



The Literary Arts Society

The Mosaic

Soul Searching

Spring 1999

A Brief Word From The President

Soul Searching is a Mosaic the Literary Arts strives for each semester. We have art work, pros, poetry, and photos from all across the campus. You may also notice we are adding Alumni to the Mosaic. Please enjoy Soul Searching and the large variety of works it has to offer.

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“Viking”

By Sue Goodwin

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UNCONSCIOUS FEARS

BY MELISSA BICHUN

LAYING THERE SO QUIETLY
SAFE FROM THE WORLD AROUND
THE BLANKET COVERS YOU FROM EVIL.
THE EVIL THAT CREEPS INTO YOUR HEAD

AND OUT THROUGH YOUR DREAMS.
IT SHAKES YOU AND YOU WANT TO LEAVE
BUT YOU'RE STUCK IN YOUR HEAD AND CAN'T GET OUT.
AS THE MONSTER CHASES YOU.

YOU JUST KEEP RUNNING
BECAUSE TO YOU IT ISN'T A DREAM.
YOUR LIFE IS IN DANGER
AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHO CHASES YOU.

AND HE'S JUST ABOUT TO CATCH YOU
WHEN REALITY CRASHES IN.
SOMETHING AWAKES YOU
IT WAS ALL A DREAM.

OR WAS IT?
AFTER ALL THEY SAY DREAMS
ARE THE FEARS
THAT WE BURY IN OUR UNCONSCIOUS.

For Asangla
Sumit Deshpande

A rainbow bright in the Eastern sky
Wouldn't be, if not for the rain
The joy in our hearts has more meaning
Because we have gone through much pain

Light is appreciated further more
By one who has known darkness
Happiness is never taken for granted
By one who understands sadness

Wisdom is received earlier by those
Who are patient and humble in heart
Your future is in the hands of a loving God
Your life...is a work of art!

Gently and carefully He moulds you
Adding the color and the hues
Your life is a song He loves to sing
And He is always in perfect tune

The caterpillar rests in its cocoon
Being changed and transformed within
When its time to fly
She breaks free from the shell
The struggle giving strength to her wings

So spread your wings and fly
My beautiful little butterfly

The Evening Songs
Jaime L. Smith

*You lost your pick beneath the trees.
Unrecoverable...*

*And how will your evening songs
lose themselves? In the darkness?*

*Such clear lyric and melody—
They must travel*

*upon the air for miles. I will not
Stand devoid of song, the offering*

*Of your crystal voice, the damp leaves
smell of autumn dew upon the grass.*

To me you bear no relation. Warm lining against my cold ego,

*And my pride folds in upon itself—
The cold breeze steals into my emptiness.*

*The stars
Have such a distance to fall.*

*Cold and forgotten—
Your voice brings them back.*

*Your gestures envelop me,
Soft and human—*

Through the sable air of an autumn evening.

The Solution

by Jamie Veley

i long for a solution. my lover seems to have found one; he kept telling me that violence is the solution. i begged him not to inflict violence and pain on others, perhaps i was naive to believe that he would not destroy himself. my mind is creating images as if it is playing a film and all i can do is pray for a commercial. i stare at the television, only i do not see it. instead my mind wanders back to my lover; today, he had decided, would be the day - a day i will never forget. he had made me promise not to watch, as if i wanted to.

my heart feels as if it is lodged in my throat. how can i sit here while the man i loved is alone, all alone except for the pistol he had purchased this morning. we had talked for hours last night and he had convinced me that this was the most rational thing to do. if he was right then why do i feel so damn alone? people constantly ask me if he's lost his mind and all i can answer is that i know i've lost mine. what will people say when they discover he is no longer?

my mind is telling me to use the phone and help my lover, bring him back to me. my heart seems to speak louder; it screams to leave him be, he knows what he is doing. lately, the depression had swarmed him like a tidal wave and he was unable to yell to the lifeguard... or perhaps the lifeguard just didn't bother to respond to his pleas.

my internal movie continues to flash in my mind, with no pause in sight. i lay on the floor, shaking with fear; unable to control my body... like a seizure. the fear and depression takes me over. i am too wrapped up in my own movie to hear the news report on the television.

"Tonight city police found a dead body. It appears that the victim turned a pistol on himself and pulled the trigger at least 6 times; this is one of the most violent suicides police have seen in years..."



Get Well Soon

Sujey DeCoo

Hush.

Don't say a word.

I know how you feel.

I've been there before.

Just come stay with me.

I'll comfort you.

You don't have to say a word.

I'm here for you.

Close your eyes

Feel my caress.

Lay your head upon my lap.

Relaxes.

*There's nothing outside that can't wait till
later.*

Let the world melt outside the door

Nothing exists but you and me.

I'm here for you.

Remember that.

I'm here for you.





Adaptation of H.R. Giger's *Li*
E. DeTraglia

Excerpts from: Leave it to Chance - Shattered Realities
Book 1 of the Magnus Rising series

By Daniel M. Reiser

How I am fighting to regain my life, to once again take control of a life that has taken control over me. I am fighting to take it back, I am fighting to get back to you. I am no longer going to move, I will stay in one place for a period of time without the fear of moving on. I was able to conceal my absences during high school and it has never happened to me in front of my high school, only close friends back home, and now in front of my new friends here. I know they will be hurt by what I have concealed from them, the lies I have told them, and the secrets I have kept from them. I hope that they forgive me. When it happened I saw the confusion and fear in Sharon's soft brown eyes, as the vortex took me, I saw Ian reaching out, risking everything, trying to save me from something that is as much a part of me as his own arm. He tried, I have to say that, without any restraint, he tried to save me. If only I told them, if only I shared with them the truth, but now it is too late, and they may never trust me again. I only hope that when I return from this world, to my home, I will explain and they shall understand why I had to keep the secret, I was protecting them. They will understand the things I have seen and accept me for what I am. This hope is what is keeping me alive right now. This hope is what is pushing me further. It might even be this hope that is forcing me to face my destiny, giving up all dreams of a normal life. In my drawer is a letter addressed to all of my friends, it will explain a part of the life I live, and wit will leave the numbers of my kin and friends that know of my secret, and deserve to know where I am. I will never give up and I will try to make it back to you all. My family, my friends. It is so difficult being torn between two worlds, two realities, two universes. I am a man, that because of fate, as born to the wrong reality, a reality I call home, yet do not belong the very same. Where my heart is, is where I call home, that is where all I hold dear resides. Unfortunately, the Other-world needs me. I was supposed to be the one that would bring about the destruction of the demons, but how could I when I lived a whole reality away.

Celeste

By Heather Clarke

The full moon and mellow streetlights tossed shadows across the quiet streets. They played on the young woman's crazed mind and made her see things that were not there. She jumped at darkened ghosts as the pounding of her feet became the only noise echoing about her.

Terror wouldn't let her think rationally because she was coming. She would come and take Alethia's life away. Everything she had built up would crumble if Celeste had her way. Tears of frustration streamed from her eyes.

She couldn't keep running like this. No matter where she went. No matter what she did, Celeste would be waiting there to take everything from her. Everything Celeste could never get. Alethia didn't have the energy anymore to fight her.

Turning a corner Alethia tripped and landed hard on her right knee. Painfully Alethia regained her feet and felt warm liquid run down her leg, soaking her jeans. But that pain would seem as insignificant as a gnat if she lost this fight. To lose this fight would mean the very end of her existence.

As she stood she caught her reflection in the storefront window. Dark eyes stared fearfully back at her. Pressing her palms against the window, she leaned forward to stare deep into her eyes, into her very being. *"I am real. She cannot destroy me. I have done what she never could!"* Closing her eyes, she leaned her forehead against the window. *"I must fight."*

The words to a Beatles song played in her brain like a broken record. *"Help, I need somebody. Help, not just anybody."* She began to chant the lyrics over and over again, as she pounded the window. Before she knew what she was doing she was chanting a new song, *"Still shackled to the shadows, they follow you, they follow me..."*

Alethia realized what she was singing and screamed, pounding the glass harder. Celeste's taint was reaching for her already. She had to be

strong. But as she opened her eyes, every sense in her body told her Celeste was coming. She could see her in her eyes.

"No!" Alethia screamed.

She turned to run but Celeste's voice whispered to her. "You can't run from me. I am here to take what is rightfully mine."

With all of her effort Alethia managed to answer, her energy already fading. "No," whimpering, "this isn't fair. I did what you could not. I should be here not you!"

Alethia felt Celeste's rage, "I made you!"

Whispering in pain, in disbelief, "No..."

Darkness. *"I am fading. My world is coming to an end. Why?"* She could not believe how fast she had lost this battle. It had been so easy to take over at the beginning. Darkness closing in to swallow her whole.

With all her might Alethia fights Celeste, but she realizes it is a desperate battle. Celeste has waited a long time for the perfect time to do dethrone Alethia. Alethia manages to scream before her world comes to end.

Brushing her hair from her eyes, Celeste looks up at the full moon. She hears footsteps running towards her, but for the moment she doesn't care. She has taken back what is hers and she is happier than she has ever been. She must treasure this victory for it was one that was won after much hardship.

The footsteps came to a stop behind her and she knew instantly who it was. Without looking from the moon she smiled. A smile that probably chilled the women next to her to look upon.

"Are you alright, Celeste? I heard a scream."

"I'm fine. Let's go home."

Celeste turned and followed her friend back home. Her friend slowed down to match Celeste's limping walk, as she favored her right leg. She would have to clean out the wound later.

MAN**Jeannette Deskiewicz**

Man I love this world
and the life I'm living in it.

This crazy, crazy world
where you can go out with a good mood dude
and be having a luscious, fluffy-pink-cotton-candy-kind-of-time
then watch the scene go halter-skater-hectic
when his unknown-until-then girlfriend-kind-of-gal
walks through the door.

Man, I love this earth
and all the funny making-life-a-joke stuff that goes on in it.

Man, this wild, wild earth
where everyone is so different,
yet so the same
and lives are more intricately woven
than the finest of crochets
and you can sit back in the black of night
and laughingly say
oh man, what a day, what a day.

A SURFER'S ROOM

By Sydney Darling

I awake in the morning light:
soft blue walls,
Marley's words,
surfer's soul shining through.

I love the feel
of the morning breeze
on my bare
uncovered shoulders,
his reassuring arm
wrapped around my waist.

I love the sound
of his sleepy breathing,
occasional conversation,
helpless cough.

I love his room.

Walking Through the Light

By Jennifer Knobloch

Through the shadow of rumors, I stand at your side.
I walk through their beatings with nothing to hide.

With your hand on my arm, and your heart in my soul,
I can deal with it all; I'm the one in control.
Yet I cry when you leave me, I'm shattered and split.
And try as I might, the pieces don't fit.

I can't fight without you; you don't seem to care,
The sin that you're burning is the letter I wear.
I hear their laughter and I stifle my screams.
I'm plugging my ears while they're stealing my dreams.

Through the rainstorm of rumors, I cling to your side.
I crawl through their beatings and I try not to hide.

Breaking Down

By Maria Schiano

To cry to deal with a heart broken by another, I turn my back to the world. My body is convulsing in an effort to stifle my tears to be quiet, but they are still wet and moist as they streak down my cheeks. I can't think of anything else and the sunny day outside isn't helping my melancholy, save for drying my face. I can't let anyone hear me or find me. I am hiding from sight, for I must cry by myself in dignity. I put all my trust in him and the hope that he brought no longer secures me. I didn't know where I'd be without him and now I am in the midst of nowhere. I didn't know what I'd do without him, now I don't want to do anything.

*I will not sing because I'm not good enough.
I will not hum because I don't like bees.
I will not walk because my legs feel sore.
I will not crawl because I'm weak in the knees.
I will not shout because the birds will mock.
I will not climb because I don't like trees.
I will not explore because I'll probably get lost.*

He was the sunrise that I woke up to every morning. Now the sun is setting into pink clouds and a purple haze. I thought that he would be there for me. Just the thought of seeing him made me get up out of bed with a spring in my step. If my insomnia ever goes away, I dream to go to sleep for a hundred years and never awaken unless he wakes me with a charming kiss. All night long I yearned for him to cure my loneliness. Now it is too late to turn back home. I couldn't wait another minute to be with him. Tomorrow I'll be waiting for the train.

*To get ready, I used to rush
To meet him again one more time.
I may have been obsessed.
I doubt it was only a crush.
I thought I had found my soulmate,
The person I traveled the globe to find,
And he was just around the corner
By a dream-like twist of fate.
I shall never be that lucky again
For fate does not last forever.*



“Statue”
By Joanne Parent

i'm not yours

By Katie Baronowski

friends, that's what we used to be, but no more.
you made a mistake, a joke, that i just can't forgive.
caring too much for something, someone you can't have.
strong hands holding me to you, feeling your heart beat faster.
slight touches that make me jump with fear.
looks that lovers should share, ones that i do not return.
an ear is what i gave you, but you wanted/want more.
you want me, but you can't have me, i'm not yours.
i say "stop!" but the pain continues, is it all a joke?
your jokes have become my pain, and i am not laughing.
i do not want to hurt you, for i see that you are already in pain,
but for me, for my life i have to, so that i can continue to love.
it stops here, now, forever, so that you see that i am not yours,
and i never will be.

I can't look in mirrors. The eyes that stare back are not my own. The lips form smirks and grins. I hear laughter and I cannot stare any longer. I had wings once, full proud wings. Till one day what had I done to deserve this?

Now I hide behind slick hair, a few threads of cloth and where did my wings go?

By James A. Rovello



Cross Bearing Portal Jumper
By Daniel Reiser



“Mother”
By E. DeTraglia



*Angels guide earth between now and forever
On the course of God that is always right
Amidst the maniacs in the human machine
and the rarely special or harmonic family environment
Heaven is wise sweet love, safety and security
earth thinks it is prisoner to its naked rebellion
of the authority of love
but can discover fortitude from
The life of a Son
That is about Quality and
Love that lasts more time than
fire and water wind or art
culture and color knowing or having*

By Heather A. Suydam

Funeral March

By Donna Jackson

Falling flailing flying failing
Fortune's fancy gone astray
Fumbling bumbling tumbling down
Fancy fortune wouldn't stay
Luck be a lady Lady Luck
Lucky foot from rabbit buck
Lucky left foot
Left foot right foot
Left foot right foot
March salute
Sieg heil Hitler
Heil Hitler heil
Hail Hitler hailstorm
Hammers at their heads
Beating pounding crashing crushing
Stopping ceasing never never
Never fail Fuhrer
Fervent Fuhrer fury
Fury at they
Who are not us



Inspired by the Sandman Comic's "Dream"
By Heather Clarke

FAST

By Sydney J. Darling

We're here right now, the party's raging.
We're young and strong and beautifully aging.
We're happy, we're free, we're careless souls,
with nothing ahead but the Golden Road.

And maybe we've had too much to drink,
and maybe our heads are too crazy to think.
And maybe this feelin's a little too strong,
and we may have held it a little too long.

Yeah maybe, but all in all it's been fun...
the memories and the times to come.
She sings the song of summer's sun
and we pass it 'round until she's done.

But trouble lingers behind our eyes,
a fear that cannot be disguised.
We silently worry that this won't last
cause time is moving uncontrollably fast.

Darkness!

And the Light awakens

Cold as I feel, tears and sweat making runny lines down my cheeks

And I feel the cold from within

Above!

And the sky awakens

The light of the sun makes thin, dust-filled slants that lance throughout the room

And I feel the warmth of the sun

Ahead!

Trendy winds are blowing, and I fear for my artsy-ness

Perhaps the people at Vassar have one up on me

And I feel the heat of the competition

Below!

The dank, dirty smell of the Hudson wafts up to my nostrils

And they flare with the flavor of the Sheahan funk

And I feel queasy from this rag

-Anonymous



+



=



Kiwi Equation
By Rob Casinghino

2000 Years

Jaime L. Smith

It was me; I saw the flashing light, the white strobe
of God, and I was afraid to move toward it,

It was me; I ran in panic, ran toward the trees, (it's black in there) I
trembled beneath the pines that blot out the sun,

It was me; I walked along ice-slick railroad tracks,
jumping at the last second time after time
after time after time

It was me; I stood on the bridge, gazing
at the water, feeling frozen pricks of
knives as breathless I sank to the bottom, and

It was me; I turned my back on the river and
sought other ways to define myself
to uncover my identity,

It was me; I drove cross-country seventy-two hours to find out if I
had a vision or you had a vision or he had a vision
to find out eternity,

It was you; you woke up screaming as you fell out of the tub
filled with blood-diluted bathwater,

It was me; I strode miles through melting ice and boiling mud
to find out if your vision was a vision
of the future or just a warning that maybe you're
f**king with something valuable-

It was me; I escaped beneath the blackness of the pines,
sorting through the littered path to find the difference
between pure truth and pure bulls**t,

It was me; I stopped, turned, reached toward the light
the flickering strobe slowly pulling me
toward sanity-

It was me; I moved away, and walked out of the mouth
of madness and into the hands of reason,
scolding man's first disobedience

It was you; you, now, forbidden fruit, whose mortal taste
brought death into the world-

It was me by one man's disobedience lost, now sing
recovered paradise to all mankind.

Clothes and the Women Who Wear Them

by Melissa Bichun

The clothes make the woman
Or so they say
And we all give into it.
We spend the thousands
For the designer labels
And have a passion for clothes.
We use clothes to compete.
The better the label the better the person.
Or so we think.
Our clothes mask our insecurities.
They hang over the parts we hate.
And the models who wear them
Enlarge our self-consciousness
With their emancipated frames.
Allowing us to think we must look like them.
But if the clothes were taken away
And we had to walk around naked
We would have to look our insecurities in the face
And overcome them.



Kneeling Woman
By Daniel Reiser

*escaping**By Kate Baronowski*

words beaten into me like hands
battering bare flesh.
eyes seeing too much that
a tongue cannot speak of.
running from a monster that
pulls me back from under warm sheets.
showing a head too ugly to
look at, but being unable to look away.
dragging me mercilessly into it's
world of harsh words and tears.
too many not knowing of the
cave i cannot escape, too few
do anything that matters.
i look hopefully past the beast
at the fall of rain that
tastes of tears, to the light
shining in the distance.
Waiting, i pace until the time i am
strong enough to fight back,
to reach through the cold rain
into the light, where by taking my hand,
am pulled to you, and become free.

There is something dark within me. Between the twisted nightmares that tear at my soul each night and the mornings I hurriedly fasten pants to my naked body and rush out the door. I can feel the horrid screams echoing within my ears. Some dark existence inside me that claws its way to the surface. I find I cannot stop it. Each day my hope is breached by thought of the tortured existence out there. The latest of my prey in my bed offers meaningless pleasure that I soon find a tortured delight as the nightmares ensue. Chains digging into flesh, horrid faces lost amongst my own. I am buried beneath the dirt. The city's dull lights offer no comfort, the stars are empty and the moon hangs without remorse like a lamppost on the verge of death.

Salvation is but a touch away before I feel the fiery wrath of my inner demons. I cannot touch a thing without being wounded. My hands bleed, the sores of my feet ache and I cry out. The world is black and I am its shadow.

As the nightmares begin I feel myself covered by darkness. A veil that hauntingly vanishes the last vestiges of light in my dreams. Immersed in the pain-filled cries of victims and saints. I am a fallen. I try to run, I always try to run. Their mocking laughter but a step behind my heel. I can feel their breath on my neck. I am forced to my knees but I do not stop there. I crawl. I can feel how close they are, their dark hands roaming over my naked body. Please let me escape.

I know how it ends, how every time it ends. At first I had hope. That I could be stronger but hark no, there is no escape. The floor of hope breaks through and I fall. Endlessly fall into a sea of tormented minions. Joining their ranks each night. I try to cry out but find that my voice only mixes with the rest. I am but one of many. Then I wake in a frenzied state. Forever am I afraid of the night around me and I envy the day, solemnly watching its last rays of hope fade away and I pray that it will rise the next day. Pray.

By James Rovello

Empty! (A song for Easter)*By Sumit Deshpande*

Dark was the sky on the day of death
Swirling caricatures of ghastly element
Blood and water spilled to the ground
As heaven and earth wept

Void of hope were the hearts of those
Who saw the death to completion
The face that once shone with compassion
Was battered beyond recognition

Final words and final cries
Sent shivers through the watchers' spines
Surprising those with derisive hearts
Contradicting the most intelligent minds

Death on a bed of wood and iron
The most disgusting way to die
Outstretched arms and a broken heart
An eagle getting ready to fly

Gently the shell was laid in the cave
While the war raged on in hell
The eternal battle, the decisive round
Before the final bell

On the surface, the mourners wept
The lovers lost their way
The dreamers could not comprehend
The events of the third day

Empty!

Astonished faces
Bewildered minds
The tomb did not hold
What they expected to find

The tomb was open
The body was gone
The graveclothes scattered
On the cold stone ground

Promises remembered
Prophecies fulfilled
The Son has risen
According to His will

Angelic visitations, miracles abound
Hell turned inside out
The end was a means to a new beginning
Something we cannot do without

We sometimes think our lives are full
Until we search and find
Very much like the empty tomb
Our lives are just as void

And for that very empty that fills our lives
The King of Kings was slain
He defeated death on Resurrection Day
And of sin, a mockery made

The empty tomb has a deeper meaning
A full life it gives to me
If I give Him my empty and take His fullness
I will truly be free

By Daniel Reiser

Look beyond the eggs and rabbits
Look to the blood and the death
Look to the Way, the Truth, the Life
Look to the Great Exchange

Summer Storm

by Jamie Veley

The storm had a strong temperament. The wind shook the old, drafty house and the lightning flashed so frequently it clearly lit the way for the man. Cautiously and quietly he made his way through the house he had once lived in and still loved; he searches for his lover.

He anxiously opens the bedroom door and peers in. The bedroom which was decorated cheerfully and cozy now looked as gloomy as an old attic covered in webs woven skillfully by a black widow. His lover lay on the floor weeping; in her arms she tightly clenches a picture of the two of them. Without consideration for the couple, the lightning flashes and the thunder rumbles, startling them both. Scared, she looks up and in amazement, gazes into his once-beautiful eyes. Once they had shone brilliantly like a rainbow after a storm. Now they look worn and tired. She jumps to her feet as he stumbles across the room to embrace her.

Was she dreaming? Only three days ago, he had been pronounced missing; he was probably dead. She had received a phone call at two in the morning saying that her lover's truck had been wrapped around a tree, but the body was unable to be found. The police had followed a blood trail for hours. The trail had led them to a large, snow-covered field, and it was in this field that the blood had just vanished and the footprints disappeared. The police classified this as an unusual happening but continued to search for clues. Unfortunately for family and friends, there could be no funeral, for there was no body.

She was in disbelief as she held him now. He was unharmed except for a small cut above his left eye. He did not speak except to say I love you, and she did not pressure him. She knew it would all come out in time. They passionately made love before going to sleep. She awoke in the morning with a new glow about her; she looked over to where her lover had been. Her eyes focused in on a small trail of blood. Scared, for she knew how this would end, she cautiously followed the blood trail. She found herself standing in her backyard. There the blood vanished, the sun darkened and the thunder rumbled.

The girl

By Jeff Schroeder

The girl sits upon the hill,
she watches the sunset,
she thinks of yesterday.
Where has the time gone?

The girl sleeps on the hill,
she watches the stars twinkle,
she thinks of today.
Why does time stop for regrets?

The girl awakens on the hill,
she watches the sunrise,
she thinks of tomorrow.
Who knows when my time will end?

Doesn't She Know

By Jeff Schroeder

The rain keeps coming down,
She tries to hide from it.
I ask why she tries to hide.
Doesn't she know that she can't walk between raindrops?
The water drips from my head to toes,
I am still drier than her.
She wishes to be dry,
she wants to clear her head.
Yet, she clings to her umbrella
as though she will die without it.
Her soul is soaking wet.
I seem to walk above the puddles,
my mind is clearer than it has been for days.

Fading Memories By Donna Jackson

School let out at 2:30 - he should have been home hours ago. It was almost five o'clock and the sun lengthened the shadows at Teddy's feet. He knew his mother would be missing him by now, and after the sun set she'd be even more worried. But he kept going anyway.

He panted heavily as he raced through the woods that he had known so well. He had grown up in these woods; he'd been running through the twisting dirt paths ever since he could remember. But everything was different now. Nothing looked familiar anymore. Most of the paths had grown over, and though the main ones were still there, they too were overgrown and he had to part the thorned vines across the path more than once just to keep going. These woods had always felt comforting to him; they'd always felt like home before, but now they were foreign and somehow threatening.

Finally he broke through the trees and onto the old road he had once known as his own. Suddenly his heart wasn't in the expedition anymore, but his legs kept pumping, pushing him up the slight incline and toward the house.

His house stood empty and abandoned at the top of the hill, overlooking the old neighborhood as it always had. The windows gazed at him mournfully. One of them had been broken. The lawn was now overgrown with crawlers and looked much like his woods did. No one had moved in since they had had to leave five years ago. The bank hadn't been able to sell it. And the once-tidy house now looked like the worthless little reject that the realtors had believed it to be. And yet, somehow, it looked the same as it did when he was nine. It only looked tired and weary, like an old man after a hard day's work.

Teddy crept up the cracking cement steps to the porch, carefully avoiding that half of the second step up that had cracked loose and rocked when you stepped on it. His mother had meant to repair it that summer they had lost the house. She had meant to do it for years actually, but had never gotten around to it for one reason or another. Teddy supposed it didn't matter now.

The storm door came open hesitantly when he pulled on it, and the edge of the door spat little flecks of rust onto the back of his hand. The front door had probably been locked, but the wood had rotted from the lock. Teddy pushed his shoulder against the door and forced it open. He stepped up into the house and smelled old dirt and older memories. They hit him hard with their physical presence, knocking the air out of his chest. He took a

deep breath and coughed from the dust, and the cough turned into a sob. He bit his lower lip and stepped into the living room.

The house hurt him to the bones. The house looked empty yet did not seem so - it hadn't changed much at all. It *felt* the same, even after five years. And that perhaps hurt the worst of all. He ran a hand over the hardwood mantle over the fireplace and winced as if he had gotten burned. His hand came away covered in dust and cobwebs. The memory burned like flame in his heart and mind. He looked at the corner where his grandmother's old upholstered rocking chair used to sit. He fingered the many tackholes above the fireplace where he and his brothers had hung their Christmas stockings. The Christmas before they lost the house had been the last time he ever saw his brothers in the same room together. Teddy remembered the big fight three days after Christmas that drove his two brothers apart. They hadn't spoken since - Jake even refused to go anywhere that he might risk seeing Don. That's why Jake didn't go to church anymore. As adults they acted more childish than ever. Probably the only time Teddy would see them together again would be at their mother's funeral. And even then he doubted they'd stand on the same side of the room.

He walked slowly through the kitchen, taking care not to break the upward-turning edges of the curling linoleum. Like the living room, the kitchen and dining room were bare to the walls. He pushed through the cobwebs in the doorway and stood in the middle of the dining room. He looked at the windows that had once worn faded but clean curtains. He looked at the faint line halfway up the walls where the wallpapers had met - years ago the walls had had a layered effect, with wallpaper of one pattern on the bottom halves of the walls and another pattern on the top halves. They had painted it over many times but the line from the merging wallpapers had always remained. He looked at the built-in hardwood hutch in the wall across from him. His grandfather had put that in for his grandmother's good china when he built the house. When Nanny died, Teddy's mother had inherited the china as well as the habit of storing it there in the hutch. The shelves were now filled with spiderwebs and egg sacs instead of the good china. Teddy supposed that, to the spiders, those sacs were as fragile and precious as the china was to his mother.

Next to the hutch gaped a doorway that led up to the converted attic where his brothers had slept. Nanny's bedroom had been up there. When she died, Don moved out of the room he shared with Jake and into Nanny's. His mother had once told him that she had seen a ghost on those stairs. Shortly after Nanny died, his mother had sworn she had seen her mother on those steps. He wondered if Nanny's ghost was still there. Maybe that was why the house felt the same. Maybe she never had left.

But then, maybe it was just his imagination. Maybe when they left, Nanny's ghost had given up after all. Why stay in her house if her family was gone, anyway? Teddy vaguely wondered what had happened to the spirit in the house. It felt like the same house, but it didn't feel like home anymore. He felt somehow as if the house *knew* it had been abandoned. He felt as if the house were blaming him. Suddenly he didn't just *feel* it. He could almost *hear* the house.

Why did you leave? Look what you did to me. Look what happened. How did this happen? Why did it have to happen?

The tears finally came. He let them find their way down his cheeks. He ran a finger over the edge of the hutch and walked away from the stairs.

The narrow hallway that led back to the bedrooms was lined with cobwebs. He had to separate them all before he could walk down the hall. It reminded him of the woods. He had to fight to get through there, too. It was like he didn't belong there anymore, and the thorns and the spiders were showing him who belonged there now. *We do. This is our place, not yours. Not anymore. We don't want you here.*

He kept going anyway.

His feet shuffled softly in the thick layer of dust that coated the floor. He looked into his parents' room briefly and startled a family of raccoons nesting in the corner. He could see the young cowering against their mother's belly. That hurt, too. They looked so small and frightened. They didn't understand what he was, just that there was some big, horrible thing threatening their little home. They were too little to understand any real danger they just clung to their mother for protection. They couldn't even see him, but just sensed there was something there. He felt sorry for them.

He went into his bedroom last. The walls had been painted a bright robin's-egg blue the summer before they had to leave. Now the paint looked dingy and faded. In the corner stood the old desk that he had had to leave behind. There just wasn't room in his mother's new apartment for it. He looked out the cracked back window into a backyard which now looked like a Nebraska wheat field. The long weedy grasses swayed together in the breeze. The four trees looked the same as ever as they stood, silent and unmoving in the light breeze. Some things faded and some things changed, but for the trees business went on as usual. Life went on as well, both within the house and outside of it.

It was time to go. Teddy realized there was nothing left to do here. His mother would be really worried by now. She might even have called his father. Not that his father would know, or even care for that matter, he hadn't seen him in five years either.

On the way back to the front door Teddy passed back through the dining room. He stopped by the foot of the stairs and looked up them again. They still looked dark and bleak, but Teddy climbed them anyway. Halfway up the stairs Teddy had to squint from the sun angling through the double-window that overlooked the backyard. He put a hand over his eyes to block the sun. At the top of the stairs he continued into the back room.

Don's room was bare to the walls. A few cobwebs hung in the corners, but those were the only decoration in the sparse little room. Tiny as it was, the room wasn't quite as forlorn as the main floor. Teddy thought it was the sunlight cast from the sinking sun. The large window let it all stream in, warming the little room. He went over to the window and looked out over the backyard. The grass looked as wild as it had when he looked out of his bedroom window, but the sun reflected differently off the tops from this angle. It was the same grass, but from up here it looked less like an unkempt wheat field and more like a sunny meadow. The sun warmed him and he closed his eyes, letting the golden light burn rosy-red through his eyelids.

Something brushed his elbow lightly, and Teddy looked to his left and saw a ghost. Nanny sat in her old wooden rocker, where Teddy remembered she had sat knitting countless late afternoons. Teddy remembered sitting on the floor by her feet when he was three, playing with his Hot Wheels cars and telling her about what he had done that day. It was just the mindless jabber of a toddler, but he remembered Nanny had always just rocked and knitted and listened. Now she held a new piece of knitting on her lap, and rocked and looked out the back window with him. Teddy didn't speak; he just thought to himself "*Hi, Nanny.*"

Nanny glanced up and smiled at him as she wrapped the yarn around her knitting needles. It was going to be a little afghan for a baby, Teddy saw. Nanny went back to looking out the window. Teddy turned back too, watching the reddening sky paint the treetops pink-orange and tint the grass tips silver-gold. He waited until the yard was cast in shadow and the sky glowed royal purple. When he finally turned to go, he noticed that Nanny was gone.

He started back home, trotting slowly down the street. He knew he's never come back again; never see the house, never feel it's solid, dusty walls. He supposed he never needed to again. Still, he couldn't stop himself from looking back at the house. It was encased in shadow; all but the tops of the eaves. They still caught the purple-red light and reflected it back to him.

The Story Of My Life

By Nik Bonopartis

The story of my life, well
let's just say it's a fork
and a knife
There's one thing on my mind,
one thing all the time, I
gotta fill my mouth
Got no favorite meal, I say
every meal is clean if it
fills me up for real
My belly's big and it's just
a start
My appetite's my heart
And when I've had enough I
just throw up and laugh

But this time's its not a
cow, it's kinda personal,
can't explain to you why
This time it's not a cow, so
Mr. PC are you ready to bow?

Breakfast in bed, yeah
breakfast in bed..
The bed's in the kitchen so
it's easy to be fed
And when I'm fed, yeah when
I'm about dead
I go back to bed.

"EMBITTERED AND EMBATTLED"
BY JEFF SCHMITT

**MAXIMS
ARE FOR LOSERS COMPETITION
IS FOR THE INSECURE
HOW CAN SOMETHING BE MY FAULT WHEN I'M PERFECT
SEIZE THE DAY
IS WHAT YOU SAY WHEN YOU'RE SPOILED. WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS
COMPLAIN AND GET YOUR WAY.
TRY TO KEEP UP WITH THE JONESES
IF NO ONE LIKES YOU FOR WHO YOU ARE. IF YOU CAN UNDERSTAND ME
EITHER I'M IN TROUBLE OR YOU ARE IF YOU WERE A MAGNET
YOU'D DEFINITELY BE MORE ATTRACTIVE YOU CAN'T ANNOY OR BOTHER ME
MORE THAN I ANNOY OR BOTHER MYSELF. JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE POPULAR
DOESN'T MEAN YOU DESERVE ANYONE'S RESPECT. THEY SHOULD MAKE A BOOK ABOUT MY LIFE
BUT NO ONE SHOULD READ IT.
I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR MY INCOMPETENCE NOT YOURS
YOU CANT READ ON IF I STOP...**

"the relevancy of relativity"
By Jeff Schmitt

how much or how little
does this make sense or does that even matter is it heady discourse or trivial chatter

when heard by the many instead of the few the ravings of a madman
will touch more lives than you

nothing in a nutshell really fits there are too many prize fights and no battles of wits

is it really a shame though? are you a fair judge? does life as a human really mean that much?

*Ode to an English Professor**By Kimberly Genesi*

*If her voice were beautiful, I would not mind listening.
If she sang out a song, I might even enjoy it.
However, I don't believe that
 anyone enjoys her voice
 as much as her own self
She speaks to her own ears
 and they pay full attention
 to her every worthless word.
Yet I cannot.
I long to hear another sound,
 any other voice in this learning pool
filled with phrases as I drown in prose.
Pull me up, please!
The fiery waters of poetic sleep are encompassing my brain,
 leaking into my head
drop by iambic drop.
I cannot stand monotony much longer.
Vague intonation,
 lack of inflection,
 waves lapping softly at my eyes
 washing them into a dreamy place
 where there is no black ink on white paper,
 or white chalk on blackboards,
 or thick unrimmed glasses staring out at me.
Comatose comfort!
Save me from this droning torture!
 Place a curse on this woman's larynx,
 Make her quiet and bid her stay so.
Take pleasure elsewhere, oh endless rambler!
Cease darkening my bright morning with your nothingness,
 for my ears have already shut you out,
 and my eyes wish to do the same.
Therefore teacher, I do apologize,
 But I must take a nap in your class.*

A beautiful light shone through the open
door of acceptance.
I wasn't sure it was there - but was glad
To be engulfed.
The passion struck all at once and overwhelmed
My perception of all thought and feeling.
I'm being taken somewhere new and innocent,
Not knowing if I'll really go, or if I'll
Ever come back.
The thought of it is frightening but I want
To live for the moment.
The light grows brighter and sometimes dimmer
Everyday - I don't want this door to be
Shut.
I don't want to hold on in anticipation for
What may or may not happen - that is
Unknown and distant
But I do know that I care - and these
Thoughts will not be driven away.

By Barbara Gambee

Pop-Culture-Heaven
J. Pisano

**When The All-Too-Perfect World
Bombards You With Their Trends And Standards
Turn To Those few "Weird folk" Those That Are So Like You. Yet So Different.
They Are The Shelter From The Storm Everyone Has Weaknesses And Fears Just Like You.
It Is Much Wiser To Find A Kindred Spirit Than To Play follow-The-leader
And Soon Realize
It's The Blind-leading-The-Blind.
looking On The Outside.
Seeing Only What Is Aesthetically Pure...
That Will Only lead You To Pop-Culture-Heaven:
A Life Of Unhappiness And fallacy.**

Sue's Poetry Excerpts for the "Aluminati"

By Sue Goodwin

Mom & Dad

Almost Free - I just need a few more days.

Finals and Dances

Graduation and Good-byes.

No more cafeteria slop! The books begin their dust collection.

Mom, can you help me with the laundry?

Dad, can you help me with my taxes?

Visiting with old friends from home - well, the ones

Looking for a good job, now.

Nobody's returning my calls.

The cabin fever sets in as the High School nostalgia continues to stagnate.

There are never any good shows on anymore.

Why won't the damn phone ring?

I know I can get a job pretty soon - I just need a few more days.

The frustration builds.

How come they have a job so soon?

Mom and Dad pave more of a life than I do - they actually go out.

I'm close and personal friends with the remote.

No, I won't wait up too late.

I could get such a good start on my life if only I could settle down.

I need my own place

I need the stability of work

My depression would be worse if it weren't for the college visits.

I need the memories.

Those guys understand me best.

I'm getting really serious about moving out - I just need a few more days.

I've saved up a lot from my temp work.

Maybe I'll be hired soon.

The space in my head fills with the planning and the freedom.

How will it look?

Where will it be?

I'm not going anywhere until I get that stinking job!

Mom and Dad have jobs

They didn't even graduate college!

Even when I finally get the job, the bills will flood in.

I'll have to cook and shop for myself

After eight hours of slave labor.

The weekends will be for recuperation from the burn-out week.

Nobody to help with laundry.

Nobody to help with taxes.

I don't want to leave home yet - I just need a few more days

Thanks Mom and Dad.

Thanks for keeping me safe at home

**Sugar shouldn't taste this way; a ride home
to an innocent-looking fan shouldn't have ended
with you a rape victim, just another statistic,**

**Sugar shouldn't taste this way; running, hopeless fear
on flying feet, your only thought to get home
before he traps you again-**

**Sugar shouldn't taste this way; a night begun with euphoria
and ended with your naked back
sliding down the bathroom wall till
you cowered beneath the sting of the shower-**

**Sugar shouldn't taste this way; sitting in burning silence,
a nameless face violating your mind
the way his hands violated your body.**

**Sugar shouldn't taste this way, your hold on reality
more tenuous as days pass and you fade into
the shadows of the life you led before**

**Sugar shouldn't taste this way; waking up night after
night screaming invisible hands pinning you down
tearing you apart inside**

**Sugar shouldn't taste this way; standing before a podium,
a bank of microphones before you, cameras flashing
as you explain to the world that no one is safe
no matter how famous you are or what you've accomplished**

**Sugar shouldn't taste this way; your hands trembling
as you place them upon the piano keys
before an audience for the first time since it happened.**

**And then you coax the chords from your fingers
and draw your voice from deep inside your soul
and you realize the music means even more than it used to
and it becomes obvious: you're stronger than you were.**

By Jaime L. Smith

Wheel of Time Outtakes in Finnland

By Nik Bonopartis

A silver flash of light formed a seam in the middle of the darkened room, then widened and took shape as the gateway formed. Elan Morin Tedronai stepped out, black boots forming dust clouds as he found footing on the ancient floor of the Stone of Tear. It was here, in a long forgotten storeroom deep in the depths of the ancient fortress, that the object which he sought was hidden. The gateway winked out behind him, and he channeled quickly, bringing an illuminated sphere to life above his outstretched palm, casting faint light and long shadows across the many boxes and odd objects which decorated the room.

His footsteps echoed as he made his way across the chamber, and Elan Morin Tedronai wrinkled his nose in disgust at the dank, musty smell accumulated from years without a human foot treading the ground he now walked on. Absently wiping dust from his fine black coat of silk laced with gold, he saw the twisted *ter'angreal* from across the room. It was a large doorway, tall enough for even an Aiel to fit through, and made in such a way that it was twisted, the corners and sides not quite connecting, so that it made him queasy if he let his gaze rest on it too long. Seemingly made of polished redstone, with three sinuous lines as the only apparent decoration, the *ter'angreal* doorway looked like it would fall over any minute. He gave it an experimental nudge, but the doorway did not budge.

Letting go of *saidin*, Elan Morin Tedronai felt life, sweetness, awareness as he had never known leave his body in a rush. Letting go of the One Power was never an easy thing, but he did not desire to enter the parallel world through the *ter'angreal* doorway while holding the True Source. The results were unpredictable. With a determined glare, he stepped through the door. The light of a thousand suns blinded him, all the stars in the universe combined into one. He was aware of his own movement, slowly, days, weeks, months, years...

His booted foot slapped the polished floor in front of the doorway, and the echo reverberated down cavernous halls. Elan Morin Tedronai looked back at the *ter'angreal* doorway behind him, as if to check and reassure himself of its existence. The doorway was behind him, but he was in a different place now. Yellow polished columns of some foreign stone gleamed in a circular pattern at opposite ends of the enormous chamber, reaching up into a ceiling that disappeared into the gloom above. An ominous light filled the room from ahead, yet the source did not appear to be from flame. The floor tiles played out a sprawling pattern as they stretched in curving rhythms to the far reaches of the chamber.

“A long time.”

Elan Morin Tedronai whirled around to see who had spoken. A man stepped forward from the shadow of the columns, clothed in long yellow and black robes.

"A long time, yet they come again." He spoke with a strange, slurred speech, and his voice was raspy, like paper on stone.

"Are you...?" Elan Morin trailed off, remembering he could only ask three questions. Three, and no more. "Take me to where I can have questions answered."

The robed fellow stepped forward further into the light, and Elan Morin could see he was not human. Scaly flesh, large, striped eyes, and an elongated face likened him to a snake. The man's too-long hands reaffirmed his analysis. He rubbed those snake-like hands together and spoke again in that raspy voice.

"You carry no lamps, no torches, as the agreement was, is, and ever will be. You have no iron? No instruments of music?"

Elan Morin eyed him askew for a moment, then spoke softly, "No. No iron or instruments of music." He instinctively felt his coat pocket for the glass *sa'angreal* that was hidden from the man.

"According to the agreement. Come."

His guide beckoned him forward, then turned towards the hallway, and Elan Morin followed. Through arched doorways, he followed his unearthly guide through curving corridors. The swerving patterns continued to play out on the floor, and an odd world was visible through the perfectly circular windows that appeared at regular intervals. The ceiling above was similarly curved, with intricately worked scrollwork making sinuous, twisting lines in the stone. His guide led, and he followed. The world outside was strange, with only trees visible, certainly not of any type on earth. Thin branches stretched out and held drooping, umbrella-like leaves from their limbs. The hallway curved and twisted, and Elan Morin continued to analyze the view outside of the windows. Several times the hallway twisted, and he thought he should be able to see the other sides of the palace he was now in, or even a small courtyard, but all he could see were the trees, and the strange yellow-orange horizon. Once the view changed, and three silver spires were visible through the porthole window, the one in the middle set straight, and the two on each side curved so that they all aimed towards the same point in the sky. Obscuring his view was a singular tree, with a broken branch, but when he gazed out of the next window three paces away, neither tree nor tower was visible.

Shivering, Elan Morin followed his guide through the curving maze of corridors. He was getting impatient when his guide gestured towards a huge, circular open doorway.

"Here you may ask your questions. Here your answers may be found."

Elan Morin stepped through the doorway, then glanced over his shoulder towards his guide, but the strange fellow was gone. Shivering again, Elan Morin Tedronai stepped into the heart of the chamber. A sprawling, domed ceiling capped the giant

space, and curving floor tiles spiraled out in every direction, always in a circular pattern. There were no furnishings, no elaborate decorations of any kind, save for three red, gleaming columns, curved and twisted, sinuous like a snake. Atop each of the three columns sat a being similar to his guide, but this time draped in robes bound by red roping, barefoot atop the columns. There were no ladders or other apparatus to reach the top of these curved columns, yet they sat atop them.

"It has been long, Betrayer of Hope," the woman of the left coiled pedestal spoke, in that same raspy, dry voice of his guide.

"It has been long, yet the Questioners come again for answers."

Elan Morin's mouth tightened into a grimace at mention of the name men gave him. He did not know how these...beings...knew of him, but he would not ask, he would not waste a question. The Aelfinn were rumored to punish trivialities.

In unison the three breathed, "Enter and ask, according to the agreement of old."

Elan Morin Tedronai took a step forward, and swallowed hard.

"I seek the *sa'angreal* known as Callandor, The Sword That Is Not A Sword. How do I free it from the Stone?"

The three lifted their eyes from him, again in unison, and seemed to study the air above his head.

The man on the left spoke.

"You must find the Asha'man called Narishma, he will free the *sa'angreal*."

Instantaneously, a bell tolled, ominous and forbearing, reverberating throughout the chamber and the surrounding corridor. The Aelfinn breathed deeply, and their eyes dropped down to meet his.

"He is yet another of the *ta'veren*," the woman in the center breathed. "The strain. The strain is yet great."

"The savor," the man on her right agreed. He looked nervous. "The savor of him." They turned back to him. "Ask."

"Who will be Nae'Bliss?"

"You were warned," the man on the left hissed.

"Questions touching the shadow," the woman agreed. "The price will be exacted."

She breathed deeply again, and Elan Morin Tedronai felt a cold run through him. Her eyes dropped from their study of his aura. "The man called Moridin, he who has the *saa* in his eyes."

The bell tolled again, louder this time, shaking, piercing his ears. The tremor shook the room. Elan Morin looked up to study anxious faces.

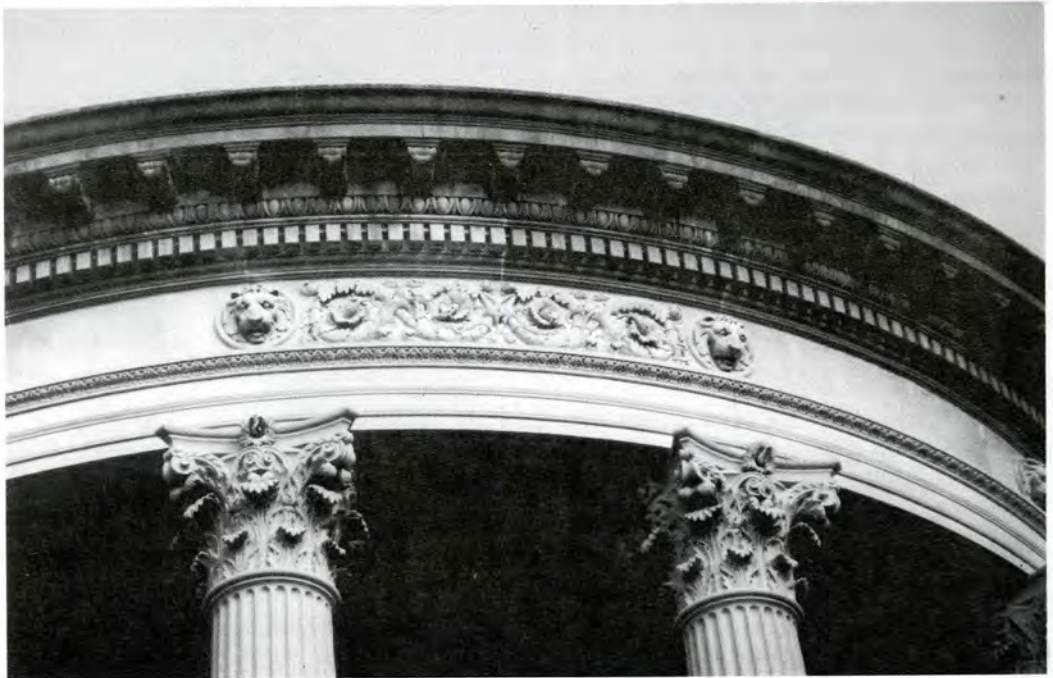
"The strain," the woman intoned. "He is *ta'veren*. The strain is too great."

“The savor of him,” the man on the right added nervously. “It has been so very long. The savor. Ask! Ask!”

Elan Morin stood there, puzzled. He had never heard of a man called Moridin, and he was not about to let him take his place as the Dark One’s champion...out of the corner of his eye he saw blurred motion, then snapped out of his thoughts to see a crowd of yellow-clad fellows like his guide swarming around the outer reaches of the chamber. They were moving toward him.

Seizing *saidin*, Elan Morin channeled, deftly weaving flows into a gateway, but the snake-like men were bearing down on him. He channeled again, and this time lightening arced down from above, striking his assailants. Muttering a vile oath, Elan Morin Tedronai jumped for the gateway, and stepped into the blinding light.

The sun beat down on him, and disorientation set in at the realization of his surroundings. Behind The Betrayer of Hope stood the Tower of Ghenjei.



“Columns”

By Joanne Parent

Beth had me come out to help her shop for Tom's birthday.

I drove the two of us to the local mall, and now, half way down the length of the strip I suggested getting something to eat to calm my stomach some. I really should stop walking with her, it's bad for my nerves.

On my budget fast food is about all I can afford, so we sit on opposite ends of a table, trays in front, a mass of other mall-goers milling about around where we eat. I've known Beth for almost a year now, met her at work and we became friends quickly. I've never felt at ease with someone so readily as I do around Beth. We have gone to movies, driven across country, been each other's best confidant, and worst enemy. Through the time that I've known her, I've never felt that there wasn't anything I couldn't trust her with.

I smile at Beth, not listening to what she says as she talks to me. It's about Tom so it's not important. Ever since Tom arrived nothing has been important. So with a smile I feign interest, taking a bite of my meal. I'll never forget that day when Beth came bouncing into work. The first thing she said was "I met this guy" and my world collapsed. It wasn't until Beth found happiness did I realize that I missed the same. I guess I kind of knew I loved her, but I never gave the idea any thought, but now it's always on my mind.

The stress alone has made me lose 13 pounds.
Beth is fingering the engagement ring that Tom gave her one night a month ago. A full one and a half carats, I believe. It mocks me, it is as if Tom is here laughing directly into my soul as he stabs me in the heart.

It's not his fault mind you, and in all fairness Tom is a pretty nice guy, but the ring is a constant beacon signaling out my foolishness. At least Beth is happy.

I watch her across the length of the table. She talks about Tom and I try to hide my remorse from her. Beth is the emotional type and if I ever said anything it would only make her unhappy. I couldn't live with myself if Beth was unhappy, and I guess that's why she is better off with Tom than me. The way she talks she must be happy with him, and judging from the fact that she has an engagement ring one can't scoff at, and I barely break even after rent, insurance, and food, she is better off in the arms of Tom.

I sigh softly and continue to eat, listening to her one-sided conversation about Tom's upcoming party. My vision starts to become gray before I realize that I'm choking, so engrossed with my thoughts was I. It isn't until I begin to thrash around and fall out of my chair that Beth looks up from her food and realizes that something is terribly wrong. She runs around the table screaming my name, and lifts me up in her arms. My head lolls backwards from utter exhaustion.

I smile as I close my eyes, pity Beth will never know how happy I am to die in her arms.

ByOrg



The End
By Scott Neville

GET A JUMP ON NEXT SEMESTER'S MOSAIC!

If you have any poetry, prose, photography, or other artistic expression that you would like to submit for possible publication into the Fall 1999 Mosaic, please drop a copy of the work in the Literary Arts mailbox in the Council of Clubs room, located in Student Center 369, or get in contact with Scott Neville, Donna Jackson, or Heather Clarke for more information. All work will be returned in its original condition. Watch for deadlines posted around campus during the semester.

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