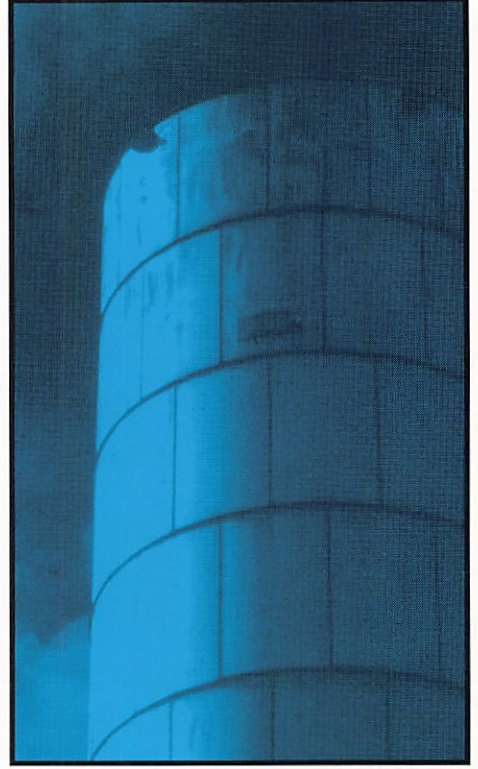
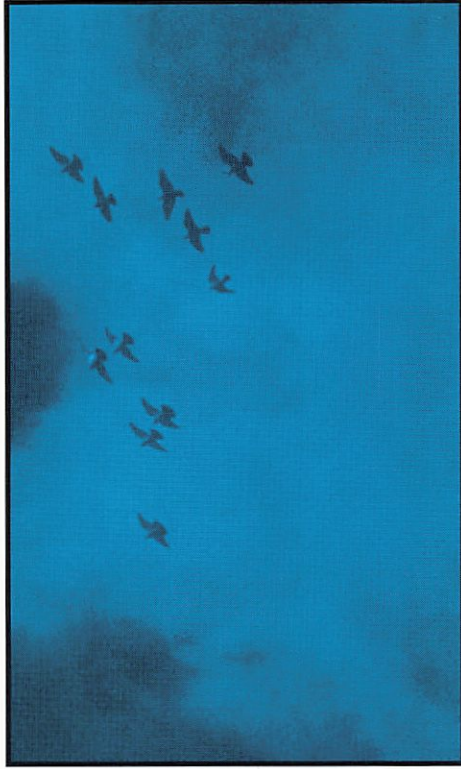
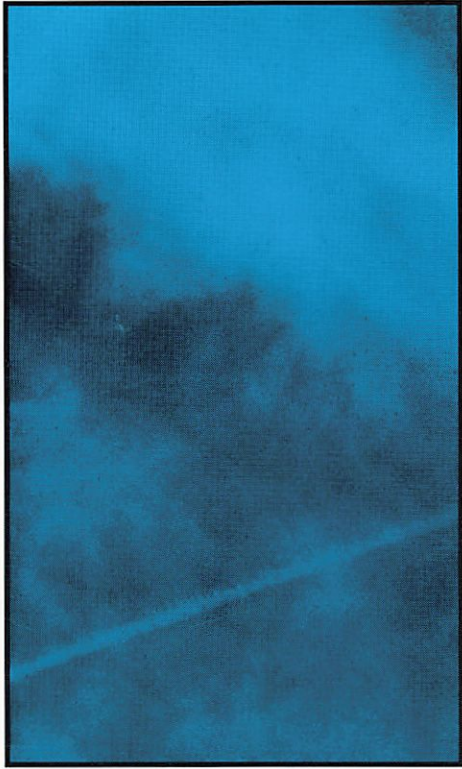


DENALI



Literary Arts Journal



Photography by Drew Laiche

D

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Photography by Kale Houppermans

i miss her

. . . like tonsils,
as i feed
the birds,
once banished by her,
for shitting on the sill.

— *Yeshe Perl*

ode to a tramp

the bruises
from your hips
have faded, love.
and now in vain,
i wait to taste
your laughter.

while angels hide
behind moth-eaten curtains,
the fragile infant dances
with a smile.

and how could one forget
that it's forbidden
to taint the soul
by feeding
a chandala.

luscious harlot
meet me underwater,
for winter
leaves a stench
i know too well.

the rubies in my eyes,
i stole
to capture
your attention,
the vulture claw
i brought along
for luck.

ancient highways crumble
at my feet, love.
weary of the moon.
i sleep in grace.

— *Yeshe Perl*

Long-term Parking

Planes as marionettes rising, landing;
the passengers are slow-moving
cells sludging through
clogged arteries. She is not any
different than a city roadblock.
Forgetful passengers, uncharted
flight plans forcing people to wait,
suffer in silence, allowing too many
extra moments to add on to the aching
long silences showing up and over-staying
their welcomes.

They do not stand close, she is alone in line and
wishing she could forget this ever happened.

She will do it again, not heeding
warnings of long-distance love. She will
know the cities mentioned, forget the happiness
he held in her future.

She will think that life
is a straight line,
from here to Newark.

She will try to find her way,
forever in circles, turning,
twisting, always in motion.

— *Katie Collins*



Photography by Sam Karp

Oregon Grape

Green and sharp
Penetrated by red

A hundred yellow flowers
bright as the sun, gentle as nipples
Penetrated by red

The smell of watermelon
red heart split, cracked, jagged
and open to the yellow sun

Juice sticky
down your arms, chest chin

It's okay
we don't mind being sticky

Yellow like the sunshine
like all the woman in my heart
Penetrated by red

Gentle as nipples
sharp as needles

Taken from nothing
Taken from no ones ribs

Grown from fertile soil and sunshine
Penetrated by red

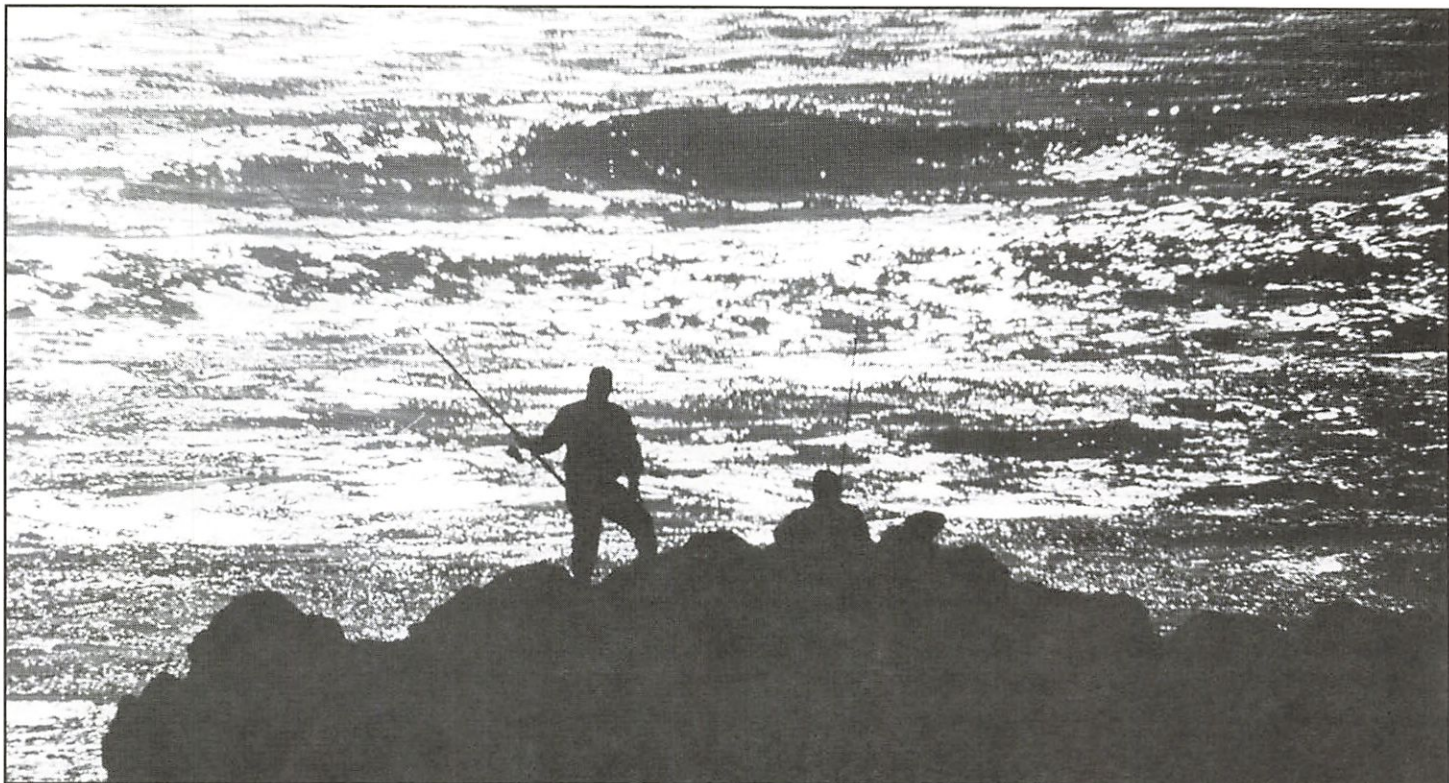
I smell like watermelon juice
dripping off a loved one

You can only touch hold, smell, me
in a certain way

— *Tashubi*



Photography by Raku Mayers



Photography by Kale Houppermans

High tide at Cummins Creek

On a red cedar log
in the lee of a sandstone bluff
the skookums wet breath eddies over me

High tide waves drive back the rising creek
flooding its first pool
rounding up new drifters
dropping off some old

The ocean draws out
The cobble bed rolls
click clack clonk
like hooves on a distant street

A raven croaks and I look upstream
in time to see a silver salmon roll
eyeing the shadows
tasting the blood of its homeland

In the salmon's eye
I see the ocean
I see the land
I see the sky

— *Scott Nelson*

Dirt under the nails

I lose balance on edges-

once it was a cliff I
led my mother up,
our bicycles went round and high.
A cartoon mountain slowed our smile
and pedaled us an easy height.

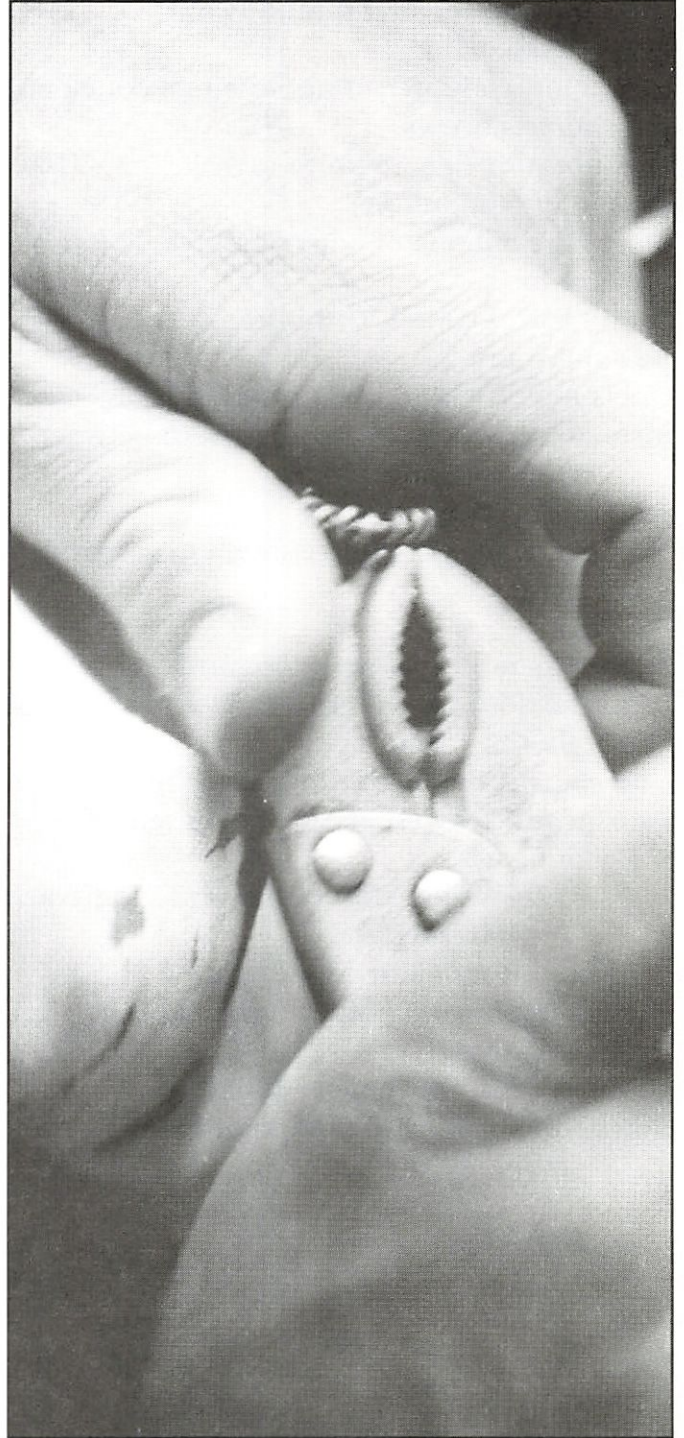
I never once did not fall
or barely hang silence from that cliff.
I swam a swollen air that was
always too ripe to forget.

Then twenty some years grew me
tightropes slick enough to know
death may always be that quick,
that silent, no matter how we intervene.

But so far the dirty earth
hasn't grown a taste for me. Even
though I swear the bottom
has been close enough to lick,
I only taste fishing wire and hope
my callused fingers will crawl on
what my fattened feet cannot.

I'm sure it's as simple as slipping
and forgetting how to fall.

— *Alexander Fouts*



Photography by Sam Karp

TWO PACKS A DAY

this could be the one that kills me
 snap. light.
through the chatter of anonymous coffee cups
my sadness brews.
“it’s not him,” i scream to myself.
i mean, it couldn’t be.
out of the billions of cups of coffee drunk a day
few are his
“don’t turn around,” i think.
he’s not there,
(he’s never where i want him to be)
instead he lies wedged somewhere between my esophagus
 and appendix
fetal and alive
his fingernails just long enough to scratch the skin of
 my heart
 raw
he knows not to scratch too hard
for if he does he will drown in my muddy blood
“he is there,” i think.
(he’s always where i don’t want him to be)
i stir around my emptying lemon tea
 it is me-
 swirled with undissolved ingredients
 bittersweet
 left cold from neglect
i crush my burning filter in the ashtray
 it is him-
 but, isn’t everything?
maybe this will be the one that kills me.
 snap. light.

— *n. demaria*

7 YEARS BAD LUCK

elbows locked
barrel facing forward
barefoot on the bathroom floor
driven not by teen angst
but by poverty & hunger
this is more exciting
than a self-induced stigmata
CD skips
& the song goes nowhere
over & over & over
like me
shove conquers all
safety off (it's been off for years)
elbows locked
barrel facing forward
i squeeze the trigger

— *n. demaria*

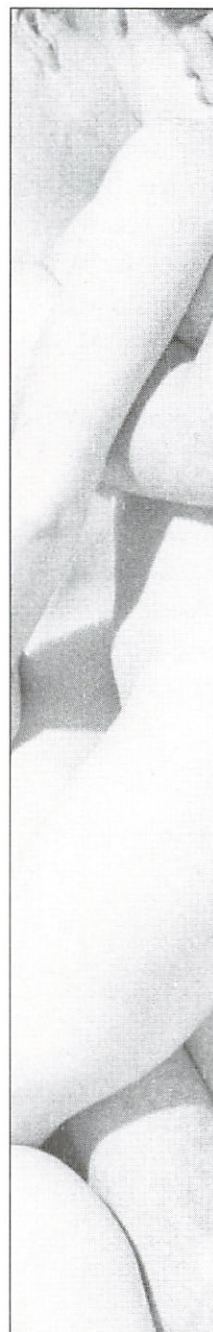


Photography by Drew Laiche

Paper Dreams

On a hot day in August,
when lust shed its saddle and bridle,
we rode it bareback.
Scattering the paper meadow of your desk,
then hard against the cork wall,
we brought down a rain of memos and faxes.
Afterward, we sheepishly reigned in passion
quietly adjourning to the real world.
Outside, I avoided your burning gaze
lest I be caught dreaming again.

— *Katherine Walters*





Photography by Matt Ralston

LETTERS

I'm writing on a stack of my old words
I'm writing poems for you
I'm writing with magicians and ancient spirits in my head
My hair is longer,
 Your artistry is in my fingertips & toes,
 In my eyes & distant smile
I'm painting your shoulders
 The sun sets behind them
My sister lives with a cat named Love
If I boxed a cricket and sent it to you
 Its body would arrive spiritless,
 Dry and crinkly like a flower in the heart
 Of a book for many forgotten years,
And ageless crickets everywhere would rejoice
 They might link arms as in a chorus and sing:
 The stars in your mind
 Make poets go blind

— *Gabe Schroeder*

A Prize Fighter

He taught me how to swim.

He used to recite me poetry,
Poe's Raven, Annabel Lee,
laughing deep from
brown eyes and skin, cracked and
shining like worn leather.

When i was young, my hands sticky,
covered in cracker jack tattoos, he'd
sock me on the chin popping
his mouth like a kiss from a prize fighter.
Mimicking Muhammed Ali, "You
can't touch me, i'm too
beautiful."

I'd run laughing from him, hiding
under tables, cloth hanging down in
stark sheets of starched lace and plastic.
Grandma yelling, "Daddy wash
his face for dinner."

Always rice and beans, tortillas and
fresh chili with every meal, pot-roast
or tamales. And in the warm Whittier
night
Grandpa and the sweet smell of
his pipe under the orange tree.

Sometimes he'd scoop me up and
wipe me clean with his thin handkerchief in
studied movements. All the while
humming some forgotten
tune that Fred Astaire used to
dance to.

The park with the fire engine is
no longer there. Or the emptied cargo
plane i used to hide in, Grandpa calling
"Mijo, mijo." The neighbors have moved
away, and with them the
little dark-eyed girl that
smiled at me behind the
waxy leaves of
the avocado tree.

the community pool might still
be there, where his large
dark hands held me as i kicked.
And all the heads turned as
the blond kid called to this
old brown man "Grandpa,
watch me," as i jump, as i sailed
through these years on
your whispering
wind.

Twenty years later,
while Grandma slept for once,
i helped him find the way
back to his bedroom in
the dead of night.

"Where are you going Grandpa?"
His diaper hanging loosely
from his slack brown hands.
"I don't know Mijo." His eyes
searching
for recognition.

I laid him down gently, the sweet bitter
smell of him sharper than sorrow,
Pushing his soft weak legs beneath
the heavy deep covers of
his hospital-railed bed.
"Thank you mijito," he labored,
"Sorry for being so much
trouble."

— O. Gabriel Avila-Mooney



Photography by Raku Mayers



Photography by Raku Mayers

No eggs

Some days wake me with spoons
sunk in a bowl or stirring the cup,
tossing the leftover milk of Cap'n
Crunch into a deep, dark coffee
that only tomorrow will understand,
when the need for cream and soft
boiled eggs become convincing,
standard, even appetizing.

The toilet paper waits with leftover
napkins, and the eggs always manage
a low boiled silence, it's just those
sometimes I simply cannot eat the
firm white/yellow meat of menstruation.

But there will wake the
smack of my lips into the journey
of sound in tough, immobile yolk.

It seems one day I might understand
that cream won't help the coffee,
and I'll always be one away
from cooking the perfect egg.

— *Alexander Fouts*

A Sense of Order at the French Horn Cafe

Her hazel eyes scan the page before she reads:

“The bass player fingers his way through the continuo
at a contumacious pace. He wants to compose but has no system.
His life is without form, without paradigm, ultimately, without hope.”

She comes to this cafe for the atmosphere and the seriousness of art.

When she writes she lets a dictionary fall open then studies the pages.

She selects two words and strikes them together. In this case, “continuo” from page 246, and
“contumacious” from page 247.

She describes her method as post modern, indexical, Krausian.

She explains how I was born at a particular time in history. The pages
of the world fell open and there I was. Most of the women who had ever lived
were already dead. This restricts my choices. She asks for my sign.

Suddenly I prefer to enter the world some other way, without being born.

Without belly button, and therefore, without sign. I stare in my coffee cup
at the slow spirals of cream turning like tiny galaxies.

She is sadly right, I concede, possibilities are indeed limited.

— *Pete Helzer*



Photography by Raku Mayers

Her fascination with Barry

One morning, malt and acid-iron flavored
sucks of vacuous lip-biting fervor,
with your tomato eyes, my hip-hop dancing,
i joking, as i'm known to do
in times unaccustomed to,
pulled a sausage, aroused and beaten,
from the holds of your livid
glistening tender foundation.

Tapped deftly not once, but twice upon
the marble liquid of your peach, waiting
to see if, like other lightly veiled insults, you'd
stand for one more.

This firmly held became Armageddon,
and twilight with your curses fell magically
aloft among a wholesome curtail of love and sex.
And with your tirade over, your eyes of green and fire,
mountain stoic earth, grinning
Catholic school girl innocence, and i,
sausage in hand, lightly
nursed the world
from your breast.

Later, when malicious, you bit me,
marks dashed moon crescents, on my
white thigh. And i, with a fistful of hair,
became your slapping ecstasy
i wondered, how could it be
any other way?

At dinner that evening, your mother drunk on eye shadow,
father's liver talking of better times, i
battered your resilience and fortitude
beneath the plastic-covered table under your
short burgundy skirt, your eyes livid
but begging, as mother
excused herself to no one.

Of course, there was also the broken mirrors, and
fists of waking, sleepless nights on
couches and friends unheeded, yet good advice.
But we held onto that morning,
you laughing, at my display of manliness
i at your gorgeous strength,
when naked we made breakfast
with our bodies.

— *O. Gabriel Avila-Mooney*



Photography by Raku Mayers

II.

I've been to Hollywood, I've been to L.A.
I can almost imagine it in 19-*fiftynine*
The silver screen ran that town: Cary Grant
Jimmy Stewart, were some of the names
Was Marilyn still young and smart?
Oh when will you wail, lonely woman?

Mr. Coleman when you build melody on dissonant chords
You won't be taken by the jazz establishment
You blew Charlie Parker's ghost into the ground
Before Coltrane had tried on the tuxedo

Mr. Coleman I believe you were the real star
You were in your best clothes when you stood on the curb in bright L.A. light
And you probably lit a cigarette before you stepped across the sidewalk
Into the dark door of the building front
I can see the overexposed street, on fire

— *Gabe Schroeder*

For An Honest Artist

I'm in awe.

Your straight-edge cynicism demands nothing,
not even change.

It is
as honest, as sharp,
as your work,
your art
dried in dark horse shoes around your nails.

Your smiling calm takes flight, wings spread
like the Coltrane on vinyl that you skin alive for hours until
your neighbor's fists hit the wall like horse hooves.

Then, the dedicated sadness waiting in the corners of your railway apartment,
hiding in the plaid lining of your second-hand jacket
hardens the callouses.

I sit down
to learn the landscape of your hands,
your callouses, your cuts, bruises,
knowing they have roughed rebar into difficult frames,
wet cement into substance,
just as they have stroked a woman's face into being
with shades of blue.

I imagine you at the end of the day.
You are an exhausted angle bent into collapse.
The alcohol eases your eyes from pine needle greens to a loose mercury.
Your back, your neck, corded into thick ropes
I ache to unbraid.

You are sore as you reach for blank paper
forcing yourself into the perpendicular.

You take up your pen or your brush like a scepter
and lay claim to the irony and agony of it all.
There are no exclamation points here
where all I can do
is to try to write with
the solid carpentry of a working class artist.

— *Michelle McDermott*



Photography by Sam Karp

Moth Wings

I shuffle down the sidewalk, past the jail.
By chance I look up to see him,
this lonely soul waving his arms frantically,
like a moth trapped between the window and the screen,
exhausted by the fruitless pursuit of freedom.
I turn away, hide my twisting face, the hot stain of tears.

He told me once about nights like these,
when I was still a little girl and he was bad.
Endless nights at the window watching
the dim, continuous light of the freeway.

It has been years now,
I am a grown woman and he is good.
He is free every day and hardly notices.
Yet at night he heaves in his sleep,
crying out and reaching for safety.
In the darkness specters come to chain
his arms and take him

Then, we find one another amidst
the tangle of sheets and he sleeps again,
peacefully unaware of
his moth wing rhythm.

— *Katherine Walters*

My Son Silence

Jeezus, these laundered rampant spring days, all
dryer sheets and laudanum, blank alleys
desperate and choked with barbecue smoke, children's
simpering wails and mismatched
faded shoes twined in spiraling phone lines.

I pick fruit blossoms on my way home. Shirtfuls of
white and pink flowers soon to turn
to hard bitter pears and round crisp apples,
granny smiths and liver-spotted reds. Arms hung
tenaciously over brown barking fences, vicious
and feral.

My house is clean. The wood bare and
empty. Foot falls step in echoes of corners,
the rotting yellow walls dripping from past
tenants' addictions. Even my own veins ache
with leisure, straddled in smoke and oil, throbbing
with tensions imagined but no less real.

Often the sounds of silence, a small dark-eyed boy, his skin
tempered in traffic, whispers forward. Decrepit and
frail he hovers, this child of absence, arms
clamped into himself, waiting to be noticed, aching
to be listened to in the rum of twilight,
this child punched with discourse, punched
with ropes in bruises like rings, like necklaces
of pearls, like ribbons of teeth.

Tilting my head for him, unhinging my jaw, unholy,
serpentine, I swelter and grow in the sultry spring air. My body
bloats and rumbles; my eyes turn dinner plates, silver
eggs, my mouth a wet tunnel, a bowl
deep and moist. I coax him into me, steps
of Silence, his feet on my tongue, salty, tinges of loam
and night, of dust, of mothball blankets.

He's timid, frightened, desperate his fingers
wrap hungry round my spine. Cool and soft, his hands
a calm, a blanket, his hands an eon of waiting, of someone leaving
and returning home again shrouded
in the chest of night. I shrink about him, around the stillborn
presence of him, of his solidity, of his muted vision.

From within my body, Silence breathing, looking
out, the wood of my floor shimmers and grows, each
crack perceptible in leathery detail to us, each
niched wall hewn in surreal awareness. My nose
flares once more the tin of apples, young pears and
mown grass. Of coconut candles, barbecue smoke
and my body's sweet dying.

My hands are light and rough, and Silence ingested,
my ears open like flowers, like a child's fists
cupped around bees, like eyes, the skin rolling back
to the music, to the sounds of traffic,
this time a rhythm,
a conch shell ocean, a roar.

— *O. Gabriel Avila-Mooney*



Photography by Gabriel Powell

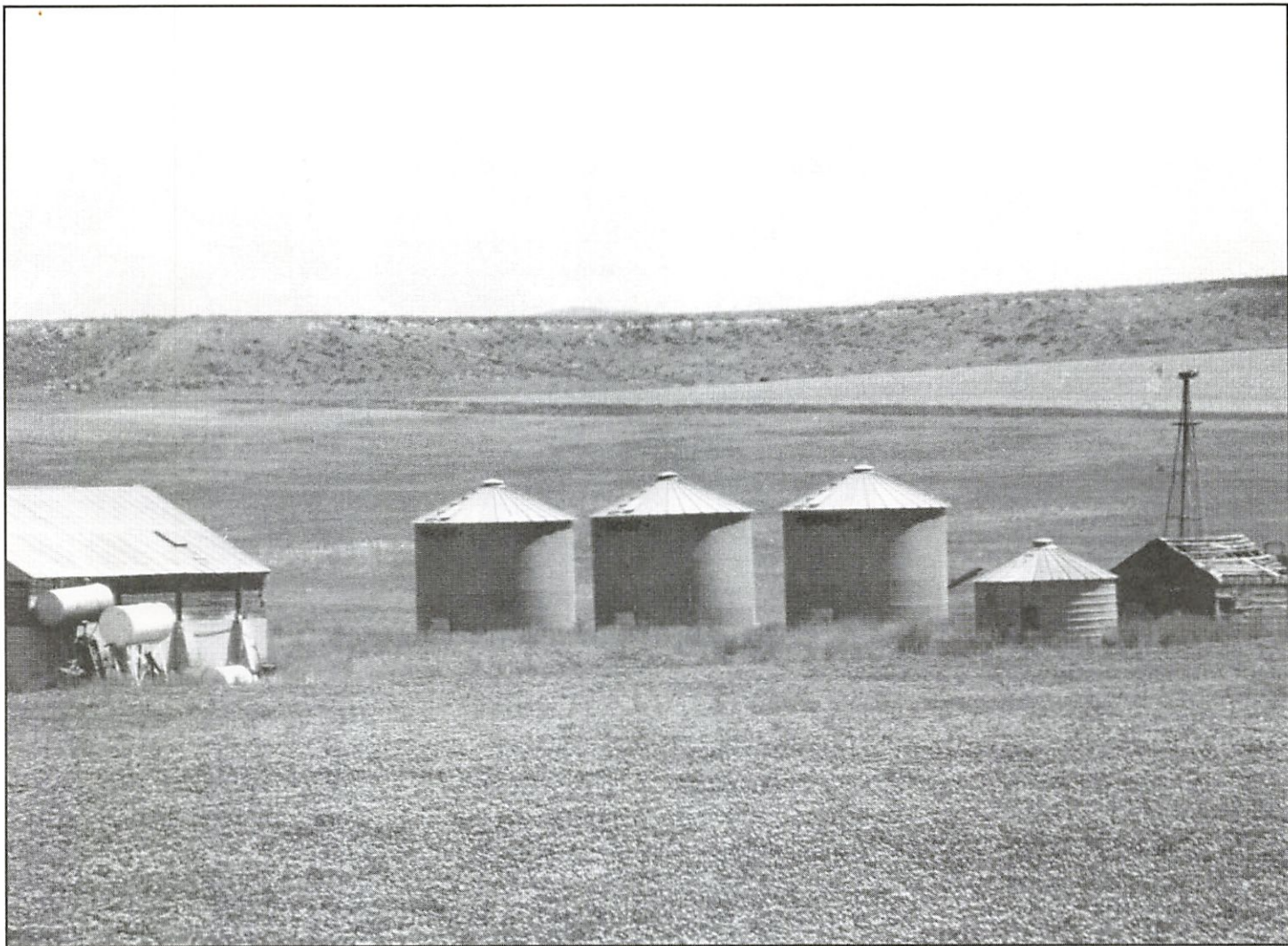


Photography by Lila Adams

In the east

the light crawls over the edge
of the sky, piercing the eye with
a bead of red flame.
I string this bead on my
forehead and wait.
the sun touches my back,
then drips into my shoulders,
as warmth becomes sweat.
cloth as white or black
billows around us,
faces are hidden but
the chanting is strong
voices raise up to the sun,
spices twist in their smoke.
one of us at a time
will bend down to the flame
taking an offering of water
from our own flesh.
the sun cries down
from its summit, and music
as sharp reeds
draws against our skin.
who knows how
long one waits in the desert
in silence to hear the music?
the cries grow stronger,
pleading against the sun
as it draws down night's veil.
the eye is hooded
but gives a level stare.
the sweat becomes cool, but
no clouds on the horizon bring rain.
our hands pluck moisture from
arms, legs, chest into our cracked lips.
the sharp cry of heat fades
and the wind gently draws us
into its darkening robe
yet our bodies press forward
reaching out for lost sound

— *Julia Selwyn*



Photography by Heather Redwine

Reckless

I want to make a mistake tonight.
I want to do something I'll regret for years.
For once in my life
I don't want to count the consequences,
looming like burning crosses
on the dark horizon of an uncertain future.

— *Michelle McDermott*

east might save us

I sense direction by
thoughts of freeways.

I said
if you can figure out just one of them
the rest are easy.

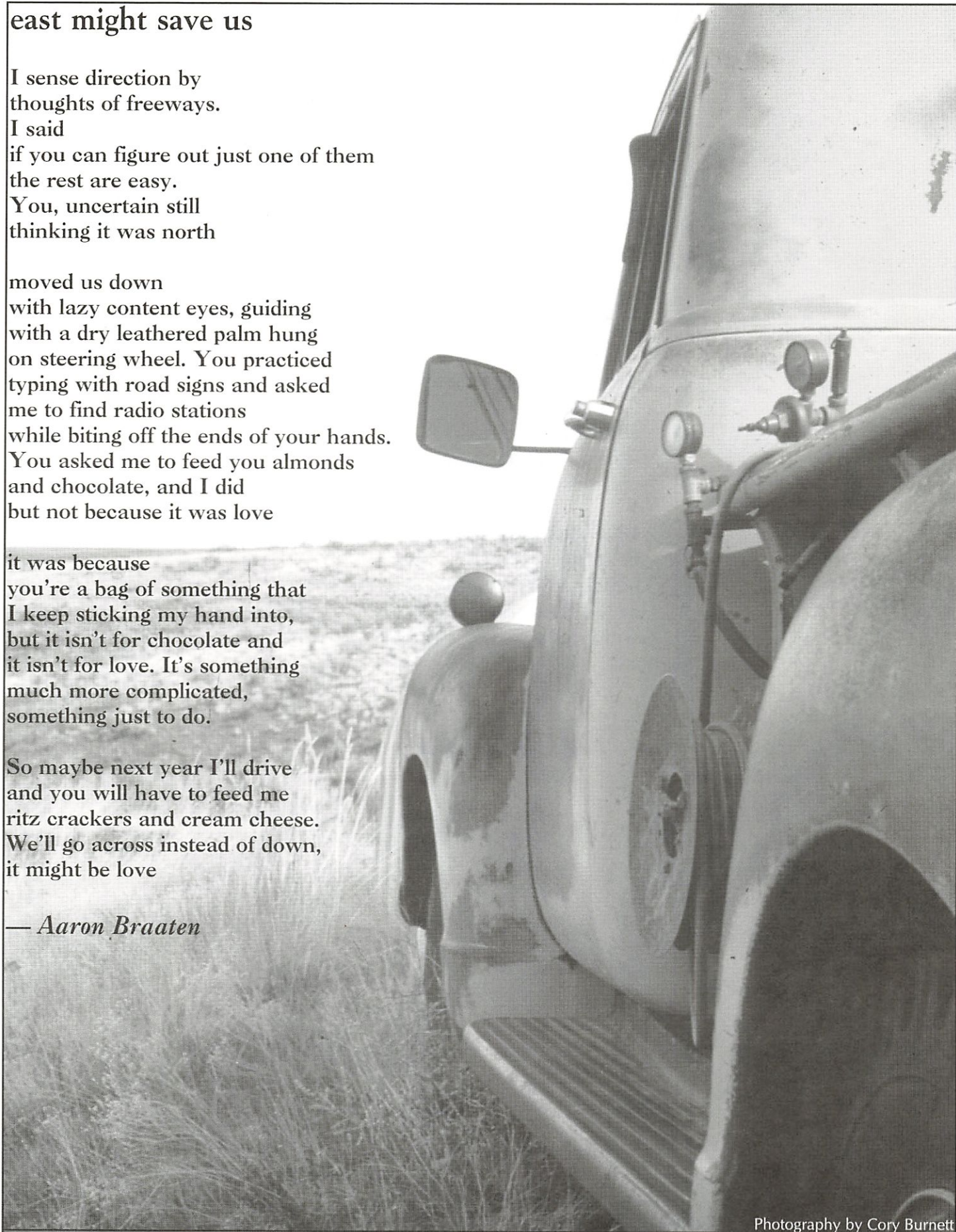
You, uncertain still
thinking it was north

moved us down
with lazy content eyes, guiding
with a dry leathered palm hung
on steering wheel. You practiced
typing with road signs and asked
me to find radio stations
while biting off the ends of your hands.
You asked me to feed you almonds
and chocolate, and I did
but not because it was love

it was because
you're a bag of something that
I keep sticking my hand into,
but it isn't for chocolate and
it isn't for love. It's something
much more complicated,
something just to do.

So maybe next year I'll drive
and you will have to feed me
ritz crackers and cream cheese.
We'll go across instead of down,
it might be love

— *Aaron Braaten*



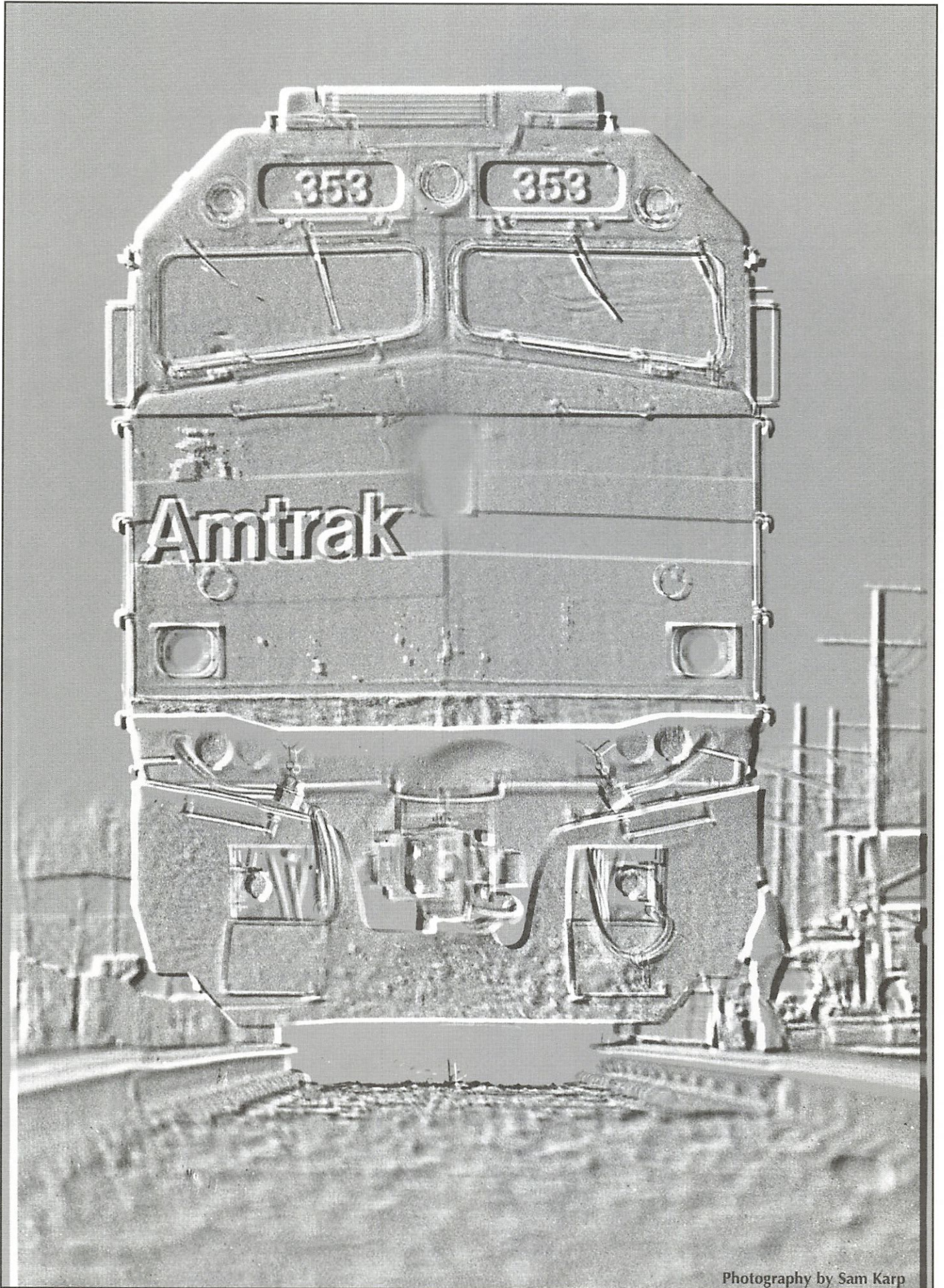
Photography by Cory Burnett

Desolate Wood and Metal

Train lurching forward,
light sheds
across empty tracks,
shining metal crosses,
weaves over wood and gravel.

Like a lighthouse sun
headlight floods,
blinding the hopeless
or the irreverent bums,
waiting for the next ride.

— *Leif Van Wagenen*



Photography by Sam Karp



Sundial Darkness

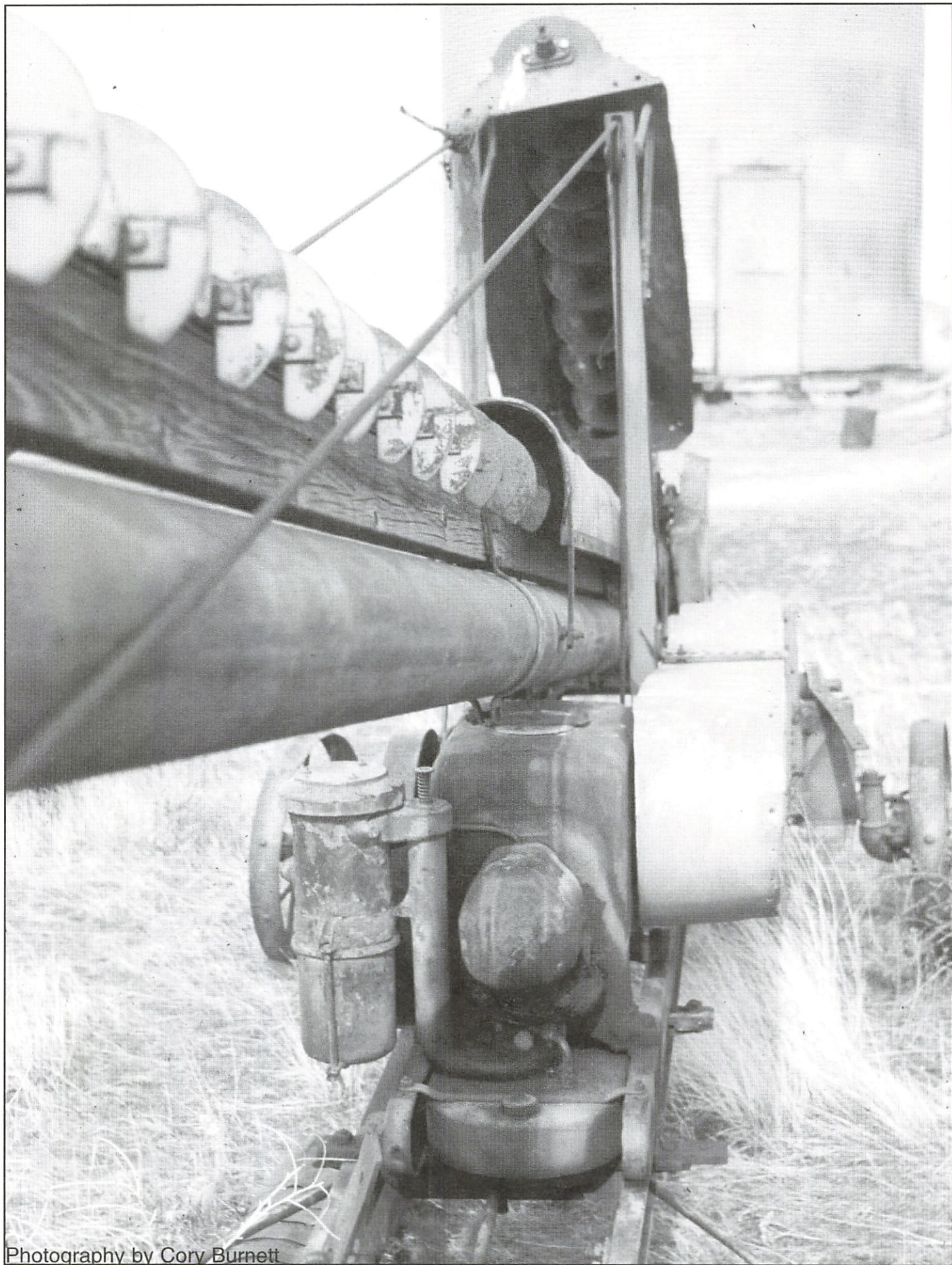
clouds cast no shadows
my body has not been
a sundial for many months.
without the sunlight
time is not stretched
from short shadows to long
i went from a mirage of water
to vague forms in mist.
From hot molten summers
to cool ashy clouds.
Here fog settles
in my cupped hands.
Time does not circle
like a crow on the wing,
instead my shadow is
within myself
the candle flickers within.
time is endless without the sun,
a vaguely lit sky with the
shoulders of mountains,
a valley where light and dark
no longer have separation.

— *Julia Selwyn*

REGRET

the bathwater is blue
like me
i lay in the tub
just to be naked somewhere
the man who plays the saxophone under my window
every night
is playing a song tonight
about a woman he pissed away
the bathwater is blue
like me
i lay in the tub
just to save money
he'll never know that
her (my) toes look like cherries
in the bathroom candle light
the bathwater is blue
like me
i lay in the tub
just to not have to talk
the man that i love
thinks that i'm crazy (for obvious reasons)
i think that i'm crazy because i care
and the faucet drips
just to remind me

— *n. demaria*

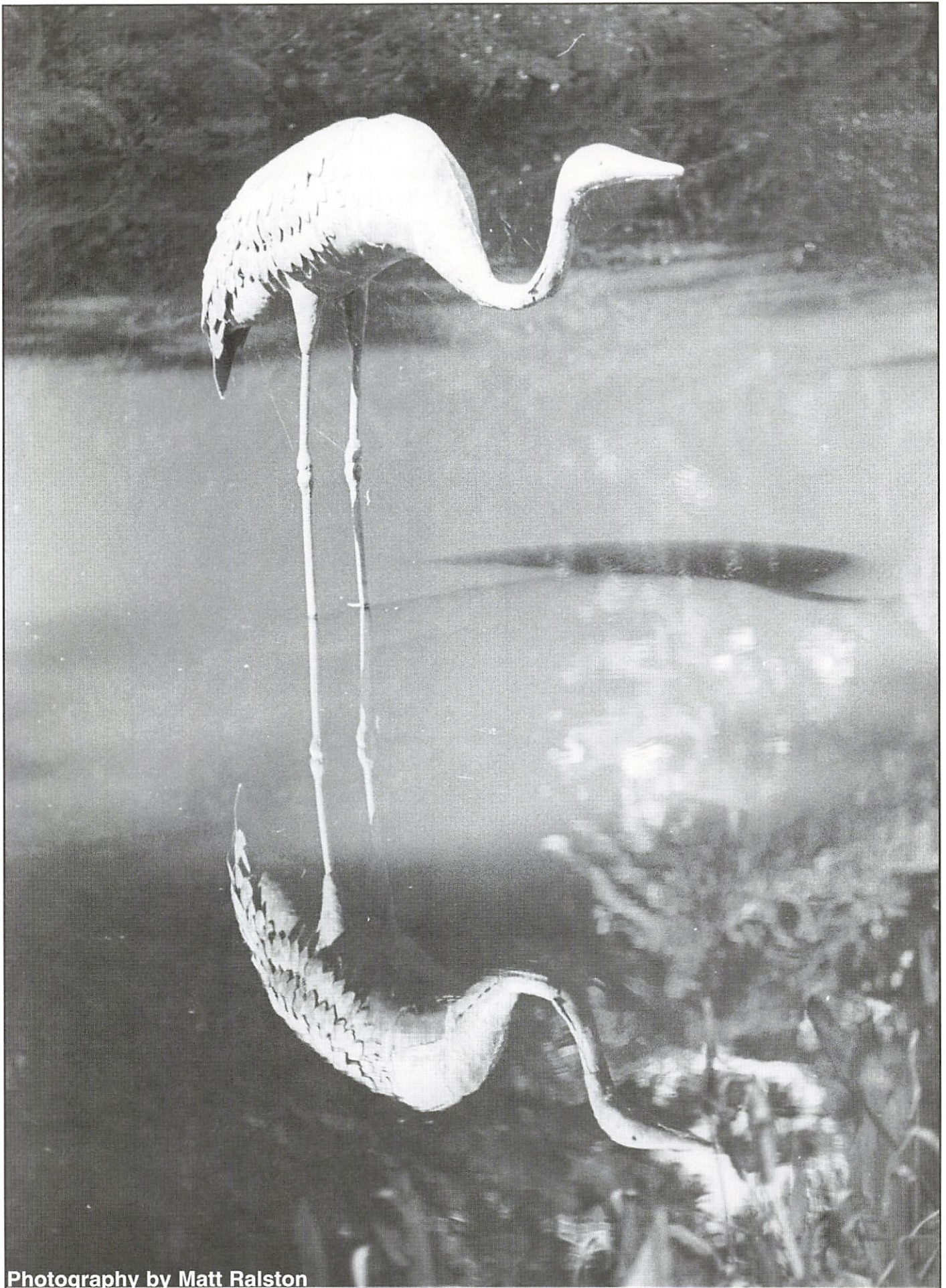


Photography by Cory Burnett

Distancing the World

He thought if he came here he'd do things differently,
maybe sleep more hours, maybe less,
eat dinner a little earlier than usual.
He never thought that he'd find a new
choice, a good time to be alive.
They weren't the years that he chose to retire
or when he was fresh out of high school or
four years of college.
He chose to go when he
was feeling a little cynical,
he thought he'd get a second wind of
life yearning to live.
He paid Greyhound \$439
to let him go anywhere he wanted:
Atlanta, Anchorage, Toledo, Tulsa.
He went to them, collected artifacts
to send home to his wife, wearing plaid
skirts to work. She delivered flowers
to customers, showing them the petrified
wood he had sent. Her eyebrows rose a little
when her customers sighed and said,
"Why aren't you with him, searching
for a better life?"
She fell asleep at night,
clutching letters he sent,
postmarked from Florida,
Georgia and South Carolina

— *Katie Collins*

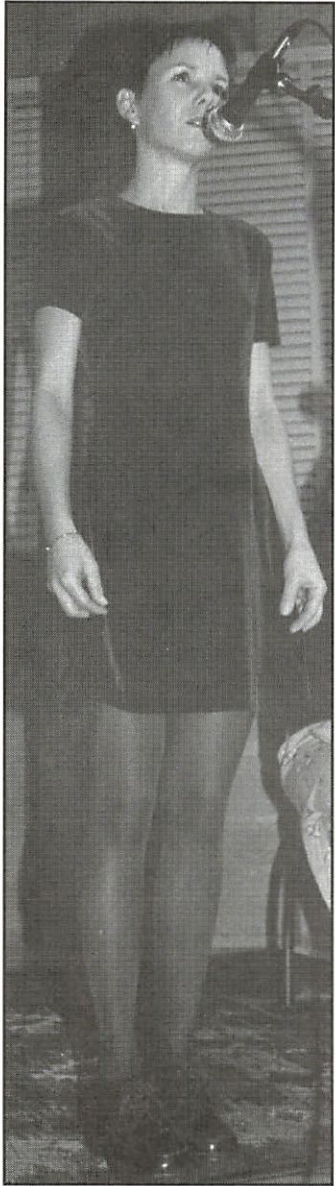


Photography by Matt Ralston

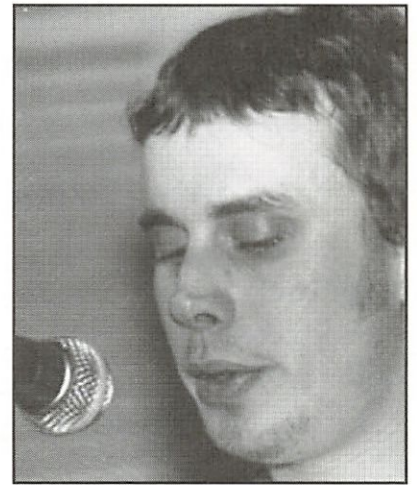
Denali at Tsunami

Live Art and Literature

June 8th
7:30 p.m.



- Authors and Artists exhibiting their work from the Winter and Spring term journals.
- Refreshments
- No cover charge



Interested?
Call Denali 747-4501 Ext. 2897

Tsunami Books is at 2585 Willamette

– Submission Form –

Completion of this form does not guarantee publication. All works are submitted to an editorial board, which chooses works for a variety of reasons including style, statement, voice, creativity and originality. Pieces chosen by the board will be published and the journal will acquire one-time rights. After publication, all rights revert back to the author or artist.

Denali Literary Arts Journal considers all original submissions of art and writing regardless of medium, style or subject matter. We do not censor except for literary and artistic merit and we do not restrict authors and artists to theme-based issues. Our guidelines are as follows:

- Submissions should be typed or submitted on a Mac-compatible disk.
- Print only your phone number on the work(s) so they can be judged anonymously. Your name should only appear on this form. Submissions with identification will be returned and resubmitted when only the phone number identifies the author/artist.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated.
- High-contrast art and black & white photography work best for our black & white format. Art in color will be considered. If accepted, negatives or slides need to be submitted for scanning.
- Fill out the form below and turn in your submission to our Student Activities mailbox or our office in Industrial Technology #213, inside the *Torch* office.
- Call or come to the office with any questions or concerns or to find out about the acceptance or rejection of your work.

Denali Literary Arts Journal IT 213
4000 E. 30th Ave. Eugene OR, 97405, (541) 747-4501 ext. 2897

Name: _____ Pseudonym: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Title(s) of work(s): _____

I authorize Denali to publish my work, should it be accepted by the editorial board.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Look for our Fall Term Deadline in September

The Denali editors would like to express their ongoing gratitude for the skill, accommodation and support of the LCC Torch staff. This publication would not be possible without them.

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