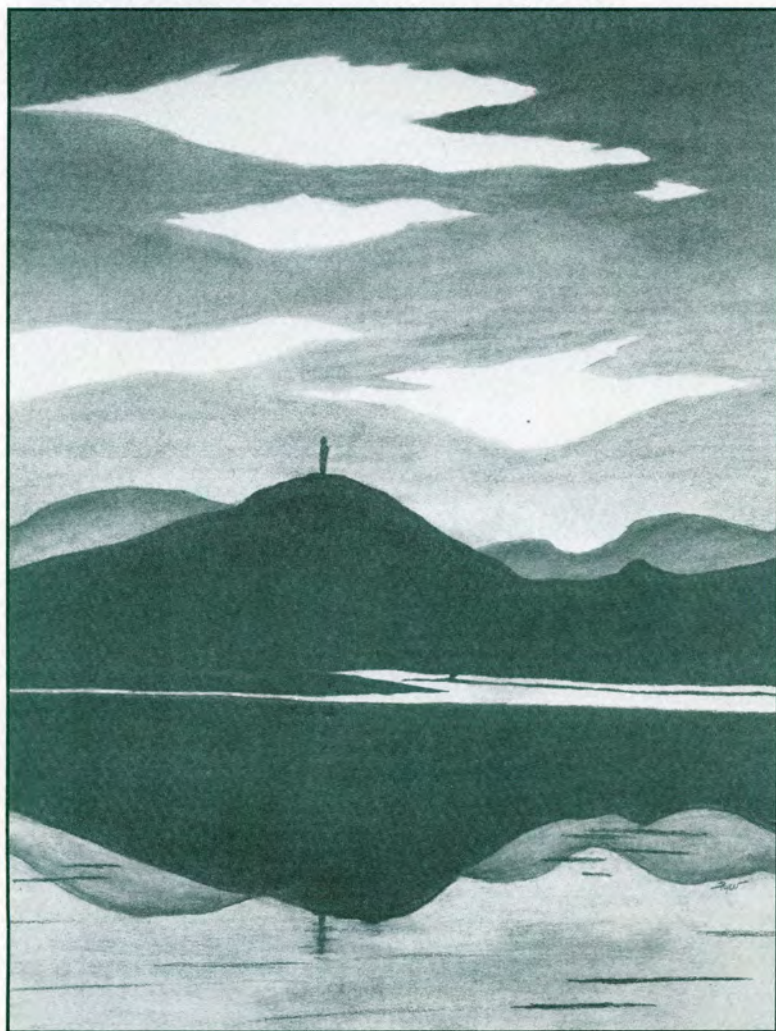
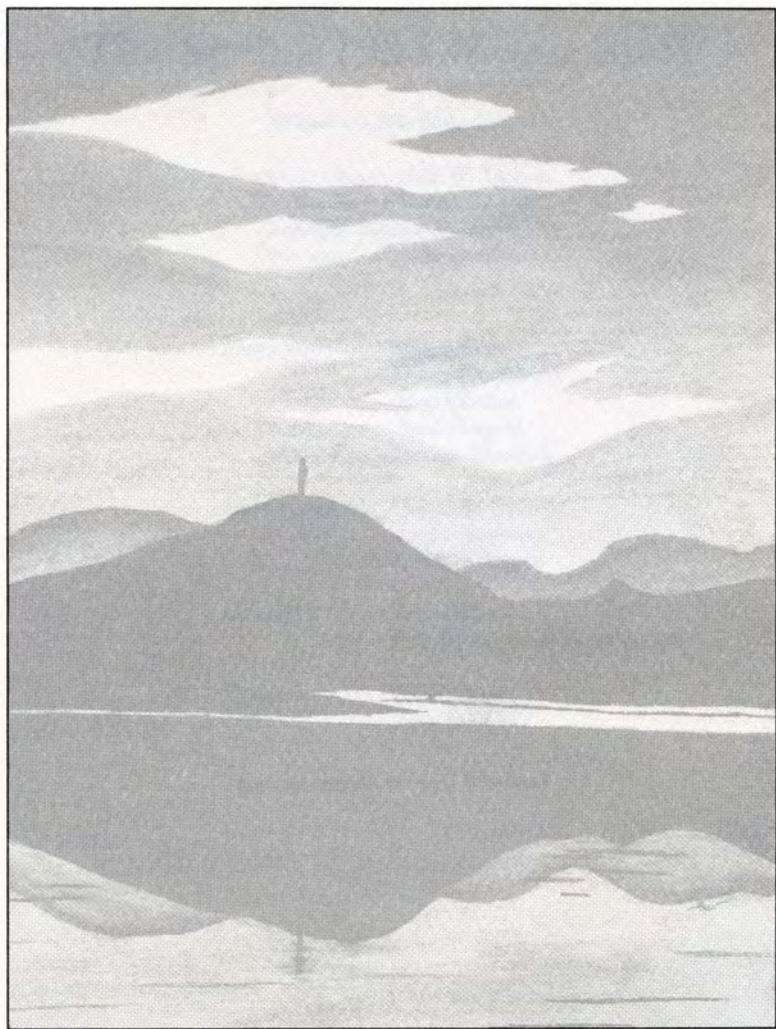


The
THE MARIST COLLEGE LITERARY AND ART MAGAZINE
Mosaic





Spring 1993



The Mosaic

Spring 1993



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Lost Number

when i first came into

the system i had
an identity
(not a number)

but when i got here
they (believe this) lost my number
i don't exist
(they won't let me go though)
they can't find my name or number

well here i am
(i'm not here according to these people)
no one knows i'm here
i'm lost in the paper work
(i don't exist)

no one can give me
permission to use the phone
(i'm not here)
so i wrote a letter
to albany
told them what was going on
(they didn't know who i was)
they sent me a letter
(least i think it was to me)
addressed to occupant
(must be me)

you are being transferred
back to your old facility
(maybe i'll find myself)
they don't know who you are
but they are willing
to look in the lost and found

to see if they may have lost you

— *William Stafford*

Samantha

by *Andrea G. Preziotti*

Nowadays it's hard for me to think that maybe you're not here anymore. I mean, sometimes I sit by my window and pray that you'll come home, yet knowing you never will. I did not understand why you left, it seemed so irrational, so unlike you. When you left, my heart just broke. I'm not too sure where it all went. The pieces flew and the shattered fragments, they lay about the linoleum floor for days before I even had the courage to pick them up. I felt so listless, an airplane flying above the clouds, no passengers, just me—the pilot. The turbulence was horrendous, but it was all in my heart, and like a fated crash it was inevitable. So I picked up those fragile pieces of my heart, and I tried to put them back together. I even tried that extra-strength crazy glue they advertise on television, but to no avail. They just hung limp on my fingertips. It was a mess, glue everywhere, and it turned out I glued the newspaper to the hardwood floor. I had to call a carpenter to handle it. He asked me what had happened, and I told him Marty and I were working on a project. When I wasn't looking, she nudged the bottle of glue and it spilled all over the floor. She said it was "an accident." Then he muttered "kids!" under his breath (what does he know!). He was finished by noon. I know you'd understand why I didn't tell him the truth, he wasn't like you and me. He'd use that word and them call Dr. Sagew, and then they'd take me away for good, just like last time—but back then you rescued me. And now, well, you weren't here. Poof, you were gone!

The view from my window is pretty. I can see the ocean crash against the rocks, and splash all the little children building sand castles. They seem to be having fun. Maybe I'll go out tomorrow and take a walk and join them. The neighborhood kids, they know me...and you. They loved you, the magician who built wonderful, fairy tale castles with moats and shell bridges. You made them laugh so many times. When I was with you I felt like a little kid all over again. This time around I was a happier kid, no dark shadows lurked behind me, no evil spirits threatened me with harm. I finally free of all those horrible memories. You make them all disappear with a snap of your fingers and the warmth of your smile.

It's starting to rain, I better close the windows. I remember how you used to tell me how musty the house would get if I kept the windows open during a shower. But I wanted to listen to the rain's pitter-patter on the window sill. We argued, discussed and in the end we compromised. The front windows would stay open and the back windows would stay shut. Today, I think I'll leave them all open. No need to lose my train of thought over a musty odor that will go away with the first ray of sunshine. The kids are all going home now. I guess the rain has scared them off. I don't know why people are afraid of rain. It's not like they're going to melt away.

I like rain, especially during an electrical thunderstorm. The lightning dances across its stage of water and the thunder claps after its every performance. Sometimes, if the thunder really likes the lightning's show he'll clap and ask for an encore. Of course, the lightning lets hem wait a bit as every good woman should. And when she's good and ready she crosses the sea in a fury of pirouettes, swirls, and leaps—brightening the sky with her energy. Thunder usually falls silent after this vibrant performance, then gives his final vouch of approval and

bids her farewell. She curtsies in a much more polite manner than that of which her dance was performed, and bids him adieu —almost sure that their paths will cross sometime in the future. Lightning never knows when, where, or even how, —but her female intuition tells her that they will meet once more, two ships passing in the night.

I wish I knew that there would be some way for us to somehow find each other again, though I know it's highly improbable. But sometimes I can see us together. Of course this occurs when dusk takes over my senses and you become real to me in the folds of the night. You will be standing at my side, as we look out at the ocean and watch the schooners pass, indelible phantoms against the icecaps. Fishing for creatures of the sea and wondering if they might hear the enchanting songs of the sirens, dying the way a true fisherman should—he and his boat crashing between the rocks, drowning in the devilish ocean. And as that dreadful note should pass through my mind, you would squeeze me tight and I would feel safe in your arms. Then we would walk hand in hand down to our sleeping quarters, falling exhausted among the sheets, two bodies as one.

But I know that shall never happen, for I shall climb the widow's walk alone and call out to you in the night, knowing that you will never answer my mournful cry. Knowing that like all the other sailors, you too had fallen for the sweet mermaid's melody and had perished the fisherman way. . .

Oh my, it seems she has entered my mind again, spurning yet another piece of her tragic tale. Oh, I wish I could help the poor soul, but only you seemed to understand. She's not another personality, merely a spirit trying to find her way. I know she uses me to find her destiny, and sometimes I think maybe we were destined to help one another. I know it sounds queer, but it just seems right, especially now that you're gone. . .she's the only friend I have now. You know, I even know her name. It's Samantha. Samantha, isn't that such a pretty name? Sometimes I think I can see her. She's wearing a cream-colored dress, very simple but elegant, with a high collar and a train. There's a black shawl draped about her shoulders, and her light brown hair is done up in a bun. I can tell you these things, I mean I could, if you were here. But since you're not, this book will have to do.

The Roffel's got a new car today, a '57 Chevy, you know how Henry likes to collect those antiques. It's red and white, with shark fins and it's a convertible, too. He said one day next week, Marty and I could take a drive in it. You know, everyone's been really nice to me since you left. I don't know why, but I'm sure someday I will. They don't seem to think you're coming back, but I know you will.

I was walking through the neighborhood, passing by our favorite haunts. I went into the Willoughby Creamery and ordered a peanut butter-fudge sundae. You know, the big ones we used to share. The guy behind the counter was kind of . . . uh, I guess you could say flabbergasted. He wasn't too sure if I could eat the whole thing. But you and I both know most times we came to Will's, I ate most of the sundae. Those hot, summer nights when the perspiration dripped off our bodies, and open faucet dripping in twilight, cooled off by Will's ceiling fan.

The sky is the prettiest blue today. The clouds look like fluffy pillows waiting for sleepy heads. Right now I'm lying on the grass in our —I mean, the backyard. The dew is seeping through my clothes but I really don't mind at all. A sparrow just flew past me and landed on one of Big Oak's limbs. Wow, Big Oak stands

so tall, his branches reaching out for a hug. I hate looking at him during the winter. He's so bare. He seems so lonely, it makes me sad enough to cry. I'm glad that it's just the summer and I have a few more months left to relish his beauty.

A butterfly just landed on the tip of my nose. She's so beautiful, more so than any I've ever seen. Her wings are so delicate. The colors are entwined around each other in a filigree design. It's amazing that nature can create something so perfect. Black, purple and yellow go so well together.



Today I saw a parade. You should have seen all the marching bands and balloons. They were huge. Snoopy and Woodstock came on and they played Schroeder's little melody. You know, the one they always play on "Charlie Brown" specials. I could have danced and would have danced with joy if you were here. I would've been just like last time, that is, when you were around. Lately the days seem to melt into each other, to tell you the truth I'm no even too sure what day this is.

I passed by Engine Co. 153, too. I was curious to know if they owned a Dalmatian or not, if that old myth had any bit of truth to it. I went in and asked one of the fire fighters, and she said that it was funny I should ask 'cause that's just around the time I found your note. Amazing huh?

It's sitting in front of me now, the note, that is. The paper's yellow already and slightly crumpled. You see, after I read it through the first time, I wasn't...I didn't...understand. I threw it out. It hurt too much to look at your cursive writing on the plain notebook paper, you didn't even sign "always"—just your name. A dagger pierced my heart when I saw the loveless farewell. I felt used, manipulated, and I tried to convince myself that your words were wrong, that you hadn't left but I knew I was only fooling myself. Once again I was taken for a ride, only to be cast out the car window, a smoldering cigarette butt. I felt that way for days afterwards. Then I was ready to throw out the garbage, and of all the things to fallout of the bag was your letter.



Crinkled and faded, it lay on the carpet, my desk light casting its shadow on the wall. Its silhouette was reminiscent of a hand reaching out for help, and I screamed. Marty jumped. She came in from the kitchen, looking concerned. But I just told her it was nothing, that I had just seen a spider. She looked at me with those deep brown eyes of hers, shrugged and then went back to the kitchen.



Oh how I miss you! My life seems so incomplete without you here. I walk around with slumped shoulders and the glimmer in my eyes has disappeared. I thought I would be able to handle it. I guess I was wrong. I always hated it when you were right. If I had known that night when you asked me if I could make it without you, that you were really considering leaving—my answer would have been different. There's no doubt about that. I thought you were asking a hypothetical question. You always liked to delve into other people's philosophy. God, I feel stupid—how could I let that one go by me?



I look out over the water, dreaming —
Drawn into the pattern of the waves:
Rising, rolling, breaking on the shore.
Shadows are trapped in each
 swiftly-moving valley;
Sun sparkles like diamonds, flashing
 from each curling crest;
Wind ruffles the surface, changing
 patterns, lines, textures.
Water magic hypnotizes —
 Ever-flowing, almost alive;
 Ever-changing, always the same.

— *Diane DesAutels*





Snow Crocus - for Mother

In the corner of my garden
lies the snow crocus.
Perhaps not the most beautiful flower
of all the Field
nor the most fragrant
nor the most virtuous
But it possesses an unsurpassing power -
the strength that comes from within



For who is the very first to break through
the frosty winter snows
depths of ice
phantom of negative powers
but the snow crocus?



In all her perils
She sings not a whistle of past sorrows
But proclaims a symphony of Joy
the true herald of Spring
and all the promise and hope a rebirth possesses,
In vibrant, contagious colors
With her head always facing the Sun.

Yet humble is her nature
for once the snow has melted away
She allows others to trample down her petals
She knows her purpose has been fulfilled
So she chooses to lie Dormant
until she hears the call again.

Leaving not a sweet fragrance to be remembered by
nor even a dying shell of herself,
only her promise
Surer than the snows of January
that she will come again.

—*Maria-Ann M. Carpenter*





My grandma
jigsaw puzzles
1,000 pieces or more
spread out on the table
piles of sky, and brick, and grass.

My grandma
kids were welcome
making noise
"happy noise"
kicking feet
against the radiator

My grandma
a grand piano she couldn't play
neither could we—
just Chopsticks, and Watchman
and noisy songs of our own.

My grandma
family reunions
at her house
Christmas, Thanksgiving,
her birthday in June
a big dinner and lots of talk.



My grandma
sang kids to sleep
"They just wanted to escape my voice."

My grandma
smoked cigarettes
holes in her sweaters and tablecloths
"My one vice."

My grandma
very intelligent
won scholarships and awards
she'd even do crossword puzzles in pen.

My grandma
loved kids, and animals,
and family, and everyone naturally
loved her right back.

—Diane DesAutels





When I Was Nine Years Old.....

You promised it would be alright
I believed it all the way
then you turned and hit me hard
and I hated you that day.

I didn't understand the hurt
my world became dark and cold
the promise broken scarred me for life
when I was nine years old.

So many years I believed you
I longed for the end to near
you told me the end was coming
you called me your darling dear.

I was told I was your favorite
told you'd do anything for me
yet when I begged for you to stop her
you said, "just let her be."



You told me she'd stop tomorrow
Yet tomorrow never came
I'm seventeen and still hoping
but tomorrow will be the same.



For years I kept it quiet
then I died inside
I couldn't live while knowing
it was for you that I had lied.

Thirteen and still helpless
I was drowning in my fears
until people began to help me
try to deal with all those years.

For a while I asked for their guidance
and they were always there
Then I knew it was time for me
to face the pain I couldn't bear.

I've stood on my feet for years now
though the others somehow failed
but because they were there to help me
to the cross I wasn't nailed.







I learned from them not to trust you
your promises would never come through
I'd stand on my own forever
I'd never give up to you.

Now another wants to have my faith
which I haven't had since nine
the faith you took away from me
the faith that wasn't mine.

What's left of my childhood innocence
is being asked of me
the ultimate of all sacrifices
one he'll never see.

I'll give him all I have
and I'll risk my new found world
In the hope that history won't repeat itself
from when I was a little girl.

—*Laura J. DeFazio*



"Words"



I think Hamlet said it best, "Words, words, words." What power do they truly have over us? We gave them meaning, and now they control us. But people don't understand. It's a dual relationship. We need words, and people don't think beyond that. People become slaves to words and fumble around them. Words need people. If we don't use them, they fade out of existence. You need to look deeper. Many people are afraid of complicated speech, but then look at some others, politicians, actors, poets, and writers. They use the words, not the other way around. All you have to do is try. Words, words, words.

—Eli

WAR

Soldier against soldier.
Fear against fear.
Life against life.
Who will die?
Whose life will be saved?
For if they were to meet under different circumstances
Could they have been friends instead of enemies?
Will there ever be peace
or just intermissions between one war and the next?
War is a time when the sun never rises
and never sets.
It just lingers in the sky
Covered by the dark fog of fire.
It is a time of pride
and sacrifice.
When all the rifles have been placed on the ground
There is another battlefield to attend -
The one at home.
Fighting back the tears,
Watching your loved one being laid to rest.
Praying that wherever they are
They never have to experience suffering again.
For war is never over,
It is never forgotten.
The pain only lessens
But it is never completely gone.

by Julie Sbrider



Impulsive

For Brian

The smiling demi-god
looks me square in the face,
his laughter reverberates
and puts me in my place.

The lover of somnus
uneasily stalks the night,
searching now for patience
suicidal in his plight.

His music—an outlet
a secluded place to hide,
it takes him in and finds the piece
the part of him that's died.

The smiling demi-god
moves on again to go,
whether or not he'll find the laugh
only he will know.

—MpG



Starfish Girl

by Jonas Wesley

The boat stopped suddenly and the propeller quickly buried itself into the sand until it did not move anymore. The man, who had been thrown forward by the impact, slammed his fist down in anger. A day that was to be spent fishing would now be spent waiting for the tides to free him from a sandbar.

He watched as the sun rose over the water's surface. It would be a clear, hot day. A perfect day to burn, he thought.

The man sat there in disbelief, not understanding how this could happen to him. He had only wanted to relax for a few hours, to get away from the stress and tension of everyday life. But now he would be trapped in a small boat for the next six hours or so with nothing to do.

The sun rose higher in the sky and the day grew hotter. There was not even a breeze coming off the water. He could take it no longer. He jumped out of the boat and onto sand, which was hot from the overhead sun. He pushed and pulled violently, trying to rock the boat free. But it was useless. He was going to have to wait for the tide.

He climbed back into the boat and sat on the uncomfortable wooden bench. As time passed slowly, he sat there and watched as the water teased him from a distance. There was so much else that could have been done today, he thought. No, there was so much else that should have been done today. There were deals to be finished, there was money to be made and there was success to be had. And where was he? He was trapped, a prisoner of the tides.

As he sat there, he noticed something lying next to the boat, partially covered with sand. He leaned over and picked it up. It was a starfish. He looked at it for a moment, it was small and tan, and then he tossed it on the bottom of the boat.

He went back to looking out over the water and waited. The sun beat down from overhead and he soon started to feel drowsy. Using a pillow as a towel, he leaned against the bench and closed his eyes. Not long after, he went back to sleep.

The man woke up many hours later as the boat rocked back and forth in the water. High tide had come. He was free.

He started the outboard motor and headed in the direction of the beach. He was sunburned badly but a late afternoon breeze pushed across the water and made it momentarily tolerable. The little boat skipped across the waves as the man headed for home. He hoped he would not run into anyone who would ask him if he had caught anything. It would be a painful reminder of what a wasted day it was. He wanted nothing more than to get on with his life and put this behind him.

As he neared the beach, the man cut the engine and jumped into the water. He led the boat up from the shallow water and pulled it onto the shore. He collapsed in the sand next to the boat and relaxed for a moment. A terrible day was behind him.

He heard laughing and shouting and looked around him. A group of small children were running along the beach. One of them, a chubby girl, stopped by the man and the boat.

"Look," she said to no one in particular "a starfish."



The starfish lay in the bottom of the boat where the man had tossed it and

forgotten about it. The girl stared in wonder.

"Go ahead. You can take it if you want." He said. He had no use for it.

She looked at him uncertainly for a moment, this sunburned, tired, gruff looking man, and then her eyes turned back to the starfish. She knelt down and carefully picked it up. She placed it in the palm of her hand and slowly touched it. And then, without another look at the man, she turned and slowly walked down the beach in the direction that she had come from.

The man sat there on the beach watching her walk away. And, for the first time that day, he smiled.



Truthful Wishes

His eyes stared at me. They penetrated deep into my soul. They reached through my heart and entered my mind. He could see all of me, know all of me and he could have all of me.

His mouth spoke to me. His lips called my name. They were luscious. They were pink. They were full and I wanted to feel them against mine.



His hands were soft and delicate. They rested in his lap. I longed to wrap his fingers with mine, to feel his touch.

His arms looked strong and muscular. They could cause violence or be the sources of safety. I wished they were around me, holding me close and tight, keeping me warm.

His chest was fine and toned. I watched as it moved with every breath. I could imagine how it would feel to rest my head upon it, to feel him next to me.

Everything about him was wonderful. He was caring and sincere. And I knew in my heart he would do nothing to hurt me. Instead, he would protect me. In my eyes, my mind, and even in my heart, this man was perfection.

—*Laura J. DeFazio*



What is it to love a black man
to stroke the broad mahogany planes of his chest
covered with tightly curled strands of hair
that curl into sleep at the slightest touch of
my hands
to see his eyes, dark brown
to be drowned in clear waters like those rivers that
empty into the Mississippi
except their orbs hold a certain welcome and late
sunset fire
that warms into my bones
hands of the soil awake and stir into life ancient
tremors
black hands hold black hands
black mouths meet
music starts of a different kind
pulsating
rhythmic
ancient
history sits and looks on
his black head lies on the white feathery pillow next
to mine
a slight smile slides across his mouth
i too smile
his hand lazy encircles my waist
the air emits the smells of jasmine and mint plants
and the chirping of grasshoppers in the night
and distant beats of drums
black hands
dom
dom
dom
somewhere the face of Africa smiles.

—st. clare roy

ignoring the obvious

you don't want to know me. so close your eyes and be blind to my flaws. i'm not perfect like you. i don't work as hard as you or with your passion. i've made mistakes before and i will make them again. i can't be like you, i won't let myself. i don't believe in the same things that you think are right. you don't like me or what i'm about. that's your flaw and you can't live with it. you claim to love me, that's difficult to grasp. you've never shown your love. i sit and think, do you really love me or do you feel that it's your job to. i've pleaded to you for help, only to be ignored. "only the weak need help," you once told me. i tried to be strong, but it doesn't work for me. strength is my weakness, i'm sorry. sorry for living, sorry for being part of your life. you never liked my friends, because they were my strength and your weakness. although you'd never admit it. i'm never correct in your view of things. you're the one who's brought me to this point in my life. the reason i've been to therapy, the reason for me being so different from everyone. the reason i'm about to do what i'm about to do. the scars that have formed on the outside, are nothing compared to the pain and wounds i have on the inside. i'll miss my friends and i hope they'll understand someday that i did this for myself. you make this easy, so very easy. thanks dad, for making something in my life so simple.

—derek johnson

Door 23

Twenty-three dreams
arbitrarily infiltrated my
not so sleeping soul.

Twenty-three dreams
focused and linked
from eyes without a blink
and my not so sleepy soul.

—MpG

Alone

sitting alone in my room, as i am right now, is depressing. depression is good, good you say. depression will leave for a bit when you become happy, but it never leaves forever. depression is my friend, happiness just makes you feel like it's your friend. it always leaves though and doesn't come back that often. loneliness is evil, to be alone is the worst. no friends, no girl/boy friend or just having nothing to do. we've all experienced one of those situations and that just hurts you deep down inside. you won't admit you cry when you're alone, but i know you do. it's nothing to be ashamed of. get those emotions out before they eat you alive. being alone can be productive. you get to find out who you really are. just how miserable your life really is. you try to change things about yourself, you gain acceptance, friends, even a lover. all of that stuff, and you'll still be alone. alone with knowledge that no one will ever figure you out or understand you the person. the person inside. you know who you are, but no one else will ever truly know you as well as yourself. except for me, i know everyone inside and out. the jocks, the preps, the nerds, the hippies, everyone, even the people who hide. the ones who walk with their heads down. i know you the best. so deal with loneliness, it's your eternal friend. that can never leave you. loneliness is the only thing that will know you from birth to death. i know no introductions need to be made, i see you've met.

—derek johnson

worn by time

it brings me upon tears
to behold this bitter piece of loss
they never stop raging within
as i lie naked — upon my cross

brothers in arms
in the spring of their lives
have broken, fallen
their dreams long denied

one crawled back to his past,
the king of pain again crowned
inhaling his demons,
he walks amid the sweet under ground

one has despised the life
that he has constantly led
and rather than tear at the sheets,
he has learned to live with doubt, instead

one was stripped of his future
by those of his blood
after fighting for change,
he's thrown back to the mud

one spent months in a bed
to see through the clear
it took for him to be crippled,
with the whispering of death in his ear

why did fate
demand that we should suffer
for suffer we did
in the loss of each other

a day will come
when i'll see them again
the boys will have slept
as they've bled out new men

—Dave Barrett

Dead on Arrival— America's Favorite Game Show

By Don Raff

"Liiiiivvee...from Hollywood, it's America's most popular game show...Dead..on..Arrival! And now here is your host, the happy reaper... Dick Fark."

The tuxedo clad Fark rushes in from stage right.

"Good evening ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Dead on Arrival, the game show where the most creative final exit performed tonight, live on our stage will be awarded one hundred thousand dollars in cash. Now let me introduce my partner, as always on Dead On Arrival...the beautiful Riuniti Bianco."

Riuniti, a buxom blonde, in a long, bright blue sequined gown enters on stage. She bows to the audience and cameras, then does a twirl around to show off her gown.

"Riuniti, why that is certainly a killer gown that you are wearing tonight."

"Why thank you, Dick."

"Better not let the contestants see you or we'll have a short show."

"Oh, ha, ha, ha."

"And now Riuniti will explain how Dead on Arrival works."

"Thanks, Dick. We have three contestants. Each contestant will come out with their family and tell us their reason for wanting to leave this world and how they intend to do it live, on our stage. The object is to be creative and entertaining. At the end of our program our studio audience will vote for which one of the contestant check-outs they like the best. The family of the winner will take home one hundred thousand dollars in cash and some lovely prizes. The winner tonight will go up against all the other winners this year to compete in our tournament of champions at the end of the season for one million dollars in cash. Back to you Dick."

"Thank you, Riuniti. Now Rip Chord, please introduce our first contestant."

"Dick, he's a former account executive for a prestigious Wall Street broker. From Bronxville, New York—please welcome Phil Sludge and his family."

The audience applauds as the contestant and his family is escorted on stage.

"Welcome to Dead on Arrival, Phil. Please introduce your lovely family to us."

"Oh, thank you Dick. Well, Dick, this is my wife Buffy and my daughters Muffy and Bambi."

The Sludge family nods their hellos.

"Well Phil, tell us the reason for entering an asylum, and how you plan to do it tonight."

"Dick, I have been diagnosed with inoperable cancer of the lungs."

"A heavy smoker, Phil?"

"No Dick, I am a victim of second hand smoke from an uncaring co-worker who smoked three packs a day. He is as healthy as a kid, but I quickly developed terminal lung cancer. Instead of putting my family through years of grief and wiping out our savings on medical bills, I feel now is the time to go. I

"Meester Deek, for many year I mop floors in nuclear power plant. Last year contameanated water leak onto floor. I see dee water. I mop eet up. It's my job to do that. I get radeation poisoneng from water. Meester Deek, I very poor and I want to ween monee for my familiee."

Ah's are heard from the audience as they politely applaud Segundo's story.

"Very noble of Segundo. Now tell us how you plan to pass on."

"I watch Rosita bake bread. I see bread rise through leetel weendow in oven. I theenk, eef I eet much yeest, I get eento oven and rise unteel I blow-up."

The audience screams in anticipation.

"Segundo, there is something you did before the show began, is that right?"

"Yes Meester Deek, I eet raw yeest."

"Correct. Segundo - fifty pounds of Fleshman's commercial baking yeast, you'll begin to rise as soon as you hit the heat... to assist you with this we had a special oven built. Could we open the curtain please."

The curtain is opened to reveal an oven that is large enough to fit a human man.

"As you can see, this is a microwave oven built especially for D.O.A. from our friends at General Electric, remember: We bring good things to life. Back to you, Dick."

"Segundo, say goodbye to your family because it is time to play D.O.A."

Segundo bids his family an emotional farewell. He enters the giant microwave. Riuniti shuts the large see through door.

"Ready, let's count down: five, four, three, two, one... turn on the oven."

The inside of the oven lights up. Segundo can be seen lying on his back. Within a few seconds the yeast he ate begins to rise causing his stomach to swell up like a balloon being inflated by a helium canister.

MmmmmmssssswwwwwwwwwwwwwwweeeeeePLOTCH. Segundo explodes all over the inside of the oven. The audience goes nuts with applause.

"Well Mrs. Segundo, your husband blew out like a worn tire hitting a nail. You must be very proud."

"Oh Meester Deek, I hope we ween."

"Well good luck to you."

The Segundos are walked off the stage.

Don't forget, the families of the runners-up receive the home version of Dead on Arrival by Worlds of Wonder. Well now it's time for that part of our show where we give two lucky members of our studio audience a chance to win money in our lightning round. Rip Chord, please introduce our two players."

"Dick, meet Russ T. Autoparts and Sammy Phlegm."

The audience applauds as the curtain opens to reveal two men who are strapped into regulation electric chairs.

"Russ T. Autoparts what do you do for a living?"

"I deliver pizza for Dominos."

"I see, so you're experienced in taking your life in your own hands?"

"Actually, I am a good driver, Dick."

"O.K. Sammy Phlegm, what do you do?"

"Ah, I don't do nuttin' Dick."

"Russ, why did you decide to play our lightning round?"

"Well Dick, it looks like fun."

"How about you, Sammy?"

"I'm with him."

"You mean the two of you are friends?"

"Yeah."

"Sammy, you don't need a reason to play the lightning round, but why did you?"

"I am with him, Dick. He drove us here and I go where he goes or I'm not gonna get home, ya know?"

"That's good enough for me Sammy. You both understand how we play the lightning round. Both of you are strapped into an electric chair. Both of you get the same amount of current at the same time. The first person who loses their vital functions within sixty seconds wins a thousand dollars. Got it? Russ, are you all set?"

"Give me some juice, man?"

"Sammy?"

"Ah, I'm with him Dick, so I gotta, you know?"

"O.K. let's play our lightning round. Ready, set, turn on the juice."

The electricity is turned on. Both contestants' bodies bolt up as far as their restraints will allow. Their bodies begin to flutter up and down and smoke rises from the contact point of the electrodes on their bodies. After sixty seconds, a game show buzzer is sounded.

"Alright, turn off the electricity and start the clock."

A clock is superimposed over a shot of two screens showing the vital signs of each contestant while the orchestra plays a countdown tune. The clock gets to ten and both vitals are still going strong.

"Let's count down: five, four, three, two, one."

A buzzer sounds and both still have their vital signs.

"Oh I am afraid that no contestant has lost their vital signs in the course of sixty seconds so no one wins the thousand dollars tonight. We'll add another thousand to that so that it will be worth two thousand dollars. Russ and Sammy's next of kin will be receiving a Dead on Arrival home game by Worlds of Wonder with our compliments. That's the way it goes some nights. By the way, don't miss our senior citizens show next week where all the contestants will be elderly. We love the old folks here at D.O.A. because they are so much fun. And make a note, our annual Christmas show is coming up. It is a one hour special and all of our contestants will be poor and homeless folks from around the country, it will be a real holiday treat. Rip Chord, who is our final contestant tonight?"

"Dick, she is vice-president for IBM. In and out of psychiatric wards and mental hospitals for years because of clinical depression and border line personality disorder, from Poughkeepsie, New York—please welcome Ivanna Mann."

The contestant is brought on stage.

"Welcome Ivanna."

"Hello."

"So I see you have frequented psych wards."

"Yeah."

"Is that why you want to buy the farm?"

"So I'm depressed."

"Well that certainly is a good enough reason the play D.O.A., but is there more to it than that?"

"No."

"Come now Ivanna, haven't you tried to douse the lights several times?"

"Forty-three attempts."

"Well that is depressing in itself. Ivanna, you say that you have no living family, what do you want done with the money if you win?"

"Keep it. Who cares. I just want out."

That is your decision to make Ivanna, but if you change your mind before you body becomes room temperature you can let us know."

"Get on with it lowlife."

The audience boos and snickers.

"I see there are a few more people here who will be glad to see you go."

"Go to hell."

"Well Ivanna, I see we have a bit of an attitude. That may cost you some audience votes."

"You bore me Fark. Can I get on with this?"

"As you wish. You are wearing a long coat. Is there a reason for this?"

"Yes. For years I have been used, rejected and treated like a piece of meat by men. I have been taken advantage of because of my great beauty. Since I was booked for this show I have been furiously working on my body. I am at the peak of physical perfection."

Ivanna drops her coat to reveal her incredible body, decked in a micro-bikini. Men in the audience howl and whistle at her.

"Take a good look guys. Eat your hearts out. You'll never have anything this good again."

"Tell us Ivanna, how will you catch the last train out?"

"I will have my fabulous body completely covered in warm beef fat, then I will enter a large steel cage. Five wild wolves have been starved for six days and fed high doses of LSD. The wolves will be let into the cage where they will tear my body to shreds and feed on my bones."

The audience hoots and hollers.

"Ivanna, our audience likes your choice. It may make up for the initial hostile reaction you received."

"Get going, I'm ready."

"Alright Ivanna, let's open up the curtain."

When the curtain is opened, a giant cage is revealed. Next to it a connecting cage contains the growling ravenous wolves. Two female stage hands come on stage to assist Ivanna in covering herself in beef fat.

"Any final words?"

"Suffer you male bastards... oh, booo, hooo, hooo, hooooo."

"O.K. Ivanna, it is time to play Dead on Arrival, so into the cage."

Ivanna enters the cage and she lies down on the floor.

"Let's count her down: five, four, three, two, one...release the wolves."

The wolves are released into the cage. They run growling to Ivanna seemingly to tear her to bits, however, the wolves stop when they reach her. They sniff her but seem confused and instead of attacking her, they whimper away as if they were lost puppies. Ivanna looks up and is stunned. A buzzer is sounded.

"Oh I'm sorry Ivanna, but you have failed to get to the great beyond, so I must disqualify you."

Ivanna is stunned and she gets up.

"I don't believe this. What's wrong with these wolves?"

Ivanna goes over to the cage and she peers in. All of them are huddled together and shivering.

"Hey Fark, these are all male wolves!"

"I am sorry Ivanna, but the game is over."

"Burned all my life by men and now rejected by a pack of starved, drugged male wolves. Mangy bastards attack me, rip me up like paper!"

Ivanna begins kicking at the wolves causing them to shrink back and yelp.

"We need to have the contestant removed from the cage."

Four stage hands run out and drag Ivanna from the cage screaming.

"No, no you bastards, I want to die. Forty-four times is ridiculous. Let me go you sons of bitches, male pigs. I have been cheated again."

"Well nothing like a sore loser to ruin things for everyone and spoil all the fun. Since our last contestant was disqualified, our audience will be voting for only two contestants. Attached to the audience's seat is a voting box. There are buttons marked one and two, simply press the number you wish to vote for. Now let's replay our two contestants. First—number one, the former account executive Phil Sludge."

"WwwwwwhirrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrSPLAT!"

"Number two, the maintenance engineer Segundo Segundo."

"MmmmmsssswwwwwwweeePLOTCH!"

"Our computer has tabulated the results, will it be Phil Sludge or Segundo Segundo? Riuniti, may I have the results?"

Riuniti hands Dick a card with the name of the winner.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the winner of tonight's one hundred thousand dollars is... Phil Sludge."

"WwwwwwhhhhhhiiiiiiiiirrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrSPLAT!"

"Let's have the Sludge family out here."

The family is escorted back onto the stage by Riuniti.

"Well Buffy Sludge, what do you have to say?"

"Phil was always a good provider."

"Buffy you win the big money but that's not all. Rip, tell them what they have won."

"Dick, the Sludge family wins a lavish funeral and top of the line casket from Tweedmans, the nation's largest chain of funeral homes. Burial and marble headstone at any Angel of Heaven cemetery, an all expense paid trip to Club Med for single's weekend and a beautiful men's wardrobe...make that woman's wardrobe from the Speigel catalogue, Speigel, Chicago 60609. Back to you, Dick."

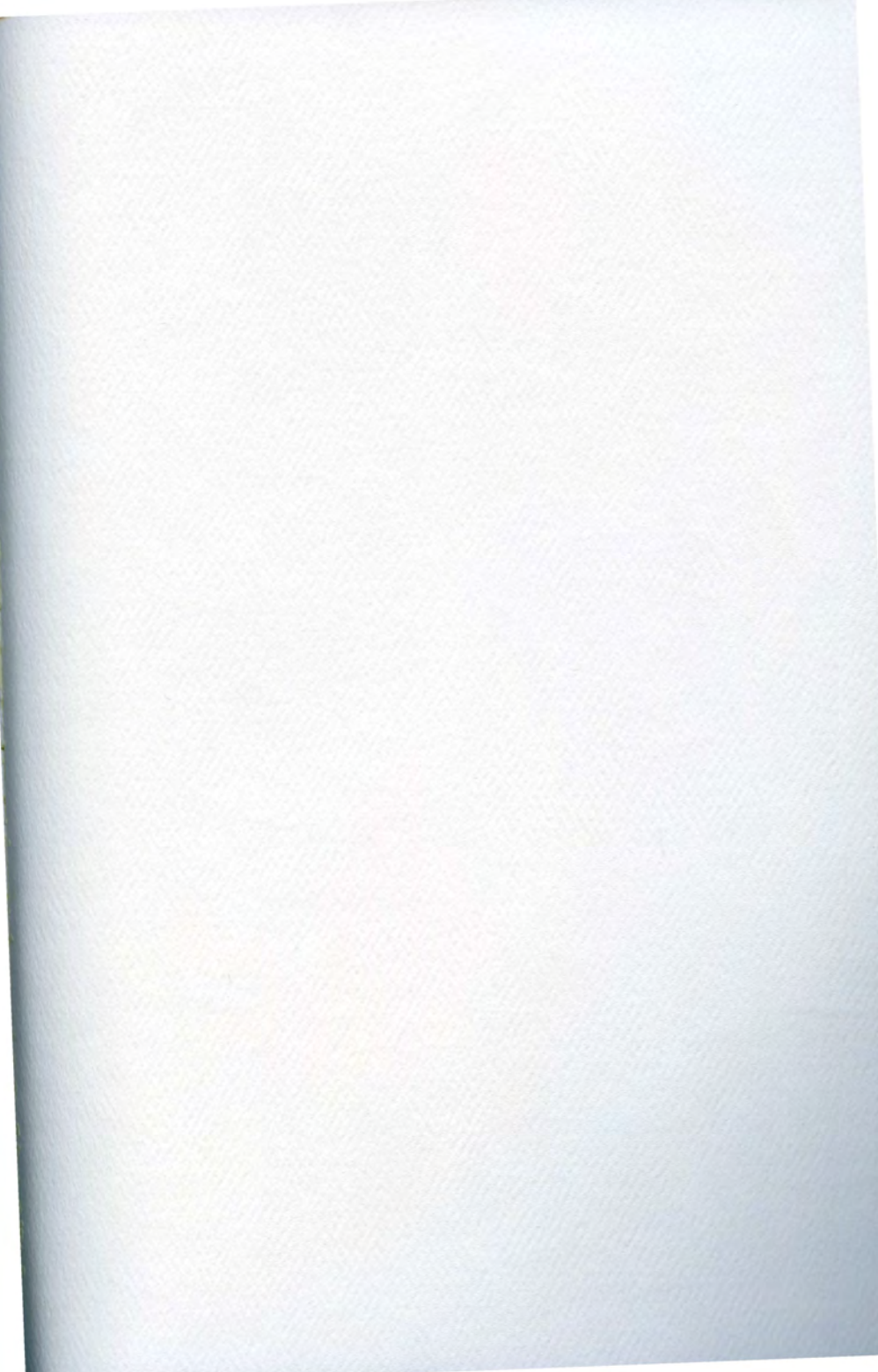
"Remember Sludges, at the end of this season Phil's end will compete with our other winners for one million dollars in our tournament of champions. What a show tonight! This is Dick Fark with Riuniti Bianco reminding you that if you are contemplating the end, don't do anything rash, come on Dead on Arrival and die for cash! Bye, bye now."

Fark, Riuniti and the remaining Sludge family wave to the camera as the remaining theme music plays and the audience applauds.

"This is Rip Chord speaking for Dead on Arrival, a Mark Goodson, Dr. Jack Kervorkian Production."



Myles Pinkney



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