



Jardis  
F 202

## Foreward

As the many different artistic fragments of a mosaic become a composite of color to the naked eye, so too the many different moods expressed in these writings become a composite of emotions delving into the deepest recesses of the writer's mind. We invite you to read, experience and enjoy the Marist community literary efforts.



Cover illustration by Courtney Black  
Mind's Eye logo by Jen McLaughlin

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Sean Creighton  
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## **Advisor**

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To pick up a pen,  
and let the ink flow freely from your fingertips  
Creative thoughts travel from the brain  
through the nerves, jotted down on paper  
The power of ink  
The creative energy of a dreamer  
never confusing fantasy with reality  
but always getting lost in one world or the other

Leading the life of a writer  
"publish or perish," this is what the pro's say  
But do they ever get their hands dirty  
do they say, "yes of no?"  
do they see the world like I see it  
fantasy or reality?

No, they sit behind a desk  
in a big chair, with gel in their hair  
Teaching from books  
Breathing stuffy air

Sending students out into the world...naked of knowledge  
Life is strange...fantasy or reality?  
In grammar school you are taught to reform, learn to conform  
High school, much the same  
College...new scene  
Teachers take twelve years of rules, set you free,  
and send you a bill  
They tell you to express yourself freely  
make the best for yourself  
in a world of fantasy  
in a world of reality

*BRICE*

Wearing an orchid negligee  
she slipped into her dark  
royal purple sheets  
and slept alone  
in a cold room  
in a cold world.

*Patti Smith*

### **Hudson Morn**

A boat sounds silent notes  
Lurching homeward to the sea.  
The river eases in and out, in and out,  
Graveling wavelets on wintered shores.  
Crunching cubic flows, the solitary hull,  
Rejecting tide, thrusts forward.  
A swaying mast, dawn dappled,  
Splashed by dubious slivers of sun,  
Salutes a newly blued sky.

*Gerard A. Cox*

### **Shadows On The Moon**

Will you ride with me in my red balloon —  
Drift over the hills and the sea?  
At night we'll see our shadows on the moon  
Let's float away and be free.

*Laura C. Kuczma*



## "MIND"

Not something you can walk away from,  
A situation you can leave.  
It's with you always,  
everywhere.

Not easy to put away  
neatly  
in a drawer  
or a box  
safe from view

"Out of sight  
Out of mind."

Not so.

It doesn't go.  
It's hard to "Just say no"  
To your mind,  
your thoughts;  
Thoughts others hurl  
your way  
each day.

Darkness  
always seeks  
to extinguish  
the Light —  
The Light of your mind.

*By Keith Barje*

## A Rotting Corpse Looking on the Bright Side of Death

My friends are now  
    the worms,  
It's not so bad  
(like they say in the movies),  
Nothing to worry about  
Nothing to have to do  
(and I never felt so loved)  
And it really is a quiet place  
(just like Marvell said)  
I've lost a lot of weight  
(like I wanted to)  
The only thing is  
Is it's a little dark  
Oh, and a little cramped  
(but I don't mind that  
    part so much)  
And I guess it's kind of  
    lonely  
(But I always liked a little solitude)  
now and then

(But the best part is:  
I don't have to worry about  
what others think)

*Kevin Dwyer*

## Annie Orange

She was angry. She was sick and tired of always being the underdog, of always being overlooked. Her unpopularity had almost driven her into obscurity, and she was not going to take it anymore. Why had her lot in life doomed her to the roofs of Howard Johnson restaurants? People never wanted to decorate their living rooms with her, or even to wear her in a sweater. No, she was solely reserved for all the ugly things in life she detested the degrading, obnoxious Howard Johnsons the most of all. They even serve greasy food, she thought sadly.

Not being one of the primary colors, Orange knew that she had no power or importance to influence the other colors. They for the most part ignored her, and gave her all the jobs that they did not want like the flag of Ireland. Green was too nice to refuse and they just kind of stuck Orange along for the ride. She does not even like Ireland because she hates potatoes and the Irish only recognized Green anyway. She dreamed of being the vibrant American flag; Red and Blue looked like they always were having so much fun and they made a good couple. Actually she also wished for a united world where everyone could mix regardless of creed or color and they could all be a flat earthy brown.

Even in the holidays she lost out. Red, that bitch, took all the Christmas fun, even pulling her mellow Green friend away from her. Green was the only one who listened to Orange, but he never had any time for her during that dreaded holiday season. She couldn't even participate in Chanukah, blue and gold had stolen that one clear away before she even had a chance. Oh, and of course there was Easter which orange hated most of all, all those stupid young colors like Pink, that pansy and Lilac who gave Purples a bad name. Even Green got his own holiday in March. Orange was particularly upset at this because **she** was also on their flag. Well if Green was going to act like that maybe she would just quit and he could have the whole stinking flag for himself. The only holiday left for poor Orange was yucky, ucky, icky Halloween which she had to share with Black. Actually if it were up to Orange, Halloween would be a much nicer affair, it would even be in a different season like summer. Orange hated the fall, it reminded her of death with all the leaves dying. She lamented over the fact that all the Green leaves were allowed to stay on the trees but when they turned Orange, the leaves were swept away as trash. It was Black's idea to make Halloween so damn morbid. All they did on that holiday was scare innocent people and dress up in stupid, juvenile costumes. She especially hated the ridiculous jack o'lanterns. The faces on them were so stupid that if she could,

Orange would blush. Black was such a morbid guy too, always cracking off color jokes and trying to pinch her butt. It was enough to drive a person to drink, and it did.

"Why?," thought Orange weeping as she took another swig from her bottle of Grand Mariner, "why can't I be more accepted, maybe if I was more assertive. It's all my father's fault, he's so cowardly, so mellow, so Yellow. If it weren't for him I would be more outspoken and more popular." She looked at herself in the mirror and was forced to admit that what she saw was not so bad, she decided that everyone was jealous of her so they sort of pushed her onto the back palette of life.

But it still wasn't fair she thought as she shoved the mirror away. She decided to do something about it now!! She had enough Red in her from her mother to make people stand up and notice her. She would show everyone a thing or two. She made up her mind to go and talk to her mother first though to see if she had any pointers, even if she didn't like her mother too much.

Red was busy making people so mad that they could actually see her when Orange asked to speak with her. Red looked down on her daughter with almost pity. It was plain to see that even though Red and Yellow were very happy with each other Red thought their children were almost downright ugly.

"Oh dear," Red said, "I simply do not like that neon tone you've taken on today, it's much too flashy almost tacky if you want my opinion."

"Mother, I've come to talk to you.," Orange stated.  
"I'm feeling rather blue lately —

"Don't you dare talk of Blue in such a manner!," Mother admonished.

"I'm sorry," Orange said humbling herself down to a more tawny tone that was rather reminiscent of a bright burnt amber hue. "Well it's just that I feel so neglected lately. I feel like I am being used for all the yucky jobs like Howard Johnsons or Burger King uniforms. I'm even the last to go in a box of crayola crayons—even in the Sixty-four jumbo box with the sharpener. I want someone to like me."

"Oh honey, don't cry," Red cooed. "Things will be okay. Just think of all the things you do have, like Halloween. And Green is always asking where you are. He even bought you a Christmas present this year."

"Yeah and it clashed horribly with my complexion. Besides I hate Halloween, Black gives me the creeps and Green is always talking about how vibrant you are. He doesn't even notice me!!! And I'm sick of doing the roofs of Howard Johnson, their food sucks."

"Don't be so down on yourself. I used to be a sort of an ugly duckling too, we all go through our awkward stages. And remember some people with color blindness can't see me at all."

"Really?," Orange asked wiping back her tears. "But I wanted to ask you how you do it, I mean what can I do to be popular- to make all the boy colors like me? How did you meet dad?"

"Oh I met your father at the corner of Main and Maple streets. He was trying to get people to slow down, I of course was trying to stop traffic. It worked too. But I don't know what you can do about yourself. I wish you could be more like Purple, she has a lot of prestige, it must be the Blue in her." Red sighed as she said Blue's name. She always felt so alive when she was with him. He made her feel like dancing.

Orange realized that Red was too selfish to care about her dilemma. She left her mother to her daydreaming of all the pretty things that Red could do and Orange couldn't. Talking to her Mother never did her any good, her mother would never tell her why red cars were the number one stolen car, whereas noone ever, ever would even consider buying an orange moped let alone a whole automobile. Or why everyone like catsup and spaghetti sauce while noone like carrot juice or turnip casserole. Orange felt she was the ugly duckling of the rainbow. Sometimes she was not even represented in the rainbow, as if everyone was ashamed of her.

Sadly, she trudged down to the local bar the Hue Hole where everyone went to drink. Magenta was there with some of her neon friends boogying up a storm on the old dance floor. They were too flighty for her and only cared about trendy clothes and gossip. The earth tones were in their usual corner discussing politics in a low tone. Of course they were talking about all the bad things going on in the world today, but they were all secretly happy because they got to represent all the dismal things in this world, and the worse things got the more exposure they received. Orange tried to join their conversation, but they kept either interrupting her or looking at her strange when she did get a word in. Besides all their talk was just making her more and more upset.

Orange resigned herself to a stool at the bar and ordered a scotch on the rocks. Usually Orange didn't like to drink, and she did not make it a regular practice; she was just trying to drown her sorrows. She could only have half of her drink, because she didn't like the bitter taste. She decided to take a walk and look for Green, maybe he would listen.

Noone was to be found, so Orange walked by herself along the cliffs by the water. She loved the ocean. Maybe if Green had been around he could have given her some consolation. However



noone was around, so Orange stood all alone summing up her meager amount of accomplishments. Not finding anything she had ever done good enough, she drew in her breath, wiped back her tears, took a few steps back from the cliff and began running towards the edge at top speed. She did not fall directly down as a human might, but actually ran a few steps on sheer air, because she was very light. Then the wind got underneath her and an air current carried her far out and away, like a magic carpet.

Orange lost consciousness when she was in mid air. She awoke with a splat in a very bright and warm place. She did not know where she was but it felt like she was lying in some grand soft feather bed with the most beautiful pale blue canopy and the fluffiest white sheets. Orange felt very beautiful and comfortable there. She looked up to see her father, looking very brilliant indeed and Orange asked him what he was doing here.

"Why I am the sun of course.," he replied. "I've always wanted you to see my office. Don't you like the view?"

"Dad, this is great, but I don't know how I got here."

"Well that's besides the point. Your mother wanted you to come out for a visit sometime. Do you want a job? I could really use an assistant. It requires a lot of world travel.

"Yeah!," Orange exclaimed excitedly. She loved to travel and she was quite frankly looking for a new job. "Well what do I have to do? When do I start!?!?"

"Well," Yellow drawled, "It's quite easy really all you have to do is follow me around and show your best colors. We get to make the sunsets in the sky. You can start today."

Being a very creative person, Orange was well suited for her job. She made the most lovely sunsets ever and was soon the envy of every color that lived. They begged her to come back, but she would only make rare appearances on tangerines and of course her namesake oranges. Even the Roofs of the Howard Johnsons began to fade, and Orange was very content to be such a glorious part of nature. She lived beautifully forever after.

*Ellen Mooney*

## Mama, Are There Jews In Heaven?

Well, I know that people shouldn't mix, they should stick to their  
own kind,  
That's how the good Lord made it, and he must have had something  
on his mind.  
But I never really thought about it over much before,  
Till this new family moved to town, and bought the house next door.  
The husband worked up at the mill, you know, just like my Ben,  
But he was some kind of accountant—he didn't work with the men,  
And they had a daughter, too—she was kinda scrawny and small—  
Wiry hair, funny nose, no kind of personality at all.  
but she was just nine years old, same age as my son Butch,  
And they started playing together—well, I didn't like it much,  
But I didn't do much about it, just tried to put it out of my head, Until  
one day little Butchie came up to me and said:

*Mama, are there Jews in Heaven? Jerry Falwell tells me no.  
If there are no Jews in Heaven, Mama, I don't want to go.  
I just want to be with Becky, and you know it don't seem right  
If God don't hear her prayers, because I pray for her each night.*

Well, you know, that really shook me, and I saw that I'd been wrong,  
So that night, Ben and the others burned a cross on the Epsteins' lawn  
And I told little Butchie how the Jews had killed our lord,  
And how he was never to play with that little Jew-girl any more.  
And I know I'd done the right thing, and that things would turn out  
fine.

When on the spot where that cross had burned, we saw a For Sale  
sign.

We all went to church that Sunday, me and Butchie and Ben,  
But on the way home after the service, he asked me once again:

*Mama, are there Jews in Heaven? Jerry Falwell tells me no.  
If there are no Jews in Heaven, Mama, I don't want to go.  
And please, Mama, I don't want to burn for all eternity  
I just want to be with Becky, 'cause she's Heaven-sent for me.*

Within a month, the house had sold, and those Jews were leaving  
town;  
That night we called Butchie for dinner, but he was nowhere to be  
found.

And when he hadn't come home by nightfall, we organized a search—  
Ben called the sheriff in, and we got some of the men from the church.  
We started out a-looking, and down beside the water  
We found that Epstein feller, out lookin' for his daughter.  
He kinda tagged along behind us, as we searched into the night  
Till near daybreak, down by Frenchman's Bend, we saw a dreadful  
sight.  
It was in the shallow waters, in the marsh grass by the strand,  
We saw Butchie and that little Jew-girl, floating face down, holding  
hands.

Well, Jesus knows which souls to take, and He knows which souls to  
save,  
We buried Butchie in the churchyard, and put a cross over his grave,  
And I prayed to God for guidance, and I know what we did was right,  
But sometimes I still hear Butchie's voice—times when I can't  
sleep at night.

*Mama, are there Jews in Heaven? Jerry Falwell tells me no.  
If there are no Jews in Heaven, Mama, I don't want to go.  
And please, Mama, I don't want to burn for all eternity  
I just want to be with Becky, 'cause she's Heaven-sent for me.*

*Tad Richards*



## OPA

I have known only  
your photograph,  
but even more,  
I have observed  
your smile  
when laughter animates  
my mother's visage;  
her very countenance  
is evidence that you  
are present in  
our lives.

I have known  
your tears  
through  
a dear grandmother's  
meditations  
of a time past,  
riddled with  
both history and song,  
and brimming over  
with the conventions  
of a distant country.

Somehow, still I know,  
there is  
a man,  
whose heart beats  
as mine,  
whose handclasp I perceive  
only through the comforting  
touch  
of the people  
who traveled far to include me  
in their lives.

Opa—  
somehow I feel  
I have known you -  
the walks you have taken,  
the private hours you have spent,  
the written voice that reaches us  
here...  
I have known you,  
Yes, through the lives of those  
who silently hold you  
so dear.

*Desirée S. Brennan*

## Spring Sport

Students are parachuting hamsters  
From dormitory windows. "It seems  
Like the obvious thing to do."

— I —

Buy a transparent, plastic bubble.  
Unscrew it in the middle, place the hamster  
On the bottom, twist the top to close  
The hamster inside. It lifts its feet  
To walk, propels the bubble forward,  
Moves protected, in a visible shield,  
No getting lost under furniture or squashed  
Underfoot. Around and around it rolls  
In its celluloid globe; no falling off the edge  
Of this world.

Bump, bounce! Bump, bounce!  
Bump, bounce! Bounce! Bounce! Bounce! Bounce!  
Bounce! BounceBounceBounceBounceBounce  
BounceBounceBounceBounce!!!!!!!  
The hamster finds the stairs!  
Someone brings it back from two floors down.

— II —

A large bandanna, knotted at the corners,  
Makes a fine parachute for a hamster.  
Strapping tape fastens securely  
To slippery fur, ingenious harness.  
Take the hamster to the seventh floor,  
Drop it out the window.  
air catches under outspread kerchief,  
Lifts it into gliding descent.  
Just one yard from journey's end  
The updraft fails, the make-shift chute  
Collapses, the hamster tumbles down.  
Glide . . . glide . . . glide . . . WHOOSH—plop.  
Retrieve the hamster and repeat.

Willing feet push off from window sill.  
Floating into flight or fall through transparent air.  
The obvious thing.

*Judith Saunders*

## Dogmapolis

The shout of a pipebomb shakes me awake. A piece of shrapnel whistles through my window and imbeds itself in the wall. I hear the sound of running feet and the wounded cries of a boy. His wailing recedes until it is lost in the white noise of faraway gunfire.

I turn on the radio. A Hell's Angel is dedicating "Anarchy in the U.K." to his commander-in-chief. The Hell's Angels were better anarchists when they didn't know there was a word for what they were doing.

As Johnny Rotten's voice trails off, the d.j. comes on: "Rocking you with one steady roll, this is Dr. Tongue, the bastard son of a thousand maniacs and the ayatollah of rockenrolla. It's high noon, and time for Rumble Report. Megasaurus firefight action exploded this morning in Hegel Park as the National Front and the American Dental Association launched a joint offensive against the Anti-Federalist/Menshevik alliance. The siege of the abortion clinic on 910th Street and Steinman by Moral Majority crusaders enters its third week today. The N.O.W. amazons defending the clinic are threatening to use napalm on the crusaders, so steer clear. The gang war between the Black Panthers and the Hassidic Jihad is still raging full on, so consider the Lower West Side a no zone. Now, here's Don with the weath..." I turn off the radio and get out of bed.

From my second-story apartment, the victim of the pipebomb looks like a Rorschach test printed in red ink. Pigeons begin to land and peck hungrily at his wounds.

Beneath my window, an Animal Liberation pack tramples a sleeping dog while in heavy pursuit of an N.R.A. survivalist. Across the street, the Andalusian Dogs paint surreal graffiti with the blood of symbolists. In the alley, Up With People stormtroopers wearing smiley-face t-shirts lynch a nihilist from a fire escape.

I turn away from the window and walk across the room. The sound of cat bones crunching beneath my boots makes my stomach growl. I strap on my dart belt and walk down to the street.

The pigeons feeding on the pipebomb casualty take to the air when I open the front door of the apartment building. The surrealists and the stormtroopers look my way, and then look away when they see that I'm not packing heat...Unfortunately, the trampled dog has already been dragged off, so I'll have to work for my dinner.

A few blocks down the street, I see a cat chowing on a dead Shriner's arm. My mouth fills with saliva. I slowly pull out a dart, take aim, and let it fly. The cat howls as the dart sinks into its left hip, and it bolts down an alley. By the time I enter the alley, the cat is gone, but it's left behind a trail of blood.

The alley comes out in the Mormon zone. Mormons will shoot you just for picking through their garbage, so I stay as far away from either sidewalk as possible by following the double yellow lines down the middle of the road. I can feel them stare out at me from their pillbox bunkers. I hope none of them feel religious today.

Utah Boulevard becomes Engels Street, and I pick up the cat's

trail again. As I track the path of blood stains on blacktop, I hear gunfire ahead, but my empty belly, heedless of anything except hunger, urges me forward.

Finally, on the corner of Marx and Engels, I see the cat leaning against a lamppost, panting. I approach it slowly and wrap my hands around its neck. I lift it up to eye level, and it looks at me with fear and sadness. I almost feel sorry for it.

Suddenly, a mortar shell explodes in the middle of the intersection. Pieces of concrete slash my face and arms. I drop the cat and duck into a bombed-out store-front. Through bullet holes in the wall, I see the Democratic-Republicans and the Republican-Democrats tearing up Marx Avenue. Opposing cries of "Freedom and Liberty" and "Liberty and Freedom" can be heard over their gunfire. Nobody knows why they hate each other so much. Most people can't even tell them apart.

Before the two gangs can kill each other, a third gang attacks both of them. They come swarming out of a side street screaming "Give Peace a Chance," yet they're jacking up the body count something awful. It must be the Swords of Aquarius, the city's only gang of militant pacifists.

The battle ends abruptly when one of the Swords detonates a backpack bomb. When the smoke clears, no one is left standing. In Dogmapolis, this is known as a "convenience store."

I scavenge my way through the dead and dying. As I search the pockets of a wounded Sword, I realize that I recognize him. His name used to be Jake Viscous, but he changed it to Billy Jack when he joined the Swords. We used to be best friends.

His eyes opened he looks at me with mutual recognition. There is now warmth in his eyes, though; just the cold flames of a fanatic.

"Hey Jake, for a pacifist, you sure fight like a motherfucker.

He whispers to me through a mouth full of blood, "a true pacifist must be willing to kill...for peace." He closes his eyes and gives up the ghost.

I hate Dogmapolis.

I take his rations and walk off.

*Greg "Hong Kong Phooey" Petix*

## Christmas Eve

How can I describe how we feel alone  
Only as one again — moments by themself  
Where two as one had been  
Where breath and salvation, trifling and contemplation,  
Hands, warmth, foots, cold and mirth blend.

Dawn's end we sought by nest  
By womb  
As friend. Now I worry  
You're bygone: all earth,  
Wit and heaven, days, sounds  
And Silence. Whisper such thoughts untrue.  
Soothe these cares  
Tame fears.

I'll be deaf  
Sad  
And nothing cried could believe  
As you'll rest forever last  
My Christmas Eve.

*Sean Creighton*

## Sabre Dance

Dave Edmunds is on the  
stereo, guitar flashing  
Sabre Dance, too unlikely

to ignore - - "If we  
talk, will it go away?"  
asks Missy, but we're all

gathered in the cascading  
anomalies of sound, and I'm  
not taking it off. "We're getting

older," says Woody, "and one day  
we'll all be dead, and who's  
going to take our place?"

*Tad Richards*

## Friends

yes glance...  
Shall we dance?  
Don't want any wrong ideas.  
So we sit down  
And I clown.  
It's worth it to hear you laugh.  
Minds wonder.  
He can't wander.  
Where did those two go?  
Talk to me and I'll be here.  
I'll talk back, know you'll hear.  
Let them think we've been kissing.  
Hey, they don't know what they've been missing.

Hey, what else are friends for?

*Mark Miller*

## Games of the Mind

Contact between them  
on a higher level.

Understood by the mind,  
unfamiliar to the flesh.

Electric waves are felt,  
ecstasy is the feeling.

A want, a need,  
satisfied continuously.

Both have the same feelings,  
the same emotions.

Detected by one another  
they know; It is time!

Venturing from their confines,  
out to a mountain or a mystical plane.  
Maybe to Mt. Olympus or to Shangri-La.

Rain falls from the clouds below.  
Unaffected, they journey farther into the unknown.  
They are entranced and they do not want to leave.

But all good things come to an end.  
Thus they return to their earthly bodies.  
Satisfied until the next moment arrives.

*Blackthorn*



## "A Morning Spent in the Park"

It was approximately nine-thirty a.m. People were rushing on to their jobs, their homes, their responsibilities.

"People should take more time to notice the beauty all around them," Nigel said, shaking his head tragically. Kenneth and Edward nodded in agreement.

"Rush, rush, rush everywhere," Kenneth murmured. "Then once they get to wherever they're going, they've got to pick up and rush off to some other place. No one has time for the simple things in life." He signed and leaned forward, resting his chin on the handle of his oversized umbrella. The umbrella was with him always; even though the sun shone brightly now, no telling when the heavens would split and shower all humanity.

Edward held out the Thermos bottle. "Would anyone like more coffee? There's still a few cups left."

"I would, thank you," Nigel said.

Edward poured out a cup and passed it down to him. They sat there, on their bench in Central Park. They sat near Strawberry Fields, the section dedicated to John Lennon. Now and then, a young person with long hair and starry eyes would come by and leave a flower or a message there. These were the polite ones; they always said a courteous "good morning" to the three of them. Sometimes they'd even stay and chat a moment. Nigel was of the opinion that these pilgrims were interested in them only because they were English and still retained their accents. The pilgrims probably assumed that these old gentlemen had known their idol in his lifetime. But it was nice to have someone new to talk to.

"Where would you like to lunch today?" Kenneth asked. It was five minutes to ten. "Any preferences?"

"Our preferences are one thing," Edward said dryly, "but our finances are quite another."

Nigel took "their" wallet—it was regarded as community property—from his pocket and counted the crinkled bills. "We have fifteen dollars and forty-two cents."

"Hmmm," said Kenneth, "I suppose that will One of those 'fast food' establishments?" "Bleah!" exclaimed Edward. "Not if we can help it. That gristle is death to my ulcer." They shrugged and sighed. Nigel replaced the wallet within his vest.

"Look at me," Nigel said quietly. "Three Distinguished Service medals in the war, and here I am. Old and decrepit, living in a low-income housing unit, presently sitting on a park bench in New York, attempting to decide between Burger King and McDonald's."

Kenneth patted his shoulder. "Nigel, be sensible! It's not as bad as all that. You've still got all your wits about you. Your health is excellent for a fellow your age. Things are bound to change for the better."

"Of course they are!" Edward joined in. "No telling what we can



do, given the proper circumstances." He nodded. "Better times are still ahead, for all of us.

This morning was no time for self-pity. The sky was an incredibly perfect bright blue. The few clouds that were out were billowy and soft white. The grass and the flowers practically hummed with life. The park was beautiful, but no one seemed to want to stop and look. What a pity. Edward reach behind him and plucked a rose from a bush. He carefully snapped the stem off and put it in the buttonhole of his worn (but clean) greatcoat.

The usual morning activity buzzed about them. For lack of anything better to do, Kenneth had placed his hat about five feet away from their bench; they were now tossing playing cards into it. Their eyes were still sharp, and they managed to get most of them into the hat. At eleven o'clock, a rather impatient young jogger knocked over their hat as he rushed off to wherever it was he had to be.

"I beg your pardon!" Kenneth shouted after him. "I believe you've knocked over my hat."

The jogger stopped, panting, and turned to glare at them. He continued to glare as he walked back to them.

"You say something to me?" he asked

Kenneth was short, but he drew himself up to his full height. "I did, sir. I asked you if you would be so kind to pick up the hat which you have knocked over."

"Oh. Damn, I'm really sorry about that." With exaggerated politeness, he righted the hat and put the cards back in. Then he straightened up and took out his wallet.

"Why don't you old guys get yourself some jobs, huh? I hear McDonald's is hiring seniors." He took out a crumpled dirty five-dollar bill and threw it in the hat.

Nigel, Edward, and Kenneth stared aghast at the hat. It was an abomination! Disgusting! They raised their eyes at him, still staring.

"You're welcome," sneered the jogger. He began jogging away.

Kenneth stood and helped Nigel to his feet. Nigel picked up his specially designed walking stick. Edward adjusted his coat, and they followed the jogger.

They caught up to him soon. He was walking slowly, clutching his side.

"Oh dear, a stitch," Nigel tsk-tsked.

"They are terribly painful," Kenneth sympathized.

"Well," Edward said quietly, "they won't be a bother for long."

Kenneth held his umbrella as if he were "presenting arms." When they were close enough, Nigel harrumphed loudly

The jogger wheeled around. "What--"

Kenneth brought his umbrella down squarely between his eyes. The jogger nearly passed out, dazed. He mumbled thickly, "You..whas goin' on..."

Edward and Kenneth grunted and puffed the man over to another bench and forced him to lie down. "Knock hey, what are ya

doin'?...knock it off--"

Nigel pulled on the handles of his walking stick, unsheathing the sword. He had bought from a frenchman in the War. The blade was fine, similar to an icepick. He neatly pricked the man at the back of the neck. The man began to gurgle. They waited. It was over quickly.

Kenneth closed the man's eyes and put the man's hands over his heart. He pulled at the man's legs and managed to get them onto the bench. The man now looked as if he had fallen asleep after a run. Edward found the wallet and riffled through it.

"There's more than a hundred dollars here," he reported.

Nigel was taking deep breaths to get his wind back after his exertions. "Greed never helped anything, gentlemen. Leave about thirty dollars there, and put it back precisely where you found it." The policeman who was interviewing them was young and plant, with blond hair and freckles. He was very respectful as well.

"Now, gentlemen, you say you didn't hear or see anything unusual? No, uh, suspicious characters?"

"No, sir," Nigel replied truthfully. "We saw no one unusual."

"Do you think that young, er, dark fellow we saw earlier might have had something to do with this murder?" Edward questioned the other two.

"I believe, Edward," Kenneth said gently, "that he was of Latin descent"

"Oh, that fellow!" Nigel gasped. "Good heavens, yes! Do you know, Officer...yes! Now that I think about it, I think that man has been here almost every day a murder happened!"

"Nigel, I do think you're right," Edward said, with a ponderous expression. "Yes, doesn't he wear a huge diamond on his right hand?"

Kenneth nodded enthusiastically "Yes! Yes, that's the chap! With a huge diamond."

The policeman made a note. "You think maybe this guy has done all of them?"

"It's very possible," Nigel said firmly.

"Well, it's not a whole lot to go on, but it could help. So you saw him today? Can you give me a description?"

"He was young," Kenneth Then he beamed at the young man "I think he was about your age!"

The policeman grinned; these old guys reminded him of his own granddad. The old guy lived up in Vermont, and he didn't see a lot of him anymore. Maybe he should call him up...no, better still, he ought to drive up for a visit.

"Yes, young," Edward continued. "With, er, long dark hair."

"And he was wearing a red T-shirt and black jeans," finishing Nigel. "Oh, and he had a lot of those large gold chains. The kind young people seem to favor these days."

"Incredible, isn't it," Kenneth said, shaking his head. "These

young fellows are always complaining about how poor they are, but yet they can afford those chains. How can they do that?"

The policeman grinned, "My sergeant wonders that too sometimes. O.K., gentlemen, you're free to go, if you like."

"Thank you very much, officer," Nigel smiled. "I do hope you find this criminal"

Kenneth and Edward helped Nigel to his feet, and they carefully made their way out of the park

"Our financial situation has improved somewhat recently," Nigel murmured. "Any new suggestions on where to have lunch?"

"What about the lovely little French restaurant over on Tenth Street?" Kenneth asked. "It's so picturesque."

"That's a fine idea!" said Edward. "And now, we've enough for both carfare and our meal."

"No, I'd rather walk," Nigel said. He took a deep breath of the fresh spring air. "It's such a pleasant day, and there's no telling when the weather might change."

Kenneth tapped along the sidewalk with his umbrella. "You're quite right. Lovely day today."

"Oh yes," agreed Edward. "It's exceptional."

"You see, Nigel?" Kenneth grinned, poking him in the ribs. "We were right. Things are beginning to improve already."

They proceeded down the street.

*Lara Weiczczynski*

## Cathleen Ni, a dhiabhail.\*

Put down your sword, Cathleen.  
Enough lives have been taking for a dream never to be seen.  
All four pieces are forsaken to  
Wish us dead.  
Skies are crying. The seas are blood red.  
Children are dying over what has been said...about their  
memory.  
Again we fail, without minority.  
What have you done, Cathleen?  
With four and four; twenty six plus six makes one??  
But have you seen the clash of colours?.  
Bombs at funerals?  
Black flags burning?  
IRA on the urinals?  
How come, Cathleen?  
There are tattered bodies against the wall?  
Where is your fourth parcel, hag? What is it called?  
600 year legacy of unrelenting hypocrisy.  
Cu Chulainn is dead, a slave to the faeries now, for trying  
To chop off the wave's head  
Oh the sky is bleeding.  
Dead hearts are beating  
And forgotten souls rot.  
While the innocent are shot.  
All around immortal scoundrels stand upon pedestals, high.  
Larger than life...in death.

and the children remain swans.

\* a dhiabhail (a yeaw-ill): you devil (Irish).

*Ed McEnaney*  
4/89

A cushion of smoke  
Carrying me  
High,  
Above the city of  
Blackness and hate.  
Carrying me  
Higher  
To drift among the  
White vapor  
And to sail to the  
Orange moon,  
Burning me up to a  
Handful of  
Kaleidoscope dust.

*Robin Buckley*

It was night. There were stars.  
There was the speedway. There were cars.  
There were hills standing silent. There were trees.  
There was wind. There was temperature, lowered by degrees.  
I was there. I saw it all.  
No raging voice had I. No madman's call.  
I knew the night. I counted the stars.  
I ran on grass. I climbed a tree.  
The wind wept in loneliness. I answered its plea.

It was night. There was the moon.  
It smiled with green teeth. It laughed like a loon.  
There were other places. Different sights.  
I had to go. I needed to see it all.  
But I was not meant to. My destiny, she did not call.  
I ran on the grass. I climbed the hill.  
The houses were empty. A cat in a window sill.  
The wind wept. The tears fell from the tree.  
I hung myself. For all to see.

*Andrew Moraitis*



## CRISIS

The rain falls, a great man cries,  
In the streets flow blood, a baby dies.  
My heart is breaking, confusion on my mind.  
Insanity rules the world, I cannot leave this behind.  
Now right now, not just yet.  
The challenge is there, the challenge is met.  
I feel responsible, I must answer,  
To this dirge I am an unwilling dancer.  
My enemy hovers at the edge of my perception,  
He knows he is the object of my obsession.  
Perseverance will champion my cause  
When my enemy is vanquished the world will pause.

*Conrad Pierre Mauge'*

## Your Living Room

A paled worn green  
carpet covers  
the floor that snuggles  
neatly into the panelling at every corner,  
(white washed and faded).  
The couch where Aunt Mary often sleeps  
(the cats get the bedroom)  
higher in the middle than on the sides  
but very soft  
smells like Christmas  
(when we used to lie  
and fall asleep together).

*Kevin Dwyer*

## The View From Where I Stand

The swelter of midsummer had made it much too hot to work indoors. Those that had foresight had left the city to escape the heat, but I \_ not lacking foresight \_ but rather, money, was forced to remain. The meager stipend which I had to subsist on at the university was enough to get by, but I could not afford any luxuries, like going to the country.

The sun would rise high enough to make the city uncomfortable by ten in the morning. I would be gone from the dorms by half past nine and on my way to Washington Square Park. I had to get there early if I wanted to beat the crowds and get one of the prime spaces to sit, one of the steps surrounding the fountain. The park was deserted in the early morning and I enjoyed the peace and quiet that this afforded me. The fountain was turned on shortly after I arrived and great clouds of mist floated on the warm, summer breeze, coating the pavement on the windward side of the fountain with water. As the sun rose higher and the ground warmed, the water began to evaporate into little wisps of steam.

About eleven, the pushcart vendors began to arrive in great numbers for the coming lunch hour. Usually the park was the destination of office workers who came on their breaks to escape the heat, and today would be no different. The ever-present hot dog sellers arrived first and stuck their claims to the most-valued spots. After them came the shish-kebob men with their giant charcoal grill carts and thick clouds of gray smoke that stink of burnt flesh. And finally, almost out of the reminiscence of my parents, came the Good Humor ice cream men with their orange and white carts with pictures of their ice cream on the sides.

At around twelve, the first people began to arrive. Most were just passing through the park on their way to some other place, but some came to sit in the cool shade. Office workers began to arrive and lines formed at the food vendors. Lunchtime conversation and the sounds of eating and soda cans hissing open drowned out the soft noises of the birds chirping and the distant city traffic.

The sun rose high in the noon sky and beat mercilessly down on the city. All of the office workers, in their warm gray suits and dresses, retreated under the trees to sip yogurt and eat tofu and bean sprouts. I watched as the men took off their jackets and threw them over the backs of the benches. Their linings were black and glistening with sweat and they turned to talk with their coworkers and tried to be as interesting as they could while wearing shirts transparent and sticking to their bodies with perspiration. The women, in turn, ignored the fact that their underarms soaked through their blouses and attempted to be alluring while either talking about the sneakers they were wearing or the health clubs they belonged to.

I chuckled at the humor of it, but my game was short-lived because, as one o'clock neared, much of the noonday crowd went back to where they came from and left the park mostly-deserted again.

I tried to return to my writing, but I was blocked and I threw my pencil and pad down in disgust. I looked around and noticed an old man who sat a few feet from me, down near the water's edge. He was bald





and wrinkled and his face bore the look on someone who had seen much of life. His shirt was missing a few buttons, and the ones that it had were sewn on from something else. His pants were tattered and patched and he had a pair of dirty, brown socks balled-up in his shoes, and these were placed next to him, I could feel his piercing eyes boring down on me.

"What're you doing, boy?" the man asked in his dry and harsh voice.

"I'm trying to write a story...sir." I said, adding the "sir" so as to not offend him and cause a confrontation. It was much too hot for that.

"You know," he said as he stared at his feet soaking in the fountain. "Growing old really sucks."

"I wouldn't know." I turned back to my work, hoping to end the conversation there. Perhaps he sensed this and decided not to let me go so easily.

"Are you going to be the best?" he asked.

I stopped writing and looked at him. "The best at what?"

"The best at writing, or whatever it is you do with yourself!" he snapped. As he spoke I could smell his foul breath and watched his mouth as he talked and was nauseated by the blackened decay of his teeth.

I looked down at my pad, resigned myself to the endless interruptions, and signed. "I hope to be."

"You can hope all you like," he said. "But until you are the best, it won't amount to shit."

"Oh, I don't know," I said and smiled. "I do pretty well for myself."

"You're always going to be alone, then? Eh?"

"I don't plan on it."

The old man laughed, then began to cough violently. I took the opportunity to retreat from the conversation and resumed my writing, but it continued to prove difficult. He was doubled-over from his coughing and when he stopped he looked over to me and saw that I was writing. Out of the corner of my eye I saw him turn from me and he stared into the fountain and began talking to himself.

He was quiet after a few minutes and seemed content to just sit there with his feet in the water. I assumed that he had had enough of talking to me, so I continued with my work. The time passed quickly, and I began to get thirsty in the hot afternoon sun. I put aside my pad and began to fish through my satchel for my change purse to get some money to buy a soda.

"You wouldn't happen to have any change to spare, would ya?" he asked. He must have heard it jingling in my satchel and there was no way that I could say no.

"Sure," I said begrudgingly and slapped some quarters down on the step between us "Go get yourself something to drink."

"God bless you." he said as he picked up the change and walked barefooted over to the nearest cart and bought two sodas. I thought of getting up and leaving while he was gone, but he kept his eyes on me and I knew I would feel guilty just leaving him there, so I stayed where I was.

He came back and sat down in his spot and put his feet back in

the water. he handed me a can of soda and struggled with the flip-top of his own. The can hissed and foamed as he opened it and he gulped a mouthful before talking again.

"I was like you once," he said. "Self-centered and selfish. But that comes with youth, and, hopefully, dies with it too."

I looked at him and said nothing, embarrassed because I knew he was right.

"I suppose it's only natural that you want to squirm away from me like you do. know I would if I were you."

"What gives you that impression?"

"Get off it boy!" he snapped. "Do you I think was born yesterday?"

"Well, no." "All my life I've seen people like you run away from or ignore people like me. In fact, I used to make fun of bums, too. Before I became one."

There wasn't much that I could say, so I said nothing.

"I had dreams, too, when I was young" he said. "But then I didn't realize that that's all they were, and that I'd have to work my ass off to get them. I believe then that I was special \_ better than anyone else \_ and that my dreams would just come true. I was wrong. I learned this too late for it to help me, but you're still young and there's hope for you."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Never forget your dreams, boy. Keep and cherish them, but always realize that they're not going to come true unless you make them. You have to force the world to meet your needs, because it won't do it all by itself."

I was thinking about what he had just said, and he snapped me out of my thoughts when he next spoke.

"Don't forget you have a future, too Plan for it. It's more important than the present because that's where you'll be spending the rest of your life. I didn't think about that then, and look at me now."

"Doesn't the government help you?" I asked. "Don't you get Social Security or something like that?"

"Not if you don't have an address."

"Isn't there anyone you can life with?"

"Would you want me to move in with you? No, neither would I. I've no friends, no family, and anyone I knew or loved died long before you were ever born."

I felt sorry for him and wanted to reassure him, but realized that there was nothing I could do or say that would make him feel better.

"Nothing," he said to himself. "When I'm dead \_ which won't be too long from now \_ I'll not have left even one single mark on the world. No one will ever know that I was here, or am gone, for that matter. No one." He put his socks and shoes back on and got up to leave.

"You know that's not true." I said and reached for my pad and opened it to a blank page.

"Yes," he with a wink and a smile. "Why else would I talk to a writer?"



## **The Masked Man Finds His Place In The World**

He lives where  
things used to be,  
where sons have no beards,  
daughters have no breasts  
He is flattered like an opossum  
almost every night,  
crossing the super highway  
where apple trees  
and tufts of grass once protected him  
from smooth hurtling cars.  
He loses his money regularly  
visiting where his friend Jake used to live,  
now a supermarket.  
He remembers the Sea Horse,  
the Academy Theater,  
the Black Swan,  
the Little Red House  
of Gifts,  
the Garden of Eden.

*Tad Richards*

## From Zero to Ninety

I am a thought, a dream, a wish,

I am living and breathing tissue,

I am reality

I am in college,

I am married,

I am a father,

I am a father of a father,

I am senile,

I am still,

I am a memory

*Blackthorn*

## Controlled Insanity

Again  
it initiates itself  
touching all of my sensibilities  
bringing forth  
goose bumps winters that numbs me.  
And somewhere  
outside this reality  
a marigold is unfurling  
reaching for sunshine  
while the rest of my global siblings  
tune out these possibilities

Still  
I can feel it ascending  
within  
reaching a perfect crescendo  
a testimony that attest  
to things yet to come

And while  
I sit in the absence of sound  
frolicking with the square keys  
the adventure begins  
where life seems to end

Again the pieces to the jig saw  
lies scattered  
and when laughter spills from  
pale, dry lips \_ I wonder at  
where it comes and touch my lips...to silence...

*Michael J. Love*

- phrases of deeper meaning...
- (1) meditating in the darkness, no one else is aware...
  - (2) there's something about a motorcycle that makes me  
want to glance at the rider...
  - (3) the ocean slurs its tidal waves  
against the molten rock  
only to leave a frosty foam  
for the seagulls to dance in

*Andrea Preziotti*

## **In The Winter**

In the winter,  
The trees poke through the thick gray clouds like needles  
And rip them open,  
Letting the liquid sunshine  
Spill like silver over the hills and the houses.

*Laura C. Kuczma*

## **Graffiti**

The neon-colored words  
Scrawled across the  
Cement walls  
And  
Abandoned apartment halls.  
The rainbow-colored  
Wills of the  
City children,  
Silently screaming to be heard.

*Robin Buckley*

## Sword of Aquarius (extended club remix)

A blue sky smiles down on me. It is like a blessing.

Every nerve in my body is charged. My aura flares like a new star. My thoughts originate from a small burning point in the center of my brain. I am focused. I have never felt this lucid.

From the top of the radio tower, I see a woman lying on the grass, reading. I want to yell down to her. I want her to know that she's making a mistake. For I too have hidden behind books, and they have only kept me from action. I have let words distract me for too long. The letters, the speeches, and the demonstrations have accomplished nothing. How long can I scream into the face of apathy? How long can I prophet of Aquarius, but Aquarius doesn't need any more prophets. He needs a sword.

Below, the R.O.T.C. cadets march onto the lawn, their brass buttons twinkling like the eyes of snakes, yet their white uniforms seem as pure as a clean conscience. Where are the dirty tears of Vietnamese children, the blood of Nicaraguan mothers? Their uniforms show no evidence of their horrible crimes. I will chance that now.

In my gunsight, the cadets march like toy soldiers. My cheek rests on the cold steel of the rifle. My finger caresses the trigger.

I will bring peace.

*Greg Petix*



## Sunday

It was a Sunday morning like any other. Slipping in quietly, Joe leaned slightly forward in his pew, anxiously looking over the bonnets. He was hoping to catch a glimpse or perhaps a scent of any one of the poised women who sought the work of God this invigorating April morning. The last strains of "What Will We Promise, What Will We Give?" released with emphatic vibratos of "Amen" and indicated to the Pastor the moment he had arduously prepared for. There was brief shuffling of chemise and leaves of paper while the congregation anxiously sought guidance from the upcoming sermon. "Grace be unto God..." the pastor's voice rose over the fussy children in the rear of the church. A few mothers raised cautioned eyebrows and an old gentleman snorted, startling in awakening.

It was then that Joe spied her. Diagonally across from him, two rows ahead, there sat the most exquisite mortal he had ever laid eyes on. Her bonnet sat high and black, higher than any other hat dared sit, and its broad brim proudly maintained a mountain of raven feathers and lace trim. He could not quite distinguish the color of the hair that escaped the concealed bob pins, but it was wavy and produced a spray of various hues from the descending stained glass light that enveloped her.

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed on and triumph, as it did among you, and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men; for not all have faith..", The pastor read a passage from Thessalonians, while Joe nervously strained to see more of the gentlewoman. Her deep set dark eyes never moved from the sermon; they seemed almost in a perpetual state of daydream. What could she be thinking? Was she really listening, or was she immersed in the reverie of a summer night passed in ecstasy? He wondered.

He noticed she had a somewhat pointed chin, and approved. This allowed support for a carefully outlined and naturally pursed mouth, which was on the brink of a possible smile. If he stared hard enough, he thought he could imagine the scent of her pouring into him, fulfilling the delights of youthful cravings.

He caught a movement in her face as thin lined dark eyebrows slightly raised, but he could only see a portion of the high forehead sheltered by the shadow of the hat's brim. Her nose posed no interruption, it sat as if almost blending into the rest of her turned face; mere shadows for nostrils. Black lace partially enveloped her high ivory neck, parting in the middle, plunging with delightful naked skin to the mid point of her small breasts where an inviting, casual knot was positioned. Occasional black tulip-like design sprinkled the sheerness of the rest of the shawl which smoothly concealed both back and slightly slumped shoulders, descending somewhere behind her. A floor length ivory peasant



gown covered the remainder of her upper and lower delicate frame. Arms in her lap, ivory hands delicately crossed, Joe could imagine a spring of lilac peering out between both hands which obligingly held open the small hymnal in her lap.

"But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from evil.." Joe would guard her from any evils. There need be no Lord above to do it, he challenged silently, interrupted by the rise of voice in the man of the cloth. He could envision her in multiple precarious situations, where he, the dashing champion, would deliver her from any debauchery. Her honor would be his paramount concern. But first, how to convince her to walk with him after the service? He would hold her delicate arm in the strength of his own, stopping occasionally in his unravelling tales of self, to guide her eye to the beauty of opening blossoms along the roadway. She would laugh lightly at his earnestness, letting go sweet breath into the graceful morning air. She might carefully remove her black hat and bob pins, unfurling her long hair to the sunlight's pleasure, then leap happily on the support of his sound frame as they strolled.

Roused from his personal revelation, Joe stumbled to his feet at the last words of the Benediction, making his way dauntlessly against the bustling shouts of "Good morning..Oh, yes, it is a wonderful morn! How are the kids? And Thatcher's sick sow...?" Joe finally reached the pew she was still occupying, and let go a feeble, "Emily. I've come."

"Well, it's about time, Joe," she remarked pointing a bony, accusing finger in his face, strands of silver hair loosed from its bun. "Lord only knows how much blasted sleep a husband seems to need come Sundays. I shoulda known you'd be dozin' yer dern life away..." she continued but, Joe had turned off his hearing aid. Sighing wearily and stroking his brow shakily with a handkerchief, he then eased her decrepit frame into the wheelchair. As he bent awkwardly to position her gown, he could smell the familiar mothball fragrance from her bonnet mixing with his own Old Spice.

"I promise I won't oversleep next week, Emily.." he vowed ineffectively as he wheeled her slowly out into the glaring sunlight toward home. The final chords of "God Moves In A Mysterious Way" serenaded only a few Sunday stragglers. "Blind un-belief is sure to err,/And scan His work in vain;/God is His own in-ter-pre-ter,/And He will make it plain..."

*Desirée S. Brennan*

## oh richard

oh richard  
because of richard  
stumbling over everything  
mistaken for lovers  
you've lost focus  
judging books by their covers

oh richard  
deceitful richard  
he's got two faces  
he'll spread his wings for you  
pulling into his trap  
thinking the illusion is true

poor richard  
such a very shallow man  
understand him if you can  
he can be so very nice  
or he can be as cold as ice

don't be fooled by his game  
he can be so very clever  
thinking that he's sincere  
and never leave you ever

oh richard  
beware of richard  
he is so hard to see  
so vacant and evasive  
his purpose can be devilish  
and incredibly persuasive

poor richard  
such a shallow man  
understand him if you can  
he can be so very nice  
or he can be as cold as ice

Art Gusmano

## A Made-Up Man

You know not what I do,  
How it is to live on the other side.  
Yet, the other side is  
as fantastic to me  
as the "Normal Side" is to you.

I soar in my beaded gown,  
with my platinum hair  
and electric studded shoes.  
I entertain, not put down,  
those who do not understand.

For you wonderful pink people,  
full of warmth,  
who do accept and care...  
all our deepest love  
which pours from our hearts  
like syrup  
and sticks to you  
in a sweet frenzy...  
You are all the more human,  
all the more real.

You POOR SOULS,  
who do not see,  
the real beauty...  
the real essence...  
in me.  
You whose hearts are shriveled  
like a burnt crumb.  
The ones who judge me,  
when I'm in all my glory;  
but befriend me,  
when I'm in your costume.

In reality,  
my world,  
is the same.  
It looks different with all it's  
Brilliant bright lights...  
It's neon signs...  
The night spots...  
where your acquaintances go,  
whether you know...  
or not?  
They are there,  
and it may surprise...  
Oh no, but its not to cry,  
The world has changed,  
such as man...  
In a made-up world,  
lives  
A Made-Up Man.

*Jason T. Suttle*



## The Cat Burglar

I have lived in the city all my life, and I have never had the desire to live in a more rural area, but I did on one occasion visit the country and hence this story.

My father, mother and myself had an apartment in Queens, New York. My grandmother on my mother's side had come to live with us because she was unable to live alone and we couldn't afford a nursing home. She was a strange woman who was perpetually afraid of someone breaking in while she was asleep and stealing all of her worldly possessions.

My uncle Joe on my father's side had a farm in the country and he invited us out for the 4th of July. Normally we don't celebrate the 4th of July because it doesn't mean much to us. I mean, it's great that America won its independence and all, but we weren't there so why celebrate? (of course, one might argue that we shouldn't have celebrated Christmas either, for the same reason, but we enjoy getting gifts so I guess it's a selfish holiday).

Anyway, uncle Joe and Aunt Ruth and cousin Emma and Grandpa lived on the farm and invited us out so we decided to go see them. Grandpa on the farm was on my father's side, so it's not like my grandparents were divorced. My great-grandparents were separated, but that's not quite the same.

I was fourteen at the time of this visit, so when I got to the farm I immediately focused my attention on cousin Emma. Emma was seventeen and to say that she had come into her womanhood was an understatement. She had steeped gracefully into her femininity like a ballerina might pull on her tu-tu just before a big presentation of "Swan Lake" or "The Nutcracker Suite: or something like that.

Anyway, cousin Emma came bouncing out to the car with her halter top and her short shorts and her wonderful womanhood spilling out all over, and my attention was instantly funneled to her. That, sadly, is the way of the adolescent male, so some of the story had to be filled in by my father, because I missed it, being preoccupied watching Emma.

The first thing we did upon arrival (after the usual "It's been so long," and "My, haven't you grown"), was make the sleeping arrangements. It was decided that my parents would sleep in the attic room and Grandpa would take Emma's room. Grandpa, who usually slept in the attic, said he'd sleep in the hayloft in the barn. When that met agreement he started off to bed but stopped when it was explained to him that bedtime wasn't for another four hours or so. He grunted and said he was just going to investigate the loft to make sure the hay was satisfactory. Last of all it was decided that Emma and I could sleep in blankets on the living room floor. Everything met my approval quite nicely.

Emma and I walked around the farm a little and she showed me the barn and the hayloft and all the animals. There were some sheep and goats and pigs, but mostly there were cows. For my part, I missed all of it. Like I said before, the human male in the throes of puberty is a sadly inefficient animal.

It was later, during dinner, that I got my first look at the family cat. It was a very large tiger cat, kind of orangeish with black stripes (hence the name "tiger" I would expect). Emma explained that Mo (the cat) had a habit of sleeping in her room at night (which didn't seem like a bad idea to me, either). That's why all the trouble started.

At about 9:30 we all decided to go to bed because we'd be rising very early; Mom and Dad climbed to the attic, uncle Joe and aunt Ruth went to their room, Grandma retired to Emma's room, and Grandpa went to the hayloft with a triumphant "Hasn't been four hours yet!" Emma went to the closet to get

our blankets and soon I was watching her fall beautifully asleep.

A short time later I heard a soft "meow" from the door and I let Mo come in. He immediately went to Emma's room for some rest. He jumped up on the dresser and I heard the soft clanking of various cosmetic articles.

Grandma immediately woke up, and, thinking it was a cat burglar (she was half right) she threw the only thing within arms reach—her shoes. For some reason women always throw their shoes. They could be on top of a gravel pit and if they needed something to throw they'd take off their shoes and hurl them at whatever the annoyance was.

Anyway, Grandma's first shoe made quite a crash, and her second shoe hit the target. Mo let out a scream that sounded absolutely human and bolted from the room.

Emma jumped up and I watched, enraptured. Mom, Dad, uncle Joe and aunt Ruth all came hurtling (as well as they could) down the stairs. Uncle Joe grabbed his shotgun and let a blast go through the window after the fleeing "burglar." Then he went down under a barrage of senior citizen footwear. However, his shot had startled the cows and Grandpa. The latter, believing that the herd was beset by rustlers, let go about four blasts with his gun, stampeding most of the animals, killing two, and breaking a lantern that started the barn on fire. Uncle Joe was out cold and the other adults were all shouting at each other to be quiet when Emma glided over to the group and melodiously stated that it was the cat that started it and the barn was on fire.

My father immediately went to put out the fire and aunt Ruth went to calm Grandpa while Mom and Grandma stayed with uncle Joe. When he came to he was slightly enraged (that's a contradictory statement, I realize, but he wasn't entirely enraged, it was sort of mild, hence the contradiction). He had lost at least two-thirds of his livestock, half his barn, and Grandma had knocked him out with a shoe.

We haven't been invited out to the farm since. I did see Emma once. I was twenty-one and she was twenty-five and pregnant. I was glad to see that she was beautiful even without the derangement of adolescence to cloud my vision. We talked for a while and then parted, both of us chuckling about the night we had a cat burglar break in.

*Paul A. Lawrence*



## Love Dwells Within

My house is my lover –  
it waits silently through  
each and every hour,  
quietly certain  
that I will return  
with some evidence  
of my affections...  
A broom, floor wax,  
a scented candle,  
caulking, a mouse trap,  
potting soil.

I know others inquire  
where it is I go,  
so hastily, all aglow  
when dusk sets in.  
I know they long  
to peer within and chance upon  
our love making.  
But I secure the doors  
and windows and draw  
the curtains taut.  
I will not allow  
a division between us.

We consummate our love  
from twilight 'til dawn;  
I lie sweetly embraced in the  
comfort of my lover's wooden  
enclosure and I awake  
satisfied with the night colognes  
that still mingle on  
my naked skin.  
Rising reluctantly, I lovingly  
smooth out any wrinkles  
between us.

Whatever clutter I  
might leave behind  
is a tender disorder  
that lingers while I am  
away. (We do not quibble  
over the trivial).  
For tonight, I may return  
with a firewood bundle  
and we will luxuriate  
collectively  
in the conflagration  
of our affections.

*Desirée S. Brennan*

## Master

You be me  
I'll be you  
You slice  
I bleed  
You're the flame  
I am the wax  
You deceive  
I believe  
You don't understand  
I can't explain  
You pour the poison  
I shall drink it

*Janet DeSimone*

## Spirit

Sounds drift off the river,  
memories float to the sky  
as I sit here thinking, of You and I.

The wind blows...  
spirits rise – up off the waters  
and dance in a circle  
...making waves with their feet

The night is still  
the spirits dance,  
the river's rough,  
Their wild dance.

The church bells ring  
I open the door –  
There, I see, on the alter, you lie.

The spirits have come to give you a name  
of which You'll rise to glory and fame.

I kiss your feet...  
my hands sweat  
I endure the torment  
of the deceased prophet.

*Robin Martini*

## Sad Beneath the Tree's Blanket

Tiris looked, resisted and remained. Hid beneath a neighborhood of leaves, brown, yellow, some wet others dry, he clothed his -self from existence. Behind the blue boy's, blonde-eyed eyes was a brain full of angst; anxious to bounce out, break the barrier he built, and pride the airy energy of youth clouding his warmful lungs. Instead he hung there, on the ground silent. Nothing but his storm brewed.

To open his eyes: would courage then overcome the past he saw? Give him a tempest of force to rid those men from whom he hid. He never did. He wanted to cry. He did. And saltfilled taste, sublime, brought memories of his mother again. And he mourned and he cried and he stayed, rotting in the puke of his own foul breath. This brought memories of his mother again. How she choked on the men's same foul breath ever-moments: and pitifilled she coughed again, and like Christ she waned under the hands of ignorant men, prayerfilled, hopefilled, and watching, as her face her faith bled, watching the diseased goals of men plug pipes in her arse, and suck gold from her breasts. Tiris knew the men knew her death. And he cried.

Sad beneath the tree's blanket, ever-sounds he heard where internal: like the banty, eatish fume, tearing, drilly, excavate, searching for more something, anything in the tissue-walls lined stomachs-high. "Allwhere!" the menish gases mewd and the gashy men marred as his mother woke and slept and woke and slept and woke and slept and woke and moaning! melted, by old molds told new: "Ouch'erts!" Sad below the tree's blanket, her blessed boy burried bellowed thoughts and licked his hallowed, hulled Mum.

*Sean Creighton*



## Fathers

I always loved the zoo, watching the moneys fly back and forth from one branch to the next, holding cups up to the glass that they desperately try to grab. Today there were a few new-born babies there and the mother was battling other females for possession. I asked an attendant about it and he said it was because they were taking the baby so she would have time for herself, to clean herself, eat, maybe catch a movie or something. The other gals would gladly give the baby back once she had quieted down.

I wondered where the father was and looked over at the guy monkeys hanging out in the corner, probably talking about last Sunday's game or something like that, maybe kicking a few nuts around later. I wondered which one was the father and why he wasn't over there helping his gal out.

I went to the circus yesterday. Mrs. Williams took me and the rest of my brothers and sisters. Nine of us. Kind of a strange number when you think about it. Most people go for an even dozen, or a lucky seven or even a flat-out ten...but I guess Mom and Dad were happy with nine.

Well anyway, we went to the circus and had the greatest time. I love the clowns, just watching them work for a laugh. Isn't laughter supposed to be the best medicine? I wonder if that was what Mrs. Williams was thinking. We all laughed at the clowns and I decided that's what I wanted to be when I grew up. Making people laugh and forget their problems had to be the best. Imagine that feeling of hundreds, of thousands, of people laughing at something you're doing, something that you want them to laugh at.

A couple of days ago Mrs. Logan took us all to the amusement park. It seemed like all of Mom's friends were taking turns with the crazy, fun-loving nine. It was a hard week for Mom. But the McKennas dropped off a steaming lasagna one night and Mrs. DeLeo sat and played spoons with all the kids another night while Mom kept busy, calling people and getting calls, signing checks and hurrying from one thing to the next. Throughout it all, she stood strong. I don't remember her crying at all. I don't remember me crying. What a long strange week it's been.

I did feel a little sad at the amusement park. Dad and I had always done the bumper cars together. It was weird getting into the car and not knowing a single person around me, not seeing Dad breaking the rules and turning around in his lane to ram me head first. I just drove aimlessly, getting bashed over and over again. I guess all these fun things were suppose to make us forget the funeral. It didn't work. I wonder what Mom was doing at home.

I remember back in July just before our trip to Maine, Daddy went into the hospital. The trip had to be postponed. We all kind of bummed around that summer, waiting for him to come out. He didn't.

I went back to school and somehow everyone knew. Mothers must have told their kids to "Be nice to Billy. His father has leukemia." That word always seemed to be said so quietly, like we were in a library or something like that. I mean, he wasn't dead yet, people. I mean, I didn't care if you talked about grandpa or anyone else. They WERE dead. But not my daddy.

But it was hard to visit him in his little room in the hospital. First of all, you had to be sixteen and none of us were, none of the kids anyway. We had to hang out at home, get the news from ma every day about what new nurses were hanging out with him and what new pain Dad was enduring. Occasionally we had our special visitation rights put into action and the nine of us would pack into the car and head off for the hospital, each going into the room one at a time to have a short bonding session with Dad while the rest got

to sit in the waiting room and check out the magazines. Once I found these really cool toys by Fisher Price. Man, did I want them.

When you went in the room, Mom acted as the prompter. Dad was so small and skinny and pale. He wasn't supposed to be like that. No Dad was. Mom would look dumb, trying to pull us into a "normal" conversation. But it would usually end up with something about "Billy, tell Daddy about your last soccer game." And I'd ramble about my two assists and my major screw-up, not passing back to the halfback who had open field everywhere and instead, stupid me, centering way too early but that's what these leagues were for, Dad said, to make mistakes now and learn. I guess he was right.

I mean, I had learned so much since the first year my father had entered me in soccer and the coach put me at center fullback. We'd hang out and play in the dirt until the other team came running down the field and all the parents would start screaming. "THEY'RE COMING!!!" We would get up and brush the dirt off ourselves. What was the big deal. So they were coming. Didn't Dad say it was only a game?

So Mom would prompt a little more and I would stutter a few sentences about my bad attitude in school and how little Terry, my gal, was doing. Terry's great. We hung out the day my Dad died and had the best time. He's been out of the house so long, it's almost like we've been getting ready for him to leave and do that "everlasting" thing.

Terry and I had the big problem of figuring out that everlasting thing. I mean, how could it work? She was the only outsider there when Mom told the crazy nine. Terry was practically the tenth anyway.

I had been jumping about the house to my brothers' Beatle album but I quickly calmed myself down. Dead. That evil word leukemia, said so quietly everywhere, had changed to another whisper, a shorter, colder one. I turned around and walked out back. Terry followed me.

We sat on the back swing for the longest time, trying to see what this would mean. But there's no way I could see that then. We talked and talked; we seemed to be two of the deepest third graders I've ever heard of. But mostly we just sat in silence and watched the sun go down, swinging back and forth, squeezing hands. It was a mistake for all the Mrs. Logans and Williams and DeLeos to make me try and forget that. Dad was dead. There was nothing else to it...and only Terry and I could fully understand the wonder of that moment.

Here I am now, some twenty five years later with an English degree from Ohio State, a soccer scholarship long gone buy my coaching days at their peak. A thirty-four year old father of three, in top physical shape for so long, just laying here day after day.

Terry brought my youngest in, how cute she looked in her little dress and pigtails. She had gotten all dressed up for me. It was only so often that we did see each other these days.

"Come here, honey. Give Daddy a kiss." She pounced upon me but stepped back, somewhat cautious, on her best behavior. I wanted just to hold on to her, show her how much I loved her...but I didn't want to scare her.

"Go ahead, Elizabeth," Terry prompted. "Tell Daddy about the zoo."

*Mark Miller*



## no longer lost

hey little boy where have you run  
to where are you now for there's  
a ball and a swing, sleeping in  
the yard but you don't play any-  
more hey little boy where are you  
now and what are you doing, for  
your mother is calling and crying;  
her little boy's a man see  
the picture, the flash of a camera  
hey little boy remember me, i don't  
see you in these shadows but i feel  
that we've met and did i ever tell  
you that brothers love? come to me  
softly, i'm having trouble sleeping  
and trouble dreaming i need to be  
reminded of your presence - am i  
blind are you near i'm turning  
madly in this world. could you be  
lost? well i can't believe you're  
being put to rest today, dust to  
dust was to be several miles down  
the road from where we dreamed of  
heroes and of being men. i believe  
in you, in your love and your dreams-  
no matter where they lie you down  
i'll love you because you are no  
longer lost.

*Andy Moraitis*

## Welcome to Arizona

Looking at the faces  
    and the one with the forced smile.  
Gleaming grin with teeth so white  
    yet eyes so preoccupied.  
Almost as if she's waiting  
    for someone to rescue her  
As she and the others pose  
    around the "Welcome to Arizona" sign.

Figures frozen still  
    but she can move  
Or at least she wants to  
    raise her face to the turquoise sky.  
Looking for something she does not have  
But what is it?  
    that she does not have.

Don't know.  
But she does look somewhat content  
Almost as if she's used to it.

*Jen McLaughlin*

## River Past

trickling down over the rocks  
a running faucet to the world  
bathing fertile soil  
later on i join my brothers...  
Adam and Eve frolicked in me once  
Indians of yesterday have spun legends around me  
i am home for the salmon  
a fountain for the deer  
a reservoir of beauty for man

*Andrea Preziotti*

## The Hunting Instinct

Wolves cry out in the night  
A howling call, a screaming cry,  
An instinct borne of blood.

Greeting each other in low growls,  
The animals paw the pebble studded ground.  
The wind carries them up heat and  
blood scents from the coyotes below.

Bodies stiffen, and pulses quicken,  
instincts sharpen, and appetites ripen,  
like thunder.

Silently agreeing, they begin their swift descent  
On feet that fleetingly pad the earth,  
Down trails, passed on for generations.

But now they must cross the freeway first.  
Unexpectedly, a Death Rider,  
clad in plates of Detroit Armor, mowed  
down a straggler.

The coyotes sleep on peacefully,  
the danger never told.  
The pack mourns the loss of a brother,  
but still leaves the fresh kill on the road.

*Ellen Mooney*

## The Surrender

Is it really feasible to lose one's mind? For one to totally sever that thread-like line that keeps one connected to reality. To abandon all relations dealing with the norm of society. To encase oneself in some sort of self-created delusion whereas the only crisis faced would be contained on one's mind. To struggle day in and day out with the chains that have imprisoned your thought process; a fetter you chose to lock. Losing touch with the world's sober existence, and journeying to a land that is much more intense; a place where darkness is prevalent, and icy tunnels try to misguide you; sway you from the route of recovery. I must admit that this world can be quite an exciting place, one where boredom is practically null. You see, many people look at madness as a disease. However, I rather fancy it and look toward it as something of a cure.

I once knew intimately a woman of such impressive disposition. Isabelle Sarah Masterson was her birth name, but Madam Eye it became as time moved on. Although I have yet to find out the meaning behind this puzzling nickname, I do suppose it will remain with her for life, if only out of sheer habit. There always was a certain air of mystery surrounding her, so in essence, the lack of definition behind her pseudonym fits in quite well with her whole personality.

Madam Eye was a shadowy vision of beauty; physically, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally. Her auburn hair cascaded down her delicate shoulders, framing her ivory face like it was an artist's masterpiece. Her eyes were the castle where her true spirit resided. They were a lustrous black. Those eyes were as deep and as rich as the bogs found along the countryside. They were wild like the stallion yet tame like a household canary. Her neck was long and slender, much like her exquisite hands. The provocative pout of her lips could bring warmth to the largest of icebergs, reducing it to a mere snowball. I surely have not done her a bit of justice by my mortal and meager description. Though I've tried abundantly to describe her freshness, you will never understand or appreciate this wonder until you've met Madam Eye.

The particulars of our relationship have become somewhat fuzzy. But, I will try to muster up as much of the circumstances my recollection will allow me to. I can never forget the memory of unity, the feeling of utter contentment I had when she was near. We were one soul bound together by chains of contradiction. Madam Eye embodied every quantum of passion and love I was ever able of bestowing upon another existing spirit. Our path seemed to cross at the strangest time. I was doing some research for my dear friend Edgar, who was working on another one of his dreadfully haunting, psychologically terrorizing stories. I was in the psychology library at Oxford, terribly fascinated by the newly published manuscript of Freud's latest work, when she appeared.

"Excuse me sir. Would it be alright with you if I shared your table?"

I was so enthralled in this vision of beauty that stood before me, that the words spoken seemed to escape my understanding.

"Sir!? Are you feeling a bit under the weather?"

A trance beheld my mind. All I could do was stare into the blackness of her pupils.

"Are you going to faint? Would you like me to get you a glass of water?"

Her face was veiled with anxiety. "I'll get a doctor!"

Finally my comprehension level returned to normal and I was able to drudge up a sentence. "No-no. That won't be necessary. I'm quite good, thank you. Please, sit and join me."

"Thank you. I was quite worried about you for a moment. I thought I



had witnessed a sudden death before my eyes. What a horrible event that would have been."

"I imagine so. Dreadful. Simply dreadful."

"What a brilliant man he is."

I looked around the library and saw that we were isolated from society.

Who could she mean?

She was quick in sensing my confusion and clarified her statement.

"I mean Dr. Freud."

Why of course that's who she meant. I had to get hold of my senses. I was losing my thoughts due to this ravishing lady.

"Yes, he does have an extremely fascinating intellect."

"So, why are you in this part of the library? Just reading up on Freud for the enjoyment?"

"I am lending a hand to a friend of mine. Doing a bit of research for the dear chap."

Suddenly we were thrust back to reality. No longer were we the only two people in existence. A third sign of life appeared and contemptuously scolded us for breaking the vow of whispering.

"I'll let you get back to your research. Sorry to have disturbed you." She acted as if she was the sole cause of our reprimand.

This was my chance, my massive opportunity. I suddenly was overcome by a strong urge to grab this flower in my arms and delicately plant a kiss on her fragile petals. I would never do this to her, because she was much too much of a lady to even subject her to such lewd behavior, and quite frankly, I would never have the nerve for such a daring act of passion. However, I had to do something. I could not let her escape my affections, and my time was quickly dwindling. I might never see her again. I couldn't go on then with life, never having attempted a move. There was something that attracted me to her, like ivy to a wall. I totally disrobed myself of familiar character and took the leap. I stuttered immensely, but it was finally understood by her that I would most enjoy her company for a cup of tea.

We sat for quite some time sipping tea and nibbling on biscuits in a quaint little cafe, that had quite a bit of coziness about it. We conversed about most every topic imaginable. Archery, government, German streudel, Machiavelli's "Belphegor" and classic cognacs were just some of the conversations we delved into. She could dabble in any subject one brought up. Such a learned woman she was. She would talk on any social, economic, or political issue occurring in the world, yet when asked an occasional personal question, she would stop talking, avert her eyes for a moment, and start up again with a different subject to remove attention from herself. There were a great many things I failed to learn about her, but that didn't seem to matter. For the things I was knowledgeable about, such as her kindness, her free innocence; the way she lived life, was far more precious to me than any other personal history could ever have been.

For two reasons I shall not bore you with every last detail of the union of each event that we shared. The first being that I must plead guilty to a lack of total recollection (be it a self-induced memory lapse or perhaps a drug-induced one.) And secondly, the memories I can recall would only appear trite and hopelessly romantic to one who didn't experience them. They would lose their vigor and freshness in the translation.

As rapid as my dream became truth, it was just as quickly shattered. If only one had the power to predict the path the present will take. For then and only then could things have been modified into perfection. My love and I were sitting by the Thames River, basking in the glorious sun of our sixth month pre-



nuptial intimacy. We were savoring an extravagant French wine. Aliens to all outsiders. Then the stranger invaded. (I actually find my adored one and Mr. Koma's acquaintance most ironic since it was I who initially introduced them to one another.)

Ah, Mr. Ulysses Ronald Koma. I was surely no stranger to this gallant knight who had obtained medals of countenance. Ulysses was a dashing man, not quite resembling his age of thirty-three years. He was kind and sensitive; never even daring to think a bitter thought about anyone. I can continue praising him or proclaiming him god-like, but it isn't necessary. I could like it to be known that Mr. Koma and I are the antithesis of one another. He incorporates every quality I most admire in mankind and so enviously long to imitate, but can't due to fear. I used to dwell on my inadequacies quite often, but since meeting Madam Eye, all my shortcomings no longer mattered. However, now it seemed that every seed of confidence she planted in me has blown away.

As he approached our blanket, intimidation burned through me like a comet shooting across the sky. I introduced them, and Madam Eye was quick to invite him to join us in a glass of wine. They stared at each other, in much the same way I had stared at her upon our first encounter. The difference being, she now returned his passionate eye contact whereas, I don't believe she ever returned mine.

I've cursed that day ever since. After their meeting, Madam Eye and myself started having difficulties. I was lucky if I was able to see her twice in one week. And when confronted with coy excuses, I tended to become slightly inflicted with paranoia. It seemed the more I pursued her, the more she longed to liberate herself from my dotting clutches. I decided to make a visit to my love and beg for her hand in wedlock.

"Hello my dear." I moved to kiss her hand, but she gracefully slipped away.

"Good day," she said with a bitter chill in her voice.

There was a deadly silence that covered the room like a mourning veil. It lasted for what seemed like infinity. I decided not to delay this any longer. I should just ask her. So, I blurted out, "Madam Eye, I adore the air you breathe. I would be most honored if you would share my remaining years with me."

It was obvious by the loud gulp she made that my statement had startled her and made her most uncomfortable.

"My dear friend, I think it is time we had a talk. I've wanted to talk to you before, but I was afraid you'd be destroyed." There seemed to be some warmth returning to her voice.

My stomach ached from the knots being formed inside it. "What is the problem my love?"

"We've shared many splendid days together, and those days can never be forgotten, but I can't marry you."

The ache increased to an excruciating dolor.

"I will always feel a great closeness to you, but the intense feelings you have for me, I can never return, for mine belong to Mr. Koma, I am terribly sorry. I never meant to bring you sadness."

I was suddenly hit by a large burst of acrimony. "You can't just walk away. We've shared so much, you have to give me a chance. I will love you immensely."

"Would you really want to marry me if I could never return all your affection?"

"I can love enough for both of us."

"That wouldn't be fair. In a union, each member's feelings must be shared, otherwise the two people will grow in resentment of each other. I do so



want to spare you anguish. You are a very special person, and I hope that we can be close friends."

My head was throbbing, waiting to explode and let my frustration ooze out. Round and round in my head circled the same phrase - I can't marry you - you - I - marry - CAN'T. no! - No! - NO!!!! I could no longer stand this suffering, so I stormed out of her flat without even looking at her one last time. As I have already mentioned, the seventh month of our relationship was surely showing signs of deterioration. I suppose secretly I possessed the knowledge that would always forbid us from extreme blithe, yet I refused to behold the dastardly truth. This suppression of my affection led me to extreme obsession. I should have seen this coming. Mr. Koma is a pillar of strength, honor and integrity. I was nothing greater than a feeble shell, afraid of courage, intimidated by truth; destined to rely on help extracted from bourbon and rye. Now I ask you: What chance does a man of my disposition have against a man of such moral decency? Quite a slim one I should like to add, especially considering it was a romantic competition.

After two weeks of trying to channel my idiosyncrasies into more concrete affairs, the obsessions I tried desperately to lock away, found a route of escapement. I became consumed with wanting Madam Eye to share her love with me, instead of Mr. Koma. My concentration diminished, and every original idea I painstakingly conjured up was soon replaced with notions of her. My intuition told me to let it go. Block it all out! But, it was far beyond release. I found myself constantly hiding in the bushes by her flat, waiting to watch her return from her evenings with Mr. Koma, I'd follow them, staring hatefully at the two of them as they gallivanted around the town, oblivious to the scorn they've instilled.

This situation was taking quite a toll on my health. My face was transformed into a long, sunken-in mask that hid my eyes in hollow craters. My diet consisted mainly of bourbon and tobacco smoke with the exception of a few pieces of dry toast that my companions would force me to digest. I'd pace the night away, for as soon as I dared to shut my eyes, their voices were heard, laughing gaily together, in a land of total bliss. I also avoided slumber, afraid Madam Eye would call me, agreeing to my proposal, and I might sleep through this joyful opportunity.

My close acquaintance, Edgar, could no longer stand to be a bystander in this gradual suicide. He beseeched me to see a professional who was more apt to deal with such disorders. I fully disagreed with him, but in an attempt to humor him, I obeyed his wishes. I do not wish to dwell on my session with the recommended doctor, so I will make this as brief as possible. He advised me to forget all the voices I heard, block out every thought remotely connected to the situation, and start life anew. Advise that was music to the ears, but a shattering noise to the mind. I then graciously thanked the good doctor and bowed out.

Even during my obsession, I always held tightly to a glimmer of hope, longing for a fluke to occur, enabling me to capture her heart. Alas, my dream has finally been extinguished. Two months after Madam Eye and Mr. Koma met, they were wed. I even witnessed this infuriating event, as I lurked in the choir loft of the chapel. She had finally met the one soul deserving of her love.

After their wedding, I became a slave to the darkness. The days got darker and finally merged with the nights. I refused to take my daily walks, the ones I used to so enjoy. I kept my curtains drawn at all times and refused to greet friends (how scarce the amount had become.) I no longer wanted to live life if I couldn't live it with Madam Eye. There was no reason to feel the sun on my face, to smell the lilacs (she was so very fond of lilacs), or to breathe fresh air. I much preferred the stale, smokiness of my room.

I suppose there is a point leading up to madness and then there is the abyss. In a final resolution, I chose to end my life. I would choose a poignant way

of death. A scene that would remain with Madam Eye for the rest of her years with Mr. Koma. I chose to finally open the door to my coffin and venture out of the tomb I had created. I paid a visit to the dear newlyweds, who had been married exactly three months on the day I chose.

At this point in the story, I'm sorry to say, but the specifics become very blurred. I can remember the feeling of comfort and ease I felt while I was riding in my carriage on the way to their house. I can vaguely remember standing in front of their love nest; a gleaming acute blade held in my right hand. I slashed my left wrist first, not going deep enough. Some redness trickled out. I cut at it again, this time I succeeded. A watery-red fluid emerged, flowing freely. I then took the red-stained blade and poked at the other wrist. The first attempt was successful. For a few moments I watched the blood ooze out of my flesh and drip down the sides of my wrist. I started to feel a bit queasy, so I journeyed toward my destination, and knocked on the door. Before I could knock again, I was staring into the luminous eyes I once knew so well, the eyes of the woman I loved and lost. The white door frame was now streaked with the contents of my life; my wasted love.

The one thing I do remember most vividly from that night, was the horrified visage that radiated from Madam Eye's face. I reached out and touched her face (the fearful glare that protruded from the bluntness of her eyes.) I slid my hand down her face and across her neck. Her face was stained with redness. She could cleanse her face, but she will never be able to cleanse her soul. She will carry my blood around with her forever. She opened her exquisite mouth in an attempt to cry for help, but she was so stricken with terror that sound escaped her at this moment. The events after that get extremely cloudy.

The next thing I remember is waking up in a stained white room, filled with a fetid odor, and I was quite unsure if I had succeeded in my attempt at freedom. Shortly after my awakening, a solid, rather large-boned woman came in and forced me to swallow two tiny blue pills, although I couldn't put up much of a fight, being that my arms were bound by some sort of cloth concoction.

I'm not exactly sure how long I've been here. It's not all that terrible though. Actually, I rather enjoy it. I get to rest quite often and receive a good amount of those blue pills. They help ease my mental suffering. I'm not expected to live up to a societal level here. There's no pressure.

However, I do find one thing very distressing. The way those intellectual eyes probe me; observing me once again. They think I don't notice them. Those damn fools. The eyes are now joined by another set. They would pry into the very essence of a man's psyche - if they could. I long to sleep now. Once I settle down, the eyes will find a new specimen to invade. I like to dream; dream about the redness, the stained door frame, lilacs, and Madam Eye's face full of terror. But, for now, I must dream away reality.

*Janet DeSimone*



## handsome

Can you see me  
i'm so devilishly handsome  
i wonder if you can see me  
so many things i can be can you see

did you see me  
i was dressed in the darkest gray  
trapped in oppressed seclusion  
a depiction of utter dejection  
could you see me

i have lost my horrible shell of black  
and brilliant on the inside  
open you eyes and see  
the resurrection of such  
a handsome man

oh such a handsome man is a pleasant sight  
so devilishly handsome

can you see me  
i am your mother's pet  
everyone loves such a handsome man  
a boy at heart  
so devilishly handsome

i have lost that horrible shell of black  
oh so brilliant on the inside  
open your eyes and see  
the resurrection of such a handsome man  
oh so devilishly handsome

oh so devilishly handsome  
brush the petals from your knees  
so very handsome  
blinded by my smile  
such a handsome man  
oh so very  
so very very  
so unbelievably handsome

*Art Gusmano*



**A Mosaic  
play  
sculpture  
created  
by  
every-  
body**

(Inscription taken from the mosaics at Victor C. Wayras Park,  
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.)

Special thanks to The Mind's Eye, for without them there would be no  
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