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UWC-WAUKESHA

THE WINDY HILL REVIEW

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Sincere thanks 1989 submitting their
works.

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Windy Hill Review 1989-Eleventh Edition

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Sincere thanks to all for submitting their works.

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I would like to thank several individuals. Without their patience and participation, this edition of the Windy Hill Review would not have made it through the maze.

To:

All those in the Computer Lab, especially Dave Weber, Kurt Schwanz, and Mike Murphy--You kept "Computer" and me on speaking terms.

Tim Kretschmann and Darlene Hampel--Your services were much appreciated.

Lynn Paque--You helped me tie up all the ends.

Debbie Alaimo--You took this edition to new heights with your cover concept.

Phil Zweifel--You showed me that there is a solution to every problem.

My family--I thank them for their support!

Bobbi McLean
Editor
Windy Hill Review
1989

Perfect

It could be,

but isn't.

It should be.

but it's not.

What is started,

has not begun.

What has ended,

hasn't finished.

What is,

isn't right,

and what's not,

is perfect.

Christy Lee Steele

Webbs and Heaven

Passing through Chicago

Endless miles of dread lining the highways

"Yeah, I think the housing projects are right over
there," I said

Worlds apart from a place just ninety miles north

Or even twenty-five miles north for that matter.

Visions of a greener land fill my head

When will the grayness of the hopeless city which
spins endless webs

of hell for its inhabitants end?

The web of the city is found everywhere

It's just the atmosphere

We're all caught in our own webs

We all create our own heavens

Dean Schubert

The People's Cry

Hey there America,

Do you hear our cries?
Mr. Bo Jangle Jingle man
Sittin' on the side.
Starin' at the heavens
Ringing his bell
Waitin' for the tingle-ling
Of hope in his well.

Hey there America,

Do you really see
The tears of our nation
The true reality?
People goin' hungry
Sleepin' in the streets
While you keep shovin' money
Towards other countries' needs.

Hey there America,

Do you really hear
The cry of our children
As another bruise appears?
You try to pretend it's
An exaggerated lie
But while you're stuck in denial
Another child dies.

Hey there America,

Can you really speak
For the needs of the elderly
That cry themselves to sleep?
Left in a home
Pining away
In desperate need of company
Until their judgement day.

Hey there America,

Can you really say
That we've done all we can
For America today?
What's wrong with you people?
With our society?
When our own damn nation
Won't help it's own in need.

Leslie J. Peters

Thanksgiving Day

Our family is a typical one
Joining in Thanksgiving's fun
Women in the kitchen bustle around
Whispering gossip about the town
Grandma, nervous, prepares the meal
With Mom, Pam, and Sharon at her heels
And then there's good ole' Aunt LaVern
Wiping clean the dust and germs
Hey, there's Dad with Tracy and Burt
Snitching a taste of each dessert
And here we have Uncle Nick
Another drink he's off to fix
Grandpa's in his usual place
Keeping his schedule right on pace
He looks just like a big soft bear
Napping in his favorite chair
For the boys, it's always the same
Off to play the season's game
Tad, Derek, and cousin Moe
Will give almost any sport a go
On the sidelines are Jim and Matt
With Jenny, as usual, being a brat
Now every family has their nerds
Our Eugene and Erma fit the word
Yep, Jayston, Ohio, sure is the place
To celebrate Thanksgiving's grace

Leslie J. Peters

An Inspiration in the Night

Lying still about to sleep
The words into your mind do creep
You try to fight the burning urge
But can't resist the calling words
They tease and caress you for a time
Form little phrases in your mind
Excitement swells as it starts to take shape
Another poem you're about to make
You keep fumbling and striving for that certain
word

It's coming, it's coming it's driving you absurd
Grasping and clawing at the thin air
No matter what you try, it just isn't there
The tension is building, oh why oh why
Can't it come to the surface, as hard as you try
Finally something is building about to erupt
Oh yes! You found the word you were thinking of
You collapse and admire the flowing line
And the poem that took you so much time
As you read it out loud, it's as if it knows
That it's chime of rhymes so soothes your soul
You put your work down and turn off the light
Then settle back in for a peaceful good night

Leslie J. Peters

May the Farce Be with You

It was a dark time for the rebellion. For years attempts had been made to squelch the hope of freedom. The imperial forces continued to wage war on the daring warriors who, even now, were speeding in a northern direction towards the outer limits of the state. It would take a lot of doe, but this time they didn't intend to pass the buck. Under the cover of darkness, shortly before the sun came up, they were rushing towards their destination when they noticed flashing lights behind them in the night.

"I never bargained for this," shouted Hans Duo, the driver. "My controls aren't responding. It's a . . . STORMTROOPER."

"Can't you outrun him?" asked Duke Landwalker, his younger partner.

"Sorry, Kid. If I were still living in the fast lane that might work. He's right on our tails and this crate ain't got the power."

Defeated, the rebels pulled over at the nearest exhaust port.

"I had my tractor beam on you," smirked the trooper wearing the dreaded Death Star. "You guys never had a chance. Where are you going in such a hurry?"

"We're on an important diplomatic mission, carrying out annual plans to migrate to the regions beyond, and shoring up the troops who are waiting at the secret base," confided Duke. "It's a humanitarian effort."

"That's understandable. I can get you to Pinelander," the authority assured them, "but it will cost you plenty."

They were really C3 PO'd; but, as dawn broke on the horizon, they paid the ransom in cash and went cruising off into

space. Mentally they went through their check list of gear and supplies: proton torpedoes; laser cannon; six-packs; all in order. They had also brought along Chewbacca; it would come in handy in the woods. Freeze-dried ice cream; tube food; reconstituted water; check. Overhead a Millenium Falcon flew off into space. This trip was not mere sport, but a last chance to recapture the dignity and honor of youth, an attempt to preserve real values like freedom and male-bonding.

They stopped at a local tavern to locate bike speeders. They would come in handy when they got into the thick of things. The place was filled with strange-looking creatures, left-overs from an earlier time, wearing suits, ties and X-wing tips. These tie-fighters were proud to have left all that behind. They gathered in a dark booth to negotiate a deal with a ruthless character.

"You never know what you'll find in this civilized country," Hans had cautioned Duke earlier. "Smuggling rebel sympathizers into unknown territory is sheer madness." After they finished their secret business, another alien approached the table.

"You boys got a license to kill?" asked the strangest creature of all, Bambi. She had eyes in the back of her head and talked out of both sides of her mouth. Her jaws were flapping in the breeze which she was shooting with all the customers. She looked like a sky-walker, but up here anything was fair game.

"Yeh, we got a license," spouted Hans, their furless leader. "And a party permit to boot." He liked to mix pleasure with his business. He was already half in the bag. They might even rendezvous with the Princess Leah. She always came across and would usually come up with a few

secret plans of her own.

Those seasoned party animals knew it had taken power, strength, and skill to pull themselves away from friends, family, and HBO. Landwalker remarked that he had, just this morning, said to the little woman, "Dear, hunting is no picnic."

"I know," she acknowledged sympathetically. "But you're a dead-eye."

When the two companions reached their secret base, they were greeted by an old desert hermit, Obi One Knobe. They lovingly referred to him as the Master; he was only an old has Ben. His kind was in danger of extinction, but he passed on his knowledge and determination to his younger counterparts. They thought about going out and doing a little partying or maybe a little shining, but decided against both. There would be plenty of time for revelry after their victory. They finished preparations for the early morning attack and hit the sack. For tonight, they were safe in their own little star world; tomorrow they would deal with the other invaders.

Dawn came early. The blaze orange suits were donned, ammunition gathered, firearms packed. They set up a shot, and a chaser was not far behind; then they went outdoors. The hunt was on. They began their search for the target when a shot rang out. Old Ben had been hit. It was a self-inflicted wound. He'd been holding the gun right between his knees; what a loss.

The duo hurried to his sides, readied him and carefully tied him to the hood of the vehicle. They raced to the medic, but it was too late. Even the laser beams could not help old Ben now.

"He might have survived," the doc informed them. "If you hadn't gutted and dressed him." Picky, picky, thought Hans. How were they to know? As Ben lay beneath

the tarp, his body just sort of disappeared. He was a goner.

The survivors left and vowed to carry on the mission and return to the scene of the accident. With more dedication than ever, they tracked their prey. They saw something move. It was a big mother.

"Oh, shoot!" yelled Hans. "Now with old Ben gone our party permit's invalid."

"Darn," echoed Duke with disgust.

They blasted their way into another clearing. There it was, a magnificent 8-point craft with a huge rack pointing to the sky. They set their sights. One direct hit in a crucial spot would blast that sucker into history.

It was Duke who flew into the trench and let go with a mighty blast. The star was felled. Success.

"We did it!" yelled Duke.

"Nice work, kid," acknowledged Hans with a small pat on the back of his pants.

The two companions made their way back to their base with the prize. They were no longer half in the bag, but drunk with jubilation.

"There's no feeling quite like making your mark." admitted Duke.

It wasn't just a trophy on the wall, or the medals they coveted. It was the respect, admiration, the big bucks they loved.

When it was time to part and to go their separate ways, the friends vowed to return to do battle again the next year and as long as necessary to keep the fight alive.

Hans bid the kid good-bye, got into his crate and went cruising off into space. But I heard him exclaim with delight as he drove out of sight,

"May the farce be with you."

Karyl Kennedy

Warm Ice

At the Oregon coast
we climb out of the car stiff
from the long drive. My son Brian races
up the dunes to see the ocean that drums
beyond our sight. My feet sink into the sand.
It feels different from the freshwater
beaches or the loam of plowed fields
back home in Wisconsin.
This sand wrestles my steps,
gulps at my feet, swallows my tracks whole.
I taste the ocean before I see it, salt and fish
and wind-driven grit in my teeth.
Weeds bristle in the dunes
like sand-bound sea urchins.
Brian shouts and waves me to hurry up.
I make it to the rise of the last dune
to stand transfixed.
the beach is glazed with light.

For a moment, I am back in Wisconsin,
on the shores of Lake Michigan,
ice dunes under my feet and the water thick
with the slush of new ice. The cold wind tears
my eyes and ices the small hairs inside my nose.
Sunlight on ice shines hard and blue-
white on bluffs and drips
in sparks from icicle teeth.
The sterile land
ignites with a cold beauty that burns
behind my eyes. I look down
to see twigs and leaves and an orange-striped cat
entombed in jeweled bubbles in the ice.

But this is not Wisconsin,
and Brian's yells lead me forward
into the warm fire of sunlight on jellyfish.
Thousands upon thousands of jellyfish
fire the beach like a hard frost.
Their bodies, layered in molten tangles
and shattered into glistening shards
coat the length of beach
and gel the incoming waves.
I stand frozen, trembling in the heat,
while my son skates with abandon over the quaking
warm ice.

Claire Davis

Farm War

1.

We learned war at home,
dug trenches in the orchard,
forts to guard against green apple grenades.

But at the farm, the weapons got more dangerous:
corncob German potato mashers
with two inches of unshucked kernels
left on top.
We had secret caches under the chicken coop,
behind the pump house,
in the tool shed.

Fall was best
when we turned into knights of old
with overcoats our only armor,
raiding cornfields for our weapons:
maces made from dirt-clung roots
spears and lances from stripped-down stalks
battle axe of stalk with cob attached.
We played at war
until a lip got split
or tooth got chipped.
Then we stopped
and hid our wounds
together.

2.

Dad kept the .22 pistol in his underwear
drawer. He got it
cheap in Korea, he said. I knew
it was real
heavy because I went to feel
it one day when everyone
was gone.

He only used it once.
Grandpa cornered a possum
in the barn.
He aimed a pitchfork
at the cold pink eyes and jagged teeth.
Dad told us to clear out
and we heard it take five shots
before it died.
Grandpa brought the possum
out on the pitchfork and threw
it behind the chicken
coop. Next day, the roosters
had its eyes
pecked out.

Dennis Held

Saxophones and Astro-turf

Dressed in black today.
I feel like shit.
All I wanted was a place to sit.
But I'm stuck with a park-bench
and astro-turf.
Listening to a soulful saxophone
on TV.
As I look at my black shoes,
they're scuffed from a day's beating,
like my soul,
like my brain,
like my heart.
Over sensitive they say.
I think not.
I'm immune to their facades
and superficiality.
Their fake smiles--
just another aspect of this plastic world.

Mari Niescior

The Carousel

Let me off
this carousel of Life.
I'm tired and I want to go home
to bed.

The ride's not fun anymore.
I keep switching to a
different horse
because none suit me.

My mind's crammed
with things I must remember to do.
Futile things made necessary by a
futile world.

I must remember
to do this
to do that
to remember to breathe.

My heart pounds so heavily
to make me remember
to give it
a rest.

The carousel
keeps spinning.
Truly I would jump
if I wasn't so afraid.

Mari Niescior

Vacancy

For twenty-two ninety-five
per room
(Double occupancy?)
(We rent by the room!)
you can stay at our motel.

If you don't mind
the walls are thin
like our towels and sheets
that smell of bleach.
(Sorry, there's no pool.)

You'll have a queen
but she sags in the middle.
The guest next door has one too,
but she screams in the middle
of the night.

Our plumbing isn't much.
You'll hear each guest
shower and flush,
but the conversations
will be of interest, we trust.

Easy access on and off ramp
yet so close to the great outdoors.
Nature nearby
chirping right in the room
you'll hardly notice the roar.

And if you awake
in the heat of the night,
you'll hear his snore, next door,
after they've come
and she's gone.

After all
it's just a room
for the night.
We'll rent to anyone.
The price is right.

Darlene Hampel

Gone Before

I see my eyes mirrored in your young photo,
Grandmother.

Now you are only ashes and tears.
Will we ever meet again?

I am filled with your curiosity and logic
dear Father.

Now you lie in a cold grave.
Will you ever see the woman I have become?

Ancestors I never knew
enough to feel your presence
or recognize your reflections.
Will I ever know you?

Other friends and loves
time has removed,
will we talk and embrace again
with old knowledge and a new life--

Or has my chance
to love each of you
passed forever?

Darlene Hampel

Just a Hole in the Wall

When I'm traveling, I always wonder
(I suppose only a woman would wonder)
about those gas station rest rooms,
and the strange strategically placed holes
through concrete block walls.

You know the kind of station
where one teenage guy acts like he runs the place
and there are always four or five others around
studying heavily illustrated magazines
of artfully air-brushed flesh.

The kind of place that sells
miniature cardboard cutouts
of large breasted beauties
scantily clad in cellophane bags
and scented with car air freshener.

But the thought of a peeper passes quickly,
because really, there is no other choice
for miles, and what there is to see
is not nearly so good as the calendar
hanging out in the repair garage.

Darlene Hampel

Farm Life

Last night
in the warmth
of the small barn
we all stood
watching the vet prepare
to pump mineral oil
into her stomach
to try and free a clog

Lying on the floor
she made a loud sound
chewing her cud (I thought)
"grinding her teeth" he said
"a sign of pain"
I looked down at her
knowing she was a farm cow
not someone's pet
yet as I leaned down
to touch her head
she extended her neck
so I could rub her chest
and I heard myself
talking to her
as though she were a sick child
and felt the others' eyes on me

This morning
the vet and the others
were just leaving
as I walked over
and stood near
feeling her warmth
rise to meet me

Her carcass
a steaming mass in the snow
slabs of muscle still twitching
Her insides exposed
and dissheveled
and the stench of the blockage
permeating the air

I crouched down close
to touch her once more
and let death touch me back

Darlene Hampel

Castle of Fear & Terror & Evil & Other Scary Stuff

The castle rested majestically upon the high hill. It watched over the twisting avenue that led the carriages of the London gentry to its medieval architecture. Great winged rodents perched in the upper tower. The flashes of lightning made the frame of the residence glow momentarily as the carriage approached. The riders, this time, were not gentlemen.

The vehicle rocked the two men inside as the dark-haired German spoke: "We must be very cautious. This man possesses great powers...."

"Powers? What kind of powers?" the British inspector asked.

"He can do many terrible things."

"Such as--?"

"He can drink cranberry juice without crinkling up his nose!"

"Anything else?"

"Yes, yes. Much more. He can get the tops off those childproof bottles."

The German concluded, "He is very dangerous."

"We shall see," the blond inspector with the handlebar mustache said. He looked up at the towering castle and fell into deep thought. Suppose that's better than some things one can fall into.

The carriage entered the castle gate. The inspector clumsily exited the carriage and approached the door. He cleared his throat and reached for the sparkling brass knocker in the shape of a spider.

"There is no need, Herr Hitchson. He knows we are here." The German brushed down the inspector's hand.

The inspector shook his head. "What nonsense!" The knocker clanked down

heavily. He couldn't help thinking the thud of the knocker sounded like someone dropping a stiff body.

A rather deformed little man answered the door. He saw the men with odd curiosity and respectfully inquired, "What is your business here?"

"I'm Inspector Fred Hitchson of Scotland Yard. My associate is Dr. Johann Carpenter. We would like to question the Duke."

The servant seemed confused. "But John Wayne won't make a movie for another century."

"I don't want him. I would like to speak to Duke Ellingsen."

"Why didn't you say so," he said, turning to lurch off, dragging a foot behind him. "I shall announce you. Walk this way."

"Not even if you paid me."

A dark caped figure was waiting for them in the receiving room. "Duke Ellingsen?" Hitchson asked.

"That is I," he said in a voice that sounded like he had a horn stuck in his throat.

"We've some questions to ask you, Duke Ellingsen. Shall we begin?"

The figure turned, and it shocked the foreigner and the inspector instantly. The Duke appeared to be a little abnormal. He was quite handsome, except that instead of a nose and mouth he had a beak.

Inspector Hitchson turned to the hunchbacked servant. "Is that a man?"

"Partly."

"Is that a--duck?"

"Partly."

The German doctor concluded, "So, the Duke is an it?"

"That would be a fair label, Master Carpenter."

"My friends," the Duke interrupted,

"call me Donald."

"To your face?" the inspector gasped. He caught himself, cleared his throat once more, and mustered a feeble smile. The Duke had taken the young inspector by surprise. He reached in his pockets and handed some pictures to the Duke-creature. "Take a look at these Polaroids. Do you recognize any of them?"

"How can I? These have been colorized. You can't recognize anything once it's been colorized."

"By the way, Duck, er, Duke Ellingsen--"

"Donald," the dandy Duke drably corrected the coy kid.

The inspector, embarrassed, smiled and said, with emphasis, "Yes, Donald. I've been here an entire five minutes and you haven't offered me a drink yet. I think you should brush up on your police dealings. I'm usually bribed by this time." Hitchson twirled his mustache.

"How rude of me to forget. What will you drink?"

"No, thank you, Donald. I'm on duty."

"Speak for yourself, Herr Hitchson. I'll have a Jaegermeister."

The servant said, "I'm sorry, Master Herr Doctor Carpenter. We ran out."

Dr. Carpenter said, "Then, a shot of some cough medicine. Formula 44. A touch of turpentine for flavor."

Hitchson looked at Dr. Carpenter in wonder. "How can those bloody Germans do it?" he thought. He shook off the thought.

The Duke looked like a burst of cold had hit him. "Egor, someone is at the door."

The doorbell rang.

Egor shook his head. "Doorbells haven't been invented yet."

"Herr Duke," Dr. Carpenter said, "may I ask you how you knew someone was at the door?"

"No, you may not ask." The Duke turned and his cape waved behind him. After thinking silently for a moment, he commented, "You may stay here for the night."

"Why would we need to?" Hitchson asked. This was all becoming a little too strange for him. All he would need is for the Duke to take the cap off a childproof bottle, and he would be out of there like a flash.

Egor returned, lurching as if he was going to drop at any moment. The coachman was with him. "Inspector Hitchson, the coach is in trouble. I don't know if she can make it through the storm."

"Can you save her, Scotty?"

"I'll do my best, Captain," he said in a thick Scottish accent. He added, "It'd be a lot easier if I had some dilithium crystals."

"Well," Hitchson said to the overweight Scot, "do your best."

"Egor," the Duke said through a leering bill, "prepare a room for our guests."

The coachman and the servant left the room. The remaining three sat down and Hitchson began to speak, "Three men have been discovered missing in this area in the past week--"

"Discovered missing?" the Duke asked. "What a wonderfully perplexing paradox."

Hitchson continued: "Any information you might have would be most helpful."

The Duke stood up and, fumbling for a key in his pocket, invited, "My friends, would you like to see my laboratory?"

"Ja wohl!" Dr. Carpenter put his glass on the table and got to his feet.

The Duke lit four candles on a stand

with his lighter. Egor decided not to say anything. The four flames lit the cobblestone spiral stairs adequately but by no means brightly.

When they travelled about a story downward, the Duke took a thin torch off the wall and lit it with his candles. The air became damp and cool as they travelled lower and lower. The Duke came to a great padlock, and he fumbled with a key momentarily.

The door creaked open.

The lab was bright. Power surged through the odd devices the Duke had. Hitchson was amazed by the spectacular dungeon. Hitchson pulled a sheet off a table and found a man secured to it.

"What's this, Donald?"

"An experiment. I do all sorts of cruel and sadistic deeds to my specimens."

"Have a license?"

"Of course," Donald Duke said, pointing to a document on the wall. "What type of duck do you take me for?"

Hitchson approached to inspect it. He was shocked such a thing existed.

"Well, I'll be cursed!"

"Of course you'll be cursed," the Duke sneered. "You are a policeman."

The Duke looked oddly at the patient. "Quiet, isn't he? This is not like him." He grabbed the patient's hand and forced him to point--index finger extended. He picked up a knife and chopped the digit cleanly off. The patient began to scream. "Ah--that's much better."

Blood dripped silently as the man shouted in anguish. The Duke giggled, "He won't play the piano again."

Dr. Carpenter looked at the Duke, puzzled. "Of course he won't! He's strapped to a stainless steel table!"

Hitchson thought they were both nuts.

The Duke led Dr. Carpenter to a small

room. "Here," the billed nobleman explained, "I study death. See this man clamped to this chair?"

"Yes."

The Duke placed a gun in the frightened patient's mouth. The patient struggled and the Duke smiled. "My hypothesis is that he will die when I pull the trigger." He looked and Dr. Carpenter nodded submissively. The Duke pulled the trigger, but the gun didn't go off. The patient was relieved. "Forgot to load it."

The Duke glanced at his digital watch. "Supper is served, gentlecoops."

"What? That finger over there? It hasn't even been cooked!"

"No, no. Upstairs, my friends."

"I won't eat your friends, either, no matter where they are." Dr. Carpenter was quite determined on this point.

The Duke gave up and led them back to the receiving room. Egor turned off his Walkman and attended to them. Egor was a big fan of The Flogger Foursome. What a band!

Shadows lurched and lunged with the flickering of the modest fire in the fireplace. The table was nearly twenty feet long, and Hitchson had to yell so the Duke could hear him. "So, my host, what is the menu tonight?"

He ignored Hitchson's question. "What wine do you want for tonight's meal?"

"Egor!" The Duke ordered for them: "We shall have the Bartyles & James--red."

"Of course, Master.--And thank you for your support."

The wine coolers were a dark, deep red. They drank and commented how thick it was until Dr. Carpenter figured out what it was.

"My God ! It can't be ! You maniacs!"

he said, leaping from the pink stained glass. "You put far too much crystals, and you didn't mix it correctly! This is the worst Kool-Aid I've ever had!"

"I shall have Egor beaten."

Dr. Carpenter nodded in approval.

Hitchson opened the door to their bedroom. Two pine boxes were before them. Hitchson opened one. "Egor!"

"Yes, Master Inspector Hitchson?"

"These coffins are occupied. Where are we supposed to sleep?"

"Oh, I'm dreadfully--"

The inspector stroked his handlebar mustache and erupted. "Wait a minute! (Repeat that for emphasis.) Wait a minute! You killed the teenagers!"

"No, no! We found them like that!"

"In coffins?"

"Where do you expect to find corpses?" Egor asked. "In a cereal box, perhaps?"

"Why did Dr. Donald Duke, the dreaded Duck, dupe me on the death of these derelicts?"

"Nice alliteration," Dr. Carpenter commented.

"It would get in the way of the plan. But it is too late now..." Egor motioned vaguely. The candles dimmed. The generator down in the cellar had drained their power when it started.

The hunchback ran, and the German snapped into action. "To the dungeon, Herr Hitchson! Quickly, before the story ends! "

In the evil doctor's laboratory, the Duke had strapped a duck to one table and the nine-fingered patient to another table. The Duke didn't see them at first. He exclaimed in a loud voice, "I was the experiment, but this is the final project! Just think, the superior mind of a duck in the body of a human!"

"I'm glad the author underlined that," Dr. Carpenter said. "That was important."

"He's MAD! A bird could never be a leader!. Just look at Quayle."

The Duke laughed maniacally, as one would expect. He turned to his control panel. Hitchson was beginning to worry. "This doesn't look good."

"Oh, I don't know. I think a few curtains would brighten it up just peachy," Dr. Carpenter suggested.

"Up your dike, John! I wasn't asking for interior design theory! What should we do?"

"Stop calling my John. The name is Dr. Johann Carpenter. Please."

"Sorry," Hitchson apologized.

A bolt of lightning hit the mighty electrodes above. Energy streaked down the silver-colored steel. The Duke ran between the tables and yelled, "THEY LIVE!"

Johann Carpenter groaned, "Don't remind me."

The man burst off his shackles, quacking like a mad duck. If you've never seen a mad duck, that simile doesn't make much sense, but such is life. The duck started speaking in a cold even voice: "Once upon a midnight dreary..."

Dr. Carpenter reached in his pocket for a weapon. He wished his pockets were better organized. He pulled out a pink paper clip, a french horn, a bowling ball, a fork, a lifetime subscription to MAD magazine and, finally, found what he was looking for. He held the wooden banana, fiercely, and waited for an opening.

Hitchson bowled his hands and the sweat beaded out of the skin's porous membrane. The sweat collected in his bowled hands, and he splashed it in the

daffy Duke's face. He screamed and quacked angrily. Dr. Carpenter ran toward the Duke, clenching the wooden banana in his hand. He plunged it deep within the Duke's feathered chest, right in the white meat.

"Whoops! You aren't a vampire duck!"

"Well," the Duke said, clenching his stab wound in the fist, "you might've asked."

Dr. Carpenter shook his head. "Now, isn't that just ducky?"

"...Quoth the Duck, 'Nevermore.'"

Timothy E. Kretschmann

She Stands Alone

She stands in the dark
She is cold as stone
She looks out the window at the city's skyline
But she is not alone

A man lies in bed
Tossing and turning in between the sheets
His desires have been fed by her
Yet the time they know each other is brief

She stands naked from head to toe
She tiptoes to the nightstand for her purse and
clothes
She picks up her hundred dollar bill with a smile
'Cause she knows she's a pro

Quietly she slips on her dress of leather
And opens the door without a peep
She says with a whisper, "Goodnight, honey."
And he replies, "Not so fast, bitch. Police!"

Ken E.

Better Homes

I moved to the city last December
to a neighborhood with a bar
on every corner and houses six feet apart.
The Mitchell Street Green Market
closed for the winter
has a sign written in English
Polish, Spanish and Vietnamese.
Kids from the houses hang out on the stoop
with the weather down to twenty degrees.
The first Sunday morning after Christmas
I went out for my newspaper and saw
the house four doors down across the street
half burned away--a charred skeleton
rising from what was left
of tarpaper-covered sides.
A pile of pieces of walls and doors
filled the room-sized front yard.
I shook my head and went inside.
I always hated those houses.
with tarpaper siding.

I grew up in a suburb
with neat little rows
of Cape Cod houses
wood siding painted white
shutters and trim red
brown, green or charcoal,
never faded or peeling.
Bushes and hedges were sculpted
and trimmed, flower beds weeded,
trees pruned, dandelions pulled.
Summer evenings, other chores done
dads smoking pipes stood
with green plastic hoses
flushing the bird crap
off of their driveways.
Those not paved got toppings
of new clean gravel every spring.
Neighbors mowed the vacant lot,

and we children were scolded
when we dug a hole in it.
In every garage painted to match its house
every hoe, rake and clipper
had its own little hook
and was carefully stored
when not in use.

On Sundays going to my grandparents' house
in our four-door car without any rust
we'd drive out of town on Main Street
past the bars and the car wash
past the old train depot
and see the odd houses all too close together
with weeds in dirt driveways
and tarpaper siding, and I'd ask
what kind of houses those were.
My mother would tell me
"That's where the spics live."

The weather stayed cold until April this year.
Now finally the neighbors are out
fixing cars in the street,
raking up their little yards,
picking up a winter's worth
of gum wrappers, broken soda bottles
advertising flyers and parking tickets
discarded down the side of the street.
A crew of men with wheelbarrows
and an old truck are hauling away debris
from the house across the street that burned.
The storm drain is in front of my house
so I did my civic duty and cleaned it out.
I filled two five gallon buckets
with rotting leaves, plastic bottles
burger wrappers and soda cups.
As I was finishing up
a bright-colored object
a few feet away caught my eye.
From the mud in the gutter
I pulled up a cover decoration
for a light switch wall plate.
It had a bright orange rooster
with a little bead for an eye

standing in a field of daisies
singing to a smiling sun.
I carried it inside wondering
if I could be silly enough
to put it on the light switch
in my bedroom.
I washed it off in the kitchen sink
but found that the bottom edge
had been burned and cracked.
So I threw it away.

R. Scott de Snoo

Cosmic Biker Hitman

After silently suffering
Hundreds of years of being killed
By harpoons purposefully shot,
And oil accidentally spilled,

All of the whales and the dolphins
Have sent a message into space,
And hired a cosmic hitman
to liquidate the human race.

Cogito Ergo Omnicide.

Ann Morgan

Time and Tomorrow

What is the past? Is it something we can touch? Does it make a difference? The cards you discarded don't matter--it all depends on what you hold in your hand.

What is the future? Just because something seems as though it will happen, will it? The sun rose today--will it tomorrow? Does it really make a difference?

How long is the present? What is the time of a moment? Not very long. An instant in the future and then, suddenly, it's in the past.

Now is the only time that means anything. Don't worry when the moment is gone. Don't await its arrival. And make sure not to miss it.

Jody Roberts

Easing the Pain

Perhaps a drink or two
Could ease the pain,
Hide the hurt
Feel no shame.

Once you start,
Two is never enough.
You want to stop--
But damn! It's tough!

It's so easy
To drown your sorrow
To feel no pain--
But you'll pay tomorrow!

Jody Roberts

One Fish, Two Fish

Live fish,
Dead fish,
Rotten fish
go squish
between my toes.
Oh, No one knows...
How I wish
those fish
would go!

Jody Roberts

Haiku

Silence deafens
ears ring with tension--
Another argument

Jody Roberts

Somber Winter

While watching a scene of winter snow,
I grow old and seem to know,

While watching a frozen landscape there,
the thought of death is hard to bear.

Will I see another spring, and
all the joy that it can bring,

or will I die as cold winds blow
while others see the crocus grow?

Georgiana Mika

And Hold Me Tight

Dark Drab Walls
gather around me
like thorns around the flower
like ravens to a corpse.

Gather around me
listen to what I say
like ravens to a corpse
and bees around their queen.

Listen to what I say:
kill the walls
and bees around their queen
until I am not alone anymore.

Kill the Walls
and hold me tight
until I am not alone anymore
so I can continue breathing.

And hold me tight
prick me with poison
so I can continue breathing
then I won't see them.

Prick me with poison
incase my ears with whispered lies
then I won't see them
and they can't hurt me.

Incuse my ears with whispered lies
like thorns around the flower, digging
into my heart
and they can't hurt me,
these Dark Drab Walls.

the well-kept field

slinking low, so i can't be seen,
i approach the center of town.
in the light, i bat at a moth
i see a large well-kept baseball field,
the entire town watching
the heroes in brand new uniforms
i let them scratch my ears
i eat a spider

i pad on. . .

ahead, the church looms,
i smell mice scurry away
their squeals of terror
tell me that my presence is known.
bugs, a bowl of milk
some affection are waiting for me
in the two taverns in either side of the church

i hear crickets chirping,
my stomach growls.
i hear the long-lone wailing of an approaching train,
i hide, watching the swift grey monster run by.
i hear distant music playing,
and the cheers of the fans
(their voices pierce my sensitive ears)
in this small town.
yelling and cheering for their
small town heroes. . .
i snap at a firefly.

Jack

Dancing slow,
he leads me
on.
He must love me,
the way he
acts.
He is a good man,
a doctor.
We are going out tonight
to the alley.
Where he pulls out his
scalpel,
and tells me to call him
Jack.
"Why?!" I ask.
Too late,
I realize
just who he is.
The next day,
the papers tell my story,
I am number three.

Dawn L. Wolfgram

I Feel Your Closeness

I feel your closeness, and

I start to

Blush

Proximity matters, and. . .

It's you I want to

Touch

Kurt Schwanz

Runners

Runners
race past

flashes
of sparks

color
show the speed

with which
they move

Old man
steadies self

against
the flow

Reeling
on his

shopping cart

Watching

as reds,
pinks, blues

and yellows
stream

beyond him

Beneath
his breast,

he dives
a curve

to this river
of youth,

and the ease
with which

it runs

Runners

Runners
race past
Flashes
of Spandex
color
show the speed
with which
they move

Old man
steadies self
against
the flow
Resting
on his
shopping cart

Watching
as reds,
pinks, blues
and yellows
stream
beyond him

Beneath
his breath,
he gives
a curse
to this river
of youth,
and the ease
with which
it runs

Traffic

Traffic
speeds over
the steel
girder bridge

Horns honk
as one
impatient
driver curses
another

In
the pond
beneath
the beams,
lily pads

un-
furl
slowly
smoothly

Stretching
in
the morning
sun

Leisurely
spreading
themselves
upon
the surface
of the lake

Kathy Held

I Never Heard You

"I never heard you.
I missed what you said"
"You always do,

With your distorted view,
The signs you should have read"
"I never heard you.

I never had a clue
And now my face is red"
"You always do

Everything straight through.
I am so easily led"
"I never heard you

And I am hurt too.
I never meant to have fled"
"You always do.

I'm sure you knew
But now this love is dead
"I never heard you"
"You never do"

Brendan O'Brien

A Photograph of Myself in My Head

I think I should be
"driving in my mind"
That's when I know
I have run out of time

It's getting harder
to switch on and off
It's getting hard
to get "up" enough

The people I get close to
get farther away
"Sure to get the hang
of hanging in there someday"

I'm the "one who's always there"
"a good listener"--designated friend
But no-one ever hears me
I'm number two, 'til the very end.

Brendan O'Brien

The Bars Seem Closer Every Day

The bars seem closer every day
The world seems cold and still
The time is drawing closer now
Time for one last kill

A strong sense of deja vu
Walking down the corridor
All the familiar feelings
That I have had before

I remember the knife
I remember the gun
Recalling my victims
One by one

I sit in the chair
Not long to go
These leather straps
Hurt me so

My eyes are silent
The guard looks on
A tingling sensation
The switch is . . .

Brendan O'Brien

Adult's Play; Child's Work

I am an adult trapped in a child's world.
I search the jungle-gym, the snow forts, and
the viewmaster for the way out.
In my imagination I can create
. . . doors of gold or gracefully carved woods,
but they do not open
--do not let me pass.

I am a child trapped in an adult's world.
I search the colleges, the factories, and the
mines for the stuffed rabbit.
I have no imagination, the world has bled me dry.
All I see is what is real.

The wall is too high and too wide to find the ends.
Where is the door?
Where is my rabbit?
How do I get to my world?

Patricia Howard

Shopping

Wrapping
the heavy sweater
tight around
my pain-swollen body,
I grip the loaded cart
and try to race
each step an agony
to my car
through November rain. . .

Damn! Doors locked.

Where
are the
keys?

Razor-sharp pain
cuts into me.
Steady rain pelts
and drenches everything.

A chuckling voice brays
"See yer limping. . .
How convenient in this weather!"

I jerk, twisting, looking
for the jackass.
Stabbed!

I gasp.
Caustic words
are snagged in my throat
and severed from voice.
I have to exhale,
awakening the butcher in my back.

Fumbling with keys
tears scalding
cold-chapped cheeks,
and shivering from pain,
I pack ripping bags
into my car.

Before driving away,
I do not
for once
remove
my handicap card
from the windshield.

Debbie Alaimo

Villanelle

Over the lake, a thick mist roams,
black twisted oaks, tall specters of night--
Such is the place of painting and poem.

Acorns falling by north winds blown,
startle calm water in lost moonlight--
Over the lake, a thick mist roams.

An owl swoops out from shadows unknown
trapping the mouse in talons' cold might--
Such is the place of painting and poem.

Whispering wings hum a powerful drone
cutting dark silence at my campsite--
Over the lake, a thick mist roams.

Branches sway as the owl lands home
freeing death's spirit by thunderstrike--
Such is the place of painting and poem.

What will death etch on my gravestone?
I wonder while huddled to oakfire's light.
And over the lake, a thick mist roams--
Such is the place of painting and poem.

Debbie Alaimo

Because It's Saturday

I come
to this black granite wall,
searching for your name.
The cold silence
reflects
blue morning sky,
heart-ache,
bitter tears,
and my face.

The face of a child
you never met,
nor held,
nor gave away on her wedding day.
Nor can I forget
you remain
still
in the jungles
near Da Nang.

I've come
placing by your name
wild flowers.
It's not a special day,
like your birthday
or Memorial day,
but because
It's Saturday
because. . .
I miss not loving you.

Debbie Alaimo

I Was Driving To Waukesha

I was driving to Waukesha
Going west on Capitol Drive
Nursing a broken heart
Thinking it's better
To hang on to pain
Than to feel nothing at all
(I know 'cause I've
Been out that way too)

When a butterfly
Smacked into my windshield
And slid down into the space
Between the wiper and holder, stuck.
There's life here yet
I thought at first
Black wing with yellow tip
Pulsing constantly in the wind.

Then I thought I've
Got to put this butterfly
Out of his/her misery.
(Actually I thought "it's--
out of its misery," but now
That I have a chance
To think about it
I don't want to render
The poor creature sexless
On top of everything else.)

I thought of turning on
The windshield wiper. Maybe
The movement would
Jar the body loose and free.
But then I thought what if
That just spreads out the misery
In all its colors.
All across my windshield? So
I did nothing but watch
The wing in the breeze
All the way to Waukesha.

Soon the flutter lost its
 Internal drive. Now just
 Wind creating a flap
 In Waukesha, somehow I got up the heart
 To put my fingers to
 Those dead wings and
 Lift that wind-defeated creature
 And bring it to rest
 Under the maple tree
 At the top of the hill.

Margaret Rozga

Love?

Alas now children
do not weep
The flowers bloom in Spring
Alas now children
fall asleep
The night has snow to bring
And off to bed
with sleepy eyes
They moved as if in trance
Their little souls
so beautiful
A Winter nighttime dance
She smiled sweet
and bent close
To kiss them each good night
Then pulled the covers
close and warm
And gently doused their light
The children sleep
she said to me
And sank into my embrace
I looked deep
into her eyes
And touched her subtle grace
The waiting gone
again together
I pulled her close and sighed
She understood
and stroked my hair
Together there we cried
The wings of love
the hope of Spring
Have always been a promise
And her touch
and warm caress
Made all seem perfect bliss
And peacefully
did I fall
Into the kind protector
My heart was right

my mind correct
To want her ever after
We talked a while
I even smiled
At her stunning dress
Covered blue
with lacy edge
White and silver tresses
Little things
she said and did
Began to make me question
The perfume
and fine wine
Seemed to me a suggestion
Talking less
looking more
Seemed to be a joy
The perfection
of two people
One girl the other boy
For I felt
not grown
But child in that moment
She to me
seemed to be
The sweet and innocent
How long we sat
upon the couch
I do not care to say
I know it was
not long enough
To give my heart away
But I left
a part of me
Behind in that small room
On that night
in sheer delight
I asked to be her groom
Her children
would be happy
As we hoped we would be
For now two parents
they would have
One her the other me

David Weber

Au Revoir

(A Reflection on the Consequences of AIDS)

A long time ago, in a world far away, there existed a language composed of many letters, each with a personality of its own. The letters were divided into two groups, consonants and vowels. The vowels were known as A, E, I, O, U, and sometimes Y. The consonants were nothing without the vowels, the more creative of the two. Words were formed only when each joined with the other. Together, they had meaning and gave voice to the peoples of the world.

One day, the world awoke to find all of the A's missing from its language. Gone were talk, art, and man. There seemed to be no reason for the disappearance of the A's, and the world was sad.

Somewhat diminished, the world kept spinning through the universe.

After a short time, the world noticed that all of the E's were being taken away also, particularly those which had fraternized with the A's. Free, be, he and she were no longer. But create, dance, read, and peace were also taken from the face of the earth.

Then the words that contained I's vanished. Gone forever were kind, think, is, and I. And yes, the ones that had intermixed with the E's were among the first to disappear. Live, time, and write ceased to exist.

Soon, the O's were spirited away too. Gone were books, colors, and know. And again, those that had mingled with the I's were taken. The people would never again know options or hoping or coming or going.

The absence of the O's gave a

definite tilt to the world as it wobbled about the galaxy. And no one knew what to do.

Soon, mankind had only U's left. And then truth was no more. As before, those U's which had been connected to O's, soul, thought, and you, vanished without a trace.

On the final day, the Y's departed. Cry, sky, and myth became innocent victims of whatever it was that had taken the others. Now the world was totally void of humanity and individuality and sympathy.

It seemed that all the vowels had been stolen away simply because they had associated with each other. They disappeared before anyone realized that had happened, or had a chance, or wanted to do anything about it. And knowledge and understanding and compassion and music and literature and most noticeable of all, Love, were lost forever.

Without the creative vowels, the language was full of consonants, but empty of meaning. It was simply letters strung together that made sense to no one. Gradually, the people stopped using what was left of the language. And the world drifted aimlessly through space.

Left with no way to look either back into its past or ahead to its future, the world slowly passed away. In its place was a large, black hole. And what might have been, would never be.

Bobbi McLean



