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Instress
Spring 1997





Welcome

Come in. Thank you for venturing to our spring gallery. Do take your time as you view the works. Be sure to notice our gallery winners, you should not be disappointed. Please wander about and experience the visible blooms of talent growing within our artists and authors. Right this way

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First place	<i>Somewhere North of Las Cruces</i>	David Michael Engelhardt
Second place	<i>Neurosis</i>	Trisha Harrington
Honorable Mention	<i>Seasons</i>	Trisha Harrington

Poetry

First place	<i>Coal Cracker</i>	Alice McGrory
Second place	<i>Of Will</i>	April Masters

Fine Arts

First place	<i>Funky Town</i>	Jennifer Bertolini
Second place	<i>Shattered</i>	Jason Buss

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Sometimes I get knocked off balance and I am forced to contemplate the fact that I think too much. Thinking is a good thing but over-thinking tends to lead to analyzing people and ideas that probably aren't worthy of such serious consideration.

My mind is cluttered with discarded sentences and half formed philosophies that I, in all probability, will never have the patience to salvage or finish.

My thoughts offer a sanctuary where undelivered speeches mix with the tired, broken despair of the last images of Dean Moriarty in *On The Road* and where the Replacements and Phish play in wonderfully strange harmony.

I think about thinking, does that make me hopeless? Am I doomed to read Jackie Collins novels and try desperately to convince myself that there has to be a deep, symbolic meaning somewhere underneath the meaninglessness of the surface?

What if I get burnout? What if after years of dissecting I suddenly forget how? Will that turn me into a giddy, giggle girl who is every thinking woman's worst enemy, or will I use my analytical side for the teaspoon deep pursuits of finding the perfect nail polish or figuring out how many times in an hour I can bat my eyelashes without looking like I have a nervous tick or a thick, mascara coated eyelash lodged in the corner of my eye?

Well, maybe thinking about everything isn't so bad after all or maybe it is. I'll have to think about it.

Neurosis

Trisha
Harrington

Second Place



Like birch trees in culm we grew...

Billy picks me up in the Torino
we drive up the strippings on a Sunday
with a six of Schlitz, or two
we lie on the heated mountain, pale limbs entwined
Billy working hard over me
and leaf-lace dark on sky-light
and mansweat sharp like fresh-shaved pencils

*Coal
Cracker*

Alice
McGrory

First Place



he comes quiet, rolls off
we share a Marlboro and smoke
drifts and dissipates like dreams...
down below in the ravine
there's a fancy pick-up, New York tags—
city people digging up trees
They sell 'em for fifty bucks apiece in the city
them scrawny trees—bet they die in a week
we laugh at the folly
of the denizens of the Empire State—
that birch trees could be worth anything to anybody

when I sit up I'm branded
with the fleshprint of a perfect ancient fern
Girl you're fossilized Billy hoots
I laugh, then choke

on a lump in my throat big as stove coal
Billy's sticky sap down my leg drying gritty
I want to run home or jump
on back of that truck but somehow
rooted I crack another beer instead
and watch the city slickers dig the trees
they come up easy
rooted in nothing but culm—
And why are you crying anyway?

Like birch trees in culm we grew.

Slender white limbs reach with stunted grace
like bloodless severed fingers
from the black fossil backs of fathers
dying in the living room
gasping careful last breaths through grey pursed lips
coughing up chunks of blackened coal-lungs
the legacy of broken dreams heaped high on the wasteland
where hell's so close you can feel the heat

feel the heat

and make a life

out of the tears and void

Because birch trees, rooted in nothing,
still stand after the storm.

*To My
Kindred
Moonbeams*

Lori Scott



I stare out my window at the glistening silver ball.
It is the only peace of mind I can find in this lost head of mine.
The man in the moon knows me,
 he has seen my bare flesh,
 he has seen my soul.
He gives me my power, my high, he is my natural opiate.
 He soothes my need to know:
 to know who out of my soulmates is staring back at me.
He tells me their problems . . . he tells me they miss me.
 He's their opiate too. We're all connected.
Every month we have a party, its more like a ritual, I guess.
 Together we are reminded of the immense love of our kindred relationships.
It's a time of BIG smiles and HUGS, as someone so wonderfully put it.
 It's FULL.
 FULL of life too.
Tonight, I need you man in the moon (but he already knows it.. they all do).
 I'm delirious . . .
 give me my high, help me find the soulmate that is missing:
 Are they out tonight?
He is the one who wishes me happy full moon . . .
 he's the one who understands me without even knowing.
 He constantly thinks.
I know he is a kindred spirit we all know.
 Actually, everyone already told me.
 He watches you too, ya know.
He gazes at you and understands me. Through you, he loves me,
 Through you we all love each other.
Someday I'll run away with him.
 Give me knowledge,
 Give him patience.
 Tell everyone good night,
 sweet dreams
 and
 God Bless.

Are you a passive consumer
buying into the words people want to feed you
without tasting first
the truth you discover on your own?
Do you faithfully eat from the hands that feed your thoughts
that are not your own,
answers that you don't question,
or purposes that you don't take time to understand?
Do you take a bite out of ignorance
and share the rest with others
because the food tastes so good,
without considering that you are what you eat
and the poisoned food you just swallowed
contaminates you with a simple mind?

*Think
Before You
Eat*

Steve Roy



*Somewhere
North of
Las Cruces*

David
Michael
Engelhardt

First Place



He was only half asleep when the bus rolled to a stop in the New Mexican desert. Looking out the window all he saw was darkness and thought this was nowhere. He didn't turn his head as the woman from the front of the bus walked back to the rest room. Smart, he thought. The rest room's a bitch when the bus is moving. If they stay here awhile, he should sneak in there, too.

Paranoia gripped him as the uniformed man got on the bus. They can't know where I am, he thought. They can't be looking for me, not here, not yet. He knew he had to stay calm, even with his heart pounding in his throat, his palms a sweaty swamp, and his breathing getting heavier and heavier. Act normal, he told himself, breathe slow. The officer ambled down the aisle, glancing briefly from side to side at the passengers as he passed. Still panic stricken, he breathed slowly and feigned drowsy indifference as the officer went by him. Yet he feared to even breathe a sigh of relief.

"There's someone in the bathroom," a voice from the back reported.

The officer knocked on the door. "Is anyone in there?" he asked. Silence.

He rapped again. "Is anyone in there?" he demanded. Still silence.

He tried the door. Locked. "Alright, come out of there now!" he insisted.

First there was more silence, then the door opened. "Let's go," the officer said quietly, but brusquely.

The officer had repeated everything he said, apparently in Spanish. It's only the Border Patrol, he told himself as the sigh of relief finally came. Still he didn't want to attract attention and only casually looked at the woman as the officer escorted her down the aisle. She certainly looked Hispanic, he thought. She was young, twenties perhaps, with long dark, straight

hair. She's kind of cute, he thought, too bad she didn't make it. He guessed she must have been illegal since she didn't resist or argue with the officer. She just submitted. They paused for a moment as she got a tote bag from her seat, then they stepped off the bus. He couldn't see them from his seat on the driver's side. He resisted the urge to stand up and watch, besides his knees were still jelly. All she wanted to do was go to El Norte for a better life, he thought, just like me, just trying to go north for a better life, right?

It was less than twenty-four hours since he left Fort Huachuca when the bus stopped in the early morning desert. He had remained quite cool as the Military Police patrol car slowed down and the MP's inside looked him over as they drove by. He was, after all, the only person around at 7:30 on a Sunday morning. He had stuffed his clothes in a laundry bag instead of a suitcase. A suitcase would have been too obvious, and if anyone asked, he would tell them he knew someone in Tucson who would wash his clothes. He felt naked standing there alone in front of the Post Exchange with his laundry bag at his feet, waiting for the eight o'clock bus to Tucson, but the MP's didn't seem to care and kept on going.

Still it was easier than a couple months earlier when, just three weeks after arriving at basic training in New Jersey, he and two buddies donned dress uniforms and hopped a bus to Philadelphia for the day. At least now he had freedom of movement and could go where he pleased as long as he was back for formation Monday morning. Back in Jersey they weren't allowed to leave the base without a pass and they didn't have a pass between them. They simply waltzed past the MP's at the bus station like they were headed home for the weekend as usual. They missed evening formation that day, but so did most of the company. The rest of them had spent the whole day scattered all over the base getting drunk and staggered back to the barracks little by little

throughout the evening. Oh boy, they're going to care when I miss formation tomorrow morning, he thought.

He was the only one to get on the Tucson bus when it pulled up. He paid the driver and found a seat. The bus was about half full and everyone else was Hispanic, mostly women and children. Suddenly he felt even more alone and settled back to watch the scenery whiz by the window. He had only been in Arizona for a month, nevertheless he already felt strangely connected to this land. He had arrived in the middle of the night and didn't see any of it until the next day. His first sight was of a rosy red sunrise filling the sky and reflecting off mountains and buildings. Even then he felt a mystical connection to the scene and a sense of belonging. He gazed at the solitude of the desert out of the bus window. It wasn't the barren sandy wasteland he originally thought he was being sent to. The desert may be quiet and dry, but it was alive. The solitary mountains and statuesque saguaros stood like sentinels of a sacred shrine. All around them the land was blanketed by sagebrush and mesquite, cholla and prickly pear. There were no creatures to be seen, but he knew they were there. While wandering around the the base he had seen the mysterious, coyotes and roadrunners, and the dangerous, black widows and rattlers. As he watched mile, after mile, after mile of the desert slip past he began to have a feeling of abandoning home. God, I love this land, he thought, but I have to go, I just have to go.

As the bus neared Tucson he began to think about what to do next. They won't be missing me until tomorrow, he thought. Even so, he began to get a little nervous. He didn't know how seriously they would begin to look for him. He figured the Army would assume he either went straight north to Canada or back home, so he would do neither. He decided to buy a bus ticket directly east. I can head north to Canada whenever I feel safe and ready, he thought. You can't just buy a ticket "east", you have to go somewhere, so he chose Philadelphia. He had been there

before and felt he wouldn't be too lost when he arrived. The bus pulled into the Greyhound station and he stood up sore. It was an old bus with stiff seats. This thing must be left over from World War II, he thought. He stepped off and looked at the newer Greyhound buses lined up at the platform. Now those will be more comfortable, he thought, and at least they'll have a rest room.

He bought his ticket and listened perplexedly as the ticket agent tried to decipher and explain all the bus changes he would have to make across the country. Albuquerque, Amarillo, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, even the agent was confused. I'll just have to wing it as I go along, he thought. He found out he had a five hour wait, and being much too jumpy to hang around the station that long, decided to go for a walk. He ambled over to the University campus where he spent much of his few weekends in Arizona wandering about checking out the bookstores and headshops.

Eventually, he found himself down on Fourth Street where the street people hung out. He had whiled away a number of hours in an old bar there, filled with street people, students, and locals of all ages. Everything in the place was old and wooden, the chairs, the tables, the bar, the stools, the floor, the walls. Most of the nicked and carved up tables had chess boards inlaid in the tops. As he sat nursing some beers, a couple of the hippie street people he had spent time talking to in the past came in and joined him. They had heard his story about being drafted and liked to tease him about having a crew cut and being a soldier. One night the big blonde one had pulled out the hunting knife he wore on his belt and offered to cut off his trigger finger, for free. "Just tell them you got drunk and some other drunk you never saw before started a fight with you and pulled a knife. Tell them you got away, but were so drunk you can't remember where it happened or where your finger ended up," the blonde told him.

"They'll have to kick you out if you don't have a trigger finger." He politely declined the offer. He told the blonde he would never be drunk enough to let him do it, and, no thank you, there's got to be another way.

He saw them eyeing his laundry bag and told them he met a girl in town who said she'd do his laundry anytime he brought it along. He was too paranoid to tell even possible sympathizers what he was up to and they bought the story, impressed with his good fortune since they spent most of their time on the streets. When he got up to leave they begged him to stay for another round, he was buying, after all. He couldn't tell them he had to catch the bus east. He could have just told them he was catching the bus back to Fort Huachuca, but was too afraid to even mention a bus. He finally told them he had to get his laundry done before it was too late. As he walked towards the bus station he realized how much he was going to even miss Tucson. I love this town almost as much as the desert, he thought.

The bus had stopped earlier in Las Cruces to exchange passengers and waited there for what seemed like hours before heading north to Albuquerque. The Mexican woman must have gotten on in Las Cruces, he thought, since he didn't remember her from Tucson. He wasn't able to sleep anymore after the adrenaline rush the first sight of the Border Patrol officer gave him and found that now he couldn't get the woman out of his thoughts. Ever since the bus had roared away from the checkpoint he sat staring out into the blackness surrounding the Interstate. He assumed the woman was Mexican because he didn't realize there were people from throughout Central America working their way north to cross the border and for reasons which weren't always economic. He wondered how long it would be before she was deported and found herself back home. He imagined her back in her hometown treated like some kind of hero who tried and failed, but managed to survive to try again. His own homecoming wouldn't be quite so

glorious. He had been despised by most of the people in town, even his own family, for being an antiwar protester. Just wait till they find out I'm a deserter, he thought. He was sure most everyone in town who knew him would turn him in the second they spied him on the street. In his current state of paranoia, walking the streets back home was definitely not an option.

As the bus barreled along through the desert darkness he thought about those past days of protesting in the streets. He had thought of himself as the "great student activist" who would change the world. A far cry from the army deserter cringing in a bus in the middle of the night. Most of his friends didn't agree with his decision to allow himself to be drafted. The rift had formed as they became more and more pacifist while he became more and more radical. He never really thought of himself as a pacifist. He hadn't even applied for a Conscientious Objector deferment. He wasn't brought up as a pacifist and the draft board didn't believe in Catholic CO's anyway, even if he did go to church. Sure, he studied pacifism along with everybody else. He read Martin Luther King, Jr. and Gandhi, but they didn't ignite a passion in him. Certainly not like the passion he felt when he read about revolutionary leaders like Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevara, and even Lenin. The more he read about them the more radical his thinking became until he began to think of himself as a revolutionary in training rather than just an antiwar protester. As his friends began talking more in terms of passive, non-confrontational, angerless demonstrations, complete with music, flowers, and candles, the rift between them widened. He dropped out of college in a momentary fit of rebellion and when his number finally came up in the draft, he felt he only had three options, Canada, resistance, or submission. His friends, of course, supported Canada or resistance. He rejected the permanence of Canada. Remembering reading once that Abbie Hoffman said all revolutionaries should do their best to stay out of prison, he decided against

resistance. Finally, not wanting to go underground, he chose submission. After all, he thought, there must be plenty the military could teach a young revolutionary in training which would be useful when the inevitable revolution arrived.

So, after failing to fail his induction physical, he willingly went off to basic training at Fort Dix. Basic was tolerable. It wasn't so hard and, being in a platoon of mostly draftees, he found a certain camaraderie among those who, like himself, didn't really want to be in the army. The drill sergeants weren't very political, just a bunch of guys doing their job, and some of them even smoked pot. All of them looked the other way as the draftees puffed their way through training. And all the while he felt he was learning some valuable skills. He even discovered a Che book in the PX he hadn't read. It wasn't until after basic when he was thrown into the mainstream of army life that things became unbearable. Surrounded by right wing anticommunists who hated all of his revolutionary heroes, let alone long haired hippie protesters, it took less than a month for him to find army life intolerable. Suddenly, Canada became very attractive.

He rode the bus all the way to Philadelphia while thinking about the Mexican woman and home. At the bus station he bought a ticket for his hometown. Going there would be risky, but on the three day cross-country bus trip he thought of everyone he would miss when he went to Canada, all the friends who would now be happy he was "doing the right thing" and all the family who wouldn't. Seeing the family would be the trickiest part he felt, but once he got to town he could try to determine what would be safe.

In town, two sympathetic friends who thought it exciting to harbor a deserter let him crash at their apartment. Through other friends he learned that the Army had called his parents from Fort Huachuca to see if he was at home, but that seemed to be the extent of their search for him. He began to feel comfortable

staying at the apartment and going out into the streets to visit his friends while avoiding the risk of seeing his family. But after a week had past, he began to feel sure that some unsympathetic people had seen him and must have reported him to some authority. The earlier paranoia came over him again.

It's time to get out of here and head to Canada, he thought. But every time he thought of Canada, he thought of the Mexican woman. He still thought of her in economic terms, that the only reason for her to come north would be to raise her standard of living. He imagined her tearing herself away a loving family and a nurturing hometown to cross the border in search of work. If she ever got lonely and scared being an illegal in the States she would always have home to go back to, he thought. Once I get to Canada there will be no coming back, not without risking jail, and, anyway, this doesn't feel like home anymore, he told himself. To him it seemed most of his hometown was against him for being a protester and most of his friends were against him for being drafted. He couldn't win, for no matter which path he took everyone held his past choices against him. Even now, as he opted for Canada, many of his friends just gave him an "I told you so" attitude. When he gets lonely and scared in Canada there would be no home to run back to. He had never even been to Canada. To him it was a cold and wintry place. . .with no desert.

One week after stepping off the bus in his hometown he got up, dressed, put on the new winter coat he bought himself, walked through a snow flurry to the army induction center, and turned himself in. A revolutionary should stay out of prison, he told himself, but permanent exile in Canada seemed like a life sentence in Siberia. Besides, there were plenty of guys in basic who took off for a while and came back, only to receive a slap on the wrist. Hopefully, having only been gone a couple of weeks and voluntarily turning himself in, he wouldn't make out much worse. With a little luck Federal prison would be avoided. The captain at the center

seemed to agree. After calling Fort Huachuca for him, the captain explained that because he turned himself in there would be no need for an escort back, he could fly back alone, but someone would meet him at the airport. "They said you will probably only get a fine and some extra duty, so relax," the captain told him and went off to make the travel arrangements.

He plopped into an overstuffed black leather chair in the captain's office and for the first time since standing in front of the PX felt at ease. All at once, he realized he felt like he was going home. Somehow he would have to find a way to cope and make it through the rest of his two years in the army. Even if they transferred him out of Arizona, he wouldn't be in prison and the desert would be waiting for him. The army paperwork took almost all day and his plane didn't leave until the next morning. For some reason they trusted him to show up and sent him off to the apartment to pack his things.

When the plane landed in Tucson the first sergeant of his company was waiting for him. "Welcome home," the sergeant said sarcastically. "Thanks," he sheepishly replied. The sergeant accompanied him while he retrieved his new suitcase and escorted him out to a waiting staff car. When he emerged from the airport terminal the warm winter desert air hit him full blast. He paused to breathe it in and gazed at the sand, the ocotillo, and the cactus at the side of the parking lot. He smiled slightly. "Welcome home," he said to himself and trailed the sergeant to the car. Before reaching the highway the car stopped at a traffic light where a number of people crossed the street. He had been watching the landscape roll by and didn't pay any attention to them until suddenly he became aware that they were Hispanic. Then, just before the car pulled away, he began searching their faces for the Mexican woman.

she came
looking easy-like-sunday-morning
in highwaters and boots from the
salvation army
a sweater that was probably her
father's or grandfather's.
her hair tossed into a plain
rubber band
and no makeup on her
sweet baby face
teeth straight enough to
never need braces
but quirky enough to be
just her own.
and then there was me
looking like a
trailer park trash momma
with my black liquid eyeliner
and ruby red lipstick.
my hair teased to the heavens
in a feeble attempt to look
like i was born with cooperating follicles
and my frump squeezed into
a silly, trendy get-up.
and I in my kerchief
and momma in her cap
gabbed about the stuff
no one talks about
the first time they meet.
childbirth, spousal abuse, sex and freedom
and I never laughed before like
i did that night.

*childbirth,
spousal
abuse, sex
and freedom*

Colleen
Chandler

for k.



*Funky
Town*

Jennifer
Bertolini

First Place





Seasons

Trisha
Harrington

*Honorable
Mention*



The long summer grass is slick with the water from the sprinkler. My short eight year old legs jump from side to side over the icy spray. I can smell the scorched coals of Mr. Reilly's charcoal grill and hear his deep, throaty laugh wafting over the backyard fence. My sister rides by on her red and white tricycle, and in her hand she carries a cherry popsicle which is dripping down her dimpled baby arm and staining her smooth face with red streaks that make her look dangerous, like a shark fresh from a kill. The tricycle moves into the path of the lawnmower my Dad is maneuvering with unusual grace. I hear my father still the chugging engine long enough to save the little shark from a collision with the powerful machine. The wind blows and the scent of Hawaiian Tropic fills the air around me, and I immediately think of the beach whose sand passes through my fingers and burns my feet. My mother is the source of the coconut smell and she lies, head tilted upward, hoping her sweet smelling lotion will help her befriend the sun. I leave the scenes around me and turn my attention back to the sprinkler. I am eight and I love the summer.

The musty smell of a past rain accompanies me on my journey today. I have convinced my mother to let me ride my bike to the library with my best friend, Libby. We proceed down the steep slope singing about John Travolta and Olivia Newton John's summer nights. We are eleven and sure of ourselves. The rain begins to fall again, caressing our faces and lingering on the ends of our matching

pony tails. We ride on, ignoring the rude interruption of Mother Nature, our bikes glide over the gathering puddles and the wet kisses of the wind feel like freedom. I am free until I feel the mind numbing jolt of flying over the handlebars. I am on the ground, a jumble of broken bones and bruises. Libby's scream is shrill and my ears hurt. There is a bitter, metallic taste in my mouth. It is blood. My face is wet from the rain and blood which are mixing together, making it difficult not to cry. I can smell the dampness of the fallen leaves which surround me on the wet lawn. The tears begin to fall and blackness begins to take the place of sight. Help me God, I'm only eleven.

I am in shock. The stiff paper is still in my trembling hand, the words are still there, staring me in the face, laughing at me. I am numb and cold from standing on the snow blanketed driveway. I couldn't wait to see what they had decided, yet I wish I had. I feel like it's the end of a love affair, a love affair with Bucknell University, but they don't love me back. It began on a frigid, January day, the day I stepped on to the campus for the first time and was greeted by the ethereal bells of Rooke Chapel. I stood, smitten. I had finally found the place where I belonged; I was sixteen and obsessed. For a year, everything I did, I did for Bucknell. I took the SAT three times, trying to impress them with my determination and drive. I worked tirelessly on an essay describing desired dinner partners and their impact on my life. I described discussing disillusionment and

being misunderstood with the fictional Holden Caulfield. I told of the questions I would ask Sylvia Plath if only she had not been so lost on that brutal February day. I wrote of sipping creamed coffee with Albert Einstein and silently praying that some of his scientific genius would rub off on me. My parents whispered to one another about the astronomical cost of Bucknell because they too were confident of my acceptance and my father bought a bumper sticker which claimed he was a "Bucknell Dad". I spent football weekends and school vacations getting to know Bucknell better and everything I learned made me desire it more. I longed to wear the navy and orange as a student and to know that I was a part of one of the most beautiful campuses on the East coast. My hopes are dashed on this despised, snowy day. I can't stop crying as I read the letter again and again. My math grades aren't strong enough, but my essay is powerful. How can they reject someone who can write a powerful essay? I can still smell the patchouli scented air of the book store, the sterile smell of academia exuding from every classroom and the freshly cut grass of the quad. I can imagine who has been given the spot that should have been mine. Maybe a math major who will never notice the beauty that surrounds him or an engineering student who wouldn't know a powerful essay if it slapped her in the face. I hate Bucknell. They left me, at seventeen, with a broken heart.

The laughter echoes through the warm, stuffy gym as we poise to step out of our sheltered, high school world, and step into one

of responsibility and uncertainty. It is three days before graduation and we can't wait to get out and be free, free to make as many mistakes as we want, mistakes Mom and Dad won't always be around to fix. The gym smells like dirty socks and floor wax and my worn Keds are scraping against the shiny, parquet floor, making an ear drum piercing screech. The floor is cold and hard, but we must remain here until we are assigned our places in the seating area. My once spearmint gum has turned into a flavorless glob of "just something to do" as I anxiously await my placement. My friends Liz and Noell are discussing the coming year and how hard it will be to leave behind all we have ever known. They are crying and I sit quietly humming an old Replacements song I thought I had forgotten. I will not cry. My name is called and I take my place next to Ryan Keller. A woody cologne is exuding from his every pore. He is smiling as he tells me about Yale and how excited he is to get there. I do my best to act interested but I can't stop thinking about the overwhelming stench of his cologne, he went overboard. He always does. I can hear the band beginning its practice of "Pomp and Circumstance" and the wailing strains of the violin cause me to become nostalgic. At this moment I want to inhale the heady scent of construction paper and crayons and stomp puddles until my legs are soaked. I feel like I want to cry, not because I'm losing something, but because I'm gaining something I'm not sure I'm ready for. My eyes burn with tears and my legs begin to shake,

maybe it's fear of the unknown or maybe it's the stifling heat of late spring. I don't know, I just don't know.

It is a beautiful day in early June. I stand up straight in my stiff, starched gown. My cap is tilted jauntily on my head and I am smiling for Noell's mom's camera. I look confident and able but I feel wary and unsure of my place in the frightening new world I am about to enter. I am used to these people who surround me on all sides, I grew up with them and know most of them as well as I know myself. I know that Duncan likes to think he resembles Trey from Phish with his sparse beard and corduroy pants or that if I turn around this very moment, I will see Heather crying, because Heather is always crying and thanks to Ryan and his defective sense of smell I will be able to recognize Aramis a mile away. I look around at the familiar faces and I hear the voices and laughter I have heard for most of my life and I realize, with horror, that I will not miss them as much as I had thought. This realization shocks and shames me. At eighteen, I am ready to let go.



Shattered

Jason Buss

Second Place



The Lord turned and looked at Peter.
And he went out and wept bitterly. Luke 22:61f

Betrayal

Michael
Bryant



With one felled swoop
I am transported
Peter's courtyard
Fully aware
This is not some
Star Trekian experience
Or holographic hallucination.
I am there
Huddled around a campfire
Protecting what dignity
I may have salvaged.

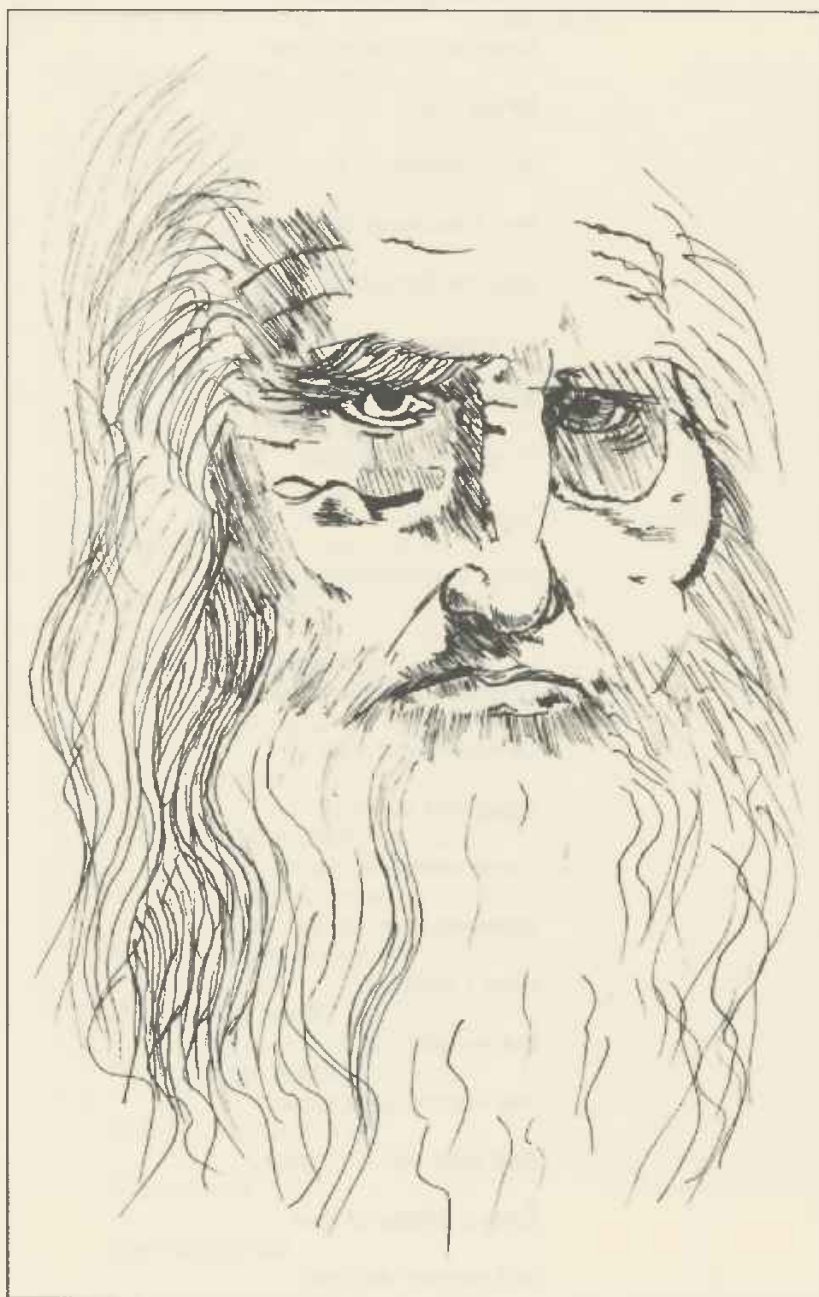
I have betrayed—
Abandoned the promised truth
Of the thickness of trust
And thinness of reality.
I have heard within
The quiet questions
That burrow their way
Into my soul
And conjure up
An emptiness of spirit
Stripping even my nakedness.

This bungled behavior
Sucks from the marrow
Of my mind
Any chances of turning back
And I snakishly slide
Into the dismal darkness
Of a sunken cell
Barring any return
To the reign of God.
"I do not know him"
Is my anguished cry.

Entombed in this mess
Of embryonic ego
I gag and suffocate on
These warmless words
Knowing that not just you
Have I violated
But my very soul
Has felt the cock crow
And seen the sun break.
Only a trilogy of love
Will recover this loss.

Untitled

Michael
Blasick



I rub them
Not always
but sometimes
and never for luck, nor from superstition

I rub them
White marbled, within
hand's reach, the knuckles rippling
beneath my fingers
rising and falling

I rub them
These toes, newly washed
by the Magdalens who shed their tears
and kneel and kiss

These toes yet innocent
of the embrace of nail and blood

I rub them
Sometimes, though not always
Still hoping

*Christ's
Toes*

Jeff Johnson



Will I be gone when all is lost
or will all cease to be?
for like the rose the flower knows

greater is its own heat

Of Will

for all the petals of delicate, make vast a thin silk sheet
layered end to end within the spring hold warmth

April Master

of lost summers' heat

Second Place

or will all cease to be?

for beneath the frozen ground of bite the silk is cold and frail

beneath the ground

beneath my feet

beneath all colors, pale

the Rose is not

its petals n'er shed, through silken solemn core

within the strength of thorny edge lies trapped

the dew of night

petals of dampened wool need not the summer's only light

for hidden strength dies not in dark nor softly

at the sight

Of Will, Of Will

All Cease to Be.



Sometimes I feel that I am different
But I am not different.
I am a person who has feelings and dreams.
I always wonder why people talk about me or call me names.
I just wish
They would see me for who I am
And treat me as normally as every other human being on this earth.
Then we could be friends.
Just give me a chance
To tell you how I feel about being Down Syndrome.

Being Down Syndrome is a part of me
That will never go away.
Yes, I am part handicap.
But I will always be normal, just like you.
I have wishes and dreams,
And most of all, I am a person who has a full life.
I can dance and I can write.
I have creativity and everything I need in life.
God made me who I am.
Sometimes we are different shapes, sizes, and even colors.
Instead of judging us for who you think we are,
Take a good look at you and me.
Then you will see the real person inside of me.

My Dream

Catherine
Riley



Just Is

Amy
Dunaway



Loving words withheld like a flannel blanket to a homeless man, with rat tugged holes in his worn docksiders. A man who plays golf with a four iron, as Nicole's sloppily torn body rots in a cherry casket. Two third row REM tickets and no transportation. A calloused hand striking tender flesh. Zapping junkies back to life, while their pained souls leukemia patients free. Manditorially stamping flimsy colored flyers before posting. Ricocheting bullets playing tag with an Asian boy, holding an orange popsicle. Promises kept in a denim coat pocket like broken glass. Japan's radiation babies. Slandering her reputation for speaking the truth about his so-called "bad date." Expensive, plastic computers crashing two minutes before a four day late philosophy paper is saved. Saving his sanity, a man who sits and prays on the edge of his blanketed cot, watching the shadows of pigeons fall across his small, barred window. Windows reflecting the worn faces of mothers waiting for missing children, who lie in muddy waters, tasting the saltiness and bitterness of time. Wetlands tarred over for the twentieth Wal-Mart chain. *X-Files* season premier, two months late. In the Atlantic to drown, never to dance under the Eiffel Tower. Thick carbon monoxide stretching up to the lightning rods of skyscrapers, smothering the horizon. A banker savors a New York strip steak, a greasy Coney Island hamburger a teacher eats. No milk but a mouthful of cookies. 1,460 days of quiet phone lines between a mother and son. Banning *Huckleberry Finn*. Echoing off the chipped green seesaws, worn brown parallel bars, and rusted chrome swing-sets, the music of gas explosions, Patriot missiles, and bomb sirens. Silence



Fire

Melissa
Spinelli



*The Indian,
the
Chinaman
and the
American*

Chad

Dreisbach



Setting: A bar at stage right with stools in front of it. The bartender will be on the stage right side of the bar, facing center stage. A table is at center stage with three chairs at it. There is a door at the back of the stage.

The curtains come up with three people sitting at the table with mugs in front of them—the Indian is on the far left, the American in the middle, and the Chinaman on the far right. The bartender is standing behind the bar wiping glasses with a white rag.

A voice is heard off stage (the recorded voice of the American) saying: "Stop me if you've heard this one before. An Indian, a Chinaman, and an American are sitting in a bar and the Indian says to the American—"

Indian: (to American) I Little Three Legs. I hunt skunk.

Voice off stage: And the American says—

American: Oh yeah? Why do they call you Little Three Legs?

Voice: The Indian answers—

Indian: I three legs.

Voice: Then the American says—

American: Funny, I only see two.

Voice: And the Indian replies—

Indian: Third leg in...

(pause)

Indian: Third leg...

(pause)

Indian: Third... hold on a sec, this is stupid. I don't even talk like that.

American: Of course you do! You're the Indian!

Indian: So?

American: Come on, you're ruining the joke.

Indian: What joke?

American: The joke! This is all a joke that someone is telling about us.

Indian: It is? Is it funny?

American: Well, if you'd do what you were supposed to you'd find out.

Indian: Tell me the punch-line.

American: Nol

Indian: Why not?

American: Because it won't be funny unless you hear the whole joke.

Indian: The way the joke's going it doesn't sound funny at all.

American: Listen, Indian...

Indian: (interrupting) Indian? I have a name you know... and it's not Little Three Legs.

American: No, no. You're Indian, I'm American, and he's Chinaman. We're just generalizations.

Chinaman: Hold on. I have a name too.

American: You're Chinaman.

Chinaman: Most people call me Michael.

Indian: (to American) And why are *you* called American? I am a citizen. In fact, my ancestors were here before yours.

Chinaman: I'm a citizen tool

American: (to Indian) You have to understand, in order for this joke to be funny I have to be the intelligent and dominant American while you have to be a silly and somewhat stupid Indian.

Indian: So this is one of those racist jokes.

American: It's not racist, it's just a joke. It's funny! Wait until you hear it! Ok, so you tell me you're Little Three Legs and...

Chinaman: So where do I fit in?

American: Wait! Your part comes up later. It's really funny! Something about eating rice and dogs. Can you talk with a thicker accent, though?

Chinaman: I don't like rice that much, but I do have a dog named Tim. He's a huskie.

Indian: I don't think this joke is going to be very funny.

American: (standing up beside the Indian and making motions with his hands) Well, it *would* be funnier if you were wearing a feather and a loin cloth, and he (moving to Chinaman) were wearing one of those big round hats.

Indian: (taking a sip from the mug in front of him) I don't suppose you'll be wearing tights and a white powdered wig, will ya?

American: (watching the Indian drink) You know, (snapping his fingers) I have a real good one about the Indian who couldn't hold his liquor.

Indian: And I suppose I'm the Indian since I have the red skin.

Chinaman: (to American) Am I in that joke?

American: No, just me, the Indian, and the Bartender.

Chinaman: Thank God!

Bartender: (looking up; to Indian) So what'd you like to drink, mac?

American: (to bartender) Not now! That's not the joke we're doing.

(bartender goes back to wiping the glasses)

American: Wait until you hear it. It's hilarious!

Indian: I don't even like this bar. There aren't any women here.

American: No, no. The Woman is in the next joke. That one's even funnier! Wait 'till you hear it.

Indian: I'm not sure I really want to. (Indian moves over to the center stool)

American: Hey! That's my seat!

Indian: (to Chinaman) Let's cut out of here. There's got to be a better place in town to get drinks.

American: (whining) I don't want to sit on the end.

Chinaman: I agree. This guy is really bugging me.

American: Come on, man. Give me back my seat.

(the Indian and the Chinaman get up and move away from the stools. The American jumps onto the center stool)

American: Hey, where are you guys going?

Indian: (to American) We're heading out, bud. Catch ya later.

American: You can't leave yet! The joke's not over.

Indian: Don't worry about it, I think I've heard it before anyway.

Chinaman: Yeah, me too.

(the Indian and the Chinaman exit through the door at the back of the stage; the American turns around and faces the bar; he looks around at the empty bar and then his eyes rest on the bartender; he takes a sip from his mug)

American: Well this isn't funny at all. (Bartender laughs as curtains go down)



Confusion

Jason Buss



Closing

Thank you for coming. We hope that you have enjoyed our gallery exhibit. To all friends of the gallery, we sincerely thank you. Until we meet again . . .

