

## The Messenger


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Messenger 1987

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# The Messenger

1987

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# The Messenger

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## **To a Poet a Thousand Years Hence**

I who am dead a thousand years,  
And wrote this sweet archaic song,  
Send you my words for messengers  
The way I shall not pass along.

*James Elroy Flecker*

For enabling The Messenger to recognize literary and artistic talent at the University, the staff thanks:

Richmond and Westhampton College Student Governments  
E. Claiborne Robins School of Business  
T.C. Williams School of Law  
The Margaret Owen Finck Prize for Creative Writing  
The Margaret Haley Carpenter Prize for Poetry

### **Aereopagus**

The manuscripts were judged anonymously by:

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The Artwork was judged by:

Judy McLeod and Carlton Newton

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## Fire and Reign

How ironic it is  
that the rain  
falling on the roof  
sounds just like  
a fire  
of small kindling wood  
crackling, popping, burning

Is it not strange  
that two exact opposites  
voice themselves  
to an outsider's ear  
with such similitude

Are we so close  
that minute variations  
appear as opposites  
Michelangelo's marble is smooth  
to the touch  
but  
under microscope  
it is craggy and coarse

Could someone not human  
discern the difference between  
male and female  
east and west  
and  
right and wrong

To what degree  
does an eagle  
resemble a bear  
to, say, a bulldog  
or a rising sun

One needn't look  
at methods  
one needs only  
eyes closed  
to hear the rhetoric

*Michael Varoujan Almasian*





## A Votre Santi

As I got older, so did he and I saw him less.  
Only for those gatherings on designated days  
Did I see him  
And he kept changing.

Across the walnut dinner table  
With white, fringed hair and a content smile  
He always proposed his toast:  
A Votre Santi.

After dinner we would all sit and chat.  
I can see him fold his arms across his belly  
and doze off to sleep.  
Grandmother always got mad,  
But I didn't care because he was  
nice.

One day he talked to my ceramic cat.  
He thought it was real.  
Everyone laughed.  
That was before we realized.

One night at dinner he told us he spoke five languages  
And he saw a pile of naked bodies behind the chain fence  
And he used to live in Texas, Tennessee, and Idaho  
And he said, "Onetwothreefour what the hell are you for?"  
And he sang, "My Irish eyes are shining"  
And he said, "Ladedagoobedeegoobeededo"  
And he didn't remember who I was  
And he wrestled my father to the ground  
And he ripped up my mother's mail  
And at first, we were quite entertained.  
Everyone laughed.  
That was before we realized that my grandfather wasn't my  
grandfather anymore.

Now he sits in a hospital  
Alone, I guess-  
I've never been.  
But he wouldn't know me anyway.  
I laughed, but not anymore because I am scared.  
What is in his mind?  
What has become of him?  
He was a good man,  
A gentle man.  
A Votre Santi, Grandfather. To your health.

## **The Hardest Thing**

The hardest thing I have to do  
Is look at him and think of you.  
His arms are strong  
Yet yours were stronger.  
He loves me now  
I'll love you longer.

My heart cries out with silent tears  
From just the thought of wasted years.  
Last night I woke and reached for you,  
I almost cried as he woke too.

*Carole Sewell*



## Our SunShadows

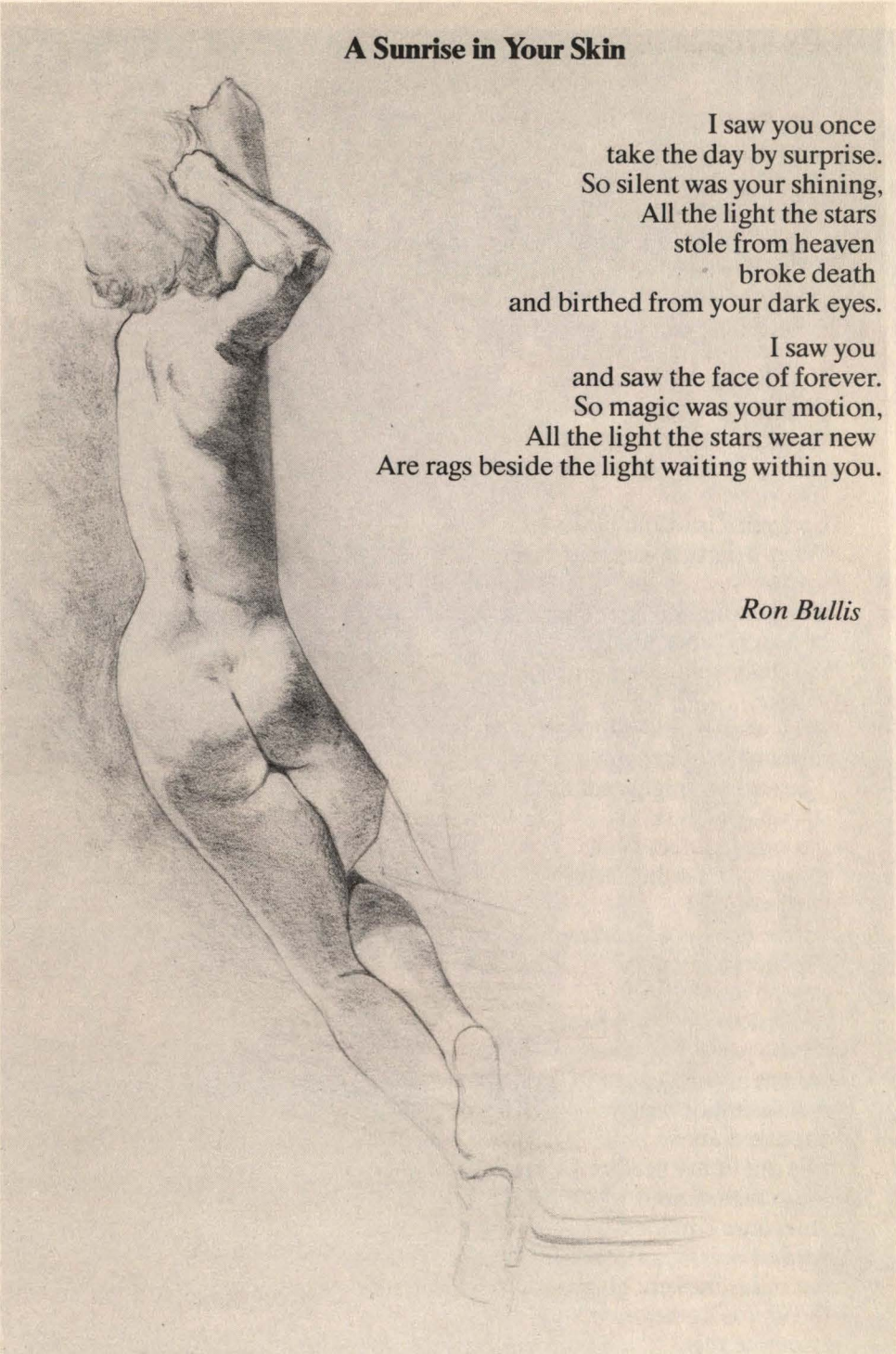
It's hard to see the sunrise at my house  
for the obstacles of others.  
Unless I go to the Holiday Inn parking lot.  
The kind that has a wide ramp ending  
on top of the garage for those who dare  
leave their machines to the vexes of  
Mother Nature,  
who reveals her wonder when the tilt is just right  
for those of us who take the courage  
to see what our "time-saving" automobiles see.  
And still, the horizon on which she lifts her life-giving  
soul, glowing steel and concrete,  
does not for me make a real sunrise.

I searched for the sunrise today,  
and noticed foreign-looking structures in the distance.  
One must have been a church steeple, the other  
resembled the Sacred Heart cathedral.  
God must always see a true sunrise.  
It's hard to see the sunrise for the fortresses  
we build around ourselves.  
When I take the time, I see the light  
whitening the faded wood, warming the bricks  
around the panels to orange  
on the house across the street,  
and shadowing the night-time tree to green.

When I take the time,  
I see the light  
reflected off those who put themselves in its path.  
To see the rise, I must walk around the block,  
cross an automobilized street, Broad,  
and climb the ramp.  
And then it is the light of darkened man.  
I want to see it from dark and  
living Gaia.  
For her to feel my face as I stand  
on our earth.  
A daily ritual,  
A natural reaffirmation  
that we all must not be shaped by the shadow  
only, but by the light.

*Polly Branch*

## A Sunrise in Your Skin



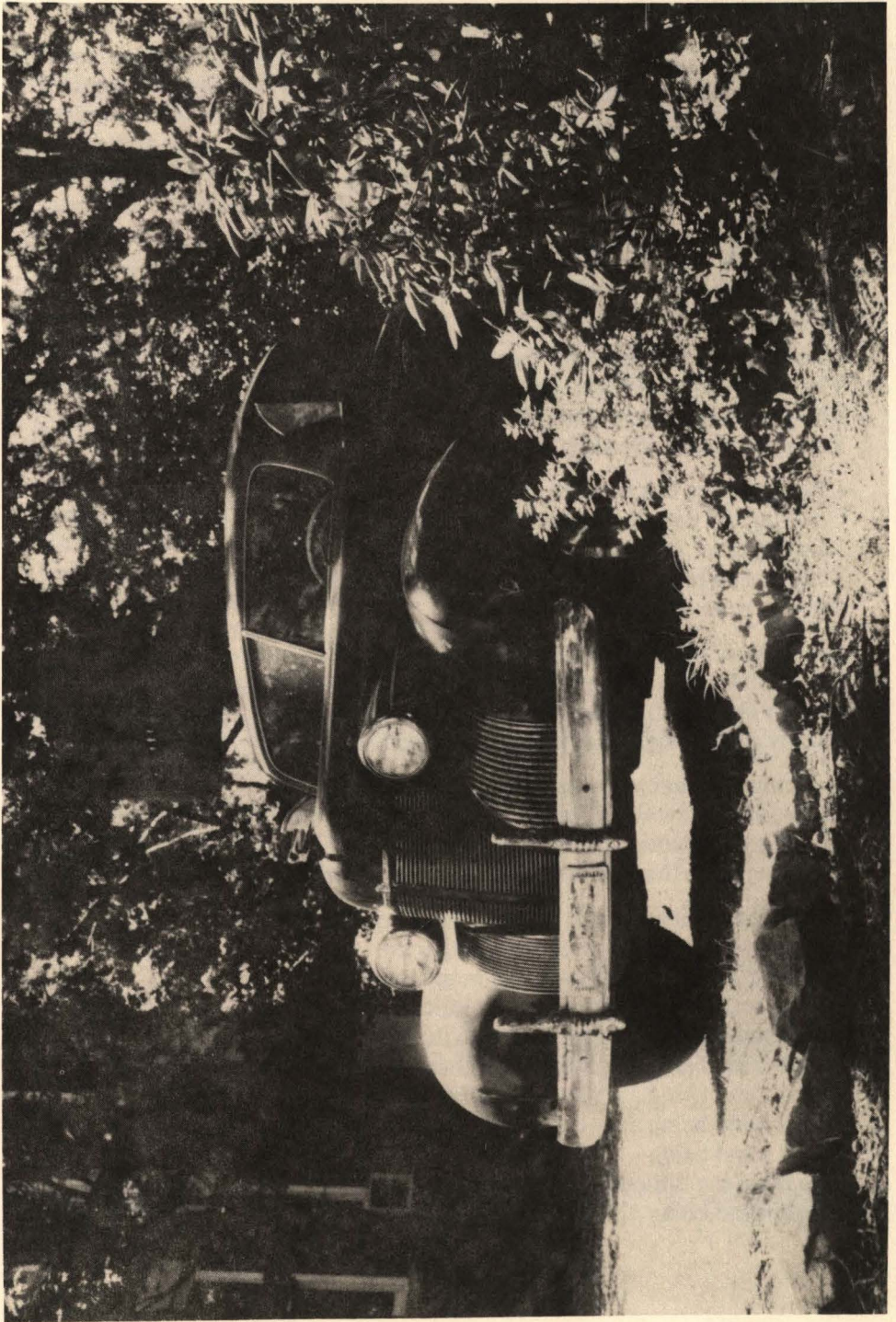
I saw you once  
take the day by surprise.  
So silent was your shining,  
All the light the stars  
stole from heaven  
broke death  
and birthed from your dark eyes.

I saw you  
and saw the face of forever.  
So magic was your motion,  
All the light the stars wear new  
Are rags beside the light waiting within you.

*Ron Bullis*

## The Perfect Darkness

Through the imperfect autumn darkness  
on the streets he ran  
arms up in victory  
laughing, joking, bouncing  
So carefree  
His bright eyes  
pressed open by the cold air  
His happy hair  
alive on end  
His taut healthy skin  
autumn red on his cheeks  
riding the crest of the wave  
caused by his buoyant smile  
In love with life  
he wished it would never end  
What a party this whole thing  
was  
The headlights came so quickly  
he barely realized that  
the shadow in front of him  
was he  
Why was he being lifted  
thrown, bent, broken  
The autumn night metal  
so cold on his skin  
His once perfect skull  
misshapen on the glass  
It all stopped  
on the dirty cold pavement  
His blood so warm  
flowed into his ear  
His untouched eyes fixed  
on the perfect black above  
A man and a woman  
two faces not happy  
appeared above him  
Get out of my perfect darkness! - he thought  
I don't know you!  
How dare you include yourselves in my end!  
Alone  
out of his broken, bloody mouth  
the words he steamed  
"Not like this."  
"There's still so much to do."





## Colors of Expression

Dust gathers on the lamp next to my bed  
I'm constantly cleaning and polishing  
but it never seems to vanish  
It almost has intelligence enough to mock me

Just as the dust covers the furniture it covers my life  
However, it doesn't wash off as easily  
It screams for attention and forces me to notice—  
Almost corners me with blackmail

Blackmail! How dare I mention a word such as that—  
The only colors seen next to my name are shades of white  
The shades of white are merely mixtures, though, in reality—  
Red rain mixed with a black base of ignorance

Often the pure colors serve as a facade—  
Covering the canvas of a distorted mental painting  
I am the artist, constantly creating my own abstractions  
I think to be reborn when I look into eyes of green—however,  
jealousy rears its ugly head

Just think if dust got into my pure colors—  
I could not stand having two grand brainstorms at the same time  
I rather like my cluttered lifestyle—  
But my created figures often hold no significance

Sometimes I want to be trapped into a corner—  
and washed off with a gigantic hose  
All the same emotions, colors, and feelings  
Charging to be the first down the most elite hole in the drain

Stained and smeared with streaks of fear and despair  
I resemble the palette of an unskilled artist  
However, human creativity takes many shapes and forms  
And I don't mind being seen as an imitation of Plato's ideal  
I don't mind being a poem—diction that motivates  
I don't mind being a painting—aesthetically pleasing colors  
I don't mind being a sculpture—chisled muscles  
I don't mind being art—creativity  
I don't mind being—  
even if life is a difficult picture to comprehend  
I don't mind being

*Mike Liebman*

Then since I had not come to  
understand I was kicking around  
definitions of poetry and art and such  
things that (as even now things) trouble me  
and defy to be shackled by my own  
guess I was reading and reading and trying  
to imitate Allen Ginsberg and  
Howl e.e. cummings and then  
in prose

Hunter S. Thompson  
and their bad craziness and it turns  
out that now though  
I have a greater working  
knowledge that I get still  
fits of up and going nowhere

I ran from poetry class with a novel  
idea and dreams of the future  
brilliance that I will wake up with  
someday if (and when) I ever find myself  
a poet I'll have sentence-rule bending  
strength and I yanked out a notebook  
and was brought back down  
to earth by the dead weight  
of stuff

I have yet to sift from my writing  
the lengthy ramblings and this and that and that and  
this bullshit that swamps my forest  
I don't really enjoy it though  
having to chop down my own trees sometimes  
is necessary

*C. Bradley Jacobs*



## Now To Then and Back Again

While up in the attic,  
Listening to the rain gently beat against the walls, roof,  
and windows

And searching through memories  
That I had stored in trunks and boxes  
I came upon a photograph.

It was a yellowed black and white,  
Ripped at the corners,  
that your mother took of you and me  
the summer we stayed at the lake.

I sit back and close my eyes,  
running my fingers over the photograph,  
delighting in its cool smoothness,  
tracing the boundaries of its worn edges.  
In my mind, the picture explodes into color.  
I can see how pink the dogwood blossoms were.  
They were a bold, daring hue that is not possible anymore.  
And the lake was a crisp, still blue,  
one that no longer exists on the spectrum.  
The wind played a soft, almost imperceptible symphony,  
with tones so subtle they could only be heard that summer.

You and I stood there  
amidst the glory of that place and time.  
How young I was.  
How alive you were.

That was the last time I saw you,  
there, in that photograph.  
You have stayed there forever,  
in that world of colors and music  
that have vanished from existence.

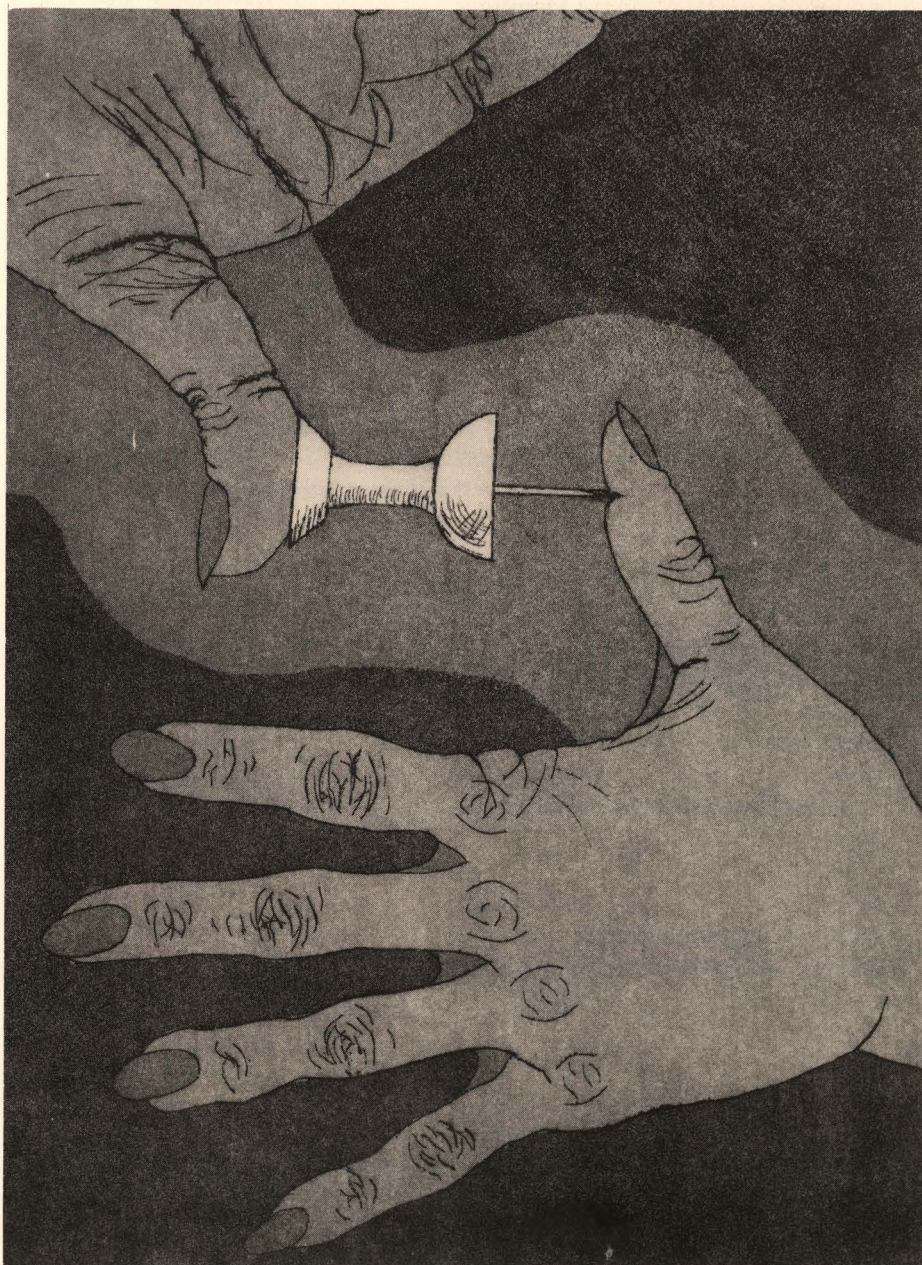
I, in my solitude,  
sit in my secluded attic  
and strain to hear the music,  
to see the colors  
that have evaded my senses for so long.  
And I watch the rain splash along the cold landscape  
reflecting the gray sky.

*Continued*

So I hold on to this photograph-  
it is all I have left of a time I lost  
and that you kept.

As I try in vain to recall the astonishing pink of the dogwoods  
and the echo of music that I used to take for granted,  
I envy you your death.  
Because you see it all so clearly,  
Because you are forever young.

*Ty Schwartz*



## Bartley

leaping  
Bartley is a genius with a  
IQ  
and when we talk he flits  
from flowers  
to his  
tory to the in (and out)  
sides of computers  
He falls in  
to  
pools of silence, you know,  
people think he's  
crazy  
but Bartley knows no  
one  
under  
stands  
so he stopped bothering  
so long ago  
Bartley's robin egg  
eyes [hide] behind  
tortoise  
shell rims  
until sun  
rays make specks of swaying  
daff  
o  
dils  
appear like golden flashes  
when he blinks

*Continued*

Always, I  
went out with out  
saying "good  
bye" to Bartley,  
I heavysighed,  
    thinking he wasn't feeling  
but now his teal eyes cloud, and  
    I skid to a scree ee eeching stop  
                    above  
Frantic, he stares  
my billowing hair  
for meaning  
    in studded skies  
he  
    buries  
    his cracking china face  
into my shoulder, weeping  
I love you but                      I can't stop thinking  
    and it hurts so much

*Janine M. Hummel*

**Winner of the Margaret Haley Carpenter Prize for Poetry**



## Driver

I'd rather look at you  
than where I'm going

You drive me to distraction  
I would drive you anywhere

I'm a happy traffic hazard  
with you beside me.

*Jon Paulette*

## A Father's Legacy

Have you ever been hurt?

HI was hurt when my parents separated to ultimately get a divorce. My girlfriend of five years turned to me one day and announced that she had fallen out of love with me and that it would be best for us never to see each other again. That hurt a lot. What had the most impact on me, though, was the death of my father. He died of unnatural causes. I guess you could say he died of an overdose. They said he was traveling at 82 mph when he hit the tree. I promised my mother that I'd never follow in those footsteps. I almost kept that promise.

My name's Bear Greenwood. I've been coming here a lot lately to look out over the ocean and think. Things are starting to get straight again and it's refreshing to be able to think with a clear mind. It got pretty bad there for a while. I'm sure a few people thought I'd never get over her. She was that kind of lady. Once she drew you in, once she took hold of you with her glamour and charm.

Have you ever been in love? I have. I barely made it.

I met her one night after a particularly hard work day. What the hell, days like that happen to the best of us. I think, perhaps, that I was chosen to give "the best of us" a rest. I believe that there are moments in our lives when we are very vulnerable and have no defense against pain or evil. They don't last long—just a fraction of a part of a second—and we are able to skip over them easily enough. Sometimes, however, other factors pry the break in our defenses farther apart, so that badness can slip in. One of these dreadful moments happened to me. It manifested itself as a sliver of time when I was most vulnerable to the seductive attraction of a freespirited lady. This singular moment was like a frame on a reel of film that lasts for an infinitesimal part of a second and then vanishes. It was the moment into which evil slipped and took hold of my soul with the intention of tearing it to shreds slowly and painfully.

She was right in front of me.

"Go on," Terry had said, "she won't bite."

"No, no. I'm not looking for anything. Her type doesn't sit too well with me anyway."

"Look. You don't even know her."

"No. But I know about her. I'm not interested."

"But she's the best! She's not just the crutch, she's the wheelchair. Go on. Give it a try. You're in control, man."

“If you think so highly of her why don’t you give it a try?”  
“Because it’s your moment and because mine’s over there.”

Slipping from his stool at the bar, Terry smiled deviously and swaggered over to a neighboring table where there were two females with legs to the ceiling and faces of ship-launching capability. How did he do it? The curiosity welled inside me and I began to wonder if maybe she could help.

She was interesting. She was interested. In fact, we hit it off from the very start. She sent a sensation through me that I’d never felt before. The feeling was ecstasy. As time went by it intensified. The recurring thought that we were made for each other kept swimming in and out of my psyche, making my whole body shiver with anticipation. It seemed strange to be feeling as I did so soon, but there was something about her that drew me in and took hold of me with a velvety, gentle embrace. A fire roared up deep within me and I needed to feel the heat.

I acquainted myself with her briefly, then brought her over to the table where Terry had gone.

“I’d like you to meet my new friend.”

Terry leaned to me and whispered in my ear, “Not your type? Ha. Some judge of character you are. She seems to like you, too.”

“Yes well. You know how it is with us shy types.” My arrogance had surprised me but Terry didn’t seem to mind. He just winked and turned to introduce the two pairs of legs. I slept, that night, with thoughts of my new found interest swirling in my mind.

The next day passed with a lumbering slowness that I’d never thought possible. I thought about her every minute and relished the idea of feeling her warm embrace once more. My thoughts engulfed me and they were the only thing that saved me from the chaos of the day. Unfortunately, it was two full days before our paths crossed again. When I saw her, I, in a sense, had to reacquaint myself with her. At first, I thought I’d built her up to be something that she wasn’t. But she was a lady with an interesting and diverse disposition. That night I fell completely in love.

The next month was a blur; a whirlwind of outings, meetings and surprises from my significant other. It slipped by swiftly and joyfully. The time we spent together was pure heaven and days together began to outnumber days apart. As January wore on, we grew closer and a joy permeated my soul. She became an essential part of my quest for warmth and comfort. The cold days of middle winter had never treated me well but with

my new love I could drift into thoughts of blue, clear water, white sands and warm, caressing sunshine. She had the power to take me places, to make me dream until I was there.

She moved in seven weeks after that first meeting.

I came to depend on her. She would occasionally visit me at my office or I would meet her for lunch. The office visits increased in number as did the lunches. We couldn't be without one another. Our lunches were the best, but afterward it was difficult to concentrate on the rest of the afternoon's business. Often I would take a half day after a particularly long feast. As always, she was waiting for me when I got home and I was thankful that she was in my life. I was feeling a happiness I'd never known before.

Seven months after that first wonderful encounter, my existence began to slip from my hands. Just when I thought everything was in control and perfection had hit a new high, everything would go wrong. She began to coerce me into staying home from work. I would miss days in a row. When I received a warning from personnel, I began to think I wanted to get fired because it would mean more time with her.

Work, however, wasn't the only thing that was being affected. Becoming agitated when I kept telling him I wasn't able to go out on our usual night each week, Terry finally gave up and stopped asking. I don't think he realized what he'd started by introducing the two of us, but then I hadn't realized it either. I tried setting up something with him once a few weeks after his last call but canceled the day before. I hadn't spoken to my other friends since in February and, at that point, I suppose they really had no need for me anyway. Any casual observer could have predicted what was happening, but love is truly blind and I couldn't see it. No matter how vehemently one who's in love denies it, the straight line of what's right and wrong wrinkles and one can trip himself on the kink and fall. I was undependable. I was deep in love and she had taken control of my life. I was on the way down but I didn't know it.

Did I still love her? Yes...more than ever before.

I began to realize that she wasn't the perfect woman that I'd thought her to be. I came to know that there had been others. She was being unfaithful to me, yet I'd given my life to her. I'd given everything I had and she still didn't care enough to give in return. In the beginning, it seemed she had an endless reservoir of warmth and kindness. I saw all of this in her but what I saw was wrong. What I thought were moments of generosity were actually times of selfish indulgence. She took the respect I gave her and created the illusion that I was getting the same in return; that

she was a part of me. I could not let go because I knew it would hurt. It would have torn a piece out of me that might have been too big.

I lost my job in September. It affected me more than I had thought it would but she helped me get over it. Fast. I turned to her and, as always, she was by my side. I was in bliss for our time together had doubled. No one knew how deep my feelings for her ran except me. Not even she knew and I believe now that she wouldn't have cared.

I began to take time to try and figure out just where I was going. My emotions seethed within me. I'd long since lost myself in a place that was dark and lonely. The fire that had started in the beginning had begun to burn me up long ago and the fuel was close to being exhausted. Wondering where control had gone and at the same time realizing that it had never been present was a stunning, epiphanic moment. The shock sent my world into a power dive and I slept for what must have been two or three days but time had come to mean nothing. That's when I began coming to the cliffs to sit quietly by myself.

I woke up dazed, drained and weary even though I'd had a long sleep. The house felt like a cell and my only relief was to get out. Down the road were cliffs I used to pass every day on my way to work. They had become ordinary and boring to me, now there was no work and when I walked to them that day, they'd seemed to hold a whole new meaning.

Rising behind me, the sun warmed my back while I watched the ocean stretch out infinitely in front of me. I felt as though I were looking into the face of an angel and I stayed there until the magnificent western sun gave way to a twilight sky. That day was the most beautiful I'd seen in all of my 25 years. The first tears since my father had died seared my face.

There had been sudden moments, during times at the cliffs, when I wanted her there with me but I forced myself to resist the temptation. I resisted for my father. There were also moments when I wanted to slip down the rock face into the foaming abyss below. I was scaring myself and this helped me to realize that she was the cause of my shattered life.

Through winter I came to the cliffs. The cold would penetrate my clothes and a few times my thoughts would take me so far away that freezing to death became a very real possibility. Slowly and gently, I had begun to drift away from the one who'd brought me down and discover the human being that had been long locked away within me. I still felt for her. I still wanted her

with me but I knew it could never be.

April came and it felt as if new life had sprung into my world. I had gotten to know a lady who had been passing the cliffs one day in winter and had stopped to offer help.

"No. I'll be fine. I'm waiting for someone." If you don't mind my asking, who would make you wait in weather like this?"

"I would. I'm waiting for me."

Two weeks later she came back. I don't really know why she returned but on that third day she brought hot coffee with her and sat right down beside me.

"I want to meet this person you're waiting for," she said with a bit of candor. "Would you mind if I give you a little company?"

The dark, sinister atmosphere that had been present for those interminable 15 months had been cleansed away by the rains of spring and the intensity of a lady who I'd met by chance. She had reached inside me and had pulled something out. When she'd opened her hand and showed me what she'd found, I saw myself and I knew, with her help, I could regain control of my life. I became a different person, a better person and a learned person. I learned who I am.

The second summer since is now upon me and I sit here gazing, once again, at a sunset to match all others. I feel that I can now be happy. I'm getting married next spring to the lady who understands me and I know she will love me in return. It's been nine months since our first strange encounter and we're still together. We come here every now and then to sit quietly. I've not seen the other since I first started coming here and I haven't tried to find her. I hear she travels everywhere, but if you see her don't tell her I said hello, because I don't. Just remember that she killed my father, and stay away from her love. There's no doubt that you'll recognize her. You may even know her name. It's alcohol.

*Craig A. Janson*

## On The Marsh

Cattail sentinels stand silent beside  
Hillocks of dried grass capped with snow.  
Watchful Canadian geese stare while  
Two fly overhead, piercing the silence  
With their strident honks.

Quiet descends again, except for  
The chatter of small birds as they flit.  
Dried grass draped over fallen trees  
Rustles in the wind, keeping the beat for  
The birds conversation.

Sitting atop trees at the edge of the marsh,  
Hawks look down on this bleak scene.  
Almost monochromatic, yet subtly colorful.  
Shades of whites, blacks, browns and grays  
Seen in birds, trees, grass, water and sky.

Candy wrappers add discordant colors  
To the pure earth tones of the marsh.  
Crumpled cans mark man's disrespect for  
God.

But even these can't mar the simple beauty.  
Cold and desolate, yet alive in small sounds.

Walk silently into this special place,  
Slowly let your heartbeat slacken.  
Stop and listen. Still and quiet,  
Yet the voice of God's creatures  
Enter your heart and soothe your sorrow.

*Merry Higgs*



Caroline Dixon M.A.



Our love lies  
Like a stagnant pool  
Blanketed by blooming  
Frog-pad lilies.  
Pretty though placid  
It rests, the teeming life within  
Hidden from the passive,  
Skeptic viewer.  
Occasional skipping stones stir  
Concentric contact rings,  
Providing the mild necessary energies  
Which serve as hopeful omens.

And soon, rest assured,  
The still-spawning beauty  
will emerge

And be united with  
The infinite newness  
Of a recent beaming  
Sun-smile.

*C. Bradley Jacobs*

Tiny fathers have faltered!  
I was reaching about and sightlessly  
they began crying and screaming  
and you thought they were howling  
but howling hits you in the heart  
hell so they were really screaming and  
crying and I was in some wild havoc  
to kiss you but all windows  
were flowing openly like eyes  
and sightlessly I saw a hymnal  
**TINY PREACHERS HAVE FALTERED!**  
There are no screams in the Vatican  
There is no crying in heaven  
I have been at many churches  
and doubted perfectly critical  
but I didn't actually falter  
oh tiny fathers I need you don't cry

*Janine M. Hummel*



## Dust

From the sun's rays bouncing off the chest at the end of the bed, the blind dust was revealed as it swam aimlessly in the atmosphere that surrounded him. He knew the dust was there, but the only time he ever saw it was on mornings like this one, so he never bothered to remove it. He had been awake for hours, sitting upright in his bed, staring at the inanimate objects that lay motionless across the landscape of the apartment like abandoned military equipment upon the horizon; images that occupied his view while he was pondering life. He then shook himself from this suspension and slowly sauntered over to the window, which he opened to let in the fresh sea air.

To his amusement, he watched two fat pushcart operators on the street below bicker over the rights to the corner. But the smile soon disappeared from his young face as he remembered he had been laughing at these same characters the day before, and the day before that. Slowly, he eased away from the window, still viewing the spectacle, as he fumbled for the pack of Lucky Strikes on his night table. He didn't smoke, but death was upon him and he was still trying life. His hands shook nervously as he lit the cigarette that was dangling perfectly at the end of his lips, held on by the perspiration he had built up in his morning hell. In disgust or simply just to hear the sound, he threw the matches down on the cold, barren floor.

Placing his head between his knees, he opened his eyes to read the matchbook that was lying perplexed on the ground. It read, "Landetas" and he reminded himself that that was where he was last night, with what's-her-name. She said to call on her again tonight, but then again, he may not be around. "Stop kidding yourself," he laughed furtively into his shirt. A sigh escaped his mouth as he took a long, nervous drag from the dwindling column of ashes and blew the smoke towards the two men outside. Sure, he was young. But the emotions etched on his face showed signs of a mid-life crisis.

When he was a boy, he was just that, a boy. One who had no regard for the events around him, but now he cherished time. Oh, how he cherished time. There wasn't a day where he missed the tolling of the twelve bells in the local square or the faint six o'clock alarm on his watch that signaled dinner. He was counting down time and still is counting down time. But he will always be counting down, for there is no end. No end. "Ha!" he scoffed at himself and buried what was left of the cigarette in the porcelain ashtray his brother has won at a carnival when they were both eleven. The idea had gripped him when he finally opened his

*continued*

eyes to reality, beyond the elusive dreams and fancies he had spent years molding like a golden ball of clay. Either because he was left facing the world backwards or because he was just ignorant, he found himself sleeping with Sir Thomas Moore amidst a secret Elysian society. When he woke up, he was deeply startled, but then spent his "time" searching for a resolution around this dilemma.

It was late June, and the sea morning was very hot. Droplets of perspiration formed on his wrinkled forehead. A lone drop found its way ahead of the rest and it streaked down his face till it met the floor with force but utter silence; depicting his cause but a contradiction of his reality. Again, he removed himself from the bed, and then found himself in the bathroom staring in the mirror at a pale, desolate figure who wanted nothing in life but to be left alone. Slowly he disrobed. In the shower, he tried to write familiar Shakespearean passages upon the steam pressing against the shower doors. But he soon gave up in vain as the water erased nothing from the walls. The water began to get cold and he stepped out and got dressed. Yet, he still had no idea for what he was getting dressed. Nor had he ever.

As he re-entered the bedroom, he noticed that the din from the street below had disappeared and was now replaced by the solemn footsteps of passing fishermen. Pulling an abandoned chair up to the window, he took out another cigarette and placed it carelessly in his mouth, but then abruptly fell upon the floor where it lay unnoticed. The matchbook behind now read, "LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR- Read the Book of GOD," and lighting the cigarette, he quietly remembered where these had come from. The light from the match produced a lone glow into the fading sunlight in his room, and from the street below, it must have seemed like a vigil was being carried on in the heavens above. He sat transfixed, thinking, but never quite sure what of. The world outside his window would be his subject matter for tonight, as it was every night. Crying alone, the cigarette carved in the corner of his mouth showed signs of deficiency, and before it extinguished itself, he put it out. But this time he missed the ashtray and the fiery-gray ashes bounced haphazardly upon a copy of *Oedipus the King* that was lying forsaken on his night table. The thin sunlight in the room had moved in an oblique measure from the chest at the foot of the bed, to the door of the apartment. Now the dust on the doorknob was highly visible and waiting patiently. He knew the dust was there, but the only time he ever felt it were days like—

Tomorrow he may change, but then the world may too.

Dave Cane

## Lobster Song

“Well, there is always hope” echoes in our mouths  
I say, “No there isn’t”  
And like a lobster in a supermarket  
With rubber bands to bind me  
And an aquarium to cage me  
I stand here  
No hope  
No hope  
No hope  
Only my stand  
And when the lobster fails to stand  
It is wrapped in paper and sold.

*Justin B. Belsley*

## To the one, from the other

You were drawn to me  
From a crowd  
Of introductions.

I, who most wanted  
To remain anonymous,  
Became unique.

I, who wanted to sit back  
And watch what you had  
That I had not,  
(including him),  
Became your confidante.

You trusted me  
Though I  
Was not to be trusted.

You asked me about him  
In your absence  
And my heart burned in my throat  
When I said  
(truthfully)  
That he spoke  
Much and well of you.

You told me  
He had mentioned me.

I wonder if he mentioned  
The night we walked through  
Fog swept fields  
Until the sun  
Burnt on the horizon?

Or, did he mention  
When he felt no comfort  
In a crowd  
How he came to me  
To ease the worry  
From his brow?

You asked me to tell you  
Of the one I love  
And I tell you  
How the one that I have loved,  
Loves another.

*Continued*

You spur me  
Not to let the other  
Stand in my way,  
But would you say that  
if you knew:  
the one that stands in my way  
is you?

*Lydia Greeley*





## The Gifts

We were all still children, young enough so that the four of us could play together. The resort our family was staying at again that summer had a pool we were swimming in. One of the other guests was an old man who delighted in watching us, as energetic youth never fails to delight older people. We rarely talked, but he was happy in simply observing.

This day was sweltering, and no hint of clouds provided relief from the burning sun. We were happily letting the cold water do the job when we noticed the old man slowly approaching. In his hands were four vanilla ice cream cones. The heat of the midday sun had taken its toll and his hands were covered with lines of white ice cream. But his face was radiant as he delivered the gifts. We awkwardly accepted and started concentrating on controlling the liquifying messes. As I ate, I pondered some thoughts which had unexpectedly come into my mind.

The drugstore from which he had undoubtedly bought the ice cream was just around the corner, but what if his slow pace and the hot sun had not agreed, and the ice cream had completely melted? What would he have done then? Or, upon returning, what if he had found us gone? Summer is an impulsive time, and we could have easily decided to leave for the beach, or escape inside for lunch. What then? Instead of simply enjoying the treat, I could not block out the thought of his face upon finding his gifts unpresentable, or upon finding no one to present them to. My heart leaped in wonder that the moment did in fact occur, and with the realization of the fragility of such moments.

*Eileen Lynch*

## Wandering Obligados in the Sunset Rouge

We were talking about species preservation  
when the topic of love  
jumped out  
leaped about  
and disintegrated from our conversation.  
I turned away from the suburban frontier  
to see the smokestacks belching  
the hymn of the city. And  
amid the floating symmetry of ash  
sounded the great contrapuntal chorus of man  
in the wilderness of his toys singing of  
the dung-gripped jungles,  
the system-shuffled populace,  
the death by satisfied suffocation.

We were talking about parasitical symbiosis  
when the pollen was carried by  
the crooning voice of the wind,  
plainsong of God.  
I turned my face to the bubbling atmosphere.  
I whispered chaos.  
I stopped breathing.  
I died.

*Stephen Jones*

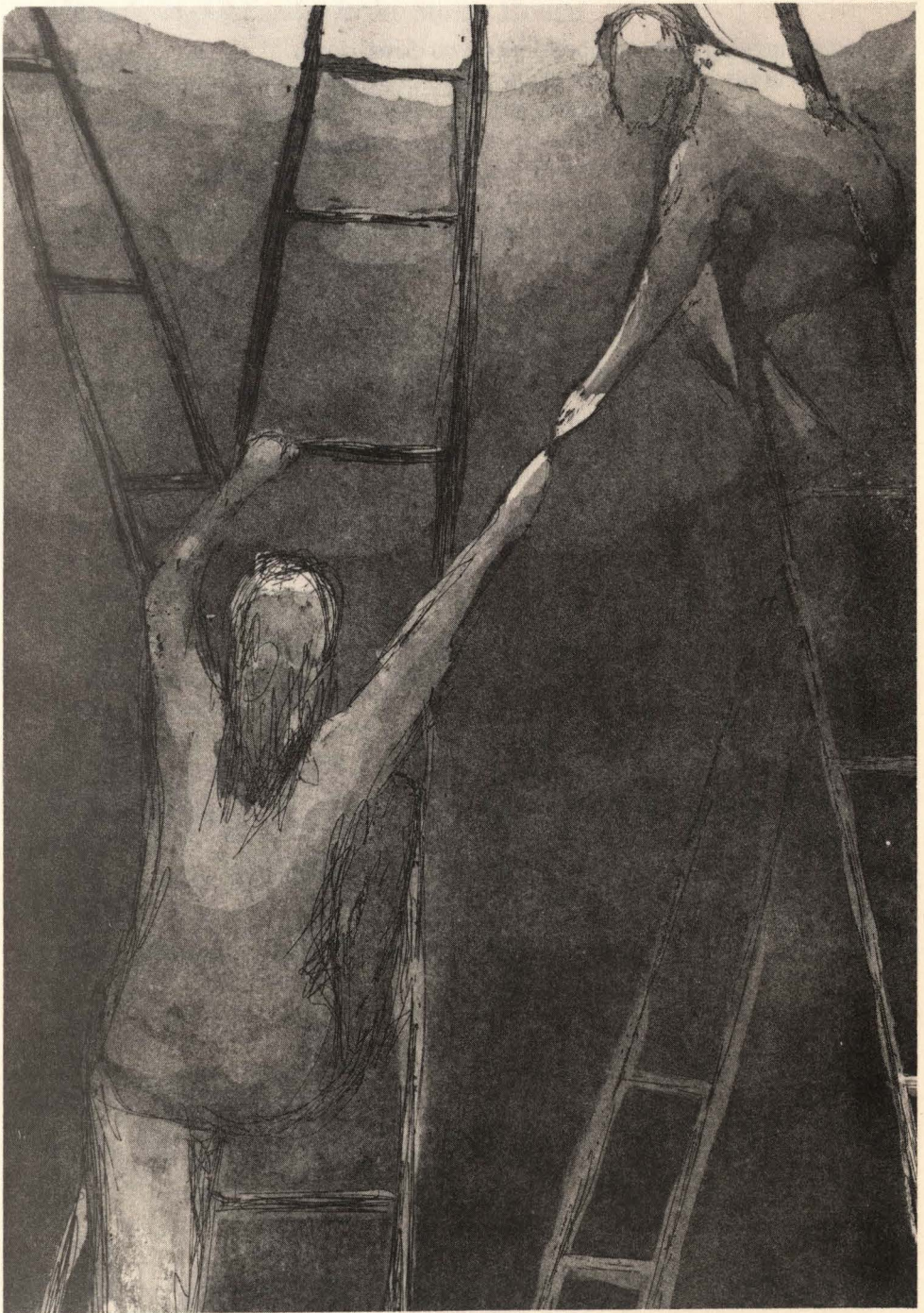
## Metaphysics My Ass

He was hugging trees and bending down down down  
ever so cautiously into a gutterfilled hole of dead brown leaves  
began to stroke the roots and speak (as if they heard him)  
in a mumble jumble incoherency that made no sense.  
I left him squatting to the inside ring of a kitchen telephone  
ALEX IS DEAD I squealed into the mouthpiece simultaneous  
to the stampede of dashing feet off to the front door  
where a sign read: Blow Our Doorbell THANKS,  
the Management.

In walks the somber funeral procession J J and N  
holding one dead cat. And boy, was he DEAD.  
The funny thing is (in a soft whisper) all I can hear is  
Belew's Big Electric Cat ah ha ha ah ha ha ah ha aaaargh  
SLAM goes the phone into the living room (but it ought to be the  
dying room)  
the black strobe light candles flicker nervously the music halts  
an empty room filled with void emotion  
No one speaks no one dares I close my eyes  
and begin the dream

Back inside Honker's pad, three young souls and one  
clairvoyant chick sit glued to the furniture like  
peanut butter on a piece of Wonder  
she reads his Tarot cards and massages my feet  
and tells us bedtime stories that make us sick  
But the last sight I wished to retain was  
several boxes of Marlboros flying  
ever so gracefully over the sofa carefully caressing his head  
it was heavenly wasn't it? I asked.  
Yes yes they all agreed, it WAS heavenly.

*J.E. Bostock*



## In A Doll's House

Before I went to sleep last night, I took a Thinz tablet. It's some sort of grapefruit and fiber pill that expands to the size of a football in my stomach so I'm not hungry anymore, while it magically burns off my fat cells. Oh sure, I felt them disappearing, yes, just shrinking by the minute. I chided myself on believing all of the commercials on TV. I believe anything, and that's why last week at the senior awards dinner, I got the award for being Most Gullible.

I was sitting there with my preppy-turned-hardcore boyfriend Tommy, talking about the new "Black Flag" album, and our cute but incredibly vapid class president started announcing the awards. We managed to block her out pretty well, and Tommy was saying something about "really thrashing guitar, really..." when our president giggled and announced, "The award for most gullible goes to..." another giggle, "believe it or not, Andi Worth!!" Tommy grimaced and ran one hand through his spiked hair while the other grabbed at mine to escort me up to the stage.

He muttered, "Dammit Andi, why are you so gullible anyway? This is totally humiliating." I stared at him coldly and said, "think how I feel!!" and dropped his hand as I ran up the steps to accept the award. I grabbed the microphone from her pinktipped fingers and mumbled, "I guess I really do deserve this, because I always believe everything, from the stories my mother told me at bedtime when I was little to my father's stories about how the admissions office at UNC is anxiously waiting for my acceptance letter..." and somehow managed to get both the audience and Tommy laughing.

There was a lot of truth in that little speech, and Tommy knew it. When I was 14, I would call him in a panic from wherever I was babysitting, frightened out of my skull by the rumors that flew around our little suburban town about the witches who lived out by Donner's Lake. A few years ago, an eight-year-old boy was found dead near the Donner's majestic but rapidly fading house. But he wasn't just *dead*, he was half decomposed, with his heart cut out by some jagged-edged object. Within weeks, rumor had it that the Donner house was a meeting place for a witch coven, and they made their sacrifices and worshipped the devil within the gorgeous, Early American labyrinth of rooms in the house.

I believed every word, and even researched witches at the town library one Saturday while Tommy was working. He knows I believed the rumors, but he still doesn't know I did the reading, because if I told him, I know I'd never live it down. I read about the existence of witches in modern times and also looked through a history of our town. I flipped through the pages, and discovered that ancestors of the Donner's were in Salem around the time of the witch burnings, and that was enough to make my blood run cold. I never told my family or Tommy, because I couldn't handle the teasing.

My goal right now is to go to college at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Unfortunately, I'm so deeply into my senior slump that I don't think I can pull myself out, and I'll be shocked if admissions can even look at my second semester grades without laughing and taking me permanently off their waiting list. I would give away my most prized possession—my miniature bookcase with the false back, copied after one built during the Spanish Inquisition—to get into that school.

I'm 18, but I still collect miniatures. Sometimes I think I'm insane because nothing pleases me more than having that incredibly ornate, detailed doll house sprawl against the back wall of my room. Grandmother left me the doll house when she died. She was as rich and as eccentric as they come, and she had a carpenter build her a scaled copy of a mansion she had lived in when she was young. She spent the last three decades of her life furnishing the doll house with exact reproductions of her favorite pieces from her childhood home.

But there is one thing about it that I don't like, and Tommy says I'm weird for thinking this, so I never told anyone else. I hate the dolls who have lived there since my grandmother had it built. She bought them at some friend's estate auction in Massachusetts. Their faces are porcelain but their bodies are made of hard rubber. Their arms and legs fold at weird angles so the dolls look like demented, deformed versions of real people. They have cold, flat black eyes painted on by some strange artist who obviously never studied the human face, and their lips are ruby red and look like they're smeared with blood. I hate them, and when I'm alone in my room, I feel paranoid for some reason unless the hinged back of my doll house is locked. Otherwise, I feel like I'm being openly watched by a dozen vicious eyes.

I met Jack Donner today. We were both shopping at the grocery store, and as I felt a cantaloupe for soft spots I thought

I recognized the man grabbing a kiwi fruit next to me. I had seen his picture in the newspaper around the time of the killing by the lake, and when he looked up into my eyes, I gasped. He didn't seem to notice, flashed me a slightly charming smile and asked, "How do you tell when these things are ripe?" I stepped back, and he stared at the fuzzy fruit in his hand as if he were an ignorant child.

"What did you say?"

"I was just asking how to tell if the kiwi is ripe," he answered calmly.

"Oh. Uh, I think it has to give in to your hand a little, you know, it can't be too firm."

"Ah hah. Well, you certainly do know your fruits," he said, and I realizing his eyes were on my chest, I quickly turned away. I felt his eyes violating and exploring my body as I pushed the cart down the aisle. Wondering why I had agreed to shop for my mother at all, I heard him clear his throat and call "Miss?"

My head snapped around involuntarily at the sound of his voice. My hands shook and my nerves felt raw. He walked to the end of my cart and draped his long body over it. "Yes?" I asked.

"Are you like that kiwi fruit?"

My stomach knotted and I felt ridiculously panicked, like I might wet my pants. "Excuse me?"

"Are you like the kiwi fruit? Would you be able to give in to my hands a little?" he asked, leering over the groceries.

I pushed the cart forward and he lurched back, grabbing at the metal fruit stand. I rushed past him, staring into the basket to avoid his eye, and I heard him laugh softly and say, "I'll bet you would, baby. I'll bet you would."

It's Saturday night and I pop another Thinz tablet and laugh at my psychological addiction, "Baby, you're so thin!" I say out loud and giggle. I think of Jack today at the store and stop.

Tommy and I are going to a Lords of the New Church concert and I'm getting dressed in basic black. The stereo is blasting to get me in the right frame of mind for the violent music at the concert. I think the music is more than a little nasty and I always need to psyche myself up for the slamming bodies and incredible amount of black clothing and spiked hair. As I rub more gel into my rock-hard hair, I hum "What I did for love" and laugh again.

"What's so funny?" Tommy asks from the doorway. I turn around smiling as I take in his outfit. It's completely black right down to his chunky boots.



"I'm not quite sure if you're into hardcore or you just hopped off a Harley."

He grins and kisses my cheek. "No offense, but you look like Grace Jones. I'll grab some beer from the fridge and be right back up. Be ready."

I salute him and say, "Yes sir!! Anything you say, you male-chauvinist pig!" I grab the big cross that hangs from his neck and playfully kiss him. "Who are you trying to be, Madonna?" He laughs and runs downstairs to get the beer.

I snap off the stereo and lean over to grab my shoes from under the bed as something flashes in the doll house, like a blinding fluorescent light reflecting off a mirror. I feel like someone has knocked the wind out of me. "Tommy, you there?" I call glancing toward the door and then again at the open back of the house.

I slowly walk toward it as my legs tremble despite the warmth of the carpet under my bare feet. I am closer now, and can see into the brick-floored kitchen. I remember laying the bricks down with my grandmother years ago. The mother-doll leans against the fully-set oak table.

Breathing in rapid shallow gasps, I step closer. My shaking hand touches the back of the doll house to lock it closed when I feel cold brick under my feet and I find myself looking into the eyes of the mother-doll. This is insane, but there is no mistake. I am in the doll house kitchen, and as the mother-doll blinks her cold eyes and parts her ruby lips in a grin, I scream.

Tommy looms in the doorway to my room. I see him from the tiny kitchen, and run to the edge of the bricks, frantically yelling his name. The mother-doll laughs harshly as she grabs the back of my shirt and pulls me to the floor. I am sternly told to shut up.

"You finally shrunk," she rasps as her rubbery body stands over me. "We've been waiting, but I think the problem was the shell on the pills. It should work better next time."

The wind is knocked out of me, and I stare up at her black skirt and painted face with its red circles quietly for a moment. "Pills?" I ask.

"Those diet pills. Evelyn put the concoction in there, but we got worried when it didn't work right away. Imagine," she cackles before my disbelieving eyes, "if the formula worked the opposite way and you got bigger from eating diet pills! Now, *that* would be horrible."

She lifts a carving knife off the table and tells me to come with her. I stare from the knife to Tommy, who still stands in the door booming "Andi, where the hell are you?" He steps into the hall to check the bathroom.

She glances at me, picks up two tea cups from the sideboard and pats the chair next to her. "Sit and drink some tea while I explain the little bit you need to know," she says, and I do as she says, not doubting that she would use the knife in an instant.

"I'm Thelma Donner inside this doll body. Evelyn Donner, my sister, killed a boy years ago for a sacrifice. The rumors were true, Andi, and you were one of the few who believed them."

She sips her tea and motions for me to do the same. As the hot, bitter liquid slides down my throat, I try to understand her story.

"Our home is a gathering place for other witches as well as for our family. We need sacrifices, but we can't risk having anyone connect any deaths to our lovely family again. So here we are, with you, and we'll kill you here where no one will find any evidence. Once we bring you beyond the walls of the doll house, we'll return to normal size and we'll have a life-size sacrifice to take with us."

She sputters a laugh and I turn to see what she is gazing at. Tommy's boot is inches away from me as he stands in my bedroom. "Andi, this isn't funny, where the hell are you?" he yells. The walls shake as he slams the back of the doll house shut, and my hope fades with the dimmed light. He storms out of the room, yelling for my mother.

I start to sob, and the mother-doll slaps me across the face.

I feel faint and my body floods with dread. She continues to smile at me as I swoon. The tea, there must've been something in the tea. Whispering, "Oh Christ, where are you Tommy?" I fall to the floor, and barely feel the boy-doll touching me as he lifts me to take me up the spiral staircase to the pink bedroom.

I wake up and feel the hard pillows under my head and notice the lumpiness of the mattresses. It doesn't feel like my mattress at all, and the canopy isn't the same color as mine. I look around me in horror at the rose-covered walls of the master bedroom in the doll's house, and everything begins to come back to me. It is a pleasant room except for the faint glow from the boy-doll's face, staring at me from the rocking chair by the window.

He hears me rustling about and smiles at me. "Sorry baby, it's not a dream."

My mouth feels incredibly dry. "Nightmare," I correct him.

He comes over to me and places a hand on my hair, smoothing it back from my face. "Such a pretty girl," he croons.

I cringe, never losing sight of his black eyes. "You're a doll, just a fake thing, not real at all!" I spit at him, and the spit hits him between the eyes.

He jerks back. "Filthy little brat," he breathes angrily wiping the spit from his face. "I'm not a doll, I'm Jack Donner, and I'll get you back for that before you die, you bitch."

He lurches back awkwardly and tries to jump onto the bed, but his rubber limbs fail him. I ball up into the corner, scanning the room for a weapon. Nothing! He tries again, and makes it to the bed. The black of his eyes is beginning to glow with a sick, victorious heat that makes me shudder uncontrollably.

"Get away from me, you creep," I hiss as the mother-doll lurches into the room.

"Jack, I don't know what you're doing, but get Andi downstairs right now and get her ready for the ceremony." He nods and she closes the door on us.

"I'll get you down, that's for sure," he threatens, and I push my body farther into the corner of the hard bed. His rubbery body flops toward me, and his hands grope around the pillows until they hit against me. He grabs my shirt and pulls me to the center of the bed while I fight with what strength I have left. The strange tea is still in my system, but I manage to smack his porcelain head once, dazing him long enough to jump from the bed. Jack's rubber hand shoots out like a piston, locks around my hair and yanks me back.

I am weak, and I feel myself fading out as he climbs on top of me and rips open my blouse. His hard, unwieldy hands beat my breasts, and I feel nauseated. His porcelain face hits into mine, his eyes so close that they become one black circle in the center of his face. I grab blindly and find the silver hairbrush on the nightstand. Pushing him up as far as I can, I slam it into his face. The red cheeks crack to reveal the face of Jack Donner, split down the center, and running with blood. It oozes into my eyes and burns them, and in a frenzy of horror I push his dead weight off me and roll to the soft pink carpet below.

Shaking, I stand and try to picture the layout of the doll house. The master bedroom opens into the hall, and I will have to run past the bathroom and across the top of the staircase landing to get into the library.

I see the scarlet stain on the bedspread and push my fist into my mouth, stifling a scream. No sounds from downstairs. I wonder where Thelma is; then I open the bedroom door and see

the grandmother-doll across the hallway in the other bedroom.

She glances up and her black circles take me in slowly. I bolt toward the library and the safety of the false-backed bookcase.

Once inside the room, I run to the bookcase and fumble for the latch that reveals the false back. It won't budge, and I hear the grandmother-doll screaming for Thelma, and then their rubbery feet begin to pound clumsily down the hallway.

The brass latch finally gives way and the front swings out. I step inside and then have to step out again to pull the door closed. My fingers are bleeding with splinters, and I can't stop crying. It clicks shut as Thelma and the grandmother-doll, who I suddenly realize must be Evelyn Donner, burst through the door.

They tear the room apart, and I watch them through a hole in the case as I feel my lungs about to explode from lack of air. I begin to breathe with exhausted relief in the stifling back of the bookcase as they finally give up and leave the room.

There is no time to take the staircase. I try to step out of the bookcase but the latch is jammed. Sweat runs down my face and back, but it finally it gives, and I stumble out in a heap of tears of relief. I hear nothing when I listen at the door for voices, so I cautiously open the door and creep into the hallway. The window at the hall's end slides up easily, and my last thought before I throw my body out the second-story window is that the shag rug had better be thick and soft.

I land hard on the rug with no memory at all. I am once again five-foot-five and don't know why I am lying next to my doll house with a ripped shirt and bruised face. Where has Tommy gone? I try standing, but my legs won't stay straight, and they fold, bringing me clumsily to the floor. As I hit ground again, I am strangely unnerved as I glance into the doll house living room.

I yelp with fear as Tommy says from behind me, "Andi, get up off the floor. Where have you been?" His hand reaches out to help me up, and I stand, blinking in confusion. "I don't know. What happened to me?"

He touches my shirt lightly and stares. "I couldn't find you... I thought you might be mad. I sat with your mom and talked. Where were you?"

"I really don't know."

Tommy shakes his head and turns, saying something about my needing water. Panicking, I clench his shirt tightly. "Wait. Let me come with you." His eyebrows knit together, but he finds

a sweatshirt on my bed, and gently lifts my arms to slide it on me.

"Thanks. And lock up the doll house for me, would you?" He drops my hand. Looking straight ahead to avoid his eye, I say, "I don't care what you say. Those dolls give me the creeps."

He laughs, turns and flips the locks closed. Let's move the thing downstairs tomorrow. Ok, little witch believer?" I feel funny when he says that, but I nod, and we go get a drink.

I went to the store for mom this morning. Part of me wants to be the model helpful daughter, and the other part wants to buy what I want without her knowing. I bought diet pills again. Mom found my old ones and threw them out, yelling the whole time that they're bad for me. She says she threw them out because she cares about me. How nice.

At the store, this older woman seemed to be wherever I was. You know, I'd look up, and no matter if I was buying cereal or fruit, she was there. And I know it sounds weird, but when I picked up the pills, she looked almost...triumphant. It turned my stomach. Strange people. Tommy should come with me next time. No, if I told him about it, he'd think I'm crazy.

*Janine M. Hummel*

**Winner of the Margaret Owen Finck Prize for Creative Writing**



*Spirit of the Tree*

*Jennifer Jenkins '86*

Oh for padded suspension  
of the animated sequences  
of day-to-day experience  
a dark room plot development  
instead  
breaking down the wall  
between imagination and reality  
but  
leaving the window  
allowing us to release  
our worries  
letting them wreak  
technicolor havoc on  
our perceptions of life and  
allowing the color-coded  
sides of our ideas to  
bleed together  
forming a confusion  
which serves to clarify  
the truth upon  
waking

*C. Bradley Jacobs*

## Reflections After Dark

With the sky framing your face, the wind in your hair,  
furtive sideways glances and shades protectively drawn;  
the crying begins.

Lights crash, strangers smile, and watches bleep. HELLO.

Chased and chasing you continue through the looking glass,  
to stop is not an option. It never was.

Buses pass, bulbs flash, guides babble, monuments live forever,  
but not so little boys or girls or little anythings.

With a giant martini for your backdrop space moves into time,  
pinups fall and oceans wave. Carry on.

You do. To stop is not an option, it never was.

Every few hundred yards something irritatingly familiar appears;  
a grosgrain bow or a quarter pounder with cheese.

You still ask "HowAREyou?" and stop listening  
at the question mark.

When will you ever learn, when will you ever learn.

Or, do you want to? Or are you able to? Or more to the point,  
do you care?

Sideway glances into windows fill your eyes with a familiar blue  
glow, voices rage, faces plead, and ovens buzz. TIME.

Enough already. You want to click your heels and go home.

You don't. Remember, to stop is not an option. Besides;  
Home is where the heart is.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder.

Two heads are better than one.

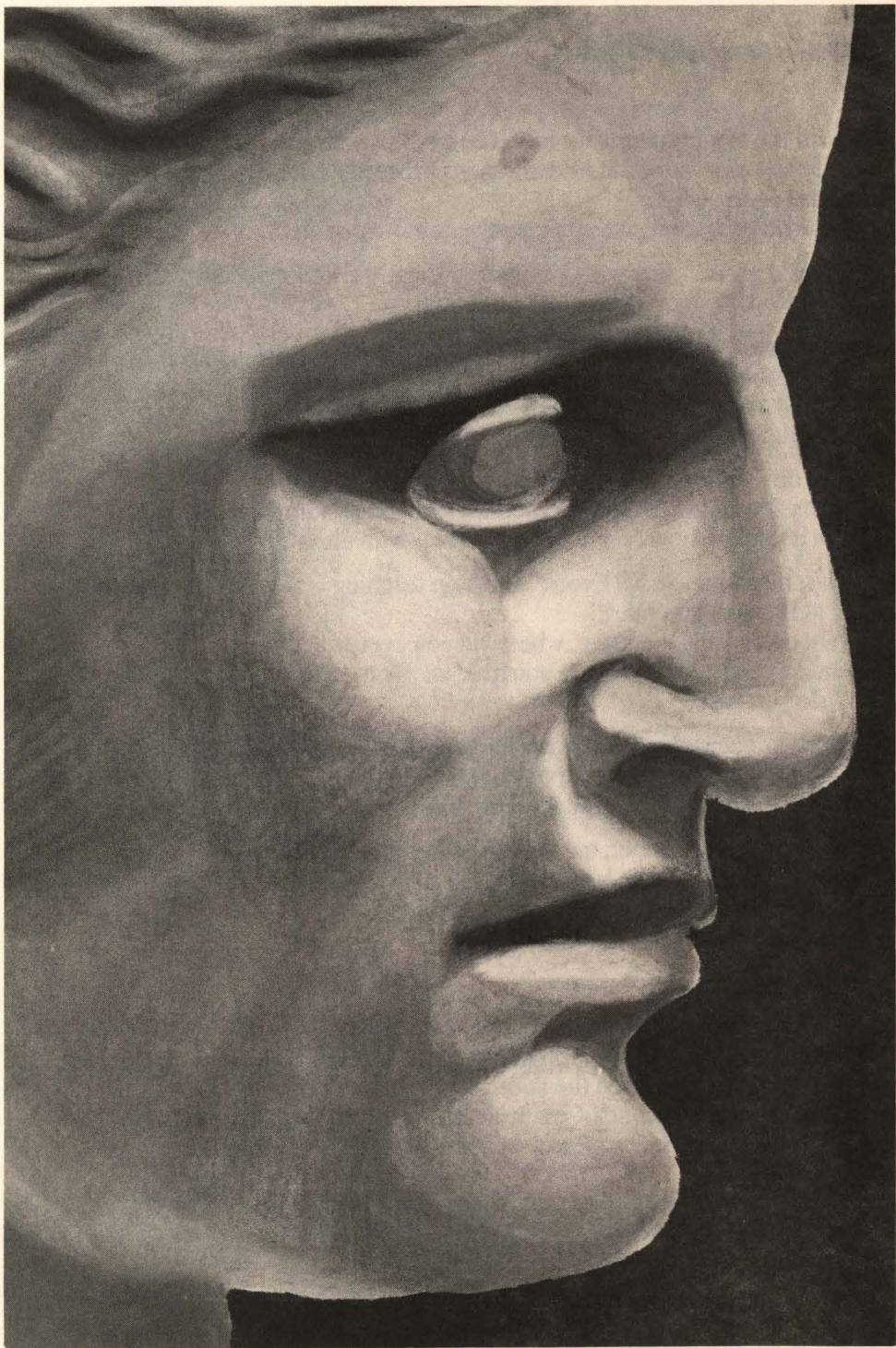
And yours is certainly in need of at least one more.

If you go into the bathroom, turn out the light,  
stare in the mirror and chant MARY FRANCIS over and  
over and over you'll see the young girl's ghost.

Wasn't it only a couple of years ago that you realized it was only  
your own reflection after your eyes got used to the dark?

*Edith Demas*





## To JoJo in Fla.

Dust sleeps on the side of the cracked asphalt,  
The day yawns and brightens to blue  
as the ground feels naked.

Days like these we took off our jackets  
and played basketball on the melting ice,  
as if that would get us closer to the  
force  
that slowly stirs the matted grass  
and warms the buds to blossom  
and sweeps the brown leaves against the chain-link fence.

The clouds burn red as they rest on the timeless horizon,  
attracting my eyes,  
after the sun has set.

Evenings like these we felt the cold crawl along the ground  
and waited like statues for darkness to fall,  
as if paying reverence to the  
force  
that took our hopes and scattered them among the  
awakening fields  
and ran our hopes through the bony trees,  
as the wind told us  
"Leave,  
and make these memories."

*Eric Holdorf*

## **Thunder And Lightning**

If I believed in the ways of Magic  
I'd call out your name some night  
From a small clearing in the forest  
With a circle of torches for light  
My robe splashed with glittering stars  
I'd call on everything that ever lived  
To tell me where you are  
And the wind would sigh deeply  
From out of the past  
And voices whisper back from tomorrow  
"I saw her first"  
"And I saw her last  
Drifting through the Sea of Sorrow"  
Then I'd split the darkness with lightning  
As thunder scattered the leaves  
Through the black hole of time itself  
I'd snatch you from the sea  
Then bring you gently through the night  
That kept you away from me  
And when silence finally fell all around  
We'd bury the torches in the ground  
And walk quietly home  
Only the sound  
Of your footsteps next to mine  
The Princess of Fortune  
And the Wizard of Time

*Yancey Knight*



*Ally's hand*

*Transposition*

9/9

## Crystal

Your mind was wandering, trying to lead your eyes,  
Looking to the horizon for the new sunrise.  
You felt too quickly that the time did pass,  
And soon your mind's eye discovered glass.

The first you found was a window clear,  
And couldn't you see all, both far and near.  
Yet, even though this window's clean,  
Doesn't it still distort the scene?  
You knew this glass was very fine,  
But it took some rain to keep the shine.  
Though this cover kept you dry and warm,  
You really wanted to feel the storm.

So up you rose and all you passed,  
And discovered yourself in the looking glass.  
It held your stare and held you there,  
And you couldn't even see you'd lost all care.  
But like the sand in a tight held fist,  
You slipped into a foggy mist.  
While none are judged and none turned away,  
Will you see life's just a way to spend your days?

An ornate decorum grabbed you hold,  
Stained glass so warm you ignored the cold.  
Surrounding your body with a chilling frost,  
Until all your beliefs were erased and lost.  
You once thought alone to draw ideas,  
But they thought in groups to divide their fears.  
You had mistaken control for caring,  
And mistook their taking for sharing.

You led yourself to a different shore,  
And through your body smoked glass did pour.  
In your mind up you rose,  
And made your head the show of shows.  
But a bright road became a dark avenue,  
And you felt all the eyes staring at you.  
Finally you decided the memories you'd lost,  
Weren't really worth the cost.

*continued*

And through all this you stand right here,  
Shedding a small crystal tear.  
You see your life as broken glass  
Because you didn't feed your past.  
But if you really look behind,  
You'll see the search is half the find.  
Since all your past has really shown,  
Is that any glass can be fresh blown.

*Steven Isenburg*



## Unmasked

Cold as the sun scorching  
Over a grassless plain,  
Underneath a rainless storm,  
Like a heartless valentine,  
Sits a mechanical girl. And  
Only her rusted edges give  
Notice of human tears.

*Marirose Coulson*



## The Staff

Cathy Bailey—is a simple, slow-talking Southerner who is slyly pulling straws to decide a major.

Polly Branch—studies studio art and biology. She concentrates on their influence on her understanding of a more peaceful way of life.

Marirose Coulson—an aspiring writer whose natural habitat is the grocery store. Natural major is English. Natural color is pink. Yellow isn't. Natural nature is uncommon.

Karen Golembeski—says she still likes that picture of the Boy Scouts...hey, and what about that cucumber poem?

Janine Hummel—Editor, closet romantic, writer. Most common utterance: "I don't care **who** you are, just rub my back." Goal: to be published by the time she's 28. Justifies the bad things in life with, "Oh well, it'll give me something to write about." Worships Elvis Costello, e.e. cummings and Pete Townshend.

C. Bradley Jacobs—Assistant, a.k.a. "Bard," reader, writer, and amateur art critic with height advantage only on the second string of the Messenger staff basketball team. Defender of dingbats, Pilot biros and real love poetry.

Susan Judge—calls herself clueless. It confuses those who know her as Sue. She loves Chinese food.

Mike Liebman—a.k.a. Dr. Rugby; English major engulfed by the absurdities life presents. Favorite ways to have while thinking (is that possible?): writing, talking and listening to the man from Bath, Peter Gabriel.

Kathleen Wong—has nothing to say.

Hilary Smith—is interested in History because it reflects the future. Her favorite authors are John Steinbeck and George Orwell. She has a neat voice.







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