and billions

of lights.

We laugh and laugh while screaming

the lyrics to a song I don't remember knowing.

A SLIVER GETS STUCK IN MY FOOT, BUT I'M CONFIDENT I WON'T FEEL IT

until the morning.

Success is achieved in the House of Mirrors--

only Molly needs to be rescued with giggles.

NO, I don't want to buy another slice of pizza.

That fat man is staring at us . . .

. . . like we're really going to steal an ankle

bracelet or hemp necklace.

WHY DOES EVERYONE KEEP WALKING INTO US?

Our fortunes are mysteriously read, only we take them seriously

under these circumstances.

The music beats out of the psychedelic t-shirt shop,

of course we stop to dance.

"WATCH THE TRAM CAR, PLEASE" echos mechanically in our heads as we watch

it repeatedly roll by.

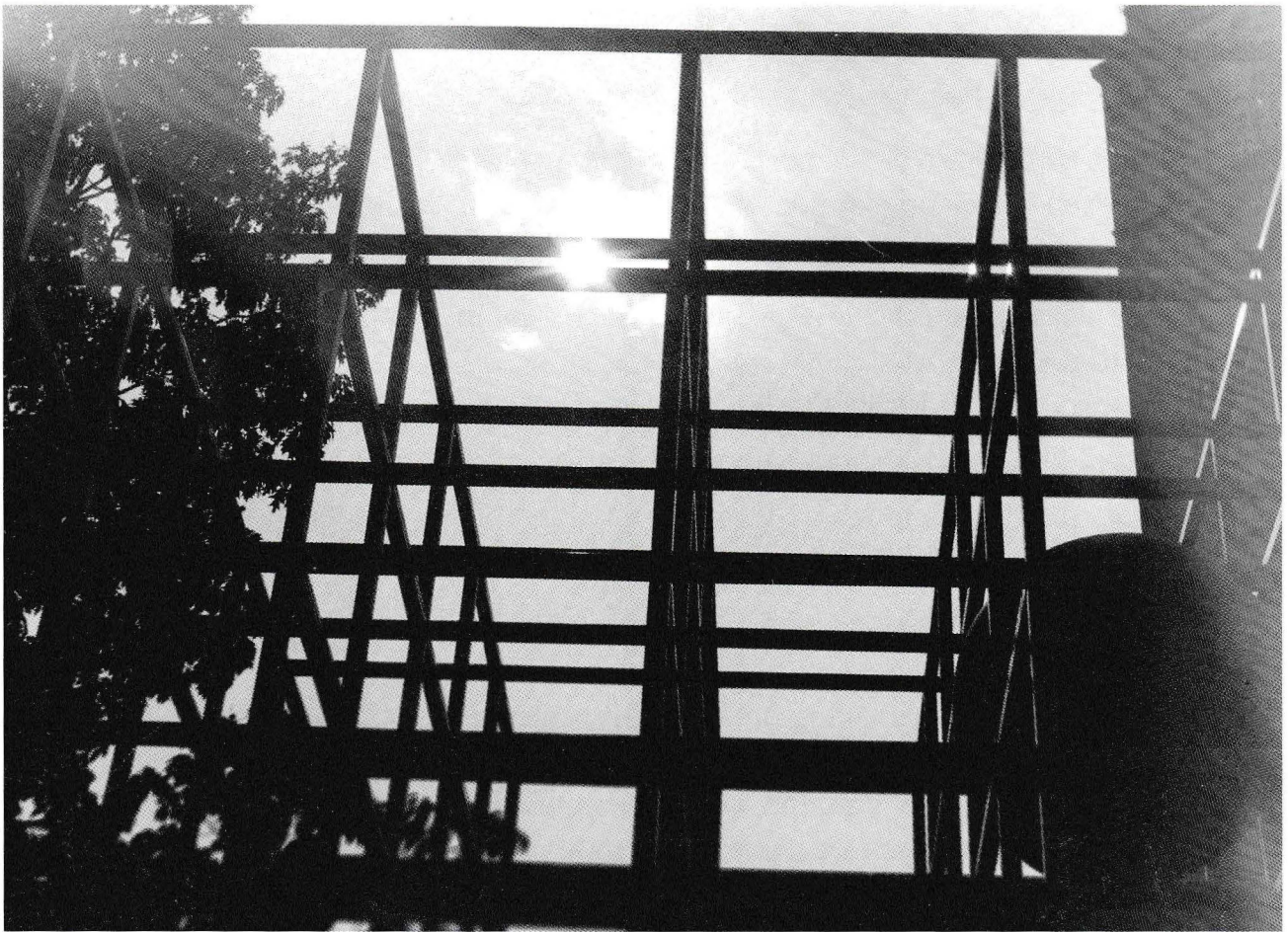
I think we need new shot glasses.

We get our photos taken in a tiny booth to remind us:

It IS fun to have a little too much to drink and then brave the boardwalk.

Hey, Jenny, did you grab that ankle bracelet?

by nicole del priore.



untitled

by dora lam.

.....

goodbye

What, what have we done to one another? I try and have been trying to make it fit all along, ever since I've become pregnant.

But it doesn't fit. It used to fit. But it doesn't. It doesn't fit. Not anymore.

What can I say to you? I--I don't know. We just lie next to each other. I can hear you breathe heavy at night. You sigh as you toss and turn, I can almost see you inside you . . . your boat capsizing under the tide of work,
and stress
and me.

I'm sorry . . . I've tried to do what I could for you . . . to help you. Your sighs are sights I just can't soothe. We used to face one another in bed, now you sleep with your back to me.

I'm sorry I shouldn't be thinking this or saying this or writing this

but I am.

You're downstairs making breakfast--it's the only meal we really eat together anymore. Remember when the world was put on hold so that our little universe could exist. Our little universe: you, me, and the length of this bed . . . that was it.

That was it; not anymore. I, we were in love once . . . not anymore . . . at least it doesn't feel like love. No it just doesn't feel at all. You don't feel anymore and that's the problem. Love, hate, good, bad, joy, pain,

NOTHING.

We haven't made love in over a year, we've just fucked, nothing more, nothing less. But--this child--this child--was a mistake . . . a miscalculation . . . an error . . . a life created without feeling. It makes me sick to think about it . . .

.....

This child born out of fucking . . . born out of nothing more than parts put together.

JESUS, I sound like Tori Amos . . . I remember all those neo-feminists we'd laugh about--all their evil penis rhetoric . . . now look at me, I sound exactly like them. But you don't care.

No, I think you do care . . . somewhere inside that universe of one exists me . . . and you. I know it does, but I've tried and tried and tried to find it,

and i can't.

I can't find me in you. Doesn't that bother you at all? That I'm lost somewhere within your heart and soul. We used to be like watercolors, you and I--our colors swirled and blended together to form another color, another shade, a hue not of this world. A color--something brilliant, bold like Times Square on New Years Eve or flashing lights on a carousel--bright.

We used to listen to Roy Orbison together, singing along to songs for "Only the Lonely," never truly grasping the irony. I get the joke now, now when it plays on and on for hour in my head, and even then I can still hear you sing along with me.

But I am alone.

That's the thing, isn't it? Alone. It's what everyone craves to be but fears to become. That's where I'm at.

alone.

And there is no sunken treasure, here in the depths of my own ocean,
This bed is not a universe,
And my heart is not a home.
This is where it ends,
And this is my goodbye.
This is my goodbye.

.....

I never wanted drama to play a part . . . in my own death. We saw enough drama on Friday nights, watching *The Twilight Zone*. I never wanted drama, I never wanted to feel alone.

But I do so here I am.

On a clear night you can see the Walled City from our balcony. It looks so confining--too much life for such a closed space. It looks like a lifetime vacuum packed into an hour. But we, we live beyond the Walled City, you and I.

But when you sleep, you face the Walled City, not me.

This is goodbye and maybe I should say all of this in a note, but I can't. You don't understand words well enough. Words are coming easy for me now.

I hate the fact that you left me alone. I am dying alone, right now, right here and I have been dying for quite some time. You have been bleeding me slow and hard. The wounds and the trail stretches back as far as your entrance to the Walled City. Once you started working in Wall, walls built up around us. When flowers aren't watered, they wither and die, as do I. Hmm . . . never saw myself as a poet. I never saw myself as anything lately. I wasn't even your wife. I was someone who shared a bed, if not words with you.

Jesus I hate drama, I hate this litany that no one hears but me. I am kidding myself thinking that this is right, but I just cannot bring myself to live another day like this. This is not a cry for help, it is a cry for release--an opening of the cage called life. You and your goddamn sense of order. Order, balance, for someone who talks about it, you don't have it--

love is gone,
goodbye,
farewell . . .

I am doing this for the sake of chaos. *This is a random act, yes a random act.*
They'll say that this was an act of desperation, but I am not looking towards
desperation, I am looking towards chaos, I am asking chaos to help me . . .

break
away from order.
It is

getting in
my way.

AND

I will not be trapped.

And there is no sunken treasure rumored to be at the edge of this universe, only chaos.

.....

I can't be shut off . . .

the clock runs . . .

the thirteenth step down . . .

I can't turn it off again

on again. It doesn't work like that.

love doesn't work like that

neither does hope.

I can feel the breakdown . . . words come easier to me now . . .

I will not bring a child into this world that was not born for a purpose.

I am giving this child purpose

to be with its mother

SAVE ME! SAVE ME! SAVE ME!

Save me from this life,

this end,

this pain.

All it takes is two little cuts.

2 little cuts.

I am drowning in this ocean,

in the sea of bedsheets

and neglect.



I have been dying a little every day, why not die a lot now?

I can feel the universe collapse upon itself,
downstairs you make breakfast,
upstairs I die

2 little cuts

HA! Easy

easy

to

bleed

life just

drips away

from you .

Easy, easy to die--I would have never imagined it would be . . . this easy to bleed.

The ocean turns red around me--a transfusion of new life into this universe. There's a rush, I feel my heart beat faster and faster, pumping life out of me as quickly as possible. Don't you see, my child, the ocean in front of us? We are going to make our own little universe, you and I. This is the creation--it comes from our soul, our essence, and will be only ours. God is in everything created, and we are bleeding all over our universe.

this is our purpose

We are creating order--it's funny isn't it? From this chaos, this death, a new order, a new life--a universe of two, again and we're doing it so right.

I'm lying on my side, facing the Walled City. See that, my child--that's soon to disappear from our universe. Remember, my baby, I love you. I love you so much that I gave your life for the creation of this universe.

.....

Gabriel, Gabriel, come quick, I've done something horribly horribly wrong!

easy, easy

and Now

One last cut . . . easy to bleed . . . I have two wounds . . . my hands . . . my wrists

Gabriel, Gabriel, come quick, I've done something horribly horribly wrong!

one last cut

one last cut

one last cut

come on

G a b r i e l

you bastard

you turn your

back to me,

face the Wall

now face me

As I lie upon the edge of the universe, bleeding, dying, suffering for your sins, remember Gabriel, I died for your sins. Remember Gabriel, your child died for your sins. We have opened the gates of chaos for you. For my lover, my husband, my dear sweet Gabe.

One last cut

.....

one little last cut

one simple wound . . .

Goodbye Gabriel . . . Goodbye Gabriel . . .

*"I was there when they crucified my Lord,
I held the scabard when the solider drew his sword.
I rolled the dice when they pierced his side,
but I've seen love conquer the Great Divide."*

*--B.B. King (w/U2)
"Love Comes to Town"*

by james warner.



manuscript