



## The Windy Hill review. 1997

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# The Windy Hill Review

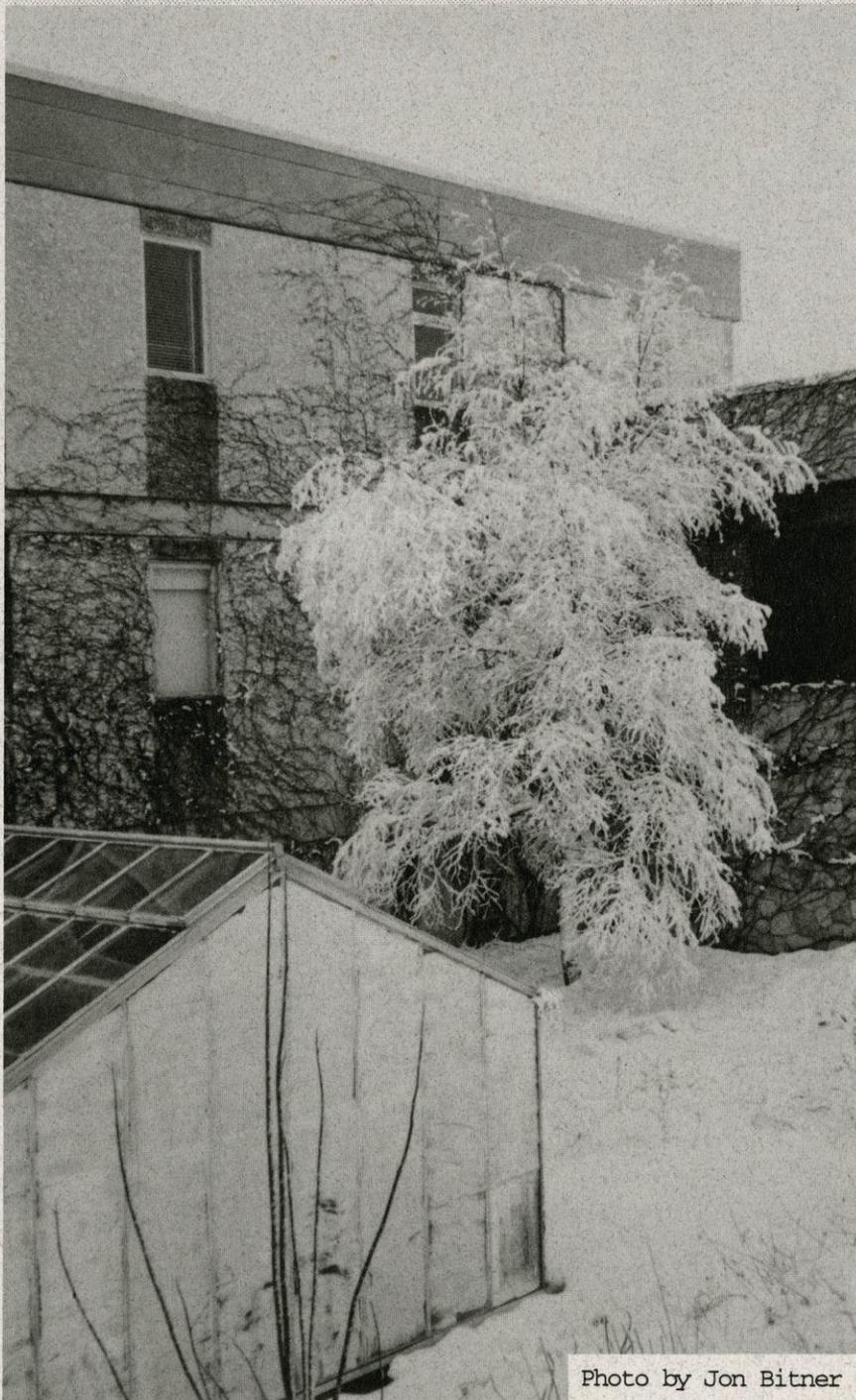
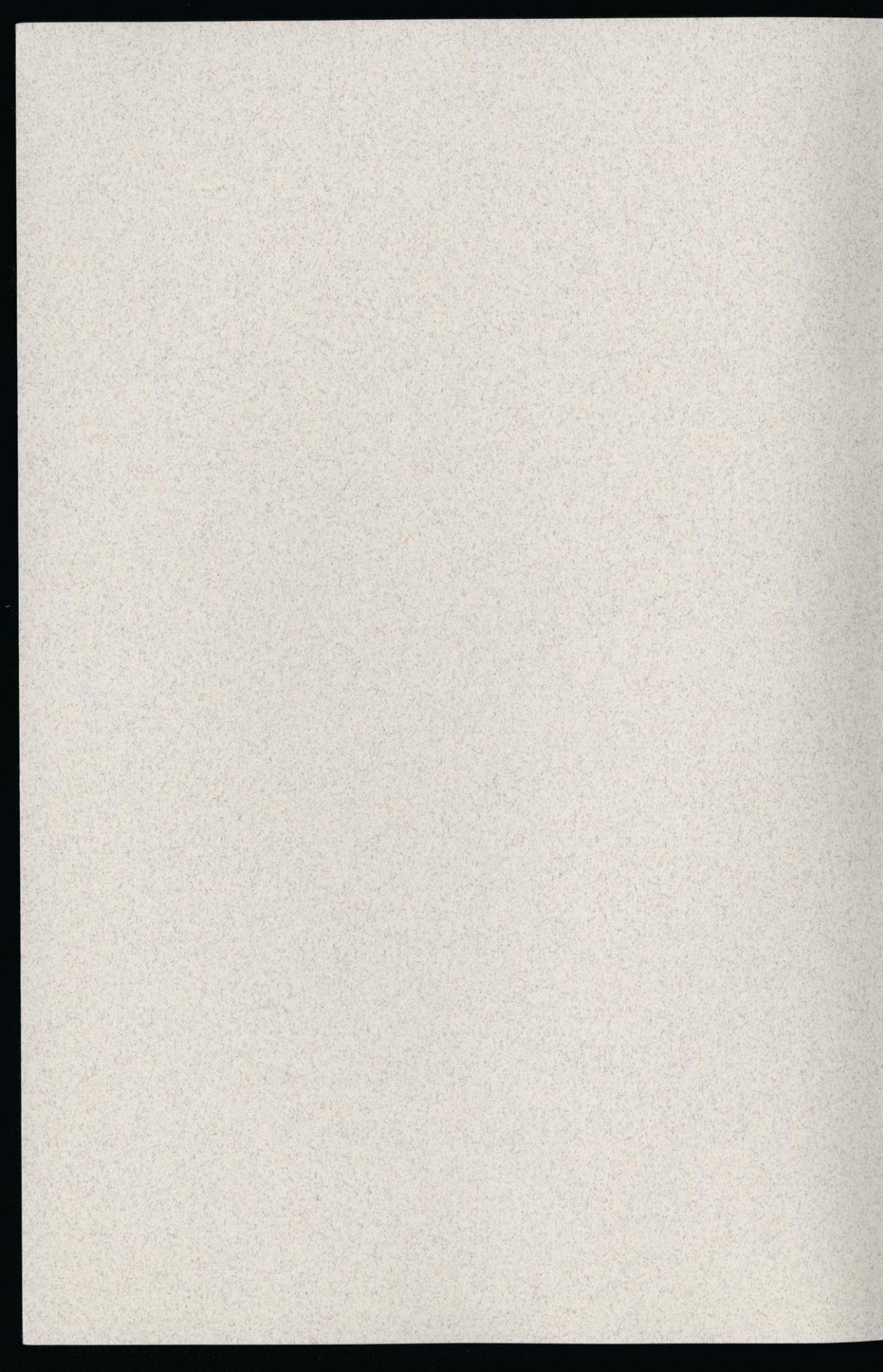


Photo by Jon Bitner



The Windy  
Hill Review

19th Edition  
1997

University of Wisconsin Center -  
Waukesha County



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### The Windy Hill Review

The Windy Hill Review is published annually by the University of Wisconsin Center - Waukesha County Literary Club.

## **Poems**

My buddy says  
these aren't poems  
you're writing  
they're vertical  
prose.

Prose, schmose—  
my poems stack up  
o.k.  
I think.

They have music  
with words to keep 'em  
going  
going.

They even make  
you think  
that is  
if you're into  
thinking.

But thinking  
like drinking  
can cause a lot a' hell—  
you might change  
your mind  
you might think  
you're something special or  
you're a worm  
on the floor.

Watch out  
for prose  
  
it might be a  
horizontal poem.

## **summer love, midnovember**

the trees with insistence  
stretch brittle veins toward  
the grey orbless sky.  
behind their bare spiderwebs,  
the blue & yellow of suburbs  
inch closer. black boots  
leave deep prints in the wet blanket  
of leaves, the pulpy brown & white  
of snow half-melted. two beer bottles,  
empty or spilled, rattle like bones.  
a condom wrapper impersonates a leaf  
near the stone circle grave  
of some long-buried pet. all around  
is the scent of imminent rain.  
the clouds hang distant & full,  
like a voice ready to speak  
like a memory close at hand.

**jen stubbs**

## Acupuncture

Too many of her needles have been metaphoric. She is seeking some that are tangible.

One needle: her best friend Eve kisses her. Two: she falls in love with Eve, against her will, against her better judgment. Three: Eve falls in love, too, but with Tom, the valedictorian at their high school. Four: Eve kisses Callie again, drunk, at a party. Five: Eve gets engaged to Tom. Some of the needles hurt, some of the needles feel good, some are a bit of both.

Now, in the sunlight streaming through the open car window, Callie's exposed midriff awaits its fate. In the passenger's seat, her friend Ian pushes the fast-forward button on the car stereo. A neon sign outside reads "Pleasure Pins," and its pink glow stands out against the gray background. They drive over the old railroad tracks, past the spray-painted confessions of love, political protests and gang symbols, and pull into a parking space as the tape reaches the end.

"I want to thank you for coming with me, Ian," Callie says, pushing some blonde-streaked hair behind her ears. She turns the engine off, but her fingers still grip the key in the ignition.

Ian's hand is on the button of his seat belt, where it hesitates. His grin wrinkles his nose, and the movement of his glasses catches the sunlight.

"Callie, my dear, are you procrastinating with idle sentimentality?"

Ian is out of his realm here; he would never understand the allure of a steel hoop through flesh, what would drive a person to desire it. Callie smiles at his polysyllables and his wire-frames. He doesn't understand, but he is there, and that is enough. She inhales sharply, unbuckles her seat belt and opens her door.

"C'mon, there's no turning back now," she says in exhale, & slams her car door before Ian has unbuckled his seat belt.

There were nights of confessions, of confused and timid love, nights Eve & Callie sat in pink pajama two-

pieces with their bellies and souls bared. Between the tentative first kisses were whispers and touches. Callie's finger circled Eve's bellybutton, so perfect and shallow, and told her, I'm going to pierce mine someday. You wouldn't be able to sit through it, Eve laughed, and pulled Callie close. At that moment, there were no rings or needles, no boyfriends or societal expectations, only the smell of Eve's skin, the heat of her breath and the soft cotton of her pajamas. This is all Callie can think of as she stares at the pink neon. The bridesmaids' dresses for Eve's wedding will be this color. She will not turn back. This is just one more needle.

Ian opens the door part-way, and some bells above jingle to announce his arrival. The sound jars Callie out of memory, back into her world of train tracks and graffiti. She follows Ian through the chiming doorway as he charges forward, out of place in his striped polo shirt and unripped jeans. He elicits strange looks from the half-dozen black-clad, pierced and tattooed patrons in the waiting area.

A man with a double-A battery through his left ear-lobe emerges from behind a black curtain and calls Callie's name.

"Can I watch?" Ian asks. "I want to make sure these are sterile conditions." Tom and Ian are med school bound, valedictorian and salutatorian

of their high school class. Ian has a morbid fascination with bacteria, and Callie suspects this is like a field trip for him.

The man with the battery through his ear laughs an open-mouthed laugh that reveals two rows of straight, yellowed teeth. "That depends what the little lady wants. She's gonna hafta take her shirt off and unbutton her pants, otherwise the fabric gets in the way."

"I don't mind," Callie says, pushing her way through the curtain and gripping the hem of her shirt.

Behind the drapery, there is a chair that looks like a dentist's. The man reclines it so far that Callie has a difficult time situating herself. She pulls off her shirt and he sweeps a cotton ball over her bellybutton. His glance lingers.

"The ancient Arabs believed deep navels were sexy,"

he says, more to Ian than to Callie. "Their belly dancers decorated their navels with a jewel inset." He inserts his finger in Callie's bellybutton and wiggles it to demonstrate. Ian doesn't say anything; he is too busy exploring the brightly colored bottles of chemicals and the free piercing safety manuals. The man

shifts his attention back to Callie. "All right, I don't want no screamin' or cryin'. Once I get that needle in there, it ain't comin' out. So you really want this or what?"

Callie does not hesitate. Absolutely, she insists, and there is no faltering in her voice. She unbuttons her jeans and pulls them down onto her hips.

The man sits down on a rolling stool & propels himself over to his equipment table. There are several bottles of sterile-looking blue liquid, assorted rings, charms and studs, cotton swabs, gauze and needles— so many cold, clean, tangible needles, and Callie feels the urge to continue after her navel, to sit and endure them all, like acupuncture, like passive purging.

The man wheels back over to Callie in her dentist chair. He scrubs her belly raw and tells her she can look away if she wants. She does not see what

he is holding in his hand. She doesn't need to see the needle, only to feel its physicality. A clamp pinches the skin around her bellybutton. Ian turns from his bacterial inspection to watch the needle thread through her flesh. The smell of the antiseptic is like the soap Eve uses, clean and safe as a hospital, and the hovering nearness of another body over hers reminds Callie of nights not so long ago, the memory, clear and close, of Eve's body, her smell and the imminence of her touch. As the needle touches her skin, Callie expects pain, but there is no pain, only a pull, and the light snapping sound of the ring clasp.

On the way back to the car, the tears held so long inside overflow her eyes. There is no sound, no whimpering or sniffling, as they stream down her cheeks.

"Let me see the ring," Ian says.

She raises her head so he can see the tear trails down her face, the mascara smudges like war paint. She pulls her jeans down further around her hips and lifts her shirt higher.

"Does it hurt?" he asks, fingering the ring, the white skin turned pink, the one tiny dot of blood already con-

gealed.

“No,” she whispers.

He moves his hand from her belly ring to her cheek.

“Then why are you crying?”

“I don’t know,” she mumbles.

She moves away from Ian’s hand and looks down, away from him. Memories stick like pinpricks: bare bellies, a kiss, Eve’s face.

**jen stubbs**

## **Ricardo**

Ricardo Torrez, Chinese fellow, emigrated to U.S., years ago, during days of Exclusionary Act. His real name was Fong, but bought (very expensive) birth certificate of deceased Philippine guy, Ricardo Torrez, so “legally” he was Phillipino, not Chinese. He was admitted. Obviously, race is a function of semantics, even lying ones; besides all these Orientals look alike to us Euro-centrics.

**James Kaczmarek**

## **Hollow**

Determination, the strongsuit  
Calculation, precision to the pinprick  
One fell swoop

Longed for so long  
Tried but failed miserably  
Tired and old

Over for him  
Continues for me  
Empty suffering

**Becca Rankin**

Free as  
Life, the beautiful  
Orange colored leaf  
Weaves  
Effortlessly, as though it is a  
Rose petal

**Kimberly Procopis**

Tune the world out...  
And there is still a song.

**Andrea Koerner**

### **Dreams**

Our dreams are movies of the night  
Unconscious images keep us aware  
With closed eyes, colors remain beautiful and bright.

Journeys beyond any recognizable sight  
Traveling realms we would never dare  
Dreams are movies of the night

Certain illusions provoke fright  
Nightmares echoing: beware  
With closed eyes, colors remain beautiful and bright

High above the clouds we take flight  
Sleep is the great key to everywhere  
Dreams are movies of the night

Imagination produces an angelic light  
Encircled by darkness that is always there  
With closed eyes, colors remain beautiful and bright

Visions of other worlds become our guiding light  
The calming fantasy erases every care  
Dreams are like movies of the night  
With eyes closed, colors remain beautiful and bright

**Elizabeth Port**

## **HOCKEY PIE**

### **INGREDIENTS**

6 small, medium or large organisms (preferably human)  
energy  
aggression  
low pain tolerance

### **GARNISH**

1 stick  
1 puck  
lots and lots of padding  
1 helmet

### **DIRECTIONS**

- a. Dress with multiple layers of protective toppings. This is a critical step to insure proper temperature and to keep juices in.
- b. Stuff well with cheeseburgers, Gator aid, candy bars, and when possible, green leafy vegetables.
- c. Transfer mixture to a large portable container and add all left-over topping. The more the better.
- d. Put on ice and mix well with 6 earlier prepared organisms of a different color. Set timer for three 15 minute periods to release combined internal pressure.
- e. At the end of 45 minutes, inspect well for bruises, rinse well and store at room temperature.

**Pam Dennison**

## **On the Bus Going Home**

You sleep beside me  
as if we do this all the time—  
your head resting on the window  
your knee pressed against mine.

The highway murmurs beneath us  
and your breathing is a gentle tide,  
a current that I drift upon  
as I sink into the sigh

of this dark and rusted day  
dream. Outside, the sky  
is a grey sleep-mask of clouds  
pressing gently on my eyes.

Now, you stir beside me  
and with that urging, gratefully I  
surrender, slip beneath the waves,  
and in sleep's blue chamber find

you there, waiting  
to dream us home.

**J.P. Slater**

## The Log Race

Curapreh lay cocooned in blankets rocking slightly in her hammock. She stared at the moldy, orange tiles of the roof searching for the hairy legs of tarantulas. It was past midnight. The only light dimly flickered from a miniature kerosene lantern hanging on the wall. Her little sister, Acrucui, was in her own hammock mumbling in her sleep. Her dad was snoring in the other bedroom of their four-roomed wooden house. In the distance, she could hear the wailing of the Indians in ceremony — mourning the death of the chief.

The day before, Curapreh had gone with her father visiting the Indians. Some were her relatives by name including her "aunt" who had named her. She had seen the log for the race. It was hollow. She thought back to the other log races of the Timbira Indians. There were always two teams of the men and two teams of the women. They would run several miles passing a log from one team member to another. The logs could weigh up to 150 pounds — burdening the shoulder of one man. Those logs weren't hollow. Those races had a winning team. Curapreh had often run along side of the first team emerging from the jungle trail. She would wait with the other children of the village at the end of the trail and run with the team though the village to the center — "the finish line". Those races ended with victory.

The race with a hollow log was different. It was a race for the dead. According to the Timbira people, the spirit of their chief would haunt the village if he was not carried away. It was his final race. His transport was on the shoulders of his people. His carriage was the hollow log.

Curapreh's eyes still wandered over the tiles squinting at the shadows — watching for movement. She was wide awake. Fear keeps good vigilance. An

eerie hush had settled on the night. Even her dad had stopped snoring. A jungle bat flew over the room partitions through the rafters of the roof. Someone had forgotten to close a window. The grunts of sleeping pigs rose through the floorboards. Again they had found a way through the barbed wired stilts to shelter themselves under the house. An owl cooed. Suddenly, Curapreh fought wildly to free herself from the cocoon of blankets as the hammock swung back and froth with groans. It was like getting out of a straight jacket while balancing in a canoe. Curapreh tumbled onto the floor still fighting with the layers, bounding in the blankets and finally freed, padded bare footed in great haste to her parents' bedroom. The mass of blankets was left tangled on her bedroom floor.

Curapreh woke in the middle of the double bed as the cool morning air breathed across her face. It was an empty gray day, and would probably rain later on. It was unusually quiet. Even the roosters seemed to respect the stillness. She crawled to the edge of the bed scanning the floor for her lambretas — flip flops. Realizing that she had left them behind in her night-flight, she tiptoed back to her bedroom, cautiously examining the floor for tiny scorpions. Her sister was still asleep. Curapreh touched the hammock rocking it slightly hoping she would wake up soon. Then changing her mind she plodded into the kitchen. She was glad that she had not had to collect the eggs for breakfast that morning. While she liked the small task, she shared an animosity with the hen that laid them.

Her mother and father were discussing the death of the chief and the subsequent log race yet to come. Curapreh took a sip of her dad's coffee. It was nice and sweet; her mom didn't use much sugar. She remembered the chief. He didn't have very many teeth left and his toes were gnarled and disfigured. His ear lobes were stretched and one was ripped — probably from getting caught on a branch while he was running through the jungle. It had healed into two dan-

gling lobes. She remembered his voice as he sang and the beaded rhythm of his rattle.

Through the back bedroom window, Curapreh watched the log float away on the shoulders of the village. The late afternoon sun drifted on the horizon. The Timbira people carried the spirit of their chief away from the village — his final race to his final resting place. They carried him away to the swamp — the place of the spirits. This wasn't a race for victory. This was the race of the dead.

**Andrea Pries**

### **My Life**

an oak tree, with firmly rooted beliefs  
light through a prism —  
    one side whole, the other fractured  
a box of 64 crayons, so many colors of emotion  
a sequence of dreams —  
    some foggy, others clear  
a yo-yo with all its ups and downs  
an unfinished novel

**Maveryque**

Who do I ask to grant me my wish?  
What do I have to do  
to make it happen- for everything  
to be blue and green again?

I run through streets and knock on doors  
with tears rolling down my cheeks.  
I cry to them, pleading for help,  
and pleading that they know the answers.

Don't make me go back to his chambers  
with no hope or answers.  
I can't look at him without  
the fear of being empty and alone.

How long before we send for the priest,  
or his mother, or his child?  
How long before we tell her that Daddy is sick  
and may have to leave, someday?

How long do I watch him fade,  
before I fade myself?  
When do I stop pretending to smile  
only for his reassurance?

When can I cry into his arms  
when I feel it isn't fair?  
When can he be the strong one for me  
and my tears that I cry?

It's hard being strong  
for someone that you love.  
It's harder to hide the pain  
and walk tall, not lonely.

No one can tell me the answers.  
I'm not sure I'd want to know  
why his face is so pale, or why he moves so slow,  
or how long I have left.

I love him, I do know that.  
I will continue to be strong like he wants.  
I will continue on, and so will he,  
with or without me, but always in the heart.

**Tina Young**

## **Saturday Morning Bartoons**

Broken amber beer bottle  
stench of spilled alcohol  
peeled labels  
leftover pizza cartons  
stale smoky air  
burnt, broken matches  
cigarette ashes everywhere

no pancakes  
just headaches  
hangovers from beer

black eyes  
bad times

**Kathleen L. Karl**

You were so sad.  
What was I to do?  
Be glad that you were so blue.  
I wanted to help,  
But you would not let me in.  
I felt so condemned.  
Part of me tried to still  
be your friend.  
But died trying to be so still,  
to let you be my friend.  
I am in dire straits,  
I am concerned.  
But need I let you drain me  
by your silence?  
Come, let us go from here.  
Let us walk together  
through the shadows,  
to get to the end.  
Let go, let love in.

**Terry Kaminski**

## The Witch's Rite?

Come dance with me amongst the ancient trees.  
I shall take you to the clearing and send your heart a  
reeling.  
We'll dance amongst the faeries, and sing amidst the  
elves.  
We'll conjure the winds and other things, and mystify  
ourselves.  
The moon and stars will smile, as in the days of long  
ago.  
And in the light we'll dance all night around the fire's  
glow.  
But keep a watchful eye for he whom behind the  
bushes lie.  
With cross within his hand, not willing to be seen or  
understand.  
A thousand things he will see, but never shall his  
heart be free.  
Study our faces, this he will, and run to his parish  
and commence to tell.  
Of witches and demons and evil things, of heaven and  
hell and satan's wings.

Beware, oh you who do not comprehend, but hide  
behind the god of men.  
For the universe is God to me, and all within shall set  
me free  
Keep loyal to your rules and sacraments, and thus for  
you my heart laments.  
With fear you follow your beliefs, with love I follow  
mine,  
And still you burn us upon the stake, and call our  
love a crime.  
Perish in the flames I will, my cries are not of pain,  
But for you who kill for the god of men, it is you for  
whom I weep in vain.

**Jonathan D. Hahl**

## **Hayin' Time**

Oh, I was pretty skinny  
when I was just a kid,  
but harnessed Artie's horses,  
and Eddie's, Bud's and Ed's,  
and often I went hayin'.  
I cut, and raked, and hauled,  
and got dirt tired ev'ry day  
I did that, I recall.

I pitched loose hay on wagons  
or rode, and made the load,  
which entailed careful stackin'  
or you'd loose what you stowed.  
I packed the hay in hay mows,  
or sometimes made a stack.  
Despite the dirt, and sweat, and toil,  
good mem'rys looking back.

Them horses all are gone now,  
and Art, and Bud, and Ed's,  
and I ain't worked a-hayin'  
since I was just a kid.  
Yet when this time of year comes round  
I gaze with wistful eye  
out on that hay and hay field;  
but real men never cry.  
No, real men never cry.

**James Kaczmarek**

## ALL AT ONCE

The first time I heard "All At Once" by Whitney Houston, I was driving home from my boyfriend Charlie's house. We had had a big fight just a week before. I just wanted to try to patch things up with him, but instead we began arguing. We threw past mistakes in each other's faces until I mentioned one of his many slutty ex-girlfriends, Melissa. The moment I said her name, I heard the door between the kitchen and the living room slam open behind me. Turning, I just barely saw a hand come flying toward my face. Charlie brushed by me to grab the hand of the screaming Melissa, who must have been listening from the living room. I just stared as he tenderly put his arms around her to calm her down. When she was quieted to normal decibels, he turned to me and said he was sorry. That was all; he was sorry. Sorry?!? What did he know?

I could tell him of the many times I had seen Melissa with Tony, doing heaven knows what. I could tell him that I'd seen her flirting with his older brother, then he would send her away. But could I really lie? Was he really worth it? It only took a moment for me to realize that he wasn't. He wasn't the only guy in the world. He'd been lying about his free time now, he probably had lied about a lot of things before which means that he will lie in the future. Do I even know him? He's a stranger, a passing interest. Yes, of course. His hands had merely warmed, not held; his arms merely touched, not hugged; his lips merely brushed, not caressed; his smile was merely familiar, not intimate. Then I remembered the smell of a cool, summer's night breeze brushing past us as we clasped each other's hands in the

twilight. I remembered the peace I'd felt when near him; the way the stars had sung for our ears alone.

The words of the song stung my eyes: "All at once, the smile that used to greet me brightened someone else's day. She took your smiles away, and left me with just memories...all at once." My imagination, working overtime, placed Charlie and Melissa on their honeymoon in the Bahamas. She was getting the hugs, the kisses, the caresses, the smiles that were rightfully mine. He was giving what wasn't his to give. My face was soaked and my eyes were bright red, my lips pursed from the salty tears streaking down my face.

My mother had always warned me that I was too trusting of guys. I never thought that one would hurt me. I'd never let him. But love was my downfall, something I could never defeat.

People were probably thinking that I was stupid to go out with Charlie in the first place. I mean, he wasn't exactly my type of a guy. He was opposite everything that I was. I was motivated, he just wanted to bum through life; I liked to look nice, he liked being grubby; I was honest and faithful, he was downright liar and a jerk. I needed to be over the guy, I decided, and it happened—all at once.

**Kelly Shackleton**

## **Singularity**

My heart is light  
Heavy is my body  
Thoughts move to you  
Love flows constant  
Faraway or held by your force  
Never changing  
From out of nothing  
There is so much something  
Time and space bend  
Your beauty traps the gazes  
Of all who pass  
Yet I am drawn closer  
As you trap my love  
Our bodies  
Close together  
Falling forever  
In a hurried fling  
We reach to one another  
I give my self to be destroyed  
As we embrace  
In timelessness  
The singularity  
My mass is ejected  
Free to feel  
As I revolve about your figure  
In relative reality  
Love is forever  
My heart is light

**J. Milton Andrae**

## **Olga**

At a festival at the zoo  
She eats the corn  
I buy for her  
Since she has little money  
And I have a bit more.

She's from the other side  
Of the world, Kazakhstan.  
I play the American host,  
Though to judge from looks  
Cossack in my background, too.

She butters and salts the corn,  
Looks up and watches a couple  
Stroll arm in arm past us.  
How odd, she says, some  
American men choose women of color.

She buys this corn  
I will not eat, and  
Being polite, do not  
Know how to take from her.  
What to say? They were here first?  
We're really uninvited guests?

I try this: haven't Cossacks married  
Mongolians and Russians? Yes, she says,  
Tilting the empty cob toward me, toward them,  
But how odd. They do not seem to belong together,  
And these people, they are not like us.

What are we like, I ask  
But she flies back  
To the other side of the world  
With her answer still  
Locked in her baggage.

**Margaret Rozga**

## **kiss**

i am a romantic  
hiding inside  
big black boots,  
starved thin.

i've wanted before.  
i've desired.  
but never in a slow dance  
did i lose my breath

leaning forward to a kiss:  
once, a man swore he loved me  
it was the third date.  
no, i said, you don't know

what love is. yes, he said, you, us.  
he thought he meant it.  
by the fifth date i was obligated.  
i told him i loved him

but all i felt  
was his tongue  
reptilian cold  
in my mouth.

**jen stubbs**

**3:27 a.m.**

swirling confusion  
surrounds me  
    black fog  
    smoke  
shrill scream of the smoke alarm  
    burning air  
    threatens  
        Medusa in her finest  
teases and torments  
menacing  
    alive  
    a parasite  
feeding  
consuming  
destroying  
    groping and reaching out  
fluorescent hands sizzle against the  
    fireman's hose  
a wet flame  
struggle to survive  
sputter and retreat  
escape  
    to find refuge  
    in a small scented candle

**Natalie Allmon**

## **Looking for Love**

Stop  
go  
enter  
stand back  
stand clear  
pass through  
merge  
go single file  
don't go back  
don't trespass  
stay within 100 feet  
no U-turns  
no turning back  
don't go under 45  
don't go over 65  
take left turn  
take right turn  
do not enter  
dead end  
back away from edge  
dangerous cliff  
dangerous drop-off  
dangerous when wet  
dangerous avalanche zone  
high winds  
hurricane prone  
tornado crossing  
monsoon area  
No exit

**Kathleen L. Karl**

## **HOW TO ESCAPE THE EYE?**

Hey! Get that camera out of my face!  
Do you have to take that every place?  
This photo crap is not fun at all.  
Maybe I will like it when I'm tall.

I'm older now and this is still pretty bad,  
I'll make this funny face to get them mad.  
Darn it! They enjoyed my funny face,  
Someday I'll put that camera in its place.

Well, here I am. I'll smile, just make it quick.  
The sight of cameras flashing, it makes me sick!  
The faster, the better. That's my theme,  
I can't wait to leave this annoying scene.

It will be that way 'till the day I die,  
You can never escape the camera's eye.

**Brian Schwalbach**

## **What a Day!**

The alarm goes off  
At 7 o'clock  
The button on the toaster  
Does not lock.  
The two fried eggs  
Were soft and runny,  
The mild was warm,  
The toast was crummy.  
I ran out of the house  
Ten minutes late.  
And as usual,  
The bus didn't wait.  
I walked the distance,  
Tired and worn.  
When I reached the school,  
I saw that my skirt was torn.  
I walked into class  
Half an hour tardy.  
The way everyone laughed  
You'd think I was Laurel and Hardy!  
I looked down,  
To avoid the laughs,  
And low and behold,  
My socks didn't match!

**Christine M. Frisch**

## The Volleyball Play

**SLAM!** the serve crosses the net

Target hit:

impact - center back.

A magical dig turns bullet to ball  
bouncing it arches on pillow air.  
With a ballet twist and a graceful  
leap, the ball floats upward in  
soft white sleep,

**CRASH!** comes the hit with a  
piston-swing. in perfect time,  
a spiker's dream.

**Andrea Preis**

Words don't hold the picture anymore.  
I need much more than words to describe  
the picture I see.  
If you could only sit next to me  
and watch me  
watch them.  
I wish you could be inside me  
where you could feel the same things I do.  
I wish you could see things as I do.  
I want you to hear the music  
that I do more than just listen to.  
It makes a perfect picture.  
It makes a whole with the far off laughs  
and occasional outbursts.  
The sun is beginning to disappear  
behind the trees  
and they gather outside to watch.  
The light is much more dim inside here,  
but I can still see clearly.

I, again, stand back  
and let the others go through.  
I would love for you to stand back with me  
and contemplate the things I do  
as my body turns numb.  
Through this window,  
I can see much more than the view.  
I wonder if others do too.  
Maybe you could tell me.  
I would love for you to reassure  
these thoughts of mine.  
No one else can.  
I don't just watch things  
and I'm definitely not a part of it all.  
I don't take things in as being true,  
certain,  
and real.  
I cannot partake in such events.  
I guess that is why I want you here.  
Your thoughts flow freely like mine,  
but only a few are released.  
I understand how that can be  
with so many of them.  
I know you can see it too,  
but I wonder if you can feel it.  
Can you feel the loneliness or emptiness  
or that uncertain feeling of  
existence?  
I only find myself watching now,  
and not a part of it all.  
Even so,  
every day seems like a  
Friday.

**Tina Young**

## **The Last Drink**

I left the house this morning with nothing on but pajamas. Neighbors saw me and pointed. I didn't care. I knew they didn't have a clue. They go on about their life. They only care for their shiny new cars and bright green soft toxic lawns. I continue down the road. Again strangers stare, and no doubt wonder. But not like I wonder. Wonder how they can go on with their tiny little knowledge of life. Accepting that brief moment of thought as a lifetime of experience within the self-contained fish tank built around themselves.

So I move on. Catching the highway I slap my bare pink feet on the smooth paved black top. The mid morning sun at my face like a beacon guiding me to the unknown that I crave to know.

After countless cars and mile markers I leave the highway spotting the simple sands of a rhythmic desert calling me to approach. Sirens in the background call me back, but I know they hold no answers. The mid day sun pounds me with an unfriendly heat. It definitely holds nothing for which I search. And I trod onward. Finally, thirsty and lost on the hot open desert sands, plodding past another desolate stretch alone, I discover a truth and absorb into my being, Only to realize I will never be satisfied. So I drown.

**J. Milton Andrae**

## **The Pain of Missing You**

The pain of missing you attacks once more  
I swallow hard and suck in a deep breath  
I'm suffocated again by the familiar weight  
Slow panic washes over me like a tide.

I swallow hard and suck in a deep breath  
My fingers trembling and palms moist  
Slow panic washes over me like a tide  
My heart twisted and stretched like tight elastic

My fingers trembling and palms moist  
All around me time stops  
My heart twisted and stretched like tight elastic  
I long to hear you, touch you, feel you

All around me time stops  
I'm suffocated again by the familiar weight  
I long to hear you, touch you, feel you  
As the pain of missing you attacks once more

**Natalie Allmon**

## **How Much Does Pain Weigh?**

it's like a two-ton heavy thing  
sitting on the soul, the conscience  
severing the heart in half  
splintering hope in all directions  
mass destruction of the spirit  
overbearing burden of torment  
cement brick after cement brick  
building an endless story house  
squeezing away all prospects of happiness  
leaving the cadaver empty  
while still breathing

**Becca Rankin**

## **An Enchanted Tale**

While I sailed the deep blue sea,  
A shroud of fog surrounded me.  
The misty air caressed my face,  
And as for land there was no trace.

A haunting silence filled the air.  
All I did was stand and stared  
Into the gloom, so thick and heavy.  
Watching, and waiting, and keeping steady.

While into the shroud I peered,  
A shadowy figure suddenly appeared.  
Long and sleek, and moving fast,  
With bulwarks, and riggings upon her masts.

Quickly it vanished into the haze.  
Its sight had put me into a daze.  
Was it real or imagination?  
Was it a ghostship with no destination?

I watched and waited, and to my surprise,  
It appeared once more before my eyes.  
A schooner so sleek, a real enchantress,  
And upon her stern, the name Adventuress.

**Jonathan D. Hahl**

## **Finery**

Fragrant bouquets  
Silk, ruffled lace  
pillowy satin  
Sparkling diamonds  
eternal gold bands  
cream,  
powder,  
flawless mask  
lips kissed red  
rose petaled blush  
freshness preserved  
shadowy eyelids  
A face,  
painted life;  
coffined death.

**Andrea Pries**

## **Details**

They stood  
an arm's length  
apart waiting  
for his flight

Don't forget to mail the bills  
he said

Hands in her pockets  
and eyes on her shoes  
I put an extra shirt in your suitcase  
in case you get delayed

Looking at his watch  
don't forget, garbage day  
is Tuesday  
make yourself  
a note

Digging in her purse  
Did you leave the checkbook  
she said

Now boarding flight 814  
to Chicago

It's on the desk  
Goodbye. I'll call  
when I arrive

Why? Did we  
forget something  
she said.

**Pam Dennison**

## **You're Mine**

You God Damn Whore  
Do you want more?

I'll hit you to the floor  
I'll throw you out the door

I could sell you at the store  
I want to hurt you to your core

you witch  
you bitch

I'll hit you till you need stitches  
then I'll turn out your light switch

you're mine  
I own all your time  
I'll make you shine  
each and every time  
then I'll throw you in the ditch  
you bitch  
you whore  
want more?

stay down  
you bitch  
you whore  
or do you want more?

**Kathleen L. Karl**

Their masks are so tightly hovering over their faces as I try to see through them. They try to hide what would be inappropriate to us in their evil minds. Yet, they still dance their forbidden dance behind where our eyes cannot follow. The Queen stands tall with her graceful caricature and holds what some call beauty. I was told (reassured) that this wasn't what happiness was. Now I've come to realize it to be true.

The joker stands beside her with his brightly colored farce. I am supposed to perceive him as the lucky one. I knew the joker already hid behind a mask to conceal his destiny and to bring delight, but now he wears a second. This brightly colored mask hides the deliberations of freedom and rebellion. The poor fool wishes for this in hopes of not being beheaded.

Running around in the circle of silence are three more masks. I mentally tear them off to see the less fortunate and graceful young.

One hopes to find her knight, sneaking glances out of the eye holes hoping no one discovers her intent. The Queen knows and looks at her, but she smiles a wide grin despite it. She makes sure everyone sees it before she prevails.

The next of the three is resented by all four. She lives down in low chambers now where no one can catch her misfortune. She yearns for comfort with the absence of reality. She only gathers herself when the mask is on, which is when she can lead the “normal life” we so expect them to.

Then, we see the one of power and strength. She holds more to hide than any other. She doesn’t need a mask, but wears one anyway because someday she will grow to have a reason to hide. They all do. She will too. Living in perfect sanity now, but soon she will evolve. She will then turn in sunshine and innocent pleasure for darkness and swords of sin. The mask will be needed then, so she starts now. She will graduate to be with the others. Can I save her? Should I? Do I want to?

No.

Can I save them all? Why would I think of it? No longer! Let them be. They will grow to love their masquerade as I will grow to love my honest own.

**Tina Young**

## **In Childhood's Eye**

In childhood's dreams and memories  
Many things were understood.  
Faeries and dragons existed, of course.  
Why? Because they could.

My house was a castle, my yard a kingdom.  
My sister a princess, and I, a prince.  
We walked in the mystical Forest of Splendor.  
But stayed away from the marsh, and the mon-  
sters within.

Between the bridges was a coliseum;  
The gladiators fought there.  
The culvert that ran beneath the highway,  
Was a cave I would often explore.

The bike my father made for me  
Was a horse of a noble breed.  
The oil dip-stick was my sword,  
My lance, a branch from a tree.

But as time went by, so did I,  
And my kingdom disappeared.  
My horse had rusted, my lance broke,  
And all had ended, I fear.

Yet once in a while you may see me smile.  
But may I have you know,  
That what I see from the corner of my eye  
Is my horse, my kingdom, and my castle.

**Jonathan D. Hahl**

## **Til Death Do Us Part**

My love, my life, my one and only  
Please hear this cry of hatred  
I lay not toward the face of death  
But reveal to the lord's embraces

Thinking of times collected  
And memories that turned free  
Turning to dust and ashes  
They'll be buried next to me

I find myself clothed  
With the silkiest of torn  
A beautiful white horse  
Will arise and be born

You will take her in thine place  
To love and let free  
To cherish and comfort  
Not torture, you'll see

She'll be helpful and wise  
In all times of need  
You'll caress and embrace her  
But beware of the heed

She'll be gone and take flight  
With her new set of wings  
And you lose once again  
All those precious things

So don't expect any sympathy  
From the dead and the strong  
You'll have to find out for yourself  
What you've been missing all along

You'll find you were happier  
In times you spent with me  
But you have to understand  
I am now taken and no longer free

So wise up my dear friend  
Before the others go  
They will up and leave you  
And finally you'll know

Know why I died that day  
And a new spirit born  
Because for all that has happened  
My heart will not torn.

**Jessica McCoy**

### **Once**

Once I knew my love,  
Like a song in the open air.  
His voice rang tender,  
His words were like the sun.  
I can remember his embrace.  
His tight thresh hold on me.  
Once I knew my love...  
Once he loved me.

Once I knew my love,  
His passion was in his hands,  
His heart showed through his eyes,  
And his care...  
Feel so deep.  
No longer do I know that love,  
For it doesn't want to know me...  
Once I knew my love... once...

**Andrea Koerner**

## **Life's Little Questions**

a quiet young man somberly sitting  
upon a porch  
looking up at infinite stars  
searching for an answer

upon a porch  
contemplating numerous questions  
searching for an answer  
within an endless universe

contemplating numerous questions  
as he waits for a voice  
within an endless universe  
desperation fills his eyes

as he waits for a voice  
looking up at infinite stars  
desperation fills the eyes of  
the quiet young man somberly sitting.

**Maveryque**

## **Toilet Seat Down**

She says she wants to be my friend  
but toilet seat is down again.  
It sent the big things when we fight,  
but little things, like toothpaste, right?  
Or toilet paper spilling wrong,  
or her a-humming that dumb song  
that grates upon my frazzled nerves  
till I ignore her ample curves.  
But we take bitter with the sweet  
but, man, she has the coldest feet.  
I overlook a lot, and then  
the toilet seat is down again.

**James Kaczmarek**

## **SPLASH**

a sea of confusion  
    relentlessly  
    pulling  
    d o w n  
    d o w n  
                  a gulp of air  
                  a breath of truth

prolonging the suffering  
frightened eyes open to  
    the icy blackness  
tired muscles  
    bursting lungs  
    sharp pain

tears  
rips  
uselessly fighting for freedom

*flash*  
    The hospital  
    A crib

*flash*  
    The first step  
    The first tooth

*flash*  
    Kindergarten  
    Grade School

*flash*  
    Awkwardness  
    Breasts

*flash*  
    Boys  
    Dating

*flash*  
    Love  
    Loss

*flash*  
    YIELD and surrender

calm,  
still,  
quiet.

**Natalie Allmon**

## **Sonnet**

A teacher is something like a midwife,  
the baby to be assisted, a germ  
of potentiality needing life,  
with air, space, and instruction, and the firm  
strong hand of a teacher who, with skill,  
guides  
the student through the struggle of labor  
by explaining, correcting the germ, bides  
her time, becomes coach, or, like a neighbor,  
insists, "Do it this way, wait, fine, well done."  
Or, "Take another look, now think again."  
The student begins to feel she has won:  
"I get it now! At last I've got a ten!"  
In the course of things, the student is lined  
up to teach herself, leaving her coach behind.

**Barbara Bache-Wiig**

## **Halloween, a Love Story**

His hands look like willow trees, she noticed as they crept along the woodwork of the forbidden attic. The floor boards creaked with their weight, hers heavy and his slight, and against their palms they felt the bass and drums, the bare bones of the night music that raged below them. It was not their house, their party, or their attic. Nothing belonged to them but each other.

Dori was his name, Dorian by birth, but she liked Dori much better. With his slim, girl-like body, his long and tattered black coat and faint traces of black eyeliner, the title Dorian made him frightening, a grave modern-day gothic villain. Dori was gentle, like the tender whisper of his speech and the soft down of his hair.

Angelique was her name, given to her by her mother who loved the Dark Shadows TV series and whose father spoke only French. Angelique was a burden of a name, as all exotic names are, but she refused to homogenize it to "Angie" like all of the blonde teased-hair cheerleader Angelas, and so her name remained Angelique to all but Dori. Dori called her Angel.

Much of their time was spent alone with each other, safe in their private names, away from the noise of gossip, come-on lines and polite small-talk. That night they stole away from a party at their friend Micah's house and sneaked into the attic with a bottle of red wine from the locked cabinet and two plastic Care Bear cups from the kitchen cupboards. No one would have ever suspected that Angel, with her pale hair and skin and surprisingly dark eyes, kept an expertly bent hairpin in her ragged gray wool purse for just such occasions. No one would have suspected Dori, with his glossy dark hair and pale eyes and skin, would have chosen the Care Bear cups.

Streams of moonlight filtered through the half-boarded paneless window. Rural midwestern smells of sweet mint and cut hay blew in with the night breeze, ruffling Angel's short light curls and tangling Dori's dark waves. They moved cautiously as cats, exploring their new refuge.

Angel's thick fingers found an old lamp plugged into a lone electrical outlet. The bulb was oddly shaped with dark glass, and when she turned the switch, the room was illuminated with eerie blue light.

Dori's fingers like languid tentacles ran over the length of a storage box. His fingernails, far too long for a boy (his mother would say), made a scratching sound against the coarse cardboard. There was some writing on the side, thick dark letters in permanent marker, and he traced slowly over each character before he read it out loud.

"Angel, look here. The side of the box says 'Halloween'."

Angel clasped her hands together in delight. She helped Dori overturn the box so that they could pilfer the treasures within. The box was sealed shut with industrial tape, but they only became more determined. They were cheetahs gnawing to crack a bone, clawing in anticipation of the marrow. Finally, Angel reached a broad hand into her purse and produced a silver pocket knife that her French bon-papa had left her. The outside was carved of ivory and was engraved with the image of a naked woman, finely detailed down to the individual pubic hairs. Dori did not notice the picture; he was dreaming of black cloaks, white theatrical make-up, thick black eyeliner and all the other darkly beautiful presents the box marked "Halloween" promised.

The box had been stuffed full, so when the seal broke, all its bounty spilled onto the attic floor. Dori and Angel sat cross legged and overwhelmed as they sorted through their new-found treasures. There was a can of silver spray-in hair color, several gauzy scarves, some rice-powder to whiten the face, a half-full bottle of liquid eyeliner, some glittery mascara, two tubes of lipstick (one black as night time, one silver like starlight), and a bottle of black nail polish.

Dori and Angel split the scarves between them. Angel took the shimmering gray one and the white one, Dori took two black and a dark blue. Angel tied hers around her neck, and Dori wove his through some holes in his long, tattered

black coat. Together they powdered each other's faces in front of an old cracked mirror.

"There are more of you when I look into the mirror," Dori whispered. "I like that." Thirteen Angels smiled back at him. Dori carefully sprayed the silver color into parts of Angel's hair, swept the iridescent lip color across her thick mouth, and brushed the mascara on her pale lashes. Angel painted dramatic black outlines of Dori's feline-shaped eyes and brushed black lipstick onto his thin lips. Then she took his hands very gently into hers, straightened his long, willowy fingers and began brushing on the black nail color. She did this slowly and meticulously, with the precision of a mother cat licking her kitten clean. She pushed his cuticles back and felt with her own rough, dense hands the spidery digits of his grasp. The black on his fingernails made them appear like claws, and when the nails had dried he brought them gently down against Angel's soft white cheek, and they smiled at a job well done.

They packed their pilfered treasures away into their trick or treat bags, Dori's old backpack, black and worn as his coat, and Angel's large gray wool purse, already drooping with the weight of the wine. Micah's little sisters would never miss the makeup or props, and his parents would never miss the wine; Angel and Dori only stole what would not be noticed or cared for. The wine was cheap with no cork, but they drank it anyway, deliciously bitter in their Care Bear cups, as the feeble moonlight shone through the boards of the paneless window. The strange blue light made everything appear ghostly, and the broken mirror showed their reflection thirteenfold: her plump shining silver frame, bright and hopeful like prayer; his thin dark figure, fingernails like the night sky; them, holding onto each other, holding onto all in the world that belonged to them.

**jen stubbs**

## **Gift**

You get them first,  
these summer storms;

swirling out of Nebraska's  
grey corduroy skies  
scraping the tops of grain elevators  
as they roll across the Plains  
deep and wide as a memory.

Drinking from the Gulf, blooming  
like great black flowers  
over the Iowa cornfields,  
roiling and rumbling as they

spill into Minnesota, tugging at trees  
pulling at power lines  
leaving towns as dark as mines.

Then, across the Great River  
washing down through the coulees and sand  
counties  
to find me here, one thousand miles later,  
in the security of my midnight porch,  
watching the sky sheet off the eaves  
watching the clouds collide in Bashes  
that freeze the night  
like a giant Polaroid, and wondering  
if it's still raining in Winona.

You get them first  
these summer storms—  
take what you need  
and send the rest to me.

**J.P. Slater**

## **The Gale**

Upon the Sea of Memories,  
I sailed a ship of tears.  
She was the gale that tore my sails,  
And left me stranded there.

Once upon her gentle breeze,  
I felt her caress my soul.  
Alas I'd found tranquillity,  
And a sea of love did flow.

As time grew old, the breeze blew cold.  
Along came the raging sea.  
My ship was tossed, her love was lost  
Desolation became reality.

Upon a crest my ship did rest.  
The horizon came to sight.  
And what I saw filled me with awe,  
The sea was calm, & bright.

So when, at last, she had passed,  
My heart from darkness fell  
Into the light with great delight  
With tales I've yet to tell.

**Jonathan D. Hahl**



