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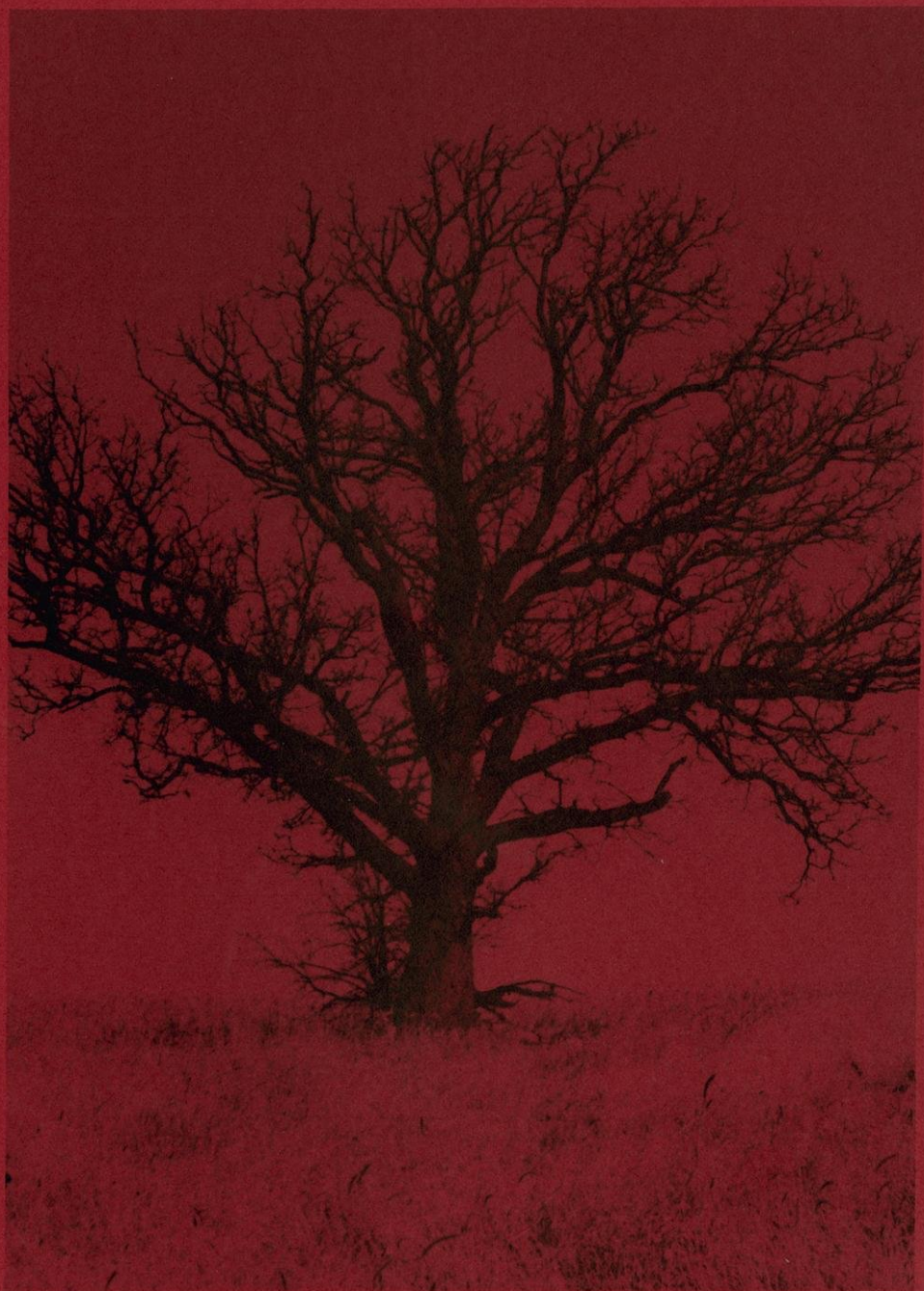
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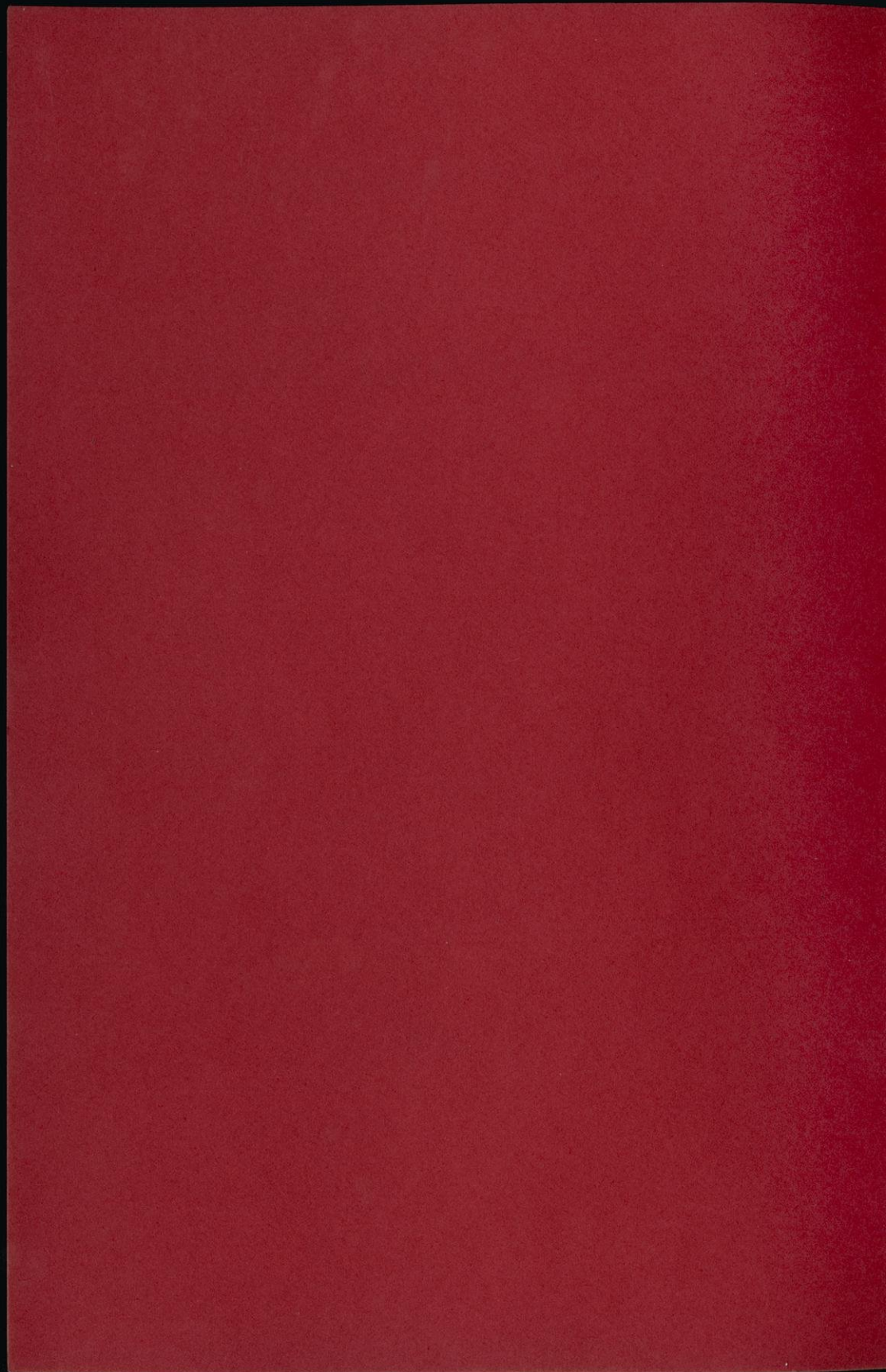
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WINDY HILL REVIEW



UWC-WAUKESHA

THE WINDY HILL REVIEW

1988

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A thanks to all of the contributors to the Tenth Anniversary issue of the Windy Hill Review.

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Editor

Kathy Held

Thanks to Phil Zweifel- You helped to make this fly.

Thanks to all in the computer lab at UWCW.

Lynn Pague-Thanks for the assistance. I'm done and I still think you're a wonderful human being.

Cover Photo

Kathy Held

wind-speak

gray skylight
big blue-stems bending
shadowed snow

wind-spoken whispers
etched in white

mary catherine

Frostbite

The snow squeaked under my dancing feet.
"We'll sing a love song as we stroll along . . ."
My arms caressed two ripened bags of groceries.
My lips warmed in anticipation of your kisses.
I felt like a million bucks, all in ones.

I beat my head upon your aluminum storm door.
The metal clanged. I watched my breath
Smear the ice cubist designs etched on the glass.

The inside door was open.
The faint splash of the shower was a sweet song.
That's where I wanted to be,
The steam rising between our legs.

I beat again, more anxiously.
And waited.
Drippings from my nose
Froze upon my mustache.
My ears felt as if they would crack.
My arms were taffy around the bags.
My fingertips pulsed with pain.
My toes were huddled into cement lions' paws.

I knelt upon your rubber welcome mat
And took the doorknob in my mouth.

Steve Tighe

Lights Out

Nighttime
Checking the distance
to my bed
I count
the footsteps
and clear the path

Clicking off
the light
I race
to beat
the shadows

Something shifts
I smash
my toe
Darkness licks
its finger
and chalks up
another one

Kathy Held

Found: Honesty

Once the trust
has gone

out of
the relationship

it's no fun
lying

anymore.

Phil Zweifel

Smokestacks and Steeples

Each morning I'd trudge
to the top of the hill
to get yelled at
for not studying
because no counselor or teacher
could explain to me why
I should know history or science
or economics or English

Boys like me were encouraged
to take shop classes
which made sense
when gazing out windows
onto little roofs of faded houses
and on smokestacks and steeples
I pondered and reasoned
in ways I wasn't taught
that artists writers
and scientists were
in a world far-removed
from my world
of hard dirty work
sweat and prayers

R. Scott deSnoo

nine-sixteenths crazy

she was nine-sixteenths crazy
when she packed the kids and everything they owned
in the car
and drove twelve thousand miles
looking for a
home

the car broke down in Iowa
but got fixed in North Platte
kids were pretty broken too
but still under warranty
she just kept running
on empty

the lady's got some hard miles on her
you can kick the tires
and slam the doors
but don't look under the hood
there's a real mess
in there

Lynn Spaulding

Red Flyer

One of the few times we got to sleep in my parents' wide double bed was on Christmas Eve. My brother Bill and I would tunnel down into the quilts, throw arms and legs out wide trying to find the end of the mattress. I would bury my nose in the smell of fresh laundered sheets and try to swallow the time in large gulps. Christmas Eve. This particular Christmas Eve, my brother Bill wore his (and my) favorite pair of pajamas, the pair with the cowboys riding bucking broncs. In the background were ranch symbols branded everywhich way, names like the Rocking K, or the Lazy L. I coveted those pajamas. I wanted to wear the bucking broncs and decipher the brands that tattooed the cloth. He knew how much I wanted those pajamas. Mine had ballerinas on them.

We could hear mom's voice from the doorway. "You two, go to sleep." She pulled the quilt-tent off our heads. "Remember, no gifts tonight until Santa comes. He's not going to show if you two aren't asleep

Now, I knew there wasn't any Santa Claus. I may have been only seven, but I'd peeked last year. Bill, two years my elder had peeked years and years ago. Still, we kept quiet. Neither of us wanted to give any of it up yet--the pretense, the excitement, our parents' belief in our naivete.

"Yes, mom." Bill nodded, turned to me with his older brother voice and said, "I'll make her behave, Mom. Promise." He silenced my protest with a wink and then smiled at mom. I wrapped the blanket around the ballerinas, hoping they'd smother and drop off the cloth

sometime in the middle of the night.

Mom's hand felt cool as it lifted my bangs from damp forehead, and her lips were warm and dry.

"You feeling all right, honey?" Mom asked me. "You feel a little hot."

"I'm fine, Mom," I lied, not mentioning the ache in my stomach, knowing it was just excitement about Christmas and all, and just the least bit afraid if I admitted to it I'd miss Christmas Eve.

"All right. I'll wake you after Santa leaves." And she closed the door behind her, leaving us in the dark.

I smiled. Bill's head on the pillow was silhouetted against the blue, red, orange, green lights strung outside the bedroom window. I stared into the lights, watching the mist of wind-driven snow curl around the bulbs and melt in steam.

"Know what I'm gonna get, Cindy?" "A lickin' if you don't shut up. How come you're always doing that to me?"

"What?" Bill asked, all innocence.

I hated talking to the back of his head. I raised on an elbow and hung my face down over his. "Acting like you're the good one . . . 'I'll make her behave, Mom.'"

Bill pushed me back down. "I was just trying to get her out of here fast. Want your presents don't ya?"

I kept quiet

"I'm gonna get that BB gun I've been asking for," he said real quiet.

"Now, how do you know that?"

"Saw it."

"Where?" I asked eagerly, thinking to get a handle on the hiding place next year. But Bill just kept on talking

"Know what you got too."

I slapped my hands over my ears. It was one thing to see your presents early, but another altogether to wait scant hours

til the unveiling and have to hear about it from a brother. "I don't want to know," I said.

"Good, cause I ain't going to tell you." He turned over and raised up on an elbow. "But I will tell you this. You're going to think it's the best Christmas ever." And then he dropped back down onto the pillow and flopped over. Leaving me alone, thinking about the best Christmas ever. And even though every year for the last three Christmases I'd hoped and been disappointed, once again, I began to hope . . . for a Red Flyer sled.

Bill had one, and even though it had long lost the lustre from its varnished boards, still it was the sweetest fastest sled in the neighborhood. It hadn't seemed fair, somehow, that he should have gotten the new sled, while I had been relegated that old derelict that had once been Mom's sled. And worst of all, it had the bad taste to still be fitted with the baby rail. I couldn't lift the sled up, run with it arrowing out before me, throwing myself down bellyflopping-hard onto the sled as it launched from the hilltop like all the boys did. No. I had to set the old baby sled down, sit "lady-like" and wait to be pushed off. None of the thrills of the hill for me. I lie there agonizing over the injustices, staring at the Christmas lights til they burned blue, green, orange, but most of all red on the inside of my eyelids when I closed them. If only I could dare to hope. But as I finally slipped off into a restless sleep, it was with the firm conviction that Bill had set me up. I would awaken to another dumb glarey-eyed doll capable of "wetting its pants" if you poured enough water into it. I drifted off, resolved not to be disappointed yet again.

I will never forget the wonder of

that Christmas, of how the Red Flyer Sled sat glistening under the tree with its bow red as the runners that so gracefully curved beneath it. It was a thing of exquisite beauty with its varnished boards polished to a glass surface reflecting the tree lights. And though I had hung back, fearful of believing that it could indeed be mine, that there hadn't been some awful mistake, dad me walked over to it and sat me on it himself. And there it was, the ultimate proof. The splendid tag with my name printed boldly on it--To Cindy, with love from Santa Claus. And while I was stretched out on that sled, feeling how easily the bars moved, how well they fit my hands, and with the new length of clothesline, that dad had tied to it, gripped in my teeth like a cowboy on a bronc, it was then Mom noticed the spots branding my body. I had caught the measles.

I sat at the dining room table with the sound of rain in my ears. It was coming from the living room where the Christmas tree was steadily dripping its needles onto my Red Flyer Sled. Seven days since Christmas Eve and the only thing that moved was the inexorable down-flight of needles. My sled would have long since been buried if it hadn't been for my mother's manic vacuuming. I had retreated to the table, unable to bear any longer lying on the sled in the living room and pretending to fly down the hill out back. A whole week the sled sat unused while the measles took its good natured time leaving. Bill would come in with reports of the hill's surface and how the

neighborhood kids were gathering there daily for the sledding. Right out my back window. I had stopped watching. It was all too painful. Mom had tried to comfort me from the kitchen. She brought me warm cookies and cold milk, and never scolded even when I dripped milk onto the table's high-gloss blonde finish. I drew pictures of the sled. Me and the sled. The sled going down the hill. The sled going up the hill, right-side-up, upside down, from the bottom, from the top. Periodically, Momma would come in and comment on how well I drew sleds, and offer me something to eat. Her answer to all complaints came out of the kitchen.

Dad went to work . . . Momma went to the kitchen. She wore housedresses and aprons, and kept the house warm with her baking--moisture would bead on the thermopane dining room window and pool onto the blonde windowsill beneath. I would run my finger through the chill puddles trying to join them into a single lake before mom would notice and mop it up. Mom liked to bake, and she was good at it. Nobody came to our house without eating. She didn't care what time it was, if they were there, they ate. She always had a stash of cookies on hand, or a bread, or a cake.

"Mom, I feel fine."

She clapped the flour from her hands, looked up at me "You look pale."

I walked over to the mirror. I was pale. It was the flour from Momma's hands, last time she checked me for a fever. I walked to the kitchen sink, rinsed my face off, grabbed a handful of cheek and twisted hard just before going back to Momma.

"I'm fine, Momma."

She looked at me again, lifted my sweater to check the spots on my belly. I

gazed down. Looked pretty good.

"I don't know . . . "

Bill came pounding in the backdoor, snow falling from him in small clumps as he stomped his way into the kitchen. The metal clasps on his rubber boots jingled. "Hey, Spots." He patted me on the head. He had taken to calling me that ever since Christmas day. Momma offered him a cookie.

"You should see that hill. It's the best ever. Tom, me and the gang have been working on it for two days now. We got it so slick . . . " his hand slid smoothly off one another and soared out into the air. "We got two great paths beat out around either side of the big rock. One has this great bump and the other one's smooth as a slide."

"Mom . . . " I whined.

Bill jumped to my defense. "Ahh, she's all right, Mom."

I picked up the cue. "I won't run or anything, Mom. I'll just walk the sled up the hill and ride it down. Okay? Huh? Walk up, ride down."

"Sure, you can even come too, Mom!" Bill threw in. I looked at him, stunned. "Sure, you can ride my sled . . . or Cindy's. Right Cindy?"

"Woman don't go . . . " I shut up as fast as I realized Bill's strategy. Of course, Mom would never come out. Bread was about to go into the oven. Mom never left her breads for no one. "Sure, Mom. You could come out and watch me on my brand new sled!"

Mom was watching me steadily, as though she were turning my face over in her sight, examining all the particulars to find the whole different than she expected. At the time I assumed she was looking for signs of fever. I wished I could pinch my cheeks again. Then she nodded and turned back to her bread dough.

I was dressed and out the backdoor in moments flat, my Red Flyer in tow.

All the kids were there. In the subdivision there was no hill quite like the one out back our place. It was our pride and joy in the winter. Glaciers had scraped dirt for hundreds of miles just to leave it here in a large slump out back our house. The only unkindness about it was the immense rock it had deposited smack in the middle of the down-slope. But we had long given up trying to dig the rock out. It sat there, immovable, like the tip of a buried mountain. We had resorted to sledding wide about either side of it. The paths were smooth as glare ice and swept downward in a wave that split neatly around the rock.

The first order of business was to show off my new sled. Shortly after that, I had to unbutton my coat, pull up the muffler and sweater to show everyone my stomach where the measles spots were paling. The cold pinked my belly. Ted was disappointed. He had expected more.

"Is that all? I thought there'd be pus and scabs and all."

"You're so weird, Ted." Bill said

"He's weird? What about yourself?" I asked of Bill. "What a suggestion . . . Mom should come sledding?"

Bill looked over his shoulder at the house. "Yeah, why shouldn't she?"

I looked at him in disgust. "I thought you only said that cause you knew she wouldn't. Woman don't go sledding."

"Who says?"

"All right smarty-pants, have you ever seen a woman sledding, have you ever seen Mom sledding?" I called out to Jimmy Flander. "Hey, Jimmy, you ever seen your momma sled?"

"No." He launched down the hill.

"That don't mean nothing" Bill

countered. " Just cause they haven't , doesn't mean they can't."

Then I hit on the perfect answer. "Mom doesn't even own a pair of pants. What's she gonna do, sled in her housedress and apron?"

"I don't know." Bill said, and he pushed me away.

I grabbed my sled and pulled it to my chest. Angry. Angry with Bill, and wasn't quite sure why. The anger shook off with the first bite of my sled on the hill top as it launched off. But when I reached the bottom of the hill, breathless and my eyes tearing from the wind, I found myself wishing Mom had been there to see me.

My sled was a sheer wonder. And I spent the next hour hauling it up the hill just so I could race back down. And in the wonder of that racing, tearing hour the thought of Mom had completely fled my mind, until Bill brought it back up again.

"I bet she's going to come out."

"You starting that again?"

"How about next week's allowance?"

Bill pushed.

That brought me up short. Bill never bet, unless it was a certain win. I looked back at the house. No one was there, except some guy. Meter reader maybe. "The whole allowance?"

"The whole fifty cents!"

Now I knew something was wrong. No way Bill'd bet the whole thing unless he was certain.

I looked back at the house at the kitchen windows trying to see what he saw in there that I didn't. Still, it seemed safe enough. Mom couldn't come sledding. She didn't even own a pair of pants.

"You're on."

We shook.

"You owe me." Bill said "Here comes Mom."

I spun around. No mom. Just some guy coming up the hill. He stumbled . . . on his pants. Hands hitched the pants up tighter, pulled his belt a notch snugger, and then with a determination on his face he looked back up the hill where we stood. It was then I recognized the face of mom. She was dressed in a pair of Dad's old work pants. "I'll get you for this, Bill." I snarled before she came into hearing. He smiled blissfully at me and rubbed his thumb and fingers together, as though already feeling my fifty-cent piece in his hands.

She was out of breath from the climb, and I offered her the Red Flyer to sit on. Out of her pockets came bags of cookies to be passed around to all the gang. We sat down on the sleds and saucers to enjoy the feast.

Small conversation passed with the crumbs. We found out that everybody's parents were doing just fine, that school was just fine, and that the holidays were a whole lot better. We all knew that anyway.

Snack finished, we stood around waiting for her to do something. Mostly leave. But instead, she looked down at her hands and asked me if she might try sledding. "Now I'm not very good at this . . . I haven't done this since I was just a little girl . . ."

Suddenly, I felt nervous. My brand new Red Flyer sled in the hands of a novice. But Bill felt no such compunction.

"Sure, Mom. Right this way." And he led her to my sled.

She gathered the clothesline in her hands and wrapped the loop around her fist. Her booted feet were braced on the steering bar, and she tried it out to see how it felt. I could hear her breathing hard.

We all lined up, two deep, to push her off, and when she nodded we heaved in a single push.

My Red Flyer bit down under her weight, skinning the hill as it gained speed. We kids stood awestruck watching how the sled and Momma careened down the hill, lifting to a single blade, rocking back down to steady out, gathering more speed beneath it. It hurtled out of the familiar paths, breaking onto fresh snow never dared before.

Momma rode the Red Flyer like a rodeo star. I watched in amazement, her arms waving, feet spurring the steering bar. With each buck, I could see daylight bright between her and the sled. And they raced down . . . down . . . down toward the rock that waited there.

We all stood hushed on the hill, knowing that the final moments were nearing. I held my scream in between my teeth as I waited for the moment of impact. It came with the screaming of red runner on granite. The sled shuddered and gathered for the leap, rising ponderous over the rock. It lifted higher than any sled before, taking flight--true to its name!

The flight was glorious, a silent passage through the clean winter air, a streak of brown pants and black booted feet. She landed in a cloud of snow, and our shouts avalanched down the hill as we raced to where she lay spread-eagled. The Red Flyer was buried nose-down next to her.

We stood around in reverent silence as she dusted herself off. She smiled shakily, and though I think she meant to say something--her lips were moving--no sounds came out. I looked around the group, Bill stood silent with love shining in his eyes--proud of our mom. The

neighborhood kids were all elbows, nudging one another with whispers of "Wow" and "D'ja see that?" But Mom never saw anything of that. She just hitched her pants back up and stumbled off to the backdoor and into the kitchen once again.

While I pulled out my Red Flyer sled. Its once bright red runners were blackened from the scrape of granite rock and bent at a curious angle into the still high-glossed but now splintered boards. The rope remained buried in the snow.

The gang had split in half. Some went to examine the scoring on the rock where the sled had sliced into stone. The other half remained looking at my sled, slapping each other on the back, shaking their heads and whistling. We all knew legend had been born.

I sat devastated. I would get another Red Flyer sled, but sitting there with the broken sled in my lap, I was too caught up in my own grief to understand what else had happened that day. Momma had retreated back into the kitchen, never to come out and play with us again. I think it was Bill who saw it at that moment clearer than I could. For long after the kids had gone back to the hilltop and I still sat crying, mourning over my Red Flyer sled, Bill stood quietly with a loss in his eyes, looking back at the house. At the steamed kitchen windows.

Claire Davis

sharing the journey's sky

within a pause
by a waterfall,

wild
with moss-covered rock,

a joshua tree's shadow
moves from east to west.

mary catherine

The Honest Truth

Did you know that dragons
Think men are a myth,
And some goblins think
That a man can grant them a wish?
Do you realize most Elves
Think we're three inches tall,
And that giants don't believe
in us at all?
Did you hear that Dwarfs
think our cities are gold,
and that leprechauns think
we live on rainbows?
Have you read that ghosts
are trying to prove we exist?
How do I know?
I read it all in this.

Joe Farmer

Silent Witness

She gazes through the chrystalized pane
At countless tiny glass prisms,
Their secrets mirrored in every direction,
Carried away in quick gusts of wind.

The silent witness basks in wonder,
Her breath turning to white lace
As it hits the window.

Mary B. Neumann

Fran

Face half hidden
with flat
gold-streaked hair
Head held
at an angle
to avoid
others' eyes

I was told
to watch out
for her
She had epilepsy
but was also known
to fake
her seizures

It was almost
impossible
to tell
if one
was real,
or simply
another hoax

* * *

Pulling us
together
as a group
we are invited
to the basement
for popcorn
and records

Wanting only
to be left alone
I decline
the offer
and enjoy
the solitude

Fran joins me
in the room
I
thought
would be mine
for the evening

Remembering
what I had
been told,
I watch her
over the book
I now only pretend
to read

I stare,
stunned,
as she flips
off
the chair
and onto
the floor

Starting to shake,
her moans
are silenced
by the music
from below

Making my decision,
I step over her
and go down
to join
the crowd

* * *

An arm around
my shoulder
draws me
tight
into the circle

*I'm so glad
that you've
finally
decided
to join us*

I look up, aware
that I've gained
an approval
I'm not so sure
I've earned

Kathy Held

My night
burns slowly
brown blanket
pilled,
familiar
black cat
curled, purring.

Em

the mulberry and i

Sis and i
would climb with our toes
burrowing into the big chunky bark of the mulberry
or into the scarred tears made at gramma's
long before we ever knew the backyard,
or listened to the rain on the tin roof.

Climbing up, away from the shiny roof,
sis and i
would escape the wide shade of the back yard
and stretch out our fingers and our toes
into the streaks of sunlight that danced on gramma's
giant old friend, the mulberry.

We were like monkeys, in the mulberry's
highest branches, far above the roof,
filling our mouths with gramma's
great purple berries. "Biggest in the world!" i
would brag, as we reached to pluck with our monkey
toes,
the mulberries that would never touch the sandy back
yard,

a yard
that in summer became dark purple from the mulberry
bounty, which squeezed up between our barefoot toes
or melted into the purple raindrops from the tin
roof.

And always sis and i
received the "wash those feet before bed!" lecture
from gramma.

We'd wash, but the stains stayed. As we sat on
 gramma's
porch during the black-eye pea shucking days,
 the back yard
warm and tomato sweet, i
would dream, and watch the mulberry
leaves flicker with the breeze, listen to the
 shifting of the tin roof,
and catch errant peas with my toes.

"Aint never seen nothing like the way you use those
 toes"
she'd say, and laugh and laugh! Then, quiet, gramma
looked up and noticed light through a crack in the
 old tin roof,
and wondered out loud as to the years she's been
 sittin' in this back yard,
watching that mulberry
grow the way it had, the same as sis and i.

On this tin roofed porch, in this shady back yard,
with memories full of purple play and purple toes,
 this old mulberry
misses you, gramma, and so do i.

mary catherine

Vehicle

like riding alone
on a bicycle
built for two.

Phil Zweifel

Swallowed by a Detour

Traffic is directed past a McDonald's
billboard,
K-mart,
Then a subdivision construction project.
I stay with the flow as if being swallowed
 (block after block, each with more
chipping paint, rotting stairways, and
broken windows than the last)
And find myself in the belly of the city
Braking to halt at a red light.

There is a lanky man standing at the curb. His
face is square jawed and high cheekboned.
Looks old with complexion hinting of jaundice.
Eyes gazing gaunt and swaying gate
He attempts to cross the street
Just as the light turns green.

I see him in my rearview mirror as I pull away.
His thick, greying-black, untailored hair
Is caught and rearranged in the hot breeze
Caused by the exhaust and movement of each car
 zinging by.
My father would never walk the streets after
 having a few.
Hanging on to his dignity he would settle into
 his place
At the head of the kitchen table
And fall asleep, snoring with an occasional
 snort,
Face balanced somehow, contorted between
 two cupped hands,
His thick, greying-black, untailored hair
Hanging over his eyes.

I continue with the current of the detour
And wonder if the old man ever made it across.

Mary B. Neumann

Amarillo Burger King

The assistant manager
(Burger Prince)
looks nervous
as a loud old lady
assumes command of the salad bar
shrieking "Don't touch that lettuce, boy!"
asking customers one by one if they know
where his hands might have been.
(no fraction left uncrazy there)

Lynn Spaulding

Oilspill

Where once white sands and herons' feet did touch,
where snails on mangroves wandered in the sun,
now bleached white death on silt, too thick, too much.
Life growing dark, the web has come undone.

The black cold metal stabs and sucks the earth;
the oil coated gull with graying eyes
rolls with the waves among the grease-black birth
of bodies, clumped along the shore. Now tied

are baby crabs and sea hares drenched in red
in seaweed strands glued thick with seahorse breath.
They thought they clung for life but gasped instead
a bitter, blackened, breathless, certain death.

Once waters bluish-green now churned to black,
the sun's warm light is not reflected back

mary catherine

Lightning Bugs

	Ran	dom		
	Notes	of	mus	
Ic		on	the	
	Sum	mer	dark.	

Barefoot, I rush
To catch them
Where they were.
But the rise and fall
In scales no ear
Or eye can follow.

Slowly I become
Tuned to the night
And see them
In their pauses.

So easy now
To trap
Feel their tickling steps,
And watch
Through the doorway
Of my thumb and finger
Their glow of breath
Illuminate
The chamber of my fist.

From my bed
I watch them
In the moonlight rhomboid
On my desk.
They scale glass walls,
Inspect nightmarish openings
In the metal top,
And drop
To beds of dying grass,
Issuing infrequent gasps of dull jelly.

Steve Tighe

Happy Meal

A treat my son had somehow
Earned that morning
Cheeseburger, fries and
Soft drink at Mc Donald's
He ate. I looked about--

Man with salad examined
Every lettuce shred and
Muttered to his fork

Sipping Coke, a young man
Leaned forward to touch
His girlfriend's face

She stared into his eyes
Took a bite of her Big Mac and
Adjusted her Walkman headphones

Accidents they had seen in the
Morning's snow dismayed a wife
Sipping coffee--free to senior citizens

Her husband nodded and then
Without a word went
To buy them ice cream cones

Matt said he felt bad for me
He didn't know what he would do
When he was too old for
A happy meal.

Margaret Rozga

Witch Lady

On the way home from school
we always ran
past the witch lady's house
We'd all seen her explode
scolding children
who touched her property
and none of us wanted to be next
She'd sit on the front porch
wild gray hair framing her sinister scowl
arms folded across her chest
ready to pounce

Older kids told us horror stories
of kids she'd dragged into the house
who were never seen again--
probably locked in chains in her cellar
They told us not to touch her fence
because she sprayed poison on it
that would make us get sick and die
Over the hill away from her house
they'd brag about how they got her
each year at Halloween
pelting her house with eggs
or filling her mailbox with shaving cream

When I turned twelve
I got a paper route
and SHE was on it
Instructions on the route card read
Paper in mailbox--collect at back door.
First week of delivery
passed without incident
Saturday I went to collect
I stepped slowly up her back-porch stairs
No doorbell on her old house--I knocked
The shade on the window was raised an inch
and her steel-gray eyes met mine
The door swung open
And I stood at judgement
route book clenched in front of me

"So you're the new paperboy!
Come on in. Come in where it's warm."
I stepped inside
Her husband stood behind her
craning his neck for a look at me
She didn't stop talking
"Come on into the kitchen.
Don't worry about the snow on your shoes.
I was just ready to wash the floor.
Let me find a treat for you.
I think I have a Snickers around here somewhere.
Do you like Snickers?"
She searched her cabinets
slamming doors.

Her husband took a two-foot
toy locomotive from atop the refrigerator
"Look what I bought.
It runs on batteries.
When it runs into something
it just turns and goes the other way."
He turned the toy on
and crawled behind it
on hands and knees
"Look! Watch it when it hits the wall.
See! It turns around by itself."
He laughed and laughed
at his toy and himself

The witch lady found her candy bars
and handed me one
She sort of cackled when she laughed
"Heh heh heh. Look at that
silly old man crawling around there.
When the grankids come over
I can hardly tell them apart."

After that it was treats
and a visit every week
and I laughed at my friends
who ran past the witch lady's house

Found: Destination

"I'd rather
go no place
with you
than someplace
by myself."

Phil Zweifel

Kathy

Sitting
in a corner
of the living
room

I put on
an album
and leaned back
to enjoy

*Your music
has negative
connotations*

*and therefore
it must
be shut off*

I later thought
it strange

that amidst
the yelling,
fighting
and screaming

the one thing
they removed
from me

was my
"Sounds
of
Silence"

Kathy Held

The Harringtons lived down by the railroad tracks, and were the kind of relatives we didn't visit much. My mom didn't like Uncle Mike because he pinched her butt when he drank too much, which he did at all the family get-togethers. He was six feet four and squeezed my hand real hard when he shook it, looking down at me from the ceiling with a head as big as a console TV. "How are they hanging?" he'd ask, tilting the TV sideways and winking at me through bushy eyebrows.

We went over there one summer when I was eight. Mike and my dad built a great clubhouse on top of their garage.

Mike was a carpenter and he could swing a two-pound hammer like an old lady shakes her finger, wamwamwam and the nail's in. My cousins and I helped them by carrying lumber and shingles and stuff. Terry and Dan were both big for their age, and they were real fun to play with at weddings and family picnics. Dan would sneak cups of beer from the tables and trade them to the high school cousins for bags of Fritos. They lived in Germantown, not that far away, but we didn't get a chance to play together much.

Mike and my dad had the whole thing finished by dark, one great big room for the cousins to keep all their stuff in and sleep out in and have secret club meetings in. Mike pulled out a board and painted "NO GIRLS ALLOWED" on it. Dan said "We won't need that," and threw it in the scrap pile. He had just graduated from eighth grade, and figured he had to act like a high schooler now.

A week after they finished building the clubhouse, I got to stay over for the weekend. My mom didn't want to let me, but my dad talked her into it. He said it would

be good for me to play with the older boys. That's what mom was afraid of. The clubhouse still smelled like raw wood, and Dan had it done up right--black lights, Jimi Hendrix posters, and the best part yet, an old record player hauled up out of the Harrington basement and planted against the back wall.

I threw my sleeping bags into the corner and ran over. Terry reached for the turntable, but Dan shoved him out of the way. "I'm the only one who puts on records, got it?" We nodded, and Terry waited for Dan to turn his back, then whipped him the bird.

That night, Dan snuck the windup alarm clock from their camper and set it for midnight. I went in and out of sleep, dreaming of robbing my mom's purse and getting caught red-handed by the cops, spotlights pinning me to a chainlink fence. I sat up, and the spotlights were there, Dan with a flashlight right in my eyes. "Wake up, sleeping beauty, it's time to hit the street." He went to the stereo and put on a Rolling Stones 45 real quiet, so we could only hear the screaming parts. There were blankets hung over the windows, and a candle burned in the middle of the floor.

Dan waved us over by the candle. "Here's the plan. We go up Lake Street over to the Wooded Hills subdivision, then cut through to Radke's house. He's got a fort in the woods. Then we go over to Miller's store to see if there's any deposit bottles outside we can nab. Then we play a game of guts. Any questions?"

Terry shook his head no. I thought back over what he had said. "What are we going to do at Radke's fort? Aren't you guys still friends?"

Even Terry looked at me like I was mental. Dan shook his head slowly, and turned off the record player. I didn't dare ask what "guts" was. "Radke's an asshole.

He told somebody I said something about them that I never said and now she hates me and likes him. So tonight, he pays." I didn't ask any more. It sounded like the kind of thing you could get into big trouble for.

Dan came over and put a hand on my shoulder. "Look, Greg, I know you won't ever say a word about this to anybody. Here's the deal. If you see any headlights, yell 'car' and hide as fast as you can. Officer Gallbreth likes to cruise around at night looking for curfew violaters. That means us. If he catches me out again, he's going to take me down to the station and call my old man. So any time you see a car, ditch it, all right?" I nodded again. I was pretty sure I'd be in jail before the night was over, but there was no backing out.

Dan walked over to the stereo, lifted the cardboard backing and reached into its back. He fished around for a few seconds, and pulled out a bottle of Gettleman beer. He took a bottle opener from his pocket and popped the top. For the first time in my life, I felt like the crook in a cops and robbers show. It was scary, but I wanted more. I grabbed the bottle and tipped my head back. Beer ran out of both sides of my mouth.

Dan yanked the bottle back. "Don't waste it, asshole. We only got this one bottle." He took a long pull and passed it on to Terry. He handed it to me, but my stomach felt funny so I just pretended to drink. Terry saw me fake it, but he didn't say anything. Dan finished it, put the bottle back and replaced the cardboard. He grabbed the flashlight, and Terry blew the candle out. We snuck down the stairs and out the back of the garage.

We didn't see any cars on the way to Radke's fort. It was just in the woods, less than fifty feet from the back door. Dan pulled off the "keep out" sign and we went in. He showed me how to cover the flashlight

with my hand, so just a few cracks of light showed through. Terry found their supplies, and he and Dan crushed all the saltines and scattered them around the floor. We stuffed our pockets with raisins and smooshed what was left on the walls. Dan found some old comic books, and he shredded them into bits. Even though I wasn't sure what Radke did, it sure felt good to be getting him back for whatever it was.

After we ripped all the posters down, Dan stood on a chair and ran his hand around the dark spot where the roof met the walls. He pulled some papers out, and stuffed them under his shirt. "All right," he whispered. "Douse the light and let's get out of here."

We ran back into the woods and followed the path toward the road. Halfway there, Dan stopped and took the flashlight back from me. He knelt down, pulled the papers from his shirt and shined the light on them. I looked over his shoulder. They were pictures of naked women torn out of a magazine. It was the first time I ever saw a real naked woman, and it felt weird, standing in the dark in the woods, shining a light on them. Dan snapped the light off.

Terry reached for the pages. "Wait a minute, I didn't see them."

Dan folded them into squares and put them in his back pocket. "Don't worry about it squirt. Let's go over to Miller's." We took off down the path. Terry and I waited in the ditch while Dan checked the road. He waved to us to come, and took off across the road. Just as he hit the shoulder on the other side, I saw a car's headlights just ready to come over the hill. "Car, car, car," I yelled as quietly as I could.

Dan flattened out in the ditch, and Terry and I plastered ourselves against trees. The headlights pointed up in the air, hit the tops of the trees, then popped over the hill and lit the road. The car passed and

we waited until the taillights were gone before we got up and headed across the field toward the store.

There was a loading dock in the back. Sometimes Mr. Miller stacked empty soda bottles outside. Dan and Terry picked up extra comic book money by taking them home at night, and cashing them in at a different store. Dan shined his light around the dock. "Shit, nothing doing." He walked over to the dumpster, lifted the lid and looked inside. "Hey, all right." He pulled out six full jars of babyfood. "These must have gotten rotten. Come on, help me carry them."

He picked up two of the jars and ran over to the darkest corner of the parking lot. Terry and I joined him. I wasn't sure what would happen next, so I kept looking all around for cars. Dan grabbed a jar, hauled back and threw it up in the air. It disappeared up in the stars for a few seconds, then landed about ten feet away. The jar exploded, painting our legs with rotten strained carrots. "Jesus Christ, Dan, that crap stinks," Terry said, wiping his pants legs with his hands. He took a jar and threw it out across the lot. It smashed in the gravel, spraying glass and mush. Dan threw two more, one right after another, farther out this time. Terry turned and sailed one at a tree on the edge of the field. It splattered, and a yellowish blob hung for a second, then dripped off.

Dan handed the last jar to me. "Here you go, just sail that baby." I pretended I was in the outfield for the Braves at County Stadium.

I caught the ball on one hop, reared back, and threw it to home with all I had. The jar sailed up, out of sight, then landed with a crash beyond Dan's farthest throw. He smiled at me. "Nice toss, kid." It felt like I had just won the Series with that throw to the plate.

We wiped our hands off in the damp grass and ran back towards their house. "You two go on ahead to the woods," Dan said. "Wait for me at the street light by Wooded Hills. Make sure nobody sees you."

"We'll be careful," Terry said. We turned to each other and nodded, then ran off across the field.

We found a good spot to wait, sitting on a log out in the woods. We took the raisins out of our pockets and ate them. They still tasted pretty good, even though some were squished up with pocket fuzz. Terry's face had a shine from sweat. "You know, sometimes I get kind of sick of hanging around with Dan. He's been acting like some kind of big shot these days, making fun of me in front of his friends and crap like that."

At least he didn't pull any of that crap on us tonight."

"Yeah, he's been pretty cool. You know how to play guts?" Terry asked. I shook my head. "Well," he said, "You stand out under the streetlight by yourself, and you try to make it land close to you, and you don't move at all, and you see who gets it to land the closest. That's guts." I imagined throwing the dart up and standing there, not knowing.

"Somebody's coming!" Terry whispered.

"No shit somebody's coming," Dan said, stepping out onto the path. "Who'd you think I was, the boogeyman?" Terry looked mad, and he started walking back up the path. "Come on," Dan said. "I'm just kidding. Did you tell Greg how to play?"

Terry nodded, and came back over by us. "I'll start," Dan said. He handed us each a dart, the big wooden kind with the real feathers and a long metal tip. It felt thick and heavy in my hand as I turned it over, looking at the pointy end. Dan walked over to the edge of the circle of light. He took a deep breath, leaned back and threw the dart

up in the air. He stood with his arms pressed to his sides, stock still. Then it hit, about ten feet away from him, the dart clicking the concrete with a spark.

"Pretty good," Terry said, moving into the street. He threw and the dart hit a good twenty feet away, marking its return with a spark. He retrieved it, and came back into the woods.

They both stood looking at me, silent. I nodded, and walked out onto the street. My fingers were sweaty around the dart. I would throw it straight up, even if it meant getting hit. No matter what, I would do better than Terry. I leaned back and threw as hard as I could, then straightened up, waiting for the impact.

I heard the faint click, but didn't see any spark. I could hear Terry and Dan laughing through their hands in the dark. Dan came out, stood in the gravel and pointed. The dart lay way down the road, twice as far away as Terry's. I felt like I missed the tag on a play at the plate. Terry came over. "That ain't so bad for a first time. Come on, we'll do one more round."

Dan moved back into the light and threw. He pressed his arms to his sides again and waited. I looked over at Terry. He stood with his hands clenched and his face squinched up. I looked back at Dan, and watched the ground at his feet for the spark. I heard the dart hit, not with the usual sharp click, but with a dull thunk. I didn't see any spark. Dan stood, unmoving. I looked at his face. He looked like he wanted to cry. His mouth was open, but no sound came out. I looked at the top of his head. The dart stood straight up, tail pointing at the stars.

Terry grabbed my arm and pointed up the road. "Car, Danny, car, car, car!" The headlights caught the tops of the trees, then spilled down onto the roadway. Still,

Dan stood frozen.

Terry burst from the woods, grabbed his brother and pulled him into the ditch on the other side. The car passed slowly, and I ran across the street. The dart was still stuck in Danny's head, and his eyes were full of tears. Terry reached over and pulled the dart out. I shined the flashlight on Dan's head. There was a small spot of blood pooling on his scalp.

Dan grabbed the light, and wiped his eyes on his arm. I turned to Terry. "What do we do now?"

Terry stood, and looked off down the road at the fading taillights. "We better get home. The guy in that car might have seen us." I nodded, and we started off across the field. Halfway home, I looked back and saw Dan, walking alone with his hands on top of his head, trying to rub the pain away.

Dennis Held

Bubbles

Lawrence Welk was more
than just a television show
It was a one-hour window
to a magical land
where everyone smiled and danced
a place where life and love were miracles
to be celebrated in song

My sister Terri and I
in flannel pajamas
would lie on the floor in front of the TV
with our pillows from our beds
and the plaid blankets Mom got
by redeeming two jars full of little red tabs
torn from the labels of Kingsbury beer bottles
We'd imagine we were there
amid the bubbles and melodies arising
from the Champagne Music Makers
I would choose songs
that I wanted to sing
and the voice I wanted to have
Terri would pick out dresses
that she wanted to wear
and we'd both try to guess
what color they were
I wanted to dance like Bobby
Terri wanted to marry him
I wanted to marry Peggy Lennon
but Terri said I had to marry Janet
because she was youngest and I was little

We both knew we watched a better world
and someday we were going there
Meantime I thought that our family
should be like those people
and one night I said so
Mom looked at me
like I'd done something wrong
She blew cigarette smoke
out of her nose and said

"Those people go to the bathroom
just like everybody else."
I looked back at the screen
and tried to imagine Lynn Anderson
singing "Buttons and Bows"
sitting on the toilet
but it just didn't seem to fit

R. Scott deSnoo

THE test

X=9

If All else fails X=9

You don't recognize the child's face
Starvation leaves not a taste of death in your
mouth.

Through the TV screen you almost see
the diseased children, the sagging tit, the
outstretched bowl.

"Pass the Pepsi and turn that down-
I want an A in an algebra test tomorrow."

A textbook graph
Another meal missed

A polynomial squared
And unbelievable suffering

The quadratic formula offers no solace
to the grieving,
the destitute,
them.

D. Chilson

Living On Survival Time

sound bounces
through fog
and
light tunnels
bright culverts.
There are no
edges.

Em

Jackie

spined heels
tight skirts
black-blond
curls
eyes
paled over
shadowing
the anger
within
Cigarette
held between
lips
coiled
in distance
No
one
can miss
as they
where I
don't
want to be
running
only
to be returned
Week
after week
Month
after month
They found her
finally
by sliding out
a steel drawer
and lifting back
the sheet

Kathy Bold

Jackie

Spiked heels
Tight skirts
Bleach-blond
curls

Eyes
painted over
shadowing
the anger
within

Cigarette
held between
lips
curled
in disdain

No
one
can make
me stay
where I
don't
want to be

Running,
only
to be returned
Week
after week
Month
after month

They found her,
finally,
by sliding out
a steel drawer
and lifting back
the sheet

Kathy Held

Living On Borrowed Time

Thanks
to
Daylight Savings
and
Loan

Phil Zweifel

The End Has Come

Kisses

like

Fire.

Words

like

Water.

Melanie Mulholland

