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SPRING 1988

Instreem

INSTRESS has been published by the students of College Misericordia since December of 1966. The title, coined by Gerard Manley Hopkins, signifies the moment the reader achieves complete understanding of the written word. The author, through INSTRESS, conveys to and shares with the reader, an emotionally moving experience.

Submit your works to any of the editors or writers of INSTRESS for publication next year. INSTRESS receives campus members' original artwork as well as their original poetry, prose, and photography.

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COLLEGE MISERICORDIA: Founded and Sponsored by the Religious Sisters of Mercy

The Door is Closed

The door is closed;
I may no longer enter here.
Maturity has given me
A suitcase and a coat.

Liz Gush

Autumn Apparitions

fusing fuchsine foliage,
famish fallow fields;

checkered citrine clumps,
cloister broadside mountain;

broad and blackened boughs,
bow bonded branches;

coralweed and cockles,
couch stonefaced road;

pallid peagreen pastures,
public plain plots;

downy dun domestics
drift distant dale;

ropy ruby roadways,
roam round river's ripples;

scathing sepia soilwounds,
streak from farmer's plow.

Mary Mackin

Haiku

Peaked rippled rooftops,
like polar corduroy
downy, winter snow.

Mary Mackin

Spring

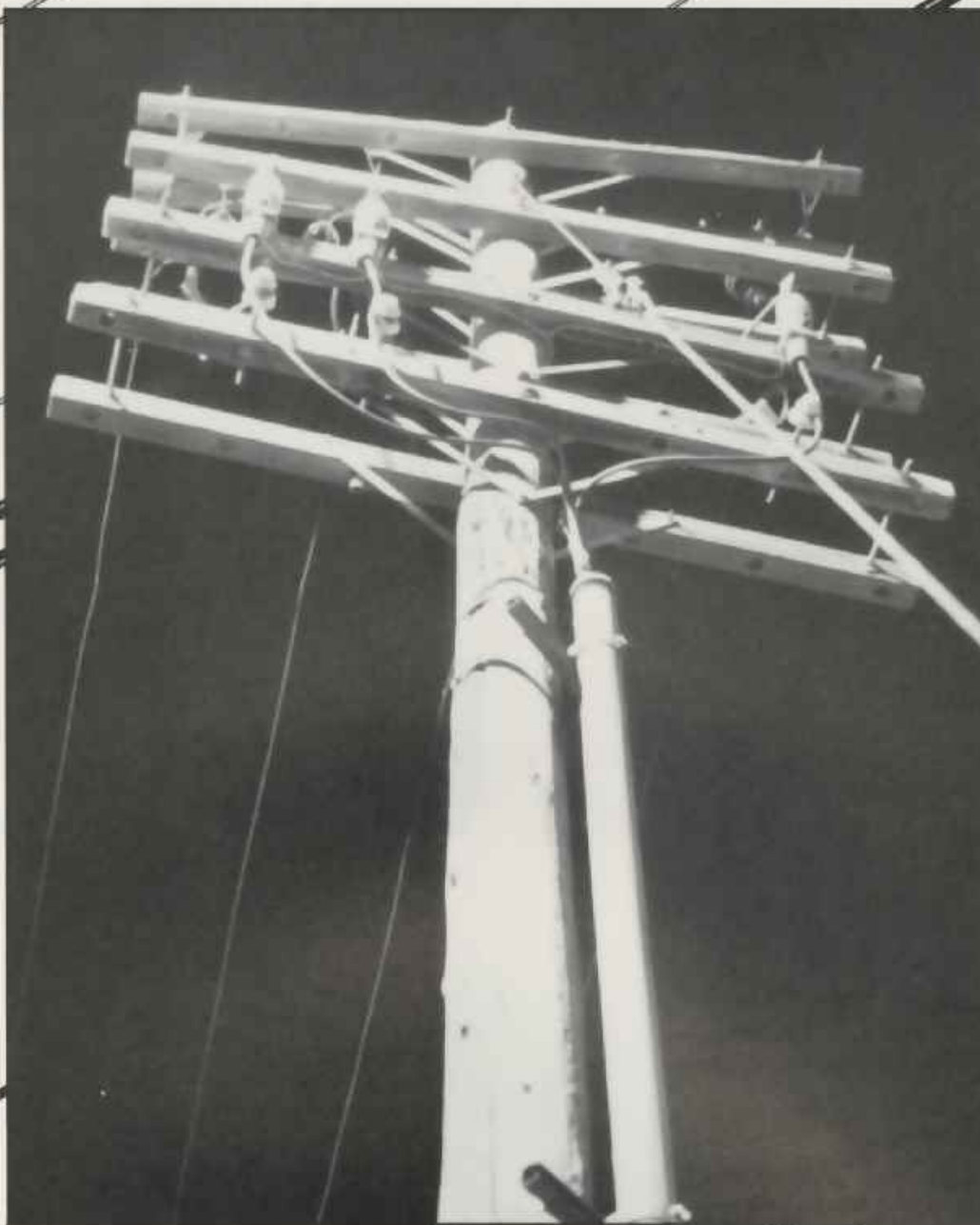
Icy dewdrops rest on

Leaves
Of
Velvet Green.
Embracing the dawn, the sun

Yawns a gentle pink
Over the morning sky.
Under the

Kaleidoscope of colors, the
Earth lies
Naked.

Julie Kullman



There is a Strange Land Ahead

There is a strange land ahead, hostile home,
Where quiet hovers like a cloudy veil
Nothing moves, but lies in wait, as for prey,

The carriage slows, and I am home.

Odd-faced natives, these instant relatives
With powdered-up faces like sculpted mud.
Yet expecting to line my face with clay --

I raise my eyes and pray for rain.

Liz Gush



The world is made up of two kinds of people; those who love cats, and those who hate them. I used to be a cat lover, but lately I find myself drifting to the other side.

My change in attitude started two years ago, after I moved out of the apartment, bought a house, and had to take care of the garbage myself. Ever since, I've had an ongoing battle with the neighborhood cats over garbage rights. The cats are winning. Monday is garbage night on my street. Tuesday morning the street is full of my garbage.

Usually, I put out five bags worth of the weeks refuse, but I only own two metal cans to put the stuff in. That leaves three bags begging to be molested. People love to share with me the tricks they use to keep cats away; "Put moth balls in the bag, they hate the smell." And, "Pour bleach on the trash, that will keep them away." Face it, cats are just too smart to fall for any of those gimmicks. Also, cats have unyielding patience to sort through the mess to find that one uncontaminated steak bone.

After much thought it hit me, a plan so simple it couldn't miss. For the first time in two years I'd be one up on my opponents. The garbage truck doesn't arrive until after I've left for work in the morning, all I'd have to do is bring the three vulnerable bags out with me then. Perfect, I thought, except for the first time in two years the garbage men came early. The low rumble of the truck and the clanking of the cans jolted me from a deep sleep to the full consciousness of three bags of garbage not yet at the curb. I jumped out of bed, put on a pair of pants, grabbed the trash bags, and ran down the street in the pouring rain after the garbage truck.

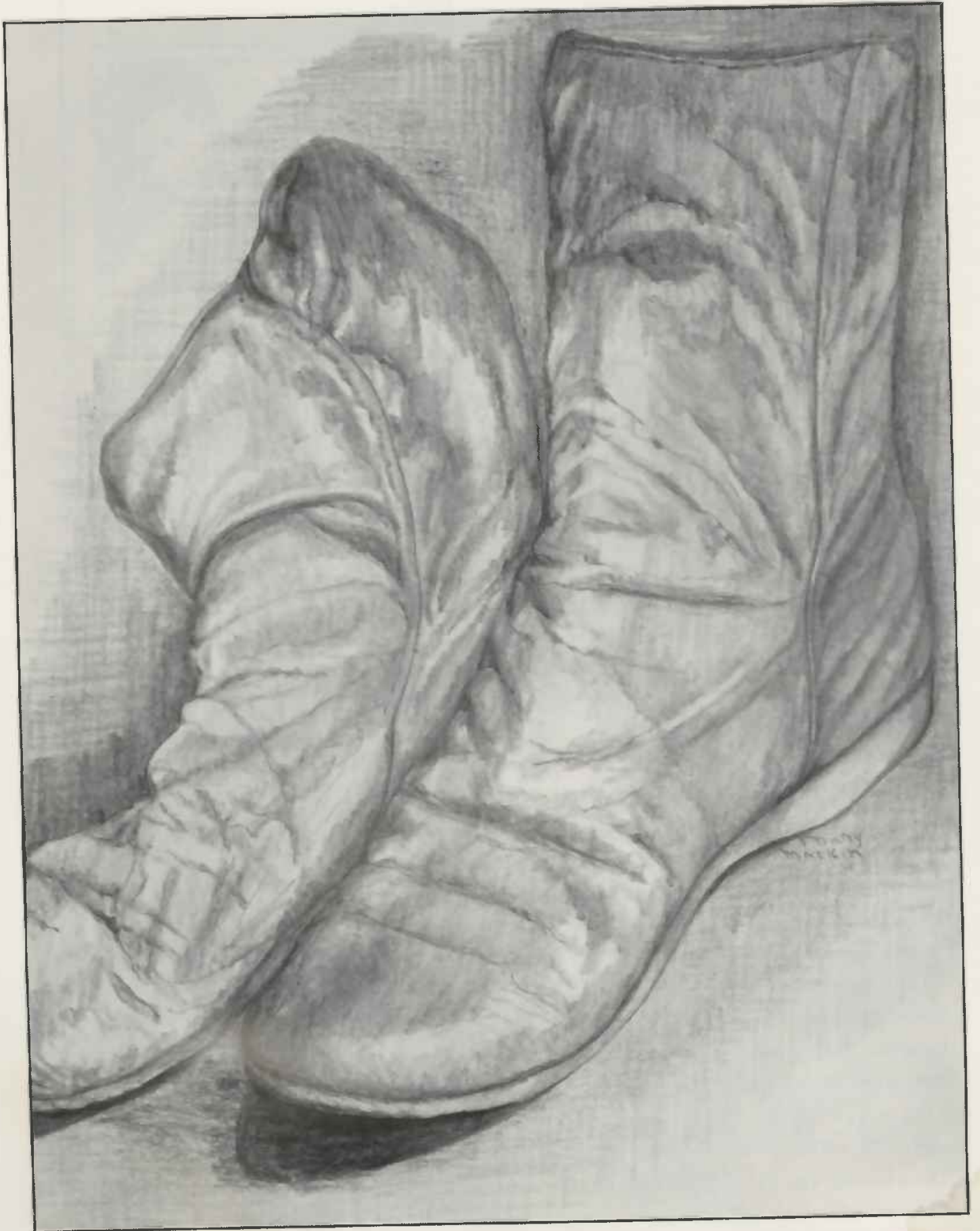
On my way back to the house I saw two grinning cats sitting under my car keeping dry. I was tempted to chase them, but I suspected a trap.

John T. Mullany

Only You

Sitting
 Under a tree,
Daydreaming,
 Thinking of you,
Recalling,
 When we were together,
Someday,
 We will meet again,
Waiting,
 The time goes by slowly,
Hoping,
 I will see you soon,
Loving,
 Only you!

JoAnn Kehoe





Mirrors

We look in it to fix our make-up,
We look in it to comb our hair,
We'll even make funny faces at it,
So mirror better beware.
One day you will be young,
Next day you will be old,
Then it's back to young again,
Your shining like 14 karat gold!
As you look into the mirror,
It's looking back at you,
Watching all the different poses,
That your body can do.
When you look into a mirror,
You not only see yourself,
But everything behind you,
Sitting on the shelf.
There's no reason to fear a mirror,
It's only telling the truth,
Of who you really are

JoAnn Kehoe

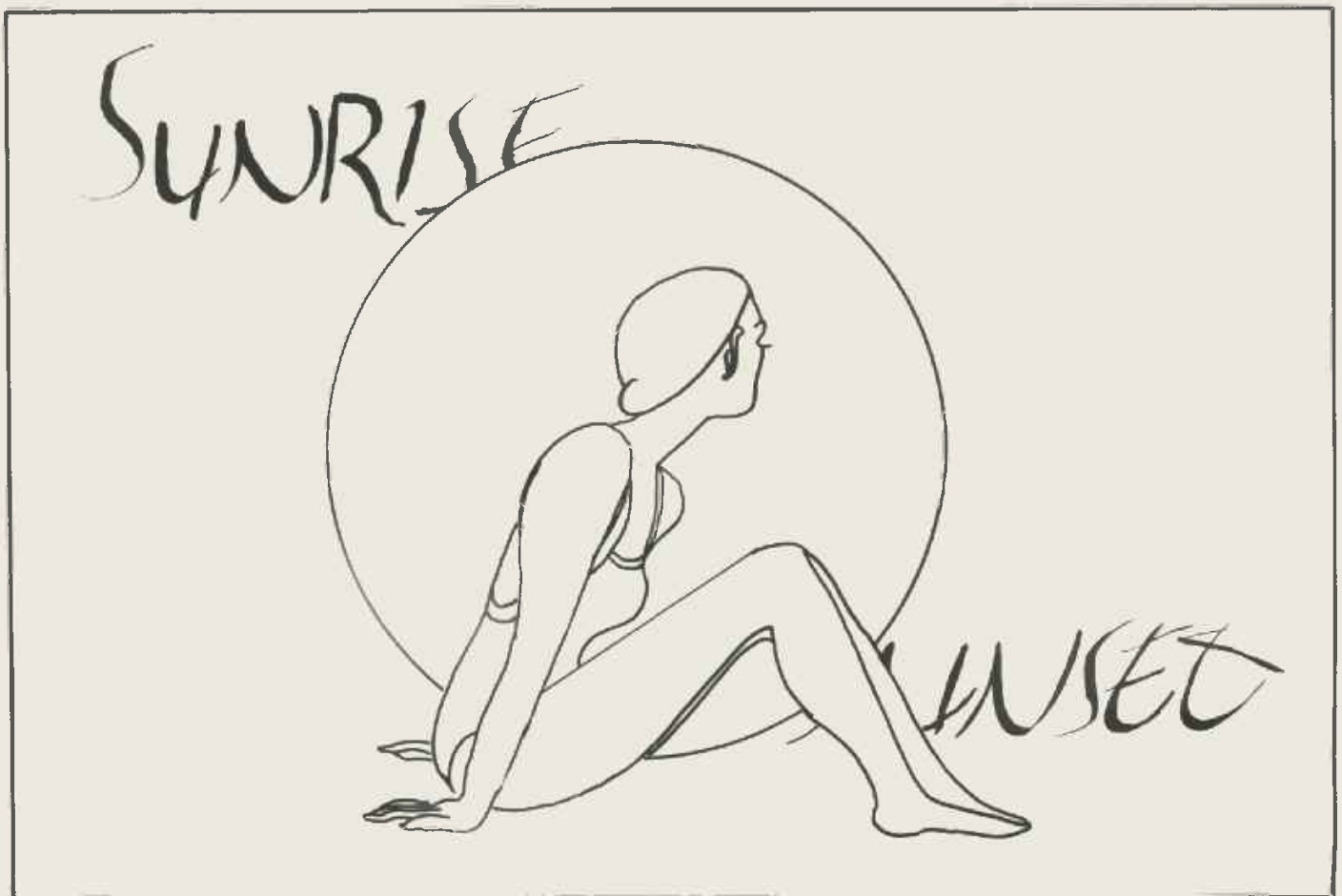
A Mere Image

I look different in your mirror than in mine
You perceive me as a glossy figure,
With my fine details never out of line.
My inner-shape is evident, you'd bet
It is transparent as my silhouette.

Though a twin to vision, different in thought
Few see what I see in the looking glass,
But an unknown mystery, I am not.
Sight of an unfinished puzzle in view,
With completion, the final thing to do.

Altering reflections appear to deceive,
May the truth be told if it's ever given,
I've been waiting for something to believe.

Kristina Pearson





Why?

Every morning
I get out of bed
...and pledge my allegiance to the flag...
The missiles may fly overhead
...but I pledge my allegiance to the flag...
Now I am left
alone in this world
My family
 my friends
 my foes
are gone
Must I pledge allegiance to the flag
and live with the wars
that cannot be won?

Maureen Carolyn Guido

Barbed Wire Fear

Dance up and down
Side to side
Big bad bullet
Rip apart slanted eyes.

You wore a candy
Necklace as a child
Now you use commie
ears to keep count.

Sam don't want to
See your tears -
Marine Corp only
Wants a few good drops
Of your blood -
No barbed wire fear.

Rip it across
your wife
Rip it across
your kids
Wrap it around
your neck
Pull
Harder

Rich Aloia**Little Soldiers**

Grab your guns and balloons
Boys and girls
I'm right behind you
Jump into the grinder
Spitting out little green plastic soldiers
Old men want to move you across the board
I'm right behind you
Fight through muddy gum wrapper trenches
Yo-Yo schrappnel bursts spin above your heads
I'm right behind you
Bang - we're hit, but
Mom won't yell about our Kool-aid stains today
Don't bother counting to ten
I lie right beside you

Nick Andrea**Color Contrast**

My hand is brown, your hand is white
We come together for war to obtain peace
What is it about color that causes much commotion
It must have skeletons and cross bones on that bottle of potion
Beantown and The Big Apple both want separate cities
because color contrast is a pity.
2010, nuclear bombs, starvation, radiation and death at last.
No one accepted the color contrast.

David Scott



Friend in a Box

I woke up thinking of you Dennis, when I was at Penn State. I wanted to write about your intelligent, amiable personality, using Oxford as a backdrop.

I feel so fortunate to have a brother who has studied abroad, through your University, St. Bonaventures.

I remember talking to you on the phone when you were ready to come home from JFK. You were tense, strung-out by standing on my suitcase for hours, looking for your ride. We laughed at the awful mess you were in, missing your ticket, missing your plane. Although you were aware of a sense of lost control, I badgered you with questions.

You answered:

French Bread.

English Ale.

A four-year old calling his friend "Old bean".

Louvre, well-visited.

Picasso print.

10 minute Louvre, you laughed at an apex.

Hover-crafting to Paris.

I questioned, believing you answered. But you gave Mom the real answer.

"A girl, a friend I had gotten to know at the pubs, died. She was from St. Boni's."

You answered:

Socialized medicine.

Distraught parents, alienated by an ocean.

A Friar wanting to give education, instead handling papers, phone calls, details for a corpse.

A fresh corpse.

You had:

Pals with questions of philosophy and religion.

Pals who "did" the Riviera.

Pals facing the death of your own age.

But when I woke up at P.S.U. I did not write. I would not squarely face acute leukemia or its repercussions on you.

Your disbelief.

Your protection of Mom and Dad.

Your blanketed correspondence, never telling them until you were home.

Instead, I stayed under the warm blankets. I'm sorry I didn't write it down. But I am much more sorry that your friend came home in a box.

Rosanne Griffin

Loss 2/16/88

Quick death
how loudly you strike
your blow

sweep away
all that matters

--even the innocent
have no escape
--only darkness.

--leaving eyes
naked
before the merciless sun

You come
as black as night
--and in a whirlwind

and salty tears
that dry like
rivers in the desert.

Patti Brennan

Pas De Duex

Curtain Raises
 Music Abounds
 Duet Dances
 Tinkling Sounds

Swishing of skirts
 Graceful frailty
 Lightly stepping
 Displaying royalty

The couple dances
 Lights are bright
 Audience quiet
 Watch with delight

A delicate spin
 A graceful pose
 Audience claps
 Tossing a rose

Anne P. Richards



The Trap

I simply refuse
 to fall once again
 for the problems set forth to me
 only by men
 I will not grow weak
 and melt in my place
 whenever I spy
 an innocent face
 or someone who owns
 a sultry smile
 and holds himself up
 with charisma and style
 Nor for dark, feathered hair
 and deep, striking eyes
 --like the twenty year-old's
 that just passed me by--
 He thinks he is clever
 creating a crush

but never! No, NEVER!!
 I won't trip for the trap
 of the hint of cologne
 which traces the path
 he created, alone
 I sigh as I breathe in
 the wonderful scent
 the masculine
 comforting
 wonderful scent
 I think to myself
 as he escapes from my sight
 I know it's of him
 I'll be dreaming tonight...

Maureen Carolyn Guido

The Lamb

My broken antenna and I silently
 wait - six cars back - for the light
 to change.
 Thought breaks my silence.
 A man is dead.
 It is green now, but we do not move - as even
 more join in our stop.
 The dead man commands passage.
 His followers have antennas, but no sound -
 except for the sobbing of their bright headlights.
 I wait in a line of strangers
 as the parade of frozen tears passes.
 The light is red again, but that is ok -
 I am still stopped.
 The dead man has many followers.
 Mortal man's traffic laws are no match
 for their righteousness.
 Our horns are dead.
 When it is time to go, - again, - I trail
 behind his congregation, wanting my lights
 to be on, wanting to go through the red lights.
 But again, I am stopped - silent - only with thought.
 Passer-bys mourn for me - for my strangeness -
 for my being alone under the light - for my being mortal.
 The light turns green and I am back with the congregation.
 Will the dead man be my friend?
 Will he love me even though my lights
 are not lit? Even though I can offer
 him no tears - no joy - no love of life?
 Why do I wonder?
 Twenty years and I am doing ok.
 A yellow flashing light - good -
 I can stay with them.
 A dead man,
 His congregation,
 And I, a stranger with a broken antenna -
 one car length behind - mortal man's law.
 We wind through the mountains - through the
 living - commanding passage.
 The man is dead, but we still follow.
 The congregation is left, alone to carry his cross,
 Alone to deliver his words -
 The words of a dead man.
 Why do I follow them?
 Why do I follow him?
 Why must I live with rusted nail pain?
 Why must I wear his thorny crown?
 Why must I eat his body or drink his blood?
 - Dead Man, Dead Man,
 Why did you abandon me? -

Death Effects

There is a staircase leading
to a closed-up room
--cobwebs and dust
become it now.

It was once
deep hues
of burgundy velvet
and evergreen satin

and grandfather died there.

My stockinged feet
disturb the silence
as I slowly climb
the creaking steps

and the top seems
miles away.

I am a curious child
longing to see
how the spiders and mice
live together
in that cold, faded room
that was once
life.

Patti Brennan

Shadows

Drug children chase
their empty shadows
across summer fields.
Little children
try to step on
their shadows but
mom won't let them.
Old men sleep on
wicker rockers
waiting for their
shadows to creep
up and kill them.
Holy sisters
worship shadows
to their death.
Butterflies have
only the shadow
of the murderer's
foot.

Rich Aloia

Magnified

I am an acute angle
in an obtuse world.

Amidst the whales
I am plankton.

Like a rhinestone
I glitter
but I have little worth.

The harsh wind came
and tore this leaf from the tree
--and it fell to the ground for the worms.

Patti Brennan

The Awakening

What dreams are these?
My mind creates
pure horror.

They haunt me
in flashes
--what is truth?
--what is illusion?

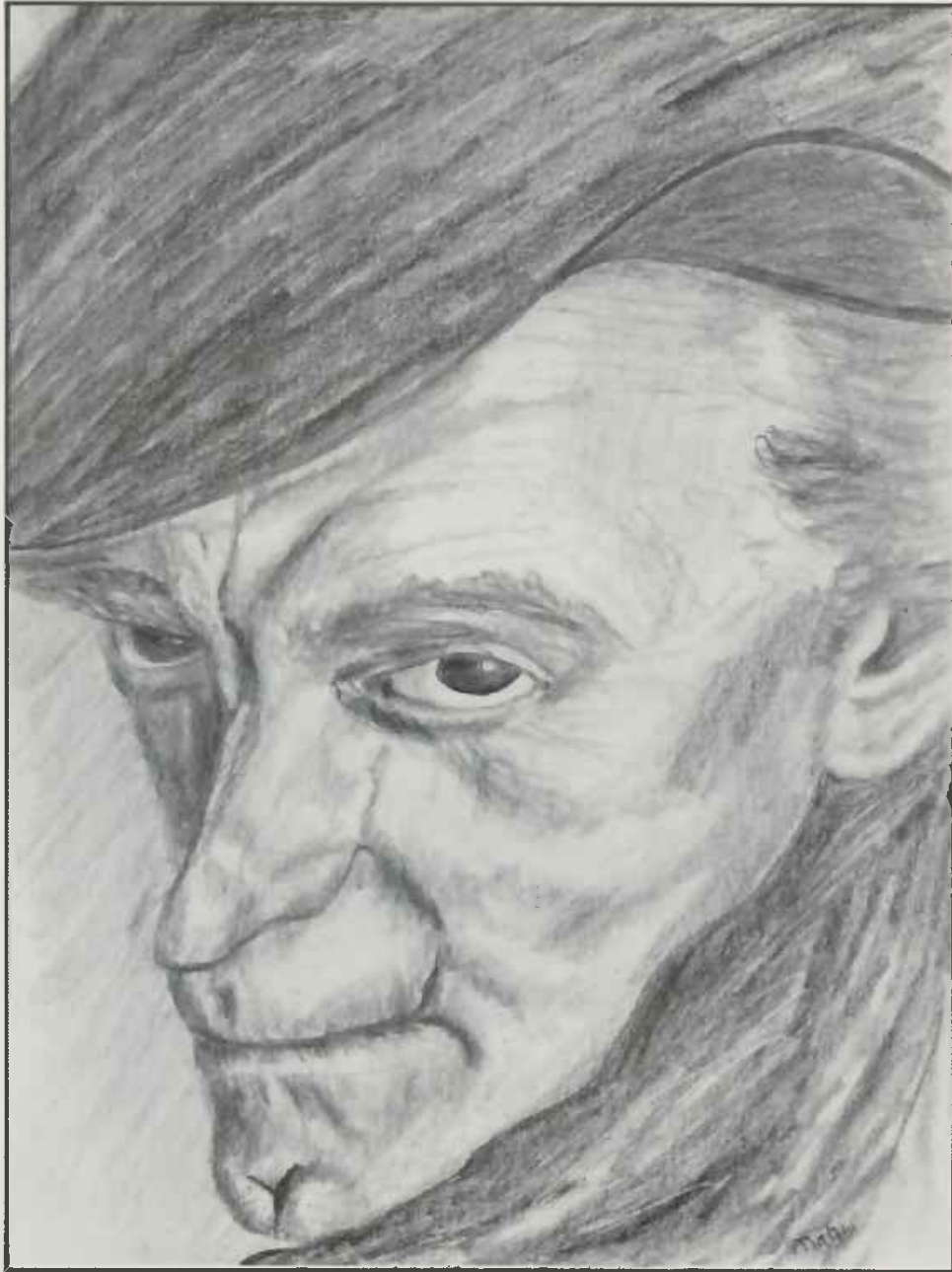
...the seeping, staining blood
...the tormenting touch
...the endless running

--I am no marathon man
...my endurance is low.

What memory?
What reality?

This pill
was too hard
to swallow
--I have choked on it.

Patti Brennan



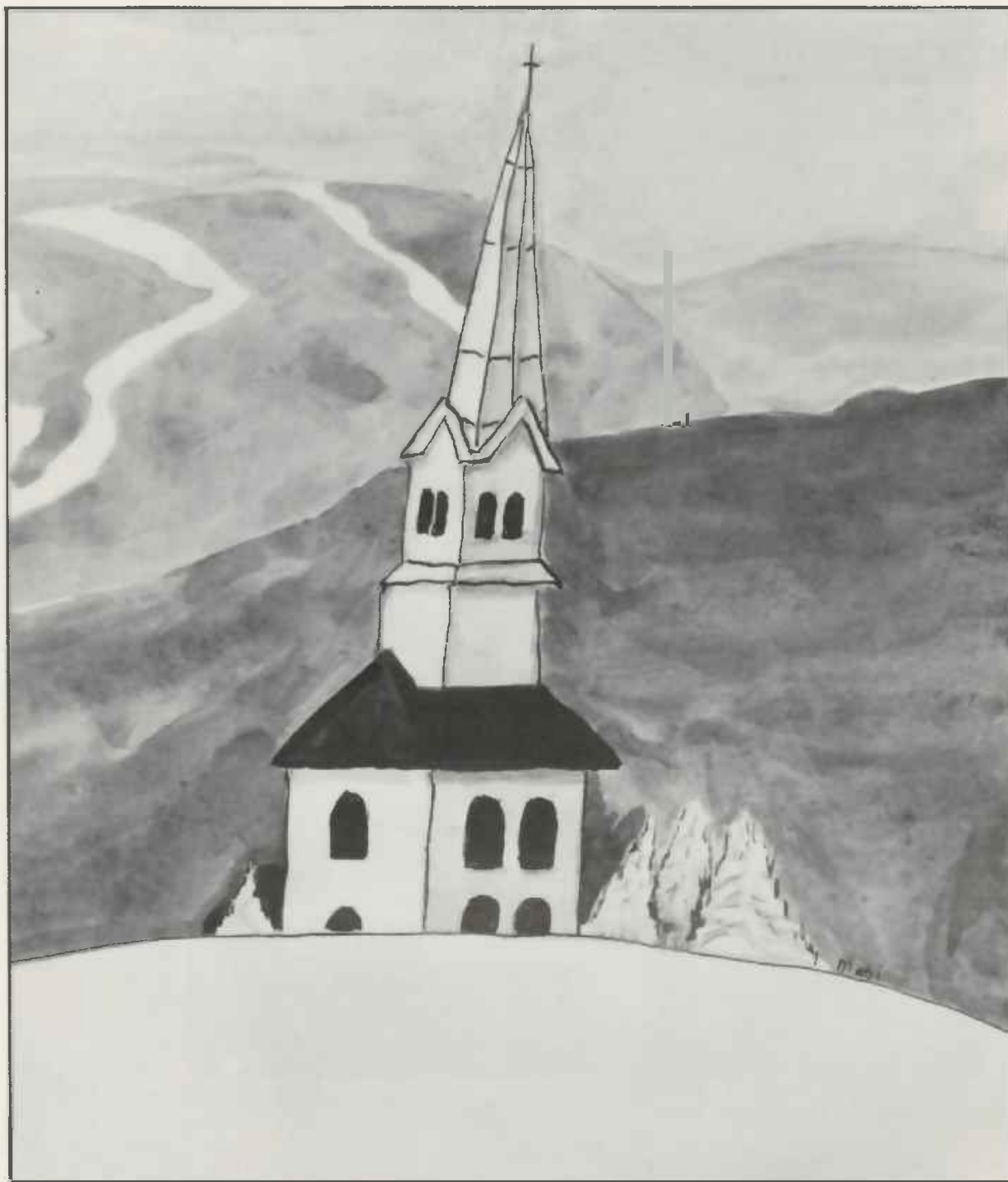
I Have Lost Something

I have lost something, youth, or naivete,
A flame that flickers fainted with each passing day
Gone, but not entirely, soon to be no more
I cannot weep with emptiness, nor feel my soul's rich store.

I have lost something, I have no urge to play
I see school children laughing as they go home for the day
To the park, to the ballfield, who has need to care?
I remember all these things, and wish that I were there.

I have lost something, my adult form is stale
It waits with weary longing for the brush of flesh, some ale
I have no youth, no naivete, no fervored urge to play,
I cannot weep, I cannot laugh, I only think about today.

Liz Gush



Portrait of Memories

A memory is a passing moment in the mind, a sweet reminiscence that slowly fades with time

A sentimental feeling that lingers in the air, a soft warm touch that embraces one soul with care

A destiny of years to come, a past reflection of what is

The search for a dream which flourishes in the heart, the freedom of inspiration that cannot be broken apart

The smile of a familiar face, the sweetness of secrets shared which time cannot erase

A friendship which survives in the climate it grows, the beauty of a friend who comes and goes.

Karen Springer



Something is About to Happen

Something is about to happen, too soon.
Cars roll in droves by the doorstep, too fast.
Taps of raindrops lull my ears like a drug
Luxury reigns in this dark otherworld.

The milkman has come, the garbageman too,
The Timekeeper's angrily shouting, "Now!"
The proud raindrops whisper, smug, "Yank the plug."
Heresy reigns in this sweet otherworld.

Liz Gush



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