

# Cornfield *Review*



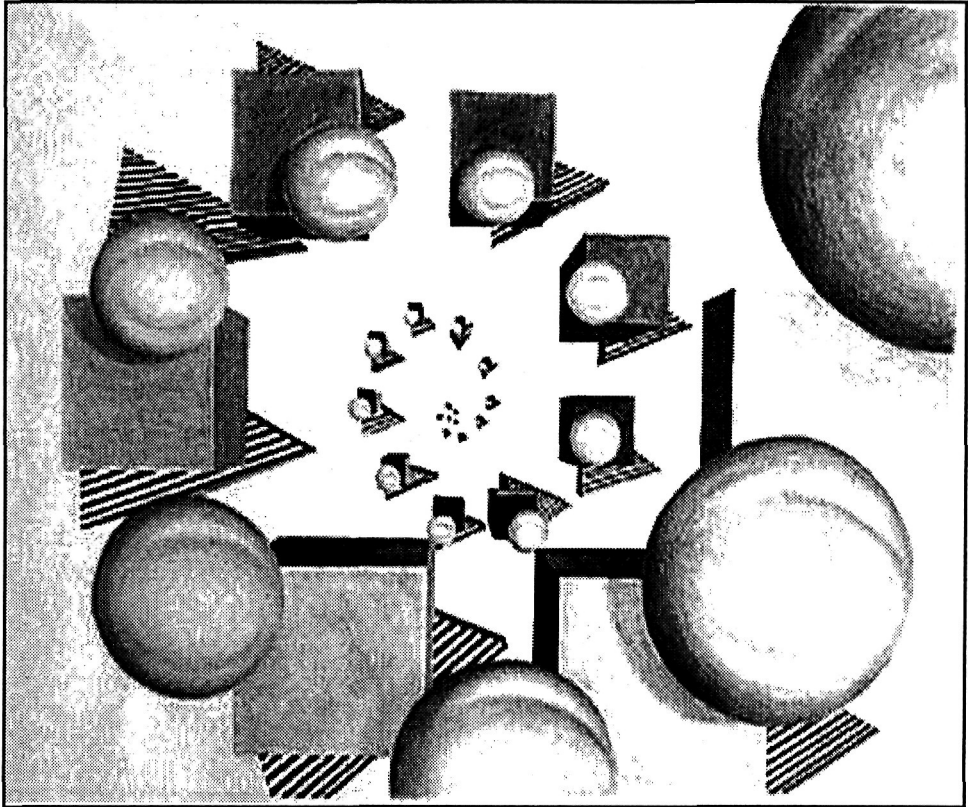
*An Annual of the Creative Arts*

**Volume 16**

**1998**



# Cornfield Review



Melanie Warner

Volume 16 1998 The Ohio State University at Marion

---

The front and back covers are sketched by Melanie Warner





# Cornfield Review

## Editors

---

Cheryl Dodds  
Della Ellis  
Jill Leathem  
Heather Sauer

## Faculty Advisor

---

Jacquelyn Spangler

\*The Editors of *Cornfield Review* give special thanks to Stuart Lishan, Shannon Greer, Amy Isler, Amy Phillips, Charma Messer, Kristy Roberts, and Brent Wygant for their editorial assistance in the selection of poetry. We also wish to acknowledge Todd DeVriese for his assistance with the design and reproduction of the graphics.

\*\*For the inspiration to transform *Cornfield Review* into a publication of student writing designed and edited by students, and for establishing support among campus communities, we are grateful to Scott DeWitt, Jeff Conley, Jim Ford, Amy Isler, Stanton Swihart, Mandi Tromm, and Willie Woken, as well as Barbara McGovern and Bev Seaton.

*Cornfield Review* is published once a year as a joint publication of The Ohio State University at Marion, Mansfield, and Newark. The editorial board seeks quality writing and graphic art. Submissions are accepted from students and faculty between October 1 and April 1 and must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Please send no more than five poems, and limit fiction to 3,000 words or less.



# Table of Contents

---

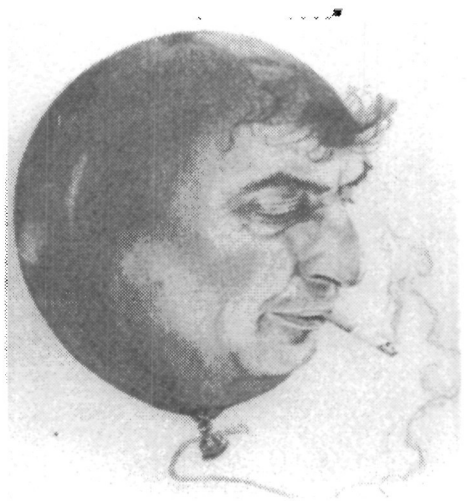
Poems	Page#
Cheryl McPeck	
Open Twenty-Four Hours.....	1
He Fashions Himself a Contender.....	2
Photograph Album.....	3
Philip Avery	
Of August Descent.....	4
Trains.....	6
Cigars and Sand.....	7
Melanie Ehler	
The Common-Job Dream.....	8
Douglas D. West	
Our World.....	9
The Special Place.....	10
Distance.....	11
Heather Sauer	
The Motionless Hands.....	12
A Cow's Society.....	13
Awaiting Torture.....	14
Kristy N. Roberts	
And it all made sense... ..	15
Solace.....	16
Ennui.....	17
Brent Wygant	
Kia.....	18

---

Amy Isler	
Something Wilder.....	19
Skin Deep.....	20
Recycling.....	21
Amy N. Phillips	
As... ..	23
Melissa Heck	
Reflection.....	24
Kathleen Heilman	
Responsibility.....	25
Jodi Smith	
Life without Prince Charming.....	26
The path of the disillusioned.....	27
Laura Behne	
Running Free.....	28
Terry Hermesen	
When I Was the Littles.....	29
Letter to L. from the Prairie.....	30
Jason Lichtenberger	
Lost Diamonds Discovered in Salinas, Puerto Rico.....	32
Jamie Piatt	
[The squirrelly world filled with wheely poppers].....	32
[I remember the large stained teeth of a camel].....	32
Maurice L. Johnson	
Voodoo Chile.....	33
Silk Curtains.....	34
Dirty Air.....	35

---

Derek Waugh	
Herbert Martin's Exorcism.....	37
Trinda Cartwright	
[Daily I brush my fangs with an ax].....	38
Do You Remember?.....	39
Jess J. Andrews	
Untitled.....	40
Diary of an Alcoholic.....	41
Amy Dobson	
Preposterous.....	42
<b>Fiction</b>	
Stephen Buttermann	
Live Long Days.....	43
<b>Art Work</b>	
Cheryl Dodds.....	1-8, 18, 20, 28
Elizabeth Barcus.....	11&12
Eve Brown.....	16&27
Kate Lucas.....	22&23
Melanie Warner.....	36
Carole Ziegler.....	40
<b>Photographs</b>	
Melanie Warner.....	13, 28, 32
Zach Davis.....	51



Cheryl Dodds



## Open Twenty-Four Hours

I thought the place would be empty  
Who goes to a laundromat at 5 o'clock  
on a Sunday morning

Drunks maybe  
seeking porcelain basins  
willing to catch the overflow

Or sleepless loners  
trading one overrated silence  
for the lull of another

It was the vibration of the sun trying to stand  
trying to shake off the last of the night

that drew me in  
headed me in the direction  
of vending machine coffee  
and the fresh squeezed sludge  
of a four second brew

I almost didn't see her  
curled to the corner  
knees pulled to her chest  
Rocking, rocking

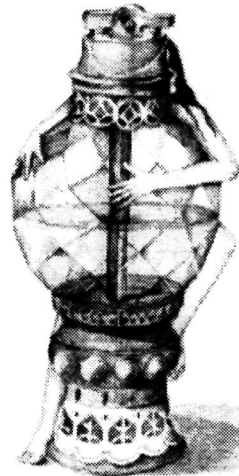
Paperback novel  
balanced in one hand  
chin on the other

And she began to sing  
pale lavender blues  
warm  
fragrant  
spreading lullaby over the room

I couldn't move

She almost had me convinced

Nothing else was real



## He Fashions Himself a Contender

That man is in pain,  
it rides all over his face  
stringing his lips  
clothesline tight  
pitting his eyebrows  
against each other.

You can see it in his hands  
fingertips pushing,  
pushing the table down  
holding of the opposition  
holding up the last line  
he tossed out, before

his finger pointed this way  
and that, intercepting  
his words, splattering them  
across the table  
across themselves  
drops escaping  
to the floor  
mixing with the dirt  
of the city.

He pulls at his trousers  
lifts his foot to the stool  
he wants to feel himself  
squirm  
at the touch of his eyes  
on the little girl's breasts  
just beginning to form  
ideas  
in her head,  
he can mold  
around himself  
shape to the rhythm  
of his voice.

Words falter  
shoulders slump and he turns  
from applause  
long enough to rinse a smile  
from his beard  
smooth it with thanks to a God  
who gave him sons  
and never once  
a daughter.



## Photograph Album

The light was too dim to sharpen images  
 faded with time and the elements.  
 I folded her memories into me  
 like stirring sweet cream into coffee.  
 She had invited me to a birthday celebration  
 held ten years ago and a graduation ceremony  
 from grade school.  
 She took me along on a glossy Lake Erie vacation  
 minus the sunburn and the Dramamine.

I knew you would be there  
 on the pages of your new life  
 mountains away.  
 But you surprised me too soon  
 warming a spot on her couch  
 right where I sit now  
 the ghost of your image  
 touching me.

But it was your son  
 no longer the boy I knew  
 Grown past the big eyed smile  
 of childhood.  
 Past me.  
 Away.

Without turning the page  
 I knew.  
 It was only your photograph I would ever see.  
 It was too late.

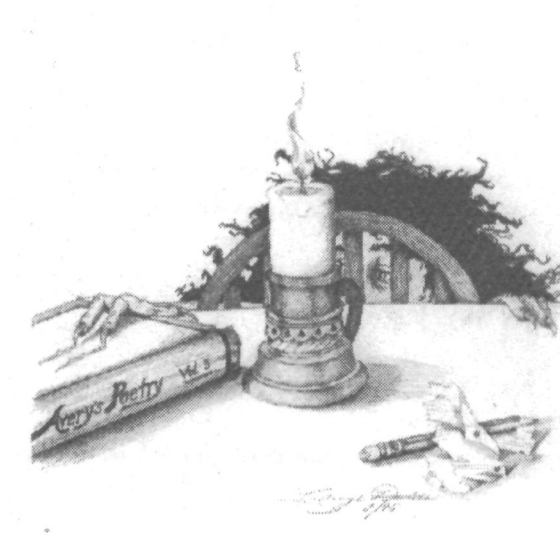
## Of August Descent

Summer days, hell, long after nightfall,  
The sun, white as Michigan sand, passionate  
As good Mexican food, and sure as a dozen  
Clergyman, warms a palm tree beyond  
An unnatural singular wall.

Everything is cool, he mutters to the  
Beautiful people downtown, the ones  
You hide your smiles from, long after  
The last child leaves, and then hope  
No one cares.

A crow, detestable yet familiar, stops  
Her daily search for sun cracked  
Snails, to watch the man's eyes of  
Faded-jeans blue cultivate their  
Traffic-light-red streaks.

True, he once walked, as all men  
Do on occasion, head up, eyes focused,  
Even his hair was arranged. His  
Mind fixed on twelve things at once,  
Never surrendering.



Everything is cool, he says, voice  
 Bucking the heated pacific breeze  
 As it climbs the Eastern foothills  
 That comb the desert back into  
 Arizona's private hell.

Summer comes too often now  
 That he can't change the way  
 The boss thinks about coincidence  
 Outweighing common sense or  
 Good mental health.

He stays inside, among the  
 Cigarette smudged plastic ferns,  
 To chew on an unclaimed lip  
 That remembers more. He listens  
 To the nothing.

Everything is cool his fists pound out,  
 Sending tiny splinters from a pine desk  
 That used to be such a friend to the ink  
 That took his handful of hatred, and  
 Spread it around.

The last good pen vanished long before  
 The crow was born, or the front lawn died,  
 Tossing his religion in the neighbor's trash can  
 Beside the ant kingdom on it's way  
 To a foreign tomorrow.

Heat, leftover from summer, and youth,  
 Collect over the bottle of Wild Turkey  
 He bought to replace the ink, and  
 Praise each other for remembering  
 His day.

Everything is cool, the woman he used  
 To balance atop his regulated mind, with  
 It's twelve individual, and prioritized tasks,  
 Calls to remind him, but the answering machine  
 Cuts her off.

On the last morning he is to spend  
 At this age, somewhere between  
 Seductive and annoying, interested and  
 Returned for factory defects, he rises,  
 And kills the crow.

## Trains

My father came to Ohio  
With an attitude tucked in his pants  
About the time Lynyrd Skynyrd died  
He was ready to leave  
Smoking pipes of brown and red  
He spun out his nights

He's six feet standing  
Twice that lying around  
Got a head for the figures  
Never let a stranger start the fight

Thumbing up from Columbus  
He met Sandy drinking stale raisin wine  
On a moon dunked Saturday  
He showed her lots of reasons  
For shedding blue cotton  
And closing her eyes

She taught him to see  
With his hands  
To extinguish certain fires  
How to say goodbye



## Cigars and Sand

A look from a young couple  
Says I'm out of place  
Sweating under San Diego's April rays  
In my boots and jeans  
But I'm not here for that peculiar foreplay  
Or the roller blades

I came to teach the ocean  
To dream  
To join blue-green mist  
With soulful gray  
To dance my toes  
And embrace the firm softness  
Of Cuban seed  
With warm lips

Today, I'm not a lover  
Not a poet, or swimmer  
I am an adventurer,  
A connoisseur of fine smoke  
Looking for an affair  
With my tan mistress

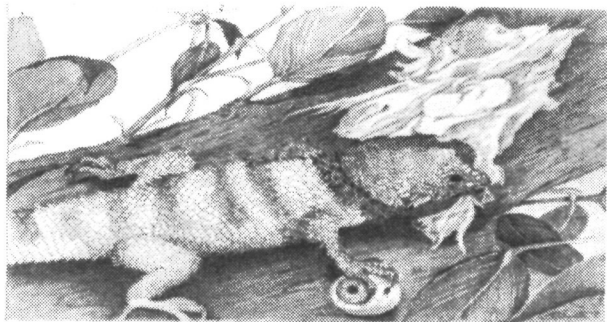
I hear laughter and music  
Smell coconut oil and youth  
Feel the heat  
The rise and fall of the sea

But know only the taste,  
The body, and acceptance  
Of my handmade Excalibur

I breathe it  
Teasing steamy fingers on my tongue  
Until nearly cooled  
Then slowly push its beauty  
To the water's edge  
Breathe in  
Pulling it to me

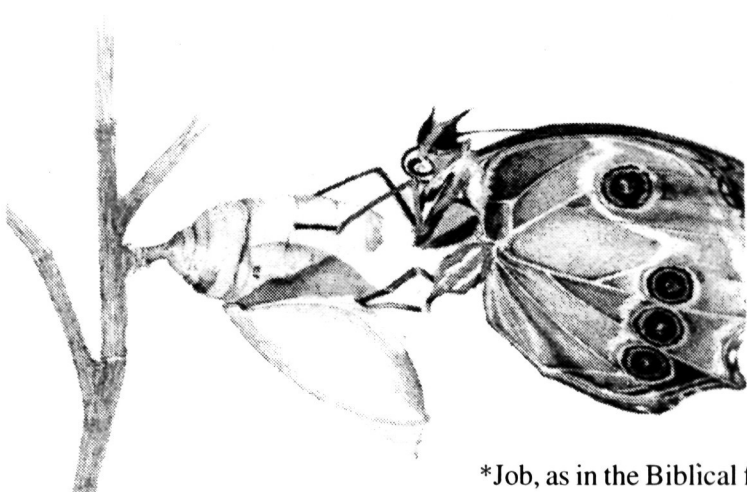
Holding its resonance  
As long as I can  
While gulls rush  
And dive  
Distant sailboats and small castles  
Wanting its life  
Dreading its passing  
Resolved to return  
Next Saturday

I release.



## The Common-Job Dream

I am waiting  
For God to tear open  
The sky, and for angels,  
Fuzzily golden, to come  
Tumbling through the hole.  
I am waiting  
For a Divine Voice  
To intervene, saying,  
*There has been a mistake.*  
*No chaste human*  
*Heart should suffer like this.*  
And then the angels, vaguely glowing,  
Will spackle the blank spots  
Inside me with stars,  
Thyme, holy music, implacable  
Affection. And all my old tears  
They will gather to water  
Banks of tired asphodel.



\*Job, as in the Biblical figure

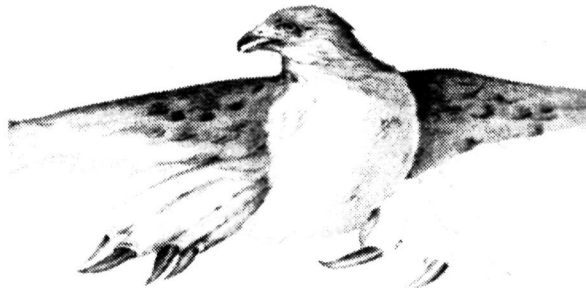
## Our world

There is a world  
inside my mind.  
This is the world  
that leaves me behind.  
I can see it  
through my window,  
I can see it  
walking alone.  
Relying on people,  
this world appears to have no mind.  
I can hear  
winds whispering to me,  
they are cold and ruined by time.  
The abuse is here now,  
it can't take much more.  
The world is alive,  
I can feel it with my heart,  
growing old with time.  
It can hear us  
speak of lies.  
It can see us  
with tired eyes.  
The world is alive through my window,  
I can see it up 'till I die.

It can cure us in disease and in sickness,  
in return, we destroy and deform it.  
Will we ever see the Earth when it cries?  
On a rainy day,  
I stay inside.  
I give the Earth time,  
to relax and recover.  
This world is tired tonight.

## The Special Place

The birds sing with great compassion  
as the trees sway to their steady rhyme.  
Frogs and fish complement the noise  
with a splash in the river.  
Running under the bridge,  
giant rocks and small rocks  
line the floor of the underpass.  
The sun shines through leafy branches,  
creating shade for me to sleep.  
A fire was made by someone, or something,  
so say the signs of an ashen fire spot.  
Spiders crawl under the bridge,  
and webs line the spaces in between.  
My sight becomes impaired  
by the beauty of my heart's sensation.  
The river flows to the end of the world,  
and the weeds are long overgrown.  
Part of the world,  
part of the universe,  
with scenes like these,  
I'm reminded of being part of something  
great.

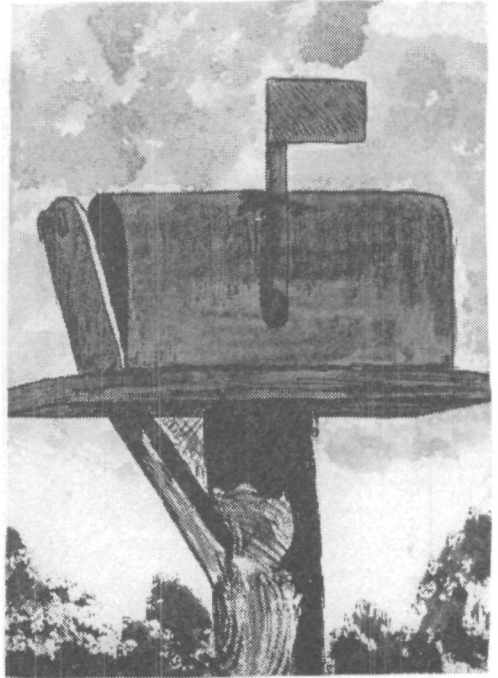




---

## Distance

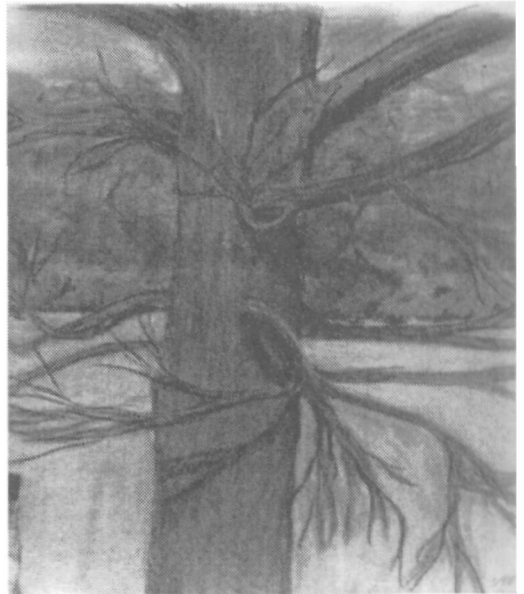
Distance...  
such a powerful word  
and such an easily achieved task.  
Distance could be the difference between  
a thousand miles, or ten miles.  
It could be a time gap of one year,  
to one century.  
Distance is being close  
to someone you love,  
and not talking to them for months at a time.  
Distance can be all of this,  
or, it can be none of it.  
Distance can be anywhere and everywhere,  
and yet, it could be  
the only thread of knowing between us.  
Distance can be a road of uneasiness  
or a salvation come to life.  
One person's fortune,  
and another's misfortune.  
Distance can be all of this, or more,  
but it never goes so far away,  
as to stay.



## The Motionless Hands

My eyes bulge,  
one swings loosely.  
My wing gives one  
last attempt  
to lift this weighted body.  
My arm reaches out,  
grasping for the  
hands on a motionless clock.  
Each toe...claw...digs within  
the wooden chair  
stripped of paint.  
I rise high,  
perched on this throne  
of wood and paint splints.  
The cold from metal  
rises and chills the  
feathers of my body.  
Dark stained walls  
hover around me,  
surrounding me with  
a great madness.  
Fresh greens of life trapped in the  
motionless clock hands.

They fall within silence  
of the tick that  
the clock once held....  
I stare at this confusion  
as I am twisted and torn  
into the still hands.  
Becoming one with  
the greens and  
the splints of wood,  
Pasted to the black  
plaster...motionless  
in time...  
Trapped in the frame  
of steel,  
the frame of life.



---

## A Cow's Society

I feast at this grassy table  
near the maples and the pond.  
The fresh greens roll for miles  
surrounding old Aunt Mabel's house.

Not far from the maples and the pond,  
my grazing neighbors appear to  
surround me as old Aunt Mabel's house  
surrounds her upon the hill.

My grazing friends  
enjoy their own greeneries as much as I.  
These fresh greens are able  
to draw me with their appeal.

While we enjoy our grass,  
the wind plays with our tails  
and draws a scattered arrangement of clouds.  
Mr. Sun smiles brightly above.

The cool breeze created  
eases the heat of the sun on our bodies.  
Fighting with the bright smile,  
our eyes squint and shift.

Our lashes ease the sun's power  
as it towers us, leaving shadows  
shifting and distorting both our  
bare bodies and the house upon the hill.

As the sun towers us leaving shadows,  
the fresh greens continue to roll for miles  
day after day while we and the house upon the hill  
remain on this grassy table--exposed. . .



## **Awaiting Torture (A Visit to the Dentist)**

The blur of flowers  
as they fade away  
kiss the world farewell.  
They close in around me.

Sucked into the tube of waste  
They vanish  
along with humanity  
leaving a bare world.

Shadows fall upon  
the remaining structures  
the tortured light  
gives a few last flickers.

A cry for life  
flows from many spread mouths.  
The very voice  
is sucked away.

Heard by few,  
it is the sound  
of death  
and of the end...

## And it all made sense...

Someone feeds burning coals of thought-  
the ceiling's eye ignites them  
under my pillow.

I cool with mediation.  
unsuccessfully.

They burden my body like lead  
with the tasté of soot.  
those thoughts.

I inhale them.  
smell nothing because of sickness.

Popcorn echoes downstairs.  
sending a beacon of yellow to  
sneak under my door

Warmth coerces me,  
"Sleep."

Ringin' doesn't wake me-  
Heather Weston of Sterling, Colorado  
returning my call.

The call I didn't make,  
numbers I didn't dial.

The forgotten phone in the frozen car,  
will it respond  
to the curves in the road,  
the sirens' roaring?

You must have proof of insurance.  
I paint my family portrait  
on the window.

I jump-  
the voice behind the paint  
asking my "4-1-1."

The cop is a boyfriend

I have never seen-  
sculpting the prickly rose of play and conformity  
Out of the ticket.

I know he hates me-

The roses are red.

I climb their petals

To sit by the pond.

Meditating like Yamaguchi  
for a frost on her skates.  
the same frost that unites  
the Gold to her chest.

For fake triple lutz  
create dry waterfalls, but  
success is measured in the splash.

Sun produces your rainbows  
and clouds give sight  
to snowflakes glitter and glistening  
dancing in the kaleidoscope.

Awake to their music  
their Carpe-Diem!

## Solace

Marion silences  
her sins, her  
Forgottens-of-tomorrow.

When billowy veils  
blacken light,  
cowardly sunsets  
Fall.

Their shadows  
strangle rock,  
hide fire  
Under night.

Struggle to  
thrive with each breath.  
Mime hate still.

Because you find  
solace there,  
you  
Die as you pray.



## Ennui

Still Standing-  
    been  
        so  
        weak.

We both loathe  
    seen  
        energy  
leak.

But how  
    the crack  
        of lack  
        of time.

Buzz tunes  
    proudly in  
the mind.

One  
must gather  
    and collect

Life's  
    fleeting  
        moments  
protect.

## KIA

When the tornadic winds whipped about  
I was your future.  
To accept or reject.

A lion in a cage  
Waiting--  
My captors unleash me  
To protect you.

When the enemy overtook us,  
Bombs dropped,  
I was your security,  
Where to go  
To become safe.

When worldly fires consumed you  
And shots rang out  
I was your fortress.

Now, I am your memory.  
A purple rock in a sea of forgetfulness.  
Your heart.  
Your companion.

The colors of the rainbow waiting  
Behind glass.  
A name on a

Wall.



## Something Wilder

Under the blue rain  
And heavy sky  
Churning like a machine,  
The buffaloes stampede--  
Black shadows racing behind  
Shaking with the earth--

Aware of the angles  
And of his hunger  
A beast strays, set apart--

A moon in a starless sky,  
In full rage,  
Something radiant  
One eye's possessed--  
Darting here and there  
Flaming birds  
Sweep in ceremonious dance  
Like hung magnets, hover  
And leap about ghostly trees  
To pollinate, and then...  
Ascend in a silent rush  
Leaving behind their legacy  
And something wilder than it ever was.

## Skin Deep

I want to breathe the tears of the Moon  
Like the dust eats its own eye.  
I want to raise this chiled from its stillness  
But the leaves bleed like rust from my fingers

What white lies  
Smell like chaff and powder  
Feel to the touch  
Of an empty smile  
Gaping teeth  
And dry words.

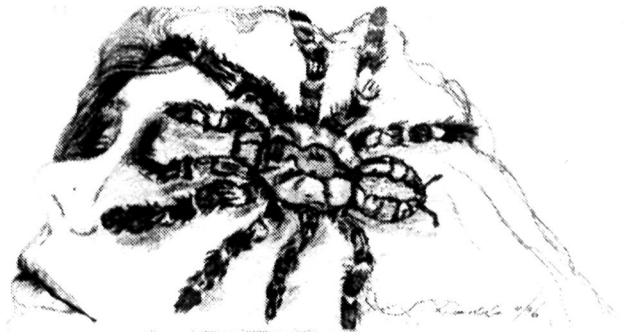
Like a blanket of dew  
On a white berry  
Thick as a shell  
And warmer within.

Only to burn  
In the rage of wind  
To go up  
And fall down  
And revolve once again.

A raisin now hangs  
At the end of its world  
Under the open black sky  
With its millions of eyes.  
And bleeds its tiny heart  
From its weary dry stem.

But He has wrung nectar from sand  
And dines with Saguaro  
Just as thick and sweet  
As I wanted to be.

So I laugh . . .  
My echoes will pulse into the sky  
Until the Moon has ceased to cry.



---

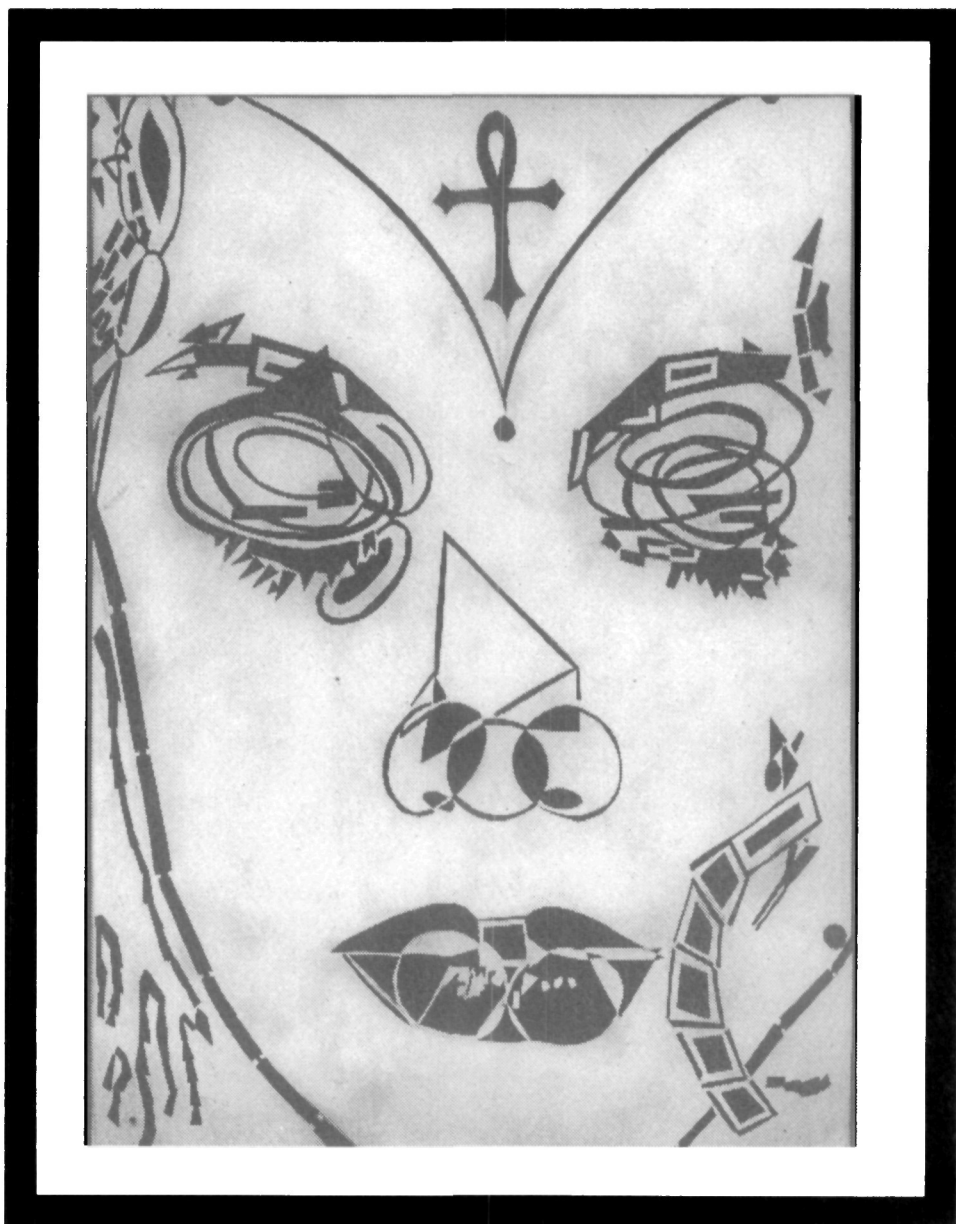
## Recycling

The tiny dogs yipped like rats at my feet  
Sorry your ceiling fell in  
I'll call him tomorrow

I went home and  
Recalled stranger places  
Her basement was  
Like a forgotten store  
Buried under its years.  
In dim light  
You can see  
Faces from the fifties  
Smiling at you like ghosts  
Enticing you to their wig shampoo.

But they will be consumed  
By dirt  
Or by yard sale.

Our forts were fed to sheep  
After hours of play.  
Scratchy hay was brushed from  
Our hair at night  
And its musty smell  
Removed from the wool  
But I can still smell it in my shirt.



## As...

Early mist wakes in the air...(falling)  
no memory of sun sleep.  
Bethany's voice just  
falling.  
Eyelashes crease at the meeting of chest  
Strong arms root me.  
His sweat kisses my lips as  
breath on my back  
hugs love.  
No memory of falling.  
Life sings from breath to sleep  
as the  
rising and falling waves of frozen protection  
surround me as I  
sleep.



## Reflection

To sit and stare at yourself  
To analyze your face  
the roundness,  
the heavy circles,  
the disheveled hair  
You sit as if in a trance,  
focusing your eyes  
trying to pick the locks of your own mind  
Sometimes they are heavy.  
other times they are light,  
depending on how much you want to see

And you sit and stare  
hiding from beyond the glass  
Your reflection beginning to take the shape of a coffee stain  
at the bottom of a black mug  
You listen  
You can hear the music play in the background  
telling of coming battles with enemies that you are destined to  
meet

Occasionally you put hope in time,  
thinking that if you stare long enough  
time will cease  
leaving you with a frozen reflection of  
Inward eyes, straight hair, and dark skin  
Your hope fails  
You get up and leaved your tired reflection  
You go on continuing to face the world with a frown  
And your reflection haunts your shadow,  
which is staring back at you with dark hollow eyes

## Responsibility

Patty sauntered home from third grade again  
Without her glasses.  
When Dad dragged in from work,  
We were fast asleep and he was weary  
So he didn't bother about them.  
But this morning they were his focus.

Dad despises factory work--Spraying enamel  
on Westinghouse washers and dryers every day  
In the most intense heat;  
Moving air would mar the shiny enamel finish.  
He toils at despised employment to pay the bills.  
Unimportant his physical state  
His emotional state.  
Display strength only.

His responsible nature  
(Beaten into him by a mirror image)  
Allows no weak demonstrations.  
Five growing, needy children;  
This year it's my turn for glasses.  
He counts his pennies, lives on a tight budget.  
So if Patty's glasses get broken or are lost,  
His irresponsibility looms;  
memories haunt him for past transgressions,  
Not keeping his brother out of the pool hall.  
Passivity won't shoulder the blame  
for his offspring's inability to see the chalkboard.  
Weakness, past sins, will be revealed.  
He must act.

From his bed, he roars, "Patricia!  
Did you bring your glasses home yesterday?"  
"No."  
"How many times have I told you...?"  
The house is shaking from his thunder.  
But above the rattle, I clearly hear  
his powerful tool snap the air as it breaks  
free from the belt loops of the work pants  
hanging on his closet doorknob.  
"Lean over the bed!"

I can't see Patty's face  
And she doesn't utter a futile sound;  
Yet her terror is mine,  
Moving me with uncontrollable trembling.  
I must escape...I could be next  
(He needs no reason other than his own  
unspoken, unresolved terror). But  
before I can, I feel the first bruising Craaack!  
On Patty's little bottom.  
Flying legs don't shelter me  
from the second screaming blast.  
And just as I close the attic door  
and cover my ears,  
The third cries out.  
In burning pain, I cry to God to make  
him stop,  
To please, please make him stop...  
But he won't.

## Life without Prince Charming

I know mama...  
when am I gonna find a good man  
when am I gonna bring one home for  
Sunday scrabble  
I KNOW mama...  
you're ready for grandkiddies  
you want to see me happy,  
and popping out babies.  
But you see mama,  
I'm tired of assuming men  
that think after one cheap, mixed tropical drink  
I'm theirs  
or that if I pay for myself  
I'm a man hating lesbian  
No mama, I am not gay  
but so what if I was?  
I know mama  
there are still good ones left  
but I'm not sure I want to look  
there is more to life than settling down with a man  
I know mama  
we've had this talk before,  
and it's getting as redundant as my life  
I think I want to change  
But mama,  
it has to be without you  
how can I be happy with myself  
if I can't do anything for me  
and if I don't find a perfect man,  
buy me a body pillow,  
and if I don't give you grandkiddies  
buy a puppy.



---

## The path of the disillusioned

She's not the kind of girl  
to look for love at first sight  
She doesn't believe that kind exists  
or that love makes everything right

She's way too disillusioned  
too aware of the policy  
to think love conquers all  
and to put faith in what she can't see

But she was pressured to keep searching

She didn't wait for marriage  
She liked the closeness  
She didn't figure he would stay  
She didn't know she could feel this hopeless

But she keeps on searching

What she's living for  
She wishes she could know  
She wishes she could touch the world  
Instead of viewing from the window

So she searches

Mama told her one day she'd be "happy"  
A man to give her babies, give her age  
give her life with  
that quiet rage

She keeps on searching

She wants to give up  
But no one told her how  
she thinks of ways to try  
But it's not helping her now

What a shallow existence  
She feels so estranged  
No going back, go forward  
Try not to act deranged

She keeps on searching...



## Running Free

Tossing and turning in the hot July swelter.  
Body dripping with sweat. Unable to sleep.  
Laying there thinking and praying for a  
December chill. At night you can still  
see the heat waves glimmering like an  
oasis in the desert. The night is silent.  
I get out of my sweat drenched linens  
and run down my road in nothing but  
my tennis shoes. I can feel the heat  
creeping up through the soles of my feet.  
I am not the only one running naked  
through the night. I see my good looking  
neighbor run past me, as I turn to stare  
at his ass. I run back up the grass and fall.  
Roll around in it like a wet dog after a bath.  
And sit there waiting for the sun to come up. I climb  
back into my window and lay in bed. Waiting  
to run naked again.



## When I Was the Littles

The textures of the ceiling  
know when I was five  
I'd learned to see with the eyes  
of light.

What was a flashlight for?  
To bring back a bed.  
To invade the shells.  
To irradiate yeast.  
Make the little mommies and daddies  
dance in their miniature oven.

I know—I was there—  
there was my heart I carried  
in the lunchbox  
each day it shriveled back  
into the old man I was.

Like a snail I lean against  
the towers  
crawl inside the open  
invitations  
of the walls.

## Letter to L. from the Prairie (on the nature of the poem)

Dear L,

If you could see this prairie  
now, in the early spring, the cold time done,

the green just beginning to reach its majority,  
that is: when it's lush enough

to see above its lowly and charred beginnings,  
maybe you could see  
your life too: the richness  
with which your myriad senses—

much more

than a mere five—

more like a hundred thousand

feelers, lush

in each pore as this colony of prairie dock—

their fronds rustling

against each other

flip like ears against the wind

They do not coil against themselves

or worry about the clank

of cranes or cars or voices

in the distance—

They whisper, they listen, they learn a way

to speak

another language

among themselves

of peace

Here. I find familiar faces  
They have on their large left hands  
                                And I have on my right.  
Our eyes do not see the weeds, clumps of dry earth,  
Or knee-less jeans,  
but baselines, even-cut grass, and pinstriped uniforms.  
Even the sweat of an obscene fat guy  
in row "K," seat "12" is as clear  
to us as the tattered cardboard of homeplate.

**[The squirrely world filled with wheely poppers]**

The squirrely world filled with wheely poppers  
You sizzle chest you  
Squealing tires halted by a milker licker  
Because I'm good like that man



**[I remember the large stained teeth of a camel]**

I remember the large stained teeth of a camel  
A boy running head on into manhood  
Wanting to know limits of his bravery  
Strong feet pounding on the brick  
Streets lined with windowless doors  
Leading us to floors filled with broken glass  
Difficult choices made at the blink of a closed eye  
Feeling the cold sweat dragged from the pores of manliness

## Voodoo Chile

Got me all out of my element detached pulled by the root  
I was grounded in the cosmos fertilized by the stars  
my eyes would never blink, black holes is how deep my thoughts  
would sink  
with a density, intensity level seven heavens high, to rain on half  
the universe when ever she would cry, but then I died and was  
reborn in flesh, in blood, in bones, AB type blood and 24 pairs of  
chromosomes  
I was living the truth, but now I'm living a lie, thinking that I'll  
live for ever through the inner mind's eye  
seeing ghosts of dead presidents, all death is caused by money  
if my heart is pumping blood then tell me why does it bleed  
the physicalness of my flesh has got my mind under siege  
I just want to break away from the chains, and from the normality  
see some change take place, and see this place save face  
live  
but, if it will not let me live, then why won't it let me die, if it  
won't let me give up, why will it not let me try  
and I will  
like eyes cry when their heart is broken  
I'm here.

## Silk Curtains

I'm an artist beautiful things rarely escape my eyes  
cloudy and clear skies pretty faces and thighs  
The wind blows, you carry it when you pass  
words in the breeze of your aura seem to ask  
look at me, connect with my eyes, see my soul  
find your place inside my mind, make me yours 2 hold  
secure me like a lock, kiss me and never stop, touch me or I touch

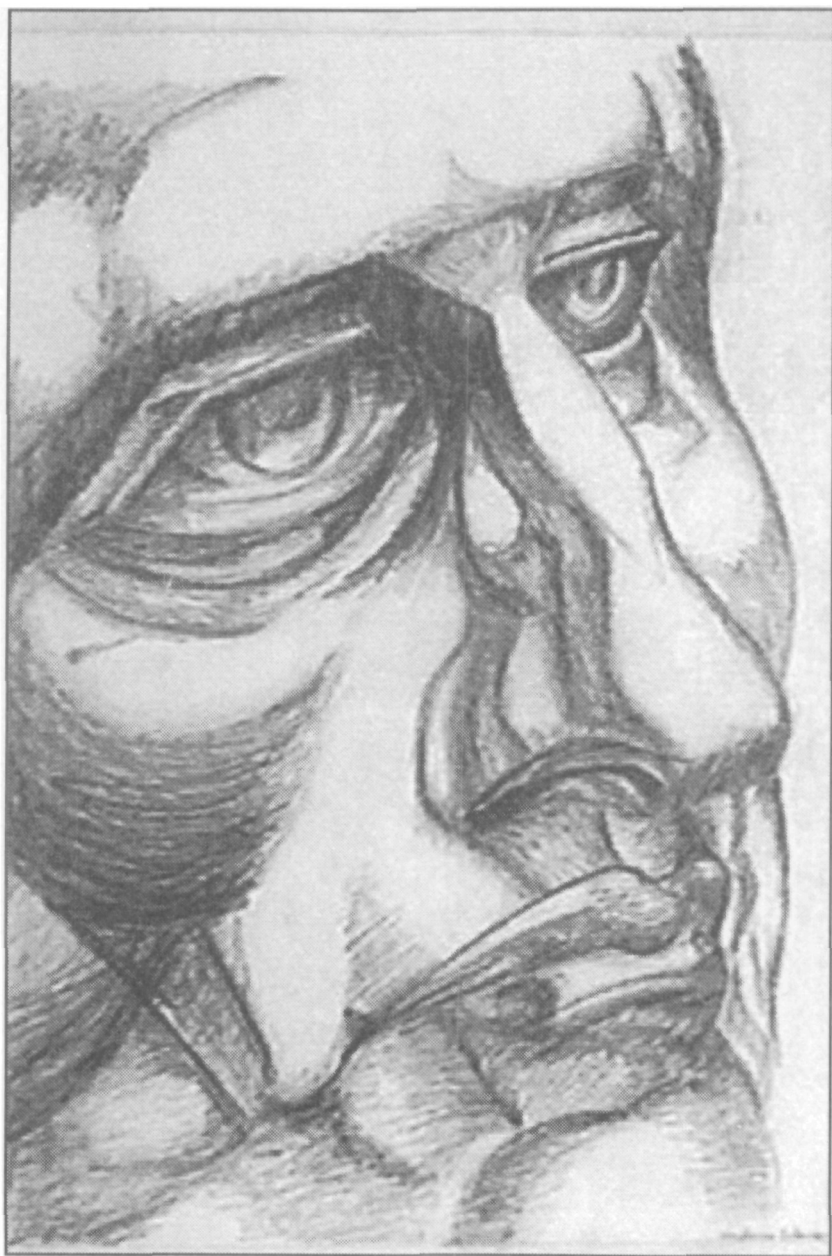
myself, you touch yourself I'll watch  
The fragrance that you choose, your body fills your clothes  
Your beauty is SILK CURTAINS you lost me in the folds  
Years turn into minutes, looks turn into stares, sparks become  
explosions, obsession is notion  
Nature does her magic, some people pay no mind  
to me you're like sky lines, to me you're like sunshine  
One time I touched your face my mind became displaced  
by the very power by which ANGELS are disgraced  
These thoughts if in the wrong mind, would cause an overload  
Your beauty is SILK CURTAINS, you lost me in the folds



---

## Dirty Air

I'm so tired...  
I mean really tired, I'm alone  
with no one around I find  
If apart we go, I've left you with lessons and love, real love  
I've been stripped mined  
You have a world that will embrace you like the softest clouds  
I have only to scratch my face and scream aloud  
you demand too much for what you give  
standards double like the vision of one who has been blind sided  
by a pretty face, only a pretty face  
Don't give CPR to lungs that breathe...dirty air  
don't try to change them, let them be  
before the pollutant changes me



## Herbert Martin's Exorcism

As I ascend cold steps, two at a time, my mind  
shifts towards the storm I have seen.  
The storm of a man, in torrential drifts, exposing  
a soul; naked to our eyes.  
Through his parted lips, exhalation of spirits that  
blow like wind to open ears.  
To the eyes of an intensity, brushing grit, expelling  
residues of forgotten memory.  
And the voice rings with eloquence, education.  
The words pronounced with gentle dominance.  
And I have to turn my eyes away; brush my  
mind away; to retain this emotional weight.  
Crushed by the mind of a true intellectual, forcing  
thoughts into hollow hills of the brain.  
The ghost of his mother hung like silk above our  
heads. Left behind, her cancered shell,  
and with soft songs of Rwanda's spread  
tumor. Longed for abortions of hatred's child.  
And tears shall stain our ilk again.  
And I...could not speak to this man. I could  
not question the poems of perfect symmetry, the  
life etched, intricately in ink.  
And before us, the death of a race and the  
oppression wrought through starving years.  
All of this, a silent stream, an agonized scream  
and the whispered notes of a song.  
Oh, self-introspection sweeping cowardice  
away like dispersal of dirt.  
A lyricist of exorcism, bleeding everything  
out in a pool for a sea of eyes to absorb.

**[Daily I brush my fangs with an ax]**

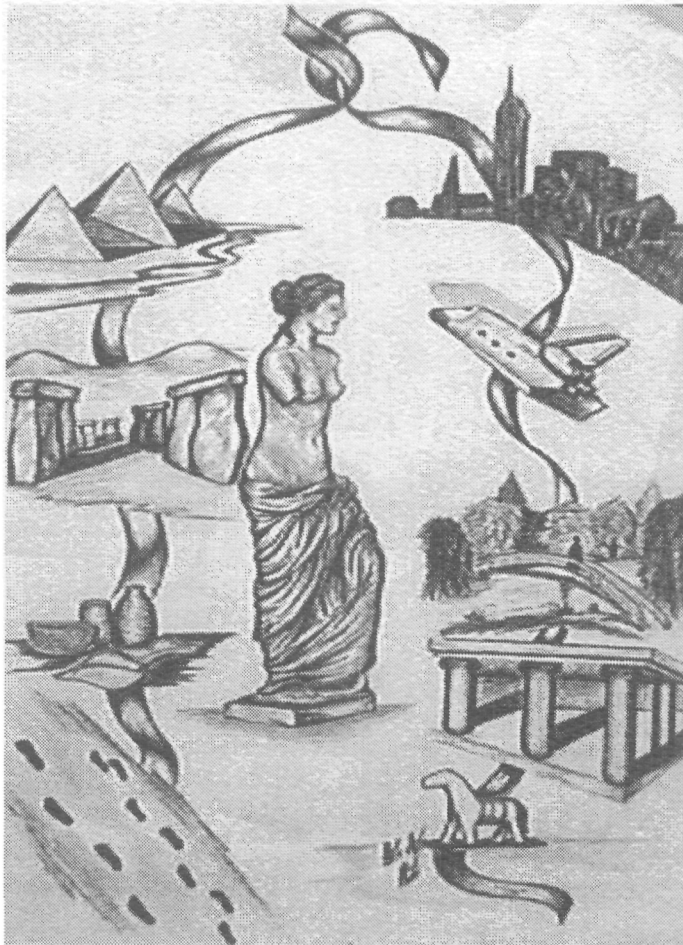
Daily I brush my fangs with an ax,  
Carefully removing the green-brown slime  
built up from days of flesh consumption.  
Skipping off to bed,  
I'm careful to catch a hot shooting star  
on the tip of my tongue. Upon contact  
it sizzles like a steak on a grill.  
I spit it out again with my dreams  
and secretly hope they all come true.  
Alone, without the moon's companionship,  
I think peacefully to myself and  
drift into my secret world of unhappy fairy tales  
where Prince Charming is actually  
an alligator prepared to tear at my flesh  
with one hundred sharp teeth that won't let go.

## Do You Remember?

Today I saw a weather map of your birthday.  
It was 10:35 at night and we experienced thunderstorms.  
Do you remember this day  
Like you remember your first kiss?  
Two children hiding timidly under the heavy coats of winter.  
Tucked tightly under the back seats of the bus.  
Both of you experimenting with your independently innocent lips.  
Trying to be adults as you both giggle like carefree children.  
Do you recall the severe lightning like  
The horror of being left behind at three  
As your parents drove to the coast?  
Your only token of their trip was a  
Confederate flag post card.  
Can you still hear the thunder as it rings in your ears?  
Much like your Aunt Clara's humming as she changed your diaper?  
Do you remember waking after the storm?  
Do you remember?

## Untitled

Thoughts of cause and justification slap the reins,  
White-knuckled grip grasps at invisible chains.  
Pitter-Patter of schizophrenic feet,  
Racing through darkened rain-slicked streets.  
Seeing life itself ahead of you,  
Limbs hesitate with fear of eventual gloom.



---

## Diary of an Alcoholic

Over and over I ask again what it is what it means what it would take how have I allowed myself to become consumed once again with both nostrils trapped below the water line I see these feelings of everyday reality Perhaps they are too personal explaining why I ignore them so I speak and speak again believing the speak to be academics while I already know it to be mere justification I know Yes I know but I act not It could be fear...it could be cowardice I know where the known unknown will take me and I wish not to go...but...I have become it and fear some other way almost more than my own chosen fate I yearn for the straight and narrow almost lusting after it like some beautiful stranger in a smoke-filled tavern But like she always does I stay on the other side of the room and pretend her mind is as beautiful as her figure I wish to be normal and despise all normal people in the same breath Why be like that Why allow myself to become closed-minded Why be with people you hate when you can be with those who'll pick-up the tab I am Jack Kerouac only without the talent I am the man who observes the despicable nature of life but chooses to do nothing about it I accept entirely too much for fear of loathing the one Generalities can be handled with a clouded mind while the specifics do cause the sober man to shoot himself What if I were the sober man and find I still hate my life rather than just what I've done to it It seems safer to sit and wish rather than leap into action-- But that just sounds like the booze talking.

## Preposterous

What is that!?  
A hippopotamus that's  
preposterous with  
bananas tangled in  
your short tail and  
you  
wondering over to bail  
me out of the lion's den  
that's the mouse's job, is it not?  
To escort the frayed  
end of the rope through  
the tiny hole of the knot  
A hippopotamus, preposterous!  
with such stubby white  
teeth and a jaw  
almost too big to chew with  
ears almost too small to hear  
the witch that's coming to take me  
away  
the old hag that's  
stuffing me into the oven to stay  
until I'm golden brown and  
you  
meandering around  
town with your buddies  
in the swamps soon  
you'll be wearing red pumps  
you pompous hero come to save me  
—A hippopotamus—  
that's simply,  
tragically preposterous!

I think, though,  
that I might like that...  
like that much better than  
the alternative gray  
silver strong hero  
that pompous man with  
a plume in his hat  
his helmet too tight  
his ego too fat  
that hippo I like better  
than the alternative's letter  
of love undying,  
devotion unrelenting  
but his horse—  
more precious more  
interesting than I  
on my hovering  
cloud full of  
sympathetic raindrops  
sensitive and educated raindrops  
—he on his trusty steed  
needs only a push  
and maybe a shove  
before he ends up  
on his knees  
and lower than my  
poor faithful  
grateful  
stopping for  
nothing but me hippopotamus  
—my hippopotamus  
is not so  
preposterous.



## Live Long Days

The river, still lightly swollen following heavy spring rains, was finally slow and low enough for fishing. A rusty, tattered barbed-wire fence, erected to keep back cattle, ran through the thick brush along the top of the river's steep bank. The fence was bent down at a clearing in the brush, kept down by branches and brush and by its barbs, beaten like makeshift nails into a large fallen tree-log.

Side by side on the log and facing the river sat an old man and two young boys. This was a balmy Midwestern spring day. The winter's snow had melted and the day's rain had stopped. A slight breeze blew, saturated with the scent of freshly turned earth. The fish were biting.

"Grandpa, when are we gonna cook those fish?" asked the boy sitting between the old man and the other boy. He glanced back at the tin washbucket on the soggy ground behind them. The bucket contained nearly two dozen fish, some swirling in the muddy water and some floating belly-up. The fish were all about the same size, about the length of a hardback book. They were mostly bullheads and sunfish, plus a single smallmouth bass. River fish.

The old man gazed down at the boy. After drawing in a long breath, he smiled. He started to answer the question, started to say that maybe the boys could come into town with him soon and spend the night, maybe even tomorrow night, a fish-fry with baked potatoes and tall glasses of cold milk, ice cream or sherbet for dessert, checkers or TV afterwards until maybe nine o'clock--that's the latest though. The old man was about to tell the young boys, smooth skinned and tousle headed, that they should ask their parents if they could please spend the night.

But he took too long. The boy was already looking elsewhere, at his bobber. He reeled it in, claiming, "I had a nibble! I had a nibble!"

"Now, you leave that line in there, Jason," the old man exclaimed. "How do you expect to catch any fish if you don't leave your bait in the water?"

Jason stopped twirling the reel handle. "I did have a nibble--but, okay. And I have too caught fish. Almost as many as you and two more than Andy."

Andy, sitting on Jason's other side, looked up. He had been occupied watching a crayfish crawl precariously up the steep, muddy bank. Andy smiled, close-lipped, at his brother. He glanced over at the old man, who just then spat into the river. While rubbing his sore left elbow, Andy watched a minnow dart up and nudge the floating sputum and then dart away and vanish into the deep brown water.

Andy almost answered his brother's veiled challenge, almost asserted that he had actually caught more fish last time out. Instead, he just gazed back down at the crayfish. From that position, he said, "Yea Grampaw, when can we cook our fish?" Fried fish with lots of butter and pepper and plenty of milk to drink and ice-cream afterwards: Andy could see and smell and taste it already.

The old man looked over at Andy, squinted, opened his mouth and then quickly glanced back at the suddenly dipping tip of his pole. He jerked the pole. Upon feeling the tug and struggle of a securely hooked fish, he grinned and began reeling it in, guiding it away from the river-edge roots. Andy smiled broadly and clapped his hands. Jason began reeling in his line, too. Unobserved, the crayfish slid back down the bank and slipped beneath the murky surface.

"It's a big one. It's a big one!" Jason shrieked. The fish, twisting and flapping its tail in the air, was a fat river sucker nearly a foot and a half long.

The old man unhooked the fish and tossed it onto the grass behind him. As he watched, the two boys leaped to the ground and raced to the flopping fish. Andy reached it first and picked it up by the back of its head and held it out toward his brother.

"Look at its lips! Look at those big fat lips!" Jason cried. The fish had enormous down-turned lips as fat as the boys' fingers. The lips opened and closed, opened and closed.

"It wants to kiss you," Andy said, loud and exuberant. Holding the fish outward, he lunged toward Jason. The boys burst into laughter as Andy chased Jason around in a tight little circle. The old man watched them, gasping between broken chuckles.

"That's enough now," he finally said. "You're gonna lose that fish." He paused to take a couple breaths. "Now, put it in the bucket."

Andy ran several more strides and then slowed and walked to the bucket, Jason right behind him. Andy dropped the fish into the bucket. Hand on knees, the two watched the fish slip into the water. It right away began to dart from side to side, banging its head against the bucket wall. The other fish stirred and darted about, too; even the dying ones floating at the surface participated in the frenzied and desperate activity by swimming around feebly on their backs.

The old man turned back toward the river. After rebaiting his hook and casting out, he sat and watched his and Andy's bobbers. Beside him lay Jason's abandoned pole. He listened to the boys behind him, laughing and shouting as they chased and raced. The air turned cooler as the late afternoon strolled toward evening. A few crows intermittently cawed. A small, bull-less herd of cattle grazed nearby; one, light brown with big black splotches and a white-starred nose, occasionally looked over at the boys and nonchalantly bellowed. A narrow tributary stream flowed out of a scraggly woods two hundred yards away and meandered through the meadow to the river that it fed right beside the fishing spot. There they fished at the foot of a small hill that cut across the entire meadow. On the hilltop plateau beyond the barbed-wire fence sat the boys' home. They lived there with a sister, their father, and their mother--the old man's daughter.

The boys clambered back onto the log. This time, Andy sat beside his grandfather. Perhaps in retaliation, Jason grabbed Andy's pole, claimed it as "Mine now," and commenced jiggling the round red and white bobber. The old man took two small jackets from his lap, one bright red and one bright blue, and held them out toward the boys.

"Put these on before you catch a chill," he said. He wanted to add, after catching a breath, that if they caught a chill they'd be unable to spend the night at his house. The boys were already busy though, were involved in a vigorous debate over which one would get which jacket; they both wanted the red one.

The old man studied the two occupied boys--their bright red lips, glowing pink skin, sparkling blue eyes, and quick, clean, enthusiastic motions.

He considered his own hardened blackened lungs, decimated by emphysema and cancer. How his early tastes and habits had subtly turned into tyrannical addictions, how they had gained control of and dominated his waking hours, how he did not know; he often wondered but he did not know. He felt little bitterness or regret, though. Nobody had ever promised him that life wouldn't get messy; nobody but fools even implied it.

"If only I could breathe easy again." He gazed at the boys, now temporarily quiet and contemplative, and he wondered what habits and vices would invade their futures. He could not imagine it. Appetites? These two have appetites for everything, he told himself; surely they'd never sacrifice many pleasures for the sake of only a few. A cow bellowed behind him and several others answered as the herd unhurriedly ascended the small hill. The old man shivered. "God, if only I could breathe."

Almost home for the soon to awaken summer, a flock of geese flew low overhead in a harmonious V-formation. Their shadow crossed over the river surface and the boys both looked up. Andy pointed and said, "Look Grampaw, look!" Then he and Jason hopped off the log and ran about flapping their arms as if to fly.

As always, the summer would turn hot and sticky, heavy and humid. The boys would spend endless evenings chasing fireflies and splashing in the small backyard pool and playing hide-and-seek in the bushes and nearby cornfield. The old man's lungs would sink into a merciless state of murky shallowness, his chest tight and racked with pain. "No!" he had already decided--no to the summer-time hothouse. He would die in the time of wetness and fresh cooling breezes, die in the springtime, this springtime.

Soon...soon. Maybe even tomorrow night--or maybe even tonight. No more medicines, numbing and nauseating. No more doctor visits, where probed and questioned. No more hated hospital stays amidst sickness and hopelessness, helpless and afraid beneath sterile white sheets. No more!

My God, he mused, gripping tight the log, maybe I'll even puff on one of my old pipes tonight. Watch the late news and then a talk show or a movie. And sip on some coffee, rich hot coffee with brandy and cream. How long since that? And smoke the pipe and maybe get out a stack of cards for a game of solitaire. Yes, solitaire after the movie, that and more coffee and brandy, perhaps brandy alone. Wait up all through the night on the front porch swing. To hell with troubled, unprofitable sleep. Stay up for the sunrise. Die with the expanding dawn, fading as if into sleep, painless,

peaceful, alone and dignified, tired but untroubled. One last stance, one final night worth living. Yes. Then escape, noiselessly escape before the automobiles and the schoolchildren and the rest of the busy world reawakens. Yes, escape.... "Yes, tonight."

As the sickness in his chest crept up into his throat, the old man paled and gripped even harder the log. He wheezed. A foul, familiar taste reached the back of his tongue. He spit out the thick yellow mucous, down into the river water where it clung to a twig and floated away downstream.

He felt a light but persistent tap on his shoulder. Turning slowly around, he was greeted by Andy's smiling face.

"Grampaw, I gotta go to the bathroom." Andy shifted his weight from one foot to the other.

"Me too!" said Jason. He jumped up and down, up and down.

The old man chuckled. "Over there," he said, pointing. "That's your outdoors bathroom."

The boys scurried to the bushes and disappeared behind them. Loud, joyful giggles and then a short shriek sounded from behind the bushes. A moment later, the boys reappeared. Jason yanked up his zipper as he walked; Andy's remained unzipped. The old man was about to point this out but Jason, quicker, noticed and screamed, "X-y-z, Andy, EX-WHY-ZEEE!"

After a half-hearted swipe at Jason, Andy turned away and zipped up. The boys then raced to the wash bucket and peered down into it.

The old man turned back around to check his bobber. His gaze wandered over the swirling brown water and then upstream at a fallen elm tree, an apparent lightning victim that had come to rest as an efficient bridge over the river. Now, he had long ago spent some swell times on tree-bridges like that one...

An abrupt, angry tug came at the tip of his pole. The pole dipped steeply downward. Caught off guard, the old man tightened his grip and jerked back the pole; it bent and bent. "A flathead cat," he whispered, excited for the first time in awhile. He reeled two turns against the strong, furious resistance from the river depths. At midstream appeared a rapid whirlpool and then a big, black, smooth and shiny tail flashed out of the water. The fish lunged. The pole, still held tightly in the old man's hands, bent even further. He went to loosen the drag, but—too late; the line snapped. It blew easy in the breeze while the old man's bobber sped downstream and disappeared underwater. He reeled in his weightless line, tied it to the pole tip, and laid the pole lengthwise on the log.

The boys' poles were already there. Through fishing for the day, they now had all of the fish on the ground, lined up from smallest to largest. A few of the fish lay stiff and still. Most of them flapped their gills and sometimes jumped just off the ground, getting nowhere. Lying at the end of the line, the fat river sucker opened and closed, opened and closed its thick lips.

Fishing poles in hand, the old man stepped cautiously down from the log. He watched the river sucker's futile movements for a minute, then said, "Throw them back in, boys."

"No!" Jason said, and he stood up.

"Why, Grampaw?" asked Andy. "Aren't we gonna eat these fish?"

"No," was the reply. "I'm sorry boys. Grandpa is just too tuckered out to clean them tonight."

"I thought you said to never kill a fish if you're not gonna eat it," said Jason. "Some of these are already dead." He toed a small, still fish.

"Well, throw them back in before the rest of them die!" answered the old man. "Besides," he added, "nothing that dies in nature is ever wasted."

The two boys, already engaged in returning the fish to the river, missed these last words. Regarding fishing-matters, they would never argue long with their grandfather: who else often took them fishing? Who else knew better how to catch fish? At last, Jason picked up the sucker and, with Andy beside him watching, tossed it into the river.

Shortly, the threesome walked homeward through the meadow. A jet flew high overhead. Soundless to the ground, it left behind a long cigar-shaped cloud, solitary in the subtly darkening sky.

The boys skipped ahead and then stopped and waited on their slow-moving grandfather. They skipped ahead again, and they stopped and waited again. When he once more drew near, Jason said, "Sing that railroad song, Grandpa!"

"Yeah, the railroad song," added Andy as he tugged on the old man's sleeve.

The old man chuckled. "Okay, okay," he began shyly, softly, in an age-roughened voice.

"I've been wor-kin on the rail-road, all my live-long days."

He paused to breathe.

"I'm the engine," yelled Jason. He shuffled his short legs stiffly and pumped his arms furiously. "CHUGA-chuga, CHUGA-chuga."

"I'm the caboose!" shouted Andy. He attached his hands to Jason's narrow waist and shuffled his legs, too. He then reached up and pulled at the air as if on a whistle-rope. "Woo-woo, WOO-WOO!"

Walking right behind them, the old man heard all this, saw it all with glistening eyes.

"Oh, I've been wor-kin on the rail-road, just a pas-sing time a-way."

Suddenly a dinner bell clanged from the direction of the boy's home, clanged again, and then was silent.

"Time to go home," said Jason. He reached back and disengaged Andy's hands from his waist.

"Yes," agreed the old man. He reached down with gnarled fingers and roughed up Andy's thick blonde hair. "Time to go home."

## **Contributors' Notes**

---

**Jesse Andrews** attends the Newark campus of OSU. He is a senior English major, soon to be graduating if he can ever pass Spanish! He works part-time in the sports department for the newspaper, *The Advocate*. He is minoring in Political Science, but he views the study of politics and society as a mere hobby. After graduating, he'll pursue a career in journalism and volunteer work.

**Philip Avery** was born in Marion, Ohio and has lived in Japan and the Philippines. He has traveled extensively throughout the United States and the world. Currently he resides in Spring Valley, California with his teenage son. His work has appeared in various issues of *The Outlet Poetry Journal*, *Anthem Magazine*, *Soul-to-Soul*, *Project Equinox* and elsewhere.

**Elizabeth Barcus** attends the Marion campus of OSU. She is a mother of one, a den leader, and Assistant Pack Master to Pack #29. Her interests vary from camping, activities with George Washington School, to time with her family. She is just beginning her college education and is very interested in the field of Art.

**Laura Behne** is a student at OSU Marion.

**Eva Brown** is a senior at OSU Marion.

**Steven Butterman** started at Mansfield-OSU as a junior transfer student Winter Quarter, 1998. He is a literature major, and honors student, and he sees graduate school on the horizon. Reading and writing are his well-married passions. Also, he loves gardening and long-distance bicycling. He has published a slim book with a mall press on the latter subject. "Live Long Days" won 1<sup>st</sup> place in OSU Mansfield's Florence B. Allen Literary Contest.

**Trinda Cartwright** is a student at OSU Marion.

**Zach Davis** attends the Marion campus of OSU. He is interested in film and photography. He works at the research labs at Scotts lawn company in Marysville.

**Amy Dobson** attends OSU Mansfield campus and is majoring in English. She is employed at Kahl's Electric Foxx Pools on Lexington Avenue. She enjoys writing, playing the piano, reading, and staying in shape.

---

**Melanie Ehler** is currently a senior English major at the Mansfield OSU campus. Her special interests include theater. "The Common-Job Dream" took second place in OSU Mansfield's Florence B. Allen Literary Contest.

**Melissa Heck** is currently attending the Marion branch of OSU. She transferred to Marion from the University of Indianapolis. She is a Biology major hoping to pursue medicine. Her main non-academic interests is her writing, which is her first love. She is also a huge fan of all forms of auto racing.

**Terry Hermesen** teaches at OSU Marion. He has published two chapbooks with Bottom Dog Press, *36 Spokes: The Bicycle Poems* and *Child Aloft in Ohio Theatre*. This year, Terry received an Individual Artist's grant from the Greater Columbus Arts Council.

**Amy Isler** attends OSU Marion as a senior. She will receive her Bachelor's degree in Psychology in March, 1998.

**Maurice L. Johnson** is a student at OSU-Newark majoring in journalism. According to Johnson, he is "the bright kid who never realized his potential." He is one of the few people around who wants to change the World and had dedicated his life to it. "My heart hurts and my eyes rain for those who have not, and those who have and take it for granted. We are all expected to reach the same finish line never taking into account each one's starting point. Those who make bad choices from an array of options make mistakes. Those who make bad choices from very limited options are viewed as living mistakes."

**Jason Lichtenberger** was born in 1978, the son of Shirley and Richard Lichtenberger. Raised in the Waldo, Ohio area, he attended the River Valley school system for thirteen years. Graduating in 1996, he enrolled in OSU in the fall of that year. Having pursued a variety of majors ranging from Business to Pre-Law, he is now an Arts and Sciences major with a focus in English.

**Kate Lucas** is currently attending OSU Marion and plans to attend the Cleveland Institute of Art in the fall of '98. There, she plans to major in painting or ceramics, but she wants to try every type of art possible. She has lived in Marion all her life, so she wants to get out ASAP. Regretfully, she will miss it.

---

**Cheryl McPeck** has been a student at each of the branches and is currently pursuing a graduate degree at the Mansfield and Marion campuses. Her poetry has appeared in *Of the Beet in Poetree Path*, a journal out of Woodstock, New York, and in Project Equinox. Her work has also appeared in a past issue of Cornfield Review and in *HER Gallery*. This is her second appearance in the *Cornfield Review*. She is an art teacher.

**Amy N. Phillips** is a sophomore at OSU Marion majoring in Psychology. She works in the Financial Aid office part-time and attends school full-time. She has a passion for poetry that was brought on by her high school English teacher who pushed Amy to write even when she didn't want to and showed her that she could do anything she set her mind to. This teacher is the reason Amy loves to write.

**Jamie Piatt** attends classes at OSU Marion.

**Kristy Roberts** is a junior at OSU Marion though she is currently attending classes at the Mansfield campus. She is majoring in Elementary Education and will graduate with her Masters in Education In December of 2000. She works at a dental office and a restaurant while attending classes full time. She is very interested in literature, grammar, poetry, and other English-related topics. She enjoys reading, roller blading, and summers by the pool.

**Heather Sauer** attends the Marion campus of OSU. She is presently unemployed but during the summer, she works at Bob Evans in Marion as a hostess/preparational cook. She is currently a senior majoring in Elementary Education (she hopes to teach Kindergarten). Heather enjoys writing poetry, being with children, jet skiing, bowling, shopping, going to movies, listening to music, and most of all spending time with her boyfriend.

**Jodi Smith** is a Psychology major at OSU Marion. She works in Westerville and can't go a day without writing something. Jodi also loves to read.

**Melanie Warner** attends the Marion campus of OSU and is working toward some kind of Art major. Ever since she can remember she has had a love for creating. As a freshman at OSUM, she is a dedicated student, making the Dean's List for the second quarter and working hard to make the Dean's list for her entire freshman year. Another goal of hers this year is to continue creating art work over the summer and to improve her skills.

**Derek Waugh** is a student at OSU Marion.



---

**Douglas D. West** lives at home in Eclison with his mom and dad, Douglas and Joyce West, and his brother Tim. He works at the Marion Industrial Center, and his major is undecided, but he is definitely leaning toward Creative Writing, English, or something in the liberal arts. His interests include reconstructing how the human race consumes natural resources, spiritual growth, basketball, camping, and the usual human needs and wants. Douglas has also attended a peace rally in Washington, D.C. with Dr. Chirstie and others of OSU Marion.

**Brent Wygant** is a senior in Elementary Education at the Marion branch of OSU. He tutors for the university and enjoys writing poems and short stories.

**Carole Ziegler** attends the Marion campus of OSU. She enjoys the sciences and art, gardening, reading and, of course, her painting and graphite art.

