

# Denali

Lane  
Community  
College

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*Art and Literary Magazine • Spring 1994*





# Denali

Art and literary magazine

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"In the beginning was the Word.  
Then came the fucking word processor.  
Then came the thought processor.  
Then came the death of literature.  
And so it goes."

— Martin Silenus  
*from the book Hyperion by Dan Simmons*

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photo by Matt Auxier

#### Denali Staff

back row: Trev Mostella, Dee Bugarin, Sonja Taylor, Steve Tristano, Randy Smith and Mickey Stellavato  
front row: Sunny Justus, Peter Jensen, Dorothy Wearne, Coogan Charles (*Denali* mascot) and Kenneth Brady

#### Greetings and salutations!

Well, your most humble editor has the unfortunate duty to inform you that we accidentally printed a piece of copied artwork in our winter issue. Some of you may have recognized the center spread as a copy of a painting by Bev Doolittle. I would like to offer my sincere apologies to the original artist. We had thought it was an imitation of style, not a direct tracing.

I hope that in the future those of you who choose to submit will use your own work.

Along a happier note, this term we received over 200 written submissions. Way to go people!!! Unfortunately we didn't get as many art submissions as I could have hoped for. Hey you artists out there! Submit!

As you may have heard, we discovered that *Denali* has quite a bit more money in its budget than originally projected. Consequently we have produced a much larger than normal publication for spring term.

Our theme this term is *On the Road*. And, for lack of direction and some very important brain cells which I

seem to have lost in the last few months, I will classify everything in this issue as having to do with the theme. Some people took the theme a little more literally than others, but all published herein depicted some kind of journey — spiritual or otherwise.

If you would like to submit to future issues of *Denali* and don't know quite how to go about it, write the office at 4000 E. 30th Ave, Eugene OR, 97405. Or, call 747-4501 ext. 2830.

I have really enjoyed my year as editor of *Denali*. In many ways I am sad to see the year end — I guess.

Anyway, I leave future readers to the capable imagination of my successor, Kenneth Brady. May he enjoy his journey as much as I have mine.

Sonja Taylor



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*photo by Laura Walker*

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## The Road to Bahia de los Angeles *photo by Dorothy Wearne*

The prairie is an endless place of winds,  
                        mosquitoes, sun.  
And when the wind's behind you, you feel  
                        like a loaded gun.  
But when the wind's against you, you might  
                        as well relax,  
And let the prairie have you as the trees  
                        embrace the ax.

— Jake Harris

## Mizpah

"homeless" said his sign  
I gave him my soda can  
it was all I had

— Denise Cameron



# Scooby Snacks To Go Way Back

by Charles Bacon

When this written account is found among my things, you who will steal my boots and loot my tools while my body is still cooling are welcome to the stuff (because the stuff is only stuff and of no use to a dead man), but the living have needs that only explanations can satisfy and so, dear plunderers, take the booty but leave the journals. Let the agonizing questions be put to rest.

As a matter of fact I do own the road but so does everyone else and majority rules. I am the mystery man living in a Scooby Doo van, and every inch of roadway is rigged to trigger the panic switch whenever I kill the engine to take a rest.

What the hell am I doing on the road? Am I testing the limits of human tolerance? How many days can a diabetic go on injecting insulin without eating a proper meal? Two days? My personal record is five days. I could feel the insulin hit my bloodstream and devour every glucose molecule like chemical clockwork and then turn unsated on the very cells of the body it had been engineered to help feed.

I experienced over and over again the sudden shock of insulin reaction. The near death thrill and acute awareness of now that sages seek through fasting would sneak up tingling as lightning does when it chooses a path through a man to the ground, and in an instant I would merge with eternal truths too wordless to explain. Then I would brace for the bolt.

When insulin cannot find a Scooby Snack, it attacks the cells of the body and produces Ketones which accumulate and turn the blood acidic. When the bloodstream has been emptied of sugar the brain simply runs out of fuel and shuts itself off. Only autonomic systems remain active, relayed through the tiny fish brain at the base of the spinal stem. Breathing and heartbeat continue as long as the master chip holds out. They say it was programmed exclusively for the survival of the organism long before our prototypes walked the earth.

Lucy had a fish brain. It kept her heart beating and exposed her lungs to fresh air, even if she were knocked unconscious by an enormous hooved mammal stampeding along with a great calamity of herbivores hell bent on the watering hole and oblivious to small apelike creatures standing erect, idly by, watching the herds pass each other on the road. Her fish brain served her well until one of the fast moving grazers crushed her skull quite by accident but with immediate and permanent results. The road was a dangerous place even three million years ago.

Lucy's theoretical posterity met the challenge with rocks and sticks, fire and the wheel. Perhaps the quest to cross the road passed through hundreds of experimental stages before a working strategy was developed.

In the early stages, for example, a small group of hominids may have rolled a log into the herd's path, creating what would

have been an early equivalent to our modern traffic jam. Then, armed with rocks and sticks, they may have attacked the herds, holding them at bay while other primates, wielding the red light of fire, hurried the young across. When the flaming procession had passed, the attackers disbanded and scurried off into the rain forest. When the bewildered herds saw that the hot red light had changed back into the cool green of the landscape they were accustomed to, rush hour would have returned to normal. Once or twice perhaps, a mastodon might have taken a snooze in an australopithecus cross-walk only to be chased away by a barrage of rocks and sticks.

New inventions evolved with their inventors. Some of the herbivores were domesticated and graciously allowed to pull logs behind them instead of having to dodge the wheel. Steel and gunpowder replaced rocks and sticks, and the mastodon gave way to the infernal combustion engine.

A vigilante patrol, cruising under the cover of a forestal frame of darkness blacker than the expanding vacuum of the night sky above, roared by in a thundering four by four, skidded to a stop, turned around slowly, parked idling across the road, and stared at the suspect van through orbs crouched low behind hungry eyebrows.

I heard an object strike the side panel like a rock and wondered how many would follow. The pickup revved, spat gravel behind it, pulled out next to my vehicle and slowed to a crawl. Another missile hit the van.

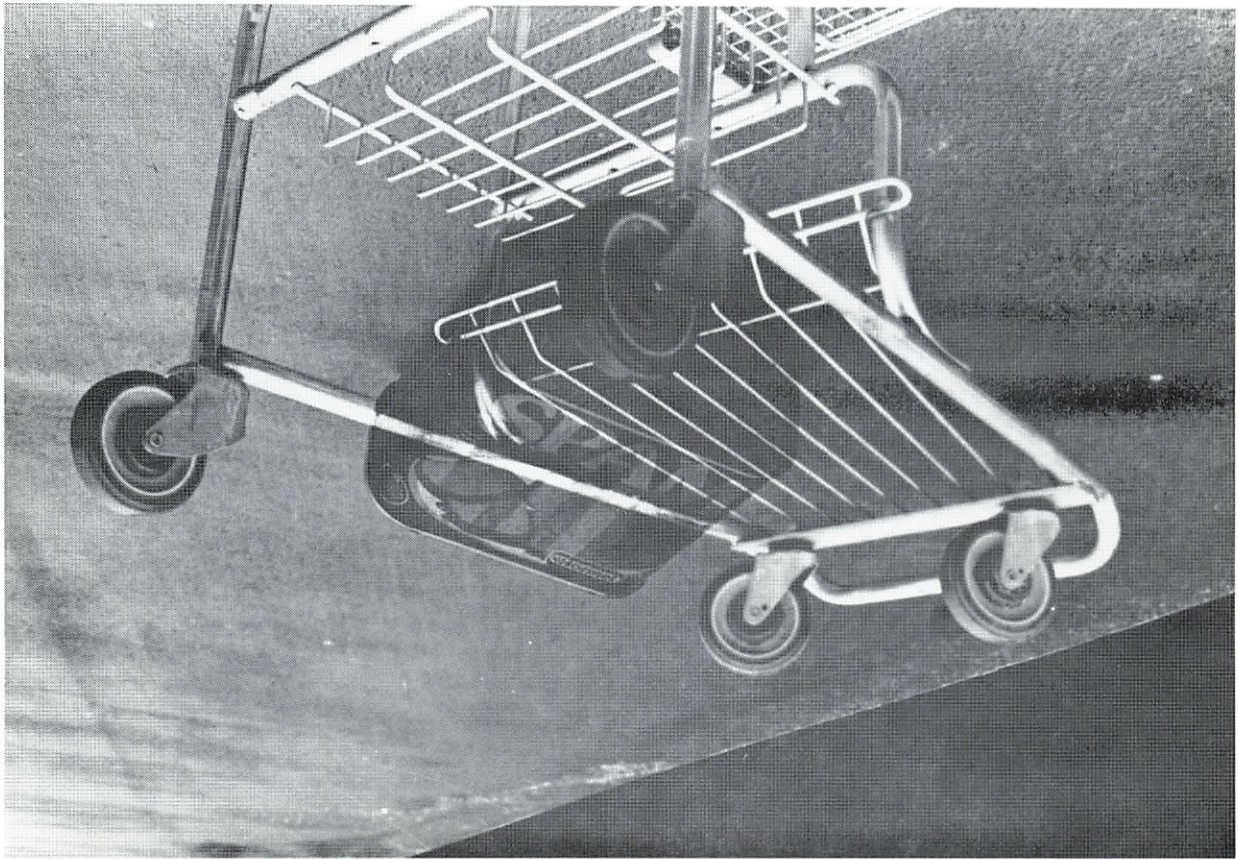
I layed low and gave no sign of occupancy. Evidently satisfied with the results of their attack, the posse broke off and squealed their tires into the void, laughing and whooping over the din of rattling beer cans. I turned the page, popped a Scooby Snack, and slept.

With the rising sun I inspected the damage, expecting to find dents or chips but surprised to find large splatters of green and orange pigment along with the ruptured rubber shells of two paint balls. I had been fired upon! Whether paint balls or pellets; buckshot, salt-rock, or hollow point slug; CO<sub>2</sub> propellant, rocks, sticks, or gun powder; the fact remains, I was shot at for no reason except that I was parked beside a public road, taking a nap. Maybe the smart monkeys thought the van was really a mastodon.

The birds have their nests, but alas, it is a common dream of the new world bard to roam the countryside, to live off the land without title to property, to experience the invisible ranges of the human spectrum, to somehow awaken the collective soul of all people, and to die a martyr, peaceful and penniless.

Maybe I'll catch a bullet in the back, maybe I'll slip into a diabetic coma, but maybe the story will survive the perils on the road.





*photo by Randy Painter*

An old man in scruffy clothes  
comes to my alley each evening

carefully he picks through  
old coffee grounds and baby diapers  
to get his precious cans

In front of him he pushes an old grocery cart  
with a cracked plastic Safeway logo

When we are feeling especially lazy we call him over  
and load him up with cans and bottles  
from last weekend's party

He leaves us and walks alone down the street  
wet and glistening in the streetlights

the hat on his head melts into  
grizzly hair and a beard  
which descends into an old army jacket

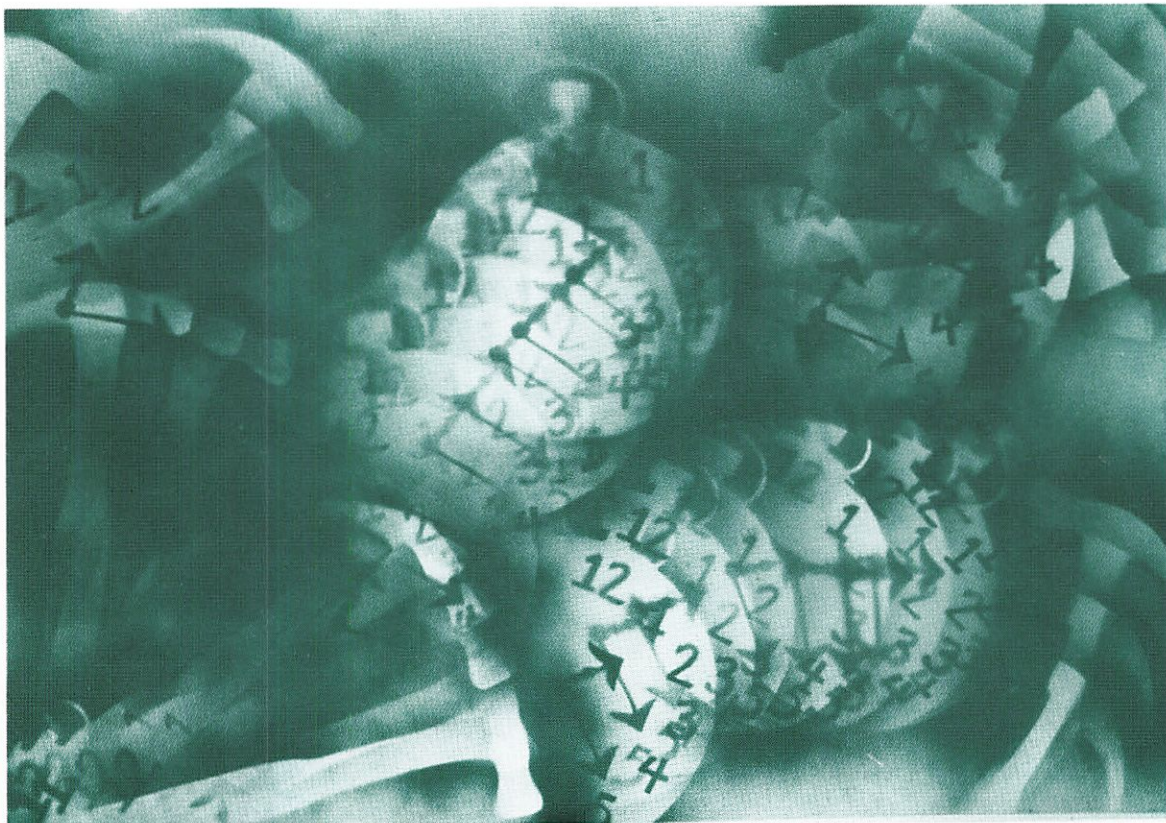
streaks of dirt catch at drops of water  
and slither in muddy snakes down his back

the man's long, ragged, illfitting trousers  
scrape their frayed hems along the sidewalk

we sit, warm and cozy, in our house  
and watch him disappear into the cliché evening mist.

— Sonja Taylor





**The Waiting** *photo by Victoria Reidy*

It's only the blur of a dream  
 After I wake to the caffeine and green light of time  
 I wish it were red, I wish it were . . .  
 But how these numbered days fly by

Liberty blinds me with the crash of her waves  
 Catching the edge of a Carnival Queen  
 Where the rocks remind me of breathing  
 You don't enjoy it, it comes naturally  
 Shadow returns to the day, hiding the stars from my eyes  
 And the angels are still playing with petals from my rose  
 Don't leave me tonight, don't leave me with anything  
 But the silence of the people listening  
 Don't leave me tonight, don't leave me with anything  
 Just the silence of the people listening  
 And how these numbered days fly by.

— **Scott R. Shinn**

## 12 Hours to Missoula

after Sunday told us  
 she was moving  
 to Missoula  
 I started thinking  
 about her  
 and our adventures  
 together

she sung back up with us  
 on "Kill the Light"

we partied together  
 in New Orleans  
 in the rain and cold  
 lost our minds  
 at Jane's addiction  
 hung out at the radio station  
 playing the Free Zone  
 and generally raging

as I drove into town today  
 the ferry bell she gave us  
 dangling from my rear view mirror  
 I thought  
 it's only 12 hours to Missoula.

— **Damien Filer**



# Sestina: Olympic Figure Skater

She sets her foot on ice and glides on one skate  
Out on the rink in Norway to take her turn.  
Her costume's brief, so we can watch her legs  
Control the steel edges of her dance.  
Under the overturned Viking ship, she'll spin  
And gather speed, skate backwards for a triple jump.

She starts her program with a triple jump  
And lands it on one leg that bends to skate.  
She comes out of her whirls with a smile to turn  
With arms spread wide as her Leonardo legs.  
She stands for a human measure all through her dance  
And ends one graceful swoop with a tight spin.

How does she keep her balance after a spin  
And rush out into a combination jump,  
A lutz, toe loop, or salchow that her skates  
Must set up, carve, and kick each in its turn?  
To understand, I delight in watching her legs,  
As my poor feet imitate her dance.

I wonder at the wish of this Olympic dance  
Meant to stop all wars while athletes spin.  
The guns of Sarajevo make us jump  
So recently a venue for this skate.  
Why can't we control the screws that set our turn?  
I'd better concentrate on this woman's legs!

She is young Aphrodite with those legs  
Doing for judges and us her ancient dance.  
She blurs to a womanly top in each fine spin  
And leaps beyond our thought (Don't fall!) in spinning jumps.  
We love to fear the edges that she skates  
And wish that she would never end her turn.

She reminds us all that all our thoughts must turn  
Away from war and crime to delightful legs.  
This is the magic ritual of dance:  
To change the ancient centers where we spin.  
So we forgive her for doubling a jump  
And give our full attention to her brief skate.

She skates for us and earns our points in turn,  
Her strong legs giving birth to the spirit of dance.  
Remember her spin, and how she made hearts jump!

— Peter Jensen



# Next Rest Area: 93,000,000 Miles

by Kenneth Brady

I used to drive along the old Salem-Dallas Highway every night, heading home from work. Back before the college was set up in Monmouth. There was never a whole lot of traffic back then. Hell, seemed like I was usually the only one on the road, most of the time. I got used to that, I suppose. And I guess that's why it surprised me so much, one particular night, to see a set of lights coming up behind me like a bat out of hell.

Of course, I figured they'd just pass if they wanted to. No use my getting out of the way. But, no. The lights stayed on my bumper for a minute or two, and they blasted a godawful loud horn a few times. So I did what anyone would do . . . slammed on my brakes and tried to fuzz 'em up a bit.

They blew right on by me, horn blaring. But they didn't go around me; they went *over* me. It took me a few seconds of startled stupidity to realize it, but there I was, stopped in the middle of a lonely road, watching a goddam U.F.O. flying over the roof of my truck and then landing on the road, right in front of me.

I just sat there, puzzled, watching the way the spaceship sat there, turned sideways across the road. Or, rather, it hung there, hovered, I guess, on some sort of invisible force. It wasn't the sleek, silvery shark of a spaceship with all rounded, Ferarri-like angles I had come to expect from a million TV shows. It was boxy, dull and what could have passed for grey primer in color. To tell the truth, I was disappointed. My first U.F.O. sighting, and the goddam thing turned out to look more like a Volvo than a Ferarri.

Well, needless to say I was a bit spooked, nonetheless. Here was a real-life U.F.O., visiting our planet for who-knows-why, and I was possibly the first human these aliens had come in contact with. I was supposed to be an ambassador for my planet, for the human race. And what had I done? Slammed on my brakes . . . done the intergalactic equivalent of flipping them off.

I sat there, death-grip on the steering wheel, the truck still running and headlights shining on the side of the ship. What would they do to me? Take me home and experiment on me? Kill me right off? Fry my brain? I began to come up with alien tortures, all the comic book stories I could remember.

A door slid open on the side of the ship, and the light that spilled from the interior wasn't at all the bright, Hollywood light of fantasy. It was a bit dull, actually, and smoky. Then I saw a figure at the door, pausing.

I tensed. Would it come out shooting? Or would it be tentacled and dripping slime? Worse?

The figure lit up a cigarette and took a drag, then promptly fell out of the ship and onto the road. The sound of raucous laughter came from the ship, and three more figures crowded out the door and onto the road.

They were vaguely human, though a bit shorter, had less hair and lighter complexions. Two looked male, and two female,

as human standards go. They stood around for a few moments, talking in their alien tongue, and passing the cigarette around. One by one, they drifted off to the bushes along the side of the road and then returned, looking refreshed.

One of the females went back into the ship and returned with a few containers of what must have been a beverage, for they opened them and tipped the ends up to their mouths.

It was then they finally remembered I was there, or so it seemed. One of them motioned toward me and my still-running truck, and the others laughed. They walked toward me, and one of the males walked up to my window, tapping a finger lightly on the glass. I rolled it down, heart pounding.

"Nlegg," he said, his voice low and hoarse. He pointed at himself. "Hlurgg," he said, then pointed at the others. "Vrengl, Glurff, r Clorrsf." He smiled. I took that to be their names, and smiled, nervously. But what did Nlegg mean? Hello?

"Nlegg?" I said, hopefully.

They all began laughing, and I took that as a good sign.

"Bill," I said, pointing to myself. They all said "Nlegg."

The male nearest the window, Vrengl, I guess, offered me the cigarette. I don't smoke, normal days. But this was not a normal day, so I took it and pulled a deep drag.

I coughed, and realized, as they were laughing, that it was a joint. The hemp smoke filled my lungs, and I coughed some more, returning the bud to Vrengl, with a smile. He smiled back and took the joint. They all waved and staggered back toward their ship.

They passed the joint around once more and tossed the butt on the road, along with the beverage containers and a sack of garbage. Then they climbed back into the ship, with a lot of laughter, and the door closed. The ship shuddered for a moment, then moved sideways down the road, fishtailing back and forth until the pilot got control. Then the ship took off down the road and was gone.

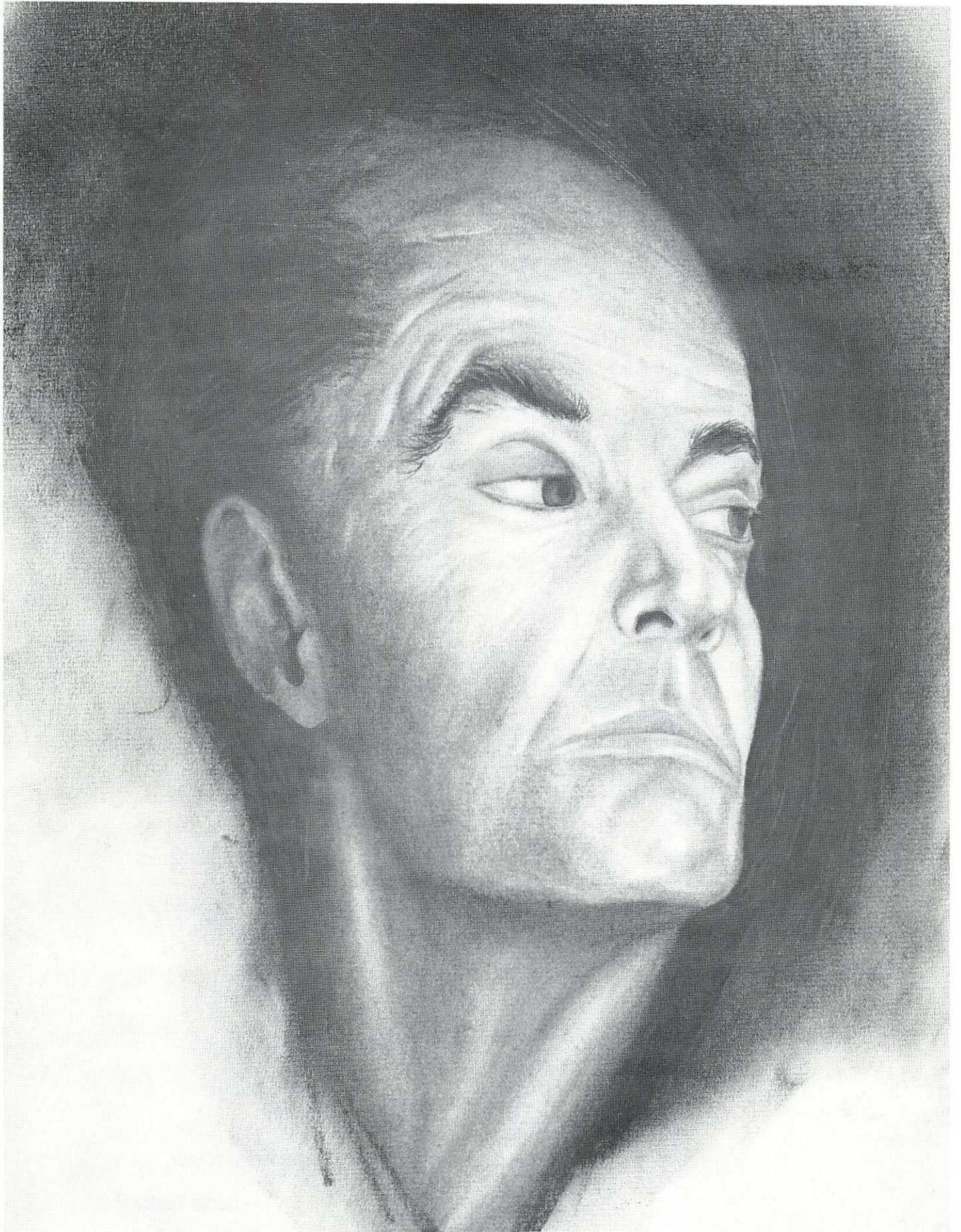
I got out of the truck and walked to the spot where they had landed. There, on the ground, were the remains of a half dozen Hershey wrappers, four McDonald's Happy Meals, and a half-case of Weinhard's Ale. The bottles, lying all around, bore the Weinhard's label as well.

They had stopped for a break? To take a leak, have some junk food, a few beers and a little reefer? I could hardly suppress a laugh. Why not? I guess they would have to stop *somewhere* for a rest. I gathered up the junk and tossed it in the back of my truck, pausing to examine a piece of paper in the mess.

It was a brochure, with a nice, full color photo of the earth in the center. There were symbols of all sorts, and a variety of languages, one of which, surprisingly, was English.

*Visit Earth, it said. Exciting cuisine, interesting wildlife. Next rest area: 93,000,000 miles.*





**You Don't Know Jack** *charcoal drawing by Jason Rackley*



# The Beach (or childhood's playground)

Childhood held its share of playgrounds  
but, by far, above the rest  
of the attractions that I played in  
the beach is what I liked best.

Building sandcastles of wet sand  
with the hands of parent help  
and taking turns with lots of friends  
jumping over ropes of kelp.

*children laughing  
children playing*

*what a gorgeous summer day*

*salty tasting  
time is wasting*

*can my friends come out and play?*

Surrounded by shimmering drops  
walking in water ankle deep  
sunlight filters through in rainbows  
water kicked by playful feet.

*blue waves pounding  
blue waves crashing*

*melting sandcastles so dear*

*summer weather  
all together*

*that's my favorite time of year*

Deep in crevices of rocks  
and in intertidal pools  
you'll find the aquatic life  
you learn about in schools.

*water sparkling  
feet are splashing*

*through the sea foam on the waves*

*children laughing  
children playing*

*this is what all youngsters crave*

The lighthouse watching over the beach  
illuminates the evening  
let's build a bonfire on the sand  
before it's time for leaving.

Roast a marshmallow in the flames  
on a whittled driftwood stick  
eat up the sweet and gooey mess  
but, be careful don't get sick.

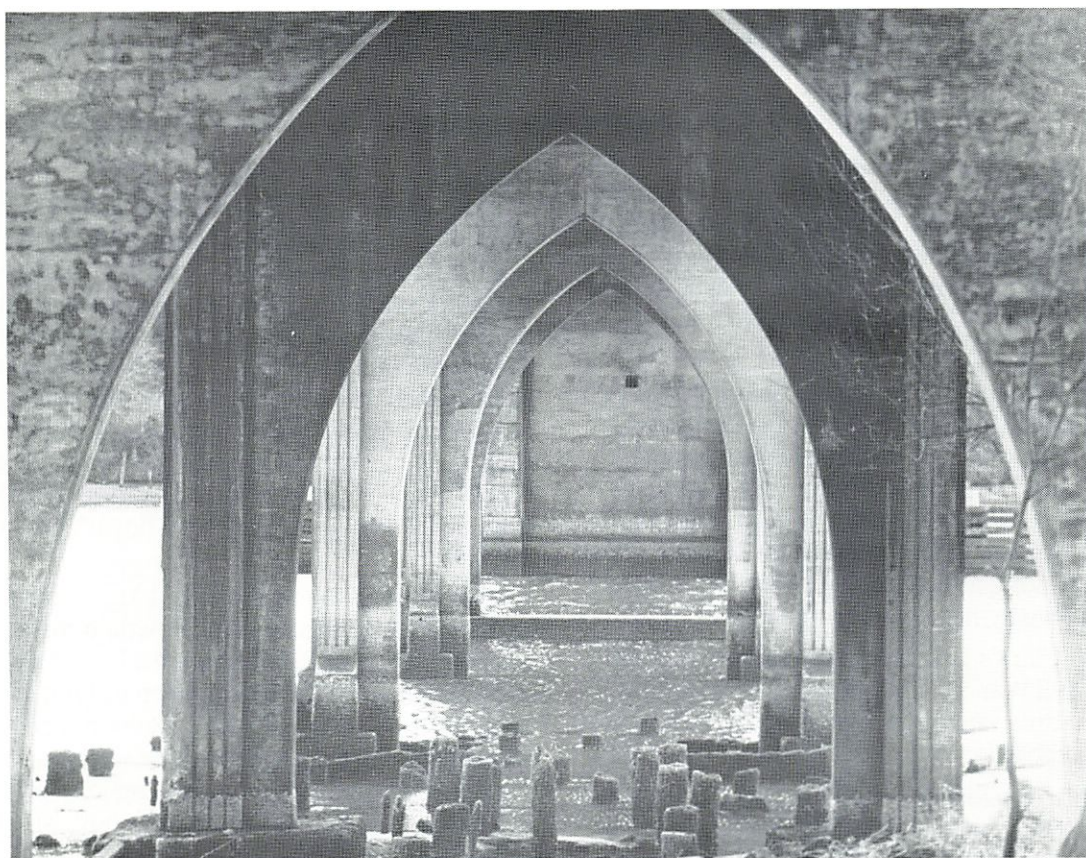
*fires crackling  
hissing, cackling*

*and the starry night is clear*

*summer weather  
all together*

*that's my favorite time of year*

— Sonja Taylor



Bridge in Florence *photo by Nancy Kile*

## The Drive

*for C.*

You can pick rosehips  
this summer, make tea.  
Go for a long drive in the country  
past the Mennonite Church,  
Kropf's Feed & Seed, pastures of sheep.

You can sit looking over the valley  
where you echoed the bull  
and his dance,  
when we saw two deer leap  
a fence in the arriving dark.

But without me  
the stars will be a woman  
you can't reach home by,  
and you won't know  
if the cock's crow  
signals time  
or happiness.

— Kathryn Steadman

## Clam Ecstasy

Blind and  
immobile,  
how do clams  
get their kicks —  
sucking in  
water,  
spitting out  
grit?

Can a clam's  
tender body  
in a shell  
that just fits  
know half as much  
pleasure  
as I,  
eating it?

— Lee Crawley Kirk



# Grandma Walker's Son

by Charles Bacon

He had gone to the store to buy a pack of cigarettes for his beloved wife. Doing something for someone without a thought for what advantage or gain it might yield; to serve; this was his way. He was a true servant to God and all humanity.

In this cynical age the majority remember his kind as in a legend of how people used to be. A large population believe his kind to be extinct. Another sarcastic rabble believes further that the true givers in history were only myths and that his kind never existed to begin with. I know better. I have seen with my own eyes. I have walked and talked with a living man who showed what he knew about the law of love by his own example in life.

James Robert Clark's father was a Confederate drummer boy in the Civil War. His mother, known in family memorial as Grandma Walker, was a Cherokee Indian. He was born with notable genes.

He taught fighter pilots how to fly planes during WWII. The military made sure that he travelled all across the U.S.A. for various types of training, and he spent a lot of time on the road.

While on assignment in Stillwater, Oklahoma, he met the woman of his dreams and told her point blank that he was going to marry her. He did exactly that and together they brought up five boys and two girls. Side by side they raised their seven kids, and spiritually adopted countless others into their family unconditionally.

It is important that I tell you the kind of man he was. Many years ago he saved a boy from drowning in quicksand. He never bragged about it. I never heard him mention it, nor did I ever hear him complain about bringing destitute people off the street and welcoming them into his home. He never refused a human being in need, and he never let anyone leave with nothing.

Sometimes his generosity would be used against him. More than once he was robbed by someone he had tried to help. They must have thought since he was foolish enough to trust, and since he left himself open, that he had it coming anyway. Still, he would overlook the bad and focus on the good he saw in all people.

He lost an eye once helping a stranger at a rest stop with a sick motor. One of the fan blades came off and sliced into his head, stopping an eighth of an inch from the fragile spot that would have meant his death. In a panic, the horrified motorist drove away, leaving the bleeding, unconscious victim for others to find, against all odds, still alive.

He wore an eye patch for awhile and with an unending smile would joke about it saying, "I'm blind in one eye and can't see out of the other." I would go along with him sometimes to collect cans and bottles from dumpsters and off the roadside. It was a good idea for someone to go along with him, to listen to his silly songs and watch the road. Alzheimer's disease was slowly tearing his memory out page by page. We'd be cruising around looking for cans or on our way to the grocery store, and he'd suddenly break into song to the tune of Camptown Races. "Oh, I've got a girlfriend, you've got ten. Boy oh boy, you belong in the pen."

There were some who didn't know him who thought he was a dirty old man because he would make it a point to ask everyone whether they were a boy or a girl. You have to understand that in his day men did not usually have long hair, and women usually did not sport a crew cut. He only wanted to be certain, and once he was sure, he would turn the whole thing into a long running joke. "Oh, I've got a girlfriend, you've got fifty. Boy oh boy, isn't that just nifty?"

I'd sometimes walk with him to the store where he'd tell the cashier the same story every time. She'd tell him the total and no matter what the numbers were he'd say, "That's highway robbery! Somebody call a cop. Where do you keep your gun?" He'd take his time writing the cheque. He'd pretend to forget what year it was. "Okay, I'll make this out to Albert's daughter, right? Ten dollars and no is spelled k-n-o-w, and cents is s-e-n-s-e, right? Ten dollars and know sense, right? Now, what's my name? Oh yeah, James R. Clark." Then he'd claim to be the descendant of a mayor of Monte Cuccio, Italy, which is a mountain unless I'm mistaken. There might have been a town in Italy by that name or by another name that sounds like it. He pronounced it "Goosey-Eye." He'd sign the cheque then hand it over the counter adding with a smile, "Goodyear rubber company, Provo, Utah."

Always a flirt, Jim would ask the cashier, "How'd you get to be so good looking?" He could charm the horns off a billy goat. As I grabbed up the bags to take them out to the car, he would say his signature farewell. "I've got some bad news for you," he'd warn the cashier, "I'll see you again next month." He'd be back in a week with the same routine, word for word.

On our final walk together, Grandma Walker's son and I stopped and watched a man trying to fly a kite. I think the only reason it finally managed to get off the ground and into the air was that Jim was watching, quietly wishing him success.



Before we reached the store, he pointed out a certain type of tree and told me that the root systems of those plants spread out for a long way just underneath the surface but never went very deep. He said that one such tree was blown down in the trailer park and within five minutes somebody with a chainsaw had hacked it up for firewood and hauled it off. It didn't take much wind to bring it down.

He bought a half pint of chocolate milk, chugged it down, and turned his back to the wind to light a cigarette. The breeze was chilly, but he liked to walk. He liked to get out of the house and feel as if he were doing something. I always tried to walk between him and the street because some drivers won't slow down until they hit something.

On the evening of April 21, 1994, Grandma Walker's son walked to the store on Barger Street west of Beltline Road. Sometimes it took a while to cross. There were no crosswalks, no signal lights, and no reduced speed zone warning signs along a two mile stretch from the edge of town to the Bethel School District 52 Administrative Office. It's a mad dash to the other side even for a young, healthy person. The 77-year-old man was really taking a chance.

One woman who lives on the street estimated that fifty percent of the drivers ignore the speed limit there, and sometimes pull into the center turning lane to pass those who obey the law. We had nicknamed the street 'Death Road' because of the numerous pedestrian fatalities that made the papers as small inconspicuous straight news blurbs. Statistical data accumulates like dust in the mind and is quickly brushed out of the public conscious like ashes. But while consecutive reports of those claimed on 'Death Road' piled up like a morbid scrapbook, and neighbors pleaded with city officials to do something, many believe the issue was less important to city planners than plans to construct a cloverleaf on/off ramp system in the area. Many feel that the desire and anticipation of potential future revenue overshadowed those impassioned pleas for safety measures.

Ask a spin doctor; statistics can lie. The many victims of Barger traffic became statistics in a file drawer, but they were not merely numbers as we have been numbed, and conditioned to see them. They were mothers and small children. They were grandparents and cousins. They were brothers and sisters. They were close friends and fathers. They were people, simply trying to dodge traffic and cross the road. Our little nickname turned out to be a prophesy.

Daddy's dinner was getting cold. He was on his way home, trying to cross the road when he was struck by the car. It is important that you know more facts than figures. The newspaper did not mention the agony, the personal suffering, the injustice, the outrage! The newspaper reported the few facts that could be gathered, and presented them with the cold statistical objectivity that wins journalism students stylistic praise, but one very important element was omitted: the whole truth.

His left leg was instantly broken, torn from him, then dragged along under the vehicle. When he hit the windshield he splattered and was literally shattered. He bounced hard and was thrown, finally to lay in a crumpled heap eighty some feet from the point of impact. His personal effects were flung like shrapnel, in some cases thirty to fifty feet beyond where he died. His spine was broken and twisted in an unnatural manner. His skull was crushed. His internal organs had exploded with the impact and their swelling pressure caused his chest and abdomen to balloon out as if bloated. His one good eye was still open. Bloody fragments littered the street, pieces of flesh and bone. His lungs were useless. Still, he was not dead.

Some very brave people tried to help, but there was nothing anyone could do. The newspaper said that he nodded when asked if he was cold. Lord, have mercy. He responded to a question! Only then, after being dismembered, squashed and mutilated, stripped of his dignity and robbed of the chance to tell those he loved goodbye, did his spirit return to his beloved Master.

The measure of a man's goodness is reflected in his children. For all their human shortcomings, his kids (and his grandchildren as well) all possess a compassion that springs from the deepest part of the family's roots. They sometimes squabble amongst themselves, but when threatened from the outside, they become a united and unstoppable force of will. He would be the first to forgive the person who killed him. But can anyone who knew him forget? Never!

In the past there have been petitions to install crosswalks and stoplights on Barger which have been denied. Meanwhile, the body count climbs. The statistics are staggering, but we seem to be immune to the shock value of the numbers. They are, after all, only numbers unless you meet the families, unless you knew the victims, unless you've seen the blood and circle to avoid the stains when you dash across the road.

If ever a man walked with God and proved that yes, it can be done even in these doubtful times, James Robert Clark was such a man.

"Oh, I've got a girlfriend. You've got seven. How in the hell are you going to get to heaven?"

Some trees spread their roots out far just below the surface without sending them deep. When the wind blows and trouble comes, they are easily uprooted and destroyed. They are then good for nothing else but firewood. But consider the tree that sends its roots deep into the soil. It is nourished by food that other trees have no knowledge of and cannot reach. It drinks deeply the water that slips through the grasp of shallow roots. It has made for itself a strong anchor. When the wind blows and trouble comes, the whole tree may shake and bend, but when the storm has passed, the tree with the deep roots stands as strong as ever.

"For God so loved the world . . ."





*photo by John Carson*

# The Hitchhiker

I pulled over on impulse,  
don't know if I should have,  
but he seemed so harmless,  
like a lost puppy on the street.  
His pack was old and mile-worn;  
he was dirty and smelled like  
the south end of a northbound camel,  
and his breath bore his memory  
in Jack Daniels' words.  
He talked on forever  
about his life and how he  
used to be like me:  
rich, driving a nice car,  
clean-smelling and refined,  
until he picked up a hitchhiker  
and had a gun pulled on him,  
like he pulled a gun on me  
and made me stop the car,  
give him all my money,  
and the clothes off my back.  
But he gave me his pack,  
and his bottle of JD,  
and his ratty old clothes,  
and his gun,  
and even his story.  
Left me standing on the freeway,  
walking toward forever,  
thumb in the air,  
waiting for the next  
driver to stop and  
offer me a ride.

— Jack Yattering

# Life in the Fast Lane

Fast Forward!  
Stop!  
You missed it  
Rewind!  
No time for a Pause-

Set the Tracking!  
Program the Thing!  
We can't Miss it!  
We'll have to record it-  
There's no time for Play

Caught in a state  
of Perpetual Motion  
There's no time for a pause  
and no time to play

— Brian J. Psiropoulos





## The Rail Ends at Treblinka

It was a day like so many others busy with confusion.

She boarded the train with her two small sons,  
Careful to hold their hands tightly in hers  
Lest they become separated in the press  
Of bodies milling on the platform.  
Like all young boys they were excited  
About the prospect of adventure  
And had inspected the great engine  
To be certain it was fit to carry their mother,  
For wasn't she the wife  
Of a high ranking German officer,  
Fighting for the Fatherland?  
They squirmed in their seats,  
Eager  
For the trip to begin —  
A wonderful holiday with their father.  
He had been working terribly hard  
And deserved a holiday with his family,  
And they were going to be so very good.  
They had even practiced their salutes.

He would be so proud of them,  
They waited anxiously for the trip to begin,  
A little afraid that it would not.  
The rails had been quite undependable  
Lately.  
Anything could happen.

Their mother breathed a sigh of relief  
And relaxed in her seat  
As the train pulled, straining out of the station.  
At last they were on their way.  
The boys chattered at the other passengers  
Undaunted by the somber faces.  
Grownups never know how to play right  
And everyone is too serious these days,  
But isn't a train ride exciting?

Then she realized  
Somehow she had gotten on the wrong train  
With her two young sons.  
What inconvenience!



She would have to switch trains  
And who knows how long that would take.  
Well at least the boys were enjoying the ride.  
She would get off the train  
At the very next station,  
Explain what happened  
And who she was, of course.  
It would all be set right.  
The train rolled on.  
She hoped her husband wouldn't be too irritated  
At her carelessness.

Into the station groaned the train  
Like some beast that howls by day.  
A clean, well ordered station  
Certainly it would be well run, also  
And her mishap would be quickly attended to.  
But things moved too fast,  
There was no one who would listen.  
She was shunted along from one place  
To the next,  
As she tried over and over,  
More and more insistently,  
More and more frantically  
To explain what had happened  
Explain that she didn't belong here  
Explain who she was.  
And no one listened,  
And she saw  
That the rails ended here,  
Did not run on.  
But she didn't belong here.  
She didn't belong in this line.  
She didn't belong here with her two young sons.  
See.  
See.  
See!  
They are not circumcised!  
I am the wife of a German officer!  
We got on the wrong train!  
We got on the wrong train.

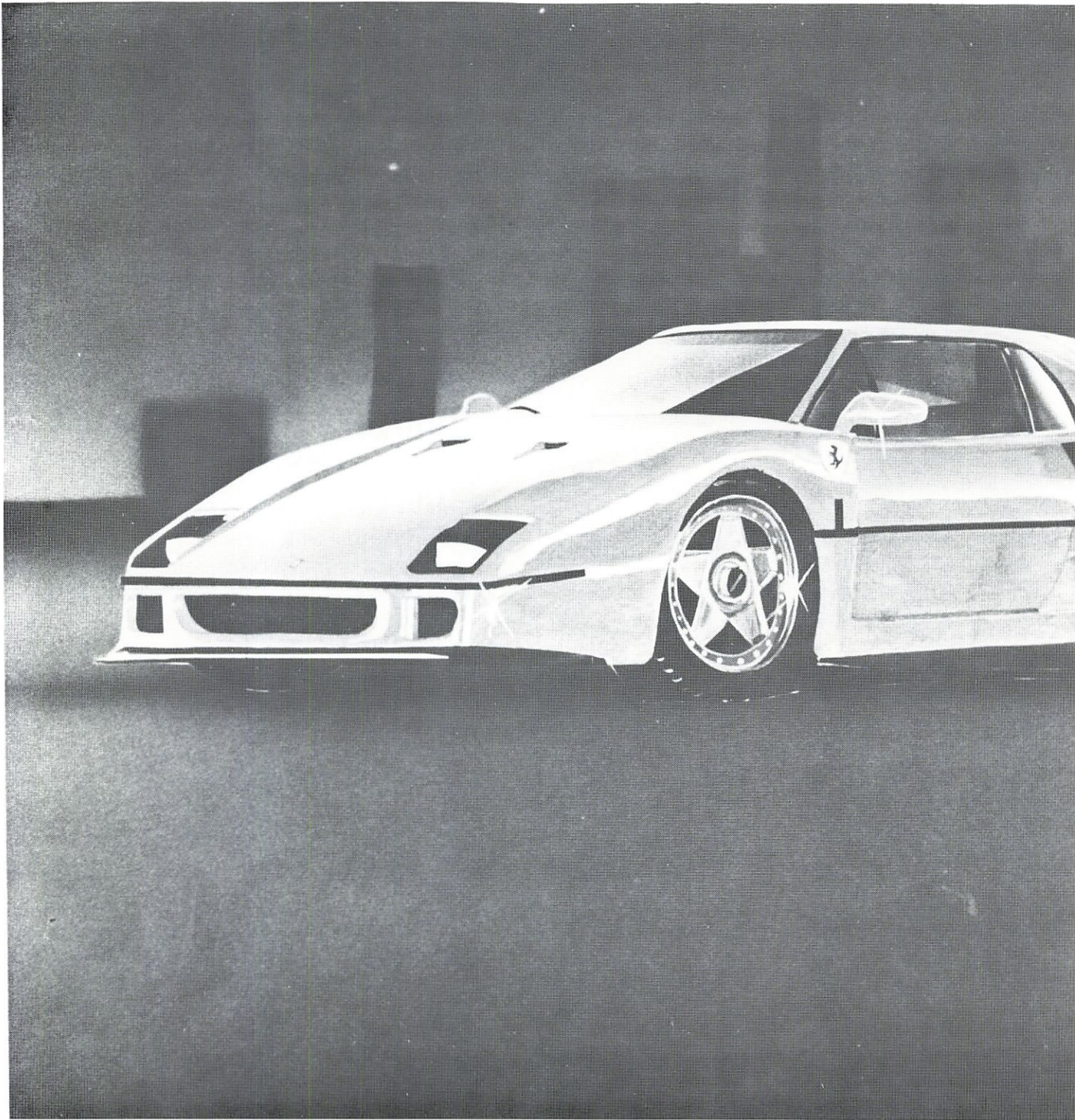
It was not enough.  
She had found out.  
She had seen  
What must not be seen.  
She knew what must not be known.  
There was a danger  
Of her, the wife of a high ranking  
German officer,  
Or her two young sons  
Telling.  
Telling what must not be told.  
And so she too, with her sons  
Must flow into the river of bodies  
Slowly moving towards the delousing station.  
Pretend it is just a delousing station.  
Pretend until the last.  
The children must not be frightened.  
Say nothing to alarm them.  
Their little hands are so cold.  
Hold them tightly,  
So they do not get lost in the crowd.

It was a day like so many others,  
Busy with confusion  
At Treblinka.

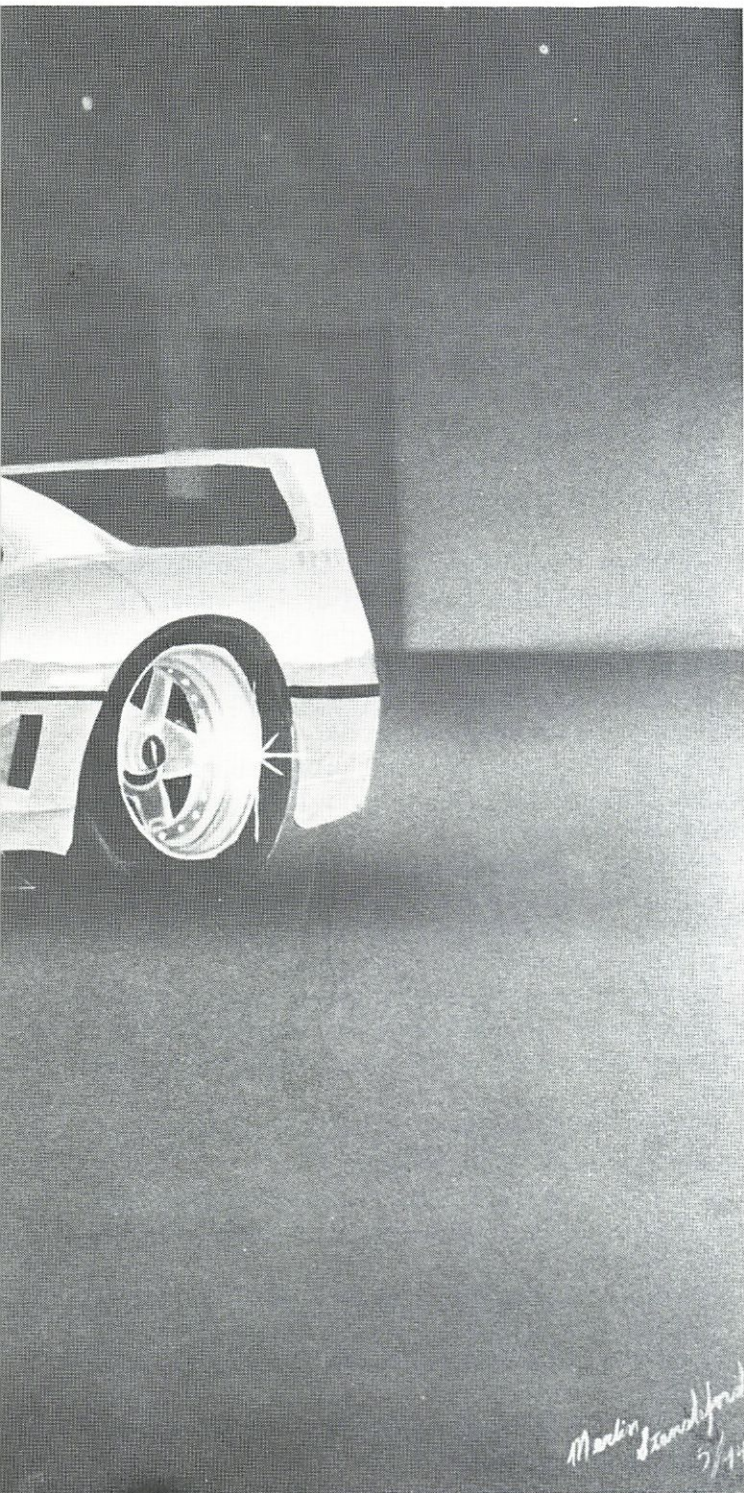
*This poem was written about an incident that actually happened at the the Nazi death camp, Treblinka. The woman and her two sons were gassed with the Jews that day. Although a death camp, Treblinka was the site of major resistance work against the Nazis. This event was chronicled by one of the survivors of the camp after the liberation. If we forget; if we do not speak up; no one is safe.  
Dedicated to Temple Beth Israel.*

— Bonita Rinehart









airbrush painting by Merlin W. Standeford

## The Contender

The road stretched out before me  
Like a knife blade in the night  
Three hundred miles of gleaming steel  
Burnt asphalt in moonlight  
Pulse racing at the red-line  
Jet fuel burning in my veins  
Tires screaming banshee wails  
Across the desert plains  
Appears a lone contender  
Glossy black and tinted glass  
Parked idling across the highway  
Silently daring me to pass  
I stop within his vision  
Engine revving as I wait  
Watching for any movement  
Headlights tempting hands of fate  
The black car rockets forward  
My own foot pounds the gas  
We close the distance quickly  
I veer off at the last  
And in a screaming second  
As the desert horizon spins  
I see the world turn upside down  
This race the black car wins  
I crawl from out the wreckage  
And look into the night  
To see the disappearing glow  
Of distant red tail lights

— Jack Yattering



# Between Two Points

by Charles Bacon

Sivle flew cargo for OXYTEK, the third largest mining company in the Alpha quadrant. He knew the route. Others did too, but Sivle had a knack for making his runs in record time and this particular payload had to be there yesterday.

"No sweat," Sivle said, licking his thin lips. "Now, about my compensation."

Sleyeberg cut him off. "Whatever you want, my friend. You just name it, and I'll have it transferred to your credit file."

Sivle leaned back in the chair and put his feet on Sleyeberg's desk. "That's just it, Sly Boy, I don't want credits. They're not worth the electricity to keep track of them."

Sivle took out his gum and moulded it into a neat pyramid on top of Sleyeberg's favorite paperweight. Sleyeberg fidgeted and watched the sticky sculpture take shape.

"What I want," Sivle said, "is to own the controlling shares of the corporation."

"Get out of my office!" Sleyeberg raged. "Just who do you think you are, you weasle?"

Sivle rose to his feet and met the C.F.O. half way across the desk, eyebrow to eyebrow. "I think I'm the only pilot that can deliver your precious cargo on time, and as you recall today is already too late. I got it there in the first place, and your boys lost it. You either hire me on my terms or you and everybody on up the daisy chain all the way to the top faces an audit and charges of breach of fiduciary responsibility as of yesterday."

Sleyeberg eased back and slumped in his chair. "I see you've done your homework," he said quietly.

"I've never done my homework," Sivle chuckled, "I've always paid somebody to do it for me. Always got A's. This time, not only do I make the dean's list, but I'm also insured against being silenced. You see, if anything happens to me, like a fatal accident, or I don't get the job, your whole garbage man cover-up scam will be broadcast all across Internet from the Fringes all the way back to Terra."

"So it's blackmail. Is that it?" Sleyeberg said.

"You catch on fast, Sly Boy," Sivle laughed, "I guess that's why they let you sign the stock certificates. Nothing gets past you. Oh, one more thing."

"You want my job too?"

"Ha ha! No way. You can keep your job. But now that you mention it, I'm growing very fond of your office. You might consider clearing out my new desk before tomorrow." Sivle was really enjoying himself. "Actually what I was going to mention was that I know what's in those pods.

I know what that cargo is for, and I know how to use that technology. I said I never did my own homework. I never said I didn't study. So, do we have a deal?"

Sleyeberg's hands were tied. "It looks as though, Mr. Sivle, that you leave me little choice in the matter." He took the stock ledger from the file safe and began filling in the blanks. "Of course you realize I have to post date this certificate so that the Board of Directors can officially issue these shares when they meet next Tuesday. We wouldn't want your stock to be worthless because of a technicality. You've made some outlandish claims as to your ability as a pilot. Personally, I think it's horse pucky, and if you can't make the run then this transaction never took place."

"Just make sure you sign it," Sivle said.

That afternoon, Sivle and his co-pilot, Gnik, looked on as the greensuits loaded the pods onto the privately owned freighter.

"What's in them crates, Cap'n?" Gnik wanted to know.

"Apples from Eden, mate," was all Sivle would say.

Two hours later they were nearing the Beta quadrant. Gnik held the controls, and Captain Sivle was port-side astern measuring the cargo hold for radiation leaks, or at least that's what the official log would read.

"Bridge to Captain," Gnik said over the intercom, "I'm getting a little punchy up here. You want to spell me before I get white dot fever?"

"Give me a couple of minutes, Gnik," Sivle answered, "I've got a few adjustments to make on the warp drive. Pick out the nearest star and point her nose right at it. I'll be up before you can spell my first name."

Gnik didn't know Sivle's first name so he began counting sheep instead. When Sivle entered the cockpit, Gnik was sound asleep, and the ship was closing fast on a white dwarf.

"Perfect!" Sivle whispered and smiled. "Enjoy your nap, sleepy head. Now we make time."

Sivle took his position at the helm and engaged warp drive. The sudden acceleration woke Gnik, and he looked around groggily.

"Welcome back to the land of the lucid, Gnik old boy. Not to worry. I've already got her up to warp seven. You keep your foot to the floor and I'll increase the mass in the field core."

"Uh, Cap'n," Gnik seemed worried, "aren't we getting a little too close to that star?"

"We're going to get a helluva lot closer than this before we're done so stand firm, helmsman, and wait for my orders!" piped Sivle.

"But we're going to smack right into it!"



"Nope," said the Captain, "we're going to miss that star by a whisker, and when I give the word, you are going to reverse the warp drive."

"But Cap'n!"

"That's an order! If you don't hear the signal, that means I wasn't able to generate enough mass to implode the continuum. In that case, just keep flying and we'll turn around for another pass. Got that?"

"Implode the continuum?" Gnik took his eyes off the road.

"Got that?!" shouted Sivle.

"Aye, aye, Cap'n!" Gnik was a loyal mate.

"Looks like we're going to do it, Gnik. Steady. Not yet. Now! Reverse warp!"

Gnik followed orders. The ship grazed the corona of the white dwarf and disappeared. From inside the cockpit multiple images of the surrounding constellations could be seen through the view screen as tracers receding back to their origins. Both men remained motionless. The ship appeared again at a position down orbit from the white dwarf travelling in reverse at warp nine.

"Okay, Mr. Gnik," said Sivle calmly, and he smiled, "we're through. Reduce speed and point the bow at our original course."

"We went an awfully long way off our original course to test our nerves, I suppose, and some silly damn theory about imploding space/time," Gnik commented. "Now we've got a lot of time to make up."

"On the contrary," Sivle smiled, "we are exactly where that white dwarf will be in seven Earth days. It is now one week ago. Take your time, Gniky."

Gnik was sure the Captain was loopy from sniffing impulse coolant. As soon as they reached the mining post on XO-4, he was going to turn in his transfer application and get as far away from Sivle as possible. He entered the coordinates and engaged the system at warp nine.

Gnik went through the motions following the stars as his ancestors had done sailing the oceans of Earth when the air contained more oxygen than carbon-dioxide. Companies like OXYTEK made it possible for the human race to continue breathing at an affordable price. Gnik began to breathe easier when he saw the familiar corporate logo on a football field size billboard floating on tethers above the gravity free surface of XO-4. A giant cartoon oxygen molecule formed a smiley face beckoning him to land.

Sivle signed the release form and let the greensuits unload the cargo bay. Gnik went straight away to the administrative office to request a transfer. He had finished filling in the blanks and was about to enter his personal signature code when he noticed the date at the top of the screen. Trembling with realization, he pressed the cancel key and terminated the transfer. Sivle was indeed a master of time as well as space. You just don't desert a man like that and expect to live.

Gnik caught up with Sivle in the cocktail lounge on sub-level twelve. "It's like I've done all this before, Cap'n. It's really spooky, you know? When are we heading back to next week?" Gnik wanted to know.

"Why bother?" Sivle said, "Next week will catch up to us soon enough, and don't start in with those cliché philosophical paradoxes about how are we going to get here in the first place if we aren't there to begin with and all that. It doesn't matter. We're rich. The only thing I'd need to go back for is to claim a stuffy office on Titan."

Sivle felt a hand on his shoulder. He turned in his chair, and there was Sleyeberg. "You're in my seat," said the C.F.O.

"Well, not yet, technically," Sivle said.

"Do I know you?" Sleyeberg asked.

"You will," Sivle assured him. "Perhaps another time. My shipmate and I have to push off soon. Here's your chair."

They went to another lounge and for a week and a half stayed clear of sub-level twelve. "You can't be too careful," Sivle told Gnik. "I can't let him suspect anything, and I can't interfere with his normal life patterns. It might throw a monkey wrench in things. One time I bought him a drink when he told me I was in his seat. He choked on an icecube and died. That sort of made the stock certificate worthless since it was post dated and signed two weeks after he bought the farm. We had to go back in time to fix that little boo boo, but that was the only time we didn't cash in. You've only been with me the last eight or nine times, Gnik. Pretty soon, you'll start to remember, and it won't be so much like a déjà vu. It'll all come back to you when we get back to our little piece of paradise; everything you always wanted but couldn't afford; all the fresh air you can breathe from now until the end of time." His dimly poetic reference to time made Sivle chuckle. Time meant nothing.

Gnik didn't question orders when Sivle told him to aim the ship at Titan. The Captain wanted to return to the original time line, confirm the miraculous delivery of his payload well before yesterday, move Sly Boy to a much smaller office, sell part of his stock again and then go shopping. Who was Gnik to argue? Little by little, he remembered the routine. After a long, indulgent shopping spree, the Captain would drop him off at the loading dock on XO-4 where he would watch himself from the shadows rushing off to request a transfer, then wait for the Captain to sign the release form. Once everything was legal and on record, he would distract the greensuits with a false alarm, and while they were chasing ghosts he would load the four small pods into a trash launcher and shoot the whole batch at the star XO. Thus, Gnik would present OXYTEK with a perplexing problem and provide Sivle with an opportunity to offer an implausible service. The only part of the plan he couldn't remember was the part about his being cut down by security laser fire and melting into a pool of goo. One day he would remember that part too, and Sivle would have to replace him with another partner. But for now, Sivle reckoned Gnik was good for another three or four cycles.

"What you're saying is," Sleyeberg paused, "that you can actually go back in time and deliver this cargo yesterday?"

"No sweat," said Sivle, "Now about my compensation."



# 3:00 a.m. and I Haven't Even Reached Portland Yet

Driving down the freeway  
encased in 18-wheelers.  
The rain pounds  
the beat to the  
body of steel  
which is my home.

In an after-hours daze  
I talk to Kerouac.  
I have this feeling  
his eternal eyes  
have seen what  
I see:

these endless miles  
with so many signs  
so many signs,  
shoulders aching with the  
heavy weight of thought,  
humming engine  
nearly a lullaby,  
window cracked to stay  
awake though freezing  
with the freeway chill,

beamed so far  
away,  
cramped neck,  
narrowed eyes  
trying to focus  
on the last night/  
early morning  
A.M. station  
licking the blues  
in your direction,  
with silent  
promiscuous  
prayers unknow-  
ingly  
mouthed toward  
what they call  
the Heavens;

yes, Jack knows  
this, and too  
he knows all the  
dreams  
and visions that  
come

and go with the road.  
He's aware of the haunted souls  
and twice broken hearts that beckon  
us to the 2 and 3 lanes  
of the human race  
and experience (ever-moving with  
rolling wheels  
of past and future remembrances  
hitting hard like the rain,  
washing away the dirt  
only to leave more-  
it's beyond our vision,  
past the horizon,  
this is "IT")

and on this stretch of road  
I understand.  
Jack whispered it in my ear  
and I slipped into a knowing  
that the road  
is always ours  
and always ours alone.

— Laura Mele

*From The Purple Series*

## Traveling Towards Purple

It snowed six inches

The road was white.  
We slid around an icy corner

You fixed the flat tire.

The wind picked up speed. The map  
flew out the window, or did we  
throw it.

I agreed to spend the night.

Your hands dipped into the fire,  
became flares  
warning the world away.

You sang my favorite song of praise.

That night you dreamt of the fruit of Chayota vines,  
and me. I dreamt the glass on a barometer  
shattered as it fell.

The kiss was red and blue on our lips.

Cold can clarify, condense our bodies,  
make room for another. I was the first  
to sleep in this bed.

I am your third joy.

— Kathryn Steadman





*photo by Kenneth Brady*

## Driving

driving too fast  
too fast to see the signs  
the signs of warning  
warning about the edge  
the edge I'm falling from  
from deep inside me  
inside me I'm tumbling down  
down past their faces  
faces that turn away

screaming  
screaming silent pain  
pain dulling the senses  
the senses that feel life  
life everyone's living but me  
but me in my lonely world  
lonely world spinning away  
away from their faces  
faces that are all closed

— Sam Espinosa

## The Head

I believe that I shall never hear,  
A poem lovelier than beer,  
The golden brew with snowy cap,  
The kind the high brewers have on tap,  
The stuff I sit and drink all day,  
Until my memory floats away,  
Poems are made by fools, I fear,  
But only high brewers can brew good beer.

— U. B. 28



# Women and the Death of Gerry or Watch What You Eat

by Eathan Mertz

Gerry ate things he wasn't supposed to. This behavior tended to land him in trouble. When he was young, he ate the neighbor girl's kitten, which she had had for only three days and was still very much attached to. He roasted it over a little burner he had made in Cub Scouts out of a tuna can, paraffin wax, and a strip of cardboard rolled into a spiral. It wasn't a very good meal, but it was "Self-Sufficiency Week" in scouts.

Later on, as a teen, he ate hallucinogenic mushrooms at the local shopping mall and peed on Santa's lap. The mushrooms were an early Christmas present from his girlfriend. His father decided she was a bad influence, even though he didn't know the cause of Gerry's peculiar action, and took steps to prevent her influencing his son again.

Still later in life Gerry "ate" the much younger girlfriend of his English professor. She was enjoying herself very much until the professor entered unexpectedly wearing nothing but sheep-skin chaps and a ten gallon hat (unless you count the buckle, which you might, because it was quite large). Gerry failed English that term. He had had a "good grades for tuition" deal with his father, and since he could think of no way to explain the situation without mentioning that he'd been caught with his face between the legs of his professor's girlfriend, he was cut off completely.

Gerry had to drop out of school and find a job, which he did quite soon. He started working as a part-time guru for the Brothers and Sisters of the Good Day, which was a front for a house of ill-repute. Don't let the name fool you, the members were almost exclusively brothers. The "church" had been investigated by the local police, but the investigating officer had been converted and found nothing illegal going on on the premises. Gerry's job was to act

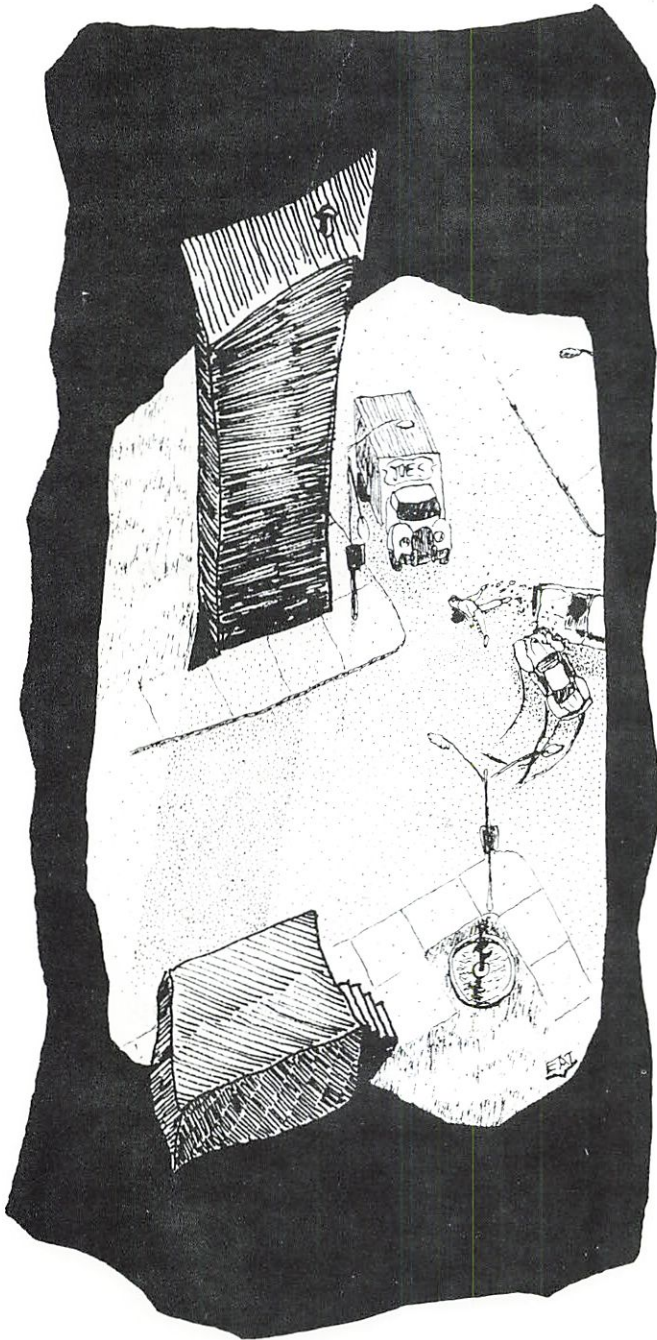


illustration by Eathan Mertz



religious with a few other people who were acting like they were finding enlightenment. Others would enter, sign the register at the back of the temple area, and join them until their names were called, at which point they would disappear into the back room.

Gerry liked his job. Getting away with something, whether directly involved or not, always made him feel good. It also paid the rent, which is a big plus in forming an opinion about one's job. It also gave him an excuse to wear big funny robes, which he had always enjoyed. He never went into the back rooms; he was quite welcome to, but he never felt like it. He decided that it was women who were responsible for the main problems in his life and that he should avoid them. His scouting den mother was the one who inspired him on self-sufficiency, and the girl next door had kept her tasty looking kitten in plain sight. His old girlfriend was the one who gave him the mushrooms that caused him to make water on Santa. And his ex-professor's girlfriend had spread her legs in such an inviting way that responsibility could fall on no shoulders other than her own.

He worked and saved and worked and saved, thinking that if he could just afford a nice new computer with a laser printer, he could be a halfway decent writer. Each payday he would take the bus downtown, walk to the bank, and deposit most of his check. Then he'd walk to Ray's Deli where Ray would fix him the best Italian meat-ball sandwich in the land. Then he'd walk across the street to look through the window at his future computer.

After a year and four months as a part-time guru, he had saved enough to buy the best computer in the store - with a laser printer. Boy, he was happy. He almost skipped from the bank to Ray's, where he wolfed his sandwich. He didn't even notice the smear of red sauce which adorned his chin. He sprinted across the street, startling several drivers, and into the store where he whipped out his check-book, pointed, and said, "That one."

"That machine goes on sale next week. You'd save three hundred dollars if you came back then," said the pretty blond sales lady.

"I really would like to get it now, I've been waiting for quite some time."

"I know, I've seen you. Do you have a desk, or software, or printer paper?"

"No."

"You could probably use that three hundred dollars, huh?"

"Yeah, I guess so. Why do you care so much when I buy it?"

"Sales contest starts next week, I'm gonna' win a trip to Hawaii."

"What if someone else wants to buy it first?"

"I'll reserve it for you, if you promise to buy it from me."

"Oh, okay."

"Thanks, mister. See you next week then."

"Yeah." Gerry left the store feeling a little empty and caught the bus home. The week dragged on and on. More than once he considered going down and just buying the damned thing and saying, "Screw the three hundred bucks and screw your damned contest too, lady!" He waited though, and the day came.

He went to the bank. "Have a nice day," said the large-breasted teller as he left.

He walked to Ray's. A new girl was working. "Where's Ray?" he said.

"Hawaii," said the girl. Gerry ordered his usual Italian meat-ball sandwich. The girl's nose crinkled, and she said, "That doesn't sound very healthy."

"Huh?"

"Doesn't sound very healthy, you want a piece of fruit with that?"

"Yeah, sure." Gerry was too absorbed with his dreams of making it really big one day, maybe even a Pulitzer Prize, to care whether he had a piece of fruit or not. He got his meal and sat down at the nearest table. He ate slowly. After his headlong rush of the week before, he had decided to savor the day so he would always remember it. He finished the sandwich, peeled the orange the girl had given him, and left.

He stepped outside, took a deep breath, and looked around, taking in the details. A metermaid was ticketing an illegally parked car, a bedraggled, yellowish ice-cream truck was pulling away from the curb, an old lady was walking a toy poodle towards him, and there, across the street, was the computer store. The old lady stepped into the parking lane and prepared to cross. He began to do the same, pulling his orange apart as he went. A spray of orange juice shot him right in the eyes, and he stepped on the poodle in his blindness. The poodle bit him and, still blind, he blundered backwards into the old lady. She smacked him fiercely, and he stepped away. His feet got tangled in the leash, and he fell forward, opening his eyes in surprise, just in time to see the postal truck, which a second later smashed directly into him.

"That machine goes on sale next week. . . Have a nice day. . . Want a piece of fruit with that?" his mind's voice mocked as he was dying. "Old ladies, poodles, postal workers. . . You'd save three hundred dollars. . . Hawaii. . . Doesn't sound very healthy. . . Women! They did this to me! Healthy, my ass!" Gerry died and, "Healthy, my ass!" was as close as he ever got to blaming the orange.

Gerry ate things he wasn't supposed to. This behavior tended to land him in trouble.





*photo by Kimberly Bourne*



# To One Going On A Long Journey

## (After the Chinese)

By the white stones, beneath old palms,  
still we pause, afraid at heart.  
The way you must follow across wide oceans  
will lead you by summer into winter.  
Your father died; you left home young;  
nobody knew of your misfortunes.  
We laugh, we say nothing. What can I wish you  
in this harsh uncertain world?

— Sandra M. Brown

## ***La Hermosura de México do los Ojos de una Norteamericana***

*En las calles puede ver la pobreza  
en los caminos y en el polvo.*

*En los niños puede ver la belleza de la gente  
en las sonrisas en los ojos brillantes.*

*En la tierra puede ver la vida del país  
en las montañas, en los desiertos, en los bosques.*

*Cada hoja del árbol, cada pedozo de arena, cada goto de lluvia  
se reresentan la fuerza de la tierra  
y la fuerza de la corazon mexicano.*

## **The Beauty of Mexico through the Eyes of a North American**

In the streets you can see the poverty  
in the roads and the dust.

In the children you can see the beauty of the people  
in the smiles and shining eyes.

In the land you can see the life of the country  
in the mountains, the deserts, the forests.

Each leaf of the tree, each grain of sand, each drop of rain  
represents the power of the land  
and the power of the Mexican heart.

— Allison Krieger





Artists Walking the Tracks *photo by Corky Davis*

## The City of the Angels

The city of the Angels.  
Devil's advocate.  
Grey over grey upon brown.

Ninety percent cement.  
Ten percent for rent.  
Grey over grey upon green.

I'm raging against this machine.  
Burning in the night.  
Grey over grey upon red.

I'm swimming in this madness.  
Oil wells out at sea.  
Grey over grey upon blue.

The trees tarnished with asphalt, the parking lots prevail.  
The fruits of our labor are concrete, my life is a living Hell.  
The rain is coming down now, it is moving so very fast.  
It is showering me with oblivion, dropping an endless grey over grey  
upon my blackened grass.

— Robert Mahon



elvis at the bijou  
if i didn't know better i would swear i saw elvis at the bijou  
but of course it couldn't be elvis because he is working at  
kmart where my own true love is shopping for blue light specials  
in housewares  
if i didn't know better i would swear that geraldo is developing  
a sense of dignity but of course it couldn't be true because  
he is looking for elvis at the bijou  
if i didn't know better i would swear i saw a blue light flashing  
at the bijou  
have you seen my own true love

— Bonita Rinehart

## Green and High by the Roadside

the days rolled on  
crushing almos'ts and afterthoughts  
like debris on the roadside  
under the one great wheel

the balance  
it's called by the learned  
and the wise

to the others it's known  
as the long hard road  
and to some names aren't so important

but under this wheel I waited  
the days rolled on  
the sky was painted  
green and high  
and hazel by a child  
and erased once  
then recovered  
in its present fashion

and still did I wait  
weary of travel

many offerings  
were bestowed upon me  
and many things stolen  
by common highway thieves  
then one day  
a crow came to rest  
on my shoulder

years had passed  
I was wary

the crow said  
it knew of me  
and that which I sought  
but that it would cost me

I told him I had mountains of gold  
and the lands that spread between the seas

he said this would not be enough  
and asked if I was ready to dirty my hands

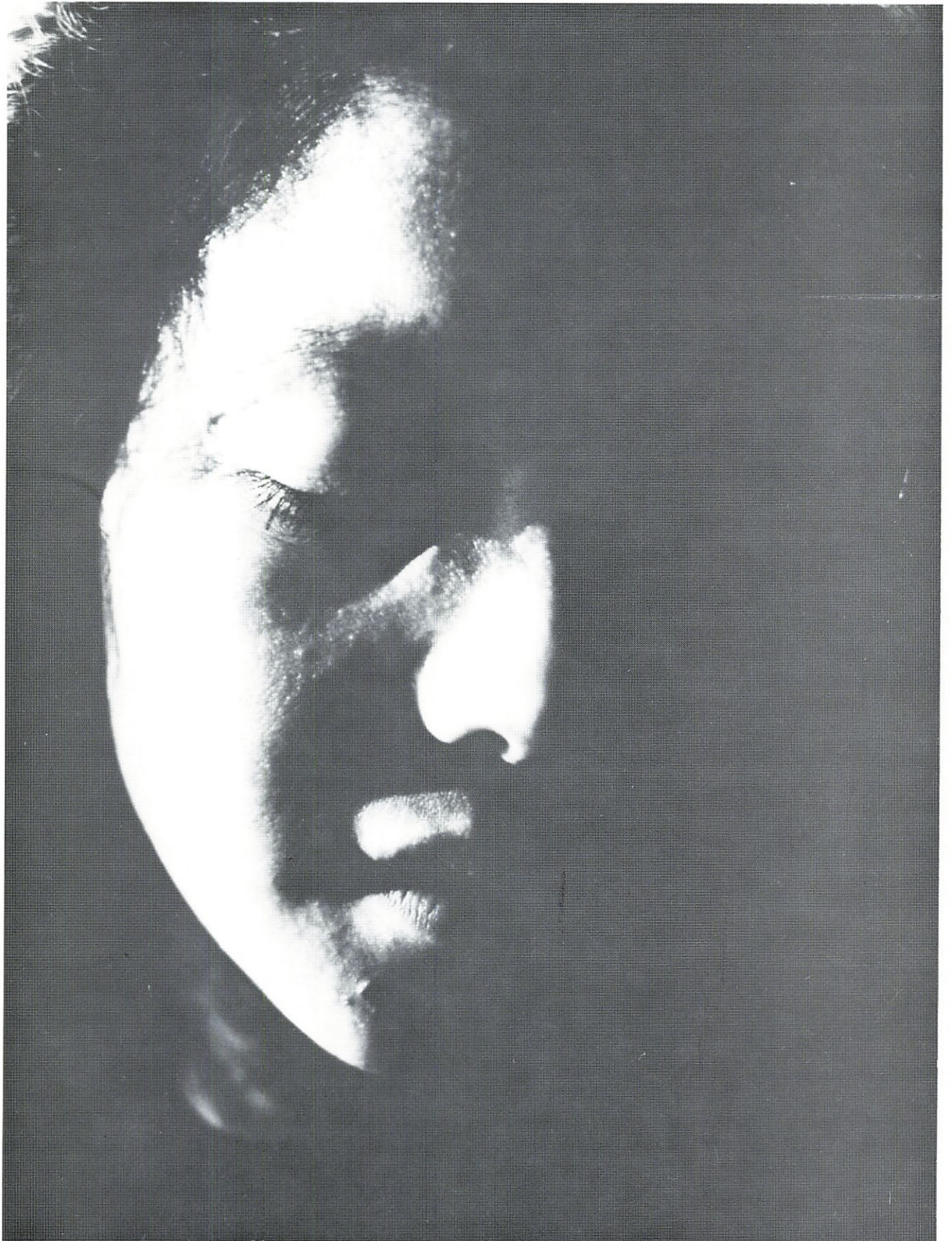
I told him I'd seldom wiped them clean  
never having strayed from the road  
and never having found that which I sought

at this I saw a sparkle in his eye  
he sighed  
relaxing a bit  
he turned to face me then  
and said I was the one  
they'd been looking for  
then he flew away

I waited  
when I grew weary of his return  
I lay myself down  
there by the roadside  
and when I awoke  
you were in my arms.

— Damien Filer





**Space** *photo by Mickey Stellavato*



# Hosmer Lake

Stillness sacred as breath,  
calm against the pink light  
of new day.

A canoe  
trails the wake  
of a merganser  
making haste  
for a morning market.

Electric-blue dragon flies  
buzz their chopper blades,  
hovering over lily pads, reeds,  
the heat of the marsh  
rising against their bellies.

On water  
flat as a mirror,  
a trout feels my keel  
slip overhead,  
paddle surges,  
flooding her gills,  
but she holds her station,  
nose to the current.

Beavers bob and roll  
in water  
as if sand,  
like they can't imagine  
not being supported.  
Osprey circle,  
impatient for the sun  
to eat up shadows  
that hide a meal  
beneath dark green.

A tickle of wind  
makes flat water marble  
and rustles lanky cattails  
that whisper,  
you are home.

— Jamie King

# Granny's Windmill

For miles we bounced over dusty road  
Our car pitching on a sea of dirt  
Nothing in sight but sagebrush and weed  
New Mexico desert without any trees

Turning lazily in the summer wind  
A tank of water bowed at its feet  
Granny's windmill broke the haze  
Breathing comfort to a desolate scene

Aunts and cousins found their way  
By the landmark tall and straight  
Hours lingered under its spell  
Childhood hung like the sun at noon

At night by kerosene dim  
Granny and I huddled close  
To watch fingers of lightning  
Scratch the distant Texas sky

As her sun parched hands  
Rubbed my parchment cheeks  
Granny's windmill creaked and groaned  
Singing to us a desert love song

Granny is gone now, her farm was sold  
Her windmill too broke down and died  
But I still see its shadow over my mind  
When lightning fills a summer sky

— Arlene Hougland



# Migrant Days

We followed the crops  
Making our livelihood in one field  
After another  
Knowing that when the crops were in  
They'd soon run us off  
With dogs and guns  
As speak to us.  
We were never welcome  
At their tables  
The tables we helped to set  
For penny wages  
Half of what went to pay  
The food we had to buy from them  
The toilet paper, toothpaste  
And soap they said we didn't use  
All charged at twice the price.  
They didn't want their children  
Sitting next to ours in school  
We were too damned ignorant  
Along with being shiftless and lazy  
After working days that stretched  
From before sun to after dusk.  
There wasn't enough brotherly love  
In their churches  
To welcome us into the "Family of God"  
They sang about every Sunday.  
Walking down the streets  
They didn't even bother to whisper  
As they called the women whores  
And said the men only wanted one thing  
Even if the man they spoke of  
Was sailing a toy boat with his son  
In the park they said we were ruining.  
We had too many babies  
Got too much welfare  
And if the hospital  
Wouldn't let us in without money up front  
Having a baby in one crowded room  
Where the water and electricity  
Had been turned off in Winter  
Was good enough to work their fields  
For wages they wouldn't stoop to take  
While they said we were stealing their jobs  
And lowering property values  
Just by passing through.  
We've always been just passing through  
Each time taking a little more  
Of the dirt from the fields  
On our shoes  
And under our skin.

— Bonita Rinehart

# Refuges on the Road

We drive from place to place seeking  
refuges from this world that drives us  
down under redwood sorrel  
to look up at light falling through forest.

Refuges from this world drive us  
deeper into the needs of nature.  
Looking up at light falling through forest,  
we see the world from a mouse's eyes.

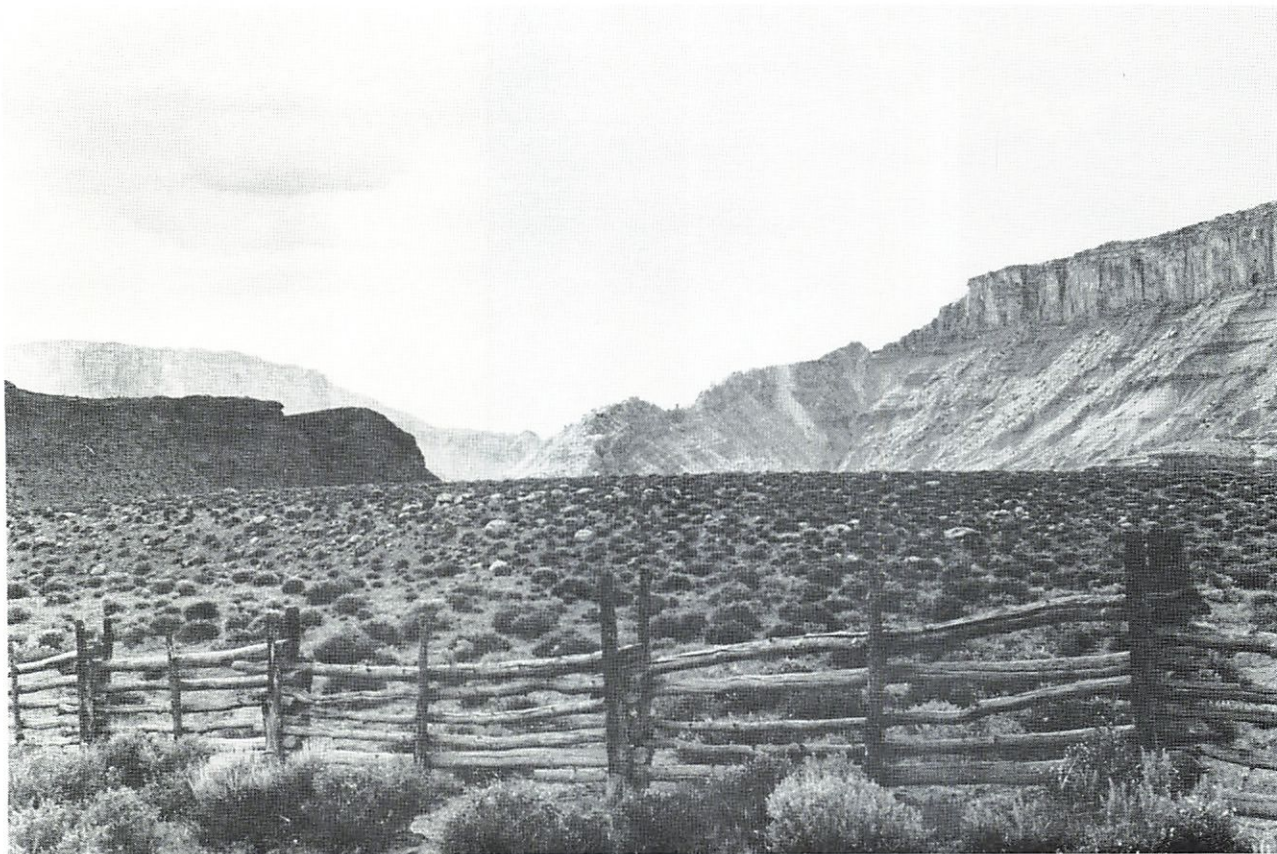
Deeper into the needs of nature,  
we descend into a cave of ice.  
We see the world from a mouse's eyes  
and fear we'll never get to return.

We descend into a cave of ice  
and see brown water frozen forever.  
We fear we'll never get to return,  
yet the evening star kisses our eyes.

We see brown water frozen forever,  
but down under redwood sorrel,  
the evening star kisses our eyes.  
We drive from place to place seeking.

— Peter Jensen





Rt. 128, Utah *photo by Mickey Stellavato*

## Tracked Down Like a Couple of Fugitives

as I walked out  
of a grocery store  
yesterday  
I passed by  
the bundles  
of kindling  
they had  
stacked by the door  
and it brought  
the whole trip  
back home to me

from the Smokies  
to the Rockies  
we'd straggle in  
beards  
and lazy dresses  
smiling  
like we had no business  
in the real world  
at all

we'd stock up  
on things  
that didn't need  
refrigeration  
and always  
on the way out  
grab a bundle  
of kindling

we built  
great blazing fires  
in forests  
all across North  
America  
to shine a light  
on our searching  
hearts  
warm our freezing

bones  
and feed our eager minds  
as we talked  
and sang  
often until dawn

then packed our gear  
and headed on  
further and further  
down that winding road  
until real life  
tracked us down  
like a couple of fugitives  
in Eugene, Oregon

— Damien Filer





*Sculpture  
by Sheridan Lee*



*photos by Bob Eiser*



# You Were Someone I Met

on my way somewhere else  
someone who thought the violence  
of juncture between  
the great brown back  
of the Plains and the angry  
humping of the Rockies was an  
acceptable place to live.  
I could not see  
what you saw and you  
were not allowed the sharded  
visions I brought from far away  
in the unimaginable place I'd left behind  
on my way somewhere else.

Your town was just a whistle-stop  
as two or three years of  
one's life can be when you're  
just passing through, hitchhiking  
on the splintered spar of a dream,  
wondering if this land where I found you  
was the somewhere else  
I wanted to be. I must admit of all  
the things I hated there, it was  
that little backwater of sound a few  
of us heard together  
I loved the most — and maybe that's  
the most a half-formed life can hope for.

You know, all I was really doing  
was slowing down to take a breath,  
waiting to shove off, still looking  
for something I'd lost. You already  
think I'm odd, so it won't  
alter the basic accuracy  
when I say how surprised  
I am today to find some  
thing came with me to the water  
when I went — something true  
and musical, both rough  
and unsullied, like a  
fragrance or a tune, maybe  
even a heron dance — some  
thing I found in a dark place  
and a frightening time, some  
thing unexpected yet  
warm as a borrowed jacket, some  
thing to wear for a while  
in the cold, on the road,  
on my way  
somewhere else.

— Sandra M. Brown

# The Battle of the Sea (or a day in the life of a fisherman)

*Tossing back and forth  
reeling with the waves  
wood and steel together  
join in graceful lines  
to form a rocking island*

*men weave back and forth  
staggering across slippery decks  
"Grab the lines!"  
"Batten down the hatches!"*

*Above  
in swirling agony  
clouds split  
to spew forth  
great rushing floods of water  
turning to needles  
sewing lines on windblown faces*

*In this mighty raging fight  
two men tried valiantly  
to try and get the fish to bite  
and feed their family*

*but luck had left their side that day  
it was frightened I suppose  
still they toiled and tried to stay  
the problems that arose*

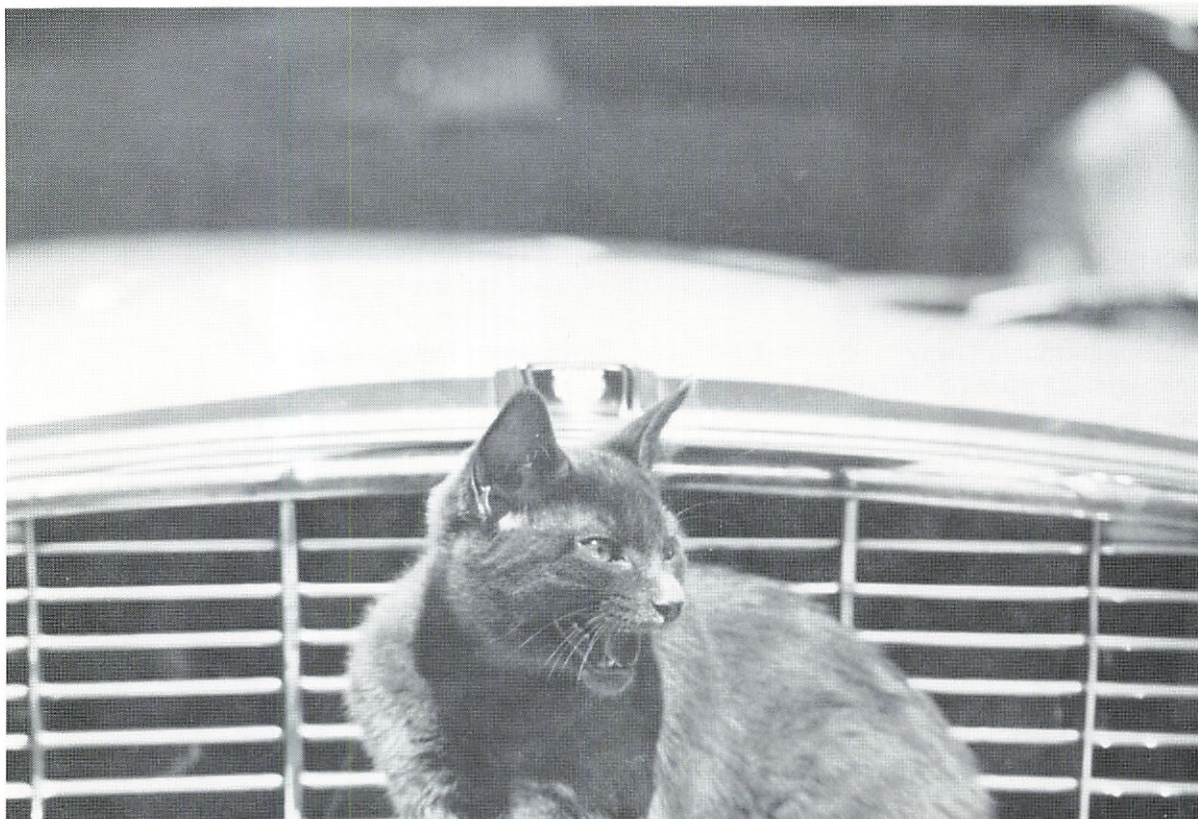
*first a line snapped from the deck  
then the dog jumped overboard  
one man said, "Oh, what the heck."  
the other pleaded with the lord*

*when it seemed that hope was gone  
and fishing would have to cease  
the wild ride that they were on  
seemed to suddenly decrease*

*they got the dog back on the boat  
and most of the fishing gear  
thanked God that they were still afloat  
and that season's end was near*

— Sonja Taylor





**Auditions for the Jaguar Hood Ornament Competition** *photo by Kenneth Brady*

## Crazy Old Katt

Racing through the living room  
 in your startled frenzy  
 to pounce on the VICIOUS  
 carpet lint —  
 "Quickly my little furry toes —  
 before it strikes again!"  
 your Spring Fever makes me  
 laugh out loud.  
 I too feel the sensual season  
 blooming in  
 my body, and watch its approach  
 with the same ecstatic calm.

— Tami Ewing

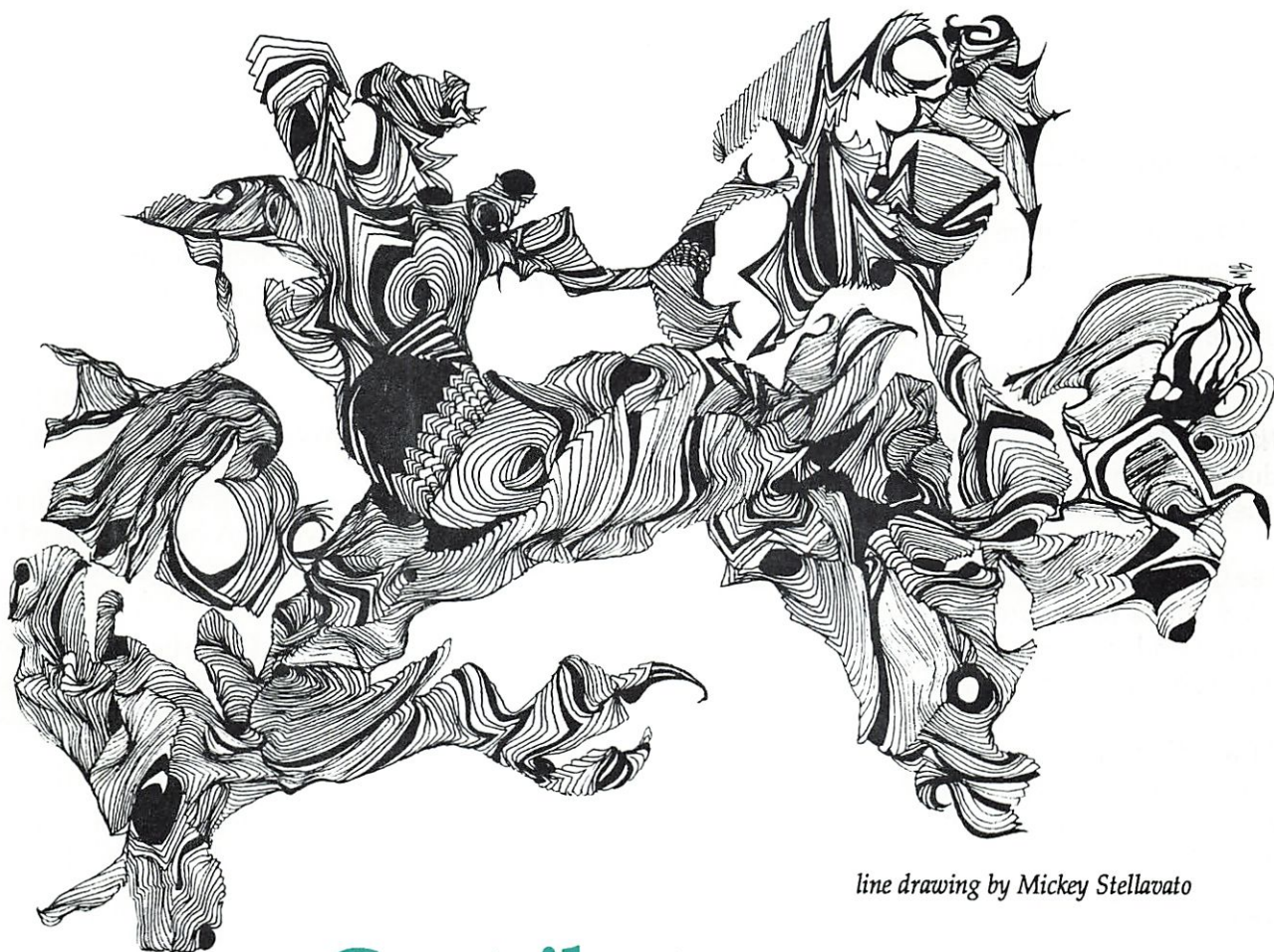
## Raven

*for Kelly — Memories of Shasta*

The delicate heartiness of the wild iris,  
 and the way the coyote  
 would howl at the moon reflected in the stream,  
 The dreaming magic of the burning sage  
 that wafted from the fire circle.  
 I remember the taste of the snow,  
 and the playful wind  
 pulling the feathers  
 from my hair, before the raven told me to return home  
 to wait.

— Tami Ewing





*line drawing by Mickey Stellavato*

## Contributors

**U.B. 28** — Part-time college student, full-time student of life, with excellent taste in beer.

**Charles Bacon** — We should make all bullets out of gold.

**Kenneth Brady** is a Douglas Adams fan, firmly believes in the fundamental interconnectedness of all things, and practices Zen driving.

**Kimberly Bourne** — Don't just be aware, be a part of your world.

**Sandra M. Brown** — a good cook, poet and real person.

**Dee Bugarin** — I have six kids. Any more questions?

**Denise Cameron** — There's very little between me and the street.

**John Carson** — is currently in a different country and could not be contacted for biographical information.

**Sam Espinosa** — Avid gardener and book reader.

**Tami Ewing** — People say I'm lucky my kid is such an angel. I work damn hard to be so lucky. It had better show ...

**Damien Filer** is a free-lance writer of poetry, prose and articles currently living in Eugene with his partner of six years and three big dogs. His work can be seen in the current issues of Thrasher, Blue Stocking and Taggerzine.

**Jake Harris** — I am 48 years old and the A & E editor at the Torch.



# Contributors Continued

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**Arlene Hougland** — I myself am a work in progress.

**Peter Jensen** — Before he started teaching at LCC, Peter was half canoe, half heron.

**Jamie King** — I have only recently put words on paper, but I have been writing for 51 years.

**Nancy Kile** — I try to always look for the good in everything and I'm always delighted to find beauty in the most unexpected places.

**Lee Crawley Kirk** — She lives in Eugene with her husband, Gary, and a back yard full of deer, raccoons, squirrels, snakes, and birds. She is not yet sure what she wants to be when she grows up. Maybe a crone.

**Allison Krieger** — I've been interested in Latin American culture for several years now and this poem was my first attempt at describing how I see the people and land of Mexico.

**Sheridan Lee** — When I grow up I want to be a graphic designer. I like to carve.

**Gladys Madenburg** is full of ideas about how to improve the world. Most of them involve surgery without benefit of anesthetic.

**Robert Mahon** — I am not pro-life or pro-abortion, I am pro-responsibility.

**Laura Mele** — "I ACCEPT LOSTNESS FOREVER"

**Rev. Eathan M. Mertz** — I need a job. I'm a caffeine pusher. Keep your bean peddling off my turf.

**Marie Orr** loves Calvin and Hobbes, Doonesbury and nightlife.

**Brian J. Psiropoulos** — I can't believe they printed the crap I wrote. I'm going to Disneyland."

**Jason Rackley** — There should be a law that states — "If you don't recycle, you'll be recycled."

**Victoria Reidy** — I've been an artist since I was 15. My favorite media is acrylic and oils. This piece was an experiment in spray paint.

**Bonita Rinehart** — If we are not our brother and sister's keeper, what do we have worth keeping?

**Scott R. Shinn** — "A song is anything that can walk by itself. I am a songwriter. A poet is a naked person. Some people say that I'm a poet."--Bob Dylan

**Merlin W. Standeford** — I have been a freelance artist in the Eugene area for about 15 years. After many years of suffering and starving I decided to go to school to improve my skills and get a degree.

**Kathryn Steadman** — Look for other works by this "bad girl" in *The Other Paper*, *Pacifica*, and *Fireweed*.

**Mickey Stellavato** — The answer is yes.

**Sonja Taylor** — Go away! I don't have anything else to say! It's the end of the year and any witty remark I might have made is already on vacation.

**Laura Walker** — I'm not getting enough mail. Sure I get catalogs and bank statements and bills, but I don't get letters (unless they're from people I don't know). So, please write me at P.O. Box 11247, Eugene, OR 97440. I'm not guaranteeing I'll write back, but who knows. Maybe we'll end up going to Guatemala together.

**Dorothy Wearne** — The last time I was on time for something, it started late.

**Jack Yattering** — I used to like pepperoni, but sometime during the latter part of the Reagan administration I developed a taste for Canadian Bacon.









## On the Road

WHEELS SCREECH, DUST FLIES, and SODA-POP SPLATTERS. It's been eleven years, three mountain bikes, and seven pairs of shoes since I last set out for adventure *On the Road*, and now, at mile marker 357, in the third state in two days, I feel a wave of nostalgia crawl up the back of my neck and tug at my **TWO-WEEK BRAID**. With one hand on the wheel, a foot perched on the dashboard, the **NEEDLE NEARING EMPTY**, and the wind eating a hole in the side of my head, I recall weeks of existence in a green Land Cruiser with an oil leak and blown tire. I ate coffee beans and pork rinds then, **CHASED CAMELS** with **TIC-TACS**, and my body **PRAISES THE LORD** that my ways since have changed, a bit. The memory disturbs a rowdy hunger inside of me, and so I turn at the next truck stop, and walking inside, the smell of the fresh men burns my nostrils. I buy a Coke, a Butterfinger, and a pack of smokes for old times sake, and as I walk outside, the men call me toots, sweetcakes, and **PRINCESS** (which I am), and I wonder if they could stare at my ass a little harder. Small town stunts are enough to make me turn my back on the air of excitement and spin myself around toward home, back to the **PREGNANT CITY** where I belong. I drive fast and hard down a flatter stretch of road, wondering how my baby is doing and realizing that my hair is just a little more matted than it was **TWO DAYS PREVIOUS**. The air is hot and my body moist when I finally sense the familiar skyline in the **SMOG BEYOND**. The Mardi Gras beads (that have now hung from my rearview mirror for three years) **SWISH**, as I **BRAKE HARD** and watch behind **THE DUST THAT SETTLES**.

ellie walker ☆  
1994