



Illuminations



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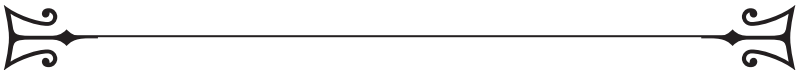
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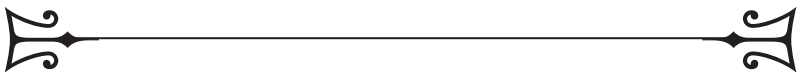
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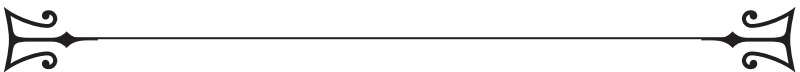
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“All glory comes from daring to begin.”

Eugene F. Ware

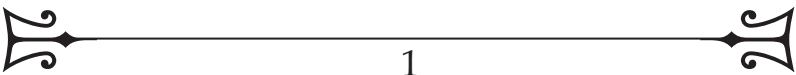


Poetry

You know,
I tried
to throw
away
my tired
words and couldn't.
Shouldn't
we be able
to write
without
pondering
what's right—
the next phrase?
Let me just raze
this page
and begin
anew;
No battling my rage
at having no clue
how to create
a poem that's great,
without
sounding insane
and having to strain
to rhyme this word or that
harmonize a chord or pat
some ill-sounding phrase
into place in this line
or the next.

Oh, I feel hexed
or am I just crazed?
How did the old poets
like Dickinson and Poe
accomplish this
AND
get praised
for what can only be,
for me,
woe
to know
how low
I sink
to summon
energy
for this
feat
in ink
of what
they've done
that
I wish
to repeat?

*Stephanie Simons
Academic Transfer*





*Denny Marshall
Continuing Education*

The Countdown

The door shut with a *quiet* click as John tiptoed down the deck stairs into the backyard. He smiled a secret smile. Sneaking out of the house at night had never been John's forte—until the fateful morning he ran across a can of WD-40 in the garage. "I'm pretty slick," thought John slightly amused at his own joke. Quietly, he hopped the backyard fence and darted through Mr. Ruben's petunias. After hurtling a few more fences and dodging an assortment of lawn ornaments, John met the street. He stopped, balancing himself with one foot on the curb as he looked down the street. There were no cars.

John set out on a brisk jog around the block and back to his own front yard. He ran quietly, mostly on his heels, as not to wake his parents (or his dog, which was known to bark at people). After checking for cars once more, he tiptoed quietly into the front yard and crouched down near a large hedge at the side of the house. He glanced around quickly while reaching near the base of the hedge. From within the dense foliage, John removed a shoebox. He stood up quietly, carefully, holding the box with both hands and tiptoed out of the yard.

Upon reaching the sidewalk, he began to run. He slowed to a stop once he had reached the corner and crouched to catch his breath. His heart was pounding hard even though he had hardly done any work yet. After a minute or so, he got up and started walking again. The air was cool, almost cold for late May, and John began to wonder whether his outfit of short sleeves and jean shorts was a good idea. He began to shiver, so he picked up the pace hoping that a faster tempo would keep him warm.

The heels of his shoes scraped the ground time after time making a heavy, gravelly noise that echoed in the empty street. He walked that way for a few blocks before he veered left into the grass. With the box under one arm, he checked the time on his watch—1:33 a.m. He smiled. Everything was

going according to plan. As he walked, the combination of adrenaline and 7–11 squishy mix began to kick in. He could feel his blood sloshing in his veins, and it made him feel a bit queasy.

For a while, as he walked, he envisioned himself as 007, clad in a black jumpsuit, sporting a huge chrome pistol. His thoughts put a spring in his step that quickened his gait. Before long, he began popping around corners and pointing the shoebox at unsuspecting fire hydrants and lawn gnomes. A pair of headlights appearing in the distance rudely interrupted his daydream. Thinking fast, James Bond John dove behind a parked car and lay flat in the grass, being careful not to smash the shoebox and the precious cargo it contained. The car passed slowly. John caught a glimpse of the white and blue police cruiser and swallowed hard. He opened the box to see if anything was damaged. When he was sure everything was in order, he scrambled to his feet and darted off into the night.

Soon John came to the first large street of his voyage: Calvin Street was a curvy street that slithered its way sideways through the city. After checking for cars, John clutched the box in his arms and hunched over to hide it from view. He sprinted through the streetlights and leaped into the shadows on the other side.

Breathing hard now, John decided to walk. He thought of all the people who would be talking about his antic the following day at school. Would they know who it was? He hoped they didn't. John liked being inconspicuous, after all, staying anonymous meant staying safe. The neighborhoods he was passing through were familiar turf: The old sandlot baseball field was on the left, the church on the right. He knew he was getting closer. His giddy "James Bond" mood had passed. He had a job to do, and he wasn't nearly done yet. Since he was no longer gasping for breath, he decided to start jogging again, after all, he did want to be in bed at a decent hour.

At last he came to the street he had come for. John slowed to a stop under the street sign that read “Scarecrow Dr.” He kneeled down and placed the box neatly on the ground. Opening it carefully, he pulled out a black ski mask and stuck it in his pocket. He got up slowly, holding the box tightly under his right arm. Smiling a modest smile, he started walking down the block. It was a very dark night; there was no moon to light his path. Since there were no street lights, he proceeded slowly in the murky black night.

He turned left at the corner with the yellow fire hydrant as he had done a thousand times before. With a huff, he puffed out his chest and stood up very straight, trying to look as innocent as possible at 2:00 in the morning. When he saw the house, he froze. He stood very still in the dark and watched it sit there. The street light down the block flickered, shedding just enough light to see. John sat down where he was and scooted back onto the grass beneath a small tree. He folded his legs and laid the box gently beside him. After mumbling a prayer, he slipped on the ski mask and picked up the box. He bolted out into the street.

He recognized the black car in front of the house and headed for it. “Thirty seconds,” he reminded himself. With a flick of his wrist, he was inside the car holding the door with his foot. He plopped down into the driver’s seat and closed the door silently without latching it. Hurriedly, he threw open the box and emptied the contents into the passenger seat. Working quickly, he secured the necessary wires and tape to hold everything in place. After a double check of the setup, he closed the box and sat up. Turning quickly, he checked the street in front and back for cars. Then, gently kicking the door open, he darted from the car and down the block.

After he had run for about five minutes, John stopped to check his watch—1:57 a.m. “Perfect,” he whispered. Yanking the mask off with one hand, he chucked the box into the street and ran home.

“Mommmy! We’re out of cereal!” Jenny shouted at the top of her lungs. She waited for a reply. When none came,

she sighed and threw the empty box into the trash. After a quick stop to brush her teeth, she snagged her purse and bookbag. One final glance in the mirror and she was out the door. "What a crappy week" she thought. "Oh well, at least, it's Friday."

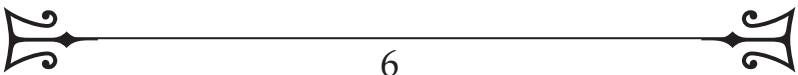
She walked down the steps and across the lawn to her car. She gently swung the car door open and flopped into the seat, throwing her purse and books on the floor. After checking both pockets and the dash, she remembered that she left her keys in her purse. She reached down to snag her purse from the passenger side's floor. In the process, she placed her hand gently on the steering wheel.

"Ahhgg!" she yelped. Her hand jerked from the wheel down to the passenger seat floor. "Something scratched me!" Jenny sat up in her seat and stared. There, wired to the middle of her steering wheel was a rose. "No way..." Jenny thought to herself. She carefully pulled it off the wheel and held it in her hands. "It's beautiful." Laying it neatly on the passenger seat, she went to start the car. Her hand brushed against something underneath the steering wheel. "A card!" she squeaked. Excitedly, she removed the card from the bottom of the steering column and opened it. It read:

Beautiful, you're beautiful, as beautiful as the sun. Wonderful, wonderful, you're as wonderful as they come. And I can't help but feel attached to the feelings I can't even match. And I'm sure you know me well, as I'm sure my name I'll never tell...

Jenny sat up in the seat, tipped her head back, and sighed as the clock in her car struck 7:30 AM. From his house many blocks away, John looked up from his watch and smiled.

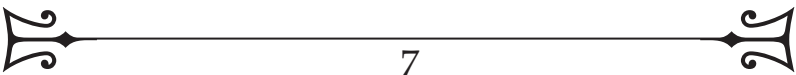
Nick Tarlowski
Academic Transfer



Introspection

a clock is ticking
systemization is breathless
societies are anxious
egos are flexed
is this the end?
christianity believes
prophets predicted
scientists speculate
politicians fornicate
a short cut in programming
vanity of humanity
financial markets boom
pending doom
what did we learn?
time to introspect
3... 2... 1...

*Shane Zephier
Academic Transfer*





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*Connie Gregor
Business Administration*

When the Lights Went out in Denver

It must have been fall of 1983, when I went to work for McConnell's Welding in Denver, Colorado. I recall it being cold, but our only outer attire was a light jacket. I hired on temporary just to build some guardrails for a high-rise parking lot. When the rails were done, so was my job. But when the rails were completed in less than half the estimated hours, the owner Pat McConnell asked if I would stick around for awhile. His son Loren was shop foreman at the time, and Pat decided to send him to the field and supervise the erection crew. Then he offered me the position as the new shop foreman. In the early 80s jobs were difficult to come by, and I was extremely grateful to acquire this job.

Work in the shop was slow at that time, and there was a big pile of guardrail that just happened to be needing installed; that's when Pat asked me if I would be willing to travel to the field to assist the field crew with the installation of the rail. This parking lot was seven stories high, which meant I would be leaning over a structure, seventy feet in the air! I've got a slight case of acrophobia, and I wasn't too enthused about the idea, but to show my gratitude to my boss, I said sure, thinking to myself, "I don't care how high I get as long as I have at least *one foot* firmly planted on the ground."

The job site was at 2020 Arapahoe Street in the old part of Denver. Now, being a transplant from a microbe-sized speck on the map in Nebraska to a parking lot seven stories up, I could see things I've never seen before. With Denver being a gold rush establishment in the 1800s, I could only imagine what I would be seeing from that lookout point a century earlier: beautifully crafted brick buildings filled with chandeliers, dancehall girls, and pounding piano music; perhaps a couple of buckskinners wandering down the street with their pack mules loaded down with pelts to trade for nonperishable goods, tobacco, and of course some whiskey to take back up to the hills with them (for medicinal purposes



only of course); and gold miners would be cashing in their nuggets and dust for the same reason (and maybe after their bi-yearly bath in one of the local hotels, an evening out with one of the dancehall girls).

However, in 1983, the area was littered with *high quality* wine bottles such as White Port, Thunderbird, Muscatel, and Mad Dog 20-20; most bottles were broken, but the labels were still intact. The first day on the job site, two blocks away from Larmar Street. I witnessed two winos, dressed in what appeared to be the finest clothes the Salvation Army had to offer, fighting over a tattered fragment of green carpet, probably retrieved from a trash dumpster. They would attempt to hit one another, miss, fall down, get up, and repeat the process, until finally one of them simply too inebriated or exhausted to continue couldn't get up again and surrendered. The other grabbed his prize, went to the end of the ally, laid down completely exhausted, covered up with his newly won carpet, and either went to sleep or passed out. Possibly, he died. In that part of the city nobody would know or care for a long time. All I know is he was gone the next day when we arrived at the job site.

Now, in order to mount the guardrail, we had to elevate it up to the different levels of the parking lot. This was done with a huge tower crane that was located on the other side of the building. The crane and operator were completely out of view, so our only way of communication was to provide hand signals to a man on the ground, he would radio to the crane operator, and the operator would execute the commands.

The guardrail was approximately twenty feet long and resembled your basic handrail that is seen around patios,—except this railing was designed to keep cars from driving off the edge of the high-rise, and each section weighed approximately five hundred pounds. Someone on the ground would wrap a stainless steel cable around it, radio the order to the crane operator, and the rail would be lifted up to us.

Someone would then reach out, grab hold of it, and pull it into the parking lot while someone else would give signals to the radio man on the ground. Since I was running the show for the installation on this particular job, I would be the one to present the signals to the radioman below. Actually, I was too much of a chicken to lean over the edge of that high-rise, but the other men didn't need to know that.

On the day the lights went out, Brian (a part-time motorcycle racer) was pulling in the rail. I would estimate the cable to be about sixty-foot long because it had to be wrapped around the guardrail, which would be forty feet, and there was roughly another twenty feet above that where it connected to the hook on the crane. We got the rail on the landing, and Brian unhooked the cable. To my astonishment, once it was loose Brian simply gave the cable a push off the edge of the building, and the consequences of that action began to snowball until all our plans for the remainder of the day were suddenly changed.

He should have told me he was unhooked, so I could have signaled to cable-up and got the slack out of the cable. He didn't, so I didn't. He did, however, gaze over the edge in time to see something not too many people have ever seen before. He looked at me very excitedly and exclaimed, "Man, you should have seen the sparks down there! It looked like lightening!" Instantly, the whole job site became mute. As a matter of fact, that whole portion of Denver turned ghastly silent when the cable swung down and hit a main power line. It created a major short that blew several transformers in the downtown area. In what seemed like an eternity, but in all actuality was just an insignificant few seconds, the deafening silence broke.

Plumbers, electricians, carpenters, and inspectors all over that erection sight were giving each other stupid looks and wondering what happened—except Brian and me. We were reasonably sure—no, we were absolutely certain—what happened. People were stuck between floors on a temporary elevator used to raise workers up and down. The crane

operator was stuck in his cab, about two-hundred-foot in the air. Soon the cars started honking on the streets on account of the stoplights going out. Brian and I *reluctantly* determined it was time to depart since we were unable to do any more welding that day.

Instead of using the elevator, as we normally did, we walked off the job site using the parking lot driveway, doing our very best to look innocent and surprised that the electricity went out, asking people on the way out, “What happened to the power?”

When I got home that night—after a couple of Buds, a few shots of Jim Beam, and a hot shower—I sat back and watched Channel 4 news. Janet Zapala (the newswoman at that time) was reporting about a power outage in downtown Denver earlier that afternoon. She said 25 percent of the downtown area was without electricity for several hours, and repairmen were still working on the problem. The *Rocky Mt. News* and the *Denver Post* both had front page articles about the incident the following day.

Brian and I were famous, but we couldn’t see ourselves informing anyone about the misfortune. It was an accident; nevertheless, we just didn’t feel right about claiming all the glory for people having to leave work early, getting stuck in traffic jams, electric heaters not working, and a score of other inconveniences. I have a feeling that Pat McConnell had a hunch that Brian and I might have known something about the incident, but he didn’t inquire, and we didn’t volunteer any information. And that’s what really happened on that chilly afternoon, when the “lights went out in Denver.”

Steve Palensky
DraftingTechnology



Baja

The shores, the sights,
the sounds, the sea
The touch of night's cool breeze.

The awesome wonder of
majestic beauty,
The feeling of surrender complete.

I give in to the gentle breeze,
the tender touch of night.
The twinkle of stars upon the sea
makes all the world seem right.

Never again shall I turn from the sun
in an effort to run and hide
For I've discovered the warmth
of nature's gifts
helps heal the hurt inside.

*Cyndi Lamm
Academic Transfer*





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*Connie Gregor
Business Administration*

Up and Down

The sky is a melancholy shade of gray. An abandoned playground sits in a familiar place in my mind. As I approach, the swings sway ever so slightly. A chill in the air makes the merry-go-round moan a bored sigh. I feel no anticipation, no excitement as I walk through the playground. There is nothing inviting about this place. It seems very familiar to me, yet that brings me no solace. I see an image of myself sitting on one end of a lonesome seesaw. The other end is deserted and points upward. Dressed in a blue prison uniform, with my face void of expression, I hold onto the handle as if waiting for someone or something to happen. Why do I sit isolated?

I can sense there is something missing. As I look up in the air at the desolate end of the seesaw, I see a flash image of a child—an outline of a child in motion at the top of the ride set against the bright morning sun of a new day. With the ringing of childlike laughter inside my head, I see the sparkle of energy in his eyes and can feel the enthusiasm in his heart as he falls beneath the sun's glare. My brow furrows as I realize the child is me.

As the image evaporates, it leaves a haze of pandemonium inside my head. I am experiencing some sort of dream only more powerful, more surreal—a transcendental journey of realization booked by my subconscious, a journey which I am meant to take alone—in my own mind. Why does it show me this scene? Why am I on this tragic seesaw? I close my eyes to cleanse my thoughts; then, I reminisce...

I remember the first time I rode a seesaw, the excitement I felt as I saw two children going up and down on that simple playground apparatus. It seemed all I needed was a friend to jump on the other side for balance. I could feel the anticipation as I grasped the handles and sat down. As my side raised up in the sky, I felt my heart pound in my throat. Suddenly, with the drop of my stomach, I plunged back to the earth. As I remember this ride, I try to place the significance



of it into my mind. How does it relate to my metaphorical dream?

As I think about that scene, sitting on the end of that seesaw emotionless, it's painfully obvious that somewhere along the way I stopped enjoying my ride. As I examine further, I see my faded and worn blue prison uniform. All of my adult life, "Corrections Officer" has been my identity. After high school I was very confused about my direction in life. I didn't realize the decisions I made then would have a profound impact on the rest of my life—would shape my character and development. I knew I wasn't ready for more school, so with an unsure step I ventured into my adulthood.

As I think about my introduction into adulthood, the introspection sparks another flashback to the same playground—only it's different. The sky is only partly clouded, the sun revealing itself as the celestial puffs drift leisurely by. I look at the seesaw and see myself as I was about five years ago when I started my adult life. My uniform is shiny and new. I can see that it was once good because I'm laughing as I go up and down. My eyes dart to the other end of the seesaw. My heart falls, like a boulder into the canyon of my soul, because I see my childhood self laughing gleefully—balancing the other side of the seesaw.

As I reflect on that time in my life, the scenes pass through my mind like a parade of emotions: gaining independence by moving into my first apartment, learning responsibility by paying rent every month, maintaining an automobile, taking care of the little things that involve surviving in everyday situations. Growing up as an adult, I was experiencing the triumphs of self-discovery. Saying, "Yes, I can do this. I can be an adult. I have arrived."

Why am I alone on the seesaw now? Somewhere I lost my "inner" child that gave me the balance of responsibility and joy in my life.

Can I be an adult and still retain my "inner" child?



When I think back to my childhood, I smile because I always had fun. I loved to do whatever my heart desired. At the same time, I was growing and developing by experiencing new stimuli, which is what growing up is all about. By playing basketball or riding my bike everywhere it would go, it seemed I was never doing the same thing. If I did feel bored, I would create something to do: build forts out of nothing, or just place my body against the earth and look through the trees at the huge white animals, ships, and planes floating in a beautiful sea of blue. It was transcendental.

They say that childhood ends when you realize that everything dies—even you. I disagree; I think it ends when people stop doing what they enjoy. After I developed into an adult, I figured “this must be it.” I had a job, a house, and a girlfriend. Showing my inexperience as an adult, I felt I could do no more. Figuring my decisions had already been made, I didn’t see my options. Tied down by personal and financial obligations I had chosen to make, I felt my desires of doing what it is that makes me happy were limited. I felt such things as my thirst for more knowledge, or finding a profession that enriched me by allowing me to work at things I enjoy, had passed me by.

The haze in my mind is clearing.

I guess I got a little too “comfortable” with my current situation and started to fear “getting off” that safe seesaw to explore in my adult world. I was doing no more for myself along the lines of learning or discovering. Becoming bored with the limited scope of stimulus for development, my “inner” child jumped off to find wonderment elsewhere. For the first time in my life, I was too scared to follow.

The only thing to do now is find “him.”

I see a perfectly green patch of grass underneath a grove of trees materialize in the distance. The vision spreads left and right and creeps toward me like an oasis on a desert highway until it engulfs me. I feel the warmth of the sun on my face and smell the energy of life in the air as it moves

through the green leaves of the trees. Is “he” here? I lay down in the grass; it cushions my body perfectly. The blades of grass feel like tiny sensors, sending the earth’s warmth and energy through my body like a wave. I look up in the sky, my body becoming numb with the buzz of energy from my surroundings, and I see the blue in the atmosphere. Looking around, I spot the sun through the openings in the trees towering branches. My eyes reach for the brilliance at its center, but the brightness reaches my eyelids first—closing them.

I open my eyes to try again and see the trees are gone and in their place beautiful mirrored skyscrapers stand, leaning over me like the towering branches. I find myself standing on the sidewalk across the street from Columbia University in downtown Chicago. I see the people walking in front of the two high-rise buildings, the film school’s campus. The stream of people amazes me. There must be a thousand people a minute passing in front of the building. I don’t see “him.” I can feel the disappointment on my face as my eyes shuffle through all the faces in the crowd. Just as I’m ready to give up, the flow of people is shut off like a water valve.

As the last people pass on by, I see the seesaw start to form. My heart starts to rise as I see the empty side up in the air. People are gathered on both sides of my view of this lone seesaw. They stop walking and turn to look at me. I see the curiosity on their faces as they cease their hustle and bustle to witness my epiphany. I feel the blood fill the capillaries in my cheeks and rush into my head making it like a balloon on my shoulders. I look back at the seesaw and see my “inner” child sitting patiently on the bottom of the other end. As my eyes meet his, he smiles as if to say “What took you so long.”

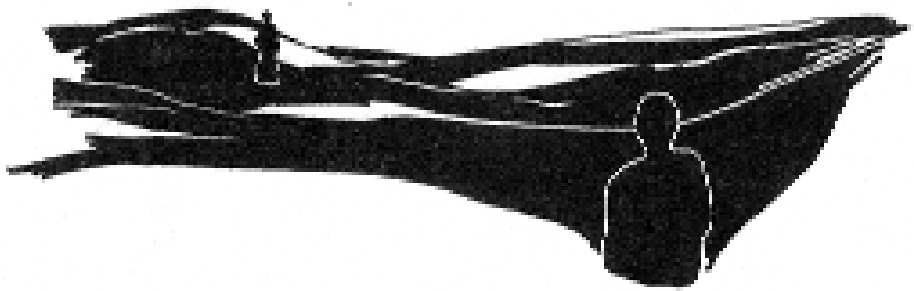
I wake up in my bed. A smile is on my face.

Shane Zephier
Academic Transfer





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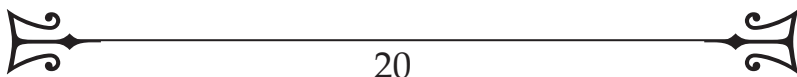


Borislav Prodanovic
Academic Transfer

Moment of Clarity

My mind opens into a splatter of ink
Into the smooth blackness I find peace and I set the world to my time
Altering my imagination up and over my fiercest emotions
Black and blue tingles to the sides of infinity
Like a serpent
Fetishness slides through the dead air
Tantalizing and twisting, he flirts with the mere idea of reason
Swallowing the deception of truth and
Regretting the illusion of perfection

Victoria Olvera
Culinary Arts



Through The Eyes of a Playa'

Only one night
to hold me tight
so make it good
and make it right
only one shot
at the whole thing
never a relationship
only a fling
as you gaze into my eyes
I stare past yours
cuz I'm only tryin'
to get in your draws
Together forever
never can be
wait till tomorrow
and you will see
together forever
may seem in sight
but I'll be playin' someone else
by the following night.

*Jessica L. Colburn
Academic Transfer*

*I dedicate this poem to anyone that has fallen in love only to find
out they are being played.*



*Denny Marshall
Continuing Education*



No Where to Run

The fact is that there's no understanding the future without the present, and no understanding where we are without a glance, at least, to where we have been.

Joyce Maynard

I remember him coming after me; *he was raging mad. He had this indescribable look on his face, and I knew then that I "had done it."*

"Dad, just leave me alone. I'll do it later-I promise!" His temper was blazing. Staring down at me, he began to shout even louder.

"You never do a Goddamn thing around here. It's always 'Dad, leave me alone. Dad, I'll do it later.' I don't want it done later, I want it done now," he yelled. I rolled my eyes and began to walk away, but there was no use because that just pissed him off even more.

"And when I'm speaking to you, don't walk away from me," he screamed charging after me.

But I just couldn't fight the instinct to hide.

This is how I came across my refuge. I would hide in a corner crouched in a ball with my hands covering my face, kind of like sitting in a tornado shelter waiting for the storm to hit, for the walls to come crashing down. It didn't save him from hitting or kicking me, but it made me feel somewhat safe.

"Dad, please don't, I'll do it if you just leave me alone." Tears were flowing from my eyes as though the river of suffering would take me away from all the pain. I sneaked out of the house to escape his anger. My best friend Kelly would be picking me up anytime now for a Friday night on the town. I had to be okay.

Deep down inside, I was never really okay. I can still picture myself sitting in those little corners of our house, my body tense and my face wet. I was scared of my father and the anger he possessed. But, I was even more frightened of facing reality. It was easier to pretend that I had a strong, loving relationship with my Dad; however, I couldn't pretend what I didn't know.



I walked down the tree lined driveway to the country road where I nervously awaited a ride from Kelly. Though I couldn't remember just exactly how the fight started, the pain I felt was foremost in my mind. I was worried that Dad would come out of the house after me and catch me before I caught my ride. Tears streaming down my face, I cried "Please Kelly, hurry, get here." I was running from my father and the things that I hated about him, but I had no clue as to what I was running to.

I ran the wrong way.

I remember when I said the wrong thing to my boyfriend. "Jeff, I just don't think that's a good way to do it," I said, pleading with him to change his mind.

In a rage he slammed down his Bud Light, put out his Camel, and looked at me with large, angry eyes. He started yelling, "You don't know what the hell you're talking about. I'm going to do it the way I want to, and I don't need you running your mouth, telling me what to do!"

The anger started to overcome his body, and he started charging toward me yelling, "From now on I don't want you to tell me a damn thing; we do what I say."

My fear overcame me, and I crawled into the corner of the couch, bracing myself for the storm. Jeff didn't hit me, but the rage was there and that was enough. I was hitting rock bottom, living my life in search of the next shelter from the storm. The problem was, I didn't realize it. My only thought was to run, so I called Kelly.

Sitting on the couch looking out the steamed-up, double windows for Kelly to come seemed like forever. With tears flowing down my face, I cried once again, "Hurry Kelly. Please get here." The sight of her maroon Beretta coming down the rain-beaten street allowed me to let out a sigh of relief as I ran out the door and down the wooden porch steps.

"Where the hell do you think you're going?" he yelled coming out the door after me.

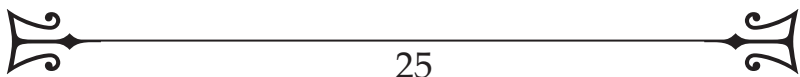
I forced out, "I'm leaving," and I ran to the safety of Kelly's car.

When I said I was leaving, I don't think I even knew if



I meant for good. All I knew was that the agony Jeff was putting me through I had felt somewhere before. I had felt it at home, and I didn't want to be there. So what was I doing there—running straight to the very thing I had been running away from.

Amber Dawn
Academic Transfer



Thank You

Thank you, Dad
for everything
you've ever taught me

You taught me
that my opinions don't matter
and that I'm worthless
That feeling is bad
and tears are even worse

You taught me
that my pain doesn't exist
and I just need to grow up
That life is a game
and I'd better let you win

You taught me
that the only way to get through life
is by wearing a mask
and pretending things are ok
And you taught me
that the love I give
isn't always going to be returned

Thank you, Dad
for teaching me
all I need to know about life.

*Wendy Lowery
Human Services*





David Briseno
Computer Aided Drafting & Technology



Dawn Lights Remembrance

Should I walk forward
into the footsteps
of the darkening night
just as the sun is setting.

Or, shall I crawl one by one into a hallow panel
beneath the floor boards of my thoughts
and wish,
for someone
yes, someone to save me.

Is this life a creature of uncertainty
that tortures,
and arouses me.

The darkness is bleak,
I am merely a drift,
turned into a wave,
following the tides.

Voices echo out
in patterns of lifestyles.

For, each wave has its own story.

A story...
what a thought.

I sing with the story



I scream out my hammering story,
with its song.
To find God,
taking me...
to the shores...
of his hospital.

Overwhelmed...
I drink in the bed panel,
of life.

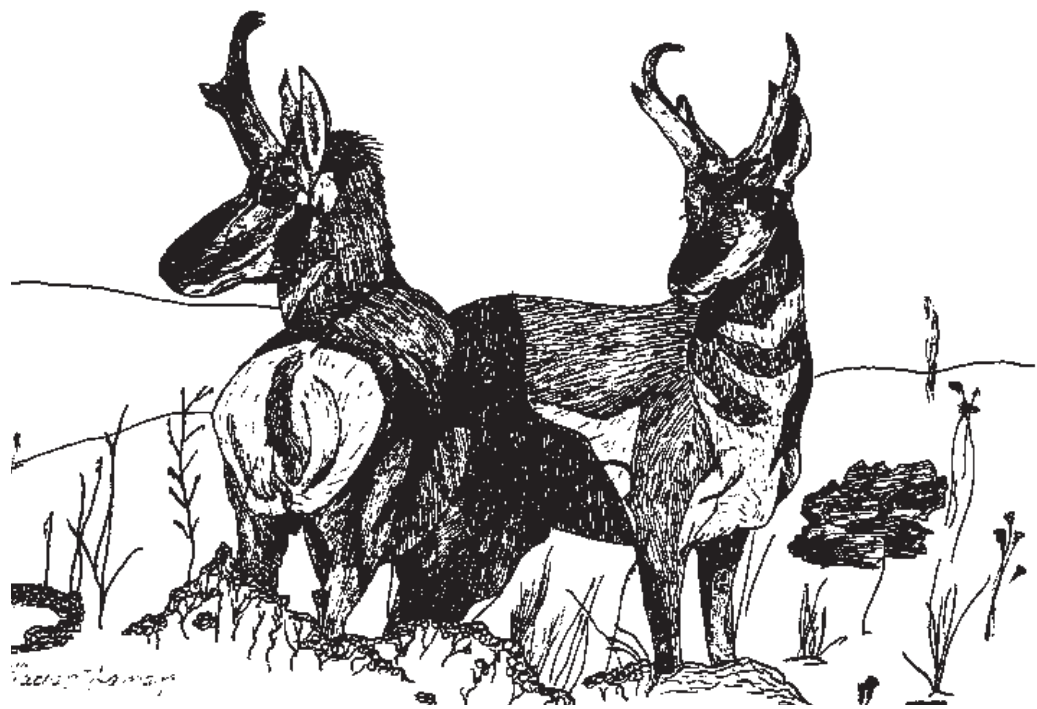
My feelings are waxed,
into a heart shaped mirror of reality.

I am a saved wave,
that is gardening
through the cracks of reality,
unreal.

'til my...
hammering story,
lies still,
still.

*Patty Steinauer
Academic Transfer*





*Nathan Haman
Academic Transfer*

The Thrill of the Hunt

The man trembles from the rush of adrenaline as it surges through his cold and tired body. His eye focuses on the figure that stands unaware of the ill-fated event about to befall him. He silently counts the number of tines that protrude from the buck's large set of antlers.

With extreme caution and using utmost care, the man raises the Browning 12-gauge shotgun to his left shoulder. He focuses his eye down the cold, black barrel, toward the magnificent trophy of muscle and grace. Finally, the perfect opportunity for a deadly shot is presented to the hunter—a chance to successfully achieve a long desired goal.

The early December day delivers a wind chilling temperature, threatening the man's exposed skin to instant frostbite. The scene is set on a private 80-acre patch of timber and pasture, with a landscape consisting primarily of fruit bearing hedge trees, many large towering cottonwoods, the thorn covered locust, dead elms and the thickets of wild plum trees spread out among a terrain of deep ravines. Across the horizon, waist-high buck brush grows wild along the timber floor, bearing small clumps of dark red BB size berries clinging to its lifeless branches, giving a special color to the rugged terrain. Scattered gooseberry bushes, raspberry shrubs, and wild rose bushes have gone dormant for the cold winter season that lies ahead.

Here this thin and muscular young man ponders the thought of having fresh venison packed in his freezer and acquiring a sizable trophy to mount on his wall. It's a tradition that he cannot seem to miss. For him, it would be like missing 4th of July fireworks or not joining his friends to greet in the New Year.

To protect himself from the below freezing temperatures, he wears a baggy pair of grayish colored coveralls made entirely with state-of-the-art Thinsulate. His outer attire completely covers his body, all the way from his wool lined, forest green pack boots, to his blue, hooded

sweatshirt and his bright orange-colored stocking cap.

He waits for his chance to meet those trophy bucks. With his Browning 12-gauge shot gun resting on his knees, he is poised and ready to aim in case that moment comes.

The hunter's statuesque figure is almost unnoticeable, except for the slight and slow movements of his head and shoulders, for the man knows that any approaching deer can pick up on motion instantaneously. If an unrecognizable movement spooks a deer, it will not hesitate to warn his family members that are nearby. It will start to shake the earth by stomping its front hooves to the ground with a mighty force. This is followed by a terrible snort that is sure to be heard up to a quarter of a mile away. Then raising his white bushy tail, the deer will take off in leaps and bounds toward dense cover and safer ground. It is very unlikely that the deer will appear again.

The only sign of life comes from the man's bright crimson red nose, rosy pair of cheeks, and the stream of fog released with every breath he exhales into the bitter cold winter air. His amber colored shooting glasses, with gold wire frames, glisten with the coming of the new morning sun, as it tries to show its face over the eastern horizon. While sitting on the frozen ground, he leans against a large hedge tree. Its short bulky trunk and long stringy bark holds together a clump of crooked limbs and branches. The crooked shapes tower over his head in a design shaped like a beautiful bouquet of flowers, with only the bare crooked stems left to admire.

With a keen eye, he searches the cool crisp air for any unsettled movement, continuing to distinguish any unusual sounds. His ears single out the fluttering of wings and whistles of two small wrens as they play recklessly in the gooseberry shrubs off to his left. He listens to the distinctive bark of squirrels as they play in the trees far off in the distance.

Meanwhile, he notices that the fruit of the tree has long fallen off and now lays nestled in the lifeless, frost



covered grass, that once flourished with the colors of spring. The Osage oranges are scattered along the ground in a symmetrical shape made up of bright greens and yellows. He discovers that some of them have turned soft and rotten from the cold winter temperatures, as others have been plucked of their riches. The squirrels that searched for the seeds deep inside have left a neatly carved and cone shaped area missing from the center of the round, bumpy, inedible, green fruit. It looks as if the squirrel was making a bowl to eat his supper, leaving behind what looks like tiny little green and yellow torches scattered on the ground after a hard day of whittling.

The man waits patiently as troublesome thoughts start to run through his head: did he pick the right spot to intercept deer activity, or will the deer walk past him just beyond his shooting range? He recalls his scouting mission in this area two weeks earlier. He was able to view a few amazing events of how deer court year after year, ensuring survival of the species.

It was a beautiful day; the sun was shining brightly next to a clear blue sky. A warm southern breeze was rolling through the trees, causing the tall clumps of green grass to wave back and forth.

Suddenly, a strong and arrogant, dominating buck appeared before the hunter, strutting his masculinity to attract the opposite sex. The whitetail buck was vigorously pawing at the ground with his front hooves, making a bare, shallow depression in the ground, leaving scent from his interdigital glands which are located between his front hooves. Meanwhile, he shook his antlers furiously in the overhanging branches, depositing more scent from another gland that is located in the lower left corner of his eye. He then paused for a moment and scanned the area around him. The massive buck started to urinate on the scrape, letting it run down his hind legs past his sponge-like tarsal gland to further enhance his presence.

Soon he continued to walk down his selected trail of choice. Using a slow, cautious pace, he took time to browse on winter foliage and scout the area around him for any intruders or a doe in her estrus.

Suddenly, the buck caught a whiff of a doe in his bedding area. Quickly, he decided to investigate. As his steps started to pick up a certain spring, he carried an entirely new attitude. It's as if he had a new purpose in life and forgot everything else, acting like a young schoolboy in love. He trotted over to her, about ten or fifteen yards behind her, and started to sniff her trail. The doe could have been in her estrus period, which lasts only a couple of days.

He extended his large swollen neck and with his head low and his chin turned up, he started to chase her while making low, long grunts, wheezing and sneezing. After a short chase, he stopped to sniff her urine. He extended his neck and held his snout slightly upward—curling his upper lip, and closing his upper nasal chamber to intensify the doe's urine odor. He then sniffed her rump and pretended to chase her, to get an idea of her intent to breed. If she were ready to copulate, she would let him mount her. She continued to keep her distance from him and soon they disappeared into the dense, wild plum thickets of the timber.

SNAP!

The hunter quickly collects his thoughts. A loud, yet unfamiliar, noise to his left—the sound of sticks snapping in half, as if someone is walking carelessly through the timber—startles him.

The coldness the hunter feels from the relentless, bone chilling air that has penetrated his selected choice of once toasty warm winter duds, suddenly subsides. His human heart starts to race to what seems to be one hundred beats per minute. With great anticipation, he waits to see what will appear from the shadows of the trees—like a hungry tiger ready to pounce on his unsuspecting victim.

Soon, appearing like a ghost out of nowhere, a small whitetail doe comes walking towards him down a well-beaten, long and narrow path. The doe stops to look behind her, apparently, waiting for something to follow. The hunter quickly steals a chance to raise his 12-gauge shot gun to a comfortable aiming position.

The doe continues walking. As she approaches the hunter, he is amazed at her proximity. He can almost jump



out and touch her thick and coarse, light brown winter coat.

Then she gasps, like a human in a state of total surprise. She is finally aware of a bizarre object that she is not familiar with. She stares at the hunter—with great intent to discover what she has encountered. She is hesitant to send a warning to other deer nearby. The hunter stands solid as a fence post so that he doesn't scare her, and she continues to walk past the hunter.

Suddenly, the hunter notices a shadow moving in the distance. It seemingly zigzags through the timber as it occupies the same trail the doe had used. A whitetail buck, baring his massive set of antlers, appears from the thick cover and walks toward the hunter with a somber stroll.

The man trembles from the rush of adrenaline as it surges through his cold and tired body. His eye focuses on the figure that stands unaware of the ill-fated event about to befall him. He silently counts the number of tines that protrude from the buck's large set of antlers. With extreme caution and using utmost care, the man raises the Browning 12-gauge shotgun to his left shoulder. He focuses his eye down the cold, black barrel, toward the magnificent trophy of muscle and grace.

BANG!

The tremendous force created by the explosion of gunpowder that projected the single-caliber slug from the gun sends his body thrusting back. The hunter loses sight of the moving target for a brief period in time. Then, after catching his balance and regaining his line of sight, he catches a glimpse of the trophy buck tumbling toward the ground. The pile of deer lay there with no movement at all, as if a person took a sack of potatoes and thrust it toward the ground. The hunter stands there in amazement as he looks at the pile of flesh lying there in a clump. The hunter starts grinning from ear to ear, realizing the good fortune his skill has brought him.

He lays his gun down on the dry frozen ground; then, he takes a deep breath—he pulls an eight-inch lock blade

knife out of his black leather sheath that hangs from his worn leather belt. He opens the knife, then kneels next to the creature's massive 250-pound frame of muscle. He proceeds to dress the animal that ten minutes ago had beautiful grace and magnificent style. He cuts the deer's belly open from his asshole to his neck. Then the hunter sticks his hands into the warm, blood filled chest cavity, pulling the lungs, heart and entire intestinal tract from the dead and lifeless body. The man throws the bloody entrails of the lifeless deer to the timber floor, thereby, providing a delicate and nutritious meal for many of God's other creatures that compete for life.

The hunter packs up and leaves the timber, towing the marvelous prize behind him. He now feels at ease with his skills as a hunter and is already thinking of next year's hunt, anticipating the challenges that the elusive whitetail will bring him.

Doug Brennecke
Machine Tool Technology

Pressing Conversation

As I trudged into Rice's Tire and Auto Center to have our Buick's oil and filter changed, I noticed one elderly, balding, and salt and pepper bearded gentleman seated in the far corner on one of the only three metal chairs. Looking around this cubby-hole of a waiting area, I noticed a six-foot table along one wall with well-read magazines, a display for Dunlop Tires, and a well-used coffee maker. My eyes focused on the Tupperware creamer and sugar containers smudged with greasy and oil fingerprints and the contrasting row of blooming cacti on the window ledge.

"I'll be right with you, ma'am," the service manager greeted me as he rushed to pick up the ringing phone in the room behind the service counter. "Good morning, Rice's Tire and Auto Center," he spoke breathlessly.

The service manager returned to the service counter and mumbled, "Thank you for waiting. May I help you?"

"Yes, I have a 9 a.m. appointment for an oil and filter change." I remarked.

"Name?" he inquired as he punched the computer keys with grease embedded under his nails.

"Meints," I replied.

"What make and year?" he inquired.

"I believe it is a '93 Skylark; I'm not sure," I said hesitantly. "Don't you have a record of that on the computer?"

"Telephone number?"

"508-541-6859," I replied.

"Is it a four- or six-cylinder?" he continued.

Jesting, I said, "I don't know. How am I supposed to know these things? Isn't that your job?"

Ignoring my question, he inquired with a grin, "Need a ride?"

"No, I'll just wait."

As I dragged a chair to the table and poured myself a

cup of coffee from the stained, almost-empty pot, I watched the steady pace of the mechanics through the glass doors next to the service counter. A couple of the mechanics were buried under hoods; others were replacing tires. The intermittent sound of the air gun removing the lug nuts was similar to the irritating sound of a dentist's drill.

"Why DON'T you know if you have a four- or six-cylinder car?" the elderly gentleman inquired as he glanced at me over his newspaper.

Should I continue the discussion about car cylinders with this balding old man, I thought? Why not.

I replied wittingly to the stranger, "When my husband learns how to iron, I will learn about car cylinders. Being naive about such technical things has its benefits, you know. Prudence is essential to a woman in such situations."

"Why, I can iron proficiently. My grandmother taught me how to starch and iron my shirts as a young man. She even taught me how to sew and crochet. I can crochet a chain a mile long!" the genteel, old man replied confidently.

"Really? Do you still iron today?" I asked quite amazed.

"Yes, I do. I find ironing very relaxing. You know, it is one of those mindless tasks," he replied.

"Yes, ironing is a mindless chore, but certainly an unavoidable one," I politely replied as I poured myself another cup of coffee. I can't believe I'm having a conversation about ironing in an auto repair shop with a total stranger, I thought to myself. "What does your wife think about your ironing skills?" I asked curiously.

"She doesn't mind at all. She has never worried about her lack of homemaking skills; her interests lie elsewhere."

Continuing the conversation, he asked inquisitively, "You have an accent. Where are you from? What brings you to the Northeast?"

"We are from the Midwest. After 25 years with one company, we decided to change careers."



“Where does your husband work and what does he do?”

“He is the operations manager for Emerson and Cuming Composite Materials, Inc. in Canton. They construct buoyancy products from syntactic composites for offshore drilling. Aren’t you impressed with my technical knowledge?” I teased.

Smiling at my openness, he continued to inform me of his wife’s mechanical and technical naiveté. His eyes sparkled as he said, “My wife doesn’t even know if cars have engines. She has run out of gas twice now and doesn’t understand how that happens.”

“Mrs. Meints, your car is finished,” the service manager interrupted as he entered the waiting area.

“Thank you,” I said as I got up from my chair. I grinned at the old man as I handed the service manager my credit card.

After he punched the appropriate numbers into the computer, he walked toward the noisy printer along the back wall. “It will be just a moment for the printout.”

The service counter was cluttered with business cards, advertisements, a smeared computer screen and a grimy keyboard. It was difficult to find room for my anything else, let alone my purse. As I stood waiting for the service manager to return with my printout, I walked over to the glass doors that separated the waiting area from the mechanics’ work area. Rows and rows of tires hung from the back wall. To the right of the shop hung various sizes of belts. Four cars on lifts at various heights and with various mechanical problems were in the center of the large work area. Under the back wall of tires, mechanics’ tools cluttered their workbenches. Leaking dead batteries, garbage cans filled with empty oil cans and boxes, and piled empty boxes were scattered throughout the work area.

As the service manager returned to the cluttered front counter, he offered the pen from his shirt pocket and said, “Please sign here.”

Returning to the front counter, I signed the charge slip and retained the yellow copy. I returned his pen. He slipped it back into his shirt pocket without a thought.

“Have a good day,” the service manager replied as he placed my credit card and printout on my purse.

Leaning over the counter, trying to avoid being overheard again, I whispered to the service manager, “Is my car a four- or six-cylinder?”

“It’s a four-cylinder,” he mouthed.

“Thank you,” I mouthed back.

As I turned from the service counter, I said to the stranger, who shared a half-hour of his life and time with me, “I truly enjoyed our visit this morning.”

“It was my pleasure,” he commented.

“By the way, my Skylark is a four-cylinder!” I remarked, smiling confidently with shoulders erect and head high, looking directly into his eyes.

Cheryl Meints
Office Technology



DEATH DECREE

Upon learning about the death of a high school friend

DEAD

She said, "He died."

My mind saw his body

in a long cherrywood coffin,

baby blue satin surrounded his frozen corpse.

His eyes closed in ageless sleep,

dimples forever silenced.

The imagined scene shifted

to an ashen day in an enclosed cemetery.

Terra cotta leaves played tag close to the numbed surface of the earth.

Lifeless, brittle leaves were caught in updrafts and then forced back to the rigid surface.

All nature was as dead as he was.

The tombstone stood vigil—

an implicit reminder of this death decree.

At my feet as I stood beside his grave

the earth was scarred in the unmistakable outline of

his casket.

*Kathy Thorne
Office Technology*



The Story of a Glass Heart

The glass heart
cracked from the inside
Heat and pressure created from nothing.

I stand and look over the pieces
pick one up and look deeply inside
to find the nothingness from when it began.

Who caused this?
Who let this happen?
Dare they think their heart is made of steel?
But we all understand.
Tears of understanding will ruse the ignorance away.

Confidence is had by few.
But one can be confident and throw stones of frustration into
the sky.
For if you throw it at the steel heart,
they just dent and fall to the ground.
But you can't hold on to them—
They must be free
The stones will find their home at the bottom of the sea.

I watch my own mental breakdown
Oblivious to reaction
Because I saw the crack's beginning
I had not yet learned the story of the glass heart.
Some stories can never be told.



I dropped my stones
There is no use to throw them anymore.
I fell into the water of time
and let the waves wash my thoughts away.
As I float, I cry because I can't fly
I don't even care that I've learned to swim.
I was in the air once—
Inside the clouds.
Enjoyed my beautiful changes so much
I didn't want to understand.
And that is why my wings were clipped.

The time realization came to me,
The water had broken my fall.
I shunned the water for taking my air away.
One must realize that air is sacred
and by no means taken for granted
plainly, I just wanted it back.

I had to use the healing of the water.
The way to the shore will be given to you by using it.
My wings will grow in time
because the land is new.
Remember that, because below the water are the stones.

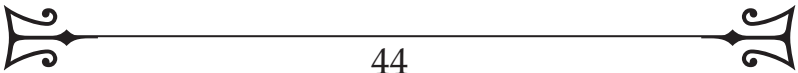
I can reach the clouds again
Judge yourself on what they give you.
Every decision is inevitable
Procrastination and denial will mist your sight
Until water fills the eyes.

The staircase of dreams is hidden in the clouds
blocked by the storm.
The stairs lead to the stars
when you reach them,
you can not fall.

You begin your journey to the sun
There are no wrong decisions—
only ways to speed your voyage.
The sun is the beginning of the end
and the end of the beginning.

I want my journey.
I will gather the pieces slowly—
the cracks will stay.
Only a glass heart has dreams.

Andy Bates
Architectural Drafting Technology



My Right Arm

The sound of a two-cycle engine screeched through the warm morning air. I stood at the back door watching my 82-year-old grandfather whizzing past the house on his red Kawasaki motorcycle, grinning his toothy, boyish grin. This particular motorcycle was one of six. They were all painted red to deceive Grandma, who watched him from her wheelchair behind the window, into believing that he owned only one. As I touched the glass panes of the old storm door, I thought about how much this door and my grandpa had changed my life.

I'd always been grandpa's little girl: showered with presents of all sorts, spoiled, and adored. I still smile remembering a summer evening when he returned from a trip to town with a doll the size of a toddler. Her dark hair matched mine, and I can still see her bright blue eyes in the vividness of a clarion memory. One Christmas, when I was small, grandpa donned a Santa suit and impersonated Old Saint Nick. I later told my mother how surprised I was to see that Santa had grandpa's eyes. My special grandpa sometimes sang to me, sometimes read stories to me, and sometimes quoted poetry. He taught me to tie my shoes when I was five and to drive when I was fifteen.

One of the things I found most endearing about him was his careless attitude. He seemed never to worry that I would get hurt. He let me ride a tractor, wade in the creek, tramp through abandoned farmsteads, pick up snakes, and raise wild bunnies. (At least he let me try to raise wild bunnies, but wild bunnies don't thrive on warm milk from a doll's bottle, and none survived.)

When he played games with me, he never hurried as if a more important task was awaiting him. In fact, he played with delighted abandon. His eyes shone. He laughed. This large man, 6'1" with broad shoulders, and big, powerful hands became my age again. We played fox and chicken,

checkers, and hide and seek. When I was with him, I felt safe and protected.

One calm, early spring evening, grandpa had just returned from the fields dirty, hot, exhausted, and hungry. I begged him to play hide and seek before dinner. The storm door at the back entrance to the house was base. I hid; grandpa counted. When he finished, he began to search and in a few moments had spotted me. I ran to the door, determined to reach it before he could catch me. Triumphantlly, I touched the pane of glass—but it did not remain solid.

My arm plunged through shattering glass up to my shoulder. I was surprised and stunned, thrust suddenly into a slow-motion, dream-like existence. My eyes saw blood coming from my upper arm. I couldn't think clearly and was incapable of grasping what this excessive amount of blood meant.

The next thing I remember, I was laying on the ground outside the fenced yard where we'd been playing. I was near an outdoor faucet used to water the chickens. I could hear the pecking and scratching from the hen house a few feet away. My uncle, who had been an army medic in World War II, was administering first aid in the form of a tourniquet. He was justifying the tourniquet with the insistence that I would bleed to death during the seven-mile trip to the hospital.

Grandpa knelt beside us.

Grandma, anticipating my stomach's inability to retain its contents in such a traumatic situation, came from the house with a small, plastic bowl. Grandpa got the car from the garage. Driving to the nearest hospital, I heard fragments of the conversation going on in the front seat. Grandma told grandpa how much difficulty she'd had getting the neighbors to relinquish the party line, so she could call the hospital.

The emergency room was small, crowded with people and equipment. From the bed, I could hear the doctor's



whispering reproach of my grandparents, “If that tourniquet had been on her arm even two minutes longer, there is no way I would have been able to save the arm. Don’t you realize that tissues die when a tourniquet is applied?” He asked my grandparents to leave the room.

The doctor smiled reassuringly and spoke to me in a calm, slow voice. He told me that he would stitch the deep wound in my arm and began his task. Shock robbed me of any emotion. I lay perfectly still and watched as if someone else’s arm was being repaired.

The next morning, I stood on the sidelines at school recess. Emotions from the traumatic experience of the day before overwhelmed me. The fear caused by the near loss of my arm sent “what if” scenarios through my mind. Other nine-year-olds clamored around me asking what had happened to my arm. It was my nature to be introverted, and I was embarrassed by the attention. I refused to answer their questions because it made me relive the experience without the benefit of shock to numb the fear.

Then, fear gave way to gratitude.

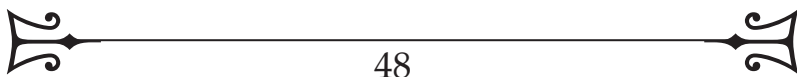
I thanked God that I was just normal with all my limbs. I felt relieved that I didn’t have to live without my right arm. In those few moments, I changed. I realized how quickly and completely my life could have been altered. I became more cautious and very grateful that I did not have an extra burden to overcome in my life.

My feelings toward my grandfather did not change. He remained the most trusted person in my life. Miraculously, he didn’t change, either. One would assume that such an accident could have changed him. He could have become overprotective of his grandchildren and great grandchildren. But he didn’t.

Now, here I stand, near the storm door, watching him speed by on a dirt bike, teaching my six-year-old how to ride. He is allowing my children to try new things—test their wings.

I do not stop the fun—even though I do nag my children to stay away from snakes, abandoned buildings, and the creek. In my heart I know how priceless it is to have someone like grandpa in the life of a child.

Kathy Thorne
Office Technology





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*Katie Stone
Academic Transfer*

My Cousin Ben

When I think of my cousin Ben, I see two big brown eyes, and two big ears rushing toward me. I just stand there, bracing myself for the impact that is him. Then I hear those dreadful words come from his mouth: “Chrissyfur! Chrissyfur!” Then he proceeds to tickle me, hit me, whatever he can do to get me to tickle him back. Of course he would run, and I couldn’t catch him. But when I did, he got the favor right back.

It was like this every time I saw him. He would bombard me with tickles and Chrissyfurs. There were even times when I would receive a fist to the family jewels. When I would tell him he shouldn’t do that, he would look at me with his innocent eyes and say “Why?”. I would immediately forgive him, of course. Who wouldn’t? But taking my guard down was a bad move. No sooner than I forgave him, he would throw yet another fist, bringing back the pain that just went away. I guess he just didn’t understand the importance of the family jewels.

I also remember a time when he brought me a birthday card. He was walking up to my house, card in hand. Suddenly the neighbor’s gigantic dog came around the corner, barking like the sound of thunder. Ben took one look at the dog, threw the card toward the house, and ran back to the safety of the van. He tried this for a second time a year later. But instead of coming up to the house and possibly having a confrontation with the ferocious beast next door, he decided to be on the safe side and put the card in the mailbox. I admire his courage for coming back that second time. It takes a brave person to face a ferocious beast, no matter what the beast may be.

Looking at our baby pictures, you couldn’t tell us apart. It was as if we were twins, with different mothers, born fourteen years apart. Looking at him was like looking at me when I was his age. We weren’t identical or anything, but we



sure were a couple of handsome lads with beautiful, brown eyes.

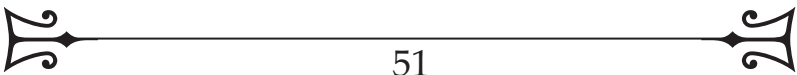
I also remember the last time I talked to him. It was at church on Palm Sunday. I was sitting in a back pew with my girlfriend, while he was in the front row with his family. I was hoping he wouldn't see me, until church was over. But he did. He smiled at me and I smiled back. I could tell he was getting antsy. For what? He wanted to attack me, of course.

The service was over, and I waited outside for him. Sure enough, there were those brown eyes and those big ears coming toward me as usual. But this time, he had weapons. The Lord armed him with two large palm leafs, and he proceeded to attack me with them. During the attack, I was teasing him about having a girlfriend at school, the same way he did to me about my girlfriend. As we were walking away from the church, he gave me one of his palm leafs. I hit him with mine a few times, for payback of course. Then we said goodbye.

I am going to miss my cousin Ben greatly. I am going to miss the random acts of assault, and the punches to the groin. I am going to miss hearing him call me Chrissyfur. I'm just going to miss him. But I know that I will see him again one day. For I know that he is in a greater place now. And I can just picture him chasing God like he did me—a Palm leaf in each hand, and the look of happiness and joy in his angelic, brown eyes. Look out God, you have your hands full now.

**IN MEMORY OF
BENJAMIN TYLER CHLOUPEK
1993-1999**

*Christopher Brock
Academic Transfer*



Awakening

I know the cool breeze that hit me
interrupting my thoughts
I know the rain that drips from the sky
I know the warmth of the sun
when she's great and high
I know the healing power of your breath
as I suck you in
I know all of these things so great
it weakens me from within
Indescribable feelings spread far and wide
Makes me feel as if I've been
Makes me feel alive
Makes me breathe a little deeper
Live a little longer
Makes me realize I have more to hunger

Victoria Olvera
Culinary Arts





Jennifer Nelms Kroft
Continuing Education

Heating Water

He lay
glistening skin
abandoned on the bed
His sculpted face, pulsing throat, sleek muscles
carelessly
inviting my hunger
my insatiable eyes
He, lavishly displayed
to my simmering stare
restrained gaze.

I lay
caressing him
eyes only
not daring touch
afraid of
shattering
the fragility of the moment
the glowing picture
sprawled on the bed
next to me.

In the kitchen now
sterile white counters
gleaming tap fixtures
cold tile floor
I hurry, grab empty mug
turn, shave chunks of bitter chocolate
they splash into heating water
yes! steam rises
Bring sweet vanilla, warm scent evoking him
Crumble sugar, hint of salt; I pour.



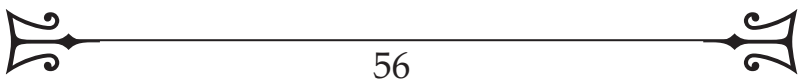
I quietly re-enter the bedroom
seeking cozy chair next to bed
curl
 sip steaming chocolate
 salty taste of him
 musky smell of him
 still clinging to my lips
 mingling with the sweet hotness
 poised teasingly
 on my tongue.

I could
lean over him
let my warmth
 wetness
disturb him awake
or remain
tempting myself with
provocative thoughts
 of this
innocent bittersweet invitation.

Stephanie Simons
Academic Transfer



*Andrew Riley
Academic Transfer*



**"How do I know what I think
until I see what I say?"**

E.M. Forester

