

remember

by Ben Bakke

Old man, remember
Warm fingers pressed against your breastbone
Descend into the abyss,
And face your death

Decipher the petroglyphs on the canyon wall
Scream at the monoliths on the valley floor
As they reflect the rejected parts of yourself
You've lost your creativity
We'll have to operate

Breathe, breathe as we probe your ass
For the fragments of petrified shoulds
The buried feelings, hardened with time
And the remnants of messages from long ago
Remember, old man
Remember to remember
And breathe.



Drawing by Maryhelen Brennard

advice

by Arin Thrine

Crying to myself
at bedtime.
Light
from the living room
washing me.
TV noise
bouncing
down
the
hall.
Footsteps...
body seated
next to mine.
Go away.
No,
stay.
Yes,
I will think
of something happy.
Thank you
for the advice
Oh mighty
bringer
of
the pain.

Monotype Collage by Joy O'Brien



changeling

by Jim Beckett

I *hate* my five-iron.

You probably think I'm being irrational—that golf clubs are inanimate. But forged within the gleaming steel shaft of my five-iron is a dark, malevolent force.

There are twelve other clubs in my bag and my five-iron, the Devil incarnate, has earned its role as the thirteenth.

Iron shots require a fragile handshake with Mother Earth and no club challenges this feat better than my five-iron. The little Hellion gouges unsightly gashes in the ground, liberating a few acre-feet of sod as it plows the Earth.

When the golfing Gods are smiling down on me the ball will react to my five-iron's agricultural activities by advancing meekly toward the hole. More often, Mephistopheles sends the innocent ball crashing into a tree where it eventually comes to rest cradled in a cavernous notch of roots; a lie only overcome by the proper application of curses and explosives.

Five is the Archfiend—Diablo—666 in disguise.

As I walk toward the spot where my drive has landed on this warm afternoon, the sun hides behind a cloud and a sudden shadow engulfs me. The freshly gusting wind chills my bones and I feel the gore rising in my gut as I realize what's ahead.

Please, I implore. Not THE FIVE.

But the golfing Gods have apparently stepped out for a beer and left me to face Armageddon alone.

I can feel the scorn from the Prince of Darkness as I pluck it from my bag. I hesitate with the club halfway out. The stiffening headwind bites my face as I ponder whether the deep sand trap guarding the front of the green plunges clear to Hell.

Unable to avoid another battle of wills with Lucifer, I set my feet, flex my knees, and wag my Nemesis a few times at the ball as if to force the possessed Five to prematurely spill its evil.

Summoning all the years of lessons and practice to my rescue, I ease the five-iron away from the ball. My confidence ebbs in the middle of my back swing and I struggle to prevent my doubt from leaking into Satan's handle.

I swing with unusual authority. The long metal shaft sweeps downward until Beelzebub cleaves the Earth and glides through the ball. I hear a distinct “thwack” instead of the dreaded “chink.”

A divot—carved from the ground as if excised by a surgeon's scalpel—lands twenty yards away. Its grassy blades sparkle in the re-emerging sunlight. Looking toward the clearing sky, I spy the ball sailing upward. Soaring toward the parting clouds, it threatens to slip the surly bonds and escape into space.

I'm reluctant to move in the suddenly still air—afraid to jinx the moment. The glow of forgotten hope begins to warm my soul. I feel the unfamiliar ecstasy of golfing rapture nibble at my mind.

I hear the satisfying “plop” as the dimpled white globe merges with the green, leaving a small blemish in the soft, manicured surface. My Titleist bounces twice before rolling into the cup and disappearing from sight.

I whirl around to find my golfing partner.

I shout to my wife, “Did you see that? I think that went in!”

“It did!” she yells back. “Was that an Eagle?”

Satisfied that my rare triumph hasn't gone unnoticed, I slide old number five into the bag for a well-deserved rest. The afternoon sun caresses my cheeks and the aroma of freshly-cut grass tickles my nose as I strut toward the green.

I *love* my five-iron.

...the golfing Gods have apparently stepped out for a beer and left me to face Armageddon alone.



Ceramic by Steve Godel



Ceramics by Brent Roberts

wine and sheets

by Josh Vliek

I am a child at the foot of my father's bed.

My knuckles turn white as I clench the comforter
to slowly pull myself toward him. He is so far away.
He stretches his arms toward me and drags me onto his lap,
knocking over a glass of wine with my feet along the way.
It burns my toes.

Great marbles of sweat spill over his face—
the thick, blistering, malodorous sweat of a leper—
as he smiles and looks past me (not through me)
into a black, bubbling bog called Creation.
His knee is digging into my tailbone.

"I wonder if Nietzsche was right about God," he says.
"Or was God right about Nietzsche?" He closes his eyes and
talks to me about the tragedy of egg yolks and of the featherless comedy
of The Crusades. He points to his cheek and I give him a kiss
The damp stubble scratches my lips.

As I twist the wine-soaked sheets up into a ball with my fingers,
I imagine that my hands are as big as his hands, big enough to twirl
the cosmos around and around with my trigger finger, big enough
to paint watercolors on the canvas of eternity.
His hands smell like cigarettes.

He lifts me up over his head and turns me around
to look at my face, his eyes still closed. My face is his face.
He points to his cheek once again and his head rolls off of his neck
and into the Technicolor brilliance of a rabbit hole.
I have no choice but to follow him.

I am the child at the foot of my father's bed.



Photograph by Ashley C. Spelling

...like machines
programmed to share
the same nothing
with
everybody else.

babylon whispering —a cosmic pickup line

by Aaron Norris

Stuck here, where words are tiny cuts opening
the night sky to reveal the body's secret self.
Sharing the same nothing with everyone else.

Closing the bar at last call like a badly executed
fall from the dark of my bed at night, or worse,
Stuck here where words are tiny cuts opening

our mouths to mime the dull human murmur.
To make sense of it, like machines programmed
to share the same nothing with everyone else.

We are planets of universal sadness falling
from the dark, hurtling earthward like comets.
Or, stuck here, where words are tiny cuts

opening only for sex, drunk in God's own image.
What does this say about the Divine? You ask,
sharing the same body, the same planet, the same

sacred dust with everyone. Waking up sick
with love or lonely because we are not machines.
We don't listen, when words are tiny cuts bleeding
to share the same secret nothing with everyone.



Photograph by Laurie Hammond

revelation

by Carol St. John

Headlines hail from check out stands
Selling the signs of the times.
Glad tidings and rumors of germ wars and plagues,
Conspiracy, prophesy, healings and hauntings,
Nostradamus and Nosferatu

On-line oracles and sages send email
Forwarding missives you can pick with a click
To send love to a friend, save money, save time,
Save the whales, save the world,
Save your soul, send it on.

Tune in to tabloid TV and talk radio
Hear the real story, urban legends, abductions,
Messages from Mary, codes in crop circles
Portents in the planets, agents in black
Ancient scrolls found in jars in the desert
Religion and science now one.

Inquiring minds see the edge of creation
Through Hubble's lens and electron scopes
Gospel truth of galaxies and the gene code
Spiral and helix, far off and within us
Fingerprints of the maker on clay.

Look for a star ship that comes in the clouds
Bringing four aliens of the apocalypse.
Are they down from above or up from below?
It can't be confirmed or denied.

Rapture me up, Scotty, rescue me!
From dark angels doling out present-day plagues
If the truth is out there, when will we see it?
Beginning or end? Honk if you know.

Do you believe?

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** He was Invited...

Poster by Quinn AHN Lucas

call it pathetic

by Mike Jackman



Sculpture by Ryan McCoy

The flashing digital clock lulls me into a slow stupor. It is twelve o'clock forever in this place darkened by blinds during the gray days and lighted with TV at night, and always thick with the spicy tinge of cheap marijuana, the stale reek of dog piss, and the slightly metallic aroma of Milwaukee's Best. Apathy has never seen better days when Pink Floyd crackles on the old home stereo.

This is when I feel most like some forgotten and unpublished Russian novelist's lame and mutated creation, brooding and pondering the inane banalities, like employment, shopping, and waking up at a decent hour, that are required so that we may have the grand chance at savagely sodomizing the American Dream, because it is not enough to voyeuristically watch the American Dream from afar.



I would be a gentleman and kiss the dainty hand of the American Dream and she would smile and giggle because she is not an abstract Horatio Alger theme or some propagandized scheme, but the super sweet and sexy college girl that sways in summer dresses and sings without a care folk songs while you play the banjo, bushy bearded and wild eyed, all aglow with Whiskey Row. Her and I would skip along, like moths that flit and flutter, enamored with the saturnine secrets whispered in our ears by khakied tourists in the day and those drunk with words and booze at night. I would be an epic man for a cause, or idea, or woman, but the American Dream is all three and she likes me, too.

I imagine I won't be so lucky.

I may be doomed to a life of pulsating frustration and severe underemployment, paid for every hour spent in a quick stupor and living in a place where clocks are unset, but when I'm feeling like that failed Russian writer's inept creation I will flee into the night in my fourteen year old Honda and under a flickering dome light scribble absurd thoughts, fantasizing and longing for my American Dream, as Pink Floyd crackles on the tape deck.

I would be an epic man for a cause, or idea, or woman...

housekeeping poems

by Jeanne MacKenzie

1

We vacuum in the same way that we remember:
going around the big pieces of furniture,
avoiding what's underneath,
what's behind.

The dust piles up creating gray clouds of regret,
like unwanted remnants from lives full of fear.

We are a people in need of a good cleaning.

2

I washed the dishes this morning
and thought of you,
the way you are so careful not to break into my
glass of concentration as I live my life around you
and, sometimes, beside you.

You admit you don't think much about things,
yet you understand that I do,
almost all the time.

You look over and see my eyes,
blue looking at the air,
and you become silent in a loving way.
Thank you.

3

I sent the dirty clothes into the wash cycle this morning,
and on through the rinse cycle,
and at last spinning into dampness, but not dripping, cleanliness.

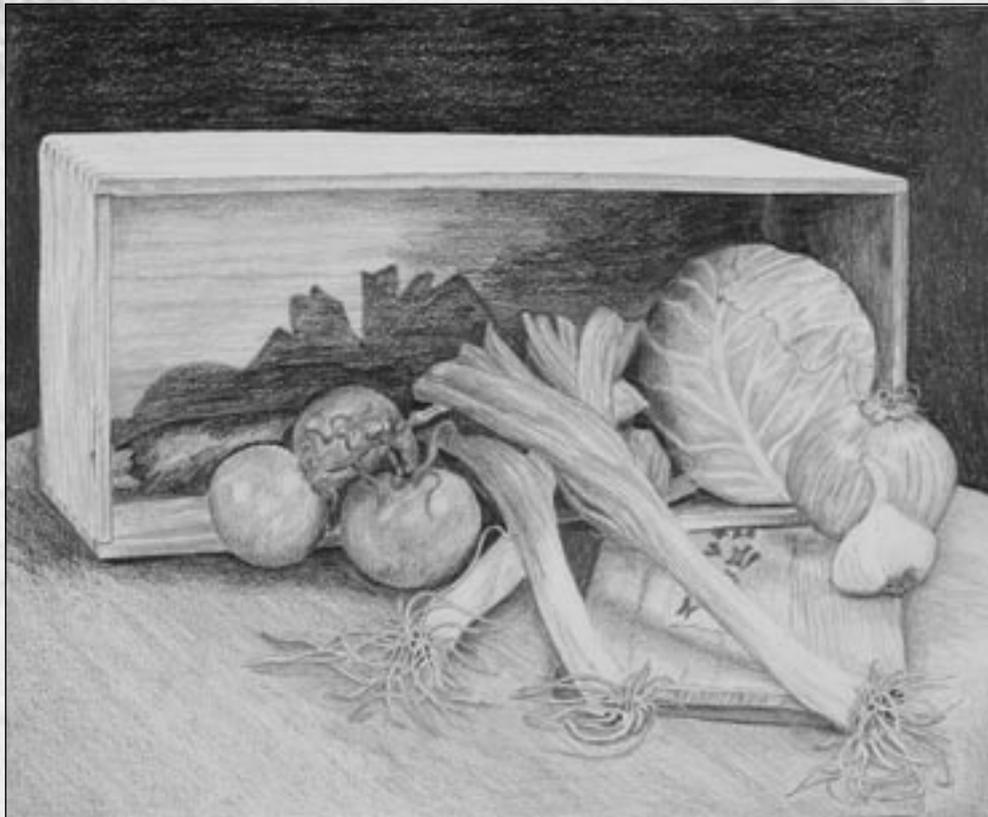
Like dirty laundry,
I cycle, too,
looking for the right soap, the right stain remover,
the right temperature to remove the imperfections.
Predictably, my laundry
becomes dirty all over again
just like my life. Because I keep
looking for solutions that come from a container,
instead of from me.

Digital Illustration by Dorothy Williams



You admit
you don't think
much about things, yet you
understand
that I do,
almost all the time.

Drawing by Paul Esposito



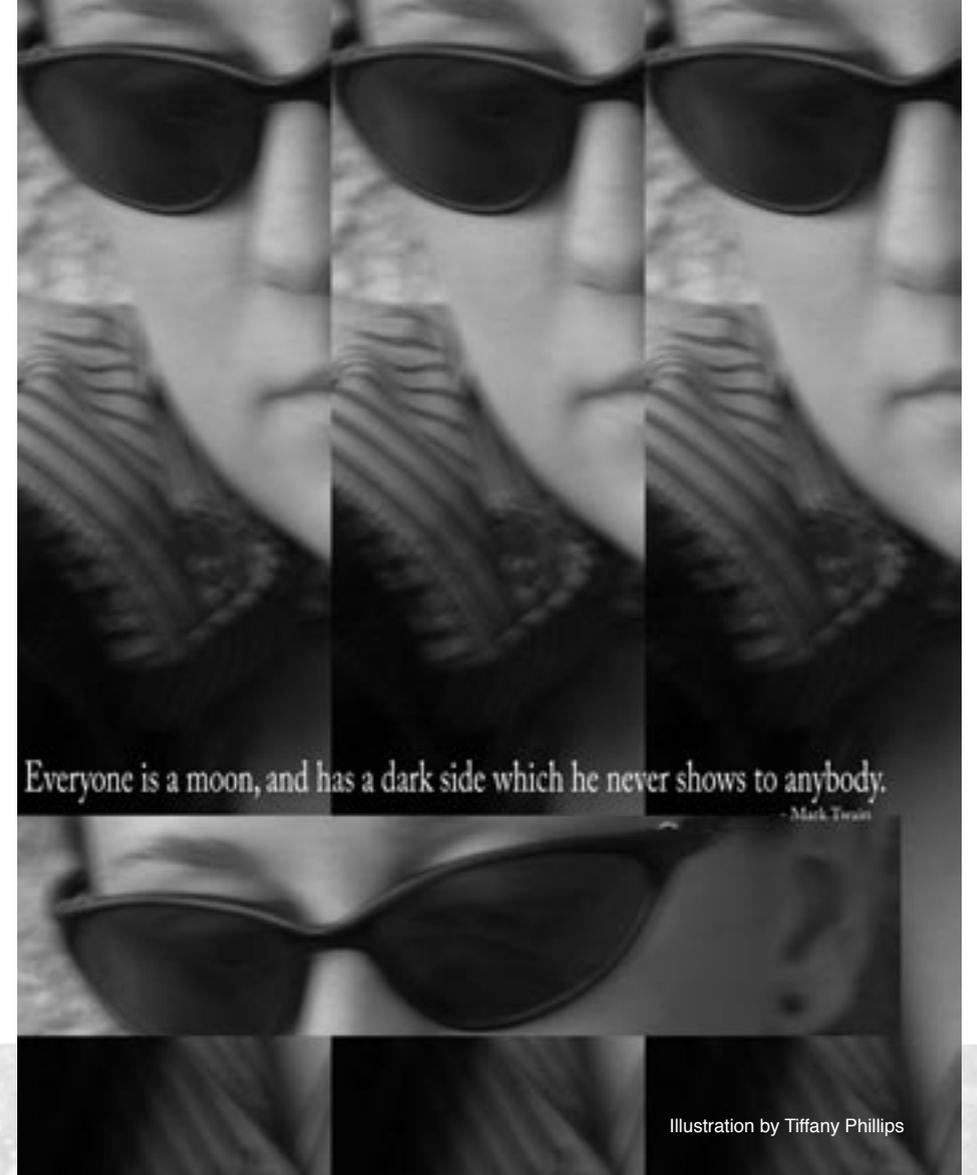


untitled

by CarrieAnne Riley

Go ahead.
Look at me.
Stare if you have to.
Smirk, leer, scoff.
Drop your jaw.
Mutter tales
Of anorexia
Under your breath.
Call me
A worthless tweaker.
Glance
Over me
Through your eyes
And call out
"Original" lines
I've heard
A thousand times.
I am sensitive now.
A bundle
Of nerves,
Hit by air,
Avoiding
Your glare.
Your eyes
Refusing
To peel back skin
And muscle.
Yes, you see me,
But do you see
Me?

Monoprint by Carol Kennedy



Everyone is a moon, and has a dark side which he never shows to anybody.
- Mark Twain

Illustration by Tiffany Phillips

depression

by Carolyn Tucker

What's so bad about it?
It leaves one to
....Ponder
....Reflect
Get inside Oneself
No Drugs
....Withdrawal
Feel, not Feel
Scream, be Still
Process
She turns to the World Changed

rounding the bases

by Joe Pangburn

Baseball is a game, and games are supposed to be fun. People from every age group of our culture and many cultures abroad play forms of baseball to have fun. It is a means of spending a few hours forgetting about everything else, to enjoy a game.

My Baseball Beginnings

I first played little league baseball when I was 8 years old. I was a first baseman and left fielder, and an obvious all around threat. I couldn't tell you how many times I struck out. I have no idea how many errors I committed, nor could I tell you the score of any of the games I played. I can, however, tell you about the game where I hit two homeruns.

I was the lead off hitter that game, and I stepped into that box ready to smack that ball. It was dusk, and the lights at the field were coming on. There was a light wind that kicked up the smell of the dust on the field.

"Make some contact Joey," my coach said. "Put the ball in play." The pitcher wound up, and delivered the ball, and 'woosh!' I swung and missed.

"That's ok Joey, you got this one," called out my mom in the crowd.

I kicked the soft dirt with my little cleats, got back in the box and was ready to go. The pitcher wound up and delivered, 'CRACK.' I hit a ground ball to the shortstop. I took off towards first base, and the shortstop threw the ball past the first baseman. I made the turn and ran towards second base; the first baseman tried to throw me out but overthrew the second baseman and the ball went into the outfield. At that point I made the turn to third and was able to run all the way home.

Now today I know that I reached on an error and scored on another error, but back then, that was a homerun to me.

"Alright Joey," I heard from everyone. I gave everyone a high-five and took my place on the bench.

My next homerun was by no means the result of any errors. It came on my very next at bat. I stood in the box knowing that I could do it again. The pitcher threw me a perfect pitch right over the middle of the plate and I swung at it. 'CRACK!' I drilled that ball way past the left fielder. It wasn't over any fence, because there was no fence, but I still was able to run the bases before the ball was back to the infield.

It was so great! I got the high-fives from my teammates and coaches, and my parents and brothers were cheering me on. I felt like Frank Thomas, my favorite baseball player, he always hit homeruns! I felt like I was on a big league field, listening to 50,000 people cheer me on. That season was so much fun.

The Move To The Manager's Seat

Now, 12 years later, I coach little league baseball. I have been coaching for over four years. I just love seeing these guys coming out, playing the game they love for fun. No million dollar paychecks, no shoe deals, but just the pure joy of playing the game.

I have three brothers, so I am a very competitive person, and over the seasons of coaching I have done pretty well, one first place team, two second place teams and one third place team. They were all teams that my younger brother played on. This year is the first year where he is not playing on a team that I have been coaching. It is certainly something new. This year my team has one win against six losses, which is also something very new.

"I don't like losing," I told my friend Lauren. "These guys are so much better than they are playing." Frustrated and bothered I continued, "I know they could be winning!"

"They will soon, but as long as they're having fun, then that's what you want," she said to me.

It's something that I have heard from more than one person at this point in time and I know that it is true. I have been seeing these players develop so much in the nearly two months that I have had them. They are improving so much and they are having fun, but I still want to win.

The Game Not According To Plan

It wasn't until last night's game that my view really began to change. I have 13 players, but four of them were out with injury, flu or just out of town last night. I was a little stressed before the game, that we weren't going to have enough players to even play. Luckily, my ninth player showed up, so we weren't going to have to forfeit. I dislike losing, but I absolutely hate forfeiting!

"Alright guys," I began my pre-game speech. "This guy is throwing just a little faster than we are used to, but all you need to do is put your bat out there and make some contact. Let's put the ball in play. Good things happen when you put the ball in play." There were nods of approval in our huddle.



Design by Kristen O'Meara

The sun was set, the field lights were on, and it was the windiest night we have played in all season long. The dirt on the field was kicked up so easily into big clouds of dust that the wind quickly blew off into the night.

"Ok hands in everyone," I said to keep with our every-game practice. "PRESCOTT!"

"D-BACKS!" They shouted back at me, before storming out onto the field.

The opposing team scored twice in the first inning, we scored none. The second, they scored four and we scored one. We weren't putting the ball in play, we weren't making all the defensive stops that we should have. I was frustrated, but unlike some coaches, I don't yell at the kids, nor do I take out any anger on them.

Going into the fifth inning, it was ten to four. My guys were out in the field and the opposing team was coming up to bat. I brought my lefty in to pitch. "Alright Josh, make sure you finish down and follow through," I called out to him. "Give me strikes buddy!"

Josh tried his best, but he ended up walking 10 batters, gave up one single and we made

four errors in the field for a total of another 10 runs against us. I left Josh in there so long, because I wanted him to get some time in pitching and some experience. He has the hardest fastball on my team, but his location is sometimes a problem.

There were only two outs in the inning, but I decided that I had to pull Josh out. "How ya doing?" I asked him.

"Alright," he said back to me as a dust cloud blew down the third base line. I could tell that he was very upset with himself.

"Well, I'm gonna take you out now, go play first, and be a wall over there," I told him. He nodded and ran over to first. "Tommy!" I called out; the short 14 year old looked at me. "You wanna pitch?" I asked him.

His eyes got big and an enormous grin appeared on his face. "Yeah," he said to me.

An Out For A Lifetime

Now Tommy is not one of my pitchers, and he had never pitched until last night. Earlier that game he missed a couple

fly balls, he made an error in the field that cost us a couple runs, and he struck out twice at the plate. He was very down on himself that game, and at one point I could see that he was close to the point of tears. I told him earlier that he couldn't let those things haunt him the rest of the game, that he had to let it go and stay focused.

After eight warm-up pitches, Tommy was ready to go. There was already a ball on this hitter when he started pitching to him. Tommy ended up walking him to load the bases. First base was open at that time, so it didn't hurt us.

"Alright, two down, bases loaded... closest base infield," I called out.

Tommy wound up and delivered, "Heeraiii," the umpire yelled, which of course means strike, but it was no word found in the dictionary. Tommy got set and delivered again, "Two," shouted the ump.

"Alright Tommy! Nice pitch! Give me one more of those," I yelled out. It seemed that the wind stopped, the night was warm and all went silent as he went into his wind-up, reached back and fired.

The batter swung and missed. "Strike three, yeer out!" yelled the ump.

I ran out as the team ran in and huddled around like we always do before we hit. "Nice pitching Tommy," I said. "Ok guys, it's 20-4. Let's not go out of here with our heads hung low. Let's get up there and swing the bat, score some runs and have some fun. Ready?" There were nods all around. "Prescott!"

"D-Backs!" came the shouts.

An Old Idea Revisited

We didn't score any more runs in that inning, and lost 20-4. However, I saw something in that game that I have known to be true, but haven't lived by of late. Baseball is a game, and games are meant to be fun. After that strikeout, I saw in Tommy's face, what I felt after hitting those homeruns.

I hope he became his favorite pitcher at that moment. I hope he heard the 50,000 people in the stadium cheering for him. I hope that 15 years from now, Tommy won't be able to tell you how many times he struck out this year, or how many errors he made, but that he will be able to tell you about his first time pitching and how he struck that batter out. And most of all, I hope he will tell you how much fun he had when he played for the 2004 Prescott Diamondbacks.

I hope he became his favorite pitcher at that moment.

doorways

by Libby Rasmussen

We have moved around a lot, you and I
not far in distance but in the spaces we have left and the spaces we fill
there is time in all the moments of each place

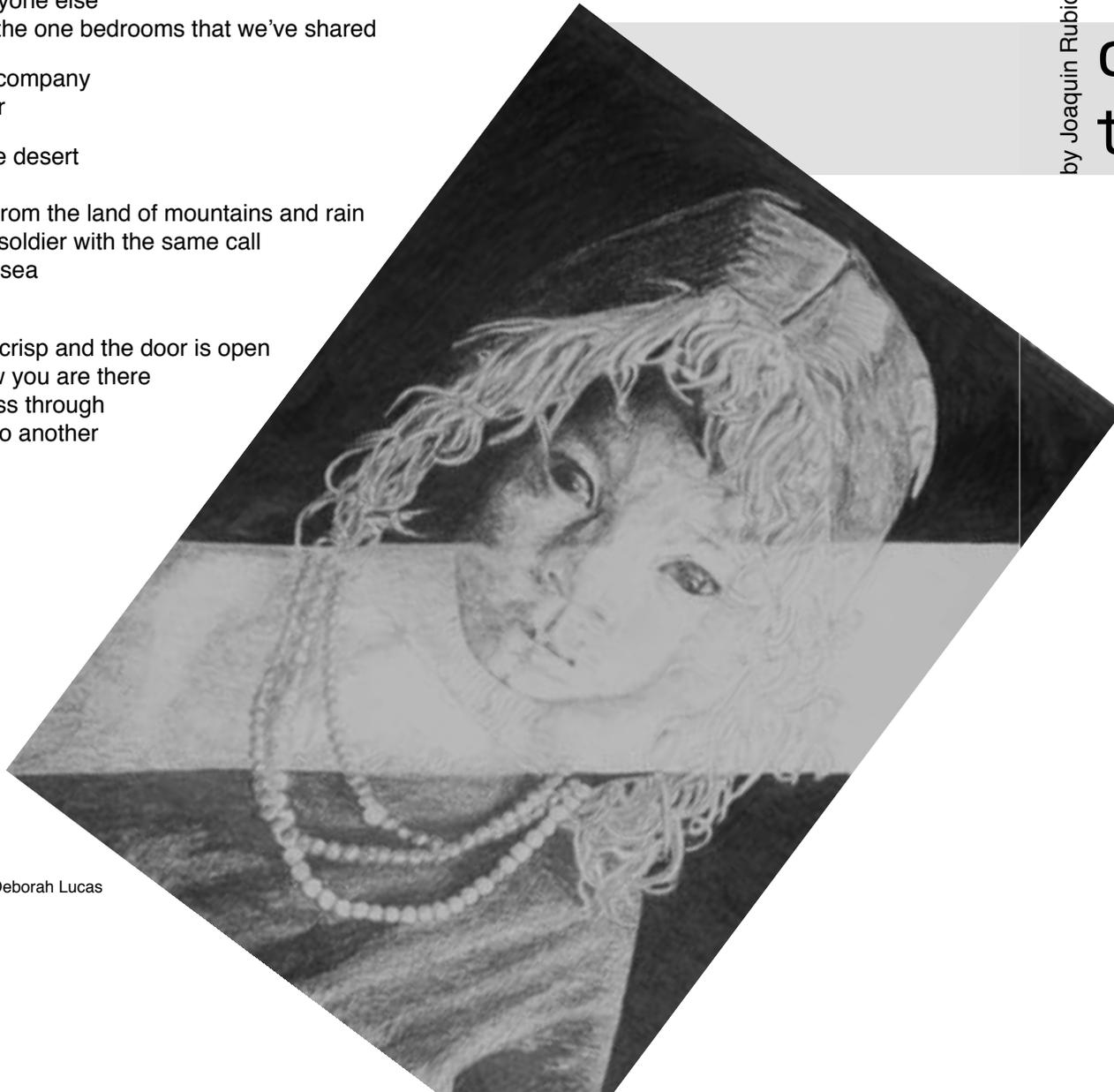
And it must look to everyone else
that we are so alone in the one bedrooms that we've shared

But there is truth in the company
we keep with each other

I named you through the desert
until one fit you right
I named you for a poet from the land of mountains and rain
and you grew to be the soldier with the same call
on march to the sea

So here we are
on days when the air is crisp and the door is open
and you letting me know you are there
and waiting for us to pass through
from one place to another

Drawing by Deborah Lucas



Photograph by Stacey Bogart



by Joaquin Rubio

queen tangerine

Your smile hurts me every time you little Tangerine
We know nothing lasts forever
I see your freckled face smiling back at me

Looking at your light blue eyes brings me pain
Feeling like a Lonely Lemon tree without you
I try not to think about us again, and I do

Queen Tangerine, Tangerine I'm living in a dream
Knowing you were my queen, as I was your king
I want to see your reflection once more knowing it's a tranquil dream

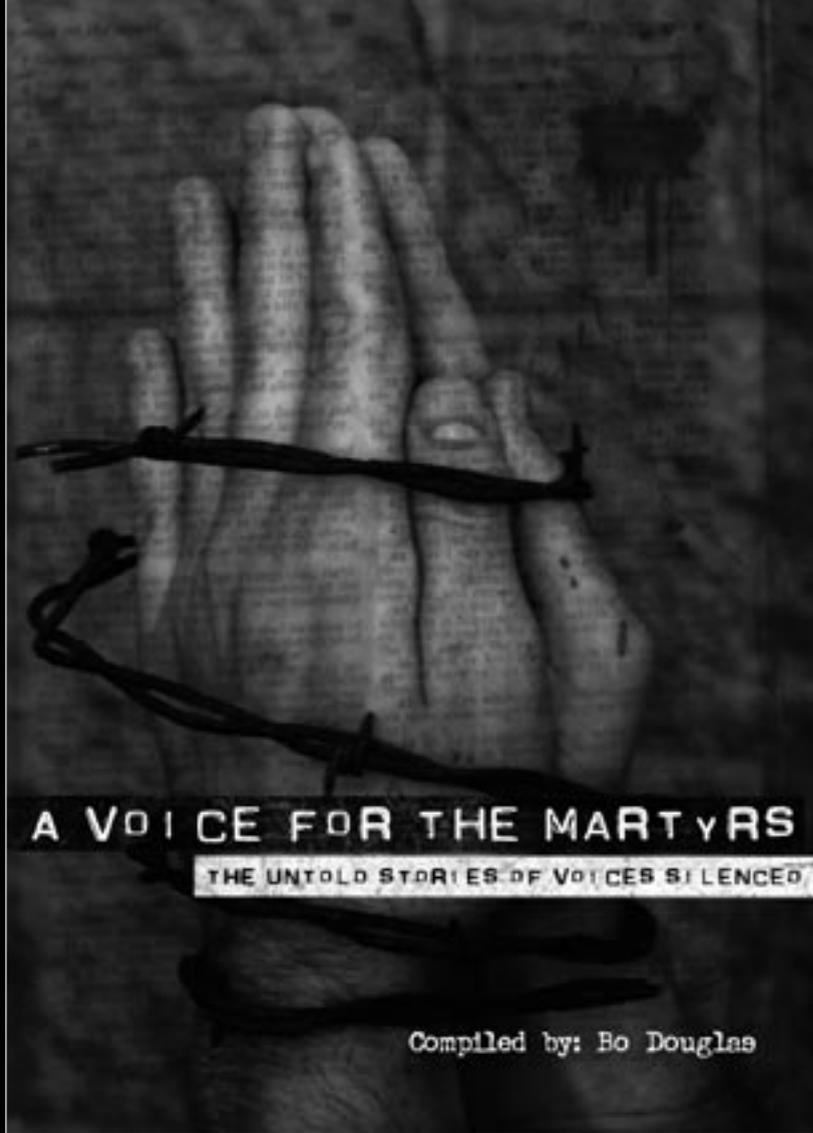
Gorgeous April snowflakes remind me of you
This April snow can never capture your beautiful
Snow angel face knowing I am feeling so daunted

Queen, Tangerine, Tangerine reminising on a past hopeless memory
The sun lights up your hair it reminds me of a gorgeous sunset
Memories like these are perfect pictures caught in time

Years of misery have gone away
Thinking about the pain makes me only see gray
Those identical sky eyes brings me pain

My little Tangerine yes you're my hybrid fruit tree
Standing only five-feet tall how could your fire ever hurt me
Wishing I could hold you in my arms again knowing that's just a dream
My Red head this is why I will always call you my **Queen Tangerine**

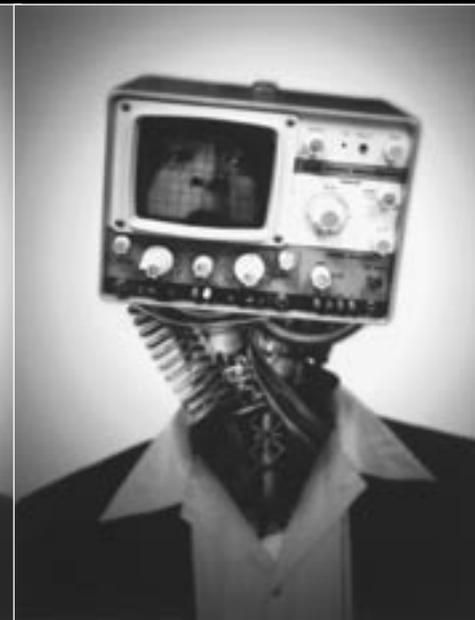
I see your freckled face
smiling back at me



Book Cover by Bo Douglas



Vector Illustration by David Branstrator



Digital Images by Jeff Lowry



Illustration by Andrew Pounders



CD Designs by Bo Douglas and Jerry Caroll

the ecstasies of a hangover

by Mike Jackman

Design by Lesley Schuler



The afternoon hangover is a mighty Viking warrior with a primitive and massive warhammer savagely pounding my fragile skull as I float high above my bed. Light skips through the blinds and dances upon my sheets as fairies, my digital alarm clock screams red, electronic rage at me, and the room is black with the vicious reek of strong liquor. I can still taste the cherry-tipped cigars and it's obvious that there has been a supernova inside my head, leaving a blackhole where my mind is supposed to be.

The night before I saw Miles Davis give birth to the Cool and I could taste that sweet trumpet in my ears all while Jesus aimed The Car towards Sedona on a clear moon washed night at 1:00 am. (It wasn't clear at all but overcast and the sky was a neon blue canvas of possibility and boredom!) The masses were all asleep; nobody was out except for the fiends and heathens and we were their samurai kings. We didn't think we were fly or tight or whatever but Beat like Kerouac and Weird like Thompson, because we were only nineteen though not of the current generation shuffling through the malls but sitting in a dark booth in a hazy Denny's saying, "Fuck it, man. Let's get the hell outta Dodge and go somewhere." "We need music and drink!"

So we lit out into the night as giddy harbingers of a new religion and other irresponsible vices with The Car becoming a shiny war zeppelin armed to the teeth with jazz and booze. Yes, we had ridiculous but honorable goals. We were going to free freedom and shatter the mountains silhouetting the sky. Stopping at a lonely and glowing gas station to empty our bladders as if our urinating there was a gift, Jesus promptly and loudly declared "We are Prophets!" as we entered with the door's bells ringing. The crumpled clerk was in the back stocking consumer goods and did not acknowledge the grand statement, not even with an awkward "Uhh... hello." He must have already believed in another Prophet or heard others say that they were Prophets on a nightly basis. Either way, we were only heretics in the clerk's eyes. While Jesus used the bathroom, without ritual or ceremony, I ambled around the fluorescent aisles and liberated a small bottle of vodka from its shelf, sucking a bit of it down crouched in shame behind a display of grinning Pringles. I would spend the rest of the night wracked with a type of guilt that I hadn't felt since my first Confession, nevermind the coming lessons of vomit and haze and hangover headaches. We stumbled out the doors and a colorful cop in the parking lot waved at us and we smiled grimly back, knowing the jig was up but he let us speed off into the night like banshees. We should have been jailed and flogged but that cop *knew* what we were doing. "*Mi nombre es Dios!* That guy must've been an angel!" "Indeed. He clearly did not know the words to *Deutschland Uber Alles.*"

We wined and snaked slowly through the Sedona desolation, its geological features glared at us like Gods haloed by clouds in the blue night's radiance. We passed armies of blinking and winking construction barricade clowns striped in hypnotic shades of oranges and whites and they were begging us to "Steal me!" "No, steal me!" "Steal me, man, I'll make ya feel good!" and on and on until we finally stopped and tried, getting covered in mud and realizing that these things are much bigger outside of a car and giving up in defeat because The Car would have none of it.

So now as I lie in bed hungover still in my mud-caked clothes, I am hardly able to smile, though I do anyway, and watch the hordes of fairies stop dancing on my sheets, all whispering and giggling, and engulf the fierce Viking warrior in a shimmering orgy.

resurrection

by Angela Yearta

All was silent in the concrete city. No birds or insects flew through the humid air. The sun's rays pierced through the sooty, black smog, relentlessly beating down on the cityscape. It was 2161, and the blistering hot sidewalks were empty at 2 p.m., the time of day when radiation and carcinogens were concentrated in the air. The Ministry of Health had long ago told city dwellers to remain indoors or to take one of the noiseless shuttles that networked the city—if they absolutely had to travel somewhere. Rampant chronic illness made people fear venturing outside—ever.

Except for Dr. Benjamin Masters. He actually felt more alive defying the government's health recommendation as he began his journey outside, heading towards the huge, gray complex that rested on the outskirts of town. The walk was long and very tiring, so he breathed a sigh of relief after reaching the worn, metallic doors that buzzed and clicked open after scanning his retinas and approving his admittance. Masters watched as a camera moved in time with his steps. It scanned the surrounding grounds, insuring that no unauthorized individuals entered the building behind him.

"State your ID number," a monotone voice boomed from a lifelike, but plastic android positioned near the door.

"613549," Masters replied, his head reeling from the heat, the pollution and the exertion from his walk.

The android quickly matched his voice with his data file. "Report to C wing, Room 41."

Masters was filled with anticipation as he stepped into a small cubicle which rapidly transported him to his destination. He exited and walked to Room 41. Once again he fed his ID number into a computer terminal. After hearing the lock's release, he stepped into a sterile, well-lit operating room. He walked

deliberately toward a large, steel cylinder resting in the center. It was icy cold to the touch, sending a chill down his spine.

Standing transfixed in front of the cylinder, he soon was joined by three others. "After all the time we put into perfecting cryogenics and finding a cure, I feel as if I've known her forever," Masters said.



Ceramic by Darnielle Straughan

They agreed, aware that today was the culmination of decades of research, experiments, and medicine formulation. Would it be possible to reverse the horrors of disease—after death?

After donning surgical gowns, caps, masks and gloves, they gathered to unveil the contents inside the cylinder. Working together, they gently removed a large silver package which had a human shape. Then they hoisted the metallic package onto the operating table under blinding, fluorescent lights.

"Ben, will you do the honors?" the chief of staff asked. Sweat formed on Masters' brow, and he held his breath as he opened the package. First, he unveiled a foot, then a long slender leg, then a shapely torso... Masters' hands were shaking when he revealed the woman's face. The body had a bluish-gray tint and an icy coldness hung in the air around it. Her eyes stared blankly into space, but she was still beautiful.

They all stood there, in awe, for a few seconds.

"Turn on the thaw unit, Masters," commanded one of the older doctors.

The thawing procedure would take several hours, then the dimethylsulfoxide and glycerol that had kept her preserved for eight decades would be replaced with 12 pints of blood. She would be hooked up to life support machines.

All was silent in the room,
and eventually, the woman's
heart began to beat...

Finally, they were ready to begin the operation that would cure her of the cancer that had taken her young life in 2080.

"Is everyone ready?" the chief of staff asked.

The doctors nodded, and with great dexterity, they injected a golden liquid at targeted intervals over their patient's body.

All was silent in the room, and eventually, the woman's heart began to beat, her lungs began to take in air. A cheer went out across the operating room, and Dr. Ben Masters burst into tears.

Had they really cured the patient of the notorious disease known as cancer? Whatever the outcome of this treatment, this day, medical science would never be the same.

That night, Masters wrote in his journal, "The patient is responding remarkably to our treatments. I believe she senses the value of this rare gift—a second chance at life. Makes me wonder how many of us appreciate it the first time around?"

dream dead

by Nancy Burgeson

You,
laughing at my Jesus.
Eyes,
refusing to open.

Life,
fresh as clean bed sheets
snatched away.
Two halves don't make one
whole.

You,
laden with baggage in black plastic bags.

You,
refusing to free it,
coupled with pride.

Me,
trying to fix.

Still,
trying to love.

You,
screaming *I hate you*,
then off to work.

You,
Sleeping beside me.

Turned Wood by Dan Liggett and David Samuelson

Drawing by Maryhelen Brennand



a rare treasure

by Heather Ruth Begay

On Navajo land you will find the most admirable turquoise jewelry. Turquoise venders can be found on the roadsides across the deserts of the Four Corners. In these little shops you will find that there is a treasure that awaits all who are drawn to this beautiful stone. Navajos find their treasure as a gift handed down to them from one generation to the next. I have received my treasure: a simple but ideal turquoise- sterling silver pendant handed down to me by my great, great grandmother. This pendant takes me back to a memorable day of new surroundings, experiences, and people.

I remember sitting restless in a car, my youth prevented me from being still. I propped my foot up on the seat in front of me and wondered where my father and mother were taking my brother and me. The shadows grew longer and I became tired. We had been driving so long that we ran out of highway and reached a dirt road that led us into a thickness of junipers and sage brush. Just as I was about to give in to the boredom that forced my body to doze off, the car stopped. I gazed through the dusty window and my eyes grew with amazement at the sight of the little house that sat clouded among the juniper trees and sage brush. We had arrived at an unfamiliar place. My mind tried to unscramble memories in search for ones that could possibly connect to this new surrounding. At the time I had no idea that this unforgettable visit would bring into my life a wonderful treasure that will stay in my heart forever.

I plunged out of the car eager to explore this unique area. For a moment a silence came over me and I admired the surroundings. I came across the essence of sage and juniper that even now triggers a memory of that day. I heard the clucks of hungry chickens in the distance. I felt the heat of the blazing sun on top of my head. The warmth also managed to place a curse of laziness on a dog that lay next to the entrance of the humble home. I looked at the house that sat peaceful and undisturbed by modern day society. There was no porch light, only a lantern that sat on top of four worn-out water barrels.



Painting by Bill Gallaher

We approached the door and knocked, someone answered, "Whosh tai!" We walked inside and I grasped my mother's hand as my father approached an old woman. He communicated with her in the words of our native tongue, Navajo. I was young and did not understand the language, so I was more drawn to the

I plunged out of
the car eager to
explore
this unique area.

objects that sat neatly on the shelves and tarnished pictures on the cracked walls. The house was filled with the scent of Icy Hot and a hint of the morning's breakfast. I heard an unfamiliar tune of beating drums in a distance. I looked in that direction and came across an old radio with missing knobs, an antenna made of tin foil, and spots of dust and water.

My investigation was interrupted by my father, who picked me up and introduced me to my great, great grandmother. I looked at her and noticed the wrinkles on her face. She smiled and spoke the only language she knew, Navajo. She looked wise and understanding. She wore a traditional velveteen skirt with a matching top. To compliment her dress was a traditional Navajo pendant that held sixteen round stones that resembled a bow. It looked as though it had been hers since she was a young girl. The silver was darkened by the dust and oils that had gathered between the crevices of each turquoise stone. The pendant had aged as she had aged.

My father put me down and I returned to my mother's arms once again. I stood near my mother for awhile and as time passed I started to feel comfortable about leaving her side. My father and mother began a deep conversation of what seemed to be gibberish with my great, great grandmother. I became restless so my brother and I walked outside. We noticed a barbed wire fence that surrounded her home. I climbed onto the fence and my brother followed. Soon we ended up playing a game of tag along the fence. I tried to hurry along but my feet slipped and I fell onto the ground. I felt a large amount of pain on the side of my stomach. I looked and found blood dripping from a cut about two inches long. Tears rolled down my cheeks and as I let out a cry of pain, my parents came rushing out. They carried me into the house and immediately attended to my wound. I felt a burn when my mother tried to cleanse the cut; I squirmed and cried. My great, great grandmother approached me with a look of concern in her eye. She observed my pain and placed an herb over my wound. The pain lessened and lessened and I was relieved from the ripping of my skin. At that moment I knew my great, great grandmother was caring and wise.

A few years passed and I found out that my great, great grandmother had passed away. I had not yet gained the knowledge of death so I hardly understood.

She was forgotten until I was 12 years old, when my mother asked me if I remembered my great, great grandmother. My mind took me back to my first visit. I said I did. She then handed me the beautiful turquoise and silver pendant she wore on the day of my first visit.

Turquoise, (Doot kl'izhii) is a symbol of protection, sacredness, and value to the Navajo. I have been drawn to the beauty of the many designs that have been made to express the potential of the sacred stone but none compare to my pendant. I believe that if I wear a piece of turquoise I am protected and guided in the right direction. This specific turquoise pendant possesses all of the values stated above and so much more. I have worn the pendant during traditional Navajo ceremonies that have taken place at my home. It has made me beautiful inside and out. I was told that the pendant was worn by my great, great grandmother every day of her life. She lived to be 86 years old. The pendant now symbolizes great value and unforgettable memories of events that I and my great, great grandmother have experienced. She has blessed this pendant to help me walk in beauty. I wear the pendant today and people notice it is a sign of my native heritage. I am often asked where I am from and what tribe I am. I have also received compliments that make me happy to be Navajo. The pendant now reminds me that I come from a family that is very loving and unique in their own way.

My turquoise pendant has blessed me with happiness and protection. It has made me aware of the meaning of my culture, beliefs, family, and myself as an individual. I have learned to walk in beauty, just like my ancestors believe is a way of life. I owe a special thanks to my great, great grandmother and her special gift for helping me be who I am today.

Wood Sculpture by Phil Maas





Digital Image by Melissa Musselman

inamorata chaos

by Heather Beeson

Don't leave me in the nocturnal recesses of your mind.
Your absence makes me a sullen girl.
Pull me from the umbra where I dined.

Look into my stunted heart and you will find,
The inamorata who bears for you a pearl.
Don't leave me in the nocturnal recesses of your mind.

The ropes wrench my neck into a bind
And my spirit is violently hurled.
Pull me from the umbra where I dined.

I implore you to not abandon me behind
Your desperate storm whirl.
Don't leave me in the nocturnal recesses of your mind.

You must not forget the docile kind
Of blazing passion you gave this girl.
Pull me from the umbra where I dined.

Through your weakened heart you will find,
The inamorata and her precious pearl.
Don't leave me in the nocturnal recesses of your mind.
Pull me from the umbra where I dined.

everyman is the prince of jive turkeys...

dry fog

by Josh Vliek

Everyman is the prince of *jive turkeys*,
always puffing up his chest to look more like a rooster
so that he may decide when the sun rises
from the black horizon in the Hills of Infinity

A drippy-nosed infant, wrapped in tea leaves
loosely chained to a crayon-covered pew,
quarantined in a featherless divinity
that smells like gas station coffee and stale cigars.

He walks through the center of the universe,
surrounded by stick figures with silver silhouettes
of cell phones dripping from their ears, packing
their brains into pudding cups with an ice-cream scoop.

He lives in a stained glass Coke bottle that swims circles
through the saltless suds of Lake Superior,
hoping to find the ocean some day and drift
toward that black horizon in the Hills of Infinity.

His pupils are not periods, but question marks
that sink into his guts and rot like bad ideas.
His questions are not complete ones. They are fragmented
by the anticipation of final conception.

Turkeys and tea leaves. Stick figures and cell phones.
Coke bottles and Commandments. Pupils and Periods.
Via con Dios into that dry fog of bearded wisdom
that floats amidst the black horizon in the Hills of Infinity.

Sculpture by Cathy Willeit





Embossed Print by Aja Pakonane

the night my brother died

by Ashley Carmiencke

I was vaguely aware that I was dreaming, lost in a lucid paradise. My warm sandy bed led up to the ocean blue sheets; the night light cast warm sun light on the walls. A figure rustled through the shadowy grove of palm trees in my doorway with a whisper.

“Wake up,” the figure drew in nearer to me. I started and looked at the read-out on my clock, which read 11:47. I had barely even begun a full night’s sleep. “What do you want?”

“I don’t know.” It paused and put its hands in its pockets in a sort of “aw-shucks” kind of gesture. “You want to go get some food or something? I’m having trouble sleeping.” Normally I wouldn’t have even considered honoring such a request. But for some reason, my brother was someone I could never say no to. I always wanted to try so hard to be the great big sister, the one he could look up to in awe. I wanted him to be pleased with me for being so cool, so nice, so

wise to the ways of the world. So I put on my pajamas with the finesse of an older sister who doesn’t care what she looks like, and grabbed the keys to my car. My keys, which reaffirmed my existence as an adult, made me some sort of member of an exclusive club. I must have done something sacred to deserve them, some ritual or journey, especially to earn the keys to my Camaro. It was six years old, kept polished like a trophy. It was the kind of trophy that you must wipe your shoes off to get in, you may not have a drink that might spill on the seats in, despite the huge stain already on the taupe carpet. But it was mine, and I pressed the button to wink my headlights and unlock the doors to announce to the world that this is mine.

I knew he didn’t really want to get something to eat, he just wanted a reason to leave with me. I knew I would ar no objections as I nosed my car towards the roads that skirted out of our town. We weaved down through the hills and out of town through an area I didn’t know, but I was sure would lead me to where I wanted to go. Scenery passed us by that much stranger, because we didn’t know what it looked like other than in the veil of moonlight. “Can we put the top down?” he asked, with a slight glisten in his eyes. I agreed and we pulled over, why not let ourselves enjoy some sweet night air? The light of the full moon gave my brother a seemingly ethereal glow. The thought made me laugh because he was always so mischievous. It almost seemed like a mistake, like if whatever was causing the glow really knew him, it would click off in an instant. We continued on the roads until I was sure we were nearly in California, although I’m sure the distance was exaggerated in my imagination. We came to a few aluminum-sided trailers that seemed the landmark for a sleepy town on this road. I almost seemed to know that I would want to pull off at a diner on this road, a diner that we would both see and instantaneously cry “Awesome!” On the way in, we both marveled at the plethora of candy-colored hot rods lined up in the parking lot. It was almost as if the owners of the most perfect cars formed one perfect car club. They all shined and glistened proudly, each a sealed and polished piece of a moment in the past. We both loved cars, and the sense of bonding was immense as we both lovingly lavished the same vehicles. We both stopped at the same car, a vintage Cadillac a mile long, molded by the details of the finest artisan. The car was a pure white, with velour seats that seemed to be made

of cream puffs. The white walls were so clean, they looked like they had been when they were put on the car in 1958 as it rolled out of the factory.

“This car is heavenly,” he whispered. I had to agree. Just then the driver walked up, a blonde with legs a mile long and a white dress. She smiled at us. I could see my brother longing for her. I swore for a second she winked at him. I practically had to drag him inside.

“Wouldn’t I love to have a car like that!” he said between bites of his hamburger. “We could cruise together on the weekends, go wherever we want. We could take it to car shows and on road trips...”

[The realization of our humanity,
no matter how slight was depressing...]

“It does sound fun,” I admitted, wishing for a second that it could really happen. That maybe it was possible we would get home, save money and restore a car, and drive to someplace beautiful, like California. To be happy no matter what and have something so wonderful. Just then the snappy waitress interrupted any pleasantness in my reverie by giving me a dose of her dour, bitter misdemeanor.

“Think about it. This place must be hell for people like her.” I jerked my head towards her baring a scraggly, grey-toothed snarl at a trucker towards the back. “She didn’t grow up wishing to be this kind of person. It wasn’t her dream to be a drug-addicted waitress in a small town. It just kind of happened to her.” The realization of our humanity, no matter how slight, was depressing enough to prompt a hasty exit for us. We wanted to deny even the slightest real thought. Back on the highway, the stars dripped towards the horizon. I imagined them as celestial compasses that marked the way for years, watching everything that happened on this quiet stretch of land. Some very years ago, those same stars were looking at someone else. Years from now, they will be too.

Many miles out of the desert lay a lake. I couldn’t believe the lake’s existence. It seemed almost too beautiful to really be there, almost put there by mistake. It was too beautiful to actually exist for our eyes. But it was really there, and I pulled my car onto the soft shoulder. We hiked up onto the inky

purple rocks surrounding the cool hush of the water. It smelled sweet and felt soothing on our skin. The moon reflected off of the water like a giant watchful eye. I looked at my brother, who had always seemed cherubic to me as a young boy with his blonde hair and blue eyes. We looked nothing alike, with my sharp features and dark hair, but people always seemed to know that we were one and the same. He gazed out over the water, ruining the perfect serenity of the moment by sucking up his chocolate milkshake through the straw. It was so perfectly him; a wonderful moment with a very personal touch.

“Wouldn’t you love to stay here forever?” he asked, and I had to agree. Suddenly all I wanted to do was lie on those rocks and watch every second of time that went by until the sun came up. We did just that, tracing every falling star that left colorful streaks in the black velvet sky, watching the stars glitter and pulsate all night, watching the sun mix a hue of gold with the black until it became blue. The edges of the sky grew purple, laced with gold. I swore I could smell flowers, maybe lilacs, even though the barren land around us was stark and geometric. It was hard and bold colors and patterns of solid rock and sand with bold stripes of color, blue and yellow and inky purple. There was nothing soft and sweet like the flowers I smelled.

I woke up to see my mother in very early morning light, crying into the folds of her nightgown. She had just awoken from the dream, the dream where she watched my brother die in an accident. The same accident where he lost control of his truck, skidded across the highway and off the steep ravine during his trip to the coast where he was supposed to start his life on the golden shores. The same accident he died in that night.



Sculpture by Mary Hirschberg



Painting by Josh Chaney



Monoprint by Walter Miklius

the old man

by Karen Groves

The children run after him mocking his slow laborious steps
Once upon a time, his name was Desmond Orlando Williams
Now he is just another broken old man, a part of the landscape
He remembers wondrous nights full of stars and a dancing pink gown

Once upon a time, his name was Desmond Orlando Williams
As he walks down the trash littered street, he hums a forgotten melody
He remembers wondrous nights full of stars and a dancing pink gown
Unaware of the crumbling red brick and the lingering cabbage smell

As he walks down the trash littered street, he hums a forgotten melody
He's young again dancing with the girl in the pretty pink dress
Unaware of the crumbling red brick and the lingering cabbage smell
The pavement is cracked beneath his feet- broken glass glitters like stars

He's young again dancing with the girl in the pretty pink dress
The song he hums is about love and loss. A far away look in his eyes
The pavement is cracked beneath his feet-broken glass glitters like stars
The moon is full she is floating in his arms- champagne bubbles heat his blood

The song he hums is about love and loss. A far away look in his eyes
Pink chiffon and shimmering stars, the salty-sweet taste of her lips
The moon is full she is floating in his arms- champagne bubbles heat his blood
He sighs and hums his quiet song while sirens wail and gunshots sound

Pink chiffon and shimmering stars, the bitter-sweet taste of her lips
Now he is just another broken old man, a part of the landscape
He sighs and hums his quiet song while sirens wail and gunshots sound
The children run after him mocking his slow laborious steps

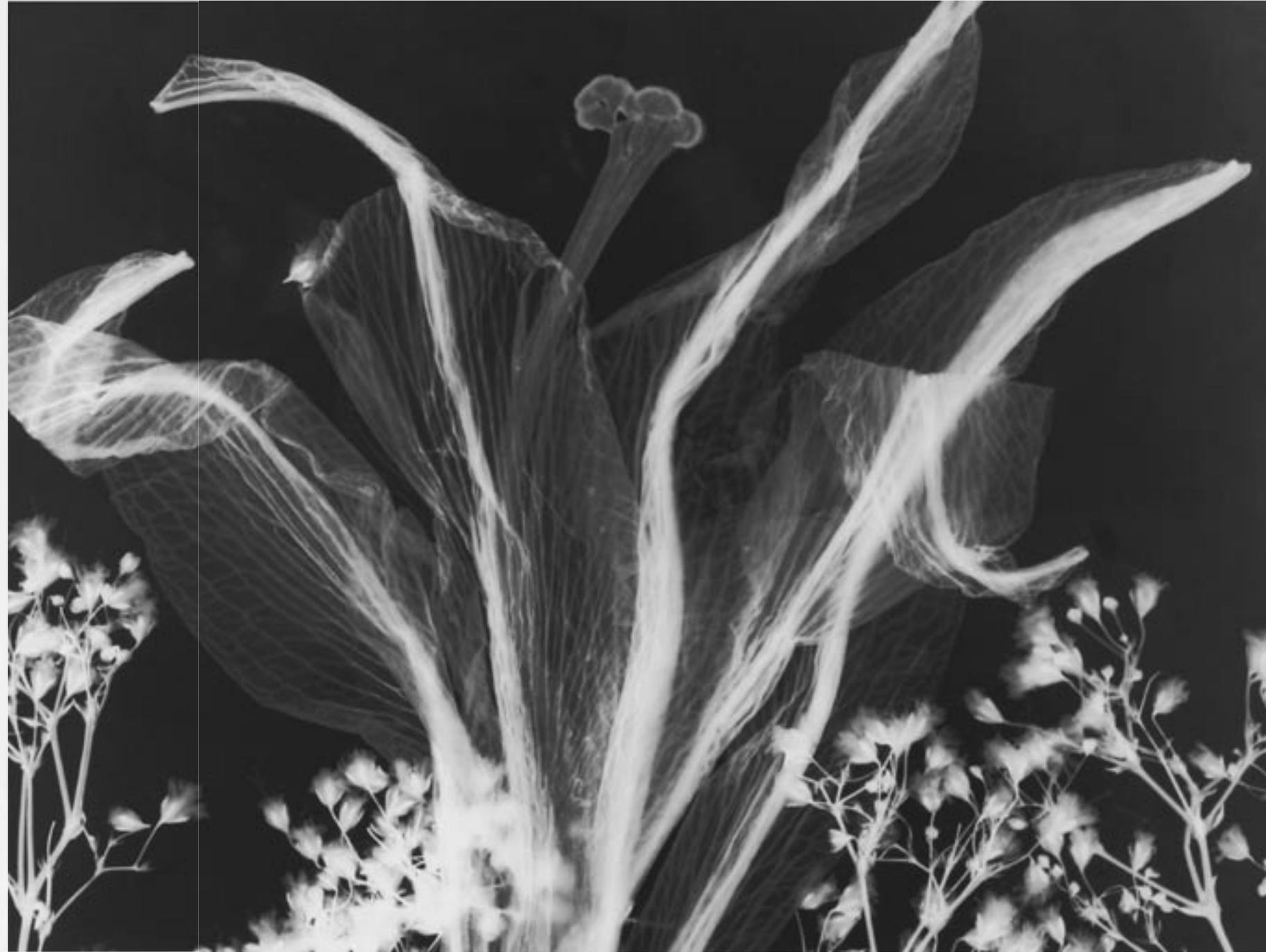


Drawing by Filmer Kewanyama

sonogram sonnet

by Aaron Norris

In the dream I played trumpet like some smooth-ass Chet Baker clone for my saucy mafia sweetheart who spoke only Italian. Then we took a love potion that made me grow antennae on my tongue. During the early morning fog, rolling through the afternoon hills and broken bed, I would take depth charge readings to hear the ocean within her womb. Now it's raining again and Chet Baker sings: "You don't know what love is". And yes, my conception has changed. I feel like a reporter surviving Vietnam monsoon of my own making. Say what you will about war and storms. During the sonogram the music of rain fell.



Photograph by Michael Jones



untitled

by Mary Cornelia Van Sant

acker hill view
reveals a spire of white
tucked away street
arizona

junipers umbrella
worn redwood understates
prescott's
pearl
priceless hideaway
a labyrinth of sandstone

oak seedlings sprout
a stellar jay calls
hushed breezes
subdue the talking mind

come in
walk with me
an inner path
a labyrinth of sandstone

Ceramics by Jim Frost (left and right), Michael Brown (center)

Watercolor by Charlotte Searls





Yavapai
COLLEGE
Your community. Your college.