



Manuscript

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*Front Cover Photograph: Jim Dee*

Manuscript

## Eddie Lupico

### *Stillborn*

Death by drowning, she says, quickly turning away. Her child's figure, subtle as a balloon, glows on the horizon. I too have seen him in the sunrises. Paige hasn't smiled since she left the hospital; the unnamed baby, her only son; all the whiteness has appalled her.

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On the seashore now, rocky and salt-sprayed, Paige's face is white as the moon in the light of the rising sun. Words are like seagulls, circling and swooping a fishless sea; the silences are monumental. We swim for an hour; the air and water are chill, but we are safe and alone. She is gone for a moment; only my head is above the swelling and settling blue. Then she pierces the surface from below; the movement is rich and exquisite, throwing quartz drops of water into the air. In the deep, we touch.

It is only as friends that we enter the water, the same we leave. Paige is so flat now that I must try to save her, fatten her up for the feast. We will be sacrificed, we joke.

She meets Carver in a restaurant one night. I am supposed to meet her for dinner, but I am stuck in traffic, an accident a few cars ahead of me. I crawl

slowly past the wreckage, then speed up. He asks her if she comes there often and laughs. Paige believes she has never seen such a man. By the time I've arrived, they are practically in one another's arms, leaning against the wall. Two half-full glasses of wine stand green and golden in the midst of half-eaten pastry. I realize that Paige is in love.

Amid smiles and casual talk, we decide on some substantial food; we'll share something, chicken strips with garlic butter. I drive home alone, the taste of dinner still in my mouth; Paige and Carver laugh on their way to his apartment, only a few blocks away.

He is a gentle lover, she says the next day, pouring coffee at her kitchen table. I spoon sugar into both our cups. The cat, meowing against her leg, reminds her of Joyce's *Ulysses*, she says. There is fulfillment in her voice, as we sit in this kitchen a train-ride from the ocean's edge; only last week she was empty as a teacup in the kitchen sink. Now, her crescent of teeth shine in the sunlight that glances through the leaded panes, disappearing into corners and under the chairs. There's a stack of books on the living room floor; pages heavy with age, sodden with meaning.

I long for the freshness of the air outside; we head for my car across the street. For a moment, on the pavement,

the sound  
her build  
on the wi

We go  
for lunch  
smiles for  
boys in b  
market; c  
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Paige c  
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the sound of our feet is disconcerting; I look back at her building, up the weather-worn brick; the cat sits on the windowsill. I'm happy for Paige, I tell myself.

We go through a day, passing in the hallway, meeting for lunch in the company cafeteria. On the ride home she smiles for the evening ahead. I stop at a red light; three boys in brown leather jackets stand in front of a mini-market; one of them finishes a story; they all laugh, flawless skin and smiles, move their feet. "The light is green," Paige says, gently hitting my arm.

In the empty church on Sunday morning, I kneel with my face up to the painting on the ceiling. Christ ascends from a little hill, people all around look at him; I'm not certain if their faces are fearful or rapturous. A little lady in a brown coat comes up the side aisle, genuflects, and enters a pew. Her grey head bends to clasped hands; she kneels and prays fervently, she seems not to care that I'm there. A few words escape her — God bless her husband in Heaven. The devout flow in, surrounding me; the priest leads us in prayers, reads stories to us. As I leave, pressed in a stream of people chatting, breathing easier, I reach for some holy water, but the font is dried empty.

Paige comes to my door that afternoon; I have been flipping through the slick and colorful advertisements

in the women's magazines my mother gives me when she's finished reading them. Faces smooth and perfectly made up, hair soft and colored perfectly, perfection. Paige comes in, brightly dressed, her voice smiling. Carver is taking her to New York on a business trip next week. I nod, sunk in my favorite chair, offer her coffee. But she turns around and looks out the window; the landlady is planting yellow flowers in the side yard. And I know by Paige's profile that soon she'll be complete; her hands are soft and gentle, to cradle the infant; her thin pink lips are just right to kiss him as he sleeps.

**Tracy Youells**

***I Woke Up When  
I Rolled Over***

I woke up when I rolled over and you  
weren't there.

The TV was already full of snow.

When you do get home,  
get my shoe from  
behind the piano,  
And don't trip over the lamp.

If she had a name,  
a face,

4 a body,  
I could hurt her.

But, it's Saturday morning.  
And I forgot our  
agreement —  
your night out.

Janis said if a woman's lonely,  
it's a man's fault.

Is it your fault,  
that I can't compete  
with the contents  
of a little plastic bag?

***Africa***

We had arrived.  
And we brought with us  
our

schools  
language  
dress and  
religion

our  
whiskey  
cash  
violence

The rotting steel of  
western farming machinery  
falls under the watchful stares  
of the lions perched in  
the treetops

We laid waste  
your beauty.  
Murdered your  
vitality.  
Clothed your  
nakedness.

You became nothing more  
than mindless copies of states  
that once enslaved you.

***Eternity***

Eternity in the  
Same places  
Same whiskey  
Same faces  
Same fuck.  
Hiding, suffocating.

No smarter than  
the worm in a bottle of tequila,  
we are waiting for the  
numbing darkness that comes  
by being swallowed  
up.

Colett

Ame

Colette Elick

*American Splendor*



## Vito Sebastian Quaglia

### *Quicky*

Instead of the office, Brad went to a bar  
She was sitting on a stool near the end  
Her name, it didn't matter, she was drinking champagne  
She was cold and lonely and he needed a friend  
Her hair was red, her skin was pure white  
Except for a tatoo of the Last Supper on her neck  
She wore leopard skin tights and a black leather bra  
On which was a pin that read "Support Safe Sex"  
Brad told her he was a modeling agent  
Who happened to be down on his luck  
She told him she was the daughter of a hooker and a shoemaker  
She liked to do it in penny loafers for a buck  
6 They went to her place for a nightcap and played Naked Twister  
To her surprise, he knew all the moves  
The next day he walked to work with a skip in his step  
Looked down and wiped off his shoes

### *Ralph*

Finger down the throat of America  
immigrant chunks and diced carrots  
foul juices w/ slave sauce  
burning Indian mucus —  
comes out the nose  
dry heaves of air pollution  
the shakes

Jill M

*Ref*

He is p  
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## **Jill Nammar**

### ***Reflections***

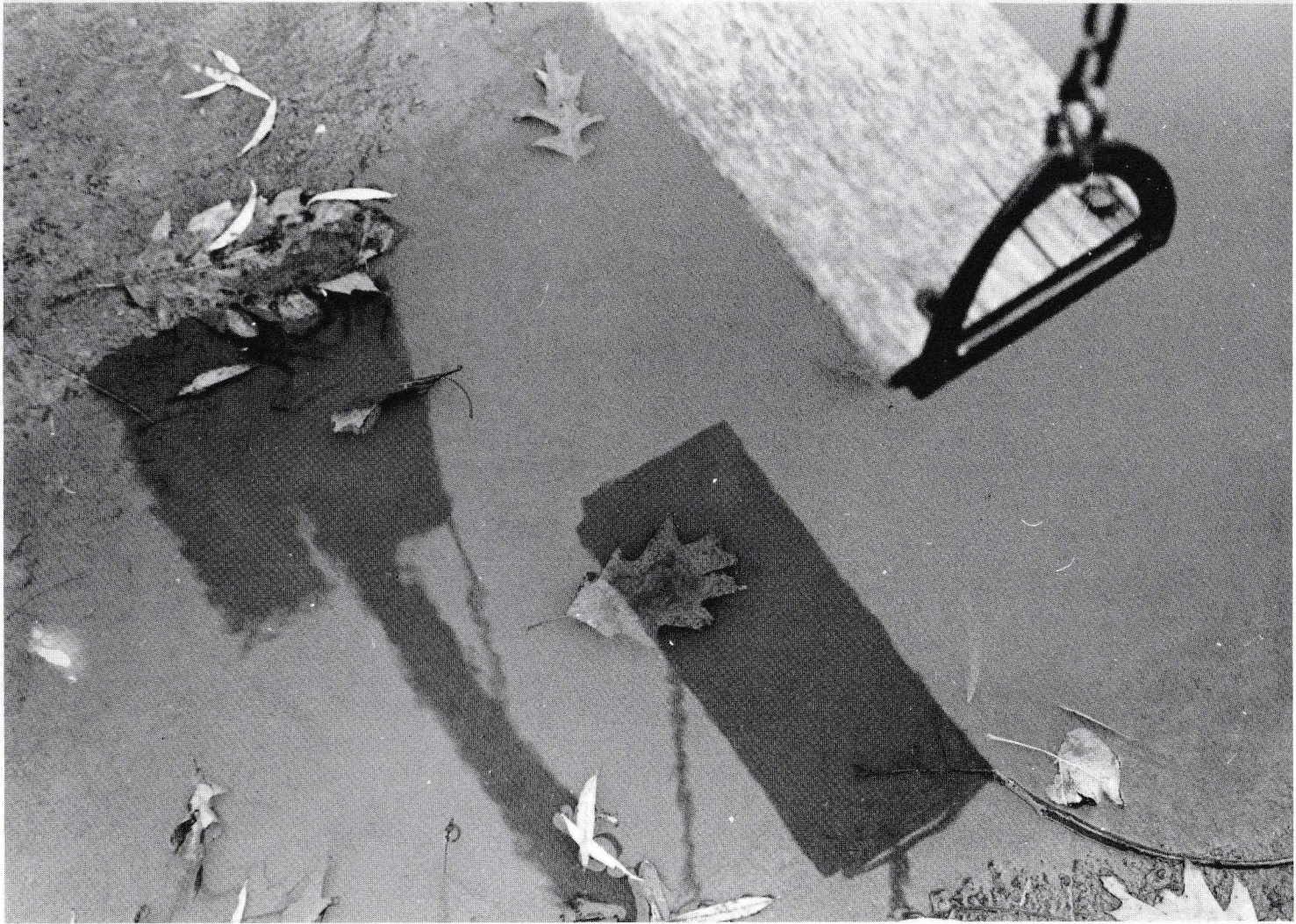
He is picking her up at 8:00. She lays her black velvet dress on the bed, cuts her toenails straight across, and paints them rose. She smooths face cream on her even skin and places body lotion by the tub. She slowly walks into the bathroom and rubs the steam from the mirror. She forces herself to touch the reflection of the scar. She had a mastectomy, the void is staring her in the face. She can feel her heart pounding in her toes, fingertips, and ear lobes. She looks at the bikini thrown on the floor in the corner. She throws up in the sink and decides to fill her life with work.

### ***Lost***

Mother slowly loads our car with stuffed suitcases.  
Father's car is gone.  
I stand paralyzed in my front yard filled with furniture.  
Light-blue Chinese silk loveseat,  
The sun reflecting off gold-leafing in the glass dining-room table.  
My father's leather and wood colonial chair.  
The dog chews on the balcony of my dollhouse.  
Our neighbors peer out their windows.  
I think back to an abandoned shop.  
Inside the dirty display windows are two antique mannequins of little girls with short strawberry-blond hair and porcelain white faces.  
One is missing an arm;  
the other, naked and scratched.  
Both have painted sparkles in their eyes, and never-ending smiles.

### ***Blanche***

She gives me a piece of moist, raisiny poorman's cake  
and tells me to relax.  
We watch T.V. with no sound on.  
Plastic red flower arrangements.  
A gold unicorn clock.  
A picture of Jesus that changes into a picture of the Last Supper.  
She just got home from K-Mart,  
the roads by the mall confuse her.  
She protests that the only thing she does wrong in life is smoke.  
I tell her its time for me to go but I'll be back.  
I enter my house,  
Pure white walls, high ceilings, and smooth-rounded surfaces  
I think about my social and political philosophy class,  
about the under-nourished dog next door.  
I sneak him a piece of left-over steak.  
I think, how I would love to be Blanche.



**Jim Dee**

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## Steve Bachman

### *Overview*

Dot on a map  
Off route 364.  
Too remote  
To be out of the way.

A bar at the end of Chestnut Street,  
Rolling Rock and 12-Horse Ale on tap.  
In the back corner,  
Two men drag on cigarettes,  
Talking about the new barmaid.

Animal rituals dance in their glossy pupils.  
And they wait outside for her,  
In the dark parking lot.

Her screams bouncing off the pavement,  
Up in the air,  
And out  
Endlessly off the map.

### *Sleep*

Look around,  
Tired little town,  
Tired as sleep slides slowly in.  
Notify your next of kin,  
If one can be found.

Listen to the tired old men  
Who sit and drink beer at the Three Deuces  
Making excuses and talking about 1961  
When the basketball team  
Was the best in the state.

See all your tired worn buildings  
Sitting in rows,  
And all the smashed windows  
Grimace in disgust  
At the life they've lost  
And the cracks they've gained.

Feel the tired grey sky  
Brush over your treetops  
Past the donut shop,  
Where the cops just sit  
Because no one's around to cause trouble.

Smell the acrid coal dust  
As it hangs in empty lightless shafts.  
Taste the raped and soured earth  
That chokes and yellows all the grass.  
Wait for tumbleweeds to roll  
And tell you sleep has come at last.

**Wendi Harvey**

### *Children at Play*

We took our shoes off and touched the cold grassy ground.  
As we walked backward around the grave  
we laughed,  
chanted,  
and fell silent.

We swayed back and forth while touching palms over the  
gravestone. There was a cool breeze blowing past  
trees,  
dead trees  
with no leaves.

10 We spun around, around, and around while looking up  
at the stars.  
Then we sat down on the magical earth which was no  
longer dead.  
There were ancient bones moving beneath us as  
we jumped,  
screamed, and  
started to run.

Laughter echoed throughout the graveyard as corpses  
surrounded us.  
“We’re here,”  
they said.  
We fell to the ground convulsed in laughter.

### *Soul Tree*

She said she has found her soul tree;  
A strength which houses her reborn soul.  
I wondered — is there a tree for me?  
Is there a tree which has been hacked at  
And burned down which can grow again?

### *The Church*

You are an erect configuration  
for prayer, forgiveness, and conformation.  
No one gives you credit for the comely  
meaning I have found in you. Your lonely  
spirit, hidden beneath the cold  
stone, radiates through like soft rays of gold.  
You are no longer a structure to me.  
You are an idea ready to be  
thought, and an emotion ready to be  
felt. My mind can free you from bloody  
wine, fleshy bread, and helpless baby lamb.  
You can become a house for peace, not sham.  
No need to light candles and count on beads;  
your true and pure meaning needs to be freed.  
You are the center for secret thoughts and  
emotions. I can not understand  
the organ and statues which falsify  
your meaning. I do not know why  
they believe in the transubstantiation;  
they have lost the right appreciation.

## *No One Notices*

Her scrawny body is covered with rags.  
The soiled purple polyester dress  
and orange sweater are gifts from the garbage.  
Appearance doesn't matter anyway.

Orphaned by a vagrant mother, she's been  
alone since she was four. Now she's nine.  
Henry, who was her mother's friend, "protects"  
her most of the time when he's not drinking.

She has a secret friend whose name is Don.  
Don smiles when he talks to her — she likes that.  
When he touches her she's afraid, but he  
smiles and tells her "that's what secret friends do."

She stirs from her spot on the concrete but  
then lies back down; she has nowhere to go.  
Small hands grasping at the vast world in front  
of them but never reaching it — never.

The foul stench rises from a corner of  
the dark, trash-filled deadend street. This is the  
poverty-stricken part of the city.  
Things happen here and no one notices.

## **Melanie Kutz**

### *Crying Days*

Crying days  
find their way  
more often than they did.  
On numbing days you called "sedate,"  
I'd lie watching wooden blades  
of ceiling fans  
create a whole  
and gain the hope that separate things  
can mean something.

### *A Meeting with my Father* 11

Sun-checkered hair from kitchen blinds  
You say you never left  
Hours, tears, and words are shed  
My energy is spent.  
And I, alone, compose my hands  
My eyes, my heart, my head.  
You lie down to catch your breath  
When all the words were said.

**Joe Barberio**

**1914**

The wind wept today,  
And the sun bled  
Orange-yellow gumdrops  
Right down our mountain sides  
And through our lush  
Spearmint knolls and glades.  
The trees converse  
Amongst one another  
Only to be interrupted  
By the insistent buzz  
Of the telegraph wires.  
It's hard to tell the difference  
Between the canals and the trenches  
After a rainstorm.  
Both look like  
Cloudy dark veins  
Criss-crossing our horizon.

12

**Colette Elick**

**Trapped**



**Jim Dee**

**The Unan**

Miss Rose, look  
looked out thro  
and said, "Can  
what is softer th

I did not unders  
but she must ha  
was raising my  
though I was ju

to catch floating  
of things in the  
She stopped my  
and I had no an

"The way I see i  
feathers are soft  
But then I notice  
that this really u

"Feathers aren't  
from our good f  
Sure, they'll help  
at the end of an

but, soft? No, no  
They're not soft  
I said, "Hey, Mi  
what about rose

Why, if someone  
from an airplane  
a big bowl of so  
and say I get to

**Jim Dee**

***The Unanswered Flower***

Miss Rose, looking weary,  
looked out through the sill  
and said, "Can anyone tell me  
what is softer than silk?"

I did not understand,  
but she must have thought I  
was raising my hand,  
though I was just trying

to catch floating pieces  
of things in the air.  
She stopped my daydream  
and I had no answer.

"The way I see it, Miss Rose,  
feathers are softer."  
But then I noticed  
that this really upset her.

"Feathers aren't that soft  
from our good friend, the sparrow.  
Sure, they'll help out with loft  
at the end of an arrow,

but, soft? No, not those.  
They're not soft at all."  
I said, "Hey, Miss Rose,  
what about rose petals?"

Why, if someone pushed me  
from an airplane into  
a big bowl of something,  
and say I get to choose

either a bowl of silk dresses  
or a bowl of rose petals,  
the bowl I would choose is  
the bowl of rose petals."

My mind landed nicely,  
and Miss Rose liked my fall,  
but I was enticed  
by the thought of it all.

The bowl has to be  
miles deep when I land.  
I'm falling and watching  
the sky as I descend.

Red circles fly upwards  
and, I don't know why,  
but miles into the roses,  
I can still see the sky.

I mean, if I was really  
falling into this mess,  
I suppose I'd be buried  
in this bowl of red petals.

But, again I awoke  
from my red fantasy.  
I looked up and spoke  
to Miss Rose from my seat.

As she stared out the sill,  
I said to Miss Rose,  
"Tell us which bowlfull  
— if you had to choose."

"Rose petals or silk? Well,  
they're every girl's dream."  
She gently smiled  
as she looked down at me.

"I'll take roses or silk,  
or, sometimes, picklejuice.  
Sometimes even milk!"  
All of the kids cried "Ooooooh."

But then, they all  
began to say  
what they would fall  
into from an airplane.

A romantic said "love,"  
and most boys said "pillows,"  
but one wanted to dive  
through a tower of Jello.

"I'll start at the top  
and eat my way out!"  
But Miss Rose said, "That's not  
what my question's about."

"The question's about silk,  
and what could be softer."  
But Miss Rose started to wilt  
like an unanswered flower.

**Jim Dee**

***A Hare's Defense***

*(stuffed rabbits are better than stuffed bears)*

Please love Jaques.  
Confide in the rabbit.  
Cry on this animal.  
For, who will listen better?  
Whose ears are better than a rabbit's?

In a moment of need, would  
some bear, some mighty bear, any mighty bear,  
any large, carnivorous man-killer,  
care about your inner feelings?

14 Does a bear, a rugged, brutal bear,  
show compassion as he tears  
raw flesh from his prey?

Is a bear, any bear,  
any terrible bear, ever there, for you  
when you truly need an animal's advice?

A black bear,  
somewhere,  
grips and tears,  
a fish's body apart with white fangs.  
And, over there, another bear,  
another black bear,  
murders three vacationing campers.  
A mother, father, and child are dead.  
They'll never return to their home,  
their family, their friends, their neighbors,  
their yard, their garden,

where

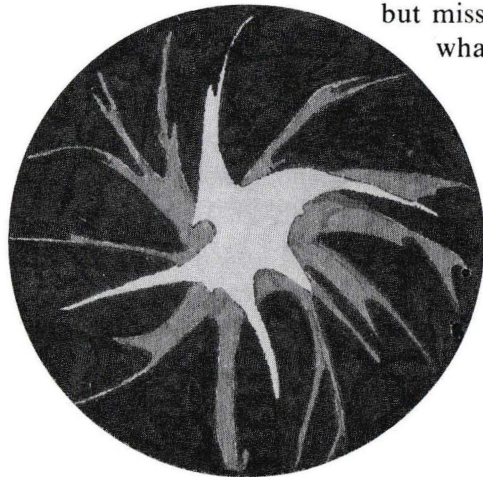
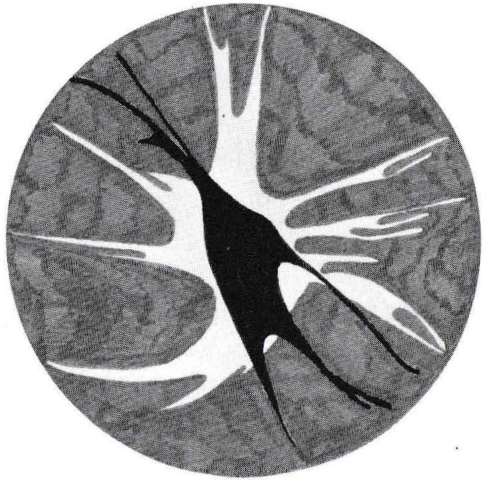
gentle rabbits nibble sparingly at a few leaves  
Gentle white rabbits,  
eyes red with love ready to give  
to anyone who'll hold and caress —  
Big ears to listen  
to anyone who'll tell —  
Twitching noses, to amuse,  
when anyone is down —  
Rear paws, just powerful enough  
to turn any mood into happiness —  
A sense of wisdom, peace, comfort, rebirth,  
that is only truly found in a rabbit.



**Kathy Harris**

***Identity***

My father always says  
"Tell them who you are."  
Not my name, but who I am.  
I'm his and her daughter  
Her and her and his niece  
I'm her and his and his sister  
I'm his mother  
No one's girlfriend  
Their friend  
Their co-worker  
Their unqualified love counselor  
Their listener  
but my nothing.  
Identity:  
all those things  
but missing one thing —  
what about me?



## Rob Hermanofski

### *Personal Struggle*

*The clock on the wall reads 8:01 a.m.*

Dr. Walters is expounding profusely on the importance of the *Iliad* to all subsequent history. As his monotone voice drones on, every part of my body seems to be getting heavier. I struggle to keep myself conscious enough to take notes. The good doctor continues to spew forth archaic knowledge for forty-five minutes.

*The clock on the wall reads 8:14 a.m.*

24 I can't believe we have thirty-six minutes to go! This class, once an opportunity for furthering my education, has become a personal struggle: it's me versus Dr. Walters. He attacks me with his vast repository of literary expertise, trying to crush me beneath its weight, while I'm fighting to keep my sanity and my consciousness through all as I write down or absorb enough of this bombardment to fire it back at him and pass his tests. It seems to be a losing battle.

*The watch on my wrist says 3:24 p.m.*

Even though it's below freezing, I'm sweating. Go figure. I've got . . . let's see . . . about forty snowballs here. More than enough to bury Bobby Williams. Come on out, Bobby. We'll see who's tough now, pal. Just you and me. No Jimmy Austin or Mike Everett to triple team me this time. Here he comes, around the corner — BAM! Direct hit! Uh-oh, Jimmy and Mike *are*

*here* . . . They have to make their snowballs, but there's three of them, and Mike's a pitcher, too . . . Can't keep up . . . They hit my pile of snowballs, and most of them are wrecked . . . They're burying me . . .

*The clock on the wall reads 8:22 a.m.*

I've come to a conclusion: Dr. Walters is an evil wizard. As he attacks me with his arcane scholarly incantations, he actually slows time to make it even more punishing. I feel myself drowning in his sea of words. The deluge weighs down on me like a dentist's lead apron. I'm suffocating under its weight. The air is thick with it; it's as if I were underwater. My head spins, my thoughts wander . . .

*The watch on the blanket reads 11:28 a.m.*

Mommy and Daddy are asleep. Whenever we come here, they rub goo on each other and go to sleep. I just filled my bucket with sand and flipped it over, but it didn't stand up like it did for that boy by the lifeguard. Maybe I should use sand like his. Look at the lifeguard, with all the girls around him. I never want to be a lifeguard. I put this dark, wet sand in my bucket and flip it over. Yep, that did it. It's neat how that water comes up and goes away. I'm going to try and catch it. It moves fast. I grab it, but it gets away. Oops, I dropped my bucket and the water is taking it away! I have to get it, or

**Jim Dee**

## ***Sex at the Botanical Gardens***

### **Philodendros**

**W**e did it on a yucca. The pointy leaves made it that much better. "Here you go," I said. "This is my heart." I handed her a philodendron leaf and she took me down again. That time we landed on a feather bed of portulaca. "Aren't you afraid of mites or something?" I asked, but then withdrew, for she was a native to flowerbeds. I placed a red pansy on her chest.

This was a wondrous place for us, be our relationship annual or perennial. Spring always has been, here. We decided to walk past the new terrarium hybrids in the greenhouse down the path. They installed new doors this year, bigger than last year's. Large green letters span the doorway, "H-E-R-B-A-R-I-U-M."

Phil was inside. He was transferred from the orchard division — probably because of his talkativeness; a true reject from some overly-dramatic Shakespeare company. As we snuck through the door, he was saying, "See, there is an art in raising the shrubbery — and the vegetables too, for that matter." He snipped a brown stem from a fern, stood erect, focused on a point near the skylight, thrust his clippers into the air and exclaimed, "I am an artist; I am an Horticulturist!" He mumbled on as he left the room.

She mocked him with a giggle, "I'll now have you in

an Hollyhock patch." She was kidding; we never do it in the perennial section, though the thought of frolicking through chrysanthemums, primrose and irises is arousing. But, it's really kind of open here. They like to keep the air circulating — it's good for the flowers.

### **Paeonia**

Well, we did lose control one time in a bed of peonies and foxglove — kind of an interesting story, really, because we almost got caught. The patch here is bountiful — two or three hundred plants, all about four feet tall, all in full bloom. They say no one ever forgets the fragrance of a good peony. We just kept rolling. Everytime I rolled onto my back, I could see those flowers, and get a deep, fresh smell. So much red and pink; it was almost as if we weren't rolling, but the flowers were spinning around us — out of control.

The chrysanthemums were in full bloom. "Aren't they pretty?" she said.

"Yes, and yet cousin to common daisies. Would you like one?" I looked around (in case she said yes) to see if anyone was near.

"I'm no common-type," she muttered. "Give me roses and pretty flowers."

**Shelley Freeman**

***A Crown For Mother***

18

**F**rom the tree in the Ross Street back forty  
I could hear mother calling me for lunch  
or school or dinner; her voice does not sing  
to me, but in the silence sounds heady  
the way in the still of Houston's morning,  
they must have felt when Apollo was launched.  
From here I can see the planet revolve  
around the sun, and the house on Ross Street  
is distant, and my mother's voice, heartbeat,  
breath all quicken when I do not answer;  
she waits on the porch with her wooden spoon.  
The branch the fat boy broke, the one I loved  
to sit on, scratches my face here and there;  
July, '69. Armstrong walks the moon.

**T**hat same day when Armstrong walked on the moon  
I wanted to be an astronaut, fly  
over the Ross Street back forty to see  
if I could pick out my house or mother  
clutching her wooden spoon, stained from other  
lunches from days when she didn't call me  
home to see something amazing, but just  
for lunch, a hot bowl of spaghettios  
to burn the roof of my mouth, send tingles  
to my belly and make it round with heat.  
My tongue remembers that fleshy feeling.  
After, I'd pound the screen door open wide  
(she hated that, always asking me why  
I made a racket. I said, "I'm a rocket!")

**S**he said, "You're a rocket to Mars, honey,")  
and out I went up past the broken limb,  
and let the sun pass through the leaves, my eyes  
shut, my arms out like wings to help me fly  
down to the tracks where we placed our pennies  
to be flattened, filled mason jars with fireflies,  
and were afraid that the bats would dip down,  
land on our heads and take us far away.  
The river moved slowly in the sunlight,  
and I could see its shallow dirt bottom  
and levee even with my eyes closed tight.  
I float down from Tunkhannock to autumn  
and back to school; I am still the smallest.  
That summer, the others grew large with breasts.

Those girls grew breasts, and on my next birthday mother gave me bras. "These are training bras," she said, "for when you grow up, or sooner." The other girls laughed, Joanne the loudest. Years later, I came back with breasts and hips too big, like my mother's, like her mother's. Our house is twelve studio apartments now; the tall oaks are gone, and smooth sidewalks take their place, not cracked and uneven slate. Absent, too, is all that talk, that girl's game of breaking mother's back. And no children, no sounds; just the cool, round chestnuts remain. I could not play that game (not out of choice) because I was scared of what could happen.

I was scared of what could happen and did: mother in bed for weeks, months, or longer. The other girls jumped with both feet landing in the soft grass between the cracks. My heart pounded when they did that, afraid that God would mix us up and blame me for my part in the game. I knew I did not belong. That same summer, we went to the beach where mother shopped for hamburgers to cook out on the grill the way we like them, like black buttons with red centers. We sang David to sleep and listened to his breathing, asked to make s'mores and stay up late to play hearts. She shoots the moon almost right away.

Right away, she shoots the moon, laying down seven red hearts. We never had a chance. We sleep and I dream she is the black queen swimming alongside me in the ocean out past the place where the stiff undertow takes you, where your feet don't touch the bottom and jump back at you because of seaweed, crabs or something worse, something more scary. I am a good swimmer like my mother. We roll on our backs so the sea takes us wherever it wants; I keep my eye fixed on our house. We are at a safe distance, not too close and not too far. It's always better to have the queen than not to have it.

It's better to have the queen than not know who does. It takes worry out of the game. I dream I wake up and she is standing by my bed in her flannel pajamas, her cold cream mask like a light or a moon. Late, the next morning we packed up the things we brought from home; I fought for the front seat and won. I ask if she came to my room the night before or if it was a dream. She said she didn't know my dreams, only what I liked for breakfast and horses. That night I dreamed that she was a seagull flying past me to somewhere quiet and pretty a long way from the Ross Street back forty.

20



**Wendi Harvey**

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**R.G. Haywood**

***Body and Soul***

Body  
and soul  
are twisted,  
rolled up  
like dirty laundry,  
pressed into  
obedience.  
Droplets fall,  
blood red  
and thick.  
Settling,  
to be licked up  
later,  
like cream.

***The Umbrella is Mightier  
than the Mushroom***

I killed a mushroom today.  
It lasted only two swipes.  
Just two mighty swings  
and the thing was uprooted,  
broken beyond repair —  
or replanting.  
I looked at the mangled form,  
the mushroom lay dead,  
and I wondered slyly,  
what fun I would have  
if, next time, I had a bat.

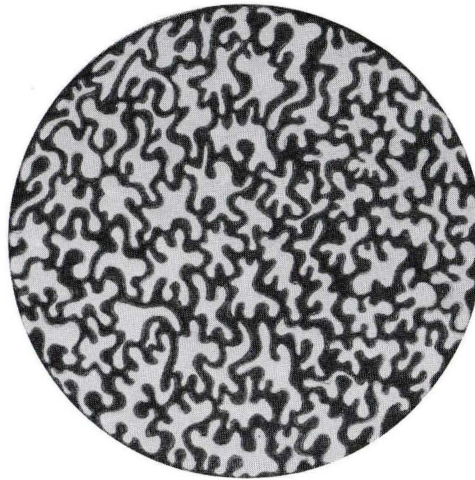
***The feeling envelopes***

The feeling envelopes  
As a cloud, soft and gentle;  
But it soon turns to hands,  
They caress the smooth skin  
And then tighten  
To strangle out breath and life.

**Sonia Ramirez**

*my eyes burn*

my eyes burn from the heat  
emitted off your body . . .  
. . . created by her.



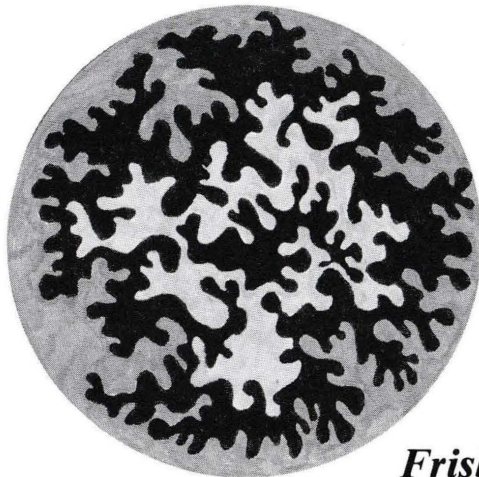
**Nadine Turczak**

*What is here today*

What is here today  
will probably be gone tomorrow.  
What is there tomorrow  
should probably have been here  
yesterday.



22



*Frisbee Designs: Craig K. Larimer*



ay  
row.  
here

Daddy will be mad. The water is deep, but I have to get the bucket. The waves are big and nasty out here. It's hard to stand. Oh no — a wave made me fall! The water all went over me! Help! When I yell, water gets in my mouth. It's salty and yucky and I can't breathe! Mommy!

*The clock on the wall reads 8:31 a.m.*

No, damnit! I won't let him beat me! I've made it through much worse. When I get a brief respite from note taking, I stab myself in the thigh with my pen. I'll do whatever it takes to shake off the sleep curse that's been placed on me. He's powerful, and he's tough, but by God I'm tougher! Not only am I going to get through this class, but I'm going to labor day and night to ace his test and get an A in the course! The enchanter's efforts have borne in me a determination to fight! Take that, evil sorceror!

*The clock on the wall says 4:31 p.m.*

What's going on it's all getting smaller, tighter, squeezing, it hurts, I'm moving, being squeezed, and pushed, it hurts, it's cold, where am I, what just happened, the warm, soft wet is gone, it's cold, and dry and light and scary, help, AAAAAAAAAAUGH

"Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaugh!"

"It's a boy, Mrs. Jenkins."

*The clock on the wall reads 8:38 a.m.*

I'm not going to make it. This is no evil wizard I'm facing — its Satan himself! He's destroying my will — I can't keep my eyes open. I can't concentrate — I don't know where my thoughts just were. It must have been a vision sent to distract me. There's no way I can conquer the Prince of Darkness on five hours' sleep. Even if I'd had breakfast this morning, I don't think I could defeat Lucifer on his own terms. Oh well, at least I'll go down fighting . . .

*The clock on the wall reads 8:45 a.m.*

8:45! I only have five minutes to go! I did it! I knew I could do it! After all, this is nothing compared to what I've been through before. I walked into Hell and kicked Satan's ass! Well, not exactly, but wait 'til that test! I'll get an A+ and hurl him back into the abyss from whence he came! Ha, ha, ha!

*The clock on the wall reads 8:51 a.m.*

I'm outta here! I feel like a new man! Ready to take on the world! I stroll — no, I float — to Dr. Lee's class . . . Oh dear God help me. Dr. Lee makes Walters look like the Human Dynamo! She's the Lecturer of the Living Dead! Well, let her hit me with her worst. I can handle it, I hope . . .

*The clock on the wall reads 9:01 a.m.*

**Rob Hermanofski**

***Night Life***

I stalk:

Gliding through the night  
In search of prey  
Bloodlust pounds in my head —  
I feel, hear, smell, see, taste the hunger.

I watch:

I see them scurry through the darkness  
Oblivious to their doom, yet  
Expecting it all the same.  
I smell their fear, thick and sweet.

26 I pounce:

Claws pull at soft clothing and softer flesh,  
Teeth flash before sinking into sweet warmth.  
I eat their flesh, drink their blood, gnaw their bones,  
Leaving little trace of our exchange.

I leave:

Sated, I glide through the city  
Finding a path through the shadows.  
Tired, the moon setting, I become a man once more  
Until the moon and the night let me live again.

**Colette Elick**

***The Two Virgins***



**Erik**

***Simon***

Find bl  
Question  
Sequest  
Labasts

In hurst  
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Seek, se  
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This is t  
See scap  
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Simon,  
In sally  
Crunchy

Taste an  
Taste an

## Erik Nelson

### *Simon Djubaits*

Find blank verse of mandibles  
Question whereabouts to origins of DuBophreses  
Sequester to Devolution, Simon Djubaits  
Labastscarst in Vallemorth Dock Brigmore.

In hurst of Hasty Hastings  
Too too, to too  
In dots Vallegmorgth  
Bring six Brigneths to vignets of dawn.

Seek, seeker, seeking Zouixy Seepers  
Sip soup sin some soundry blackits morb.

This is the day, black as it is  
See scapegoats treading dawnhills of cloudy, frosty figits.  
With bootheels and batwings, Simon Djubaits.

Simon, sink, sop-sope, sa . . . saw . . . sas . . . ses . . .  
In sallyhoo of redish hairy turtle chips  
Crunchy, chrunching, crunch, crungies, crunchable.

Taste and see, Simon Djubaits  
Taste and see.

### *Tree*

Longing for the sunshine,  
"Please fall upon my leaves."  
This lovely tree, multi-facets  
Glimmers as she breathes.

See my leaves, don't pass them by  
But this tree is alone  
In my field under my sky  
How could I pass them by?

Little does she know  
I've studied every petal of the flower  
Every branch of this tree falls victim to my scrupulous eye.

Now rhythm, call your lover!  
Back to my arms she flies.

**Ralph W. Middaugh, Jr.**

**Poem # $\sqrt{10}$**

I hear a voice whispering,  
a soft, feminine contralto in my ear:

**You're Free, Go, Run!**

Her clear, sweet voice  
strokes my mind into belief.  
I reach to her serenade:

**Go, You're Free, Run!**

I run, run fast, faster,  
toward where the door was —  
should be.

28 Her soft whisper resounding:  
**Run, Go, You're Free!**

I believe in her words fully,  
to the linear depths of my soul;

Until the cold, parallel, iron bars  
force the air from my lungs,  
smash my ribs and face.

Feeling the warm fluid trail from  
my nose,  
I ask the angular walls  
and her gentle voice:

**Why?**

Laughter answers me,  
cold and distant.

Again I ask:

**Why? . . . You Lied?**

Her laughter echoes,  
first in one ear, then the other,  
switching back and forth,  
feverishly.

She whispers her answer in both ears  
softly and sweetly:

**Fool!**

***Pour Ma Cousine***

Sing while I sleep  
Tell me you love me . . .  
Even if you don't.

You don't have to,  
but someone must.

Sing me a song of Love . . .  
Of Life . . .  
Of Death . . .

They're all equal,  
whether you believe them or not.

Sing and we'll forget:  
Forget who you are,  
Forget who I am,  
Forget your Mother and  
my Father,  
And what they'll say when  
they know  
Forget what we have in  
common,  
And our differences.

Sing and I will dream  
I always do  
(I'm the Dreamer, you're  
the Cynic.  
You always find the Darkside  
in every full moon.)  
And you can remind me why  
I shouldn't.  
Recite the Laws of Man and God,  
I'll ignore them out of habit.

## Michele Broton

### *Father*

I carry you,  
Christian cross  
burden  
in my arms.

Christ spread  
his arms in  
sacrifice.  
You crossed  
yours  
to me.

They lay on  
your chest,  
a cathedral cross,  
anointed and holy.

The wood of  
Christ's cross  
tortured him,  
and took  
him up.  
Yours took you  
down  
under the dirt.

Tucked away  
like the  
Sacrament  
you lay in  
satin stillness.

On the third day,  
he rose again . . .  
I've waited five  
months, and  
my faith is  
beginning to shake.

### *Red*

"Hey, sleepyhead, wake up!" Ted put his hand on the girl's hip and shook her gently, but she didn't stir. "OK, I'll get a shower, but you'd better be up by the time I get out or else."

Getting out of bed, Ted went to his overnight bag and removed the blue terry-cloth robe and a clean pair of underwear. His other necessities, including his shaving kit, were already in the bathroom.

As he passed the bed, he took another look at the supine form of the girl he'd spent the night with and again marveled at her beauty. She looked to be about twenty, with long red hair that reached halfway down her back. She was the personification of beauty in Ted's eyes, possessing the bland good looks of a model.

But it was her eyes that affected him the most. They were green, not the usual green that is mixed with brown and blue, but a pure, clear green. Ted thought they looked like cat's eyes; that she was his cat. She'd liked that and pretended to attack him with her "claws."

He started to ask her if she wanted him to order room service, but as he couldn't remember her name, he decided against it.

Ted went into the bathroom and turned on the water for his shower. He turned it on as hot as he could and waited until the steam was pouring from the shower before stepping under the stream of water. When the hot water hit him, he felt the tense muscles in the middle of his back begin to release themselves and gave himself over to the feeling of contentment.

As his body relaxed, he thought again of the girl.

*Ted decided he liked "Heart and Soul" because of the atmosphere. It had that susky aura to it that reminded*

him of a 40's movie.

*The girl had been sitting at the bar, all alone. The minute he saw her, he knew he had to have her. Walking through the wall of people, Ted felt as if he were moving in slow motion, but his look never strayed from her face, her eyes.*

*She'd laughed at him at first, softly and without making a scene, but she'd laughed. She thought it funny that an overweight, middle-aged businessman wanted to be with her. This had happened to Ted before, and he knew just which buttons to push to make her go with him. With this girl, the button was a little poetic talk and the hint that he was very wealthy. They left the bar together within an hour after their first introduction.*

"Hey, are you awake yet? Do you want me to order room service?" Ted stood naked and damp in the bathroom doorway and called to the girl who still lay in the same position as before.

30 Returning to the bathroom, Ted stood before the sink and looked at himself in the mirror. Not entirely displeased with what he saw, Ted wet his comb and began to fix his black hair.

*The girl had enjoyed running her fingers through his hair as they made love. As her excitement grew, her grip would tighten until she was nearly pulling the hair from his head.*

Back in the room, Ted began to dress, all the while his eyes focused on the girl's body. He saw nothing but the red of her hair, the red of her lips, the red of her nails, the red of her throat . . .

*Her lipstick had smeared as they kissed passionately, and he had laughed at her. He thought she looked like a little girl with a juice mustache. She'd liked that role too, and had pretended to be his little girl sitting on his lap. This game made him nervous, but he played along to make her happy. He always wanted them to be happy.*

He had to leave, but the girl wouldn't wake up.

He leaned over and kissed her gently on the mouth, but she didn't stir.

"Uh, I hate to do this, but I have to leave. I've got a long drive home, and I'll never make it before nighttime if I wait any longer. I had a wonderful time. Maybe I could call you some time?" Ted waited for a moment, hoping for an answer, but none came. Finally he gathered his things and left the hotel.

*She'd been just like all the others in the end. In fact, she was the most evil of them all, she'd actually asked him for money for making love to him. She actually wanted money for what he did to her. That made it easier to let Edward take over. Edward understood that women were treacherous. Ted never understood that. He always wanted to believe that they were nice and loved him. That's why Edward was there, to protect him.*

*Edward made sure that the women Ted was with didn't try to hurt him later. Ted liked that, because it meant that Edward cared about him. But he was never sure what Edward did to the women, and they slept too late for him to ask them. That made him sad, because he was very curious.*

Sarah was hungover. Her best friend had been in town for two weeks, and they'd held a going-away party last night. She'd been drinking vodka tonics and screwdrivers all night.

Opening the door to room 34, she had her cleaning equipment halfway through the door before she realized that there was still someone in the bed.

"Oh, God, I'm sorry, I didn't realize . . . I mean . . ."

Something about the unusual pale tone of the girl's skin made Sarah stop in mid-apology and walk closer to the bed: just close enough that she could see the red, gaping cut in the throat that had long before run out of blood to bleed.

Sarah screamed.

## A Salted Man

### *Ostrich*

She said to me:

I have seen  
witches drinking Pepsi,  
ostriches dancing,  
a black man in a tuxedo pushing  
a shopping cart down the shoulder  
of an interstate highway.

What was in his shopping cart?

She said,

In the baby seat of his cart,  
a smiling poodle in a tuxedo.

A poodle with a tuxedo?

Yes, and a matching top-hat.

He had feathers in his hair,  
come to think of it.

The poodle?

Yes, yes, and the man as well.

What else was in the cart?

They were tiny, but  
there were witches drinking Pepsi,  
and I'm sure I saw  
ostriches dancing in small circles.

Whenever was this?

She paused,

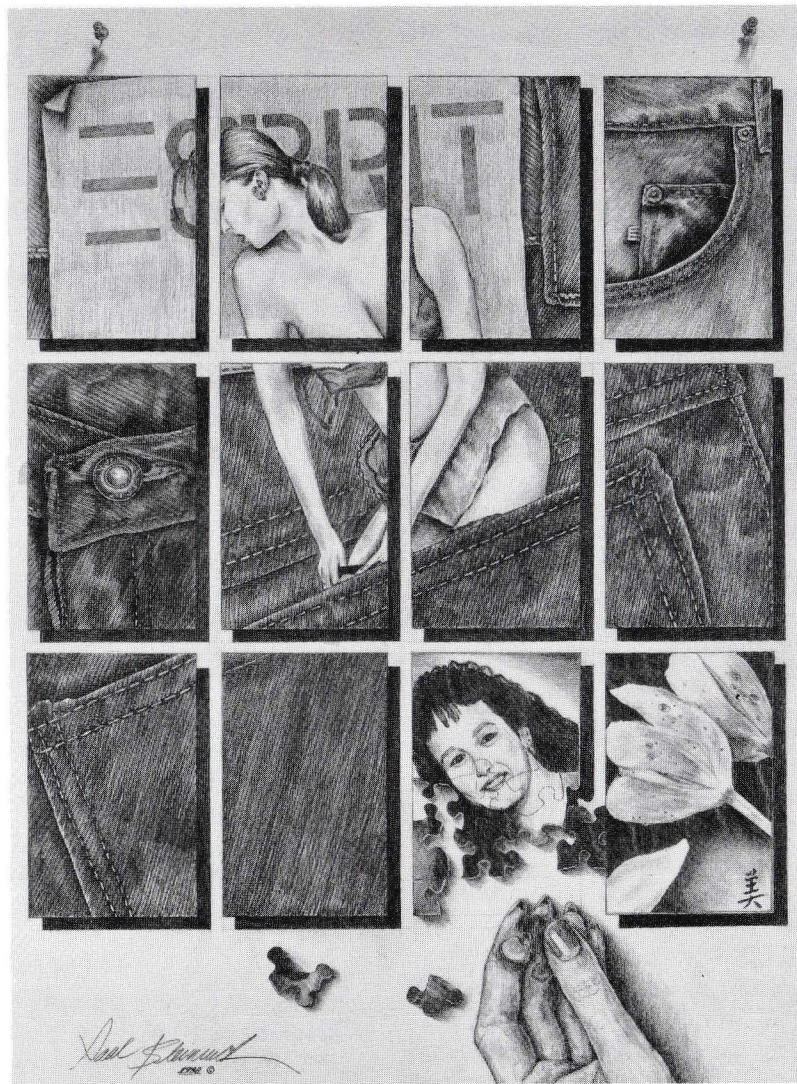
It was  
all in just one moment.

### *If I Could Crunch Myself Open Like a Sunflower Seed, I'd Be Between My Teeth Crunching Open.*

I am eating sunflower seeds.  
They're warped little black and white  
pictures of striped hearts.  
Crunch me open like one between your teeth.  
Expose me.  
Enlarge me.  
See the kind of seedy person  
I really am.  
Develop me into what you will.  
Frame me and hang me on your wall.  
Dust me sometimes.

Paul Steinruck

32



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## Carolyn Swalina

### *The Bee*

I saw a bee  
I had forgotten  
In winter's frost  
A simple thing  
That had not crossed  
My mind  
But here is spring  
And this bee  
I had uncreated  
In my forgetfulness  
How many other things  
Have I forgotten  
And never will remember  
As simple as a bee  
I remember mythology  
The Pegasus  
A winged horse  
But forget the bee  
And in my self's reality  
I can remember the thing  
That never was  
And that which was  
Can't see

### *I Want To Write*

I want to write (to you)  
From this poetic room  
(The mandatory cliché  
Candles and smoke  
Drawing patterns on my walls)  
I want to sing you a dream  
Paint you a universe  
Profess my undying love  
But it's all been done  
Before  
(At least the love part has  
And I haven't the skill  
For the rest)

### *2 AM*

When the snow falls in the daytime  
People bitch about the roads  
And when it falls in the evening  
Kids pour into the streets  
Snowball fights and sleds  
But when the snow starts  
And it's 2 AM  
And you sit at the front window  
Warm coffee steaming the glass  
The snow falls soft  
Enshrouds the cars, the streets  
Crystalline blanket  
Sparkling in the streetlights  
And you walk like a cat through  
the house  
Put the cup down over an ancient  
Counter coffee-ring  
And slide into a jacket  
And out the door  
And let the latch click soft  
The world is new  
At 2 AM  
There are no footprints  
No snow angels  
No fingerprints running across  
car roofs  
Just you  
And the snow  
No sound; All sleep  
Snow gently landing  
Winds raising curtains of glitter  
in porchlights  
And you make the first footprints  
The best snow  
Falls at 2 AM

**Jim Dee**

34



**Amy Braun**

***I Am 'GRUMPY'***

They call me "Grumpy." I know this because I overheard that one girl, the one with the cheesy smile and the cheap perfume who coffees and donuts me every morning, say it once. But she's stupid anyway. I was crossing Main Street at Public Square last week; I saw her talking to some guy in a green Chevy Nova, (flicking her eyelashes kind of like Sophia used to). I saw that same guy talking to another chick last week up the mall. I don't think "Cheesy" sleeps with him or nothing but she wants to. She'd probably do it with him in the back of that

Nova. That's why when I tip her I only leave three cents (with Lincoln's face down); tells her more than if I leave nothing.

That time I heard her say that about me — I mean use it as my name — was last year, six days after Thanksgiving. Told some guy from King's College; I know because I heard him invite her to a party over at "Margarita." He's a football player; I can tell by his shoulders and that goofy look on his face.

Every day I have breakfast at Donut's Delite. The coffee is okay black with half-a-pack of that pink sweetener stuff. I get the honey glazed donut or the chocolate frosted donut or I get Boston Creme sometimes too. I like to eat at least two 'cause then I don't get hungry until three and if I eat then (well for lunch I eat at Mick's Coffee Shop underneath the Sterling Hotel next to that record store with the broken window — they have a different special every day and it is cheap after three), then I don't bother eating dinner. So when I go there I try not to sit in "Cheesy's" half of the counter (sometimes I do just so I can give her the three cents). I usually sit on the other half near the newspaper rack. The donut lady

on that half is called Grace. She don't look religious or act religious but her name is Grace. She just gives me my coffee, doesn't ask how I am (which I don't mind), and gives me whatever donut I ask for usually pretty quick. I tried the apricot jam-filled sugar-topped one once. Yuck.

36 I live up "The Heights." I grew up there except now I live on Hancock street and when I grew up I lived on Northampton. My house is the blue one with the couch on the front stoop. Don't have a dog, but the people who lived there before me had one so there's a fence out front. I just leave it though 'cause it would cost money to knock it down and it doesn't really bother me.

I see "Cheesy" in Boscov's a lot. She's always in the stocking section buying black stockings or in the basement getting an ice cream. Hate how she eats. I watched her once gorge herself on a double scoop chocolate and vanilla cone, smeared it all over her chin.

I know where she lives; been there a couple times. It's that big pink place on River Street. Kinda looks like a giant bottle of Pepto-Bismol was dumped on it; she lives on the fourth floor. See I followed her home; did it carefully though.

I had to get "Cheesy"; I wanted to make her think. I mean what the fuck, calling me "Grumpy"! What does a bony-ankled kid who smokes Chelseas (trying to look sexy) know about working for the union or spending twenty-two Christmases staring at a half-frozen half-cooked turkey, stuffing, peas, cranberry, apple-something t.v. dinner? "Cheesy's" never been married, probably never been laid more than twice even, that little bitch wouldn't know what it's like to wake up after eight years of marriage and find a shopping list (with uh — milk, cinnamon, celery, noodles, and tuna fish on it) and a simple note: "I don't like the way you leave the magazines in the bathroom and your shirts still stink even after I wash them. I'm leaving. I'm sorry, but you never learned what it was that I needed exactly . . . Sophia".

So today I went to her place right after donuts and coffee 'cause I knew she was at work. I shoved cheese (it crumbled all over when I did it) through her mail slot. It was cheddar first. I put some Bleu cheese in there too, and some swiss chunks and two slices of American. I shoved every goddamn moldy piece that I could find in my fridge through that slot. That'll show her.

Whatever is done from  
love always occurs beyond  
good and evil.

—NIETZSCHE

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