

genesis

Fall 2008



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W280 Apprentices:

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Cover: On Our Way

Joe Wallace
Digital Photograph

Editors' Note

A vast amount of energy has enveloped *genesis* this school year. Our dedicated staff of editors has grown both in numbers and in skills, making this one of the most enjoyable semesters in the magazine's recent memory. This page reflects recent changes in the editorial positions among our staff. The positions of "managing" and "junior" editors reflect the energy that has been harnessed from our core of senior editors, and the great strides we have made getting more of the IUPUI student body involved with our publication.

But all of this change has coincided with a return to 36 years of *genesis* traditions. We have a history of publishing only the best art and literature from our students' varied walks of life. We also have a tradition of achievement. The urban tone of this issue speaks to the proximity of our campus to the heart of Indianapolis. It bears witness to the culture we all love and share. Please enjoy this new beginning, this renaissance, of our magazine. Enjoy this *genesis*.

Ryan Baggett
Managing Editor

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following:

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genesis—the origin or coming into being of anything; development into being, especially by growth or evolution; the process or mode of origin <the ~ of a book>

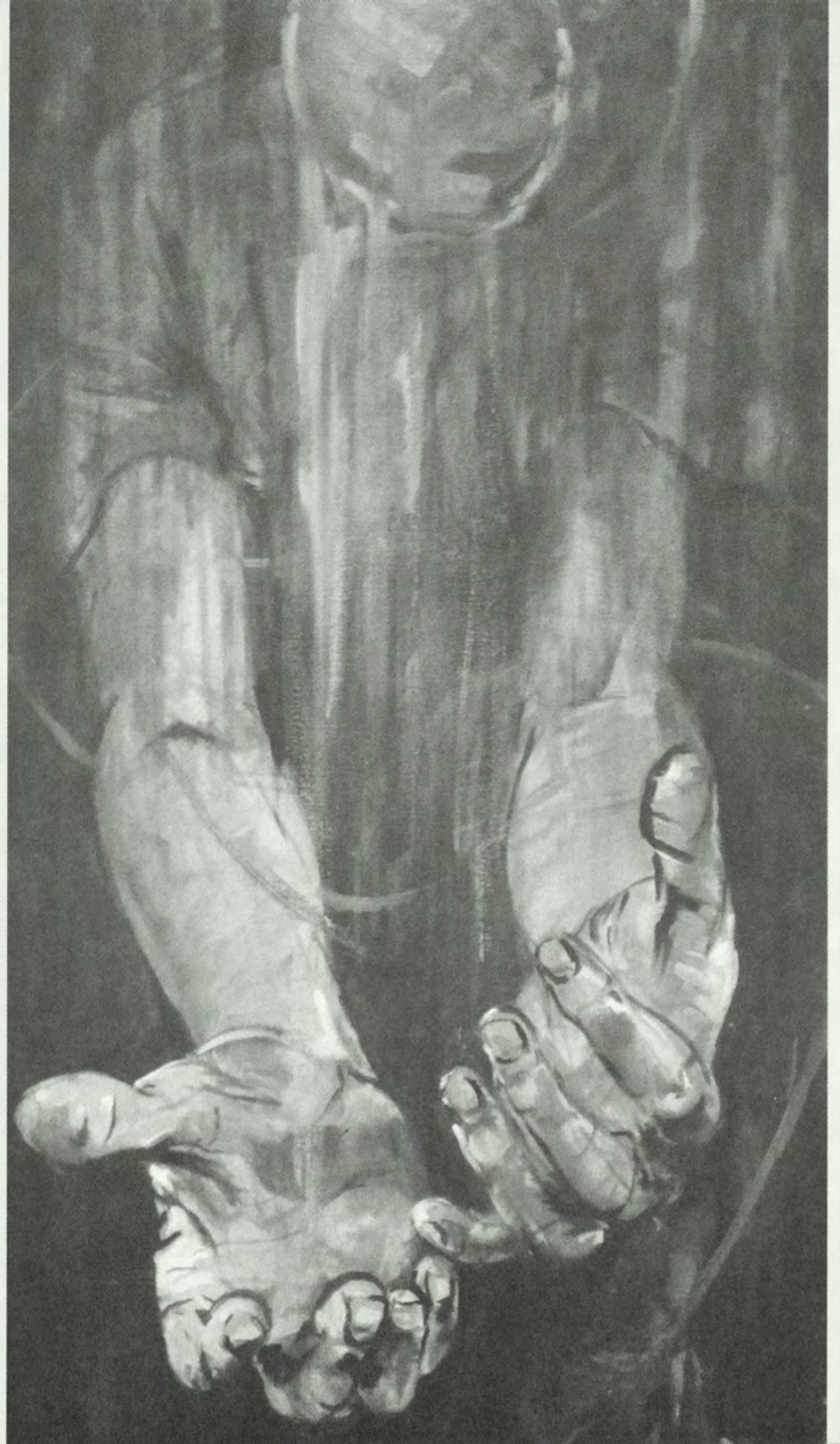
genesis

IUPUI

Literature and Art
Volume 40 Issue II
Fall 2008

The Catch
Kyle Miller

Oil on Canvas 24" x 36"



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Some Go

Kenny Spry

Like mules
will mosey where they will,
like my father and his,
some go like this.

Some, at twilight, would rather
look back
directly at the Sun—
those who dread the dark—
while others will look ahead
to the encroaching calm
just to swim in the stars,
if that's what it's like.
Some will take their pills,
and some will take a couple few more.

La Jolla Pier
Adam Kelm
Photograph 8" x 8"



Taking the 39

Ashley Mack

I wear my patent leather Sunday shoes
Daddy wears Chucks that lean with him
when he rests against the streetlight
“This is our day,” Daddy says.

“We are going downtown
where the Bank One building reaches
way up to the sky. You know where
I mean?” I nod though I am not really

sure. People crowd around the stop
so I stand *this*close to Daddy. I can smell
Old Spice dabbed behind his ears.
It is not polite to stare so I keep

my eyes on Daddy. I try to count
the freckles on his right cheek. But, then
I see Dancing Man from the corner of my eye.
I see his purple, corduroy, patched coat. I know

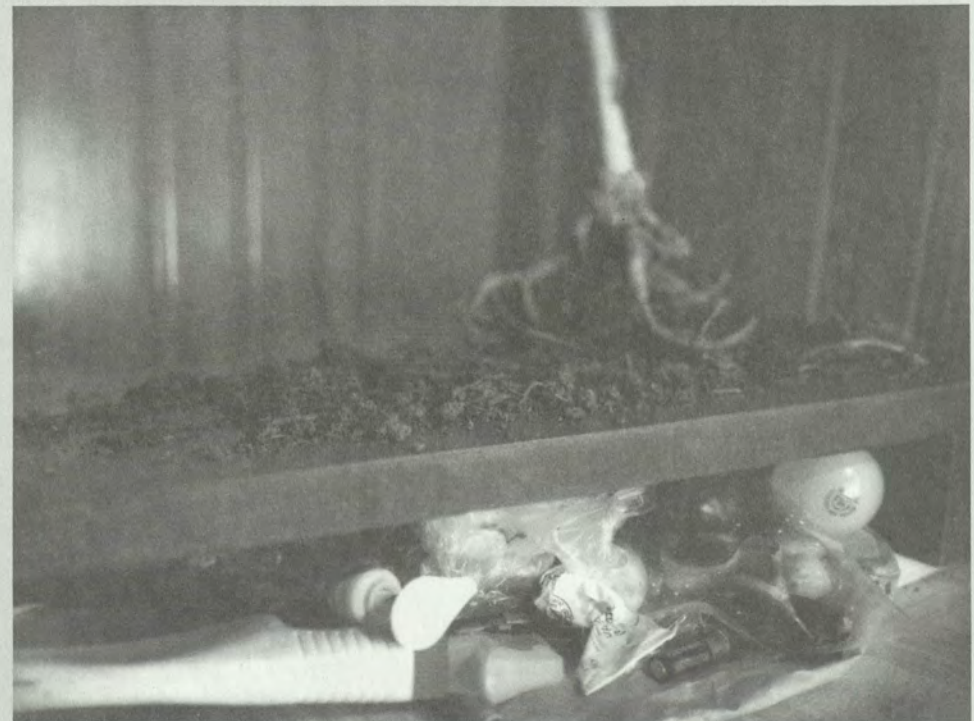
it is Dancing Man because, like a cartoon, he wears
the same coat every day even in summer.
He is changing the station on his imaginary radio.
When he finds a song he likes he bops his head

so hard it looks like it might snap off
and when the music really gets good,
he pops and locks right over
to Daddy and me. Dancing Man smiles

right at me. “What’s up man long time no see,”
Daddy says as cool as Denzel in Mo’ Better
Blues. “Hey Mack,” say Dancing Man, “This your baby
girl?” Dancing Man’s hand brushes my head

and he smiles at me so hard I can see
all his teeth. I hold tight to Daddy’s jacket sleeve
“She’s mine” Daddy says so proud it makes
me stand up straight. Dancing Man

offers me his hand and when I shake
it he tips his invisible hat and moonwalks
down the street just like Michael Jackson
only a little bit better I think.



Under
Desiree Moore
Photograph 20" x 16"

Nolan's Creek

Charlene Farabaugh

Living in Philadelphia, Mississippi was like living in a different country. The sun was hot as the two fifteen-year-olds walked down the dusty dirt road leading into town. The one-mile walk seemed to be more like five miles with the torture of the sun. Rose, not used to the Mississippi summer heat, could feel the sweat form on her forehead against her blonde curls then trickle down the sides of her red, sunburned face. Every once in a while she reached up and wiped the wetness away. As easily as she removed the sweat, she wished she could remove the fear that settled itself down in the pit of her stomach. She had never felt this fear living in Michigan. It was here, in this agonizing summer of 1964, that she was learning how unfair life could be, based upon someone's skin color.

Her parents had moved to Philadelphia to help with Freedom Summer. It was their quest, along with hundreds of other Northerners, to help black people register to vote in record numbers. Even though the government had made it illegal to stop blacks from voting, the majority of the whites in Mississippi were coming up with all kinds of ways to prevent them from registering. They required uneducated blacks to pass literacy tests or threatened them with job loss if they took part in the presidential election.

Rose was proud of her parents for wanting to make a difference. Living in the North, she had taken in the stories of the Ku Klux Klan. She had heard how they burned down the blacks' churches and burned crosses in people's yards. She often wondered why they chose the cross to represent themselves. Even at fifteen, she knew God had nothing to do with their racist attitudes.

Rose looked at Alan and noticed the stains on the armpits of

his white tee shirt and the way his gray pants rose a whole inch above his ankles. He was tall and thin, but his height didn't seem threatening because he walked with his back humped over. He didn't look up, but stared down at his broken tennis shoes. The tip of his black toe peeked out of the white worn leather. It wouldn't be long before the toe made its presence completely known.

Rose's family had only been in Mississippi for a couple of hours when Alan walked up to the porch of their country house. Their white Ford pickup truck was sitting in the driveway loaded with all the furniture they could manage to bring with them. Dark wooden legs of kitchen chairs shot out from one side of the truck, and an old white mattress was lying across the top. All the furniture was tied down with a brown rope.

The main door of the house was open, and Alan banged lightly on the outer screen that was scattered with holes. The only other noise coming from the porch was the flies. They would buzz up to the screen, walk around an existing hole, then let themselves in.

Rose was closest to the door, sitting on the floor of what would be their family room, when she heard the knock rattle the screen. She slowly approached, and when Alan saw her he immediately looked down at the wooden boards of the porch. He seemed surprised that a white girl answered the door. Rose found out later it was because no white people lived in this area outside of town. They would be the first and only white family to make this their home.

continued...

"Yes," Rose said, standing behind the screen waiting for him to look up at her.

Alan stuttered slightly, "My momma sent me over to see if y'all need some help unpacking your truck." He motioned toward the truck in the driveway.

Rose's dad heard Alan and walked over and stood behind Rose at the door. As he pushed the screen open, Alan, still not looking up, stepped back farther on the porch.

"Well, that's mighty nice of you," Rose's dad said. "You from around here?"

Alan motioned to an old tattered white house down the road. Even at a quarter mile away, Rose could see the weathered wood of what people in Michigan would call a shack. There was a dark red blanket hanging over the entrance where a door was supposed to be. She could also see an outhouse and some chickens in a small cage.

"We can use all the help we can get," Rose's dad answered.

Rose and Alan worked side by side until nightfall to unload the truck. They exchanged short conversations. Rose asked Alan about what kinds of things there were for kids their ages to do and what the weather was like. She asked him about school, but learned that blacks had a different school than the white children.

"You know," Rose said. "I don't have any friends here. I have black friends and white friends in Michigan. My friend Sara is black. She waits at the corner of my street every day, and we ride the school bus together."

Alan looked up at her in surprise. His eyes met hers with a look so deep Rose thought he could see into her soul. Maybe he admired her boldness because she was the complete opposite of him.

"Will you be my first friend in Mississippi?" Rose asked.

Alan nodded and gave her a half smile. "I never had a white friend before. You talk and listen to me like I'm a regular person. No white person ever did that before."

"You ain't afraid are you, Rose?" Alan broke the uneasy silence as they walked.

"Why would I be afraid? I'm no chicken," she lied.

"Didn't you hear about what happened to those three men?"

Rose didn't want to answer. She had heard about it, but she didn't want to think about it. Thinking about it would make it real.

"Those three men got killed all because they wanted to help black folks be able to vote." Alan stopped walking and looked at Rose. "They wasn't even from around here. They got shot by the Klan and thrown into Earthen Dam." Alan held up three fingers in a desperate attempt to gain Rose's attention. "Now only one of them was black. The other two was white."

The outskirts of the town were now in sight. Rose felt like she could already smell the scent of the sweet magnolia trees that lined Main Street. Their graceful white blooms with pink centers would be gone soon and all that would be left for the remainder of summer would be their long, slender, sun-scorched leaves. It was hard to believe that so much ugliness lay hidden beneath the beauty of the town.

"Rose." Alan put his hands on Rose's shoulder and made her turn to look at him. "You may not got black skin like me, but they don't care. You is good as dead if you just seem friendly with someone like me."

"Well, maybe I'm not so friendly," Rose teased, trying to lighten the mood. For a brief second the seriousness of the situation was erased. Rose grabbed the back pockets of Alan's gray pants with both hands. "Maybe I just want to gain your trust so I can rob you of your riches!"

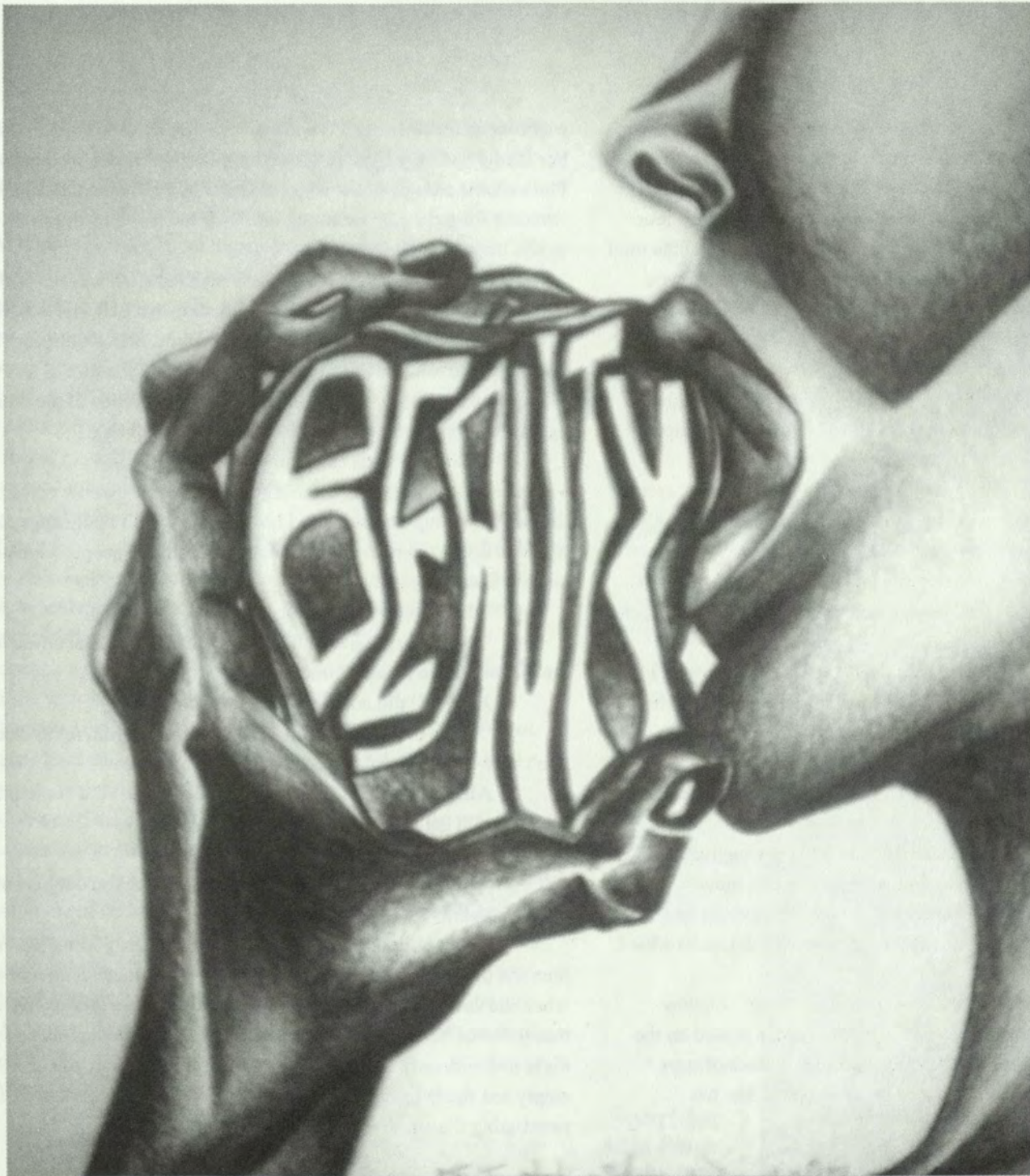
Alan pushed her hands away and rolled his eyes. "Now everyone will know for sure you is lyin'!"

Rose wiped the sweat away from her mouth with the back of her hand. "Maybe we should go swimming in Nolan's Creek later."

Rose knew she could swim in the public pool if she wanted, but Alan would not be allowed. All the black children, imprisoned by the summer sun and longing for relief, would stand outside the fence, clinging to the silver metal with their noses poking through the gaps in the

continued...

The Temptation
Amanda Dowdal
Charcoal 9" x 10"



barrier. There they would watch the white children swim. They longed for even a brief hint of relief in the cold water, but the only way to get their deliverance was to swim in Nolan's Creek on the south end of town.

The creek was a far cry from the crisp, clear water of the public pool. You couldn't see the bottom of Nolan's Creek. You could feel the mud seep between your toes as you walked. Many times, Alan left the creek with cuts on the bottom of his feet due to sharp stones buried in the mud that laid the foundation of the swimming hole.

"So, what are we goin' to do when we get into town?" Alan was curious about Rose's plan. They had never dared go into town together in the light of day. They had gone for swims in Nolan's Creek a couple of times, but only at night with no one else around.

"We are going to go to Grossman's Diner and get some ice cream."

Alan reached into his pocket. "I got twenty-five cents. What've you got?"

Rose fumbled around in her pocket and pulled out some change. She flipped it around in her fingers, counting quietly to herself, then stuck it back into her pocket.

As the two approached town, Alan continued to look down. The sounds of cars and people's voices took the place of the silence they shared on their walk. It was almost noon and the busiest time of the day for Philadelphia.

"People is starin' right at us," Alan whispered just loud enough for Rose to hear.

"So, let them stare." Rose sensed a hard ball growing tighter in her stomach and eyes glaring at her, tempting her to make a move.

"Now," Rose pulled her shoulders back like her momma had taught her to do when she wanted to make a statement. "You just do what I do."

The diner was located on the corner of Main Street. As they reached the entrance to the store, they saw a big white sign posted on the door. It was hand-written and read, "colored entrance in back of store."

Rose ignored the sign and pushed the door open. She felt

everyone in the diner turn to look at her. Voices grew quiet. Even though her family had only lived in Mississippi for two weeks, the people of Philadelphia already knew who her father was. They didn't like the invaders from the North coming into their town and trying to tell them how to live their lives.

A few feet into the store Rose realized Alan was not with her. She nodded at an old man sitting at a booth by himself. He was slightly overweight, with a scruffy beard, and he wore a police uniform. He didn't nod back. Rose never felt so unwelcome before. She turned and went out of the store to look for Alan. She found him at the side of the diner leaning against the hazy brown bricks that framed the building.

"Now who's the chicken?"

Rose could feel her face getting red with anger and her voice beginning to rise. The thing that surprised her was she wasn't really angry at Alan. She was disgusted with the people in the diner, the people who looked at her like she was trash.

"It's easy for you," Alan said.

"Alan, you got to stand up for yourself! Black people everywhere are standin' up to this unfairness!"

Alan still did not move from his spot.

"Come on, Alan, I want everyone to know you're my friend! I don't care what color of skin you have!"

Alan took a deep breath. "If my dad finds out I come into town with you, I'll get whipped for sure."

"How's he going to find out?"

"I'll just go to the back entrance and meet you out here after I get my ice cream."

Anger built up in Rose as she gave one last glaring look at Alan, then she made her way back into the diner. A moment of silence stung her when she entered the door for the second time. Rose ignored the stares that followed her every move. She felt like a small rodent being eyed by a night owl with only seconds to spare before it pounced. She gazed at the empty red stools lining the long bar and breathed in the smell of coffee penetrating the air.

She glanced around the diner and noticed there was not a single black person in the place. The police officer who had been sitting in the booth came up behind her. She felt small and insignificant under his glaring black eyes. She could smell tobacco on his breath as he leaned close to her.

"You know, we don't like nigger lovers here in Philadelphia." He reached around Rose and took a toothpick from the small silver box sitting on the counter. "And we especially don't like northern nigger lovers."

Rose kept her back to the officer, but no one came to the counter to ask what she wanted. The waitress who was walking around filling people's drinks didn't even look at her. Rose felt invisible to everyone except the police officer. She could feel the redness on her face. She was afraid and full of rage all at the same time. The knot that began in her stomach was now in her throat, and she could feel her heart beating in the same place.

"If you know what's good for you, you'll explain to your folks how your family ain't welcome here," he chuckled. Then he bent down and in a low voice, he whispered, "People comin' here from out of town seem to find some way of disappearin', or haven't you heard?"

Rose felt a tear forming in her eye. She never felt this afraid before, and she wondered what happened to Alan.

The police officer took his hat off and nodded his head to Rose. His voice grew loud enough for everyone in the diner to hear. "You be careful now. Oh, and welcome to Mississippi."

Rose heard the door of the diner open and shut as the police officer left. She quickly made her way back outside. She felt her body shaking as she went to the side of the building to look for Alan. He was not there. She thought of calling out for him, but she did not want to bring any more attention to herself.

She walked towards the back of the building and there she saw Alan. He looked relieved to see her. She saw beside him a long, beaten up brown door with big letters painted in black that simply had the word "colored" on it.

"Where's your ice cream?" Alan asked.

They both ignored the presence of the door; Alan out of shame, and Rose out of fear.

"I changed my mind," Rose said.

"You changed your mind?"

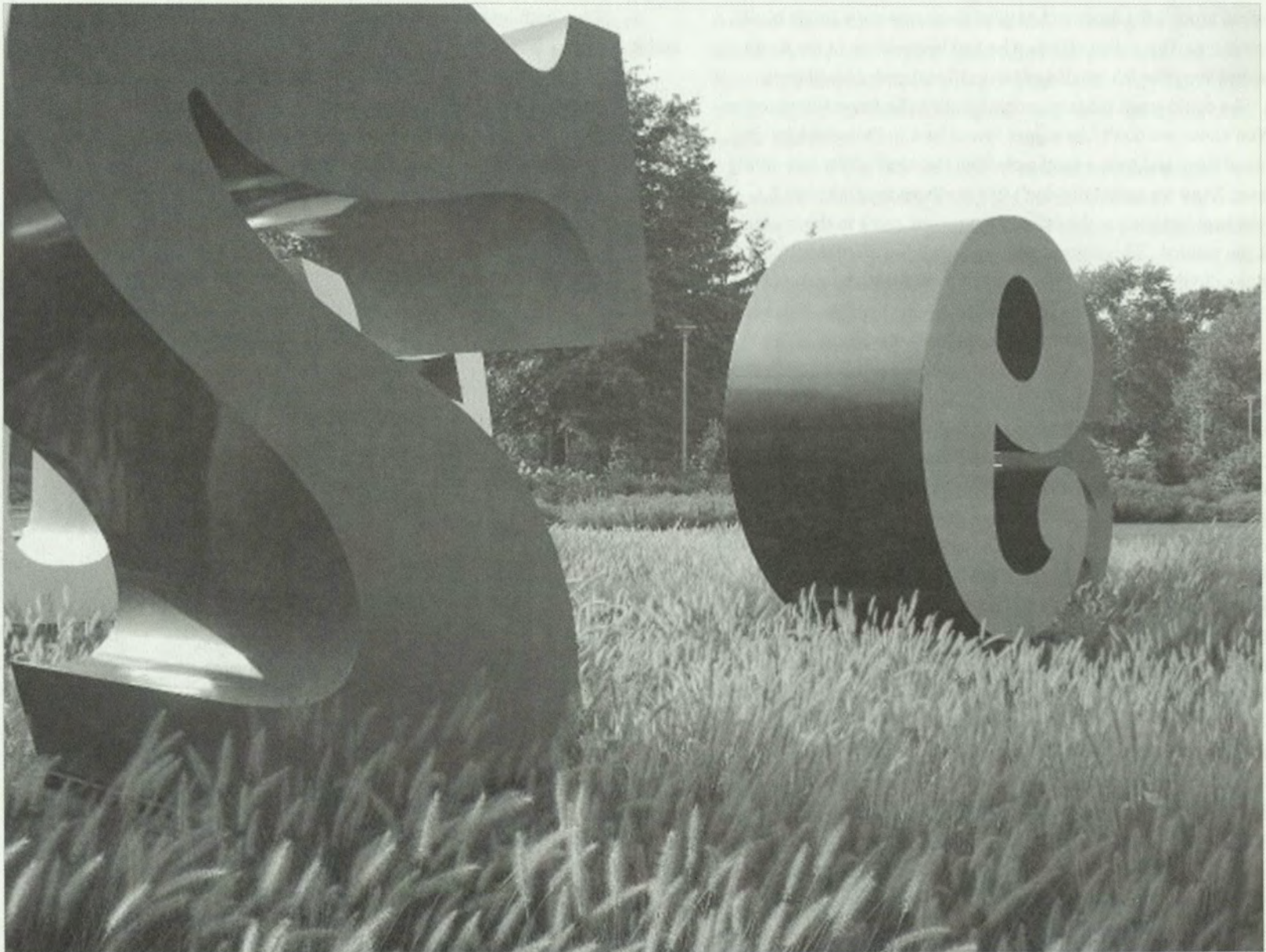
"A woman's got a right to change her mind, you know."

"Whatever you say," Alan said.

"Let's get our swimsuits and go to Nolan's Creek." Rose pulled on Alan's arm. The knot in her throat slowly dissolved back into her stomach as they made their way back to the outskirts of town. ■



Sparkler
Mike Potter
Photograph



Jumbled Back Entrance
Suzanne Robin
Digital Photograph 5" x 7"

Money, Mississippi

Bridget Connors

The flesh of the Delta, the soil's
black. It's rich, I'm talking thick beady
ground like the kind a man can immerse
hissself in knee-high and sprout into an oak.

He was a right Hernando de Soto, sunk
to the bottom with a gin Christ-wired
under his chin, pricking his tender blunted
face. His momma come wailing, "Lawh me!"

I laughed with a pick dangling
from the corner of my dry, pink
mouth. But I never heard what
she said. I was up and out. He didn't
come down to get Money, but he won
Money. The heat's breath absorbed
his yelps. Boy, he perished digging in
another man's fertile bed.

Next Register, Please

Bridget Connors

1 pm
The sidewalk pulls bands of suburban mothers
into the bistro—fresh chalky highlights and
bronzed skin.

11:30 am
Water piles into the greasy basin full of lipsticked
café cups; ceramic, chipped. I'm wiping the counter,
"Why doesn't anyone use cutting boards?" My middle
finger catches in the thin mesh gloves. Three Chix Salads.
Three Pickles. Three skinny cappuccinos.

4 pm
Four thirteen-year-old girls pose
next to the five-foot-three ice cream cone.
One measures her blushing breasts
by the plaster strawberries. A flash
and then a photograph. Giggling.

10 am
On the floor, Emily-Krista, the new girl,
grinds the plastic lid of the blender, hacking
and vroom-vrooming like a delivery truck driver.
Mixed Berry, no whip—every goose bump
on the syrup-stained wall thickens.

2 pm
In the back, Ron spoons out sorbet fruit flavoring
into the six-gallon bucket. "Black people like
strawberry." I tell him he's a jackass. His laugh
is collective.

Japanese Pearls

Karen Mitchell

When Dad was stationed in Japan—
long before he and Mom chose my tiny egg

for their basket—he dove for pearls
at an oyster farm. He later fixed

these into Mom's ears, locking the clasps
shut on their wedding day.

Now I open the blue velvet box
and gently place one of the earrings

into my palm. The fingers clamp shut
and trap the tiny orb inside

as if they are the jaws of an oyster.
I never wear this earring,

nor its twin, choosing
instead to let my sterling hoops dangle,

but I often pull the case out of my dresser
and gaze into these little sea moons.

I wonder about the dragon
who once guarded them

and the dragon with silver wings
who now guards my father.

Sometimes I squeeze
the studs so hard that blood

trickles out. I kiss my skin
and taste the precious metal

of my life. I am also kissing
my father, one last time.



The Dent in My Face

Courtney Hitson

My mother busied herself
planting lilies. The petals whirled
a white wind that enwrapped
her. They floated against
the backdrop of mulch and grass like
clouds in an ill-fated sky.

In the dining room,
I was twirling perfectly
awkward circles.
Limbs flung to the pulse
of Day-Glo stereo pop and the
unsteady meter
of prima ballerina dreams.

But I tripped—a big toe jammed, its balance gone limp,
beneath the coffee table.

Outside, my mother's gardening spade stuck
beneath a muddy slab of rock—her inhale stammering
to the heave of her grasp. My scream, exhaled, spinning
her backward up through the sky.

She came,
rebounded, hand peekabooing
beneath a white rag. Placing,
replacing, the bloodshot washcloth on my forehead's
fresh gash. She, with me in her lap—suddenly heavy,
sat wide-eyed and blinking. The towel's scarlet stains
dripping down onto my legs' curved gape.
Red staring back at my mother
from the carpet.

My father drove us to a hospital.
But I sat in a lap, head cocked
and dizzied by the beaming
stoplights which
spotted those fuzz-fringed clouds—the clouds
that *she* saw melting
into the pallid carpet that swirled
with the aftertaste of my blood's
lucent speckles.



Polar Bear Bubbles

Justin Jett
Photograph



Illumination
Melanie Colter
Photograph 5" x 7"

Home for the Weekend

Caitlin Reeves

Four tiny crescent moons
in the palm of my hand tell
me that you're under my skin;
inside my stomach with
all the other pretty moths.
I'm sure you know how you linger,
like something I've burned—
maybe you thrive on the thought
of me scrubbing your scent
off my clothes and hair; sitting
in the shower for a good half
an hour rinsing you out
of my pores.



Honeybee
Desiree Moore
Photograph 20" x 16"

Pondering Edibles

Jennifer Nagelin

~ I get off work at 3:30 a.m. intent on a glass of juice, a thick sandwich, and an hour of Japanese cartoons. Knowing the fridge to be devoid of bread, meat, and lettuce—eggs and pancake mix too—I stop at Marsh on my way home, select my items, and bother the cashier with meaningless small talk. She keeps glancing between the novel propped up against the receipt printer—some bodice-ripper romance if the cover is any indicator—and my purchases, scrunching up her face and making it very clear to me that interrupting her reading with leafy green veggies is an unforgivable offense.

~ Lettuce, in its early days as a food plant, was far less attractive than modern varieties. Quite unlike the wide, crisp leaves of Romaine, or the tightly furled balls of Iceberg, wild lettuce is a tall, spindly plant, bitter in taste. The smell is no better, reminiscent of chemical adhesives or, at best, cheap bathtub cleaner. Found along many roadsides and vacant lots, wild lettuce is hardly the sort of plant you would consider edible at first, or even second glance, unless you knew better. Even then, the thick, dandelion-like sap with its foul odor would likely put you off trying it. It certainly did me.

~ During March of 1999, our church began hosting meetings concerning the impending disaster of Y2K. The congregation was encouraged to stockpile non-perishable foods, seeds, hygiene products, bottled water, and small caliber ammunition. In this intriguing bout of panic, my family was among those buying cases of Ramen noodles, Spam, and No.10 cans of green beans; hoarding fifty-five gallon barrels of water in our basement; and keeping sufficient plywood and plastic to board up and seal all of the windows in the house in case of panicked looters and nuclear fallout, respectively. Childishly excited about the “End of the

World,” I still had enough of a grasp on reality to know that if there was a disaster, two things would happen. The first would be that I’d get really sick of chicken flavored Ramen soup. The second, and more ominous thing, was that eventually, we’d run out. Seeing as how I really like to eat, neither was an acceptable scenario. I started looking for ways to supplement my diet in a post-grocery-store world.

~ Packaged food is deceptive. Everyone knows that eggs don’t magically appear in cartons. They are laid by chickens. This basic knowledge of food origin doesn’t begin to approach the reality of it. The process of obtaining eggs—regular, mundane, brown chicken eggs—isn’t as easy as just tossing a couple of birds out into the yard. Generally, you can’t get anyone to sell you a laying bird; you have to raise it. Mail order chickens come in batches of 25-50 chicks or more. They are less than twenty-four hours old when they arrive at the post office, and so stupid that you can place them in front of a bowl of water, and they’ll die of thirst. You have to physically introduce them to the novel concept of drinking, dipping their tiny beaks in the bowl until they start to sputter, then again, until they finally figure out they are supposed to swallow. They have to be kept warm, safe from predators, and away from corners. Given a ninety-degree angle, they will pile into it until the first few are crushed or smothered. Chickens are not known for good decision making. Feeding them, however, would seem easy. They eat anything: chicken feed, grass, small gravel, insects, sand, leftovers, bits of glass, green beans sprouting in the garden, mice, each other. As such, you have to really keep an eye on where you let them forage, or keep them penned up all day. When in pens, they are more likely to eat mice and each other. Several months of these headaches pass before your chickens lay their first eggs. They lay sporadically for the

continued..

Pondering Edibles/Jennifer Nagelin

first three months, and many of those first eggs break and are eaten. If the chickens develop a taste for their own eggs, it becomes a race to get there before they peck them open. Eventually, the chickens settle into a steady pace of one egg apiece, every two days. Every one of those eggs comes covered in shit.

~ How did people ever decide what things they would and wouldn't eat? Who first decided, "I am going to eat the next thing that comes out of that bird's back end?" What brilliant fool discovered that cashew nuts—poisonous raw or even partially cooked—would be rendered safe after sufficient roasting? The initial decision-making process seems almost random, even if it *is* need-driven. Even necessity doesn't explain the Japanese custom of preparing poisonous blowfish, when the ocean is teeming with any number of other species. Eating something else seems move expedient. Examples of this sort of thing lay closer to home. A pair of older women, sisters, perhaps in their late sixties, live across the street in the apartment complex. They used to sneak into our yard on late summer evenings and early mornings, in those half-lit hours, and glean the weeds from our yard. Pokeweed, particularly. It used to be commercially available, canned like spinach. Poke is a tall, leafy plant, reaching five feet or more at its peak, with ominous, nightshade-purple berries at the tips of its stalks. It is also poisonous. Despite our warnings, and our insistence they stay out of our yard, they continued for years, edging around our fencerows with sharp scissors and scurrying off with huge bundles of poke. The weed was a nostalgic favorite when cooked with eggs, a comfort food from their childhood: poke and scrambles.

~ Almost every backyard, assuming it isn't completely paved, contains something you can eat. This is before you take into account any livestock or crops intentionally raised. Just a few of the potential food sources that may be found in a typical yard: dandelions, chickweed, milkweed, wild lettuce, violets, chicory, nettles, cattails, birds, squirrels, and rabbits. Modern humans have the habit of defining a very narrow range of

edibles as food, limiting themselves to a few favored species that have been cultivated and domesticated. We like our nutrients to come from a predictable source, and understandably so. Some of these wild plants have side effects attached, generally in the form of stomachaches. But cultivated and domesticated species—potatoes and corn, chickens and pigs, wheat and rice, to name some of the more common ones—represent a tiny fraction of the foodstuffs available in any given area. In our three acre backyard, I found over one hundred edibles. Not including the cat. I've been socialized to think of him as family.

~ Protein is the hard part. You can come up with a mess of greens every day from early April through October, and store fruits and roots through winter, but that does nothing for proteins. For that, you have to kill something. Fish is one option, but you have to have a place to catch them, and most small streams aren't going to have anything big enough to bother with. Few people, at least in Indianapolis, would look at the raccoon tearing up their trash as potential dinner. And while cleaning fish is one thing—a very messy, unpleasant process—reducing a mammal into its component parts is entirely different.

One evening, I received an invitation from a friend to come over and share a few drinks with her and some of her husband's family. Without inquiring as to the occasion, I drove right over. Greeting me as I entered through the garage was a doe, hanging from its back legs over a tarp on the concrete floor. I'd been invited to a butchering party. The guys skinned and butchered the doe, keeping us gals shut off from the carnage in process. Occasionally, the inside door opened and a gore-flecked hand sent trash bags full of meat into the house for us womenfolk to wash off and grind up, and set aside the larger pieces to trim into roasts and steaks. The myth of sanitary Styrofoam-packaged meat became evident for the lie it was. In spite of the fact that the deer had been reduced to a series of large, generic hunks of meat, the course, tawny hairs that clung tenaciously to its flesh made its recent history as a critter rather obvious. Regardless, the next day as we barbequed the results of our labor, the odor of slightly charred

continued...



Turtle Demo
Justin Jett
Photograph

venison was irresistible. Every bite was chewed with obvious relish.

~ Tucking the eggs into the fridge on the shelf above the crisper, I pull a bottle of Caesar dressing out of the door, then let it swing shut. Two slices of bread into the toaster, the rest of the fixings carefully arranged around a paper plate. Out pops the toast, and I spread it thick with dressing before layering it with crisp romaine lettuce and packaged lunch meat. The meat is watery, pale, and has no observable resemblance to muscle tissue; it has been chopped, mixed with bizarre, arcane ingredients: sodium phosphates, sodium diacetate, sodium nitrite, sodium erythorbate (“made from sugar,” strange as that seems), modified corn syrup. None of these sounds particularly appealing. It has been pressed into shape, cut, wrapped, shipped, stored, and now slapped onto my sandwich. I flip on the TV and mechanically start eating, more intent on giant robots than the food in my hand. ■

Canned
Justin Jett
Photograph



Blazing Bullets

Karen Mitchell

The woman held a gun to my head
and asked, *Do you really want to go through with this?*
Yes, I replied, my small hands trembling.
Very well, she answered and loaded the shiny bullet into the barrel.
One shot should do the trick.

I squeezed my eyes shut and gripped the armrests.
I can't believe I'm doing this, I said to myself.
But it was 1979 in Indiana, and this was the ritual
that sprung a girl into womanhood.

I could feel her smoker's breath on my neck,
and a sharp red fingernail raked across my shoulder.
Don't worry, honey. It won't hurt much more than a bee sting.

A loud pop crackled inside my ear—
one tiny winged explosion
followed by another—then the red rush

of adrenaline swarmed and masked
the throbbing as I gazed into the mirror
and gasped at the sparkling gold topaz suns,
glittering like mirages against my pink desert skin.

I could almost smell the smoking barrel
of Belle Starr's gun, shots ringing in the air
as she rode her stallion through the dusty
Oklahoma streets where her roulette wheel
spun one time too many.



untitled

Sarah Fitzpatrick Anderson
Digital Illustration



Human Traffic

Justin Walsh

When the traffic is human
And the headlights are eyes
When the wheels are just feet
And the horns only cries

When the exits are choices
And food is the gas
The speed still decides
Who will stay and who will pass

When the soul is the luggage
And the head is the door
When the mouth is the tape deck
And oil seeps from the pores

When the lashes are wipers
And the legs are the brakes
When the skin is the window
And nothing escapes

When the heart is the engine
And the lap is the seat
When the veins are the valves
And the breath is the heat

When the wheel is the hands
And the plate is a name
When the traffic is human
No one drives quite the same

Internal

Sarah Helen Wuensch

Compressed and Vine Charcoal on Paper 22" x 30"

Fictitious Courage

Justin Walsh

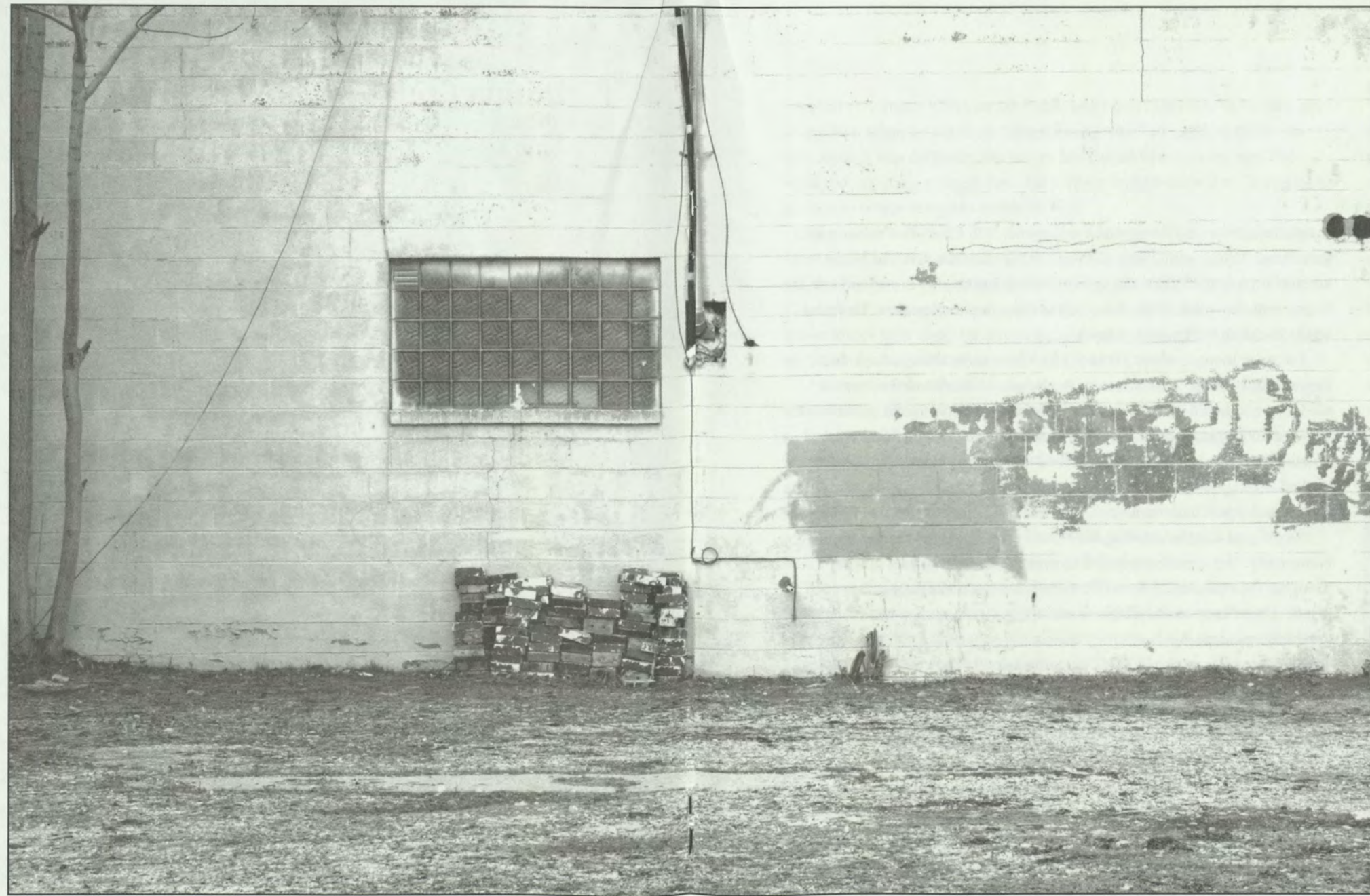
Mostly I feel
That I'm wavering
In the wake of my purpose
Lurking in the dark corners
Of my head-shed
Huddled-humble in the shadows
Of my sacred secrets
The safe, sound-bound stories of
My slow-sweet stumble
To catch the somber stone-sway of my
Wordplay— self-worth
Better, standing, still-student
To the method of soaring in the dream-skies
While still keeping one foot tiptoe-touching
The earth

Blue Angels
Anthony Deak
Digital Photograph 5" x 7"

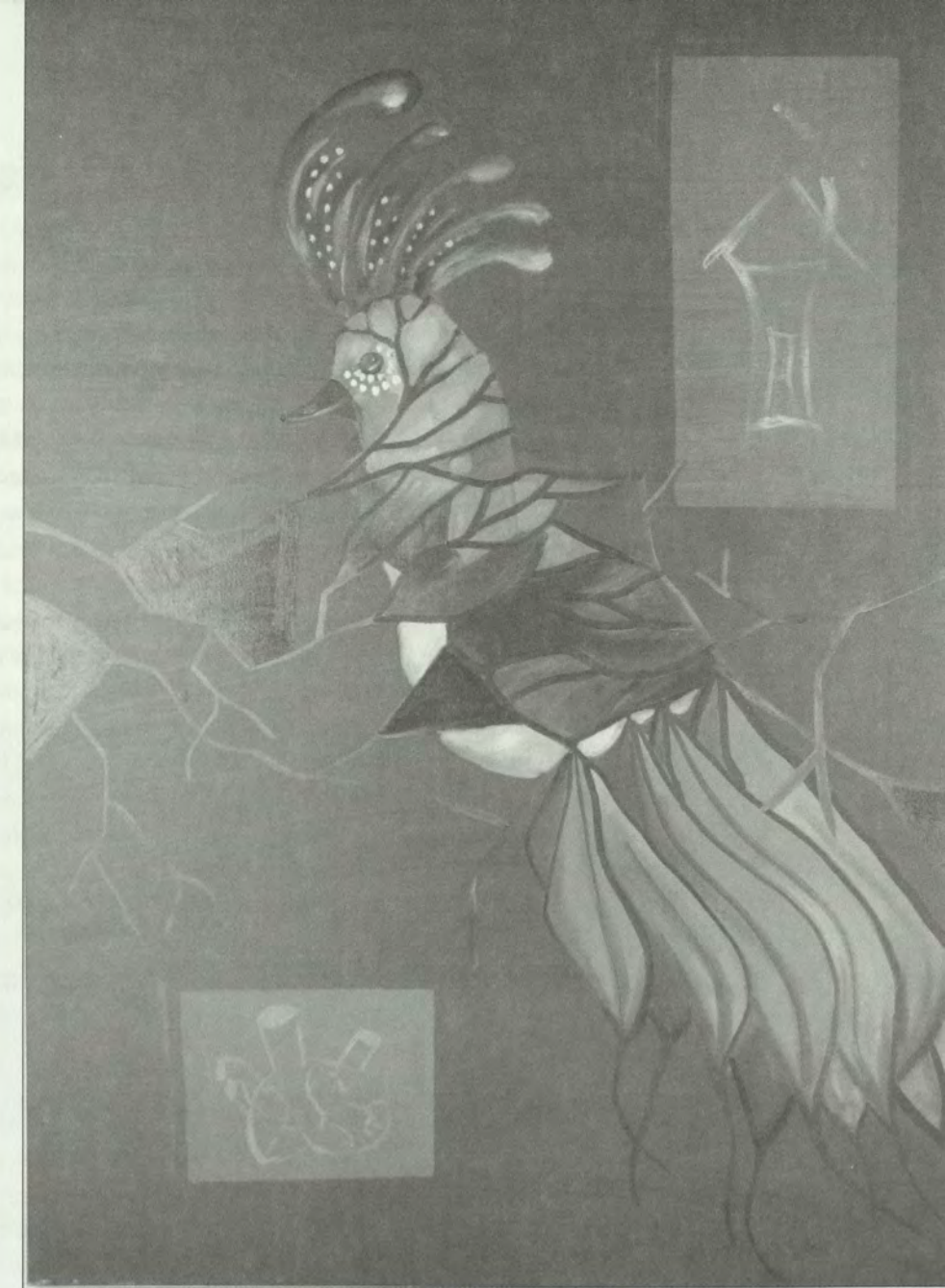




Butterflight
Sarah Helen Wuensch
Mixed Media 22" x 30"



Bricks and Wall
Joe Wallace
Photograph



Tacycardia
Kris Peterson
Oil on Canvas

Perhaps it Would Have Been Different

Natalie Robinson

Funerals are so morbid, I think to myself on this drearily bright day. Ten or fifteen people crowd around a large rectangular hole in the ground solemnly being filled with dirt. The ladies are politely crying and dabbing their eyes with dainty black lace while the stoic men in long black coats are the silent strength at their sides. I stand among them, and we listen to the old minister read in resounding tones from the faded black leather Bible lying listless in his hands.

“Today we come to mourn the death...” he begins slowly. Why do they always start that way? My attention begins to waver, and his words become a soft buzzing in the back of my mind. My eyes wander over my fellow mourners. Precious few seem familiar. They must be the dutiful citizens of Felbright. I suppose I would have known more of them if I’d gone out of my house more, but I’d lost interest in this old town ages ago.

My eyes dip down and my lips lift into a smile. A shy young girl presses against her mother’s legs clutching a pair of pink and yellow alstroemerias, tied neatly with black ribbon. I remember those. Peruvian lilies were one of Mama’s favorites, so they were always around the shop. Even now, after Bella’s Garden has been closed for years, I am surprised I still know their names. I suppose that’s what happens when you work in a flower shop most of your life.

That’s not what I’d wanted though. I remember loathing this little town with a boiling hatred when I was younger. When I was eighteen, I swore to myself that I would leave here, run far far away, and never come back. I would go to France, Italy, India, China, Egypt, Brazil; anywhere and everywhere. I would be a real woman of the world.

But there was Mama. Most of the time, it was hard to get new ideas through my old mother’s head. I tried to tell her once about leaving. She

simply laughed at the thought and said to me, “Oh Clari! You’re not gonna leave here! You’re gonna stay and work at the shop. Be just like Mama when you grow up!” Then she gave me a hug and a spray bottle and told me to pay some attention to the ferns before they shriveled to dust. Then she went chuckling back to the counter.

I wonder though, where I’d be if I had done more than go back and begrudgingly dump some water on the ferns and deadhead the roses. I wonder what would have happened if I’d found the courage to march back, stand up to Mama, and tell her what I really wanted for my life. Perhaps it would have been different if I chucked that bottle out the window and packed my bag for the seven o’clock train that night. Perhaps, I think with a sigh. But it doesn’t matter now. It’s too late.

“A diligent daughter, loving sister, and hard working member of our community. Her contribution...” The preacher’s droning cuts into my thoughts for a moment. I scowl. Preachers always make people into such saints. Their fancy multisyllable words and pretty language would make anyone seem amazing. Don’t they realize the people they write eulogies for are just ordinary people? Of course they don’t. They didn’t know the people. Why should they? All they have to do is make the dead sound flawless. Who’s to argue once they’re dead?

I shake my head and go back to my inspection of the crowd. A man on the opposite side of the grave looks blankly downward into the dark opening. A slight breeze plays with his sandy brown hair. It blows some wispy strands across his eyes, and my fingers itch to sweep them aside. He seems so much like Charles; that boy’s hair was always falling out of place. Countless times, I brushed his hair from his face and he caught my hand to kiss the backs of my fingertips with a devilish smile. That twist of his lips

always had a funny effect on my heart, and I was never able to resist a grin of my own when he did those things. Except that last night on the porch—that night, it was different. My hands had stayed firmly in my lap. The wind did tug at his straggly hair, but I barely looked at his face. It was hard enough to comprehend the words he said.

“I just can’t stay here. I can’t! I mean, what am I supposed to do here? I feel so caged!” He shot out of his chair and paced frantically across the old, creaky boards. They squeaked every time he stepped in front of me. “This place is eating me up. I just have to get away from here. It has to be better somewhere else.” He stopped and leaned against the railing. Staring up, he whispered to the stars, “It just has to be.”

I felt myself start to shiver, but not from the cold. It stayed quiet for what seemed like eons as he searched the sky for answers. Finally he sighed long and deep as his shoulders slumped with the weight of the world. He spoke forcefully, to the bushes. “I don’t want to be trapped in this little nothing town any longer. I’m leaving. There’s just nothing here for me.” Then he strode off the porch and across the yard into the night. My heart tightened as he disappeared. I felt it slowly crack like old glass on a cold day. I was sure the whole world heard it shatter.

He went to California to start his new life, to find his place in the world. Sometimes I wonder how he fared and what became of him. Did he actually find happiness? I often wonder what would have happened if I hadn’t just sat there numb on the swing. What if I had stood up and rushed after him? Perhaps it would have been different if I had been bold enough to tell him what I truly felt. He might have said the one thing I’d been secretly, desperately, wanting to hear. I could imagine the shock and joy in his eyes as he told me, “Clarissa, I never knew. Oh my darling, I love you too!” He would bundle me up into a wildly passionate kiss and he would stay so I could change the name Arnalli for Rocard and we’d live blissfully ever after.

I chuckle as my own imagination runs away with me. Perhaps, I think with a sigh as I shake off the fantasy. But it doesn’t matter now. It’s much too late.

I threw myself into the shop after that. Mama was so proud. She thought I was finally going to be like her. But when she died some fifteen years later, I sold the shop. I bought a quiet house a little ways out of town and dabbled with painting. I liked the solitude, the cool feel of brushes, and the fresh paint. My sister was good and came to visit most Sunday afternoons. She was about the only one who did. One time, after brunch, she found one of my pieces. I tried to protest, but she thought it was wonderful. She encouraged me to let her take it to Mrs. Merchelli, the local art dealer, but that was preposterous. My work was not fit to show. Of course it wasn’t. I made sure to keep my canvases in the attic after that, and refused to discuss it further with my persistent younger sister. But I wonder. Were my paintings beautiful? Could they have touched someone? I wasn’t that good, was I? Perhaps though—perhaps I should have tried, just to know. What crazy thoughts I have.

continued...



Hello There
Mike Potter
Photograph



Ripped Self-Portrait

Kyle Miller

Paper Collage with Ink 16" x 28"

The silence brings me back. I must have missed the minister say, "May the Lord bless you and rest this tired soul in peace." Everyone has gone. I look down and see the pair of flowers lying innocently on the freshly turned earth. I kneel and stretch out my hand as if to touch the petals, but stop a hairsbreadth away as my eyes are drawn to the somber stone behind them. Clarissa Arnalli: A Quiet Soul Who Trod Lightly Upon This Earth. My fingers trace the words. Perhaps it would have been different, I think, as a lone tear slides down my cheek. But it's entirely too late now. ■

Within Us

Amanda Dowdal

Color Pencil and Charcoal 14" x 11"





Washed Out

Ashley Mack

1

Not even 48 hours later the storefront was clean. The day manager checked to make sure. When he unlocked the door at 8am there was no more blood splattered. No white trace of chalk on the parking lot. He frowned at how easy it was to wash the boy out. He remembered 2 days ago. The way the boy's body twitched, skinny legs grinding against the concrete. But, for the most part everything looked like before. The picture window was the only change. Where the paint was chipped before, now the words "Cash America Pawn" were stenciled on the murky plastic in a fresh coat of white, blue, and red.

2

You expect bad news after midnight. When they call and wake you out of your sleep, it can never be good. No matter

what kind of mother you are, or how many kids you got, there is no intuition for 2 in the afternoon. When you are sitting at your

desk, in the front office, answering the phone "Remax Realty, how can I help you?" and the caller ID shows one of your kids

Ventura Pier

Adam Kelm

Photograph 8" x 8"

calling, you think to yourself, *Hell, I can't even work without these kids bugging me.*
You don't think before the phone clicks your baby

will be dead. It is 2 in the goddamn afternoon.
Rushes to the hospital are reserved for midnight or later. Am I right? I am the kind

of mother who can see a cuss word forming on silent lips from across the room. I am the kind of mother who knows what time the principal will call

(and which one he will call about) when I watch them at the bus stop from the kitchen window. I will (or would if somebody asked me before today) testify on Sunday morning in front of God and the entire congregation that I know every hair on every one of their little peanut-shaped

heads. I am a good mother. But, when those bullets went into my oldest son's stomach and through his back, it was mid-afternoon

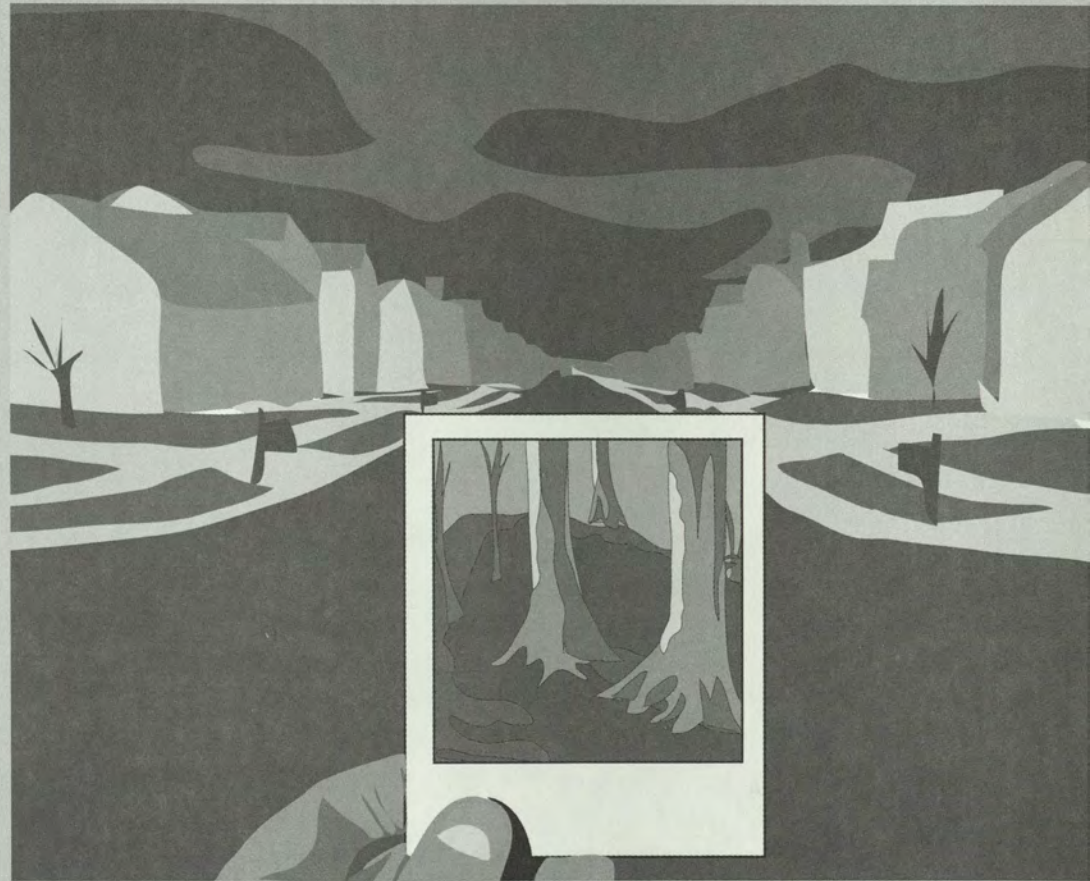
and I didn't feel a thing.

3

March 7, 2007 4:40pm

indianafan316 wrote:

there goes the neighborhood. another stain on the street. what you expect me to say?... think about it. gang violence tearing up our city...got what was coming, like the rest of them. if they keep painting the street with blood over there, how much you think the property will be worth then?



So It Goes

Sarah Fitzpatrick Anderson

Digital Illustration



Non-Fiction

The Mound

Caitlin Reeves

I wake up in the early dark part of the morning. I sneak out of bed carefully and quietly, mapping my path to the bathroom. The light hasn't come out yet, but my nightmares force me out of bed to splash water on my pale face.

The pile of blankets softly groans. He stirs in his semiconscious state. My love is young. I am two years his senior, and he doesn't know how beautiful he is. He is long and lean with sand-colored hair and captivating green eyes. But when he sleeps he is a soft mound made up of one quilt, two comforters, one sheet, and 206 bones.

"What's wrong?" The Mound whispers. The voice is so soft and muffled I can hardly make it out, but I don't have to. This is what The Mound asks when I get up in the middle of the night.

"Nothing. Shh. Back to sleep," I lie. I know The Mound does not have nightmares. The Mound will not understand.

"I love you," he murmurs in a voice so faint that no other human could possibly recognize it except for me.

"I love you too," I sigh back at him.

The Mound swells and groans. He sucks in a pillow, devours it, and grows even larger. He settles down.

When I decide my head is clear enough to return to the dream world, I crawl back into the nest. As soon as my body hits the mattress, two appendages ooze out of the huge convex thing beside me. An opening forms in the side of The Mound and strong limbs emerge to pull me into its new cavity. I force my body to relax and resist the urge to struggle as The Mound swallows me whole. I surrender. Once inside, I am digested and become a part of The Mound. I fall asleep. We become a soft mound made of one quilt, two comforters, one sheet, and 412 bones. ■

The Frame

Melanie Colter

Photograph 5" x 7"

August Popsicles

Elizabeth Howard

Hot August sun beating
down on my face. The slick,
orange, gooey Popsicle cold
in my mouth. I bite down to the
wooden stick littered with jokes.
Finally, our small, green pool is finished
filling. My sister and I dive in. Cool, fresh water
splashes against my hot face.
Minutes of waiting are rewarded
in an instant. I lie on my back,
looking at the sky, smelling the fumes
of Gary, Indiana. I admire my white
swimsuit. Yellow, orange, red, green,
blue, and purple stripes decorate my stomach.
My moment of pleasure is interrupted.
Here comes Dad, camera in hand. My mother
beckons us to come out and stand by her.
*Is she crazy? Can she not see how much fun
I am having?* No use; out I come. The longer I stand,
the more my small feet heat up against the hard wood.
My feet are beginning to burn
as Dad takes his time clicking the button.
Picture taken; duty served. Back to my cool
oasis. Time clicks by; my mind begins to wander.
My small body wrinkled from the water,
the sun is too hot to handle now.
It's time for Mr. Rogers. Red polyester jacket with a white shirt underneath;
red shoes and white laces. Here comes the trolley.
Let's follow.

Save Ferris at Italian Fest

Suzanne Robin

Digital Photograph 5" x 7"





Grounded
Anthony Deak
Digital Photograph 8" x 10"

(dis)placed

Ashley Mack

i

*the indianapolis
museum of art is showing
roman sculptures from*

*the louvre
go there and
let the art speak to you—*

the professor says—i rush
there smiling then feel dumb—
how could i forget i don't
understand italian

ii

after 15mins of staring at *slave*—
a palm sized black marble statue
with freaky friday the thirteenth
alabaster eyes, alien muscles
(impossible rows of abs and veins
outside of skin) and one arm broken
off from the journey—

i move on to *antinous as osiris*—
a human-looking white marble head
with empty eyes and smooth
easy muscles wearing osiris's
headpiece—

Getting Lost in Rothenburg

Caitlin Heath
Photograph

the plaque says antinous
was emperor hadrian's lover
and hadrian loved antinous
so much he made him a god
after the poor boy died choking
on the Nile.

iii

When I was a little girl
my father would show me Africa on any globe
or map we came near. Each
time he'd point, "This was where civilization
began." He told me that
the same blood that runs through me ran through the people
who built the pyramids,
the people who built America on their backs, and Jesus.
"In school you hear about Greeks
and Romans? This is where all of that started."
Then he would smile
so hard that his rust-colored freckles would bunch
together, like tiny
constellations, under his eyes. "Look," he'd say with me strolling
behind him while he turned
all the globes in Sears so that Africa faced out, "never leave
the room until you make
sure we are
in our proper place."



Two-step

Ashley Mack

It must have been a Saturday,
almost past summer, late afternoon.
A family reunion. Uncle Herman probably
played Frankie Beverly or Earth, Wind
& Fire to get Uncle Greg to stop asking
“Man, when the food go be ready?”

Do you remember the 21st night of September?

Mommy and Daddy were probably the first
ones to get up, making a dance floor from a small
square of space between the meeting of four picnic
tables. Most likely Daddy tried to be cool at first,
dancing like his feet just learned the moves—
Do you remember the 21st night of September?
but when the music got good and Mommy rolled
her hips, spun around and snapped, Daddy’s
feet slide-kicked like James Brown.

*Love was changing the minds of pretenders
chasing the clouds away*

It had to be the Chicago bop two-step
that made them think I was a good idea.
No thoughts of how they’d keep
the lights on with another mouth to feed.
They didn’t know Mommy would always
be crying and Daddy would always be

between jobs. *Do you remember the 21st night
of September?* The easy way they moved
with the changes, Mommy twirling on Daddy’s
pointer finger like a needle clinging to a 45,
made nothing of baby-making, light work
of child-rearing.

*Ba de ya de- say do you remember
Ba de ya de- dancing in September?*

I was conceived
in a dance in my mother’s
step-ball-change and my father’s
grapevine in the 3minutes
and 41seconds with Aunt
Sherrill dancing offbeat
and singing along.

Ba de ya de- never was a cloudy day

It Never Gets Any Easier

Michael O. Holland

Aaron shoved his way past a babbling drunk, caught somewhere between paperwork and a holding cell. He danced around a pair of women who shouted as they pulled at each other's hair. Normally the distractions would have pissed him off, but today was his first day as a detective and he was determined to make it a good one. He smelled like a department store in his new suit, and it made him smile. It was the first suit he ever owned, and he wanted to look good when he met the new captain. He ran his hands down his sleeves, wiped away a few specks he missed from his fast-food breakfast on the way to work, and checked his watch again. It had taken him forever to make the trip across town to his new assignment. He was late and he knew it as he flew through the double doors labeled "Homicide."

"Detective Parker!" bellowed an older man standing in his path as if waiting in ambush. "First day on the job, and you're already wasting my time."

Aaron ducked to one side to avoid running the older man down, then jumped back to give him some space. He stuck out his hand to shake the big man's hand. He grimaced as his

gesture was ignored. "Captain Sawyer?"

"Do I look like Captain Sawyer? My name is Detective Nelson and I'm your new partner. For now at least."

Aaron watched as Detective Nelson wheeled around and retreated behind an old wooden desk that looked like several others lining the musty room. He was very disappointed. Years of watching good-looking detectives living out television dramas had deceived him. The detectives from his old precinct were never very impressive but none of them looked like Detective Nelson. He could not help but notice how out of shape Nelson was. His face had the mean look of an old army drill sergeant, and his eyes looked like those of an old hound dog. He frowned at Aaron for a moment.

"Stop grinning, Parker, you look like a moron."

"Sorry, um... Detective Nelson. I was supposed to see Captain Sawyer first thing this morning."

"Yeah, well 'first thing this morning' was half an hour ago. Captain Sawyer is on his way to Meridian Street to supervise a crime scene," said Detective Nelson, as he shuffled several stacks of paper around on his desk.

Aaron began to fidget and shoved his hands in his pockets to keep them still. He glanced around the room, and he could feel Detective Nelson's eyes watching him. The old detective was sizing him up and he knew it. Looking down, Aaron realized he had begun to sweat. Something about this guy was way too intense, and Aaron took a step towards the door as the urge to flee came over him.

"Where are you going, Parker?" asked Detective Nelson. Aaron felt himself freeze in place. "Nowhere, I mean, wherever you're going I guess."

"Don't be in such a rush. You've got plenty of time to get your head all messed up."

Aaron stared at Detective Nelson. He didn't know what to say, and began to wonder if the detective had decided to screw with him because it was his first day, or maybe because he was late; maybe both. The room suddenly felt much smaller.

"Sit down, Parker," Detective Nelson said while he motioned towards a chair not too far from his desk.

"You can call me Aaron if you want," he blurted out. He took the seat he was directed to and suddenly wished he had not opened his mouth. He realized he was sitting in the chair Detective Nelson used when talking to witnesses or potential suspects. The chair was boxed in on two sides by wooden desks. The only way out of the seat was past Detective Nelson or through the window.

"Aaron? Is that what your buddies call you?"

"Yeah, you don't need to call me Par... I mean, not if we're partners, right?" Aaron took a ragged breath and realized he had said too much once again. He glanced around for something else to focus on but found little on the walls to look at. From this angle, there was nothing but Detective Nelson and the frosted glass of the window. Nelson had probably set his desk up like that on purpose.

"I looked over your personnel file," said Detective Nelson. "Took the detective's test a few times, did you?"

Aaron nodded. "It's not an easy test, but I passed."

"Yeah, you passed eventually. Your file says you're single. Have a girlfriend?" Detective Nelson loomed over Aaron from behind his desk. Aaron's face flushed, and he wanted to lash out at his interrogator.

"Do you?" asked Aaron. He smiled inwardly as something flashed through the old man's eyes. Aaron pushed himself forward in his chair and leaned into Detective Nelson's personal space. "Is this how you treat all your new partners?" He waited in silence.

"Well, at least you have some nerve to you," answered Detective Nelson. He chuckled and leaned back in his chair to give both of them more space. "Nerve is important in this office. The first thing you need is something deep down, from your gut. If you don't have that, you might as well go back to being a beat cop, because we can't use you here."

Aaron nodded but was not sure he knew what Detective Nelson was talking about. He was already a cop; a good cop. Of course he had nerve. He was startled when Detective Nelson jumped to his feet, grabbed his coat, and shoved a pack of cigarettes into his pocket.

“Let’s go Parker. Captain Sawyer wants us to head down to Meridian to help out.”

Aaron fell in line behind his partner who was already shuffling towards the door.

“Nelson...”

“Call me *Detective* Nelson.”

Traffic slowed their progress through downtown to a crawl. They stopped for coffee, but Detective Nelson threw out the box of donuts Aaron brought back with him. The curmudgeon had called Aaron a damned fool for wanting food on his stomach on this kind of day. They had barely gotten back into the flow of traffic when it ground to a halt.

“Maybe I should throw up my light; see if we can get through this any faster.” He reached for his police light.

Detective Nelson shook his head. “We don’t need to get there any faster.”

“What are you talking about? The body will be cold by the time we get there.”

Aaron grimaced at the look of shock on Detective Nelson’s face before the older man managed to conceal his emotions.

“They are more than bodies,” Nelson said, as a mask of calm settled over his face. “Besides, they’re already cold. The landlord of the apartment complex found them this morning when he followed up on a complaint about a stench on the third floor.”

“ ‘They’re?’ How many are there?”

“More than one. We’re in no rush though. Captain Sawyer has the whole office down there with the forensics crew. We’re just going to lend a hand.” Detective Nelson lit a cigarette and Aaron could see him focusing hard on it as if he didn’t want to think about anything else.

Aaron smiled in spite of himself. The thought of a big case on his first day excited him even if it was not going to be his case. His time as a regular cop was good, but this was what he had dreamed about since before he joined the police force. Beside him, he noticed Detective Nelson had laid his head against the window and closed his eyes. His shoulders had sunken into him, and he looked very frail.

“Are you alright?”

Detective Nelson sat in silence, then sighed before looking back at Aaron. “Have you ever seen a dead person?”

Aaron nodded.

“And I don’t mean just a dead body at a funeral, Parker.

continued...

I mean, have you ever seen someone who's been murdered. A dead person like that?"

Aaron thought about the photos he had seen at the academy, and the myriad of images he had seen on television and in the movies over the years. Despite those images, which could be gruesome, he could not recall actually seeing a dead body himself. He shook his head and wondered at the sad look on Detective Nelson's face.

"I didn't think so, Parker." Detective Nelson took a deep breath and sat in silence for a bit longer. "I want you to be ready. It's not the same seeing it in person. Not everyone handles it the same way, so I just want you to be ready."

Aaron chuckled and then quickly cut off his reaction. This sounded too much like something he has seen in a movie once, but the way Detective Nelson pursed his lips made him think he should keep his comments to himself. Traffic began to move again, and Aaron devoted himself to navigating the city so he could ignore the quiet man beside him. He thought of a few witty comments to lighten the mood, but never found a moment to use them.

He didn't know how this old man could think he was so soft. He had never seen a dead body, but that didn't mean he wouldn't be able to handle it. Life as a cop isn't easy, and you see a lot of nasty things. He had seen pictures. They weren't that bad. Detective Nelson must be past his prime, getting too old for the job, and Aaron had the unfortunate honor of being

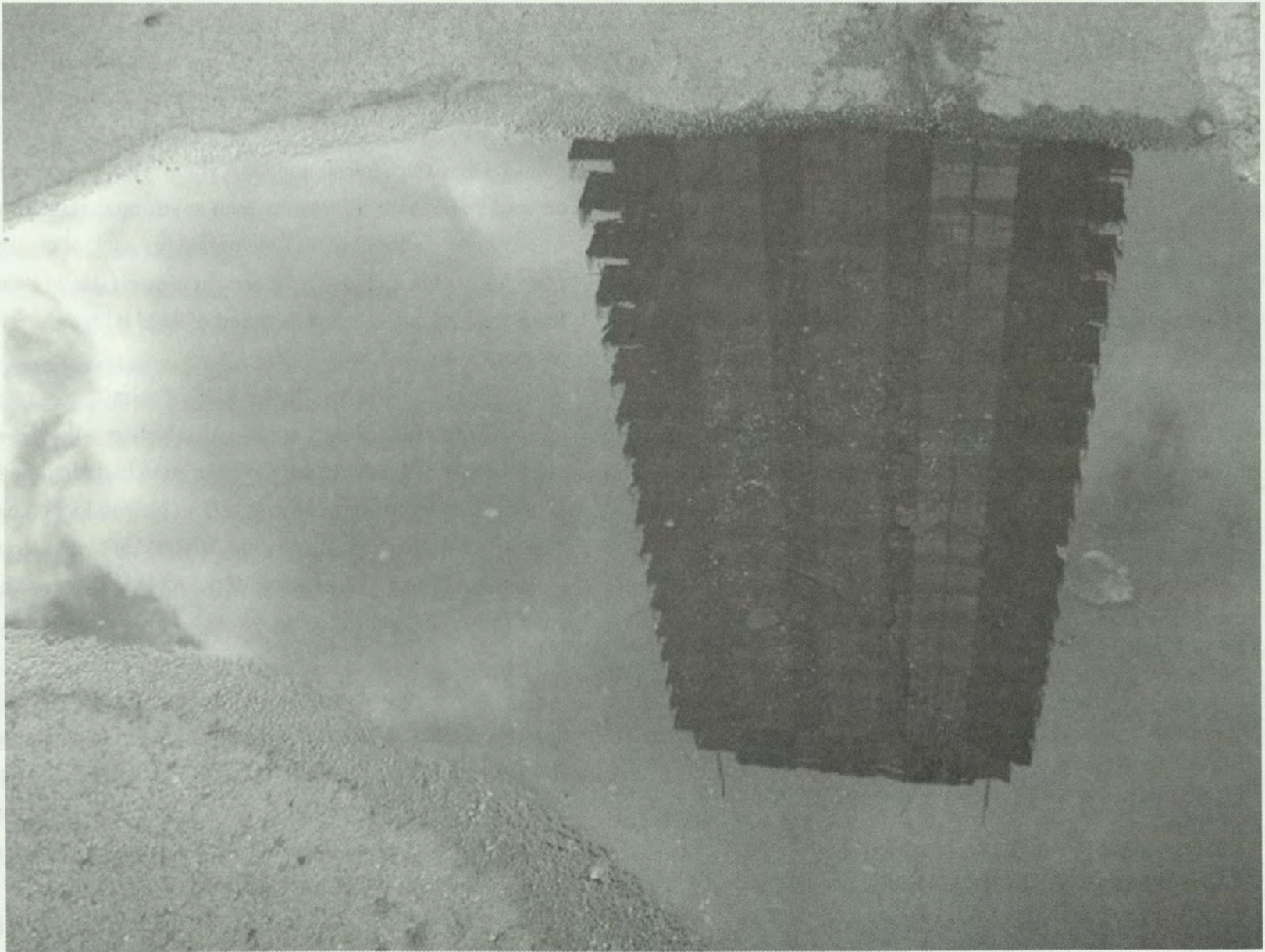
partnered with the man. He decided, when he got a chance, he would talk to Captain Sawyer about requesting a new partner.

Half an hour later they pulled up to an apartment building surrounded by squad cars and police vans. A small crowd had gathered, and beat cops were working to keep people away from the building.

"There have to be at least a dozen squad cars here," said Aaron as he slipped into a parking spot half a block from the building. A line of beat cops walked back and forth along the yellow police line keeping the crowd from crossing. He remembered how many times that had been him in a blue uniform, begging and pleading with the people to mind their own business. He would watch the detectives and forensics techs going back and forth. Now it was his turn to cross the yellow line and head inside the building. He smiled.

Aaron glanced at his partner. Nelson slowly stirred from his silent vigil with a worried look in his eyes. Aaron jumped from the vehicle, noticed a light breeze, and started to jog down the street into the wind when he realized he was leaving his partner behind. It would be a bad idea to show up alone, so he waited at the edge of the apartment building for Detective Nelson to catch up. The pair pushed their way past the spectators and cops and disappeared inside.

continued...



Rainy Riley
Suzanne Robin
Digital Photograph 5" x 7"

The heavy wooden doors of the apartment building burst open, and Aaron rushed outside to lose his breakfast in the gutter along the street. Vomit splattered on the legs of his pants. He shoved his tie into his shirt while fighting back the dry heaves that wracked his body with pain. The bodies of the victims in the building behind him danced in his mind. He nearly toppled over as his body tried to expel food it no longer possessed. The stench of the third floor clung to him, so he lifted his face to the breeze and let it pull the evil away from his body.

He pulled a handkerchief from his pocket to wipe away the mess on the sides of his mouth and noticed everyone outside watching him. He turned and walked away from the crowd throwing himself on a bench in case he needed to relieve his stomach again. His breath came in ragged gasps. He covered his face with his hands, but his arms felt too weak to keep him hidden for long. Behind him he heard the doors to the apartment building open and slam shut again. Hard footsteps sounded over the din of the crowd. Aaron felt the presence of Detective Nelson loom over him before he felt him sit down on the bench beside him.

“Are you okay, Aaron?”

The younger detective raised his head from his hands and thought carefully about his words. He had already lost

face, and he didn't want to sound like he was completely out of control.

“I don't know. I think you were right. I wasn't ready for that.”

Detective Nelson nodded. “If it makes you feel any better, I'm not sure if I've ever seen anything that bad myself. There were... a lot of them.” He pulled his pack of cigarettes from his pocket and slowly lit one for himself. He lit another from the first and reached over and offered it to Aaron, who waved it away.

“How do you handle that kind of thing?”

Aaron looked over at Detective Nelson who was staring at him intently. He could tell the older man had already decided he wasn't going to answer the question. Nelson looked back at him with his sad eyes. “Listen kid, if you don't want to go back in there, well, that's okay. Most of the guys in there are having a hard time stomaching it too. No one would think anything of it.”

Aaron sighed and said, “No one will respect me if I don't. I just need a minute.” He pulled his brand new casebook from his pocket and read over the few notes he had managed to take before he was forced to flee the scene. None of the words seemed to make much sense, and he realized he was focused on the page and not really reading anything.

Detective Nelson sucked hard on the cigarette in his hands and tossed the butt into the street. “We don't need to go

back in yet. With that mess, forensics is going to be busy all day. We'd only get in the way."

"You don't want to go back in there either," said Aaron.

Nelson grinned and said, "Yeah, you're a sharp one I guess. Well, not dull at least. Or maybe you're just a moron stating the obvious."

Aaron chuckled and spit some of the taste out of his mouth. "Honestly though, can I ask a question?"

"You can ask, but I might not answer."

Aaron nodded and decided to take his chances. "How did you make it this long in the job? How can you stand it?"

"It's not what you expected. I understand."

Aaron shook his head. "No, it's not what I expected. How do you get used to something like that?"

Detective Nelson sighed. Aaron watched as he pulled another cigarette from his pack, stared at it, and then put it back without smoking it. "I don't think we ever get used to something like this. We protect and serve." He paused, and Aaron let the words wash over him. "Not everyone can do this job. I was serious about what I said to you earlier. It takes something deep down inside to go the first time. Hell, it takes the same thing to do it the last time. It never gets any easier. I honestly think that's why we have partners."

Aaron smirked and shoved his casebook back in his pocket. Detective Nelson struggled to push himself to his feet and walked towards the apartment building, leaving Aaron

continued...



Beetledream

Sarah Helen Wuensch
Mixed Media 22" x 30"

alone on the bench. Aaron watched the crowd beyond the police line jostling back and forth, trying to get a glimpse inside the crime scene. He shook his head in disgust. They had no idea what was waiting for them should one of them happen to break through, driven by a morbid sense of curiosity. He stood and walked over to join his partner at the door.

Detective Nelson grabbed his shoulder as he reached for the door. "You know, Aaron, I have gotten too old for this. If this is the kind of thing the bad guys are doing these days, well, I just don't think I'm cut out for it. I spoke to the captain this morning, and he knows. He just wanted me to bring you down here for your first time."

Aaron looked at his partner whose shoulders were slumped once again. Just a moment ago this man had been speaking words of encouragement and Aaron's mind reeled at the hypocrisy.

Detective Nelson shocked him out of his reverie with a hand on his shoulder.

"Tell Captain Sawyer I'll be in to see him in the morning."

Aaron started to object, but couldn't speak. He found himself staring at Detective Nelson's back after he turned and began to walk away from him. The old detective meandered through the crowd of onlookers and disappeared from view down the street. Aaron looked at the door of the apartment building and wondered if he could go back inside alone. A

shiver shook his body as he reached down and grabbed the door handle. It felt cold in his hand. He looked back down the street, past the crowd, in hopes of seeing Detective Nelson again, but he was already long gone.

"I don't need to go back inside. I could leave too," Aaron thought. He looked around at the beat cops working the police line. Their backs were to him as they fought with the crowd, much as he had not too long ago. If he walked away without making a scene, none of them would notice. He could probably fade right in with them if he wanted to. It was easier holding the crowd back even if he never had thought so before.

He squeezed the handle and slowly pulled the door open. It might have been his imagination, but he could smell the stench from the third floor seeping down and out of the building. If he did not close the door quickly, he knew the smell would crawl out into the crowd, and they would know what horror awaited their curious eyes. He wondered if they could hack it any better than he had. His arms felt weak again, and the breeze threatened to close the door, so he pushed himself inside and continued towards the stairs.

His body might be weak, but something deep down, from his gut, kept him moving along. He knew somehow Detective Nelson would be proud of him, or pity him. Maybe both. ■



Bar Scene
Adam Kelm
Photograph 7" x 9"

Contributors' Notes

Sarah Fitzpatrick Anderson is a senior in the photography program at Herron School of Art and Design. She has a strong background in graphic design, and it informs most of her work. She works for the Indiana Historical Society in their Preservation Imaging Department where she digitizes their photo collection.

Melanie Colter is currently a senior General Fine Arts major in photography at Herron School of Art & Design. Melanie is from Zionsville, Indiana but now resides in Indianapolis. In addition to photography, she enjoys foreign language, traveling overseas, and horseback riding.

Bridget Connors likes to talk a lot to people that she knows.

Anthony Deak currently attends the Herron School of Art and Design and pursues a BFA degree in photography.

Amanda Dowdal is currently a Fine Arts major with emphasis in drawing at Herron, but was previously a Creative Writing major at Ball State University.

Charlene Farabaugh is back to school at IUPUI after a ten year break. She has decided to return to school to work on her writing skills and is considering a degree in English.

Caitlin Heath is a freshman in the IU School of Journalism.

Courtney Hitson is a transfer student at IUPUI, double-majoring in English and psychology. She's into poetry, freestyle unicycling, cognitive psychology, and existentialism. She's been published in Ball State's *Broken Plate*. She plans to attend graduate school for either an MFA in poetry or master's degree in counseling psychology.

Michael O. Holland is an English major with a focus in Creative Writing. He served proudly in the USAF for close to nine years and has returned to college as a disabled veteran to pursue a new career as a writer and a teacher.

Elizabeth Howard started her college career at Herron, then switched to Liberal Arts and Anthropology at IUPUI. After much consideration, she decided to major in Creative Writing. "To me, writing is not a big move from art. It's simply painting with words." Elizabeth writes poetry from personal memories so her children and their children can imagine what her life was like.

Justin Jett is currently a sophomore at Herron School of Art seeking his Bachelor's degree in photography. His wide range of interests include music, architecture, cars, sports, nature and wildlife, and are found throughout his work.

Adam Kelm is a second-year student at IUPUI. He currently majors in English with a creative writing concentration, but plans to double major in photography, which he is beginning to realize will be time-consuming and difficult.

Ashley Mack is an Indianapolis native, a creative writing major, and a University Library Diversity Fellow. Ashley was published in the 2005 issue of *Drumvoices Revue* and was invited to attend the writer's retreat of *Callaloo* at Texas A&M University.

Kyle Miller is currently a junior at Herron School of Art and Design. A full-time honors student with project after project after 20-page essay piling up on him, he has recently given up sleep. Kyle enjoys free time and animals.

Karen D. Mitchell is an English/Creative Writing major. She loves her husband of 19 years, 13-year-old daughter, pets and feral cat colony very much. Karen also loves the manga Fruits Basket, and attended her first anime convention last spring. Karen was the 2008 recipient of the Rebecca Pitts Poetry Award.

Desiree Moore is currently a senior in the Photography Department, and looks forward to leaving the basement early enough to witness the sun. She loves the environment, all flora and fauna, and urges all to recycle.

Jennifer Nagelin is an English major with a concentration in Writing and Literacy, and works part-time to support her reading habit. She hopes to work in the publishing industry upon graduation. Barring that, she will probably freelance as either a superhero or mad-scientist.

Kris Peterson is a Political Science grad who has returned to Herron for a Masters of Furniture Design.

Mike Potter is an IUPUI student working towards a degree in Creative Writing. He spends his time writing, and pondering the problems of the world.

Caitlin Reeves is in her second year at Herron as a pre-Art Education major. She has a newly found interest in sculpture and creative writing as well.

Suzanne Robin is a twenty-year-old English major. She has always had quite a passion for photography and seems to be addicted to sushi. She loves to laugh and hopes to travel all around Europe someday.

Natalie Robinson is studying English at IUPUI and hopes to become an editor.

Kenny Spry was born July 28, 1983. It was hot that day.

Joe Wallace developed an interest in photography at an early age. He has been taking pictures as a hobby ever since. Now pursuing a degree at Herron, Joe hopes to integrate his hobby into a career.

Justin Walsh is a photography student at Herron School of Art and Design, who first fell in love with poetry at a young age. He is discovering and debating the truth of the adage, "a picture is worth a thousand words."

Sarah Helen Wuensch is twenty-one years old, and a current fine arts major at Herron School of Art and Design. She loves drawing and using mixed media in her work, particularly gouache and chalk pastel. Most of her art is perceptually based and "edgy." She incorporates bright colors and gem tones that are heavily emphasized and blended together. After graduation, she plans on going to grad school out west to pursue her MFA.

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Back Cover: Scratch Bird

Kris Peterson

Oil on Canvas 12" x 16"

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