



genesis

genesis

Volume 22

Number 1

Spring 1994

ART

&

LITERARY

MAGAZINE

Senior Editors

Mark A. Curtis

Peter A. Monn

Editorial Board

Tracey Clevenger

Maureen Creager

Faculty Advisor

Geneva Ballard

Copyright 1994 by the trustees of Indiana University, genesis is published in the spring and fall of each year by the genesis editorial board. Publication of genesis is made possible through a grant from the School of Liberal Arts and the Student Activities Fund, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis. Content is devoted to imaginative writing in the areas of fiction, essay and poetry, as well as artwork fulfilling the dimensions requirements listed on the invitation page. Correspondence pertaining to business or editorial matters should be addressed to: genesis, c/o the English Department, IUPUI, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202.

INVITATION Artwork is invited from all persons
TO who have been students at IUPUI at any
ARTISTS time during the last eighteen months
AND prior to submission. Any type of artwork
AUTHORS may be submitted. Artists are asked to
submit no more than ten pieces for a
given issue. If possible, please submit
photographed artwork in either color or black and white.
Arrangements for the return of artwork not photographed will be
made following publication. Please identify each piece on the
back with its title and your name, address, phone number, and a
short biography. Artists will be notified as to acceptance prior to
publication. Submit work to genesis, care of the Herron
Assistant Dean's Office or Geneva Ballard in the English
Department, Cavanaugh Hall.

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, non-fiction,
or poetry, on any topic, may be submitted at any time to genesis,
care of Geneva Ballard in the English Department, Cavanaugh
Hall. All manuscripts are considered by a student editorial board.
Authorship is not revealed to the board until a manuscript has
been accepted.

Manuscripts must be typed; prose pieces should be dou-
blespaced. Please classify prose pieces as either fiction or non-
fiction. Poets are asked to submit no more than ten pieces for a
given issue. All submissions must be accompanied by a separate
title sheet containing the author's name, address, telephone num-
ber, and a short biography. Names should be on the title sheet
only, and not on the manuscript.

Authors whose material has been accepted will be notified
prior to publication date. Manuscripts will not be returned. Any
manuscripts submitted too late for the current deadline will be
considered for the next issue. Honorary prizes are awarded at the
discretion of the editors for the outstanding entry in each of the
categories of art, essay, fiction, and poetry. Members of the edi-
torial board are ineligible to receive prizes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Untitled I	Jill Haycraft	1
Veteran Recuperation	Ann Duckworth	2
NOW:	Laura McPhee	6
Fahrenheit 2030	Sharolyn Herring	7
The Tinker's Damn	Sharolyn Herring	8
Untitled II	Jill Haycraft	9
The Shoot-out	Marcia Mishler	10
Siva's Wives	Jeffrey S. Beebe	13
The Mourning of Women	Sharolyn Herring	15
How To Plan Your Wedding Without Stress: A Survival Guide For Men	Mike Nidels	16
Oh! Sol	Sharolyn Herring	19
Lighthouse on a Shelf	Ann Duckworth	20
Not a Drop to Drink	Sharolyn Herring	21
Spring's Cascade	Carol Durbin	22
Building Character	Marcia Mishler	23
September 26 (Allegory II)	Jeffrey S. Beebe	28
Untitled III	Jill Haycraft	29
Storm	Benita T. Liepnicks	30
It's All In A Perfect Saxophone Dream Moment	Deborah Evans	31
Cover: Here Today	Sharolyn Herring	



Untitled I

Jill Haycraft

Veteran Recuperation

Ann Duckworth

She got out of her car and made a mad dash to the employee entrance. Her chest fluttered as she thought of Mrs. Globine, Lisbeth Globine, administrator of the surgery-orthopedic wing of Veteran's Hospital. Had she ever been late to anything? Natalie wondered and anxiously pulled the heavy door open, remembering Mrs. Globine's motto as she did, *duty is everything, without it we slide into mediocrity*. Actually the time was 0653, and Nat fleetingly mused at why she felt so late even when being on time. She pushed her lunch bag into the fridge and met George and Andrea, the aides, at the nurse's station. "How did he do through the night?" Nat directed her inquiry to George, who she knew was gentle with Mr. Kruschinski.

"He moaned most of the night, but the morphine kept the edge off. Anyway he doesn't know it's gone, he kept asking for more covers, saying his *feet* were cold."

Natalie looked at the shimmering white floor as she headed to Tarence's room. Soundlessly pushing the door open, she saw that he slept, his mouth open, body relaxed. Turning back, she headed to the conference room for morning report. She was grateful to hear that Judy Barnes would be taking Tarence today. *Now I need to concentrate on my assignment*. It wasn't until lunch time that Natalie could see for herself what Judy had described as marvelous.

"So you're awake!" She chirped as she walked in on Tarence as he was spooning hot broth and cursing his IV line that was inserted in the back of his wrist.

"When the hell do I get this out?"

"As soon as you show us you're going to hold down fluids like that broth."

"Bahh! I haven't upchucked since I was a kid." He growled, adding, "You might as well have my right blue slipper. I won't be needing it."

The light in his eyes was still there and Nat was relieved by the familiar spunk. "I can see you'll be working at getting out of here fast. Remember though, one leg can't run."

On day three of Mr. Kruschinski's recuperation Lisbeth leafed

through his chart, briefly glancing over the doctor's orders and notes. She spent more time in the yellow section, the nurse's notes. Natalie was pulling the medicine drawers to prepare for her rounds. She watched as Mrs. Globine waked down Hall B, noting that she entered Tarence's room. *What could she want? I've never seen her visiting the patients.* Glancing at the clock, she hurriedly pushed the cart to C112, saying "Good morning, Mrs. Allen."

Back in B140, Tarence was attempting to swing his body into a sitting position on the side of the bed. "Blast it! This is going to be some feat. I've got to shave before the pretty young nurses start congregatin' in my room. You know, they're softies for an old lonely man in pain." Lisbeth smiled and helped pull Tarence upright, positioning his stump carefully.

Mr. Kruschinski, are you getting adequate care here at Veteran's?"

"Hell, yes! Never met a kinder bunch, course it helps to have Nat. We've been Creek friends. Caught us a twenty-three pound salmon last fall. You shoulda been there when we ate that pink, juicy fry! Do ya like salmon?" Tarence winced as he repositioned.

"Well, yes, I do. I haven't had any fresh since I was a girl." A slight smile softened her face.

"Do you like running this place, Mrs. Globine? Kinda seems a bit soberin'."

"It's a good job, anyway I feel I can't avoid it, army blood." Lisbeth wrote on a notepad.

"Ah, I was an army cook in World War I, made the best recipe of scrambled eggs and cubed potatoes. The boys clapped on those mornings." He eyed the flat eggs on his plate and took a full draught of coffee.

"I didn't have too many pleasant scenes in Vietnam. I was seven miles behind the line in a Stage I medic unit. Once, I took care of an amputee, Private Campbell. He was so bright, sensitive. I wished those brooding eyes had alerted me in time. He shot himself when he went to the latrine. It was only his second attempt at ambulating. We never found where he'd gotten the gun. I saw enough horror to last many lifetimes." Lisbeth stared out the window, then shook herself, standing quickly, "Enough of memories. I need to get on with the day. Your recovery is coming along quite well. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help."

"I surely will. I'm doing this just right, see, I kept my legs through the war so figure I'll keep the rest of me for some time to come!" Mrs. Globine was half way out the door and he added, "You come back anytime

and we'll talk some more."

Natalie decided to see Tarence after work today, giving more time to relax and talk.

"How's the pain, Tarence?"

"Well, at times it's enough that I'm outright spooked, but mostly the ache is dulling." He pulled at the blanket to bring it farther up his chest.

"I saw that Sargent Globine stopped in today. Did you pass inspection?"

"There's that edge of yours again, Nat. She is brisk, in her business moments, but I guess since I don't work for her, and maybe more because I'm not in tremblin' fear of her, I got to hear her other voice."

"I'm usually quite imaginative, can't see a spark of any warmth there." Nat sat on the edge of the plastic chair, grinning at Tarence.

"Did you know she nursed the worst injuries behind the lines in Vietnam?"

"No, I thought she was always a state-side army brat." She moved back in the chair and folded her arms.

"I guess she was drawn to me, kind of a kindredness. I'm also an interesting relic from WW I. Did you know she actually lit up when I suggested trying some of our fresh salmon next fall." Every wrinkle in his face grinned.

Natalie stared, she'd always regarded the salmon catch as sacred time. Tarence groaned. "I guess I need something to get to sleep. Can you let them know, Nat?"

She rose and placed her hand on Tarence's shoulder. "Sure, I'll check in tomorrow."

She walked down the hall wondering at Tarence's ease with people. She stopped at the nurse's station to give his message then walked past Mrs. Globine's office. She noticed the door half open. The room was gray with the outside dusk. She hesitated and wondered if she should pull it closed as Globine always locked the office before leaving for the day. Instead she pushed the door open a little. Globine sat, hunched over with her head on her desk, hands clasping over her ears.

"Mrs. Globine, are you okay?" Natalie quietly entered.

Lisbeth slowly raised her head, taking several moments to focus. "O yes, Natalie. I'm just a little tired. I'll be leaving soon, see you early tomorrow."

Natalie walked toward the exit, her hand on the knob, stopped and headed to the small canteen by the locker room. She read the choices on

the Hot Drinks machine, put her two quarters in and punched coffee with extra cream, remembering she'd seen Mrs. Globine do the same, then one black coffee for herself. She walked slowly back down the hall toward Mrs. Globine's office. She decided this time she'd ask to stay a few minutes.

NOW:

Laura McPhee

I
do
not
hold

I
clutch

in
tight
white
knuckled
fists

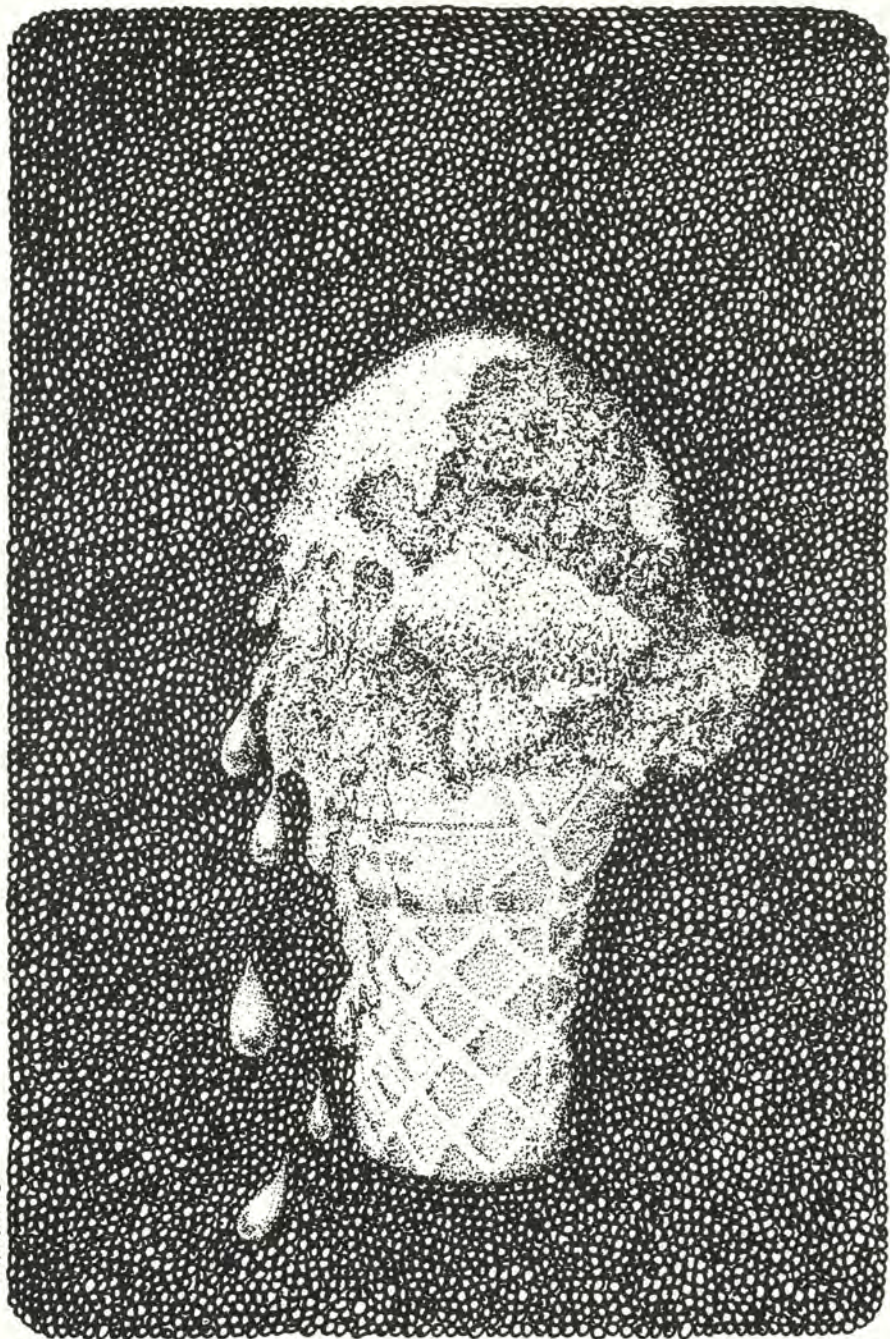
memories

are all
that remain

and
they
will
dim
fade
and
die
unless

I
can
keep
them
alive
unlike

I
could
you



S. HERRING

Farenheit 2030

Sharolyn Herring

The Tinker's Damn

Sharolyn Herring

"Bandy, what are you doing?" Kate asked. Her husband had piled all their shoes on the kitchen table.

"Tinkerin', just tinkerin'," he answered briskly, as always, sweeping questions away as if they had never been asked.

"It's time for your dinner, so let's get these put away. Are you hungry?" Kate asked, but he didn't answer. His broad hands turned a black patent evening pump this way and that, looking for a loose sole to glue, a wobbly heel to hammer. Kate smiled and sat down next to him.

"Bandy, do you remember the last time I wore those?"

"Uh huh, I do, I do."

"Your retirement party. Oh, we'd looked forward to that night, and we danced and danced, didn't we."

"At the Elks Club," he said, frowning into the evening pump. One hand gripped the hammer lying on his lap. "The Elks Club." He stared at his own face mirrored on the shiny patent and rubbed it with his thumb, smudges turing his reflection into that of a stranger.

"You remember," Kate said. She sighed and took the shoe from him. "Oh well. Time to put all this away."

"All fixed, all fixed. Better take a look at the sink."

"It's fine, Bandy, no need to fix the sink."

"The window?"

"No more now, it's time for your dinner."

"The back door. I can fix the back door."

"Bandy, I said no more tinkering."

"Kate? Kate?"

"Yes, what is it?"

"I messed myself again, Katie."

"Damn it, Bandy, you know to tell me when you have to go."

"I will. Damn it, Bandy."



Untitled II

Jill Haycraft

The Shoot-out

Marcia Mishler

My brother Jim has always been a firm believer in the right to bear arms. I guess you could say that he comes by that lifetime membership to the NRA honestly enough. Although he did spend most of his college years at spot shoots and most of his high school years taking potshots at me with his B.B. gun, his “aficionado” status for the gun thing started much earlier still. I would guess that he was probably about the age of six when his NRA love began to blossom.

Jim used to spend most of his time as a child at our Grandma’s house. Grandma lived just up the road from where my parents lived, and in the winter when the leaves were off the trees we could see her house through the woods. She used to feed us grandkids Little Debbie swiss rolls and brownies. Now these were very alluring treats for sweet-toothed grandkids, but the big draw about going to Grandma’s was that she always had lots of Double Cola for us to drink. Double Cola was kind of a local-bottled Pepsi with red and blue dots on the bottle. The only place you can still buy it, outside of Evansville’s local grocery stores, is at the cheap liquor stores for \$.79 a two liter. In those days, however, it came packaged in 16 ounce glass bottles. It may have been “cheap” to some, but to a bunch of sugar-buzzed kids it was a luxury beyond comparison. We weren’t allowed to have Double Cola at home -- only Koolaid.

Grandma also allowed us grandkids to watch television anytime we wanted. She didn’t make us watch those stupid educational shows either. At Grandma’s house we were introduced to the laughs of Sanford and Son and Good Times. We learned to love Match Game, and we knew every episode of The Brady Bunch by heart.

Needless to say, Jim (as a true junk food/junk T.V. junkie) spent a great deal of his time at Grandma’s. One of the other grandkids who used to go there too was my cousin Little Kenny. Little Kenny was anything but little. He was only called Little Kenny because his dad’s name was Kenny too, and that was how the whole family specified who they were referring to: Little Kenny and Big Kenny. Of course, we probably should have said “Old” Kenny and “Young” Kenny or maybe just called Little Kenny “Junior” (since that’s what he was), but we didn’t. In those down-home traditions of Southern Indiana we called him Little Kenny. As a matter of fact, we all still call him Little Kenny, even though he is forty years old and

much larger than Santa Claus in season.

Anyway, Little Kenny was four years older than Jim and used to beat on him terribly. I think he gained inspiration from those Saturday morning bouts of the WWF wrestling shows (which we also watched at Grandma's). One day, while Jim and Kenny were at Grandma's eating Little Debbie swiss rolls (Little Debbie really was little) and drinking Double Cola, Kenny went too far in his abuse. He must've hit Uncle Jim in the stomach once too often. Or maybe it was the sleeper hold that broke the camel's back. I was never really into the wrestling scene.

For once Jim didn't scream for help. He didn't get angry. Instead, he calmly left the sanctuary of Grandma's great white house and marched directly home to my parents'. He walked up the stairs to my parents bedroom, opened the closet door, and carefully took dead Uncle Ollie's legendary revolver out of its box. He then closed the closet door and resolutely marched back down the stairs with it -- the revolver almost bigger than Jim's six-year-old body, and certainly much older. It was at this point that my dad intervened.

"What are you doing with that gun, Jimmer?" my dad asked him, with no more emotion than if he were talking about tadpoles or the dog. . .

"Gonna go shoot Kenny," replied Jim rather matter-of-factly.

My dad reflected for a moment and then said "If you shoot Kenny, then you won't have anyone to play with, and you'll have to go to jail." Perhaps seeing that this wasn't producing the terror that he wanted, my dad took a more basic approach. "You know they only serve sausage (which Jim hated) in jail, and they never have Double Cola."

Jim's face started to fall, and Dad, encouraged by the crestfallen look, pressed his advantage with the clincher, "I suppose we'll have to give your room and all your toys to your sister then."

Jim stood very still at the base of the stairs. You could almost see his mind balancing out the pros and cons of shooting Little Kenny. His head would tilt to the right (yes, shoot him) and then to the left (well, maybe I'd better not shoot him), and then back to the right, to the left. He looked like one of those nodding dogs that people used to have in the rear windows of their cars.

After a quiet eternity during which no one seemed to breath (except Dad -- HE knew the gun wasn't loaded), Jim straightened his posture and held his head high. "I think it's something I still need to do," he told my dad.

It was at that point that such a glorious story ends in the same man-

ner as any other endeavor of childhood misbehavior. Jim was soundly spanked and sent to his room. (This was before the days of fanatical child abuse hawks when a parent could still give his child a whack on the rear and not go to jail.)

I recently spoke with Jim about the incident. Although it happened over twenty years ago he says he remembers it quite clearly. (Jim has not yet been discovered by the Freudian psychoanalysts who will want to use this repressed memory to throw the rest of the family in jail.) I asked him what had upset him so much about the incident that it was still so vivid in his memory.

“Well,” he said, “everyone else was so upset and Mom cried and Grandma cried, and Kenny and I weren’t allowed to play together for over a week. I wanted to play again by the end of the afternoon. It was such a boring week without Kenny.”

IV. Uma

the boy pulls
leaves from the branch
of a sugar maple,
 gathers the candy-corn colored
 hands into a ragged bunch.

(the sun warms him--
he tears off the brown jacket
and stows it
under a bush)



The Mourning of Woman

Sharolyn Herring

How To Plan Your Wedding Without Stress: A Survival Guide For Men

Mike Nidels

Congratulations upon your decision to enter the wonderful world of matrimonial bliss. Hopefully, you will find that married life is full of happiness and spiritual peace. Choosing a companion for the journey of life is one of the most important decisions a person can make. The only decision of more importance is a woman's decision as to what color dresses her bridesmaids will be wearing or who is to be invited to the wedding. So many decisions and so little time. This is a rite of passage to be endured by all men who choose to get married and have the traditional "big wedding." However, let it be known that there is an alternative route to totally stress free martial planning. One can always take the cowards way out and elope. Though elopement is considered to be a craven act, it can save time, money, and may even prevent future hair loss. Those lucky, blessed, and fortunate few who have sold your fiancee on this idea STOP READING NOW AND MOVE QUICKLY BEFORE SHE CHANGES HER MIND!! If elopement is not an available option, please continue reading and be brave.

Unless 200-350 of your closest friends, relatives, and co-workers are all tragically killed in some catastrophic event, which is unlikely considering the recent fall of the Eastern Bloc, you are looking at a major undertaking of planning and organizational skill that would tax the patience of Job himself. Pay attention here, guys, never underestimate your ability to pass the buck and remember the KISS theory (Keep It Simple Stupid). Remember this is one of the few times in a woman's life that she can have absolutely everything the way she wants and every little item or task is completed and carried out to meet her satisfaction. Also remember that despite her harried demeanor and her stress-induced panic attacks, she is loving every minute of it.

Let her be the despotic dictator and let her enjoy her tyrannical tirades. Rely heavily on the inbred, negative, male stereotypes and low opinions that many women hold of men. Perhaps these base judgements are injected into women at an early age when they take that mysterious

tuberculosis test that we all have to undergo. At any rate, try to remember to play dumb. For most of us, there is a good chance that we won't even be asked about color coordination, floral arrangements, wedding cake style, food selection, or which lucky niece and nephew get to be flowergirl and ring bearer. Remember, we are men, and as proud members of the male race we must strive to maintain the very honorable and longstanding traditions of stupidity, insensitivity, and ignorance.

Women do not ask our opinions about wedding matters for two reasons. First, because they know that not only do we not give a rodent's posterior about these things, they also know that we are totally ignorant in these areas. Secondly, they are so consumed with the planning and preparation process and they are so drunk with power that the opinion of the groom is a very low priority. Though at times the temptation may be great, avoid making smart or cutesie comments like, "Remember me, the one that bought that rock on your finger?" or "Are you sure you don't want the groomsmen and the ushers to dress up in Elvis costumes?"

On those rarest of occasions when your beautiful bride-to-be does ask your opinion, try to be completely agreeable without sounding patronizing or apathetic. This is often easier said than done. Some good canned responses to her might be, "If you think that would be best, that's fine by me,"; "Whatever makes you happy honey," or "I think that is a great idea." Short, innocuous, and falsely solicitous responses will surely get you into deep, deep, deep trouble. Avoid the use of responses such as, "Sure," "Okay," "Fine," and never ever, ever, ever, never, say "I DON'T CARE." If you are stupid enough to use this last quote as a response when your opinion is being requested, then you truly deserve the "Wrath of God" that will be assailed upon you like a lightning bolt.

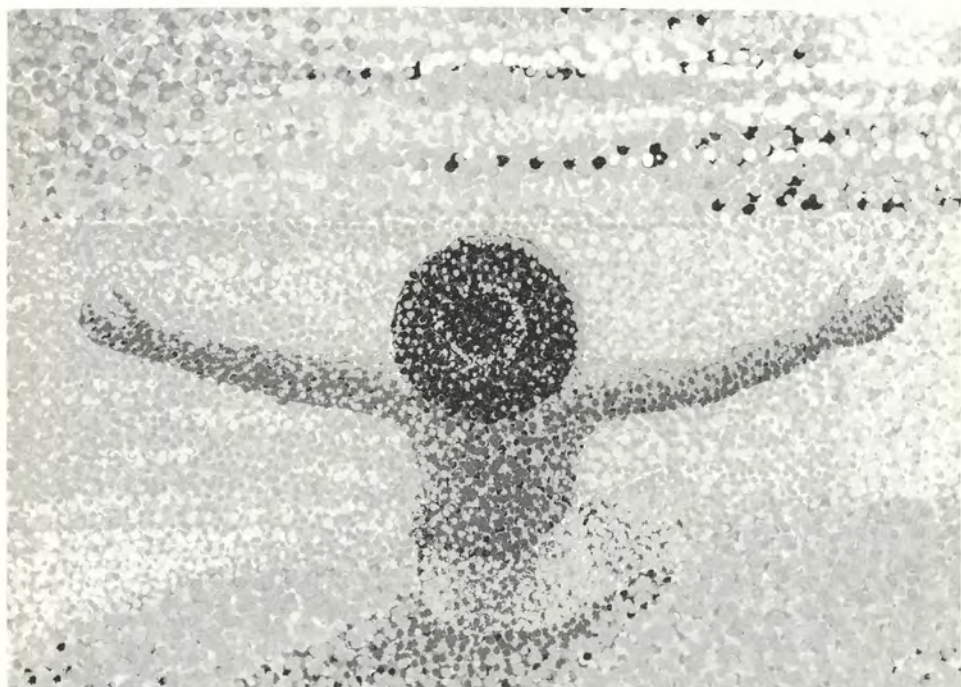
One thing that will be asked of you is that you make sure that all the men involved in the wedding get fitted for their tuxedos. Do not approach this task with any sense of drudgery. If carefully worked and depending on the size of your wedding party, this task can be drawn out over a one or two month time frame. A groom can use this opportunity to enjoy some quality one-on-one male bonding, (a note to all female readers; male bonding has nothing to do with any Freudian, latent, homosexual tendencies). A young groom may want to get all his men together and turn this occasion into a big party at the tux shop on a Saturday afternoon. Try to avoid this scenario. One can kill several weekend afternoons by eating lunch with a buddy or going for a drive prior to and/or after a tux fitting. Not only is this quality time spent with good friends who are going to share

in the most important day of your life, it is also an excellent means of escaping the severe, tyrannical yoke of your oppressor, and harsh taskmaster, your bride-to-be.

Try to be understanding and sympathetic to what your bride is going through. Don't burden her with extra worries. For example, the "Bachelor Party" should be none of her concern. Though she may during the time prior to the party inquire as to what sort of activities and prurient behavior will be going on, one can avoid any compromise of integrity by making sure that the Best Man only provides you with critical party information on a need-to-know basis. A note to concerned brides; the Bachelor Party is a traditional rite of passage, endured throughout the annals of history by all grooms-to-be. Truly, it is often a time of decadent, deviant, and morally relaxed behavior, yet you brides can take comfort in the fact that almost always the groom has the least enjoyable time of all those in attendance. Vomiting is not fun.

Finally, the big day arrives, and unfortunately there are always last minute arrangements and contingencies to be dealt with. One way the groom may avoid this last-minute stress, second only to finals week during college, is to have your best man arrange a golf outing for that morning. However, if one does not golf and the excuse that the Indiana-Michigan basketball game comes on at noon fails, one should offer to help by being the guy who drives all over town running errands. While initially this job may not sound enjoyable, this task results in one spending quality, solitary time in a car or truck. Hopefully, this car or truck will have a radio, and one will at least be able to hear the basketball game while running errands.

Once all the errands are finally run, the hall is decorated, the church is decorated, and all the loose ends are tied up, you can sit back and enjoy the festivities. Smell all the roses of that day and revel with your friends and family. Lastly, stand at the end of the aisle and be awe-struck at how that angry, stressed-out, at-her-wits-end, screaming woman is miraculously transformed into an angelic, beautiful lady that could put Helen of Troy to shame. Bask in your good fortune, and always remember how lucky you are to find a woman that will tolerate you.



Oh! Sol

Sharolyn Hering

Lighthouse on a Shelf

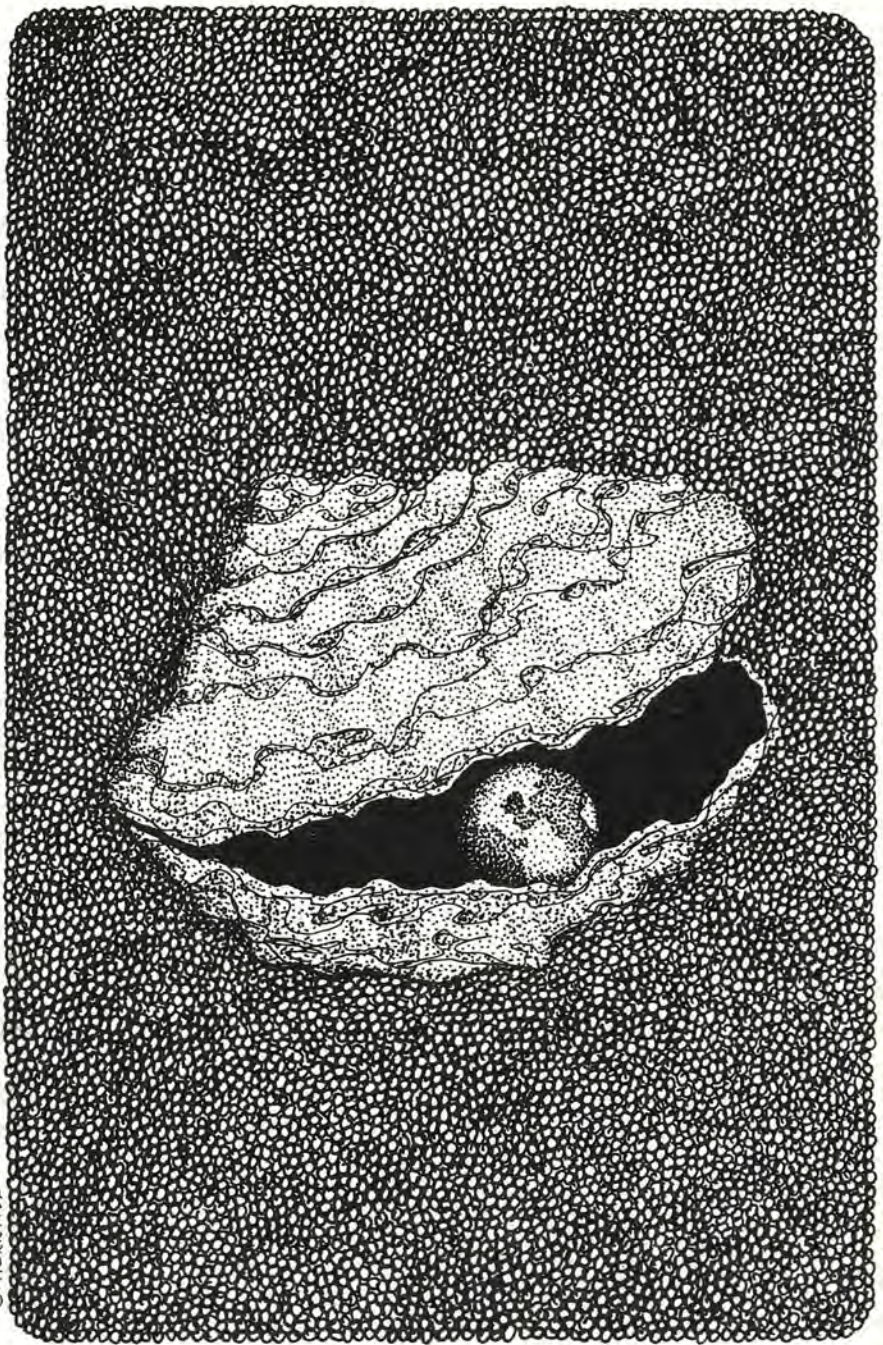
Ann Duckworth

An eighty-year old graystone house
with older maples towering,
and she lives there still, though
she seemed taller then, rounder and always
glad to have you drop in to say *howjadoo*.

I remember best the lighthouse.
Carved in stone, pure white, it towered
over the red-roofed cottage next door.
A gull sat on a post looking out to sea.
She had rested her arm across my shoulders,
*Somehow, someday, I'd like to live at one of them,
climb that tower and fire up them lights
for a lost ship.*

Friday I drove by. Her son, in fatigues, threw
his pudgy toddler in a playful romp. She swang
on the porch and laughed as she waved.
I recalled the time my grandma visited--driving down
the maple-lined street, she shrieked *Lock the doors!*
as my friend and her son carried sacks to the porch.
My face had burned, as I countered *But Grandma, they LIVE
there!*

Call me Miss Ginny, she had said many times, though
She'd had a husband. *In the South
people'd called others that to show
some respect*, her eyes dancing, dark face glowing
and I laughed because I'd thought it a good thing.



S. HERRING

Not a Drop to Drink

Sharolyn Herring

Spring's Cascade

Carol Durbin

Moss-laden rocks
Drink the punch of
Yesterday's rain.
A lily cries tears
from petals full
with dew
And drops the water
To the earth to feed
The soil anew

Building Character

Marcia Mishler

Lots of people go to Florida for vacation. When they come back, most of them usually return with fond memories of their vacation. Many bring back pictures, some bring back souvenirs. A rare few even bring back hitchhikers. But, the “best” thing to bring back (if you want to have a vacation that no one will ever forget) is not any of these things I have mentioned. No one will ever forget the summer that we brought a live sea animal home from Florida. Let me qualify that. The sea animal was alive when we **left** the Sunshine State. However, by the time we reached the Kentucky/Tennessee border the following day, our noses should’ve told us that the animal was pretty much dead. Wait, let me qualify that again, before the animal rights activists start picketing my home. Or maybe it would just be easier to start at the beginning and tell the whole, sordid story.

I had just turned twenty-seven years old and I was riding high on one of the best years of my young life. I’d just gotten married, landed a great job, bought a new car, and I was about to go to Florida (for the first time in my life) with my best friend, Terri. My new employer was not only allowing me vacation time so soon, they were even giving me vacation time with pay! Could life be any better?

In retrospect I see this time period of my life as an “accident about to happen” scene from a movie. I’m sure you’ve seen them. A man is on a ladder painting his house and the camera zooms in on him. He has apparently been painting for days and is almost about to take that last victory stroke to complete the job. The camera shifts to a totally “unrelated” scene of a driver’s education car about two miles away. An elderly woman with blue hair and a hearing aid is weaving northbound in and out of the southbound traffic lane while the driver’s ed. instructor cowers beneath the backseat fervently saying prayers. The camera zooms back to the man on his ladder and pauses over his mailbox to reveal that he resides at Berry Drive. The camera moves once more to the blue-haired driving demon who is just now making a left, across-five-lanes-of-traffic, turn onto ...Berry Drive. Zoom to happy man on ladder unaware of impending doom. Zoom to driver’s ed. car picking up speed.

You get the picture. I’ve already described the one scene for you. Here I am riding on the wave of happiness, innocently humming Jimmy

Buffet tunes as I pack my bags for Florida. We then zoom to the other scene of ...my father. He is fanatically pursuing his latest hobby of rock collecting. His most recent, and greatest, quest of rockhounds is to acquire a piece of coral. I'm going to Florida – on the ocean. Coral is found in the ocean. Therefore, I must comb the oceanside and bring back a piece of Coral for my father.

Terri and I were not phased. We were used to Dad's impossible requests. As I remember, we were (naively) amused. I believe Dad delights in asking for the impossible. Whenever anyone complains about the difficulty of his requests, he informs them "It'll build character. Quit whining." Knowing that whining would do us no good, we asked Dad for a picture of the prized coral so that we could recognize it once we got to the beach.

The vacation started off as fantastic as the year had been. Our hotel suite had its own refrigerator and microwave. There were palm trees outside our window and a swimming pool just outside the door. The hotel offered a free breakfast buffet every morning and free open bar/happy hour every afternoon. Yes sir, we were in heaven.

. . . Until the day we went to the beach. The beach served as our transitional path from heaven to hell. You know the Trojan Horse saying "never trust Greeks bearing gifts?" Well, never trust a wave bearing coral. The way Dad had described it, coral was a hot commodity and very rare. We imagined our coral search as being a cross between searching for a four leaf clover and finding the proverbial needle in a haystack. Au contraire. We hadn't even been at the beach for fifteen minutes when the tide came in, lapped at our ankles, and ran out - leaving behind an honest to God piece of coral.

"No way!" I exclaimed overcome by our luck. "Go get the picture out of the glove compartment. It can't be this easy."

So while I stood guard over our newly found "treasure," Terri hoofed it back to the car for the necessary picture of proof.

It matched exactly. Exalted, jubilated, feeling quite lucky indeed, we deposited our treasure in the trunk of my car and promptly left the beach. We would have time to go to Sea World after all.

About an hour away from the sight of our terrific find, Terri made a face with her nose scrunched up and said "Check the bottom of your shoes. It smells like dog shit in here."

We both checked our shoes and found nothing but sand. The farther we got from the beach, the more the smell grew. Finally, we had to pull the car over. A quick inspection informed us that the source of this foul odor

was nothing other than Dad's glorious coral.

"Throw it out." Terri suggested. "We'll just tell him that we couldn't find any. He'll never know."

Looking back, I could kick myself for not chucking the offensive monster then and there. But I was determined to be the good daughter. "Let's call him," I said. "Maybe we're supposed to wash it or something."

And so we rode with windows down to the nearest pay phone, breathing as little as possible. We called Dad – collect of course. We knew he wouldn't mind as long as we had his coral. After much discussion he was convinced we had the right thing and that it wasn't unusual for coral to smell. He said it probably had little dead sea creatures in it or something. "Spray it off," he told us. "It'll be fine."

So much for Sea World. We went to a distant cousin's home who lived in a nearby city and asked to use her water hose. She helped us to spray the coral down, all the while I'm sure she was thinking how glad she was that we were "distant" cousins, both geographically and genetically. Our task accomplished, we thanked her and drove off.

The coral smelled somewhat better that evening. We had loaded the trunk down with various "stick-ems" air fresheners. I was afraid that the smell was ruining my new car. The smell of country roses was sickly sweet but preferable to our newly discovered aroma of coral.

The next morning we left for an all day cruise. We left the car parked in a pay-lot with the coral still stored in its trunk. How wonderful it was to spend an entire day without the smell of either roses or coral. I don't think I truly appreciated the value of fresh air until that day. What a great day! The security guard at the parking lot, however, was not having one. By the time the ship docked at midnight, the security guard had definitely had his fill of smelling coral. Of course, he didn't know the smell was coming from coral, so I really can't blame him for calling the police.

When we approached the car we noticed that a small crowd had gathered in that area. Our first thought was that someone had hit our car. As we approached the car with keys in hand, the crowd of people parted for us like the Red Sea. A police officer had just arrived also, and was demanding that we open the trunk for him. Apparently the security guard had worked up a theory that we were storing a dead body in our trunk. It was to everyone's grave disappointment, then, that the opened trunk contained no scandal at all. Only a couple of suitcases and the offensive, odorous, stenching, filthy coral.

Everyone had a good laugh, including the police officer, who

looked very relieved at not finding a dead body. (He was the only one who expressed this feeling. Everyone else looked rather annoyed.) Terri and I were relieved at not being arrested. We were annoyed as hell with my father. We called him then and there from the dock.

“You’re coming home tomorrow,” he reasoned. “Surely you can make it one more day.”

“But Dad,” I tried to reason, “it really does smell like a dead body.”

And then came that time-honored line that we’d been expecting all along. “Quit whining and bring it home. It’ll build character.”

That night we left the coral in a field several yards from the car. We did this for a variety of reasons. First, we didn’t want any more police officers searching for decomposed bodies in our car. Secondly, our suitcases and clothes were beginning to absorb the smell of the coral. And thirdly, I think we were both hoping deep down that, with coral being the “hot” item that my father professed it to be, someone would steal it during the night.

No such luck. The next morning we loaded the backseat of the car with all our luggage and souvenirs. We loaded up the vast, now empty truck with several air fresheners and the coral.

I’m not sure what the record time is for driving from Florida to Indiana, but I know we were up there with the fastest. We drove straight through, sticking our heads out the windows now and then for air. We kept all the windows down, even when we encountered a rainstorm just outside of Henderson, Kentucky.

When we pulled up to Mom and Dad’s house, we threw the coral as far away from us as possible. Dad was in the shower, but Mom came out and told us to move “that thing” away from her house. “The smell will kill the flowers,” she complained.

Spot, the dog, came over to check out the new item in the yard. You know how dogs are always attracted to things that smell rotten. After a thorough investigation, Spot promptly hiked his leg over the new coral. If he was trying to mark his territory, I don’t think his “mark” was enough to overpower the scent of the coral “intruder.”

At last, the moment we had been waiting for! Dad finally emerged from his shower and walked across the yard to inspect his rare addition to his rock and mineral collection. He looked down at the coral for a moment, and then looked at us both with disgust.

“That’s not coral,” he informed us as though we were morons. “That’s a sponge and you’ve killed it. The reason your car smelled like you were hauling a decaying body is because you were.”

Not much is left now of our famous “coral” vacation. We didn’t even have the foresight to take a picture of it. Spot peed on it a few more times that evening. Mom buried it out behind the woods the next day. Terri and I had to rewash all our clothes and air out the suitcases. And the smell eventually faded from the car. Dad wound up buying his coral from a store and Terri and I, theoretically, built some character.

And every time I smell rose-scented air freshener I feel like throwing up.

September 26 (Allegory II)

Jeffrey S. Beebe

The brown grasshoppers
disengage from the cover
of goldenrod and clover
—glossy violet-green wings uncased

(tapering bodies disappear
when they hit the road-dust)

They are cold-lazy and won't scatter
until the last moment;
some don't move and get crushed
under boot heels

pairs locked in a coitive
knots alight, poised
among the pleated lips of beer bottlecaps
anchored in the dirt

a finger-long grasshopper
(impressed by the wind)
leaves the road,
glides out over the creek--

and descends
kicking the surface
corrugating the patchwork of treeshadows
where the fish wait.



Untitled III

Jill Haycraft

Storm

Benita T. Liepniks

Sometimes
When it's cold and windy
And grey clouds promise rain,
I like to sit outside
On a concrete bench
Until my entire body is numb,

Watching the herds of people
Hurrying home.
Cursing the weather
And the brewing storm,
While their feet pound the pavement,
Legs scissor-slice the air.

Often I want to round them up,
Drag them to a darkening pasture,
Trap them with electric wire,
Make them fear lightning bolts crashing
And feel pelting torrents of rain,
And deafen them with pounding thunder.

On the bench I watch,
And imagine them wondering if I'm freezing,
Though if they look
Into my eyes
They'll see the reflected storm.
They'll hurry faster by.

It's All In A Perfect Saxophone Dream Moment

D eborah Evans

Dust these days
in cigarette fumes.

Fly coasts the rim
of a vodka glass

The city simmers
behind the steam
heaving off my kitchen
stove.

Biographies

Jeffrey Beebe is majoring in English and cannot wait to move away from Indianapolis with his dog, Thelonious.

Carol Durbin - I'm a freshman at IUPUI. I plan to major in geology. I have always enjoyed writing, especially poetry.

Deborah Evans is originally from Detroit, Michigan. She is a pre-law English/Philosophy major currently studying Japanese language.

Jill Haycraft - Photos

Sharolyn Herring - After a twenty-year detour through corporate communications, this former Indiana State University graphic design major resumed her education at IUPUI as an English major. She is currently at work on a collection of short fiction revolving around issues that concern women.

Benita T. Liepnieks - I am a recent graduate of Purdue University, but I completed my classes at IUPUI. In school I discovered that I could put thoughts that I had compiled in notebooks and journals into poetry. With this discovery, along with my major in Visual Communications Design and minor in Spanish, I also minored in English with Poetry my specialty.

Marcia Mishler is a graduate of Indiana University, Bloomington. She is currently enrolled at IUPUI in the teacher's certification program.

Mike Nickels - I am a 29 year old, married, student, and I am also a father. Actually I am a step-father but I prefer not to use biology to qualify my relationship with my wife's 10 year old daughter. I am a 1988 graduate from the IUPUI School of Liberal Arts with a B.A. in Organizational Communications. Currently I am enrolled here at the IUPUI School of Education where I am working towards my Teacher's Certification to teach English at the Secondary level.

