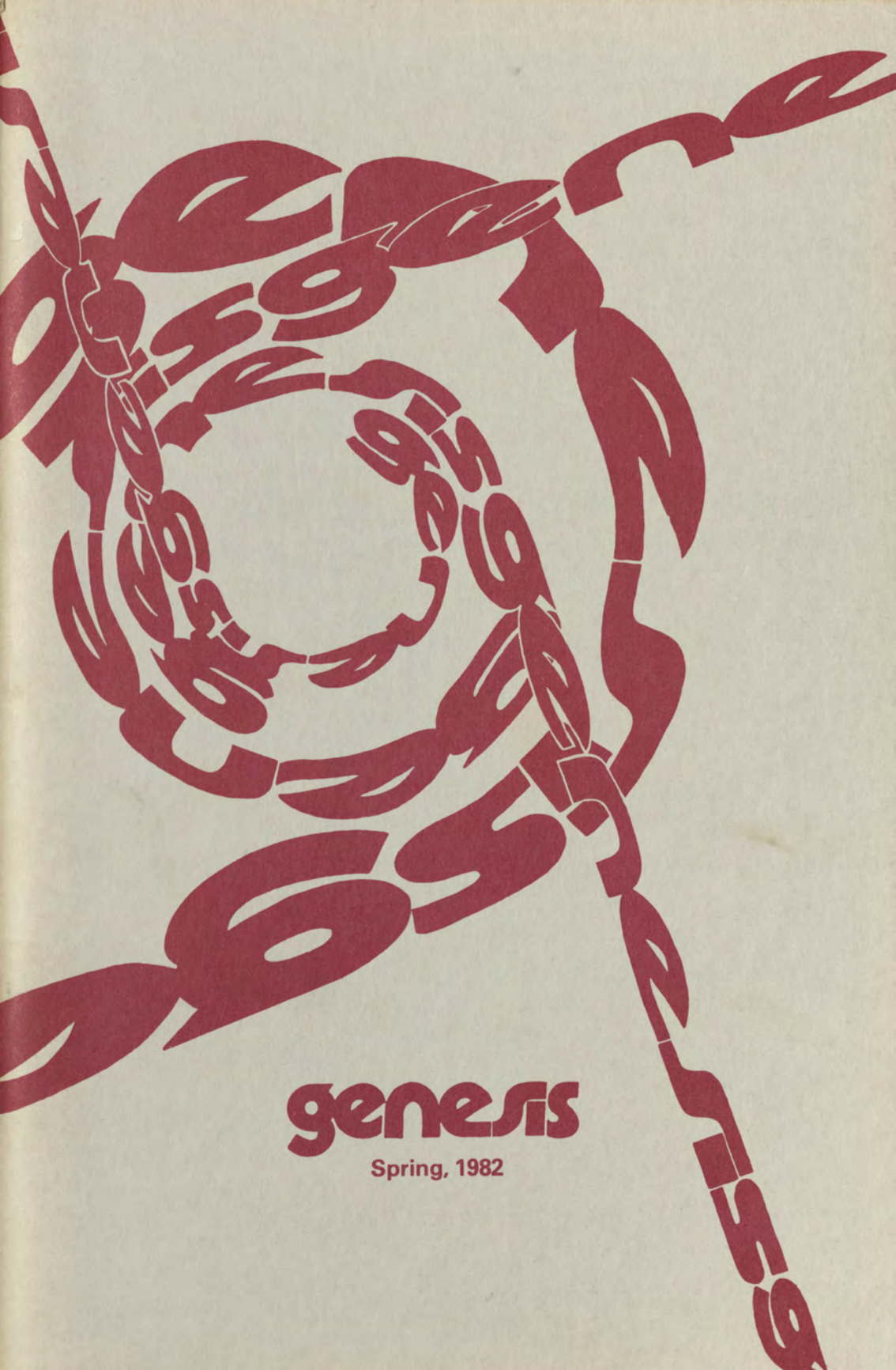

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Invitation to Artists and Authors

Artwork is invited from all persons who have been students at IUPUI at any time during the last eighteen months prior to submission. Any type of drawings may be submitted, although black-and-white sketches are preferred. Photographs may also be submitted. All artwork will be reproduced in black-and-white. Artists are asked to submit no more than ten pieces for a given issue. Please identify each piece on the back of the artwork with your name and the title of the piece. Include your name, address and telephone number on an enclosed title sheet as well as on your portfolio. A 25-50 word bio must accompany all submissions. Artists whose work is not accepted will be notified by mail. All artists are expected to pick up their artwork after submissions have been judged. Submit work to GENESIS, Student Services Office, Cavanaugh Hall, 925 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202.

Manuscripts are invited from all persons who have been students at IUPUI at any time during the last eighteen months prior to submission. Manuscripts of essays, fiction, or poetry, on any topic, may be submitted at any time to GENESIS, Student Services Office, Cavanaugh Hall, 925 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202. All manuscripts are considered by a student editorial board. Authorship is not revealed to the board until a manuscript has been accepted.

All submissions must be accompanied by a separate title sheet containing the author's name, address, and telephone number. Essays and fiction should be typed on a sixty-space line and double spaced. Manuscripts of less than sixteen pages will be given first consideration. *Manuscripts must be submitted in duplicate.* A 25-50 word bio must accompany all submissions.

Authors whose material has been accepted will be notified prior to publication. Authors who wish to be notified of rejection prior to publication date—and all authors who wish their manuscripts to be returned—must include a self-addressed stamped envelope with their submissions. Any manuscript submitted too late for the current deadline will be considered for the next issue. Prizes of $25 are awarded at the discretion of the editors for the outstanding entry in each of the categories of essay, fiction, art, and poetry. Members of the Editorial Board are ineligible to receive prizes.

Night Vapors

Gina Mallory

Gina Mallory This is my second semester at IUPUI. I plan to major in either Computer Science or Engineering.

"Night Vapors" is my first (and possibly last) short story. Writing tends to be hard work. She is the recipient of the *Genesis* award for fiction

The sounds oozed out of the cracks in the chicken coop and were shoved through the darkness by a lethargic wind, but no one listened. She always waited until she was sure her neighbors (no, not really neighbors, just people living a few miles down the road) were all asleep before beginning her serenade. She couldn't play when they might hear for fear the Scot she "borrowed" the bagpipe from might discover where the noise was coming from and demand the return of his instrument. Even her boy was excluded, by his choice, from her musical exhibitions. Now, as in his infancy, he wrapped his senses with sleep and refused to surface until the last note seeped out of the county. Her potential audience was lucky never to have attended a performance, for it sounded more like she was giving a pig an ice-water enema than playing a bagpipe.

When not in use, the instrument sat in its corner like an octopus exhausted after a night of love. It seemed to be as much at peace as its new owner in their home, once a shelter for chickens. A few of the mangy birds remained, but they preferred sleeping in the nearby outhouse; it smelled better in there. The coop had changed a bit since it was abandoned by its former occupants. A rusted brass bed, a wood-burning stove, a stool with a board nailed to the top pretending to be a table, and a chair with a broom handle substituting as a leg replaced the roosting poles and straw-covered crates. The birds' furniture burned in the stove during the first winter, but they left behind other remainders of their past residency. Chicken feed, chicken feathers, chicken shit covered the walls, the floor, the stove, the table, the chair,

and the bed. She was also a victim of chicken residue; it was on her skin, in her hair, up her nose, in her ears, under her nails, and between her toes. Only her boy escaped. Each morning he scrubbed his entire exterior with pieces of burlap and water from the well. Her condition failed to bother her. She only worried about "the poisoned night vapors that creep into a person while they sleep and rot their insides." To protect herself, she put wax paper over the square holes she called windows and hung a blanket over the space once occupied by a door. The gaps between the boards of the walls and floor were forgotten.

Her daily housekeeping duties consisted of cooking two meals of corn bread, cabbage, and navy beans on top of the stove; gathering enough kindling for the next day; and plucking out any blade of grass that trespassed on her dirt lot (she believed the night vapors were most attracted to houses with thick, green yards). While she labored at these tasks, her boy wandered across the landscape looking for something to stare at with his question-mark face. She once asked him what he did when he left her for so long. He reluctantly told her that he was searching for a reason to stop searching and that he sometimes saw people who looked like they'd know the answer, but he never asked them to share it with him. They rarely made contact with each other. They didn't even eat together since there was just one chair between them. He only spoke to her when he wanted to know something. Sneaking up behind her with his question mark in place, he would demand an answer to whatever was perplexing him at that moment. One day he wanted to know where snot came from, another day why skin wasn't green. She never commented on any of this; she just continued smiling as if nothing had been said.

With the last meal eaten and her boy protected from sight and sound in their bed, she lit the hurricane lamp that hung on a string from the ceiling, dragged the chair to the center of the room, clutched the bagpipe to her withered breasts, and waited for the rest of the world to sleep. When she felt certain that only the chickens and God listened, the concert began. She developed, after months of practice, a system that allowed her to make the most noise with the least effort. First she filled her jowls with air, then she held the wooden pipe to her lips and emptied

her chickeny breath into the bag. As she sucked more air through her six remaining teeth, she crushed the bag with her forearms, forcing its contents through the drooping pipes. She didn't attempt to create music; the painful wail of the deflated instrument was the only sound she needed to hear. This cycle continued until she became dizzy from a lack of oxygen in her brain. The skin on her face hung around her chin like lemon icing melting off an Angel food cake.

The show was over, and the winded sack was put back in its corner. She dissolved into her rusted brass bed next to her boy and pulled the patchwork quilt over her head. The night vapors just might like the sound of a bagpipe. As she tucked the corners of her feather pillow into her ears, he mentally shook himself awake, but didn't physically move until he heard her rhythmic wheezing begin. He then eased out of bed and scurried past the blanket. She knew of his nocturnal excursions, despite his precautions. She also had a good idea of what he did. If it was clear, he climbed up to the roof and sat gazing past the stars and planets. This she knew because one night she crept out and watched him sit with his head tilted back and a frown, the only other expression he seemed capable of producing, locked on his face. She was sure he took refuge in the outhouse when it rained since, on those nights, she often heard the squeals of startled chickens and the thuds of wet birds hitting the ground. A series of metallic clanks penetrated the pillow stuffed in her ears. Mounting the roof without being heard was impossible. It was constructed of tin so thin that it made the lightest drizzle sound like rounds of buckshot fire. She now knew her boy was safe above her and began wheezing in earnest.

The next morning she found him sitting in the chair, right angled at the waist and knees. When he heard her sliding across the floor toward him, he began to rub his eyes the way people who are fighting to remain conscious do. She wasn't fooled. His eyes had remained open since she put her bagpipe down and wouldn't close again until she picked it back up. If I ever quit playin', she thought, he'll never git a bit of sleep. As she prepared their morning meal (the one that would give him enough strength to continue his endless search), the chickens filed into the

room. Their hunger had once again forced them to wade through the fowl odor that hung in the coop. She had learned long ago that once they'd gotten in, it was impossible to get them out. They did serve a purpose she decided. They did save her the effort of tossing out the moldy leftovers. When he finished eating, she took everything left behind and scraped it into a crusty bowl. This she set on the floor. Before she could even straighten up, the scraps were gone. They aren't chickens, she thought. They're pigs with wings.

He always avoided looking at the birds, but he was the one who noticed one was missing. This news upset nobody. In fact, they were a little pleased. She had tried to talk those animals into relocating ever since she moved into the empty coop. The chickens wouldn't cooperate though, and she didn't feel she had a right to insist since they were there long before she was. Besides, they couldn't live forever. She told him not to worry about it. As she went outside to draw a bucket of water, the secret ingredient in her corn bread, she chuckled at the thought that the chicken had probably moved to a better neighborhood.

Her boy followed her out. He had a question to ask, but the sound of the approaching truck interrupted him. Inside the truck bounced the nephew of the man who owned the store in town. The nephew was paid to deliver to her once a month a box filled with three heads of cabbage, a bag of corn meal, two sacks of beans, a few sticks of beef jerky, and a box of Little Debbie crumb cakes. She thought that was so sweet of them. She got all that food without ever having to move. The only thing they made her do was put an "X" on the back of her wrinkled government checks that the nephew quickly shoved into the pocket of his shirt. Her boy once told her that the uncle was cheating her, that the uncle was getting all her money in exchange for a few groceries. She dismissed his accusations by asking him what he thought she'd do with money.

Climbing back into the truck, the nephew, his box delivered and his check pocketed, shouted through the crack in the windshield that there was a dead chicken on the other side of her house. They both raced through exhaust fumes to be the first to see if the nephew was right. Neither got to claim the honor because a swarm

of flies had already beat them to it. Standing side by side at the corner of the coop, they just couldn't believe what they saw. She wanted those chickens to go away, not die. He had never seen a dead animal before and wanted a closer look. She shouted for him to stay away from that thing, but he didn't stop. Her words, like the sound of her bagpipe, brushed his cheek and were gone. The vapors had killed it. Of that she was sure. And if he started handling it, they would leak out and get him too.

The thought of vapors never entered his mind. Even if it had, his curiosity would have squeezed it out of existence. His investigation began at a safe distance, but as he became convinced of the finality of the situation, he drifted closer. Soon he was squatting over the bird, letting its over-ripe body fill his lungs. Again she shouted that he absolutely, positively not touch that thing. Her words floated away. If he wasn't so close to that damn chicken, she thought, I'd yank his hide right off his bones.

Despite the quivering moan that funneled out of the bottom of her stomach, he reached down and placed his index finger on the chicken's featherless chest. He announced it was completely dead and rose to his feet. Then the bird began jerking as if tossed into an open fire. Her bucket of water somersaulted to the ground; his knees unhinged and sent him sprawling. Before either could recover, the chicken scrambled upright and bolted toward the outhouse.

When she calmed enough to stop hiccupping, she sputtered that she had told him not to touch it, that they could have had one less chicken eating their food and shitting all over everything. He remained face down in the dust, refusing to admit she was right. She returned to her chores as if nothing had happened, enjoying the sizzle righteous anger brought to her skin. He wobbled to his feet and escaped to a spot where he could be alone.

The idea that a reborn chicken might have a direct bearing on her life didn't occur to her till that night. After leaving the bagpipe in its corner to recuperate, she slipped into bed. Soon her quilt and pillow corners were in place and her boy was safe on the roof, but she couldn't sleep. A fuzzy notion kept sneaking back and forth between her ears. Even though she didn't know what it was trying to tell her, she knew the message was

important. The sound of his fingers tapping against the tin above her finally brought her thoughts into focus. If he could dissolve the night vapors in a chicken with just one finger, surely he could do the same with a human. Somethin' big as a person might take a whole hand, still it should work.

This was her best idea ever, and she had to share it with him. She knew he'd be pleased to hear that he had earned such an important spot in her life. In spite of her expectations, her sudden appearance and wonderful news didn't make him happy. He only snarled at her violation of his privacy, then leaned back on his elbows so he wouldn't have to look at her. His hostile reaction squeezed all the joy out of her. She braved the night vapors because she believed she finally found their cure. She wasn't so sure anymore. After hurrying inside and tucking the quilt and pillow corners back in place, the sleep she couldn't find before arrived.

The next day she decided to pretend nothing had happened. Since he can't stop frettin' about whys and wherefores long 'nough to 'preciate what he done and can do later, she thought, I'll just make like he didn't do nothin'. She planned to make it a typical day, but he wouldn't cooperate. Instead of eating after climbing down from the roof, he went to bed and stayed there all day. The following three days were the same way. He only slid out from under the quilt long enough to watch from the roof the night pass. She worried about him, but continued her daily routine without a word. Only the screeching chickens, the rattling tin roof, and the whining bagpipe dared to break the silence.

Four days after the chicken's recovery, he spoke, and after he did, she wished he had kept quiet. He told her that he had done something that all the thinking in the world couldn't explain away, that only the wisest man in the world would know the true cause of it all, and that he was leaving to find this man. As she watched his back fade away from her, the stubbornness that clogged her tear ducts for so many years dissolved, and water the color of urine washed strips of chicken shit from her face.

She did everything she felt obliged to do that day. The meals got cooked. The kindling got gathered. And the grass got plucked, but these chores no longer served any

purpose. They were "just things to keep the mind and body occupied." They weren't very successful. Every few minutes she stopped and thought, why now when things were goin' so good, when things were gettin' better? The game continued on into the darkness. She lit the lamp, moved the chair, grabbed the bagpipe, and waited, but when the world nodded off, she didn't play. Instead she thought about yesterdays she had once hoped were truly forgotten.

After a hot night followed by a hot morning, she couldn't stay inside that house a bit longer. The coop, with the sun's unblinking stare focused on its tin roof, was a crock-pot. Trapped inside the four walls, its contents tried in vain to keep their juice from dripping through the cracks in the floor. The cabbage in a pot on the stove curled until it looked like a boxer's amputated fist. The corn bread scattered across the table lost the moisture that held it together and crumbled like a neglected sand castle. The chicken shit vaporized and floated in the air like a tapioca-pudding fog. And her skin slowly separated from her bones and swayed like a wind-blown porch swing when she walked. She was sure her brain would melt right out her nose if she stayed inside a moment longer.

A "borrowing trip" was her excuse to escape the steam. In her opinion, these trips were the best things ever invented. In fact she found her bagpipe during her first one. It was easy for her to figure out what things the owner wanted her to borrow. They let the unwanted stuff sit gathering dust and falling apart. She did them a favor by carrying off their eyesores. All that borrowing was hard work, but she enjoyed helping other people out, even if they did sometimes holler and stomp when they caught her helping them.

She walked slow. All her energy was puddled beneath the coop. Her plodding steps were nothing for her to get concerned about. She kind of liked going slow. A dim memory of a story about a turtle and a rabbit told her fast was bad, slow was good. She headed in a direction she had not traveled before. No sense helping the same people more than once. After trudging along for over an hour, she came upon her first house. A tubercular woman stood on the front step sweeping yesterday's dirt away. She had seen women like this before. They constantly fought to get

rid of filth that would only sneak back and be there tomorrow. She never had as much faith in their houses though. It always looked like the least little stirring of the air could shove their walls flat to the ground and send their furniture bouncing off the earth. These women upset her. If she went into this house to borrow all that was neglected, she'd end up having to take everything, including the woman, with her. She turned her head, determined never to glance in that direction again.

The unfamiliar sound of a crying baby changed her mind. Covered with flies and dust, he squirmed in the shade of a leafless tree on the far side of the house. He's what could use a good sweepin', she thought. But babies didn't interest her, so she kept walking. She didn't see another house that day and returned home at dusk empty handed. Despite the heat, she was hungry enough to finish off the food cooked the day before. The good thing about this weather, she thought, is that it's too hot to worry about cookin' and the sun burns up all the grass 'fore it even gits a chance to grow. It was then time to play her bagpipe, but she discovered the humidity had borrowed all her breath. The only thing she could get the bagpipe to do was sputter like a frog caught in a screen door. She put the bagpipe in its corner and returned to her chair. It was no use trying to sleep; the air was too thick, and her mind was too full. She was making a mental list of the things she wanted to borrow on her next trip when the little boy crawled into her thoughts.

Once the parts of his little face not covered by flies filled her mind, she couldn't concentrate on anything else. No baby, she decided, should have to live like that. A crime had somehow been committed, yet she was unable to decide how the careless mother should be punished. The answer came to her an hour before dawn, and her body, stiff from sitting in a chair all night, responded to her call. She knew she had to act fast. By the time the sun filled the coop, she was back. With her she brought a three-month-old baby. Ain't nothin' wrong with what I done, she thought. I's just borrowin' him till his mother learns to take care of a wee feller like him. They won't come lookin' here for him. Nobody ever comes lookin' here for nothin'.

She once tried without success to explain life to her boy: "Corn meal and water together make a meal, but

either alone is just a painful reminder of what could have been if the other was there too."

On the second day of his absence, she continued as before. Like a watch not wound for several days, her parts kept moving, but each motion was noticeably slower than the last. She seemed to be edging closer to the instant when her hands would stop, when her version of time would stand still. She cooked one meal, then forgot to eat it, gathered four twigs with no intention of ever starting another fire, and uprooted six blades of grass while muttering how silly she was to think this would help. She didn't even bother to pick up the bagpipe that night. She didn't want to touch it anymore. All she felt she really needed to do was sit in silence and ruminate over the past.

When her mother died, her father hid in senility. These two events she blamed on her mother's selfishness. Why else, she reasoned, would momma sneak out of life and take daddy's mind with her? Before her mother's death, they lived in a car they found in an exhausted strip-mine pit. Apparently the car's owner decided it wasn't worth the effort necessary to recover it. Her father constantly searched for a job. Each Monday morning he left his family and traveled to every city he had ever heard of looking for a way to make money. On Friday night he would return to the car carrying the food he had borrowed along the way and bad news. Looking for work was the closest thing to a job he ever had. She and her mother also helped to supply food. They spent most of the time sorting through trash heaps. People were always throwing away perfectly good food and clothes. Returning to the pit after a day at the heaps, they often met hunters. These well-meaning men usually warned them of how dangerous a strip mine could be. Old mines like that, they all said, were full of holes hundreds of feet deep only covered by a thin stretch of topsoil. Her mother's reaction to this information was always the same. She pulled her eyes open in terror and breathlessly thanked the most kind man for his most kind warning. They then waited for the hunter to head back into the woods before sliding down the bank toward their car.

It was a Friday when her mother was cautioned about the holes for the last time. They returned early that day

from gathering food. Her mother told her to stay in the car while she went to meet her father. She never saw her mother again. Exactly what happened she was never able to discover. After sitting in the car for over three hours, she climbed out and went to find her parents. At the bottom of the path her father always slid down, she found him on his stomach staring into a hole. He had his head inside and kept repeating in a thick voice, "But I found a job." These were the only words he ever spoke again.

With her mother gone and her father unbalanced, she knew she had to take over. Her first decision was to get as much space as possible between her father and their strip-mine pit. Maybe distance could put his thoughts and actions back together again. Space did little for her father, but each mile they traveled erased another of her private griefs. By the time they reached the building that was to be their home, she was ready for a new and hopefully better life. The land she decided to borrow was once a prosperous tobacco farm, but poor weather and healthy insects ended that. When both his house and barn burned to the ground, the farmer was happy to finally have an excuse to pack his family up and go north. All that remained was a crumbling henhouse and a lopsided outhouse. She chose the henhouse as their home. A pack of stray chickens already claimed the outhouse.

To furnish their new home, she went on borrowing trips. The small stuff she was able to bring back herself, but for the stove and bed, she needed her father's help. He was never any trouble, just did everything she told him right up to the day he died. Since her mother forced him to live like a child, it was only right that he got to die like one too. She went into the nearby town just once, and that trip was to take her father to the undertaker there. The undertaker said he couldn't bury her father because she had no money, but the man who owned the grocery store offered to pay, and her father "got put under proper." The grocery store man was also the one who told her about government checks. He said since she was all alone, she qualified to get one once a month. When she asked him what purpose a government check served, he told her he was willing to trade her food for it. Now that I'm gonna git gov'ment checks she thought, I'll never have to borrow food again.

"Six days with honey aren't worth the seventh without." Her mother was fond of saying this on days when they had nothing to eat.

The need to carry on left her during the third day. She no longer felt any responsibility to her house or to herself. Eating was a silly waste of time, and grass always grew back no matter how many blades were yanked from the dirt. She fled to the outhouse and squatted beside the chickens. Knowing she wasn't the only living thing left helped a little. Those chickens still had their own order of priorities—immediate comfort first, all else second. She suddenly wanted to kiss one of the birds, but the effort needed to catch one changed her mind. She squatted until her knees gave out, then sat. Fresh air was nice for a change.

For the first time since he left, she slept. She drifted off at supper time and didn't wake up till the next morning. When she opened her eyes, she couldn't believe she had fallen asleep so easy. I been tryin' for two days without a bit of luck to git some rest, she thought, then I come in here and doze right off. I guess watchin' bald chickens do that to ya. Stepping out into the sunlight, she felt like she had forgotten to do something very important. Exactly what, she couldn't decide. She went back to the coop hoping that would help her remember. Inside she looked everything over to be sure it was all there. Somebody might have decided to borrow something from her. The table, the chair, the bed, the stove were all in their places. The wax paper and blanket were where they should be. Her box of crumb cakes sat on the corner of the table, and the lamp hung from the ceiling. Even the bagpipe was in its corner. The bagpipe . . ., she thought. That's it. They took my boy from me and now they want my bagpipe too. This notion convinced her that before the day was over the Scot and everyone else she had borrowed from would drive up to her front door in flatbed trucks and take back all her possessions. The tobacco farmer, she believed, would even arrive to reclaim his land.

She recalled the words her father often said before her mother died, "If ya ever go pickin' apples lay 'em out in a straight line when ya git through. Don't pile 'em on top each other 'cause if ya do somebody 'll come along an' grab the one at the very bottom. The the rest of 'em 'll

come tumblin' down an' roll away."

I'll take my stuff an' give it all back to 'em she decided, 'fore they come an' start yankin' it out from under me. She was sure she'd lose everything either way, but at least she could keep her self respect if she pretended she didn't want any of it anyway. At first she didn't know what to begin with, but after some consideration, the choice was clear. The bagpipe had to be first. It was the first thing she ever borrowed, so it would be the first thing she returned. As she lifted it into her arms, a tiny whine escaped from the pipes. "Now don't ya start cryin' on me," she told it. "If ya make a fuss, I won't be able to take ya back where ya belong." She waited for the bag to say something else, but it didn't make another sound.

It was a long walk to the Scot's house, and she wasn't sure she could make it. When she took the first step out the door, her feet felt as heavy as the rock she used to keep the roof from blowing off the outhouse. After the next few steps though, they became easier to push through the dirt. I don't 'member this bagpipe ever weighin' so much, she thought. Walking away from her home, she stared down at the ground and her shit-covered toes. She didn't want to see where she was going, and she already knew where she had been. There wasn't six yards between her and her door when she heard a familiar voice calling her. The sound of it made her lose interest in her feet. She scanned the space in front of her and saw him running toward her. All doubt was removed. She hadn't snapped like her father. They had really let her boy come back to her. She knew she could now keep her bagpipe too.

He couldn't tell her what had happened, not right away. First the bagpipe had to be put back in its corner and he had to be fed, then, she said, he could tell her all about his little adventure. He ate everything that sat in front of him, including her box of crumb cakes. Halfway through his meal, she began wishing she had saved a little back for herself. He went out to check on his chicken (suddenly the reborn bird was "his chicken"). Only then was he ready to begin his story. Sitting cross-legged in the center of the patchwork quilt, he told her of his trip to "the big city," of the people he met there who helped him, and of the people he met there who hindered him. He told

her about everything he saw, everything he heard, everything he tasted, and everything he smelled. He talked for two hours on subjects she found very interesting, but he still hadn't told her what she really wanted to know. In the middle of his description of an ice cream cone, she decided she couldn't wait a second longer.

"Didja find out why that dead chicken hopped back alive just 'cause ya touched it?" He shook his head no. According to him, he asked everyone he saw if they knew who he should talk to about his problem. Most people either ignored him or told him to go away, but a few people really tried to help him. One man, he said, told him to talk to a bunch of scientists at this big school, so he did. These scientists were all very interested in what he had to say. The first one listened to his story, then called in another scientist and had him repeat the whole thing. This continued until the room was filled with middle aged men with bald spots and sagging stomachs. He told her the first scientist said the real question was why such a little boy had such big delusions. Another disagreed claiming spiritual forces were obviously at work. He said the men he trusted to answer his questions were so busy arguing that they didn't even ask him to demonstrate his power.

"I walked out of that room after listening to those men talk and I knew I'd lost it," he said. "I knew I'd never be able to bring another chicken back to life." Nothing else was said for a long time. He wanted the full meaning of his words to penetrate her casual acceptance of his fate. If he couldn't heal a chicken with the vapors, he certainly couldn't heal a human either. She already understood this, but it didn't matter anymore. She planned to protect herself the best she could, and if that wasn't good enough, then it just wasn't good enough.

Now that her boy was safely home, she wanted to undo some of the neglect she spread around while he was gone. Dragging the chair behind her, she carried her bagpipe out the door. She set the chair a few feet from the coop, sat down, and began to play. No more sneakin' around, she thought. I'm gonna play anytime I want and Heaven help him if that Scot comes a lookin' for this bagpipe. Her boy came and dropped on the ground at her feet.

GENESIS

It was time he found out what he had been avoiding all these years. As she struggled to fill the bag, he smiled up at her quivering face, then began plucking out the blades of grass that appeared during his absence. The sounds that didn't get trapped in his head were shoved through the sunshine by a lethargic wind.

kali

i am the most holy terror,
called the all-consuming one.

here it begins.
i clap my hands
and the dance begins.

all dance and dance
within me:
caught in the snap
of the dance,
no rhythm ignores me
but ignores the self,
no rhythm denies me
but denies the self.

now it begins.
i stamp my feet
and the dance begins.

from the fault of your birth
you dance in my arms.
. . .

—L.M. Jones

L.M. Jones returned to IUPUI in the fall of '81 after an eleven-year hiatus.

—Marsha Bilbrey

—Gerard Boulais

Free At Last

(For John Riteris)

Pecking pigeons nod
inviting the elevator.
Phallic mushroom button.
Each of us fingers it.
Press it once again
and it will come.
Quiddity, quiddity, quark,
a mouse ran down my dork. . .
More isolated than any
particle—what do I care
for particles?
I spring from a
great chain of bases.
That full breasted one there
stares my way, looking bored.
She should be, pumping
sodium all day.
"Pandora's box is black," I say,
"and I'm not in it."
Nor, I think, in my
glandular fantasies.
Nor in rancid recesses
of the smell brain.
I look at her as if
to say the sticky net is empty,
can you find me?

Elevator opens,
we step in. I look
intelligent. She speaks.
"It is wrong to democratize Newton."
"If you are relative, I'm fixed,"
I respond.
"At night all holes are black," she says,
smiling as the elevator closes.

—**Stephen Stouder**

Stephen Stouder often writes poems about subjects with which he is obsessed. He hopes to become a gardener someday.

Earth Satellite

Since primeval days, eons watched
this radiant sentinel of the night
and its apparent variants:
new moons, waxing or waning crescents,
eclipses, or Holy Hosts in haloed light;
influencing man and beast, seeds and sea;
casting pleasure upon lovers,
wonder upon artists,
ideas upon fertile minds
seeking to probe lunar height
until
this creation of the fourth day,
useful in its orbital perch,
became an astronautical
stepping stone to the stars.

—Shirley Vogler Meister

Shirley Vogler Meister, an English major, is a junior in IUPUI's Learn and Shop program. She has held editorial positions with various publications, and her husband and three daughters now encourage her in free-lancing.

Carcass

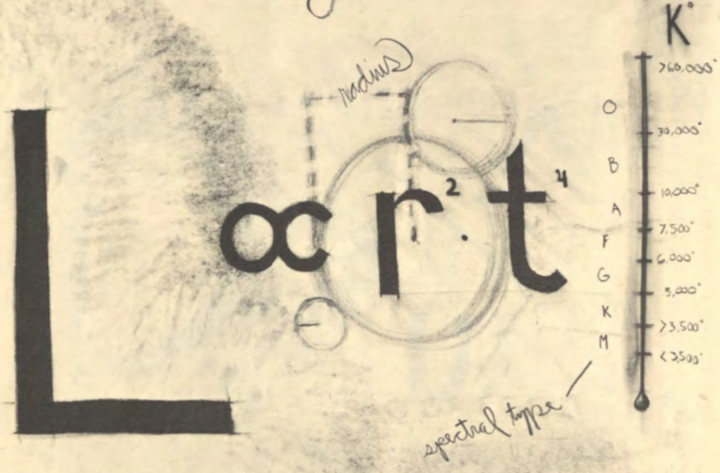
Rotting sweet odour of death
The carcass lies exposed
Sublime glorious obscenity
Unashamed before the Sun
Alive in death
Host to maggot and worm
Bravely mocking the World
With cold eyes unblinking

—Mark Simons

GENESIS

— Mark Simons

Let there be heavenly bodies . . .



Luminosity $\propto$ radius^2 · temperature^4

—Mark Simons

Stellar Companions

Departure makes us the object of dreams
And embroiders obsession with magic:
We watch for the constellation which must yet reveal
Incantations for a distant reunion,
Calling up
The undying fragments of moments
Which echo in liminal light
And linger on the horizon of consciousness.

—**Castle McLaughlin**

Castle McLaughlin will graduate this spring with a degree in Anthropology.

Come Out, Come Out, The Moon Has Been Killed

you asked me once just
after an eclipse of the
moon if i had a

lover for ev'ry
celestial happening
and i replied not

if it were false or
true, only gazed up at the
place where the moon hadn't been

—**Gabrielle Antolini**

Gabrielle Antolini anyway, i find myself writing of the same old stuff—seasons, the moon, us ever sleeping together again. . .my verse getting longer, leaning toward epic. . . i read k. ashmore's bios & feel i should acknowledge my bright star, but when after all, it is **her** name i've borrowed. . . thanx to my friends who supply me with a never-ending source of material—such a diverse, enchanting entourage, they are.

—Gerard Boulais

Time's Runaway

Madge Stiefel

Madge Stiefel is a fortyish returning student whose aim is to get a degree in English before she becomes fiftyish. From a long line of octogenarians she plans to spend the second half of her life doing the writing she only thought about during the first half.

Neither have the hearts to stay,
Nor wit enough to run away.
Samuel Butler, 1612-1680
Hudibras, p. III, canto III, l. 569

"Got another one here, Sarge," said the tall man.

The sergeant leaned over the high counter and looked down, shaking his head and frowning. "Hey, Buddy, ain't you old enough to know better than to run away from home?"

"My third one of these this week," said the officer. "Must be an epidemic."

"Do you know anything about him—or his family?"

"Yeah, he's been pretty cooperative." The young officer patted his prisoner on the shoulder; but he flinched and pulled away. "I've already called them—they're on their way to pick him up."

"We still have these damn papers to fill out," said the sergeant with disgust. "Say, Buddy, can you read and write? Want to take this form over there and fill it out while you're waiting for your folks?" He pushed a sheet of paper and a pencil across the counter and turned away.

The short runaway had been standing rather hangdog with eyes downcast, both hands holding a knitted cap, but he stiffened at the first question. Glaring at the sergeant's back, he irreverently replaced his hat and snatched the paper and pencil. With more noise than necessary he settled himself at the table and bent over the form as he chewed the end of the pencil.

"So you think it's an epidemic, huh, Joe?"

"Old Charity thinks so, too," laughed Joe. "She told me she was tired of being plagued with these kind."

"You mean the old bag lady?"

"Yeah, she's the one who stopped me and told me to do something about him."

"What's the matter? Her 'charity ' running out?"

"No, she's as big-hearted as she is fat—always helping out at the mission with runaways and dopers. To tell you the truth, Sarge," he nodded toward the table, "I think this kind is getting too close to home for the old broad."

"Could be." The sergeant contemplated their vagabond a moment, but then growled, "Hey, Buddy, don't chew on that pencil. Other people need to use it later."

The truant bit the eraser off and spat it on the floor.

"Did you see that?"

"Aw, Sarge, let me see if I can help him with that form."

Just then the double doors flew open and a fortyish couple burst in. "Where is he?"

The chair scraped the floor followed by the drop of the pencil.

"Dad!"

"Where on earth have you been? We've been worried sick."

"Are you his folks?" asked the man behind the counter.

"Yes, where did you find him? Is he all right?"

"He's okay. Actually, I didn't find him. An old lady turned him over to me—guess he hadn't eaten for some time before she ran across him and fed him," volunteered the young officer.

"Officer, I'm sorry for any trouble he's caused," said the well-dressed business man. "I don't know what we're going to do with him—this is the second time he's taken off."

The woman tried to put her arms around the runaway, but he recoiled from her touch. "Let's go, Dad." She looked at her husband.

"Soon as my name comes up on the list at that *fine* retirement home," said the old man, pulling his cap over his ears, "you won't need to worry anymore."

Dandelions Never Die

Madge Stiefel

Years before I was born, someone peeled Great-grandma Danelle's house off the page of a child's picture book and stuck it in the middle of Indiana, dainty and out of place among clumsy farmhouses and barns. I remember a long narrow lane ending at the white picket fence, surrounding and pinning a vivid painting to the Hoosier landscape. In the center was Grandma's white brick house with gray roof and bright yellow shutters. A pink brick walk matched the chimney. Along the walk, around the house, and in clumps, clusters, and sprays throughout the enclosed yard were wild flowers of all kinds. These were linked together by thickly scattered dandelions.

I visited Grandma Danelle twice a year, in June and at Christmas. Summer was the best time—I loved the colors. The first Christmas I remember, I was four and cried because the flowers were gone; but Grandma explained they were sleeping under a blanket of snow. My happiest memories are from the summer I was eight.

Our car stopped beside the fence and before my father or mother could open a door—I was out, around the car, through the gate, and halfway up the walk. He yelled for me to wait. Leaping over a cluster of violets, I started picking dandelions and had a handful when they reached me.

"What are you doing, Danelle?"

"Picking Grandma a bouquet."

"Dandelions don't make good bouquets," he said. Then adding sarcastically, "Only the roots live on—and on—and on."

"They'll live awhile—and they're my favorite because they're soft, fuzzy, and yellow." I rubbed the flowers gently under my chin. "Besides, Grandma Danelle says dandelions never die; for each one you pick, two or three more will grow." I skipped ahead.

"I know," he muttered. "Look at this yard, Liz. It's a mass of weeds."

"To you they're weeds—to others they're wild flowers." He gave her a huffing grunt.

The yellow door swished open. "Now, who is that coming up my walk? I declare, I believe it's my namesake." Grandma rushed across the porch. Though her step was quick and spritely, stooped shoulders and a bowed back revealed her eighty-three years. Her hair was thin and wispy and no hint of its color lingered. Over high cheek bones and a delicate, yet firm, jaw, her weathered skin was taut as though the many wrinkles had petrified; and her mouth always seemed to be going into or in a pursed expression, even while talking. A warm and hospitable air reached and embraced me before her arms encircled.

I flung myself at the old woman with such force we both fell back on the porch steps and sat there laughing and hugging.

"Danelle! Be careful!"

"I'm sorry, did I hurt you, Grandma?"

"Of course not." The watery eyes twinkled happy tears.

Inside she put the bouquet, which somehow had not been crushed, into a small, thin-necked, blue vase already filled with water and waiting on the table near her rocker. We exchanged knowing glances. I had given her the vase last Christmas, specifically for summer's dandelions.

I looked around the room. It was all there: yellow and white floral wallpaper matching white woodwork; framed embroidered pictures; sheer white curtains tied back so the sun sparkled through crystal bottles filled with yellow-colored water; blue braided throw rugs; Grandma's rocker; and two worn blue velvet loveseats before the fireplace which centered the inside wall. I loved to crawl through the open fireplace to the kitchen, and noticing it was as clean-swept as the shiny hardwood floors, planned to after my parents left. Grabbing my

suitcase, I ran into the kitchen and upstairs to "my" bedroom.

When I returned, Grandma said, "If you stretch that smile any wider, the skin will slip right off your face."

I tried to stop grinning and sat down on the loveseat across from my parents. With folded hands in my lap, I sighed and looked at my father, waiting for him to make the next move. I glanced at the clock on the mantel and then back at him. He was smoothing the frayed piping on the arm of the loveseat. Grandma's rocker began to creak softly; a breeze rustled the starched curtains at the open window; and the clock ticked and ticked. At the sound of a robin chirping outside, I could be silent no longer.

"Is that robin's nest still in the cherry tree?" I asked.

"Sure is. Didn't you see it from your bedroom window?"

"I forgot to look." I started to get up, but changed my mind. "I did see the dandelions, Grandma—beside my bed."

"I think we're going to keep busy replacing dandelion bouquets in the next two weeks."

"This place sure is overrun with those weeds. You need a good weed-killer."

"Over my dead body!" snapped the old woman.

"Daddy doesn't like dandelions," I explained. "We don't have any at home; that's one of the reasons I love coming here."

The mantel clock chimed four.

"We'd best be getting started, Bob. If we leave now, we'll get home before dark." Mommy smiled at me.

Standing on the porch and waving to the shrinking car, I felt relieved. Grandma gave me a pat on the rump. "Well, now. Looks like we have some hard work ahead of us." But I knew what Grandma Danelle called work was really fun.

We picked cherries and made a pie. We baked bread and ate it hot, spread with melting butter. We laughed together. We gathered greens from a nearby field and ate them with green onions from the garden. Grandma killed a chicken and I helped pluck the feathers. We sang together. We hoed the garden and cooled off with lemonade in the shade. We picked fresh dandelions two or three times a day and changed the colored-water in the

window bottles. We even danced together over the yellow reflections on the hardwood floor.

Grandma called them her mood bottles. At Christmastime she filled them with red and green, but in summer, yellow was for happy moods and blue for sad. The day Mr. Mitchell came and mowed the grass, we changed to blue water because the dandelions were gone. Then as the yellow blossoms reappeared, we replaced with yellow one by one till all the bottles were happy again.

"If it doesn't rain tonight, I think tomorrow will be a good day," said Grandma as she rocked and embroidered one night about a week after I arrived.

"A good day for what?" I asked, intently bent over my hoop and needle.

"To make dandelion wine."

I looked up. "You make wine out of dandelions!"

"That's what the grown-ups drink at our Christmas dinner every year—even your father."

"Daddy drinks dandelion wine? He hates dandelions."

"He likes my wine."

"Am I allowed to help?" Making wine sounded excitingly wicked.

"I think so—but it's hard work. It takes a lot of dandelions to make a gallon batch of wine."

"I'll go to bed right now so we can get up early."

"No need for that. We can't start till noon because the plants must be dry when we pick them."

I ran to the window. "I can see stars all over—it won't rain tonight."

"I'll bet you're right." Her rocker creaked contentedly.

Next morning I watched the sun rise higher and hotter till it hung straight overhead. "I think it's ready now," I said for the third time.

Grandma laughed, found two large baskets in the pantry, and handed one to me. "Let's go."

"It will take all the dandelions to fill both of these."

She laughed again. "We'll leave enough for bouquets."

We picked till our baskets were filled and then sat in the shade separating the heads of the dandelions. Grandma showed me how to hold the green calyx in one hand and pull the yellow petals out with the other. It's very important not to allow the tiniest part of green in the

yellow because "milk" from the dandelion leaf makes wine bitter. We alternated between picking and separating till each of us had a quart jar filled with delicate yellow petals. In the kitchen, Grandma set her winemaking jug on a stool in the corner behind the stairs; we dumped the petals inside. She then poured a gallon of boiling water over the flowers, placed a cover on the jar, and draped a white tablecloth round the whole thing. "Now we wait two days before the next step," she said.

"Two whole days? Does it take that long?"

"It takes longer before we have wine. In two days we'll cook this mixture with sugar, oranges, and yeast; then it goes back in the jar to ferment. You'll be leaving before it's wine—but we'll have 'your' wine for Christmas dinner this year." That pleased me; and everytime I walked through the kitchen, I grinned at the little white ghost in the corner under the stairs.

When my parents came to get me, I thought of telling them about the winemaking, but decided to save the surprise till Christmas. As we were leaving I remembered something I'd left upstairs and ran to get it. My father was impatient. After I returned to the car, Mommy whispered she had seen the ghost under the stairs and winked. I looked back and saw blue bottles in the window; I wondered when Grandma had changed them that morning.

At Christmas everyone was surprised, especially at the labels Grandma had made: on the top line—DANELLE'S; underneath—"Dandy-Wine"; and on each side of the label was a tiny drawing of my favorite flower. I bubbled with pride when Grandma poured a glass for me along with the grown-ups. Of the four bottles from our batch, two were used for Christmas dinner, one Grandma kept for herself, and the other she gave to my father.

He seemed happy.

Great-grandma Danelle died the third week of February. In her will she asked that her property be divided equally among her relatives, with one exception. A large cedar chest and everything in it was to go to her namesake. When we went in Uncle Joe's truck to pick it up, the sight of Grandma's house hurt so badly, I couldn't even cry. It looked as if someone had scratched and scraped all the color out of her picture book house. There were no flowers and no blanket of snow. The

curtains hung limp and one bottle in a side window was dry and streaked. The floors, tables, and walls were bare; the little stool stood empty and alone in the corner under the stairs.

My mother gave me the key to the chest and asked if I wanted to open it there. I didn't. When they carried it up to my room at home, I put the key away. More than a month went by and still I did not open the chest.

I awoke on Easter Sunday and hoped last night's rain would cancel a planned Easter egg hunt—I was too old. Going to the window to see how wet it was, my mood changed. Scampering into robe and slippers, I ran down the stairs and out the back door. I ruined my slippers in wet grass, but as I tried to sneak back through the kitchen where Mommy was making coffee, she smiled and pretended not to notice. I bounded up the stairs and began moving things around; the noisy activity awakened my father.

"Danelle, what are you doing?"

"Just a minute, Daddy, and you'll see."

Soon I called them and were they surprised! I had thrown my toys, dolls, bedspread, pictures, and pillows into the closet. In their place were blue braided throw rugs, embroidered pictures, blue and yellow pillows matching a handmade quilt, and in the windows, crystal bottles filled with yellow water. I held up a bottle of food coloring, "See, Grandma Danelle even left me her yellow—and did you see the ghost, Mommy?" In a corner on my desk chair I had set the winemaking jug and draped Grandma's white tablecloth over it. Balanced on top was a bottle of DANELLE'S "Dandy-Wine."

They laughed. Then my mother noticed the cedar chest at the foot of my bed. The lid was closed and the key lay beside a small, thin-necked, blue vase filled with dandelions. "Look, Bob."

He smiled, absent-mindedly nodding, and then stared in disbelief. "Where did those flowers come from?"

"Look out my window, Daddy," I said with determination as I crossed my arms over my chest.

"How in the hell—?" he exclaimed. There was a zig-zagging yellow-dotted line across his solid green lawn to a circle of yellow polka-dots in the left corner. "It looks like someone planted those damn dandelions," he said turning to me.

"I did." I pursed my mouth as I spoke, "I brought the seeds home last summer."

"Danelle, do you know how hard I've worked and how much I've spent to keep those weeds out of my yard?"

"Are you going to kill'em?" I stared hard at him.

He looked at my mother. The hint of a smile brushed her face, then she too crossed her arms, pursed her mouth, and gave him a penetrating stare.

"Are you going to kill 'em, Daddy?" I repeated.

He peered out the window again, then around the picture book room. "Well, you both know I'm going to try." He sighed. "But then, dandelions never die."

IUPUI/October

Liquid slivers
slide out of the sky
while parasol people
stumble by
on shiny rectangles
of rusty brick

Waxy leaves
twirl down on pebbles
adhere to puddles
on a mosaic floor

Newborn ivy
on stainless steel walls
beside greasy rainbows
that swirl in the street

Golden windows
reveal the faces
of night-time scholars
who scurry by

—Kay Castaneda

Kay Castaneda Ever since the nuns in grade school held my hand, so that I would make perfect letters, I've written something every day. Seeing words of blue ink appear on new, white paper is one of the greatest joys of my life. I need to write in order to survive.

The Art Work

17 **Drawing:** Marsha Bilbrey
18 **Drawing:** Gerard Boulais
21 **Let there be land:** Mark Simons
22 **Let there be heavenly bodies:** Mark Simons
24 **Photograph:** Gerald Boulais
35 **Drawing:** Jeff Reed
40 **Drawing:** Roger Hoffman
44 **Drawing:** Jeff Reed
46 **Drawing:** Gerard Boulais
61 **Photograph:** Roger Hoffman
68 **Photograph:** Roger Hoffman

The Artists

Marsha Bilbrey is a Junior at Herron School of Art. She is interested in all aspects of visual expression, both 2-D and 3-D. Influenced by the "rustic" school of Japanese art, she strives for simplicity and directness in her work.

Gerard Boulais is a Fine Arts major at Herron concentrating in printmaking and photography. He is often seen wearing sunglasses "in case of nuclear attack." Gerard's creativity stems from a highly imaginative childhood. He prefers his Rickenbacker guitar over chinese checkers or evening television.

Roger Hoffman is a third year Visual Communications Major at Herron. He is very interested in Graphic Design and Illustration and hopes to find a job allowing him to work in both areas after graduation. He was awarded a Mildred Darby Menz Scholarship in 1981. This summer Roger is looking forward to getting more than four hours of sleep a night.

Jeff Reed has studied at Vincennes University, University of Montana, IUPUI, and is currently enrolled at Herron School of Art. Jeff is interested in all aspects of art. "Art is the interaction of artist and environment; many of my ideas are drawn from the urban environment around Herron and IUPUI." Jeff is the recipient of the *Genesis* award for Art.

Mark S. Simons is a Sophomore majoring in painting at the Herron School of Art. An avid lounge-lizard, Mark was recently heard to say, "When I feel the urge to exercise, I lie down until it goes away."

—Jeff Reed

We Travel

Madge Stiefel

The uniformed man behind the desk looked contemptuously at the old man and particularly at his hat. "Name," he said his eyes focused so strongly on the disrespectful hat that it seemed his glare alone would yank it off.

"Otto."

"Last name," warned the officer.

"Otto Jeremias Jerusalum Hagar," said the old man as he removed his hat and raised a stone-hard gaze to meet the glare.

"Jerusalem is not a name, it's a place."

"I reckon so is Cleveland, but our President uses it for his name," said the old man.

Taken aback, the officer snapped, "Cleveland's no longer the president and hasn't been for over ten years."

"Well, he came back before, I figure we'll elect him again. You one of them Republicans?" Uncle Otto put his hat back on.

"I'll ask the questions!" The man behind the desk spent the next few seconds studying his form with pencil aimed, finally muttering, "I only have room for your first and last name. How do you spell it?"

"Two O's and two T's."

"I mean your last name, does it have one or two G's?"

"It don't make no difference to me."

"Don't you know how to spell your own name?"

"Sure, I know how. But some folks spells it with two G's, some with one G, some with two A's, some with one A and one E, and once somebody even put two R's on the end."

"How do *you* spell it?"

"H–A–G–A–R. But suit yourself."

"Address," droned the uniform.

"Ain't got none."

"What do you mean?"

"I ain't got none."

"Yes, you do," was the mocking answer. "I'll make it simpler—where do you live?"

Again the old man removed his hat the way he always did to accentuate what he had to say. "We don't live anywhere—we travel."

We all like to hear Uncle Otto tell that story. He's a good storyteller; he can mimic voices and make his gestures and expression alive till we feel as if we had been there. Some of us had, but most of us are satisfied to relive his stories. Since we finally left Indianapolis in 1908 for good, that's about all we've had to hold us together.

Being gypsies, we Hagars never had a home—at least a real home as most Hoosiers did—so Uncle Otto was telling the truth. Of course to a gypsy, a home is his wagon on the open road. But we did congregate along the White River when the weather turned bad; that is, we met there for almost seventy winters.

Maybe that's why the big capital city seemed cold and indifferent compared to friendly towns and villages all through the midwest. We spent the winters there when the summer sun shied away and avoided us like the people of Indianapolis.

Not that we ever asked them to get close to us; some of them were so hateful and conniving we didn't want to be near them. Others posed as well-wishers, but their uprighteousness and do-goodness was enough to turn us against them as well as their preaching.

Ben and Sarie Hagar were the first to reject Hoosier religion; Uncle Otto said his parents were also the first Hagarites, as our clan was called, to come to Indianapolis in the 1840s. Uncle Otto must have gotten his sass from Sarie, because one of his favorite stories was of the way she had talked to a man of the Gospel.

The minister had persuaded Sarie that if she and her family attended church regularly, blessings would come their way. So she convinced Ben to join her in becoming

members of the Baptist church. Ben wasn't a stranger to churches; in fact, his brother had founded the Hagar Chapel in his native state of Kentucky. Otto's father often claimed that was one of the reasons he moved north, to get away from his Methodist preaching brother. Nevertheless, for several weeks the whole family, including Uncle Otto, went to church faithfully.

Then one Sunday as the minister enumerated the blessings of the Lord, Sarie stood up and interrupted the sermon—at his point in the story Uncle Otto would remove his hat and assume a solemn face. "We was joined up like you said and we been waitin' for them blessin's. We ain't got none yet. I ain't had a dab of butter on my table in weeks. We ain't comin' back." Putting his hat on again, Uncle Otto would demonstrate the jaunty stride in which they all marched out.

Not all of our confrontations with ministers were as funny; some were downright scary. Rev. Claycrook preached against us, both in the pulpit and to government officials. It was rumored that he said we were like bugs and weeds in a garden, needing to be stomped and hoed out. Uncle Otto had heard about this sermon; he had also heard of a speech the Reverend made at a convention in the East. The old Hagarite elaborately removed his hat and with biting tongue repeated the accusing words, "Gypsying, pauperism, and licentiousness."

"Now we ain't never denied being gypsies and though we're a proud people, when we're hungry we've been known to beg on street corners. But this other thing," Uncle Otto would spit the word out in a snarling hiss, "licentiousness—I'm not rightly sure what this is except anything and everything we do which the townfolks disapprove of. Sometimes we Hagars find these so-called 'licentious' crimes necessary in order to survive."

The word became a joke among us; we used it to shock our accusers. When one of our women was caught telling fortunes or begging on the street, and it was assumed all our women were prostitutes, she defended herself by whining, "I can't help myself—I'm nothing but a 'licentious' woman." Likewise, judges were just as baffled by a Hagar man who admitted his "licentious" nature caused him to commit his crime. But most surprising was the look on a shopkeeper's face, when he demanded

of a small Hagar child why he had stolen an apple, to hear from the wide-eyed boy, "it was the 'licentiousness' in my heart, sir."

It was the concern for the children that finally led our people to leave Indianapolis. Rev. Claycrook had proposed the children be taken away from our clan; that scared us, but nothing came of the threat.

It wasn't until Uncle Otto was being questioned by the police officer who couldn't spell our name that we decided to leave. As a warning, he told the old man of a new law, the Indiana Sterilization Act of 1907, which would end our kind for good. Uncle Otto never explained exactly what it would do, except he said it sounded more "licentious" than anything we had ever done.

So he put on his hat and we don't live anywhere, for sure. We travel.

Late Season

All row boats ashore,
The summer season is lost
Fading with the tide

White capped entity
Sail boats in hiding till Spring,
The lone fisherman

Cabins deserted
Boards line the windows of camps,
Death takes the season

—**Thomas Edwards**

Tom Edwards These haikus were written by Thomas Edwards, A Sophomore attending I.U.P.U.I. on a part-time basis.

—Roger Hoffman

Innovative Packaging

Onions have skins of
Translucent waxed paper.
Colorful peels seal in
Fruit's savory flavors.
Eggs come in sanitary
Single-serving shells.
Oranges advertise their goodness
With clean citrus smells.
Bananas come in bunches,
Individually wrapped,
Perfect for lunches.
Peas and beans are sewn
Into crisp, snap-open pods,
But peanuts grow their own
Little cardboard cartons.
Watermelons come giant economy size,
Guaranteed to feed a crowd.

Nature wins the prize
For innovative packaging!
No pull-tabs nor twist-ties,
No aluminum cans,
No styrofoam cups,
To clutter earth's sands.
Nothing to throw away,
Nothing to burn.
All are no deposit, no return,
And bio-degradeable.

—**Phyllis Adkins**

Phyllis Adkins-I am an elementary education major who attends Weekend College. I am a housewife and mother of two. I am actively involved in my church and enjoy teaching children's classes there.

I had always disliked reading poetry until I took a literature course taught by Prof. Turner. His course inspired me to try to write a few poems myself.

The Invader of My House

He lounges in the dark
Invading my house
Welcoming his friends
Their barracuda cars
Heavy and humid
Summer's arrived.

The staircase groans
When he is here
Dogs snarl and tear outside
Teeth glaring white in blackness.

BREAKING noise—
My daughter wails
Fallen from her brass bed
And I rush to her
Even while she sleeps sobbing.

The invader of my house
Lounges—
Never sleeps
Keeping my daughter
Myself from rest.

And I hear the alarm clock—5:45
Of the woman
Through the wall
And the creeping floorboards
The opening dresser drawers
HER daughter awakening,
MY daughter stirring
Fan droning—
Drifting off———
AGAIN the invader touches—
Jerks me to wakefulnes.

—Karla Ashmore

Karla Ashmore begins her graduate work in Meta-theories this fall at Indianola Sta.
Calloch Calley! Her daughter-cohort, Erika, gets "big huggie kisses" for beginning her fifth year of life studies this fall at IUPUI Kindergarten.

i awoke to find you
already so
lying on your back
with your head on your hands

that slow glow
that surrounds
that half dreaming space
i wonder how long you've

lain there, silent, and
if you watched me sleep

you say you studied
the way the sewing machine
and the broad leafed schefflera
appeared in the predawn haze
both having the same value

on the sidewall
a roadmap of the stars,
a playing board of the galaxies

would you like to find out
what it might be like

or are you just another
gossamer hallucination
that shares my bed

—Gabriele Antolini

—Jeff Reed

History for William and Virginia

Ritual dance on a wrinkled bed.
Questions of more than timing.

Fra Angelico
    Leonardo
        Michaelangelo
Spencer, Shakespeare, Virgin Queen.
Hilda Doolittle, Harriet Monro.
Sandburg in Chicago, no place to go.
Ferlinghetti, City Lights.
Emerson, Hawthorne, Concord nights.

Bernini, Cellini,
Fucking Greeks!
Harlem Renaissance,
Muhammed Speaks!

Walter Pater
See you later
Edna St. Vincent
Millay.

"Why is it we never come together?"

"Together?"

—Stephen Stouder

Camus

this notion (of a)
fixed identity
man facing irrationality
though craving for happiness
    and reason
is an absurdity borne of human nostalgia
bouncing my thoughts into space
the age of negation dawning

—David Mattingly

David Mattingly I am a sophomore English major at IUPUI. Last semester I served as vice-president of the Philosophy club. Last year I had several album reviews printed by **Sagamore**. I also play in an obscure local band known as "Gabble Rachet." In my writing, I like to focus in on the less romanticized things that we all encounter as human beings.

—Gerard Boulais

Papa

Steve Jose

Steve Jose Mr. Jose is a part-time bartender and Bon Vivant with a degree in business. Raised in Indpls., he now resides in Tucumcari, New Mexico. Last reports indicated he was considering running for Congress.

Now Papa, he fathered seven of us but only two by the same Mother; that's my brother and me. The rest are split, one to a woman. They say we're all legal but I, for a fact, know only about Frank and me. Frank tells me that when they brought me home Papa and Mama were living together, even went to church every now and then (something only Mama does now). Mama told Frank it was the same when he came home. The rest of 'em I don't know about and don't really care. It's not that I don't like 'em; it's just I never see 'em or play with 'em, except maybe on a holiday or some day special like that. But everyone says they're legal, so I reckon they are.

Soon after I came home, father left and never lived with us again. We asked Mama but she said she didn't know why, he just had to go and they couldn't live together, but she still loved him (as we should) and he was a good man. That's not to say we never did see him; he came back to visit every once in awhile, always at night. Sometimes, we'd hear the train go by and not much later, we could hear Papa calling Mama to come let him in. Up he'd come to our room all happy and always smelling like that cough syrup we had to drink in winter. He'd pick me up and hug me, then he'd grab Frank and box around the room with him, telling Mama and me that Frank had to know how to protect the family, since he couldn't be there. Mama'd settle 'em down and we'd all sit in our room with Papa tellin' us stories about the cities he'd been to, all the people he'd seen and the things he'd done. Funny, Mama would always be laughin' and makin' fun of all this stuff. Frank and I'd have to tell her to be quiet so we could hear all he had to tell.

Papa had a great life, it was just too bad he couldn't stay. After he'd get finished, he'd tell Frank and me to get to sleep, study hard in school and take care of Mama. And no matter what we said or did, that was it. He'd tell us that he'd be back again, but he had to go now on account of business and such. Then they'd go into Mama's room; we could hear them talking and laughing until we'd fall asleep. Sometimes we'd hear them laugh and we'd look at each other and laugh. It was nice when they were together, made me feel like we had a regular family like most people do.

In the morning Papa'd be gone and everything would be the same. We'd ask Mama why he never stayed, but she'd just say he had to go and couldn't stay with us. Then she'd always make us promise that we'd say nothing to nobody 'bout Papa being there. She said if somebody did hear, that he probably wouldn't ever come back. We'd promise and when we left for school, mama'd say remember that promise you made. So Frank and I kept it to ourselves, but when we were together and we'd hear a train whistle blow or see a train go by, we always would look at each other and smile and laugh.

Punk Haiku*

1)
Your spider limbs
Weave cobwebs—
Catching flies,
Not even struggling.

2)
Melancholia—
What a beautiful name
For her
Nervous break-down.

*Short, somewhere around 17 syllables, but not sweet.

—Karla Ashmore

TO AN ART STUDENT AFRAID
TO OPEN A FLOWER
SHOP, I said,
Who knows what evil
lurks in hearts of palm?
Artichoke?
No one is watching
you eat
your salad.
Who cares where the shadow goes?
Yes I remember
radio,
and when times, hearts,
or flowers could be
gay.

Centaurea cyanus!
You need not wear
a bachelor button.
Asexual spores of
graceful fern are
not contagious.
Shades of Erasmus!
Darwin, that is—
the old voyeur.
What did he say?
We are all equal
under the greenhouse.

Quercus virginiana!
Remember Whitman!
Be your own
man.
Even an oak is
Androgynous.

—Stephen Stouder

Carl's Cabin

Linda K. James

For years, I've heard the expression, "You can't go home again," and it was just another profound statement to me. But in an attempt this summer to revisit my childhood, with a trip to a once-cherished place, I can now take the quote to heart.

The cabin wasn't that unusual, but it also wasn't the vision of a snug hide-away, complete with a roaring fire, as is depicted in the movies. It was just a wood-frame structure, built on a sloping, sandy patch of land fronted by a man-made lake. Even the lake, nestled amid farms in northern Indiana, wasn't the Hollywood image. It began as a gravel pit, was never stocked with the most desirable fish, and was so small that one could almost call to someone fishing on the opposite bank.

A friend of my father's named Carl built the cabin shortly after World War II, when he happened upon a lucky deal on the land. He preferred fishing and hunting to socializing, and now on week-ends, he could escape the boarding house in Indianapolis where he roomed while working with my dad at the Chevrolet plant.

Carl, being a confirmed bachelor, never did consider modernization a factor when building his cabin! An outhouse was good enough for him; and why take a bath on the week-ends? He did opt for electricity, though, because he loved his radio music at night. The furnishings were sparse: three iron beds in the two bedrooms, a couple of worn, but comfortable chairs, and a large table in the kitchen flanked by long, wooden benches. The decor was what made Carl's cabin unique—stuffed and mounted fish, deer antlers, and just the jaw bone of what must have been "Jaw's" predecessor! One of my favorite features was a kitchen clock with the numbers painted on backwards, the hands moved in reverse, and determining the correct time was a feat to be admired. When winter came, Carl

discovered the joys of ice-fishing and installed a second-hand wood burning stove.

The next summer Carl invited my dad to the lake for a week-end of fishing. When he saw how much my father enjoyed the cabin, he encouraged Dad to bring our family up to the lake for our vacation. Carl was not in the cabin much during the day, but at night he seemed to relish my mother's talent for golden-coated fish and huge bowls of crisp, fried potatoes and onions. He also welcomed my dad's shared enthusiasm for stalking the elusive catfish.

Before long, my parents, my baby sister, and I shared many week-ends at the cabin. Carl and my father spent most of their time in the leaky, old rowboat, intently watching for a fishing bobber to take off across the lake. Even though my mother had to haul water and cook on a hotplate, it was a restful respite from the hot, crowded house trailer that was our home in those days. My sister and I, normally confined to our tiny yard in the trailer park, became unleashed puppies, romping up and down the sandy shores, exploring the lush woods, and never regretting the lack of a bathtub!

We always begged to be allowed to stay up late at night, but once our mosquito-bite-covered bodies were in that big iron bed, the cool breeze from the lake, the murmur of the grown-up's voices in the next room, and the faint, comforting sound of Carl's ever-present radio, we were soon sound asleep.

Those summer mornings were a delicious time. No matter how exhausted we children may have been the night before, we always heard the men steal quietly outside before daylight to check their fishing lines. I can still smell the aroma of freshly perked coffee and frying bacon mingled with the special odor of a lake breeze. We delighted in the freedom of going barefoot and usually managed to get through a hurried breakfast and outside before Mother noticed that we had not brushed our hair or our teeth.

Occasionally we were treated to a rowboat ride to gather enormous water lilies. The danger of falling into the murky water while leaning over the edge of the boat to pick lilies added to the thrill of the excursion. The oilcloth-covered kitchen table was always honored by our gorgeous

flower arrangement and the massive lily pads became our much-treasured hats.

As our family grew in size, five children in all, money for vacations was non-existent, and the cabin was our salvation. In the winter, we would clear snow from the ice and "skate" in our shoes. We could spend the entire day walking back and forth on the lake, watching the ice fishermen, and sometimes thrilling at the daring of some brave soul who would drive his car out onto the frozen water. In spite of an even larger heating stove, we were never quite warm enough. The cabin had no ceilings and most of the heat settled in the rafters, but after supper we would feel very cozy all bundled in quilts, listening to the music on Carl's radio.

Over the years, no-longer-needed dishes and linens were relegated to the cabin's supply closet, an old sofa-bed was donated, and a larger, sturdier boat dock was built at the edge of the sloping front yard. A lean-to became a small bathroom, an apartment-size range was added, and running water was connected to the kitchen. There still were no television or telephone, no ceilings, and no need for curtains. My teen-age friends could not understand what attraction such a place could hold for me.

Unexpectedly, just as I was finishing high school, Carl discovered that he had only a short time to live, and asked Dad to buy the cabin. My father was not financially able to help his friend; but my grandfather, who by now had enjoyed many pleasant week-ends at the lake, agreed to buy the cabin. At first, things were almost the same, but I missed Carl's radio music and soon, my social life and entrance into the career world seemed to take precedence over visits to the lake.

With only a couple of short trips to the cabin in the next two years, time passed; I married and moved to the West Coast. When I returned to this city, it was with my own family and a new life style. My parents very seldom journeyed to the lake anymore, leaving it to my retired grandparents and their friends; and somehow, we never managed a trip up to the cabin.

Then this spring, my sisters and I decided to hold a family reunion. My grandfather, who is now alone, suggested that we hold our gathering at the lake over the Fourth of July holiday week-end. Everyone was

enthusiastic about the idea and I was especially anxious to show my husband and children the place that had been the subject of so many memories. One of my sisters, who had been to the lake several times with my grandparents, warned me that it wasn't the same place, but I could still see that cabin in my mind and I refused to listen.

When my husband arrived home from work on the Thursday evening before the holiday, I had the car loaded and even a supper packed to eat during the three-hour drive. My children had absorbed my eagerness and begged my husband to hurry and transport us to this magical place in their mother's stories.

The narrow, country roads leading to the cabin were seemingly unfamiliar to me and it was quite dark when we arrived. I did notice, though, the many modern summer homes built up almost to the doorway of the cabin. Once inside, I was thoroughly confused. My mind reeled with the blurred vision of carpet, lowered ceiling, a modern kitchen and bath, and formal draperies! The heating stove had been replaced with a series of floor registers, and there were taffeta spreads on the modern beds! Gone were the fish trophies and deer antlers; and when I rushed to check the kitchen wall, so was my beloved "backwards clock."

The television droned on in the evening and the adults played cards; Carl's radio had been silenced with his death. Now we were the grown-up voices as the children slept, and when I went to bed, there were no sounds to lull me to sleep.

When I awoke in the morning, the air-conditioning barred smells and sounds of the lake, and the odor of microwave bacon and "Mr. Coffee" just wasn't the same. After breakfast, I eagerly led my daughters to a favorite hideaway in the woods, only to find a swimming pool residing in the spot! A trip out on the lake, in the sleek, new motor boat, established that water lilies cannot grow in polluted water.

The family gathering was a huge success. My grandfather is moving to Arizona, so the cabin has been sold, but my sister says she knows a great site for our next reunion. I'm glad, I couldn't face that strange place again. I think "my cabin" is wherever Carl is. He's watching for that catfish, the clock is ticking backwards, and the radio plays into the night.

The Measuring Cup

The water-witch had waved
her willow wand and said,
"This well's the nearest.
Dig here, not deep."

Wooden yoke unbalanced, from a
splashed-out bucket Mrs. Hicks
dips a drink and eye-counts
the paces back of her sod house.

Cold, heavy liquid aches
down her throat, numbing
ancient water from a low table,
wind-pumped and hand-carried.

Bare feet scuff brown dirt.

Grass tickles a sole.
Toes dangle in a friendly creek.
Oak shades from sun.

Climb a ladder to a
lover's rendezvous.
Run off with a young man.
Freedom measured in
miles to the nearest neighbor,
and years.

Parched wind evaporates
tear before streak.
Treeless prairie horizon holds,
wall of countless distance.

—**Jeff Schenck**

Jeff Schenck A collection of color slides shows I've been places; my academic record confirms my degree in geography; a few poems try to fill in the blanks behind the head lines.

Incubus

beneath the pale gaze

of sunken eyes,
sucking the circling dancers dry

as bone, hollow sockets swelling,
orbs reddening, reflecting

the fading sun. Smiling
wanly, watching from

the center of the ring,
silent, unseen,

then flurrying on,
satiated,

he flies from the stone-
cold of daybreak.

—Jeff Schneck

Waking at Seven

To find
No clothes
Nor shoes
Marking you.
How ceremonious I crept
Down the stairs—
Saw the sun creeping through my bamboo shades
And you are gone:

Bound from
The alarms
We heard last night and
Could not silence—

—Karla Ashmore

Thanksgiving Prayer

Dendritic remnants
remain
from the falling off of life.
Exposed in cold
polluted morning
precipitated ectoplasm aches
and liquifying slowly
dries.

Degenerating time.
Emaciating age of dessication.
Life's unused muscle
wastes away.

My skin no longer clings.
Thinning to frail transparency
it loosely hangs on barren bones.

Touch me lightly, if you must,
for I am fragile now.
I bruise, might even break
or fall in bloody flakes
upon the floor.

I have lost my elasticity.
I am easily deformed,
like that frozen squirrel,
buried now beneath the snow.

Winter here is treacherous.
I dread a partial thaw.
Let me ripen uniformly,
melting in a warmer rain
to hungry roots.

—**Stephen Stouder**

Lying on the bank
I spied the silver minnows
Swimming inside me

—**Donna Baker**

Donna Baker is a student. At Last.

Armoire

O! Seasoned Walnut!
awaiting "ohs" and "ahs"
when viewers meet you
cornered in the room of sleep:
show your polished grain
with best feet forward—
squat feet lathed and rounded—
sturdy, your weight to keep

upright, proud; twin doors
splitting your facade—
carved molding on inset
panels, protecting rough
inner recesses that hide
shelves and hooks, nooks
and crannies, from which old
timber scents still seep.

Three sections: massive
building blocks made to look
as one, dovetailed, scant-nailed.
Free-standing closet: I weep
to contemplate your past,
your history steadfast,
restored now to last
as cherished wood antique.

—Shirley Vogler Meister

The Runner

transforms the winter
cold into warm
as she brushes away
sweating snow
and peels off
bodysuits
damp with
effort.

—Lynn Ann Sayre

Lynn Ann Sayre I am a twenty-six year old child, a poet by nature, a writer by necessity, and a runner by training. It is in these three activities that I feel a sense of balance in life.

i'm a junkie for love
a glass-eyed
hollow brained
frenzied mainliner
for that good feeling.
shoot me full
of that passion and excitement
jump my veins
with that 1st romantic rush
lace my drink with sexual impulse
drum my brain full
of that first infatuated flush.
i'm a junkie for love
an addict that seeks no cure
so happy am i to quiver
once more
with these white hot blues.

—Lynn Ann Sayre

Past Fragrance

The wet grass
always smelling of footprints,
your shadow
bending each thin blade,
a memory of
silk wind, the
hair under your arms
you allowed
that summer
to grow
as we allowed weeds next to the house
to climb and
how,
when you lifted your arms
about my shoulders,
all the flowers bloomed

—Jeff Berger

fighting the end

i am not ready to fall
should the precipice i walk
begin receding,
am not able to face
beyond its edge.
the thrill
is an empty gaze
not
a kiss.

i would claw with fingernails.
i would hang by eyelashes.

—**Jeff Berger**

Many a simple man
Can enjoy a simple kiss
And never think about the cause
'Cause pleasure's all it is

There are many complex lines of thought
For you thinkers and the like
To try and tell the simple man
And make him see the light
The things you've given so much thought
Are the things he'll never know
And you can yell and scream and break a sweat
And his little brain will never grow
To understand your abstract mind
Or why you're so perplexed
To him your thoughts are far away
And your thinking too complex

The simple man is simple
That's as simple as it is
He'll never grasp your discontent
Yet he'll live his life in bliss

—**Gary Oertel**

Gary Oertel is a 20 year old sophomore physical education major. A resident of the Eastside of Indianapolis, Gary is a graduate of Warren Central High School. He attended Western Kentucky University for the past two years, and has transferred to I.U.P.U.I to finish his education.

a series for ceres

did you see her too
sweet persephone
on her chariots of
vernality
and i
    (cant be certain
just not sure
but i think
she winked.

if someone offered you a pomegranate
its myriads sticky with sweetness
how many seeds
would you lust to taste
before you realized
it meant
months and months

i stepped
onto
a puddle of light
and felt
(is this what it's like?)
my senses
reeling
unabated astonishment
it's definitely in the air
and nothing we can do will stop it:
drunk
with the season

—Gabrielle Antolini

—Roger Hoffman

there you go again, giselle,
astounding with the same old marvels
what a great misfortune this amazement is less remarkable
the second day.

you,
writing your seduction poetry
(your true love is everywhere)

"all i want is a man i cant suck dry."

all you want,
he deduced, rolling over,
is a continuous string
of ones you can.

and he should know.
he's one.
(or at least she thought he might be.)

"i just wanted to
get her in the sack
and she wanted to save my soul"

as if it mattered in this striking of sudden wonder

all the time longing
for the chance
to feel that
marvelous desolation
again.

—**Gabrielle Antolini**

Last Night

Glint of mineral
in snow freshly fallen
is sharpened
under corner lights
between
dark buildings.

In soft rows
sleep alleys
like footprints left for night
to swallow.

—**Jeff Berger**

neither salty spray
nor the sweet strand lingers
in the beached-whale mind:
only sand-demise
(the dry death upon him)
shudders the massive side,
informs his swelling wait
with random thought.
even children carving names
on the imminent carcass
are but scratchings of land,
less than the toll
of the deep left behind.
. . .

—L.M. Jones

3:00 A.M.

You are still working,
shoulders bent over books,
head angled to catch
the dim circle of light
from your desk lamp.

I lie stone still
in the shadows of your room,
warm in your bed,
lovingly tucked in.

With my eyes I touch your face,
smooth your hair,
kiss the back of your neck.
I want to tell you
that you're closer to me
than my skin,
but I am too full of you
to speak.

—Elaine Childs

Elaine Childs is a senior majoring in Religious Studies. Her work has previously appeared in *Genesis*

"Don't wait up. . . ."

Zita Nurok

Zita Nurok was born in South Africa. She has a B.A. degree and was an elementary school teacher. She has lived here for five years and is at present employed as a nursery school teacher. She has been interested in writing for three years. She lives in Indianapolis with her husband and two sons.

Ravi opened the door of the dining room and announced smoothly, "Dinner is served." His lips smiled automatically while his soft brown eyes swept over the elegant couples who were to spend the evening in his care. As he turned he caught sight of himself in the mirrored hotel lobby. He was pleased with his tall slender image. The black evening suit made especially for him, the white shirt and bow-tie enhanced his fine Indian features.

"We'd like to face the sea, please," a middle-aged couple requested.

"Certainly, sir, we can arrange that." He escorted them to a window table, greeting the pianist who was introducing the soft music of the evening. He took a towel off his arm and dusted the seat of the embroidered chair as he drew it back over the royal blue carpet, and helped the lady into her place. He lit two pink dinner candles, which illuminated the single rose in the center of the small round table.

"These two look easy enough to please," Ravi thought as he placed the tassled menu before them.

"I'll leave you to look over the menu and be back to answer questions." He smiled and glimpsed at the flashing diamond ring of the woman as she turned the pages.

A young couple sat under a crystal chandelier, holding hands and deep in conversation. Ravi cleared his throat as he approached.

"Good evening ma'am, good evening, sir. Would you like to know Chef's recommendations for tonight?" He described the special orders of the evening, then bowed his

head and walked off to summon a waiter to serve at their table.

As the evening wore on the restaurant became crowded. The smell of prawns, garlic sauce, snails, lobsters and other delicacies wafted above the drone of people's conversation. In addition, the soft music, popping wine bottles, heavy smell of perfumed ladies and colognedmen began to irritate Ravi. Waiters called him for advice, people asked to sort out orders and explain bills. The clatter of plates, pots, cutlery, the yelling of chefs, waiters and cleaners, in the steaming kitchen, tired him.

He decided to take a short break outside. He stepped out of the side door, and made his way through Mercedes, Jaguars, and other vehicles parked in the garage, to the main road. He waited for a bus to pass and wished he could go home to his little house near the sugarcane fields. Many of his friends lived in Illovo, twenty miles from Durban, but they worked in the sugar industry and on the farms, as their parents had for generations. Ravi had wanted to be a waiter in the city and months before was promoted to his present position. His old father, the tailor, was happy. He'd sewn many suits to enable his six sons to be what they were. Wasn't the eldest an important man at a university in America, and his other brothers educated too? His father deserved the happiness he got from his children, and even more.

Ravi took deep breaths of salty air. He crossed the road and walked to a wooden bench on the beachfront. The sound of waves crashing on the sand below, and the cool breeze comforted him. Sparkling lights of the boats far out, beckoned his thoughts across the water. He wondered if his four children, Anil, Vikram, Maya and Meera were sleeping. Suman was probably waiting up for him. He'd often asked her not to. It would be nice if he could bring her to see the glowing lights, the fancy cars and the well-dressed people. She never complained but he knew how she longed to be able to buy some of the silken cloth from Vijays store, and have more saris than her few cotton ones. His erect shoulders drooped a little as he thought of his family.

He returned to the hotel and slipped into the men's room to straighten his tie and smooth down his jet black hair with his fine long fingers.

Anil, the new young waiter, was looking for him when he went into the dining room.

"A gentleman would like to see you," he said anxiously. Ravi walked confidently over.

"Yes, sir. Can I be of help, sir?"

"You certainly can," the young arrogant looking man replied. "What kind of management runs this place? I ordered my food over half an hour ago and there's just no sign of it. This waiter knows nothing." Anil shifted uncomfortably from one foot to another. The man's partner looked sheepishly down at the rings on her fingers.

"We do apologize and will look into the matter right away, sir." Ravi walked briskly into the kitchen, Anil following.

"And so you should," he heard the man mutter. He felt uneasy. The man appeared his own age and sounded educated. The wife could have been Suman's contemporary. He helped the inexperienced waiter with the order which the chef was preparing and began to work on the flambee's, crepes, Irish coffee, which signaled the beginning of the end of the evening.

He worked around the tables.

"Waiter." Ravi turned around to see whom the same bothersome individual was calling.

"Waiter." Again. He snapped his fingers at Ravi, who put down the pan in his hand. He tensed his arm muscles and ground his back teeth. He raised his fine eyebrows at the man as he reached his table.

"How much is this dish?"

He handed the person the menu.

As he flipped the page and found the price he demanded, "This costs ten Rand?"

"You're correct."

"For a supposedly excellent restaurant in a five-star hotel, we are most disppointed."

"I'm sorry." Ravi picked up the dish, as the couple prepared to leave.

People looked at the disgruntled pair. Ravi's eyes followed the long green silk coat and backless high heeled shoes to the door. He turned and went on with his work.

By midnight people began to filter out, candle lights flickered and died down, food smells disappeared into the

circulating air, and waiters prepared to go home.

The white hotel bus drove silently through the streets of shanty town. Ravi bade the driver goodnight and turned the key to his door.

His wife sat waiting in the wooden chair beside an old table, dressed in her familiar cotton sari. The smell of Indian curry mixed with incense.

"Why are you up?"

"Hello, Ravi. I wanted to wait."

"But I told you not to wait for me."

"Oh, Ravi, I like to hear about your nights. The children are asleep and I wanted to be with you," she said despondently.

"When will you stop doing this?" he yelled at her.

She looked at him, surprised.

"Why, Ravi. Did you have a bad evening?" she asked meekly.

"Don't talk to me about my work." His big eyes and high cheek bones were startling in the lantern light. "When will you buy yourself a new sari? Take that off. I'm sick of it!"

She stepped back, alarmed. Her eyes filled with tears.

He towered above her and she could smell the cigarette air in his clothes. He grabbed the folds of the sari, and pushed her back with them. She stumbled over a pillow on the floor.

"What are you doing? I'm your wife!"

"Nothing," he snarled at her. He looked around the poorly furnished room.

"Get up and go to bed!" he shouted.

She stood up shaking. Her long black hair tumbled over her shoulders. Tears rolled down her silent face.

"Go. . . ." he pushed her. "Go to sleep."

He went to the creaking cabinet, and took out a bottle of cheap brandy and a clean drinking glass. He sank into the large pillow on the floor.

—Roger Hoffman

Poetry, Language & Art.