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**P'AN KU**



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P'an Ku [pan koo] n(Ch.) Ancient Chinese Divinity. From P'an Ku we derive Ying and Yang. He is the primeval man born from the egg. One day the egg split open and the top half became the sky and the bottom half became the Earth. After 18,000 years, P'an Ku died and split into a number of parts. His head formed the Sun and the Moon. His blood, rivers and seas. His hair, the forests, sweat the rain, breath the wind, and voice thunder. His fleas became the ancestors of mankind.

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JUN 9 1995

Cover: "Changes of the Sea" by Gregory P. Bosowicz, Watercolor

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"Pennsylvania" by Eileen Soler  
B&W Photo

# Hear the Journey Speak

by  
Kathleen Davis

4 I spent the days in the cities of Miami and Miami Beach, enjoying them before the time came for my train to depart. I wanted to soak up the sights and sounds of the streets, the rapid fire Spanish spoken by brightly clothed Latins, their figures standing out against the pastel buildings like tropical flowers. I watched the models in South Beach posing for invisible cameras, all in the same denim shorts and poet shirts, sipping the obligatory iced cappuccino at the local outdoor cafe. I listened to the German tourists ordering American beer, looking oddly out of place with their pale white skin and open friendly smiles. I walked the beach with its water so bright, that at first glance it appears like something animated out of a Disney film. There are children playing at the shore and women lying topless on the sand and men pretending not to notice. The sun lends itself to all of these in the indifferent manner of one who has seen life from the beginning and can no longer be impressed. Sweat trickles down from my brow and travels south to its own vacation spots, leaving a damp path as a map of its journey. The heat seems to bear down on me in waves; I move onward to try to escape to a cool patch of air. As I walk down the street, I am caught by a sound, a saxophone in the windless air out of a darkened bar. I try to see the player, but I am too late; he has stopped, and so I move on. It is a concert of images and noise, some pleasing, some not, all interesting and alive. I will be sorry to leave this place, even for a short while.

It is time for me to go, to leave this beautifully decorated land. I linger at the station, not wanting my departure to begin. I watch the passengers board shiny, silver capsules of the train and the train stares back at me with blank, vacant eyes. I see silhouettes of the lives inside and I reluctantly decide to join them. On the inside of the compartment, I see a petite man with a large case; he smiles in my direction. I avoid his eyes and move past to find a seat alone. The other passengers move past to find seats and ways to seal themselves off from each other. I remove a book from my duffel and pretend to read as I wait for the train to pull away from the station.

I relax back in my seat as I feel the movement of the train; there is a silence on board this train of strangers and I stare out the window to watch the city leave my view. We pull away to a scene of parking lots and shopping malls and miles and miles of highway. I look away; there is nothing to see here, just the clone vision that has become America's main street. As we leave the city and the cars on I-95 become sparse, the view becomes more interesting; there are eagles on the tops of telephone poles watching weather-beaten migrant workers toiling in late day sun. Rows and rows of orange trees spread out across the terrain like a giant geometric quilt comforting the land. Hills have appeared on the scene, rising from the flat earth, giving depth to the land. The sun sets over rural Florida in a burst of ochre and violet, fading, fading, fading into red and gold, fading into pale pink with crimson and maroon at its blue edge, fading into magenta and navy, fading into darkness and starlight. The moon rises and hangs in the sky like a Japanese lantern, a lover's moon, clear and bright, illuminating the pastoral setting. As the darkness settles over the landscape and the view dims, I amble out of my seat and find my way to the lounge car.

The lounge is filled with people in the unlikely pairings that occur with the belief that they will remain strangers. I see the small man, his case at his heels; he has a horn in his lap, a drink in his hand, and a cigarette dangling from his lips. He smiles at me as I enter; this time I smile back and take the seat across from him. We fall into casual conversation, and I notice he is silently fingering the keys on his saxophone. We talk about people and places we have been. The bourbon flows and with it the smoothness of the idle chatter. I amuse him with tales I have constructed about people around us, and he entertains me with his music. The crowd throngs to our corner of the car drawn to the melody, swaying to the sound like wheat in the wind, purposeful yet unchoreographed. The night sneaks by and suddenly it is morning. My mouth tastes like smoke and whiskey, yet I am unwilling to move from the dawn-lit car, to take leave of this little man with a big horn.

Sunlight fills the lounge, and a parade of souls come pouring in for coffee and eggs. They have slept through the night, and morning is a new day for them.

We have left the land of early summer and find ourselves in the frosty springs of coastal Georgia. The train grumbles to a stop to load and unload passengers. In the gray and rose light stands the old station; a grand old lady, she used to be beautiful. Ghosts fly out of her bricks at me. Broken window-pane-eyes register dignity at her plight; she sags at her edges, and once-tall and straight pillars

lean tiredly up to the intricate woodwork which edges the roof that shelters the verandah. Graffiti defiles her long gone loveliness and she peers out at the antiseptic child station that has taken her place, with its cold metal railings and impersonal polyurethane benches. It is efficient in its design, this other woman, younger woman, but it lacks the slow grandeur of the aged southern bell it has replaced. The sight touches me and a tear escapes me; the music man releases a slow, soft stream of mournful notes. As we pull away we silently say our good-byes to her, but nothing to each other. It is enough to have seen her for ourselves, and I know I will carry her memory with me.

I excuse myself to the bathroom and examine my face in the unforgiving florescent light, searching for every insipid line in my haggard face. I picture myself as an ancient woman hiding in a youthful appearance. I shake off the image as I return to my seat and the horn man. I order another drink and watch the cinema in the window.

The country side passes in a slow waltz of pine, and marsh, and red clay fields. Time has ravaged this land, like a thief, stealing its beauty, leaving patches of tract housing and condominiums as evidence of its rampage, but the land endures. The south has always endured, but I still shed a tear for the ram-shackle shacks and plantation mansions, their character and charm gone in a blink of a wrecking-ball's eye, and in their place are shopping malls and parking lots.

In South Carolina we come to another stop. We are told that we will be delayed slightly, and we have time to get out and look around. We find an old black man leaning back in a rickety wooden chair; his face is impassive as we approach. He has a trumpet in his hand and I imagine him listening to music from his hey-day in his head. Everything about him is shabby except the trumpet, which is lovingly shined and cared for despite its obvious age. He sixes us up and we are judged to be innocuous. We say our greetings and he asks us for a cigarette and if we have a drink. We oblige, so he allows us conversation; he strikes a chord with his fellow blower, and for the fee of another drink, he begins to play: Bright, lively notes float freely from the gleaming metal of his horn, Dixie-land jazz, from a time when was still spelled with S's. The saxophone joins in harmonic embrace, a young boy with a fiddle appears from nowhere, filling out the impromptu score. The differences between the three become blurred, and as the music envelopes the gathering crowd, disappear completely—the only thing is the music. The song dies down and the train whistle sounds; it is time to go. We never asked him his name and he never asked ours, yet I feel I know.

We settle back down in our moving bar; the place is empty except for us, and we talk about music and men, and time and land. The saxophone left his lips bruised and red, as if he had been kissing a lipstick lover. I want to touch his tender mouth, but I dare not; I don't want to disturb the moment. Drinks appear and disappear in front of us and the train pushes on.

Wide expanses of wilderness stretch out to meet the horizon only to be disrupted by the occasional factory. It looks so pristine until closely examined; rotting tires and rusted out junk cars are mingled with the trees; even this place is not safe from the debris of humanity. The air is getting cooler outside, and we can see the breath of the animals on the farms we are passing. We are entering a town and the buildings are more closely gathered now. As the train pulls into the depot, I can see men standing around in huddled masses, their clothing tattered and lovingly mended; women stand around an oil drum that has been set with a fire to keep themselves warm, and pass out coffee to all the men. The attendant in the lounge explains that they are waiting for work; they will load or unload trucks or train cars for a day's wages. The only things abundant here are poverty, dignity, and love. These are the proud and the brave, and they are a testament to faith, and hard work, and endurance. I love these people for their courage. The saxophone sings a lament to the gods, a hopeful prayer, as we leave them behind.

The sun is waning as I come upon my stop; I am to meet someone briefly for business. I did not want this trip to begin and now I regret its ending. My stop is ending and I gather my belongings to leave. I look longingly at the little man; I turn as if to speak, but, saying nothing. I wave farewell. He raises his horn in a salutary wave and I depart.

My flight back to the land of summer is uneventful and silent and although nothing has changed for me, nothing will ever be quite the same again, either. The ride through the city from the airport is filled with harsh sounds and gaudy landscapes. It is still lovely in its way, but it seems too bright and too loud. There is no history here, no hues of gray and mauve; everything is bright and shiny, like a newly minted penny. I put off unpacking and instead go for a walk on the beach. The tourists are still here, and so are the models. I look to the seashore to find the women in their same poses and the men feigning disinterest. I feel the charm and vibrance of the sandy streets. I pass a dimly lit bar and I hear a sound; a saxophone; I pause outside, debating with myself, shake my head and walk on by. I love this place and would hate to leave it, even for a little while.

mmmmm

by  
Tali Simhoni

6

שלוש פרפר נחמד!  
 אך קורא'ם לך?  
 טסתקל מה ש' ל' ב'ד.  
 ש' ל' חתול. קור'ם לו דרקסל.  
 הוא אוהב לאוכל פרפר'ם כמון.  
 "ממממ... טעם!"

## La Criatura Mas Amada

by  
Ana K. Cespedes

La temen criaturas del diablo. Ella es única creada por Dios. Habla y sus palabras consuelan. Mira y sus ojos matan. Toca y sus manos curan. Duerme y en sus sueños muere. Nace cada día con algo nuevo en la mente; llena de sabiduría observa a la gente y concluye solo una cosa. En ella belleza es real tan adentro en el corazón, como afuera en su cuerpo hecho a la perfección. Ella es mujer perfecta. Con fallas o sin ellas, esta diosa demuestra coraje. Nunca se duda si misma, sino, hace a otros dudar y convence con una sola voz tan impecable como el azul del cielo. Toda ella es mi madre: tan llena de pasión por vivir y el temor de morir sin haber enseñado al mundo como sobresalir como ella lo hizo, lo hace, y continuara haciendo. A ella las criaturas del diablo siempre la temeran, pero su propia criatura solo la llamará madre.

## Deux Soeurs

by  
Vashiti Braha

Isis et Nephthys  
Deux soeurs par delà ce monde  
Contraint à ce monde  
Aiment pourtant doivent haïr  
Nécessairement

Deux soeurs, de temps éternel  
Et des temps préalable  
Leur danse continue  
Dépasse cette aliénation  
Même maintenant



*Jch Denke an Dich . . . E.J.S.*

*Jch frage mich,  
Wo Du bist,  
Wie Du Dich fühlst,  
Was Du gerade ißt.*

*Du bist für mich  
Wie frische Luft,  
Der blaue Himmel; der Vogel, der singt,  
Und die Sonne, die mir, die Wärme bringt.*

*Viel auf die Welt  
Macht mich traurig ins Gesicht,  
Aber in Dir sehe ich,  
Ein sehr helles Licht.*

*Noch ein Tag geht vorbei,  
Und ich denke...  
Jch denke...  
Jch denke an Dich!*

Monique McLaughlin



"PIPEYE" by Patrik Sundquist  
Computer art

# Cats' Eyes

by  
E. Frost

I've done a few things in my life that I'm not proud of. Who hasn't? However, it was during the early seventies, that, something happened that would change my life forever.

I was a student living in Gainesville. It was right after I earned my pilot's license. I was young, living just outside a college town, and having the time of my life. I lived on a "farm" consisting of five houses. There were four bands that shared the five houses, so the best music and a good time were never far off.

If you know anything about the early seventies you know that it was the era of peace and love, which by today's standards, would probably be called sex and drugs, but things were different then, and, oh Lord, it was a wonderful time. The farm overlooked a beautiful lake and had its own dock. We would swim and sun all day, play music far into the night, then make love until the sun was almost ready to make its crystal appearance in the morning dew over the lake. A quick nap for a couple of hours, then arise again in the morning, drink a couple of beers, smoke a few joints, and start all over again.

The women were young, beautiful, and full of life, easily walking naked among the trees, lying nude on the dock in the sun, their tan, firm bodies so willingly given. We were in love, all of us. The men were as brothers, the ladies, often spending nights in different houses, wherever their fancy might lead them. Many was the morning I awoke, curled in a pile of lovers, like puppies in a litter huddled together for warmth.

I don't know how the idea started, probably just as wishful thinking, but the talk around the community was, that I was going on a drug run, and soon, I found myself sitting around the kitchen table, until late in the night, planning our "big score." The plan took shape quickly. The group being multitalented, each had their own area of expertise to lend.

Cat was a race car mechanic; she had grown up in a racing family, and could pull an engine by the time she was thirteen, a whizz with all things mechanical. We had been lovers for two years by then, and I often admired her skill with motors, me being a mechanical jinks. She never liked to talk about her past, and I never pressed her, and besides, she was so good at

having fun. So I actually knew a little about her, except she could drink a fifth of Wild Turkey in a day, rolled the best joints you had ever seen, and, her parents had been killed on their way home from a race in California. Having no other relatives that could be found, she lived in foster homes until she was seventeen. That's when the abuse started. A drunk foster missed the turn into his wife's bedroom, and ended up in Cat's. She fought like the wild spirit she was, but he beat her so badly that she was afraid he was going to kill her, and finally she just stopped fighting and endured the slobber, pain, and the smell of his breath. She left the next day, with only the clothes on her back. It was two years later that she came to live with us.

I'll never forget the first time I had laid eyes on Cat, she was sitting at my kitchen table, her auburn hair streaked with gold from the sun, wrapped around her like a mane, cascading down her chest in a way designed to cover her breasts. She later told me she did that so men would talk to her eyes instead of her chest. She looked up at me, brushed back her hair, and smiled; her eyes flashed like golden tigers. I was hooked, hooked and landed like a mackerel. I have since misplaced the memory of who actually brought her to my house, though he must have been very disappointed in the outcome, but, once our eyes met, it was all over. We were made for each other, like peanut butter and jelly, day and night, I was the one she had been waiting for, and, as if I had a choice, I for her.

I'd heard about moments like that, though I never thought I would be part of one, and truly, never thought I could be so happy, the days and nights blending together like chocolate mousse, swirled and exquisite.

As the plan began to take shape, we were all excited. We would build a set of ferry tanks complete with transfer pumps, the whole rig designed by Cat. The tanks were to bolt quickly to the rails that the rear seats used to occupy. I would rent a 310, a fast, small, twin engine airplane, land it on the highway behind the farm, and taxi it into the barn for its rapid conversion to the "mother ship." We timed the flight to land in Panama in the middle of the night, where 5,100 lb. bails of the best Panama Red in the land would be waiting for us, supplied and guarded by Panamanian soldiers, who were paid half up front by Alvero, and the other half on delivery. Alvero, as luck would have it, was the son of a powerful Panamanian colonel.

The plan came off without a hitch, and like clock work, precisely at 8 pm., just after dark, everyone from the farm gathered to help push the 310 out of the barn. After much hugging and fanfare, I taxied out to the highway, ran up the motors, and lifted off for the 5 1/2 hour flight to Panama. Scared? You bet I was, with 800 miles of Gulf to cross, flying low in the dark across the white capped waves, captain of a flying gas can, petrified was more like it.

Damn remarkable thing, watching the ADF needle finally begin to

home in on our landing zone. In those days the soldiers provided you with a homing signal as part of the package. The frequencies changed often, the transmitter weak, but if you were good, it was enough to put you over the top. We hit that strip in the middle of the pitch black jungle like we knew what we were doing. I'll never forget Alvero and Cat laughing and hugging, as we swooped in low over the jagged slash the Panamanians called a runway. We made one pass to check the wind and the field, and in we came, like eagles to roost.

Funny thing about propellers, as they stop turning they suddenly become visible, like sabers slashing the air; just before they lurch to a halt. We sat still for a moment, amid the sudden roar of silence. Then Alvero opened the door, the smell of the jungle immediately engulfing me, pouring into the cabin like water. We climbed out of the airplane, Alvero first. He would deal with the ominous looking soldiers, then me, then Cat.

I should have known there would be trouble as soon as I saw the way they looked at her, like wolves after a fawn, but leaving her home was out of the question. She was as good, as capable, as any man, and didn't mind telling you so.

"Besides," as she put it, "if something breaks on your ass out there, who you gonna get to fix it?"

Alvero dealt with the leader, Cat and I loading bales, while the soldiers pumped gas into the airplane from 55 gallon drums out of the back of the army truck, their faces dark and ruddy, greedy eyes watching Cat like junkies after a fix. Alvero had already given them the second half of the money, the bales were loaded, and the gas pumped into the plane, when the trouble started. Like the roar of a lion, the blast of a machine gun split the air, lending a surreal quality to an already dream like state. I looked up and saw Alvero backing towards the airplane, gun leveled at the soldiers, telling them in Spanish,

"Don't move, don't move."

"Let's get the fuck out of here," he shouted to me.

Cat and I scrambled for the safety of the wing.

"What the hell's going on." I heard myself shout.

"It's Cat," Alvero said. "The assholes want Cat, and I'm afraid they're going to kill us to get her. I thought they were kidding, the stupid bastards. They tried to make her part of the deal, so I hit the son of a bitch, grabbed his gun, and ran."

Alvero scrambled up the wing, and stood in the open door of the airplane bracing himself between the door and the cabin, machine gun in hand, as I fired the engines. We were parked at the end of the strip, in a little clearing just off to the side, the wrong end of the strip, fully loaded with gas, people, and pot, way over gross. I knew I had

to take off into the wind or we would all be smashed into the jungle, so I taxied for the downwind end, Alvero jammed in the door like a stick, Cat wedged in the back between the tanks and the pot. It was when I reached the end of the strip, turned around, and got a look down the runway, I realized we were going to have to take off past the soldiers, and Alvero was going to have to shut the door so we could take off.

"What the hell are we going to do," I screamed over the roar of the engines the wind whipping through the cabin, swirling and mixing the smell of pot, fear, and gas into a mixture my eyes were having difficulty seeing through.

"Go for it," Cat shouted. "Go for it," Alvero shouted almost in unison.

"Oh, what the fuck," I shouted, slamming the throttles to the firewall. I would have put them through the firewall if it would have helped. The door snapped shut as Alvero ducked in. The machine gun made a loud thud as it careened down the wing, being knocked from his hand by the force of the wind slamming the door shut. I could see the soldiers scrambling towards the runway as we began to accelerate, slowly at first, the computer in my mind whirling all the while, we're not going to make it...we're not going to make it.... Then, little by little, we began to gather speed, locked in a kind of macabre race with the soldiers, to see who would get to the end of the runway first. Just below flying speed, I hit the flaps, a trick I had learned in a magazine, and she jumped into the air like a startled horse, almost in a stall as we passed the soldiers, almost out of control, rocking from side to side, like a drunken sailor. For an instant the soldiers were frozen in their tracks by the thought that we were going to crash, and they were going to have a front row seat. Then they realized we might not crash, and they opened fire. I never heard the sound of their guns, but I could see the flash of the muzzles as we passed, I guess we were shouting and laughing too hard.

"We made it, God damn it, we made it." Cat was shouting and laughing. Hell, we were all shouting and laughing. I knew her eyes were gleaming gold in the dark behind me. We would be home soon enough, tired and dirty, the heroes home from the hill, loot and all. We were 20 miles out, gear and flaps up, headed out over the blackness that was to be our home for the next 5 and 1/2 hours, I busy flying, Alvero with the maps, when I smelled something, or sensed something, I'm not sure which. I'd never smelt blood before. Alvero must have felt it too.

"Cat,...Cat!" She didn't answer him, "God damn it Cat, quit foolin' around!"



Alvero unbuckled and turned in his seat. I could see him shake her. He threw himself between the seats. I could tell he was searching for a pulse.

"She's dead, God damn it, she's dead."

As if I couldn't believe his words, I turned in my seat as best I could, forgetting about flying the airplane for an instant long enough to see the blood matting her hair, staining her shirt. We sat in silence for, I don't know how long, tears streaming down our faces, the only sounds, the motors, and the wind whistling through the neat little hole in the left side of the fuselage.

Before he said it, I knew.

"We can't take her back with us. We have to leave her."

"Fuck you!" I said, but I knew he was right. We couldn't take the chance of getting busted with 500 lbs. of pot and Cat in our airplane. It would mean life, instead of 10 years, so, somewhere out there in the blackness, I left her, just like all the other men in her life, pushed her through the door, and gave her to that howling wind.

We barely made it back to the U.S. The soldiers had shorted us on fuel, figuring we would crash into the blackness, like the stupid gringos we were, and they would get to keep Cat and the money, and no one would be the wiser, but Cat had fooled them, She'd designed that fuel system to carry more fuel than anyone ever thought the little 310 could hold, and we made it. By the skin of our bloody teeth, we made it.

I will never marry. You see, I'm not sure who was actually left back in that blackness. Oh, Cat was the one who was dead all right, but so was something in me. We all knew the risks, but I was responsible. I could have stopped the whole stupid thing before it ever got started. I will never be able to forgive myself; in all this time, accept is the best I've been able to do, and, I've never met another person in this world like Cat. Her gold eyes still shine in my heart, and, for better or for worse, I know they always will.



My name is Lori Corey. I was born in Germany. Having survived the Holocaust, I think I am a very lucky person to be here at all. I came here by way of Cuba on the last ship they allowed to land. I entered the US in 1939 in Key West with my father. We lived in New York for a year and then moved to Indianapolis where I met my husband. I married him in the state of Washington. I had three children by him, but after we moved to Florida, I divorced him because he was an alcoholic and he was abusive. After leaving him, I have been happy ever since.

I lived on a sailboat in the Caribbean for six months; it was the best time of my life. Now, after open heart surgery, I am attending college, taking painting, ceramics and creative writing, and having lots of fun.



## PAN

As I was walking through the fields  
 Heavy laden with care  
 I heard a little melody lightly floating on the air.  
 It danced and sparkled lightly  
 And called me to follow  
 I put my heavy burden down  
 And walked down to the hollow  
 To where the trees are close and green  
 And the brook winds it's way between  
 I can't see the piper in the glen  
 But I start to skip a step now and then  
 Cause the pipes are dancing,  
 And the tune is sprightly  
 It makes my heart sing and my foot step lightly.  
 Ah there in the shade of a bending tree

I catch a glimpse of where the piper might be.  
 He stands just where the shadow falls  
 And I came closer cause the music calls.  
 It pulls me right into the wood  
 I'm past caring if I should.  
 I now see the piper and his smiling face  
 And his hands which move with uncanny grace.  
 His chest is brawny and gleams in the shade  
 He seems rather hairy, but very well made.  
 His dark hair is curly and it seems so right  
 I approach to see in a better light  
 My hands want to touch him,  
 My eyes want to see  
 He put his pipes down and smiled at me  
 He stroked my hair, he touched my face  
 I don't know how I came to be in his embrace.  
 My dress is too tight as my breasts seem to swell  
 The rest of my clothes are confining as well  
 His lips cover mine, oh it is getting better  
 And I feel myself getting much hotter and wetter.  
 I rip at my dress and pull off my clothes  
 And down in the soft luscious grass for us both.  
 The hardness and fullness and the heat of his kiss,  
 Wow, things at home were never like this.  
 I feel like I'm glowing, like I am on fire  
 All time has stopped passing as the pressure grows higher.  
 I don't know if it's heaven or if I'm in hell  
 What's more I don't care, I like it too well  
 My heart is pounding as the rhythm gets stronger  
 It may have been hours, it can't last much longer.  
 And ah, there it goes, fire filling every part  
 Giving fulfillment, peace and joy to the heart.  
 I lay in the soft grass, stroking his chest  
 And feeling his muscles and patting the rest  
 "I know you are wild, I don't want you tame,  
 But maybe some day we could meet here again?"  
 He smiled and he hugged me and gave me a kiss  
 And then disappeared in the shade, just like this.  
 I dressed and then I left the wood  
 I took my time, I felt so good  
 I picked up my light bundle, I felt so fine  
 I must walk through the wood again some time.



"Nude" by Lori Corey Oil On Canvas

## Operations

Shadowed walls  
Concrete floors  
Dark cold rooms  
Echoing halls

2 A.M.  
All alone  
Frightened, panicing  
I want to go home

Morning brings paranoia  
Doctors in green coats  
Nurses with needles  
I'm totally freaking out

Scientific language  
A lot of bull shit  
Rolled down to O.R.  
My life is ending

Bright lights  
Sickning smells  
Shiny instruments  
Prolonged Hell

Holding back tears  
Trying to be strong  
Clasping fists tightly  
Praying nothing goes wrong

I breathe deeply  
Just like the doctor says  
5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1

Is that a tunnel ahead?

Eyes slowly open  
I made it  
I survived  
The sun shines brightly  
that's always a good sign

Someone was with me  
From the other side  
Telling me not to worry  
It just wasn't my time

## New Math

That look he gave me,

his eyes grew cold.

My heart stopped, and started slow.

I knew him will, but yet still afraid.

Steady pace towards me- like a beast stalking prey;

but I could not cower.

His body above and beyond me,

powerless to his every move.

My soul left its shell.

My body now limp.

It is finished. It is done.

And all I have left to be—

A statistic, a statistic.

# My Memories

by  
Lori Corey

The nightmare has been over for such a long time now, that it hardly seems real anymore. It has become just that, a nightmare, a bad dream without reality. And yet it was so very agonizingly real.

My first memory of that bad time seems to be a walk with my father. We had many such walks then.

"Pappi," I told him, "you might as well vote for Hitler in tomorrow's election, everybody else will. He is sure to win."

My father explained to me that Hitler was a very bad man, who was planning to destroy us, and you don't vote for your enemy, no matter how sure his victory.

We were both right of course. He did win, and times changed after that.

We lived in a fashionable area at that time, in a very large apartment, in a modern apartment building. I, being a tomboy, had created the only Indian tribe in Germany. We picked the chief by wrestling with each other. All the boys were about evenly matched and could get each other down at some time or other, but I, being smaller and faster would just not stay pinned down. That's how I got to be one of the few German Indian chiefs. We were the terror of the neighborhood. I remained chief until some of the boys called me Jew. That was the end.

Time in retrospect has an odd way of skipping around. The next thing I remember was our move from the tree lined streets of the suburban neighborhood into the center of town.

We lived in Breslau, the capital of the province of Silesia which lay between Poland and Czechoslovakia. It has now been absorbed by Poland.

We moved into a large dark apartment. It was divided into my father's law offices on one side and the living space on the other. One thing that I liked particularly about this house, was that it had a back entrance that no-

body seemed to know about. Beautifully worked iron railings worked gracefully down ending in a hidden courtyard with a tunnel that exited to the street.

This unused exit proved a lucky thing for us. One morning we were awakened by an early phone call. My father who sometimes defended people who were supposed to lose, and because he had many friends among the judges, sometimes they won. It was one of his grateful clients who called us so early in the morning.

"Sir," he said, "I have seen the Gestapo trucks passing here all morning. They are arresting Jewish men by the truckload and taking them into town, You better get away as fast as you can."

"Thank you alot for warning me," said my father, but after he hung up he said, "Nonsense, I'm not going anywhere. After all, how many people can they arrest? The jails must be full now. They would have to build whole new camps to house more people, if they keep arresting them. They wouldn't come for me." He sat down for breakfast.

"Pappi," I said, "maybe you ought to go away just for a little while. It wouldn't hurt. Why don't you go visit our Grandparents? If they should come for you it would certainly be better if you were not here. Let me go to the railroad station and buy a ticket for you, in case they have people watching there. (I did all buying of tickets and getting of all official documents because who would suspect such a tiny little blonde girl with pigtails of being a despised Jew?)"

He let himself be talked into leaving. I remember packing his attache case with clothes for a weekend, after I had bought a ticket for him. Just as he was ready to leave, there was a loud banging on the front door. The only ones who crashed and smashed like that were the Gestapo or police when they came to arrest somebody. Thank God for the unused back door. My father slipped out just as my mother opened the front door.

I have always been proud of the way she told the Gestapo, "My husband is not here, and if I knew where he was, I would not tell you." Looking tall blonde and beautiful, like their perception of the perfect German she got away with it too. So many people were imprisoned that day; hundreds, thousands, who knows? All taken to concentration camps.. Most never returned.

My father got to Hindenburg, a small town at the Polish border, and arrived at my Grandparents' home just as they were led away. They saw him but never let on that they knew him. He rose the train for two days before he dared to come home.

And I remember Crystal night. The night when they burned and broke all Synagogs, and glass from their windows was everywhere.... just like crystal.

People were dropping by all night, whispering, crying.... I heard

only snatches. because everybody tried to protect us children from the worst of the news. but we were right in the middle of it, how could we fail to know that the fire department stood next to the burning building without doing anything but keeping the neighboring houses from catching fire?

Next day I went to see what happened, and I saw. The beautiful pale green copper dome that had crowned our temple had fallen into the building. And glass from the stained glass windows, glass everywhere.

But it was not the big horrors that were the worst. Somehow you survived them. The worst thing they did to us, and I still suffer from it, was lowering our self image, so that you were ashamed to be yourself. That being Jewish was something to be ashamed of. Jew was a dirty word. A Jew in Germany was actually less than an animal. Many Nazis cherished their pets, while they tortured and killed countless Jews.

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Because we had lots of money and were willing to leave it we were among the lucky ones. The ones who got away. But sometimes I think of the others, the millions, the people I knew, and those I didn't. How many of them must have been better persons than I am. And of the ambitions and dreams of all those men, women, and children, millions..... with their lives unlive and their dreams unfulfilled.

I must make my life count for something, to have been so lucky, to be allowed to live.

## March of the Living by Hayley Becker

There is a story that must be told to the coming generations of children all over the world. Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, or Jewish, all children whomever and wherever, must hear the facts, so that the events in the story never happen again.

On October 6, 1943, in a speech given by Heinrich Himmler, Hitler's companion, the following was said: "I do not think it would be wise to exterminate the adult Jewish population and leave their children to be avengers. The decision has been made to annihilate every Jewish child and to make these people disappear from the face of the earth. This will be accomplished."

With these words, the Nazis tried to condemn the future of a five thousand year old religion to death, but they did not succeed.

The whole story of the Warsaw Ghetto, of the gas chambers, and crematoria, of the extermination of more than one million children, Jewish children, cannot be told often enough. It is the true story of our families, friends, and relatives who are kin to every Jew in the world, past, present, and future generations. They are no longer here to tell the story themselves, children who will be forgotten if they do not live in our memories. I we forget them, no one will ever know they lived, smiled, played, and cried, just as we do today. All of those who say it never happened must be proven to be liars.

As for myself, it was important that I saw the Warsaw Ghetto, the concentration camps, the gas chambers, so that when I become a teacher and a mother, my students and children may be able to see it through my eyes. Then they can understand the greatest tragedy to befall a people. This was a mission for my love for my people.

On a brisk winter day in early April, many miles from home, I experienced the best and worst times of my life. I had prepared for one year before this trip; however, all the studying and researching I did could never prepare me for the anguish and torment I experienced. My life has changed in great part due to my long heartbreaking journey. Unfortunately, it is still very difficult to discuss without breaking into tears.

I was told that everyone would react differently when we arrived there. Some people would let out anger, while others would cry. The anticipation

and anxiety were building up inside me. I was not sure how I would react.

It started to get dark; the roads were poorly lit. I moved around uneasily in my five layers of clothes. I looked around the bus, and everyone was asleep.

“How could they sleep so peacefully? Didn't they know where we were heading, what we were about to see and experience?” I felt scared and alone. I wanted my mommy and daddy!

When I opened my eyes, it was daylight again. Much to my chagrin, I was still on the smelly bus, packed like a sardine in five layers of clothes. I looked around and everyone was awake, talking to each other or writing in their journals.

“Look out the window; it is snowing,” someone said.

A smile lit my face, I had not seen snow in six years.

“I had to come all the way to Poland to see snow,” I laughed.

“Pit Stop,” someone yelled.

“Where are the restrooms?” I asked.

Someone pointed to the dark forest with dead trees.

“Boys to the right, the girls to the left,” shouted the bus captain.

“No way, I am not pulling down my layers of clothes in the snow, in the dirty forest, in the middle of Poland. It is not happening,” I yelled.

After everyone made their deposits in Poland's beautiful forest, we were on the road again.

“Remember what you have learned. Everyone will react differently. Be there for each other,” the bus captain warned.

My body became numb.

“Oh my God,” the reality of where I was and what I was about to see hit me in the face like a baseball. I wanted to go home. I changed my mind. Maybe I was not ready for this, or was I? I wanted to scream with terror. The bus passed over a squeaky bridge and drove through some old gates. The bus stopped, for a split second, and so did my heart.

Walking towards the entrance was a gift shop and a snack shop. I wanted to be sick.

“Why is this here? How can these people be so sick and twisted. This is a graveyard to us,” I thought.

Slowly it came into my view, the words: “ARBEIT MACHT FREI, work will set you free.” They were the same strong iron gates I saw in documentaries, but I was now standing under them. I have distant relatives on my father's side who might have been here. I was there to gain knowledge about my heritage. I was there to let all ignorant individuals know that the Holocaust really did happen. I was there to show anti-semites that they have not succeeded us. I was there for my people.

I did not know how to feel; I was at Auschwitz concentration camp!

I was not sure where to look first. By this time, the snow was melted, and the sun was out. Birds were chirping and the grass was lush and green. The immense brick building stood beautifully. I was ashamed to think such a morbid place looked so breathtaking.

I walked deeper into the depths of Auschwitz. The brick buildings that were once soldier quarters, were now set up as museums. German documents were behind glass along with walls of photographs. Tears filled my eyes when I saw a broken babydoll on display. The doll was broken and torn apart, as was the little girl's life.

“What happened to that little girl?” The child who lost her doll forever was lost as well. I saw huge piles of human hair, brushes, eyeglasses, rooms and rooms piled to the ceiling with shoes and other personal items taken from the innocent prisoners.

“What was their crime?” I asked a friend.

“Their only crime was being a Jew,” she replied.

“There were also a great majority of other people persecuted, not only Jews,” another girl said.

I saw suitcase with names written across in bold letters, suitcase the prisoners thought would be returned to them. I was surprised to learn that when people packed their personal belongings into a bag, they included religious garb; they took what was most important to them.

As I passed through the doorways, I let fingers touch the places I thought others would have touched. It was dark inside there. I looked out the window and saw light. My eyes captured the same view the prisoners saw while they were imprisoned.

I continued to walk through the buildings. My eyes were searching the ceiling and the floor. My hand touched the stairwells that they touched. I felt their presence with me. I sobbed uncontrollably; I was hysterical. My tears fell on the same spot that their tears may have been shed. “How did they feel; what did they know? Did they know their impending doom?” I cried. Friends and adults tried to console my fear by giving me tissues and hugs.

We slowly walked toward the gas chambers and crematoria. As I entered, the walls seemed to close in on me. My throat became choked, and the reality of where I was standing hit me. I became frantic and hysterical, I was in the gas chamber where my people were murdered. I held my breath and tried not to breathe, for if I did, I feared I might inhale the cyclone B gas. While in this horrid place, we prayed and lit candles in memory of those who perished here.

After the gas chamber, I saw the crematoria. I saw the ovens where corpses were brought by Sonderkomandos from the gas chamber. Ashes still remained in the ovens.

As we walked towards the gates to leave, our boots pounding against

the gravel, I heard the big boots of the German soldiers hitting the ground roughly. I saw the prisoners with shaven heads and half naked bodies being marched to their deaths at Birkenau.

After Auschwitz, we rode five kilometers to Birkenau (Auschwitz II). Birkenau looked immense. It looked exactly the same as it did in the movie Schindler's List.

I walked along the train tracks that brought cattle cars packed with my already sick and suffering ancestors to this horrid place. My ancestors who were tortured here, and died here. I took a rock from the tracks that divided Birkenau into the men's side to the right and the women's side to the left. I suddenly thought of our "Pit Stop" on the way here. "boys to the right, girls to the left." Chills crept up my entire body. The rock I took may have been touched by the wheels of a cattle car.

Regina, a survivor of Birkenau, led the way to her barracks. She pointed out the bunk that she slept on with eight or more women. She then carved her name in the rotting wood.

I could not believe how strong this woman was! She did not bat an eyelash nor shed a tear. I know that I would have if I were in her situation.

Later, we visited the bath area. The toilets were cement holes in the ground. As I looked at this atrocity, I thought of the little boy in Schindler's List, hiding in the pit of feces.

After touring this sickening place, I left Birkenau. My eyes were blotchy, my nose was running, and my heart was forever in pain. I knew that I would never forget.

Slowly clutching the hands of my friends, I walked along the tracks heading for the exit of this sickening place. The exit prisoners never reached.

The next day I boarded the buses again. It was daytime, and I could watch the scenery as we drove by. I looked out the window and saw a group of young Polish children spitting up and sticking their middle fingers at us. Tears filled my eyes. I felt betrayed by these kids because I give so much to children.

We arrived at Auschwitz again, but this time we were late. I was there to meet six thousand other Jewish teenagers from forty-two different countries. I was about to participate in the "March of the Living." I was about to march five kilometers from Auschwitz to Birkenau. This was the same march that the prisoners took years ago to death. However, it was then called "The march of death."

The United States was the last country in line; therefore, we had to wait for all the countries to pass by. It was strange seeing all of these Jews from different ethnic background. They were from countries you would never guess that they were Jews. There were Moroccan Jews, Swiss Jews, Hungarian Jews, Indian Jews, Ethiopian Jews...

I marched out the gates of Auschwitz, proud and strong. We passed groups of Polish men, women, and children. They watched us march. To some it was a farce, and they laughed; other spit at us, and others just stared expressionless. However, I was not ashamed. I was proud! We were proving them that we are strong. We were showing them that the Holocaust really did happen, and that we will not let it happen again. I felt anger towards these people, but I also felt pity for them. I asked myself what they could possibly find amusing. Ignorance is the only explanation.

As I marched, the brisk wind blowing, I saw the sea of blue in front and behind me. It was the sea of six million proud young Jews, marching for the same cause, in the royal blue jackets we were given. My heart ached with pride.

All six thousand participants joined together at Birkenau for a ceremony. The ceremony was spoken in several different languages. I felt many different emotions. All of these people were here for the same reason. Although we were all from different upbringings and spoke different languages, we all had one thing in common, our Judaism and our prayers.

After the ceremony, a Canadian handed me a large flag of Israel. I walked along the train tracks with this flag; I walked out of Birkenau. I walked out of myself, and for those who could not. They are alive inside me forever.

When I boarded the buses, my heart was in pain. This was the best and worst experience of my life.

Soon I would be in Israel, my heritage home.







Male Nude by Mark Jette  
Conté crayon figure drawing

## Butterfly

I was wondering how many springs have kissed his wings.  
I was wondering if he was happy or just pretended to make me believe it. I was pondering if he ever felt the same way I did. I used to be strokes of sun light that touched all his being. Twilight times that I won't ever repeat.

He went away like a butterfly when the winter hit, leaving me alone tumbling over our memories of love. Prisoner of never ending nights, my spirit used to flow out of my chest as if it wanted to run away, escaping the loneliness of his departure.

Snowy dawns were the aperture of gray and rainy days because my sunshine was not there. My multicolored butterfly was gone. I was the only one who was in love. I was the one who missed the passionate summer nights where the moon projected only one shadow in the infinite sky.

A thousand years have passed, and I still remember all he said, all he promised, all we planned in case winter winds hit our love and froze our souls. I still see his body projected on the walls... because I am the only one who is in love.

Miriam Marin

# Sweet Little Laurie by Jan Parker

The hospital corridors were long and clean, and gave off the faint scent of Lysol. It was very late. The visitors had all gone. The sounds of her heels clicked sharply as she hurried along the hallway. She saw no one, hoping no one would see her. She stopped to lean against the wall, to catch her breath, and to slip off her shoes, those shoes that were making such a terrible racket. Passing the open doorways, she heard the coughs and moans and groans of the patients. With a thrill of fear she noticed the red nurse call light over a door at the end of the hall. Please, she thought, don't let anyone come now, don't let anyone see me, please. She hurried down the hall to his room. She was sure she could have found his room in the dark. She came to see him almost every night. Sweet little Laurie, coming to see her Uncle Harry, dear Uncle Harry. The doctors had told her that he was in a coma, and that only a miracle could pull him through. But sometimes, she would see him open his eyes and follow her every move. With a sharp intake of breath, she walked into his room. She barely looked at him, such a small barely discernible mound underneath the blankets, as she walked directly over to the respirator, and pulled the plug.

"No surprises" she said softly,  
"Rest in peace you bastard."

She had planned this for such a long time. Planned to end his life, quickly, with no regrets. She closed her eyes tightly expecting tears, but instead she smiled and thought, how easy, it had been so easy. This old man had once been so important to her for such a long time. This old man that had once ruled her life with an iron hand, was gone. Taking a deep breath, never looking back, she slipped on her shoes and strode out of the room, down the long hallway, out through the front doors, and into her waiting car.

She drove aimlessly for a while, just long enough for her breathing to slow down, and her heart to its loud hammering. Turning on the car radio, she tapped her long slim fingers on the wheel and sang softly in time to the

music. I could use a drink right now, she thought. Making a sharp left on Meridan Avenue. She steered the car into the parking lot of the Empire Lounge. She stepped out of the car, a slim figure, well dressed, long black hair shining under the fluorescent lights. Smiling, she opened the door and walked in.

"Laurie Haven't seen you in long time," the bartender said, flashing a big smile.

"You certainly do dress up a place. Don't be such a stranger. White wine, right?"

"Yes, thank you for remembering. I will have a glass of White wine, and take a drink for yourself."

Laurie was an infrequent visitor to the bar, but Toby the bartender never forgot a pretty face, a good tipper, or the name and the drink that went with either one. Laurie took a small sip of the wine, the glass was nicely chilled, and the taste and aroma relaxed her. She glanced around the bar. Several attractive men were looking in her direction, trying to catch her eye. Smiling at herself in the mirror behind the bar, she lifted her glass, saluted herself and took another sip of wine.

"Hello pretty lady, I sure hope you will let me buy you a drink. I saw you coming in and wondered what a lovely lady such as yourself is doing all alone. That is, I hope your alone. My name is Larry, please let me buy you a drink."

"Hello Larry, thank you for the offer, and the nice words, but I just ordered this drink, maybe late."

Laurie looked at him, tall attractive, young, much too young. She had always been attracted to older men. So many years under an old man's rules, playing his games, playing baby, playing sweet little school girl, sweet little Laurie, dressing the part, flirting, holding his hand, touching him, touching him everywhere. She shook her head, trying to push those thoughts out of her mind. She was free now, she had made herself free. She was free to do anything she wanted with her life now, and yet, she searched the bar slowly, looking for that touch of gray, the wrinkled hands, the lines around the mouth, the older man, the man she needed to fill the void.

She sensed him before she saw him. The smell of expensive after shave, the soft silken rustle of a suit of high quality fabric. Glancing into the mirror, she smiled at him. Gray hair, sharp nose, tanned, a look of arrogance, so attractive.

"Toby, I'll have another scotch rocks please,

and a glass of champagne for the lady, if she will join me.”

Laurie raised her glass and smiled.

“I’m Jack Winter dear, and I do believe this is our lucky night.”

For the next hour or so, Laurie and Jack chatted idly, touching on good and better restaurants, latest movies, theater, books, O.J. Simpson, the Cuban and Haitian crisis, a civilized conversation, avoiding anything too personal.

“Let’s get out of here little Laurie, let’s get out of here right now.”

“I’m ready Daddy,” she said.

Clinging to him, they left the bar.

Angie Riccio had awakened early. She put on her bathrobe and her glasses, and stretching, yawning and scratching, she opened the front door to pick up the early edition of the Herald. Behind a large Hibiscus bush, where the paper had been thrown, was the body of a man. A large steel nail file had pierced his right eye. There was blood everywhere. Angie ran screaming into her house, called 911 and then collapsed. The police arrived, the coroner arrived and left with his grizzly bundle, and the street was quiet again as if nothing had happened.

Laurie woke up feeling groggy and disoriented. She sat up in bed and stretched, running her fingers through her hair. There was something there, clumpy and sticky. She jumped out of bed and ran over to look into the mirror over her dressing table. She was naked, and there were dark brown streaks across her face, breasts and stomach. Her fingers were stained and sticky. There was a strong odor of blood all around her. She quickly put her hand between her legs, sniffed at her fingers, no odor of blood, no signs of fresh blood.

“What in the hell happened to me,” she screamed.

“How did I get home?”

“Where did the damn blood come from, it’s all over the sheets.

Where in the hell was I last night, who was I with. I can’t remember, I can’t remember, God please, I’m so scared. I’m so damn scared.”

She thought back to the night at the hospital, when she pulled the plug on the old man. She felt good about it then, and she felt good about it now. No regrets, no tears, just memories that started flooding through her mind, memories that she could no longer deny.

“Give Uncle Harry a big kiss, “ her Mother would say.

“Uncle Harry is gonna have dinner with

all of us tonight, isn’t that swell,

“and then he’ll stay with you while

Daddy and I go to a movie. Now sweet pea,

don’t you cry, look here what a nice gift

Uncle Harry brought you, all wrapped up so

pretty. Just be a good sweet girl and we’ll

come in and kiss you goodnight when we get home.”

After her parents left, Uncle Harry would place little Laurie on his knee, and bounce and tickle her. Then he would put her on his lap facing him, squeezing her tightly, much too tightly, then he would begin to moan and breathe hard, his nasty breath in her nostrils, his rough cheek against her soft skin, pressing her tighter and tighter.

Laurie soon learned how to tease and taunt. Money for candy, money for the movies, then later money for makeup, pantyhose, money for cigarettes and perfumes.

“Just don’t tell.”

“This will be our little secret, sweet, sweet little Laurie.”

Laurie never told anyone.

Laurie stumbled into the bathroom and turned on the shower. The water felt so good. She scrubbed her face, her breasts, her stomach. Washed all the fifth away. Washed away the pain and the fright. Dressing hurriedly, she stripped the bed, shoving the stained sheets into a large green plastic garbage bag. Taking the plastic bag in one hand, her purse and keys in the other, Laurie ran from the apartment, just barely remembering to lock the front door. Tossing the plastic bag into the outside trash bin, Laurie slowed down to walk. The air was brisk, and she began to try to figure things out. Passing a Denny’s restaurant, she decided to stop for coffee and a bite to eat. The hostess seated her at a small table for two, and the waitress walked over carrying a steaming pot of coffee, and a cup and saucer.

“Good morning Miss, my name is Dee,

I’ll be your server, would you like some coffee now?”

"Coffee," Laurie answered,  
"no, no thank you, not now.  
I have to go, I'm sorry."

Reaching into her bag, Laurie threw some money on the table, and ran out of the restaurant. I remember everything now, she thought.

She had gotten into the car with Jack Winters after leaving the bar. He had driven around for a while, and then he had parked the car in a quiet residential neighborhood. They had kissed and held each other, murmuring softly. It was very dark, there was just thin sliver of moonlight.

"Come on now sweet little Laurie,  
be good to me little girl, you know  
why we came here, so be good to Daddy,  
sit on my lap baby, be good to me."

When he said those words to her, all the years of abuse flashed through her mind, and Jack became Uncle Harry. She remembered reaching into her bag and pulling out the long sharp nail file, and then with all of her strength, shoving it deep, deep into his eye. The blood spurted everywhere. Summoning what little strength she had left, she pushed him out of the car, onto the grass. With trembling hands and pounding heart, she started the car and drove back to the bar and parked his car, then got into her own car, never seeing a soul on the street. It had been so easy.

Laurie steered her car into the parking lot of the Carlyle Lounge. She could hear the music, the lights were bright and flashing. She stepped out of the car, a slim figure well dressed, long black hair shining under the fluorescent lights. Smiling, she opened the door and walked in.



B&W Photograph by Atom Persac

# Fuck You

So dont march up to me with your well rehearsed drama 'cause you think its what i want. dont try to feed me the pride you cant choke down. dont bring me eyes and arms and impromptu empathy and profound 'induced-by-me' enlightenment. just shove it. i never needed it. the only thing you couldnt practice rehearse. study, contemplate or improvise was being real...and you never did...ever! and it was all i ever wanted never tangible, never something i felt like i had, just something in front of me; visible but untouchable. dont throw me your baited rope to scale that wall just so you can run and hide once i get over.

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fuck you and your insecurities with a big capital F for the friend you never even realized you weren't! not my fault. its not my job to hold your tounge down during your little epileptic pitymefits. hold your own damned tongue. youve had plenty of practice so far. and how could not caring have impacted so much of me? i thought

i didnt care. totally displaced-can quit at any time. i guess i can be as wrong as you, almost...but not enough...  
not enough words in our twisted language to feel anymore on paper  
not enough time to search for them if there were  
not enough hate to fuel my aggression  
not enough care to keep caring  
not enough fear to keep my tongue off the flaming red coils  
not enough disgust to strip you as naked as i feel  
not enough balls to curl up in a corner and cryandcryandcry  
not enough pride to raise my head, look up, bring my eyes into the sunlight  
not enough knowledge to rationalize living  
not enough thick skin to keep out your acid tears  
not enough numb to ignore the pain  
not enough hours in the day or night to sleep  
not enough love to depend on it anymore  
not enough rejection to reject people  
not enough abuse to cover the bruises to cover the scars to cover the scabs to cover the wounds to cover the tears  
not enough life within me to want it, embrace it, thrive for it, work toward it or sacrifice for it- there's nothing left to sacrifice. everything has been taken away... almost... everything but one thing and it's hardly even left.

and if you were never around to keep me from being alone, then who the fuck are you to demand answers about why im copping out  
**FUCK YOU!**

Tiffany Sherry



"Birth Of Venus" silver gelatin print (mixed media) by Sherry Williamson

## Balseros

the under-tow of gasping breaths  
surfs each worried rafter  
praying for the tides to release  
the ropes and shackles  
fear is not in death but in living

under the reigns of the chicken king  
ominous skies crack open a hell  
the raven would run from  
so the ocean screams and whirls  
canvas and match-stick rafts  
as if the cries of whales  
send rings of radar crossing the keys  
oh, save us, save us, please

every minute the sun steals  
a layer of skin that has already been  
beaten and bruised  
every wave hurls the salt and bile  
that lines the stomachs

guantanamo bay beds the survivors  
reporters are handed scraps of paper  
"por favor 375-6343 Estrada"

families await notice  
searching lists after lists  
like the wives of POWs

## Whether Report

Sugar water breakfast  
Sugar water lunch  
No such thing as Sunday Brunch

No cutting out of coupons.  
No produce. No meat.  
No food stamps. No welfare.  
No ends to meet.

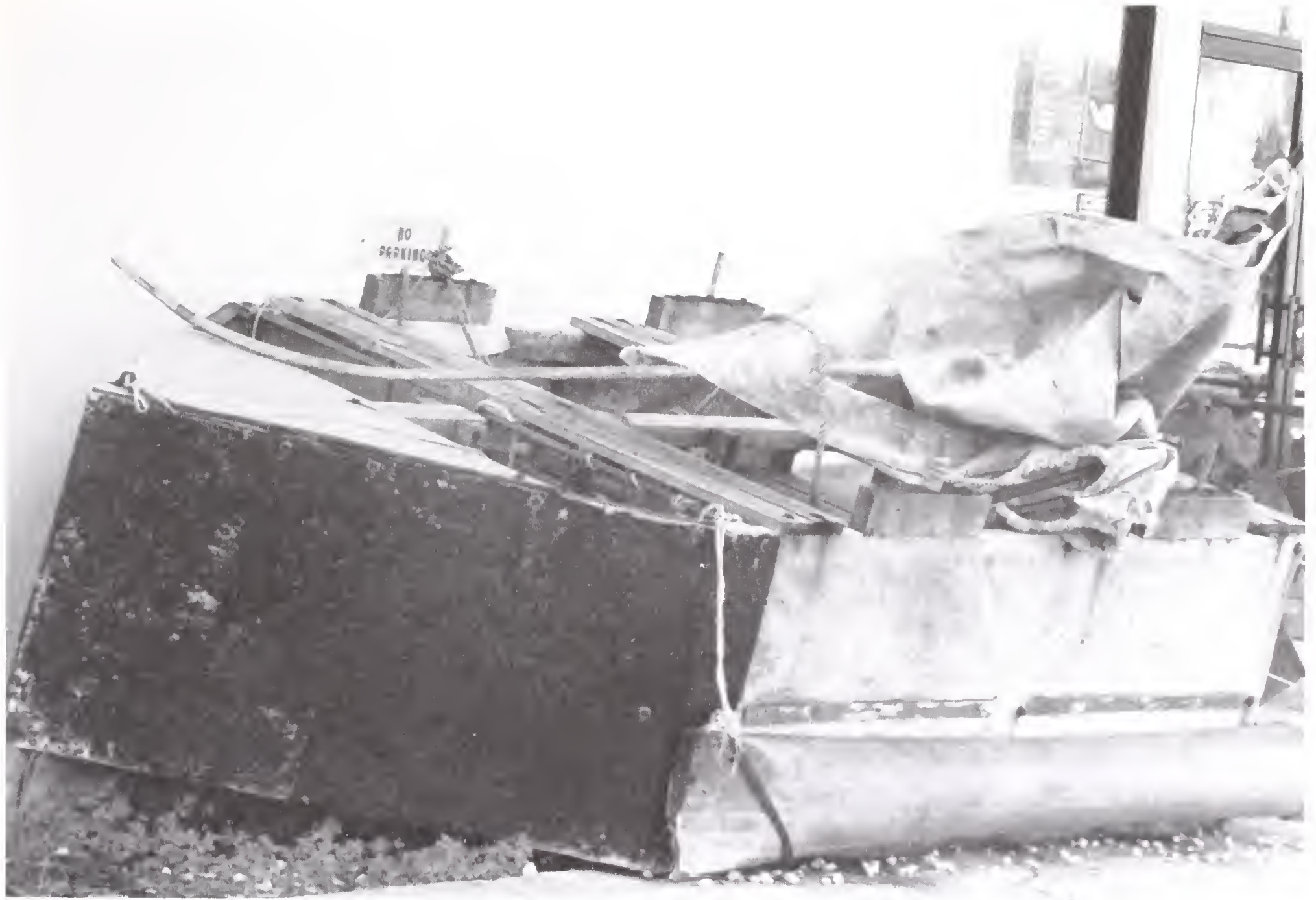
No Peace Corps., No Red Cross,  
No noble "Mother T."  
No airlift grain. No Habitat  
For Humanity.

No motor highway traffic,  
No air or noise pollution,  
Just thirty years of whispered hopes  
of waylaid revolution.

Overcrowded camps,  
Empty jails,  
Mostly fair skies, and balmy  
Carribbean gales.

Perfect weather for rafting  
to Guantanamo today.  
We'll obligingly receive you.  
Enjoy your stay.





"Cuban Raft" by Yvonne Vasquez  
B&W Photo

# Gregory P. Bosowicz

Accents



28

Gregory Paul Bosowicz

I am a Pre-Med student. I will transfer to UCSD/University of Cal San Diego after getting my PHD in medicine. I will join the Peacecorp & help out other countries that are not so advanced in the medical field.

I use art to relieved any stress I might have. This is my way of expressing myself. I do not focus on any subject in particular; I draw what brings feelings to me. My favorite mediums are working with pencil & prismacolor pencils. My art & art around me brings me happiness & a sense of sanity.



"8821 Tree Street" -Pencil



"Fruits of Life" -Prismacolor

## A Conversation With Evil

Evil,  
I cannot defeat you.  
You are a joke,  
not worth defeating.  
I laugh at your folly!  
You are a vacuum,  
you are darkness.

I will fill the empty spaces  
with my light.  
You cannot take away  
the filled spaces.  
I am the light that fills  
the darkness.

Darkness, I would like to  
destroy you.  
Destruction  
is the tool you use to  
black me out.

I will not be a part of your  
cancer.  
I will laugh as I rally!

Evil, you are a joke.  
I am the punchline.  
My laughter will  
blind your eyes.

You will never see  
the good  
you have created  
in your efforts  
to destroy  
me.  
I thank you.

## The Man In Uniform

Midnight Blue  
creaking leather  
clinking steel

Intimidation  
excitement  
lust

"Annihilate me."  
she said  
and surrendered

She knows who  
is in control  
He will do  
her will

Bowing down  
in submission  
she will have  
her way

The stone  
will falter  
the shadow  
will appear

She will  
lead him  
away  
from his  
steel trap

He will  
give her  
the power  
to break  
the barrier

Forbidden fornication  
deviance becomes you  
the uniform fits you  
you must break free



B&W Photo by Atom Persac

## Gigi La Valle Foland



Gigi La Valle Foland, a student at Broward Community College's North Campus, looks at life through the eye of a camera. Gigi has always had a passion for photography and has been shooting ever since she was a young girl. High School uncovered her talent through photojournalism and with the direction of Richard Von Saal, college has taught her techniques in the darkroom and behind the lens. Her main influences are the French photographers Brassai and Doisneau. Like them, she tries to evoke emotion through her own photography. Gigi prefers to use Kodak T-Maxx 3200 B/W film to emphasize grain and contrast. She hand colors her photographs to distort and animate her subjects.

Traveling around America has given Gigi a continually changing backdrop, from the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco to the transient beings that lurk in the dismal alleys of New Orleans. Some of her best photographs have been taken when she walks down an unknown street and strikes up a conversation with a total stranger.

Gigi wishes to continue her education after Broward Community College and expects to journey wherever her camera may drag her.



"Golden Gate" -B&W Photo



"Squeeze" -Hand colored B&W Photo

# First Place

## The Wheelchair

Lisa Leokum

She sits  
on the arms of a wheelchair  
crossed legs  
squeezed like sausages  
The ochre mane frames her face  
her bitter eyes meet mine.

I glance away,  
shamed.  
She is the one with oozing flesh  
taking money  
from men who want to feel  
her stab her use her leave her.

One slows  
-then stops.  
As he lifts her from the chair  
She avoids his eyes.  
In his car she leans over and  
her head disappears from view.

Her slack mouth is a smoky haze  
sweaty skin cooling  
is she happy with her job,  
pleased with her performance?

Is she crippled  
or is the chair a draw to men  
who see her sitting there  
and say  
There's one who won't get away.



# Second Place

## The Park Rena Register

I need to see a tree  
and a park bench

I need to know  
that there are  
things that remain  
quite

while I rush  
frantically  
through this  
melodrama

I need to hear  
the birds sing  
and feel the breeze  
blow against  
my skin

I need to know  
that the sound  
of a bird  
remains always  
a melody  
and the breeze  
remains a  
caress

when all I can  
hear  
is the  
chatter  
of my mind

screaming  
for a way  
to  
feel  
again

# Third Place

## Portfolio by Tina Chance Mary Jenkins

The black woman will do what she can  
to make things right,  
She's a woman of courage,  
and definitely bright.  
She doesn't consider herself to be  
naughty, snobbish, neither serene,  
But she's a perspicuous woman,  
If you know what I mean.  
She might be considered a star,  
In comparison to her past,  
She has made it far.

Don't misinterpret her, since  
She's from a different race,  
For she's the portrait of the Black woman.  
And it's written all over her face.



"Tea-Time" hand thrown pottery by Lisa Rivera



**Rappelling Raindrops**

Rappelling raindrops,  
outside the cracked window pane—  
inside dry eyes watch.

**Whispering Pines**

Whispering tall pines,  
ancient canopy cries out,  
a lone chainsaw roars.

**Twisted Tree**

Twisted lifeless tree,  
long gone of leaves and flowers,  
an empty nest waits.

**Fire**

Rapidly burning,  
raging fire of destruction,  
life lingers below.

**Shells**

Fragmented sea shells,  
bleached, broken, and buried,  
supporting the shore.

# OF MUTTS AND MEN

by  
Dave Barry

38 It was after two in the morning when Tracy finally crawled into bed next to me. I pretended to be asleep as she ran her fingers through my hair. She had spent the past three hours pacing in the living room, sobbing. She was stroking my ear now, obviously hoping that I would respond with a show of sympathy for her plight. Well, screw that. The events of the evening had left me furious, and I had no intentions of being affectionate right now. She sniffled loudly, then leaned over and began whispering baby talk gibberish into my ear. That was the last straw. Abandoning my sleep ruse, I opened my eyes, gave her a quick look of disgust, and then leapt to the floor and trotted into the living room. I needed to think, and that wouldn't be possible while sharing her bed tonight. She had screwed up her life, and mine in the process. So she could just cry her little eyes out for all I cared. I was seething with rage, and needed some way of venting my anger. Lacking any better form of expression, and appreciating the irony, I shit on the white rug, and then took my spot on the couch, ready for a long night.

Life with Tracy had been a trial from the start. She found me licking a discarded hamburger wrapper in the parking lot of the mall where she worked as a clerk for Waldenbooks. Even though I was only slightly more than a year old, I could see that she was a ditz. She was twenty-three, but her blond hair was tied in pigtails like an eight-year old's. Her bright orange dress was covered with embroidered kittens, and she wore a green and red bracelet on each wrist. She was bubbly and perky, and the image she portrayed was that of major airhead. I would have avoided her altogether if not for the fresh baked cookies she used to entice me into her beat-up Datsun.

Once in her clutches, I got my first taste of her irritating fussing and cuddling. "OOOOH, YOU'RE SO CUTE! YES YOU ARE! YES YOU ARE!" she said, squeezing me like a python and rocking me from side to side. I squirmed free, and cowered in the back seat. "Who was this bimbo," I wondered, "and what did she want with me, anyway?"

I know I sound ungrateful, and believe me I was in need of attention. I had been born in the county dog pound, the smallest in a litter of five. My

mother, a mange-infested cur, had been sentenced to death by injection as soon as my four siblings and I were past nursing age. My dirty brown coat and big pleading eyes were impossible to resist, and I was quickly adopted by the Sullivans, a young couple who got me as a birthday gift for their obnoxious six-year old twins. I was kept chained in the backyard through rain and shine, being allowed in the house only when the brats felt like yanking my tail or pulling my floppy ears. When I reached twelve months, and had maxed out at thirty-five pounds, it was decided that the kids didn't show enough interest in me anymore, and Alpo was getting too expensive. I was driven across town, far enough so I wouldn't find my way home, and left in an alley. I had managed to survive for eight days on my own before Tracy found me.

She was already in violation of her building's "one-pet only" rule, but she couldn't resist adopting me. When she brought me into her tiny one-bedroom apartment for the first time, I thought, "hey, this might not be so bad". Her place was warm and cozy, and after a heaping bowl of leftover chicken, I settled into the lazy-boy for a long nap (although Tracy insisted on waking me every ten minutes to remind me of just how adorable I was).

But soon trouble appeared, slinking from the hallway into the living room to check out the new houseguest. Cats. Lousy, rotten cats. There were two of them, each a different flavor. Snuggles, the ten year old Persian, was a typical older cat, grumpy and aloof. She mostly resisted Tracy's attentions, choosing instead to spend her time on the windowsill and sleep. But Whiskers was another story. He was a three year old Siamese, young enough to be energetic and mischievous, but old enough to have developed a feline sense of cunning and sneakiness. Upon seeing me for the first time, Snuggles simply made a large arc around me and took her spot on the windowsill to stare out into the street. But Whiskers crouched by the kitchen, hair on end, watching me while emitting a deep, continuous "MURR" that made it plain he didn't welcome me into his home. He had grown accustomed to having a monopoly on Tracy's affections, and he clearly didn't trust me. I couldn't have cared less and resumed my nap, although I made a mental note to keep a close eye on Whiskers.

As I settled into my new home, I began to worry about the quality of life I was destined to lead with Tracy. Don't get me wrong; after my cold, hungry days of vagrancy in the city, I was grateful to her for rescuing me. But the more I was subjected to her childish affinity for snuggling and kootchy-cooing me like a baby, the more I wondered if we might be mismatched for one another. I had always yearned to be someone's trusty ol' hound-dog. I craved a master in Levi's and a t-shirt. Someone who would take me with him fishing or camping. I desired a life of rugged adventure, and instead fate had deposited me in the possession of a grown woman with the personality

of Betty Boop. She was sweet, mind you, but she was caught in a state of perpetual cuteness that drove me up the frigging wall. I came of the opinion that she simply didn't get out enough. Besides us pets, her only companionship seemed to be the Jackie Collins novels she brought home from work.

As for me, my only companionship were the two cats, whom I viewed as little more than a mild annoyance. Snuggles, being the wiser of the two, had accepted my formal peace treaty: don't bother me and I won't eat you. It was a simple agreement that served both sides. But Whiskers, ever jealous of Tracy's constant attention to me, was always trying to incriminate me via tipped potted plants or garbage pails. He even tried chewing up her Italian pumps to frame me. Tracy didn't buy it, and eventually Whiskers had to settle for shooting me dirty looks, always from the safety of the kitchen counter.

Tracy chose "Muffin" as my new name. This bothered me to no end. What the hell kind of name was Muffin? For some precious French poodle or Scottish terrier perhaps, but not for a mongrel like me. With my long scraggly tail and wild floppy ears, I personified the word "mutt." I had always pictured myself as a "Scraps," or "Rags," or even "Buddy." But Muffin? Gag. The babe was determined to sissify me. Each passing day seemed more tedious than the last.

Among the few breaks in my otherwise mundane existence were the times when Tracy would thoughtfully invite me to accompany her during her various travels about town. "Muffin, wanna go in the car? Wanna go in the car? Yes you do, don't you? Yes you do! Yeah!" She would have this idiotic grin on her face the whole time, and shake her head from side to side as if caught in some cuteness seizure. Geez Tracy, calm down. But when you're stuck in a stuffy apartment all day with no one but two obnoxious cats for companionship, and you're offered the chance to stick your head out the car window and let the wind blow up your nose, you don't pass it up. So I'd play her stupid game by jumping up and down and barking excitedly. But I hated having to sacrifice my dignity for a simple cruise to the grocery store.

Another rare treat I enjoyed was the Sunday afternoon walks she took me on to the city park down the street. After countless dreary hours spent in Tracy's chiffon and lace filled apartment, I welcomed the opportunity to lift my leg over a hydrant or two. And at the park, I was able to congregate with the various collies, dobermans, and other neighborhood canines on similar outings with their masters. Here I met dogs in all shapes and sizes, and not a butt went unsniffed. At these moments, I felt truly alive.

Unfortunately, following each walk to the park I was forced to endure the ultimate humiliation: a long bubble bath, and then a dowsing in Chanel #5, or some equally foul stench, concluding with the final insult, an oversized pink bow around my neck. Hello, Tracy? I'm a male, remember? Check

underneath, hon. Whiskers would usually watch this ordeal from the dry vantage point of the bathroom counter, licking himself clean and looking quite smug. Ah, get a hairball, you pussy!

The walks and car trips we went on were welcome changes in my boring routine. But these expeditions usually caused me mixed feelings. While I enjoyed coming in contact with the outside world, I was also forced to endure constant reminders of the exciting life I was missing out on. Every time I saw a stray poking through a garbage can, heard the happy barks of some shepherd chasing a mailman, or caught a whiff of fresh crap, I felt the loneliness in my heart grow. More and more, I began to resent Tracy, with her incessant babbling and coddling, for keeping me as an unwilling captive.

I suppose that sounds cold. After all, she had rescued me from starvation, or worse yet, certain doom at the pound. I was thankful for the warmth and care she extended me. But we were so obviously wrong for one another. She lived in a world of stuffed teddy bears and Malibu Barbie dolls, and I belonged in some rough-and-ready life where I could jump and run, tongue flailing crazily to one side, while harassing a flock of ducks, or some other such adventure. I considered making a break for it during one of our walks. God knows it wouldn't be difficult to break her frail hold on my leash. But then I was risking a run-in with Mr. dogcatcher, or the possibility of having to fend for myself again on the mean streets of the city. Besides, I felt a sense of obligation to this dimwit who had lovingly taken me into her home. So I figured the best thing to do was to improve the quality of my life by improving the quality of Tracy's. Since she had rescued me, I decided I would find a way to deliver her from her dreary life into one of romance and passion, and in the process, find me a master more suited to my needs. Tracy needed a guy. And I was going to get her one.

Now all I had to do was figure out how to set her up with Mr. Right. The other tenants of our building were mostly older, married folks. Responding to personal ads was out of the question, not having opposable thumbs and all. During our walks, I kept an eye out for prospective bachelors walking their pooches. But my efforts to introduce Tracy to these guys by feigning friendship with their curs were always thwarted when Tracy, ever timid, would fabricate some mythical appointment she was late for, then awkwardly excuse herself. I began to wonder if I would ever be able to fix her up before she became an old Mother Hubbard, fetching her poor old hopelessly bored dog a bone.

Then we met Greg.

We were out for "walksies" one Sunday when I saw a group of guys frolicking on a hilltop on the far side of the park. There were five of them, all in their early twenties, throwing a Frisbee around to see who could make the most acrobatic grabs. My heart leapt with yearning to be a part of that.

Knowing that a chance like this might not come again, I stopped in my tracks and hunched my back while wheezing and hacking. Tracy simply stared at me for what must have been thirty seconds. Jesus, good thing I wasn't really choking. The impulse finally reached her brain, and she bent over to loosen my collar. As soon as I felt the clasp come undone, I sprang to life and took off running. With Tracy in hot pursuit, I sprinted across the park to their group and, mustering all the grace my underexercised legs would allow, I leapt into the air to intercept the bright orange disc Greg had just launched. After a rather ungainly landing, I returned the Frisbee to Greg just as Tracy huffed and puffed her way up the hill. She apologized profusely, explaining breathlessly that I had never, ever done anything like this before. I got the distinct impression that the guys were happy I had. In her cutoff shorts and white tanktop, Tracy was obviously a welcome intrusion. Five pairs of eyes inspected her as she struggled with me to fit my collar around my neck. Greg, who was clearly the leader of the bunch, spoke up.

"Hey, that's okay. That was a hell of a catch she made." He was about six feet tall, athletic, with dark curly hair and eyes the color of milk bones. Perfect, I thought.

"He." Tracy responded demurely. "He's a he."

I didn't understand the guys' laughter until Greg said, "Then why the pink bow in her, uh, his hair?" Oh, the shame!

"Oh, um...I guess I just think it makes him look pretty and junk. I don't know." I could tell she was looking for an escape route. She finally succeeded in fastening my collar, and began dragging me away. "Well, um, sorry again," she said, eyes facing downward as she walked. While tugging as hard as I could against Tracy's pull on my leash, I thought, No! Introduce yourself! Strike up a conversation with him!

Luckily, Greg didn't need my help. "Hey, wait!" he said, walking after us. "I want to ask you something."



Tracy jumped as if goosed. "Yeah?" she squeaked, turning around to face him.

"Well, that was a terrific catch that she, uh, he made. And I was wondering. There's an animal talent contest being held here next month. It's sponsored by, um, by Pet Supermarket, and I thought that if you didn't mind, maybe I could train your dog to be a champion Frisbee catcher. First prize is

five hundred dollars, and I'll split it with you if we win."

"Really? They're having a talent contest here?"

"Yeah, really. It hasn't been announced yet, but I know this guy that works there. We'd have a great chance to win." His eyes were fixed squarely on her chest. "So what do you say? Can I get your number so we can arrange a practice schedule?"

It was an obvious lie, and she bought it completely. "Okay! Wow, Muffin, wouldn't it be cool to win a talent show?" She bent over to tousle my fur, then looked up asked Greg. "Do you really think you can teach him?"

"Sure I can. But it's gonna take lots of training. And I'll need you to come with us

when we practice because...well...because he's obviously going to be a lot more responsive to you than to me." he said while I wagged my tail furiously and licked his hand.

And so began the courtship of Tracy. Every afternoon, she took me to the park to practice with him. The poor girl didn't have a chance. She never seemed to notice that Greg devoted far more time to her than to me. He picked her flowers, bought her sodas from the concession stand, and complimented her endlessly. Tracy, unaccustomed to such treatment, was powerless against his charms.

Greg was in no hurry to woo her. He obviously recognized that Tracy was a timid little thing, and he would have to proceed slowly so as not to frighten her away. We trekked to the park to meet him every evening before

sunset to see how much I could run before I collapsed. In order to keep up the talent show facade, I had to spend hours on end chasing these Frisbees that he was capable of throwing about twelve miles. This went on for six days. Finally, after a particularly grueling session, Greg came clean with her while they sat beneath a shade tree as I panted madly nearby.

"Say Tracy. Let's go to dinner tomorrow. Say around seven-thirty. Maybe catch a movie afterwards."

Tracy blushed deeply. She was not used to this. "Well, I don't know. What about Muffin's training?"

"Well, actually 'I've sort of got a confession about that."

She gave him a puzzled look.

"See, the thing is," I was watching with rapt attention. This was a big moment. How would Tracy respond to this admission of deceit? "...the truth is that there is no talent show. I just made it up so I could get to know you better."

She said nothing at first, and simply looked at him blankly. He was cool, though, and maintained his deep stare into her eyes.

"You mean this whole thing has been a lie? These practices, the show, everything? I've had to swap three shifts at work this week for this." Uh-oh.

But he was unflappable. "Hey look, what can I say? I guess I have no values when it comes to a great looking girl." He laid his hand on her thigh, and lowered his voice seductively. "You know, I think you're very special. I just want a chance to show you how special I think you are." His sly smirk spoke of total confidence.

She seemed to struggle with herself for a moment, averting her eyes from his powerful gaze. "Well, I guess I'm flattered. I kind of wish you'd been more honest with me, but..." She lifted her head to look into his eyes. "But when I first saw you, I thought you were really cute. I'd hoped that maybe you would ask me out. But I figured someone like you would never be interested in someone like me."

"Allow me to dispel that notion, then."

He reached his free hand out to gently caress her cheek, never removing his other from her leg. He leaned over, and stopped a few inches from her face. She craned her neck, and their lips met. Without losing lip contact, her maneuvered both arms around her and locked her in a firm embrace. Damn, I thought. This guy's good.

When they finally came up for air, he noticed me sitting nearby admiring my handiwork.

"By the way, why did you call him Muffin? No offense, but it's kind of a sissy name." Oh man, I thought. The cavalry has arrived.

And not just for me, but for Tracy as well. She needed Greg in her

life. He made her feel wanted and special. She was so shocked that anyone, let alone someone like him, would want to be with her. Their relationship took off. They went to ball games, movies, and carnivals. They called each other constantly, both at work and at home, just to say hi. They moved very fast, and I could tell Tracy was falling very much in love. Wonderful, I thought. Tracy was finally receiving the human contact she needed. It had been a long time coming.

And in exchange for the attention he gave her, Tracy showered Greg with the care and affection that until now she had been wasting on the cats and me. She cooked him dinner, wrote him poems, and just hovered around him in a constant display of love that I was quite familiar with. He had made her feel pretty and desirable, and she was so grateful for this that she would do anything for him.

I was thinking about this one afternoon while drinking from the toilet. It was obvious that this relationship was good for Tracy. A change had begun to take place in her, subtle at first, but gradually more and more noticeable. More time was taken on makeup and hair. Money was budgeted for new clothes. She finally got around to calling the landlord about the broken garbage disposal, and she actually ripped into him when he accused her of breaking it herself. I had never seen her so forceful. Her self confidence and sense of worth were growing stronger every day. I suppose being made to feel wanted and loved will have that effect. And this was all thanks to one special guy. And to me. for getting them together.

Greg began to spend two or three nights a week at our place. He always found time to wrestle with me, or take me outside for a game of fetch. Things were looking brighter every day. He was the assistant manager at a nearby McDonalds, and many nights he'd pop over with a six pack and a few unsold Big Macs for me (although he never brought a thing for the damn cats. I think this bothered Tracy, but she never said anything about it.) After some serious sweet-talking and fondling on the couch, the lovebirds would retreat to the bedroom while I finished off the last of the onion rings. Ah, paradise.

Tracy continued to grow before my eyes. This once meek little thing was now radiant with new love. Her neighbors and co-workers began to see the change in her. She finally approached her boss at Waldenbooks to request her first pay raise in three years of loyal service. She got it too, along with a better shift that freed up her weekends in order to spend more time with Greg, who was also flush with new found romance. He had decided to go back to school to pursue his engineering degree, and was even talking about maybe moving out of Mom and Dad's place. Despite seeming to be total opposites, he had caused her to blossom by making her feel desired and valuable, while she boosted his macho pride by offering him her unconditional devotion and attention.

The quality of our lives had improved greatly, and I know that it was just a matter of time before we took the next step. Tracy and I had both grown quite used to having SuperGreg in our world, and I began to wonder how long it would be before he would be around all the time. I was still being subjected to Tracy's endless smothering, as well as my Sunday afternoon perfume dips, and I wanted Greg to be there permanently to break Tracy of these annoying habits. He was a real guy's guy, the kind who wore his baseball cap backward and ate stale pizza for breakfast. If anyone could bring Tracy the space cadet back to Earth, it was him. The moment I had been waiting for finally came while they celebrated their four month anniversary with Chinese take out and a movie Greg rented from Blockbuster. It was something with Stallone, and she soon lost interest and began to affix a purple bow of shame around my neck.

**He likes wearing ribbons and looking pretty, don't you Muffy?**

"Honey, don't put that bow on him." He scolded. "Jesus, he looks like a sissy."

"Don't you call my Muffin-Wuffin a sissy!" Her voice went up about twenty octaves. "He likes wearing ribbons and looking pretty, don't you Muffy? Yes you doooo.!" She squeezed me and shook me violently from side to side. Yahoo. I struggled to be released, and immediately jumped onto the couch next to Greg. All right pal, we've come this far. Let's finish the job, whatta ya say? I nudged his arm with my nose, leaving a wet smear.

"Hey Tracy, I've been thinking." His voice was full of authority. A proclamation was forthcoming.

"Yes?" Tracy was now seated in the recliner, stroking Whiskers who was purring loudly on her lap.

"Well, I'm going to be getting more hours at work starting next week. I'll probably be making an extra two hundred dollars a month. And I'm getting tired of living at home."

Tracy had stopped petting Whiskers, who looked up at her annoyed. "And?"

"And so I figure, why don't you move out of here and we can get a place together? I've already found a great townhouse closer to where my school is. It's got a washer-dryer, walk-in closets, and even a yard for the dog to run in. It's a lot bigger than this place, and I think that, well I mean..." Tracy and I were both waiting breathlessly for the next line. "What I'm trying to say is that I think things are going really well for us, and I know that you feel the same way. Anyway, I've decided we should move in together."

"Oh Greg!" Tracy squealed, leaping from the chair and sending Whiskers sprawling to the floor. Ha! Didn't land on all fours that time, did

you? Greg stood up, and the two of them embraced.

"Yes, I think we should move in. Together, I mean. As soon as possible. I've never been so happy until I met you."

He looked into her eyes, and if I had tear ducts I would have cried. "I love you Tracy."

"I love you Greg," she whispered.

"I love you Greg," I thought. Whiskers was licking his balls.

Our lease was expiring in less than a month, and plans were hurriedly set into motion. Greg mostly took care of the details at the new place. He reserved the unit with her check, and made arrangements for the utilities to be activated on the first of the month. And Tracy, anal as always, began packing boxes of carefully organized crap, each one labeled "GRADE SCHOOL PHOTO ALBUMS" or "ROMANCE NOVELS: AUTHORS A-M." Every time she floated past the television, she paused to gaze lovingly at the picture of Greg she had placed there after their third date. He continued to come over almost every night, and they were like newlyweds. They would map out the layout of their love-nest, deciding where to put the sofa, the entertainment center, the bookshelf. They couldn't get five minutes of planning done without stopping to suck each other's fillings.

As for me, I was in heaven knowing that my plans had worked to perfection. Tracy was happier and more stable than she had ever been. And I couldn't wait until that first day in our new home. I spent hours daydreaming about the yard where I could bark at birds and chase squirrels. Greg and I could go jogging together. Or maybe just to the park. I could tag along when he and his buddies played football or basketball. I would finally have a master that I could bond with.

And then the bottom fell out.

On the twenty-ninth of the month, three days before the big move, Tracy was still going over the interior layout plans with Greg, who was watching TV. Tracy asked what he thought about her designs for the spare bedroom. When Greg mentioned that he planned to store his weight bench in the spare bedroom's closet, Tracy looked confused.

"But that's where the litter box is going to have to go," she said.

"What hon?" Greg asked. He seemed much more interested in the Redskin's pathetic defense than in this conversation.

"Greg!"

He looked up at her.

"That 's where the litter box is going to be. For Snuggles and Whiskers."

Now it was Greg's turn to look confused. "Tracy," he sputtered. "I just thought...I mean...well, we both love Muffin, but you know I can't stand cats."



A hurt look slowly appeared on her face.

"And besides, you don't really play with them that much. I mean, you hardly ever even pet them. I guess I just assumed we'd let them loose or something."

"Let them loose?" she whispered softly. Her eyebrows were arched and her lips were quivering. He reached for her hand, and she pulled away. I could sense trouble. Call it my keen canine instincts.

"Well, either that or give them to the animal shelter. They'll try to find them good homes, and if they can't, well..."

Tracy sat motionless. Greg suddenly realized he was going too far, but there was no turning back now. Geez, maybe Tracy was the smart one after all.

"Well, it would be quick. It's done by injection. And it's painless." He emphasized "painless," as if this would make Tracy leap into his arms and thank him for being so thoughtful.

Tracy wore a deeply pained expression, and that didn't bode well. My mind was reeling. This couldn't be happening! Not when I was so close! Think, dammit, think! There was nothing I could do but watch helplessly from the floor near the couch. There was no hand-holding or eye-gazing now. There was just the two of them, and he was revealing a part of himself to her that she didn't know, or had refused to believe existed.

"I'm not going anywhere without my cats," she whispered. Greg didn't respond. He simply sat there, looking dumbfounded by this interruption in his afternoon plans of football and romance.

"I'm not going anywhere without my cats," she said again, louder this time. Standing up, she raised her voice even further. "Jesus Greg, did you honestly expect me to leave them in the streets? Or take them to the pound, for Christ's sake? I've had Snuggles since I was thirteen. She was a birthday gift from my grandmother. I got Whiskers when I graduated high school. What made you think I would just leave them?"

Greg stood up, trying to regain control. I was hopeless. He had drawn her from her shell, had helped her become more assertive and self-confident. Now it was coming back to bite him in the ass.

"Look, don't get all bent out of shape over this. I'm sorry for not letting you know this earlier. I just assumed that...well anyway, I'm sorry. It's just that the rules of the complex only allow one pet per unit, and the manager lives next door to us. You know how I feel about Muffin, but I just don't like cats. I'm sorry. I should have told you earlier.

"You should have told me?" Tracy was shrieking now. Even Snuggles knew something big was up. She hopped down from her usual perch in the windowsill for the first time in about three days to get a ringside seat for this match. "What do you mean you should have told me? You don't

tell me what I'm going to do with my cats! You don't tell me what I'm going to do with my life!"

"Look, Goddammit!" Greg said. He was intent on regaining authority. Unfortunately, his voice cracked on the "Look." Nice try, tough guy. "I said I was sorry. But don't you think you're overreacting a bit here? We can only have one pet, Tracy. We're not getting rid of the dog. The manager lives next door to us, so we can't try to hide two cats. There's just no other option. This is the only way we can do this. Who's more important to you anyway, me or Whiskers? Come on Tracy, they're just stupid cats!"

She had picked up Snuggles, and was softly kissing the top of her head. She looked up at him icily, tears streaming down her face. She did not, however, break her gaze, and Greg was the first to look away.

"Get out of here," she whispered.

He didn't move. His eyes darted about the room searching for some way around this unexpected roadblock.

"Get out," she whispered again, softer this time.

He stared at her, then took a tentative step toward her on unsteady legs.

"**GET OUT!**" she roared. She was no longer Tracy. She was Linda Blair in "The Exorcist." Snuggles leapt from her arms and scampered to the safety of the bedroom. She moved toward him, and he retreated like a frightened child. Moving past him, she yanked open the front door, and stood there. He slowly stepped outside the door, then turned to face her.

"All right, if this is how you want it, fine. But "I'm not leaving here until I tell you this: You are without a doubt the most..."

**SLAM!** The walls shook with the force of it.

I was still sitting on the floor watching this scene in disbelief. I felt numb. Tracy leaned against the door for a moment, then straightened up and turned on her heel in a military style, and gallantly began marching toward the hall. She didn't make it. Stopping in mid-stride, she suddenly fell to one knee. Then the sobs came. Great bellowing sobs, one after another, sending her into convulsion. Snuggles cautiously emerged from the bedroom and approached her. She rubbed against Tracy's legs, mewling softly. Tracy managed to pick her up and kiss her once before spasming into sobs again. Whiskers was in the kitchen, peering sadly into his empty food dish. As for me, I didn't know what to do. My great chance for happiness had sprouted white angel wings, and was flitting away before my eyes. I went into the bedroom and stretched across two pillows, whimpering softly.

He called about an hour later. There was plenty of shouting, lots of name-calling. Safe to assume a reconciliation wasn't in progress, I surmised. My heart sank. Finally, she slammed the receiver into its cradle hard enough to make Greg's ears ring for a week. Then the apartment was abso-

lutely quiet, the calm before the storm. A fresh batch of bellows commenced, and I tried to shield myself from them by covering my ears with my paws to no avail. I remained there until she finally came to bed, at which point I vacated the bedroom in disgust.

So that was when I made my trip to the couch. I couldn't believe that things had suddenly gone from so wonderful to so miserable in one night. If I squinted hard, I could almost see the invisible stink rays floating up from the love offering I had left on the rug, a metaphor for my ruined life. He was so perfect. So right for her, for us. In my mind, I began to see the sticks I would never fetch, the camping trips I would never go on, the squirrels I would never chase, the Frisbees I would never catch, and on and on. And all because of two worthless cats. What was Tracy thinking? Couldn't she understand what Greg was saying? What was this mindless loyalty to tow ungrateful beasts that couldn't have cared less about her?

The light in the hall flashed on. Tracy made her way toward the kitchen. She sniffled loudly, and wiped her nose on the sleeve of her nightgown. She looked across the room, and saw my surprise gift on the rug. Sighing, she walked over and sat next to me on the couch.

"Poor Muffin. You're going to miss him, aren't you?" She patted my neck and began scratching behind my ears. "I'm sorry, sweetheart. Please don't hate me"

She looked directly into my eyes, and it was scary. There was understanding there, as if she knew. As if she knew my unhappiness, my desire for a new master. As if she knew that I had planned her rendezvous with Greg that day in the park. As if she knew that I had been obsessed with getting away from her and her smothering affection. She bent over and kissed me on the head, then rose and walked into the kitchen. A moment later, she came back into the living room carrying a roll of paper towels and a plastic bag. Ignoring the foul odor, she began to clean up my mess. Using liquid carpet cleaner, she attempted to scrub away the brown stain. When it was obvious the rug was as clean as it was going to get, she got up to deposit the bag in the garbage, leaving behind a softball-sized brown patch on the carpet. I began to feel the shame swell within me.

Now, over the past six months I had developed an intense dislike of Snuggles and Whiskers. Especially Whiskers. But we had learned to coexist by mutually agreed upon avoidance. I still wasn't a fan of theirs by any means, but since they were Tracy's darlings long before I was, I naturally assumed they would be making the move with us to the new pad. I didn't mind continuing to avoid them, especially in a bigger place. Even though

**She looked directly into my eyes, and it was scary.**

Tracy didn't have a lot of attention left over for them when she was through adoring Greg, and then me, I knew she loved them with all her heart and would never leave them. But apparently, Greg had never noticed that. I will admit, though, that I had harbored a secret hope that the cats would somehow, some way, be left behind with my old life. While part of me enjoyed seeing Tracy blossom into a woman, I still had hoped that Greg's hold on her was strong enough that if there was a fight over what to do with the cats, and push came to shove, Tracy would revert to her former mousy ways and give in to his wishes.

But the more I sat there in the dark and thought about it, the more Greg's attitude began to irritate me. I started to suspect that it was more than just the prospect of losing Snuggles and Whiskers that had sent Tracy into her rage. It was Greg's clear illustration of his feelings toward her. He thought enough of her to take her out to dinner or the movies. But he didn't see her as important enough to consult with on such trivial matters as the fate of her lifelong pets. Worse still, he had resented her and lashed out when she protested. How dare she defend herself, eh pal? The central issue here was his insensitivity to her feelings. He was head over heels in love with her, as long as they saw the movies he wanted to see and moved to a townhouse closer to where he worked. He was caring and attentive towards her as long as she remained submissively by his side to feed his ego. But as far as he was concerned, her newfound assertiveness better not apply to him.

Was this the son of a bitch that I wanted Tracy to be with? That I wanted to be with? Tracy had lifted me from the street, cleaned me up, and dedicated herself to taking care of me. I ate the most expensive dog food, got lots of leftovers, was taken outside for walks at anytime of the day or night that I demanded, and enjoyed her total love and care. True, she doused me with perfume and tied pansy ribbons around my neck. But she had the sweetest soul I had ever known, and I had attempted to repay her for saving my life by trying to escape from her tender care. I now recognized that she deserved better than Greg. And I guess she deserved better than me, too.

Well, maybe she hadn't blown it after all. Maybe he had. If Greg was too stupid to realize what he had in her, at least I wasn't.

I walked down the hall and peered into the bedroom. The lights were all out, but the glow of the street lights filtering through the Venetian blinds revealed her lying on top of the covers, still crying softly. My heart nearly burst with love for her. She didn't need Greg. She didn't need to be taken for granted or pushed around. But right now, she was hurting and needed to know she was still loved.

And what the hell, I could learn to live with the baths, the baby talk, and even get along with the cats. Besides, if I capable of getting her together

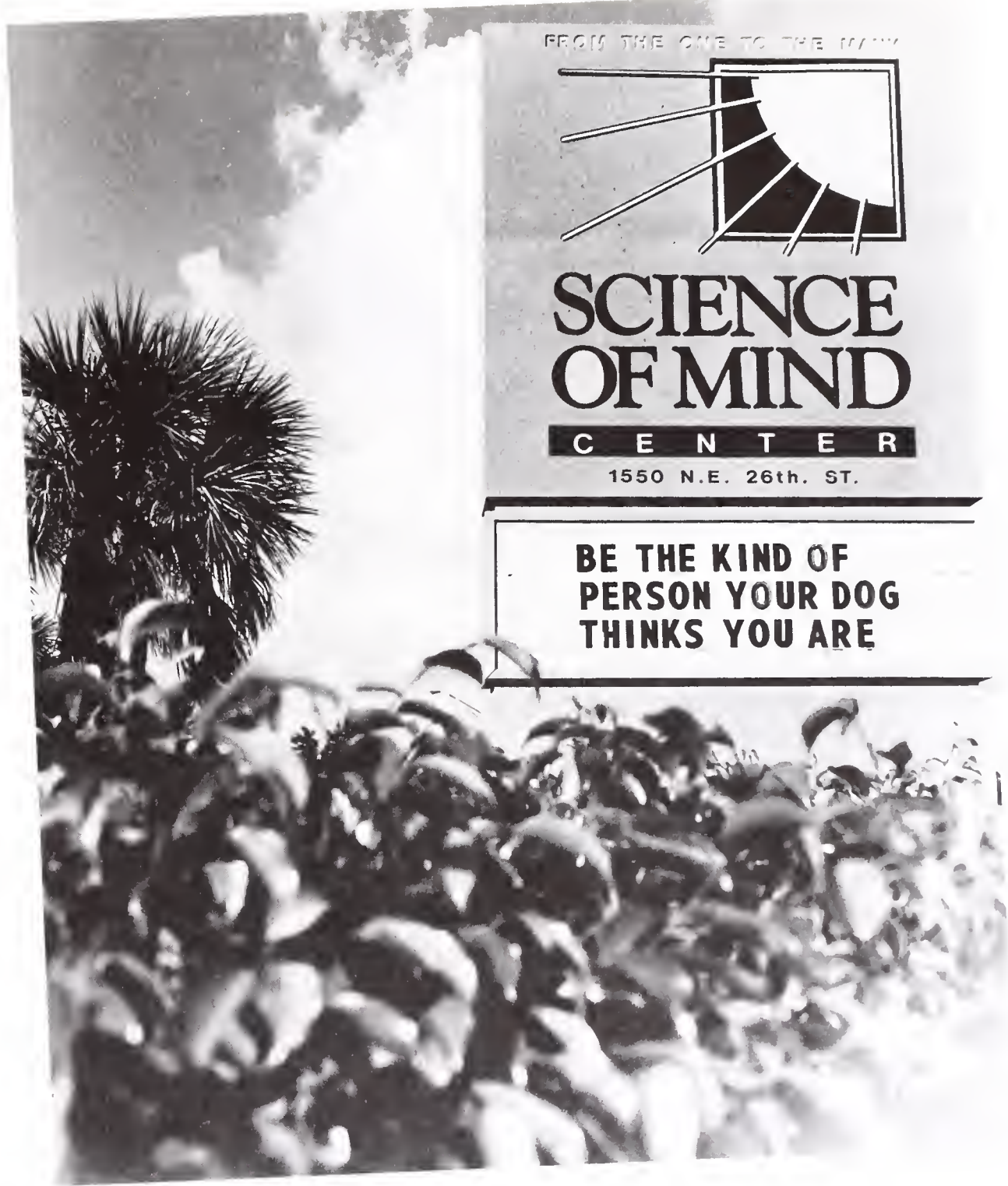
with that asshole Greg, then who's to say that I couldn't come up with some plan to bring another dog into our lives? Something unpretentious and fun that I could spend my days romping with, like a golden retriever. Or a beagle. Nah, a mutt like me would be our best bet. Some mixed-breed bum that we could rescue from the pound. We make the most loyal pets, anyway.

But that would be tomorrow's plan. I jumped onto the bed, and shoved my snout into her face. I began to lick furiously, tasting the salt in her tears. She choked back a sob, then giggled and shook her head trying to escape my tongue. But I wasn't letting her get away that easily. I continued to lick her cheeks until she grabbed me and hugged me tight, while I wagged my tail madly.

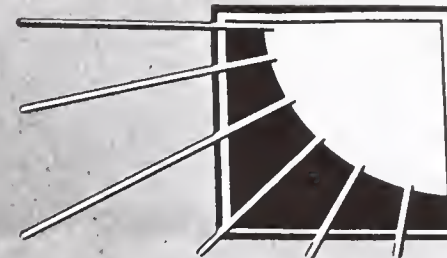
"Thanks Muffin. I needed that." She laid back on her side, and I nestled in close to her. "We're gonna be okay, pup. You, me, Snuggles, Whiskers. We're all gonna be okay."

I turned my neck to give one more slurp across the face, then stretched out. Snuggles was watching from the top of the dresser. She was purring, and had a pleased look on her face that I couldn't recall ever seeing there before. Not to be left out of this love-fest, Whiskers entered the bedroom and leapt onto the bed. As he cautiously made his way toward me, I lifted my head and sniffed in his general direction. He approached me slowly, and extended his head to my nose in a nuzzling gesture.

With a sharp twist of my head, I sent him flying to the floor, meowing in protest as he fell. Hey, what can I say? Old habits die hard.



FROM THE ONE TO THE MANY



# SCIENCE OF MIND

C E N T E R

1550 N.E. 26th. ST.

**BE THE KIND OF  
PERSON YOUR DOG  
THINKS YOU ARE**

"Thus Spake" B&W Photo by Walter Hansen



B&W Photo by Kymm Ryan

## What Maps Are Made For

a dirt road drive  
along the darkness  
and barbed-wire fences  
off the highway  
we passed the twin cities

it's really a norwegian moonlight  
that scrapes the grazed grass-

royal blue-eyed blondes  
white linen aprons stitched  
so close to curves-  
cottages lined with flower beds  
white colors, heart shapes, clean textures  
pristine porcelain.

she said swedishly, "mi n n -e- so-o-o-ta"  
where the cows walk  
sideways and cross legged—  
milkmen deliver glass gallon  
bottles of milk still top-layered  
with cream-

she pointed to the map  
laid it in the back seat  
motioned to open

now i know what maps are made for.

Tandilayla

Loser: First 50 Words free

**Self abusive SWM (21) seeks SWF (19-23) goddess type to screw what few friends I still have, wreck my car, steal my money, ruin my credit, destroy my self esteem, and rip my still beating heart from my chest and stomp on it. Send photo.**

Mike Carpenter



Staff Photo

# Small Miracles by Lawrence Carrino

Life can sometimes surprise you. Like a wrecking ball between the eyes or a jolt of electricity running through your system. Life has the ability to surprise you. Once in a while, just when you think the whole human race, the motely crew that we are, has finally reached the depth of degradation, the pinnacle of perversion, something happens that reaffirms your faith in the human spirit.

I guess I'm a cynic. A pessimist. The person who can, and usually does, see a woman give birth and see not a miracle, a small miracle, but a strange and upsetting physical act. But perhaps, no more.

I often watch the news and feel burdened by all the injustices and evil that is in the world. The misery, the cheating, the hunger, the death, and the hopelessness that things will never change. It is all there, like a melancholy brew. But when it seems love and hope are dead, one person, one solitary individual, can commit and act so selfless and laden with kindness that it becomes a part of you. Makes flames burn where cold once lived in your heart.

Miracles do not exist, I often think. If miracles did, why is the human race in such a hole? But, they do exist. They happen and who would have thought I would have been witness to a small miracle at my place of employment? A supermarket.

In one work day I must personally check-out over a hundred people and when it is overly-busy... well, you can imagine, I'm sure. Most of my customers are just faceless forms brandishing money and then only blend into the crowd. Others leave their mark on you and make you remember them, mostly for the wrong reasons. But, once in a while life comes along and throws something in your face and surprises you. This is a true story about a man, a priest, and a small miracle.

The night was relatively slow, thankfully, and the air out-

side was rather chilly, and I felt rather good myself. I wasn't working too hard and I would be going home soon. A gentleman stepped into my line and it is this gentleman who plays a vital role in my story. It was this man who taught me what school could not; that kindness is the most powerful gift we have and even at its lowest a human being can still be capable of selflessness. We will call this man Paul. The name seems fitting. I checked out the faceless shadow standing ahead of Paul and took his money. As I turned to ring up Paul I realized that behind Paul was a priest clad in black and white collar. I had seen the priest before in the store and knew him to be a pleasant man and relatively quiet. A stereotypical man of God. The priest was talking to Paul with a quiet and hushed voice. I hardly pay attention to my customers after a certain point, and usually find their annoying babble moronic. But then Paul said something that caught my attention.

"I've been living on the street for almost a year." I looked up in surprise and then realized how he was dressed. Paul's body was clad in mismatched clothes and he was unclean. His long soiled blonde hair was pulled back in a pony-tail and his rough face was covered in salt-and-pepper stubble that also looked unclean. An obnoxious neon pink baseball cap sat on his head and his eyes were sullen and dark.

Clasped in his hands was loose change and he looked down at it miserably. I took Paul's groceries, a pint of deli-made peas and rice and a few pieces of cooked chicken, which was probably his only hot meal in a while, and began to ring it up. As I did that the priest reached into the folds of his robe and drew out his wallet. He plucked a bill from it and put it in Paul's hand. Paul looked down at it and handed it back to the priest. "Take it," the priest said, and pushed Paul's grimy hand away. Once again Paul insisted and the priest answered in the negative. Paul put the five dollars in his shirt pocket and looked down at the change again.

"Have you tried Camillus House?" the priest asked and Paul shook his head. "No," he whispered. The priest rattled off other names of local shelters and to each Paul shook his head.

I bagged Paul's things and told him the price. He looked at me and then sifted through the change, counting it out. "No," the priest said and repeated his previous act this time handing me the money for the groceries. I nodded and rang it through and reached out to give the priest his change. He shook his head and nodded toward Paul. I gave Paul the change and he thanked the priest. The priest smiled and pulled a piece of paper from his wallet and began to write on it. "Go to this church," he told Paul. "Go see the pastor there and tell him I sent you. He'll take care of you and get you a shower, some new clothes, and a hot meal."

Paul took the paper slowly from the priest's hands and thanked him. Paul put the paper in his pocket along with the change I gave him, and left,

his groceries in his hands. "That was a very nice thing to do," I said, proud of the man before me not as a good priest but simply as a good person. Good priests are easier to find.

"What's that?" he asked, an honest look of puzzlement on his face. "What you just did," I said, grinning. "Oh," he said, laughing. "Isn't that what life's all about?"

"I guess it is," I answered.

But that is not the end of my story. As far as I am concerned it is only the prelude. The priest is gone. I have rung out several people since he left and for one moment I look up and see Paul again; he is standing on the express line, the one dedicated to people making less than ten purchases. He's making a purchase. He's buying beer, I automatically assume. Told you I was a cynic. He's using the money the priest gave him and buying alcohol. From my point-of-view I could not see what he was indeed purchasing so I stepped over to my right and saw that I wrong. From where I was standing I had not been able to see that he was holding something. Now I did.

Clutched in his arms was a small dog. It was thin and wiry and shaking from the cold outside. The dog clung to him almost as much as he seemed to cling to it. I grinned at the sight before me and then saw his purchases slide down the tray and onto the rear of the register. Dog food. He was buying dog food. Not beer. Not bread. Not food. I watched in wonder as Paul reached into his pocket with child-like joy, and pulled out the five dollars the priest had given him. He paid for the dog food with the five dollars, took the change and pocketed it. He then reached into a small pack that was slung over his right shoulder. He had not had it earlier. He drew out a wrinkled shirt; he unwrapped it and then wrapped it around the homeless puppy. It disappeared into the warmth of the shirt, and with the food in one arm and the dog in the other, Paul walked out. The majority of the store was watching him quietly.

Selflessness is hard to come by in today's world. And it seems so odd that a person with so little could give so much of himself. And those with so much find it so difficult to even give someone a smile. Both Paul and that dog needed each other and it's often in the lowest darkness that light grows. You don't have to have much to give a damn about something; you just have to have a heart and use it. And life, if anything, is always surprising.



B&W Photo by Shumana H. Sikder



## Avoiding the Electric Chair

Happy is the lone widow  
as she walks through the fields  
Stalks of grass  
slice her stockings  
and fall back with bloody stains.

She moves on  
softly humming  
swaying to the echo  
of her sweet husband's sighing  
as he released his last breath.

Her fingers loosen, drop the knife,  
it falls to the dirt  
hilt first  
ready to slice the heel  
of some poor unsuspecting sod.

She smiles as she nears the gate  
her fingers wrap around the bars  
insane  
she knows  
this is her new home.

Lisa Leokum

## The Old Man, His Wife, His Dog

The moment was occupied  
Within a mutual experince  
Bodies one but little disguised  
In the front seat of my car  
Sense returns quickly  
Sweat stinging my eyes  
A prickly sensation in my neck  
We are not alone  
The old man, his wife, his dog  
Like out of an old painting  
Stood beside our car  
The wife- racoon eyes watching  
The dog- panting in harmony with our still speeding pulses  
The man- an almost smile on his lips,  
inside aching for our sensations

Eric Phillips



"Iguana Tale" acylic by W. Eric Henderson

# Rise Again By Caxrl

Charlie was fat. He was the fat kid you picked on in school. He was the fat kid the neighbors didn't let their kids play with because, "There's somethin' wrong with that boy. Nobody can be that fat and not have somethin' wrong with him." He was the fat kid you would always see by himself in the cafeteria, silently eating his three brown bags full of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. He was the fat kid you always picked last for the kickball team, if picked at all. He was the fat kid who was never asked on a date. And if it wasn't bad enough he was fat, he had the terrible double curse of owning the last name of Dough. Thus, it was the natural course of human kindness that you bless him with the nick-name of, you guessed it, Dough-boy.

Now, God himself knew that Charlie Dough was indeed not in his image and felt sorry for him and sort of ashamed for letting something like this happen. So, he gave Charlie something to live for. He instilled in him a love of words, the passionate, aggressive love of rhetoric that Mozart or Beethoven had for music. Sitting for hours, Charlie would slowly digest books and their delicious banquet of aromatic verbs, spicy nouns, and plump, juicy plots. It gave him something to hide in and help shun the cruel reality that surrounded him during the course of his life.

Luck would have it, Charlie had a heart attack at the age of twenty-eight while he was on the southbound 8:30 B bus headed for the downtown library to return some books. It took five paramedics and one off-duty police officer to remove his body from the bus and the spectacle even made the first page of the newspaper the next day.

Finding out about his death, God sent instructions for St. Peter to "Send the Dough-boy in to see me right away," not even thinking of what he had said.

God had just finished a hearty lunch made at the Heaven's Gate Deli, consisting of a thick Reuben, a bag of Lay's Sour Cream and Chives potato chips, and some of his favorite chocolate chip cookies, when Charlie Dough walked into the room. He could see Charlie's nostrils flaring at the left over scent of food and told him that as soon as they finished talking, he

was more than welcome to have all that he wanted from the Deli.

Pacing the room and clearing his throat, he found his most impressive, booming, saving for the sinners and great miracles voice, and began to speak:

"Charlie my boy, I don't feel you've gotten a fair deal in life. You've been shunned and ridiculed for being something that is, by far, not your fault. Well, being who I am, with the influence that I have on the order of things, I feel greatly saddened at what I've let become of you. Believe me, those puny, irritating Earthlings have been a thorn in my side ever since I created them. It was my first creation, I was young and inexperienced at such things and before you know it, everything's gone haywire and they're doing things that I tell them not to and killing each other and....Anyway, I feel responsible for what has happened and feel that you deserve another shot at life. I'll let you be anything you want. A tall, dark Italian model? The Pope? President of the United States? Anything you want Charlie, and you're it. What do you think, son?"

Staring at his laced fingers placed in his lap, Charlie didn't care what was going on--he was hungry. Looking up, he obediently nodded in agreement.

"Good. Now, according to the Great Reincarnation Book," he said, taking down one of the many books that lined the office walls and flipping through the pages, "There are a few restrictions. Here it is, chapter nine, page thirteen, paragraph two: 'The soul of a living thing cannot and will not be immediately returned to being what it had already been. Only after a waiting period of a hundred years, can that soul of that living thing be returned to its last form or species.' See, that's the only problem. I know you're probably thinking, 'You wrote the books, why can't you change it', right?"

Charlie nodded.

"But, I can't do that. I'm a man of my word and if I wrote something, I won't change it. So, why don't you go get some lunch and while you're eating, think of what you would like to be in your new life, O.K.?"

Coming alive when he heard food, Charlie quickly stood up.

God gave him the directions to the deli and happily waved good-bye, as Charlie walked to the deli as fast as he could.

He ordered two large Italian Monster Subs with everything, a king size bag of B-B-Q Fritos and an extra-large Bladder-Buster Coke. While eating his lunch, Charlie started sorting through ideas of what he would like to be. something man eating, definitely. Maybe a lion or a shark or a strange incurable virus. As he was finishing the last of his snack, it came to him. Smiling, Charlie Dough began laughing out loud. He emptied his tray and proudly walked back to God's office.

"Ah, I can see by the look on your face, my boy, that you've come up with a good one, huh?"

Charlie grinned a Cheshire grin.

"Well, what is it?"

Charlie could not contain it any longer and blurted out his answer, "A dictionary!!"

"A what?" God asked, confused.

"I want to be a dictionary. A really big one."

"Surely you jest. Who would want to be a boring, inanimate dictionary? There must be something else that you would want to be. Right?"

"No. A dictionary."

"Are you really sure of this?"

"Yes, I'm sure."

"Alright. You know, I can give you more time if you want to think about it..."

"No, I've thought about it enough. I would like to be a dictionary."

Charlie said, grinning once more.

So, Charlie was sent down to processing and his soul was removed from his body and sent back down to Earth to inhabit a dictionary. He was now Webster's Great Encyclopedic Dictionary, always sitting proudly on any bookshelf. He was still big, but it was an expected, respectable big. And for the next hundred years he was owned by only the greatest of caretakers. A woman, who should have been a model, but was too short, sat on him when she drove her car. He received plenty of use from a family of eight that loved to play Scrabble. He was owned by an old lady who had her bookcase next to the kitchen and whenever she baked apple pies or deep fried chicken, a slight glow came from the dictionary. And this, by far, was his favorite.



Jonnie B&W Photo by Gigi La Valle Foland

# Bumpa by Dianne Zeller

The room was cool and comfortable. The only light that illuminated the room was a beam of early morning sunshine. I was lying in my warm cozy bed trying to count the dust particles dancing in the beam of life. I could smell coffee brewing and hear Mama singing the "Good Morning Song," and the rustling of Bumpa's newspaper. It was Shabbos, a day of pride and ritual in my little family. At age nine, my family consisted of myself and my two Grandparents.

My senses were invaded with childlike visions of the last few days and of my best friend Elena Gonzalez. As I stretched like a lazy cat, my thoughts turned to Elena and our forbidden secrets. I tried very hard to remember her teachings, and her probing questions. With my eyes tightly closed and body very still, I tried to envision the statue of a gentle woman and her child, a lovely necklace made of seeds, and a table with white fat candles. I could hear Elena's voice invoking secret words that captured my imagination. Suddenly I felt the tender touch of Mama and heard her sweet voice announce the day's upcoming agenda. "Good morning Dianne. Hurry up and get dressed. Bumpa is ready and is waiting for us to have breakfast together," she said as she was busily setting out my clothes. Her voice startled me out of my reverie, and my guilty thoughts put me into motion quickly. Perhaps if I was busy getting dressed she wouldn't notice my blushing or read my thoughts.

Sitting at breakfast was a painful affair, as I was convinced that my preoccupation would be discovered and elicit a barrage of questions. So I ate quickly and silently. Bumpa was dressed in his finest suit and Mama was in her green eyelet dress with matching shoes. I was in a dress that had a white pinafore and matching green eyelet. We were dressed to go to Saturday morning services. Both Mama and Bumpa noticed my pensive mood. Bumpa even remarked, "Princess, are you still dancing with the sandman? You're so quiet and somber this morning."

I gingerly replied, "I'm still tired from last night. Maybe I should stay home and go back to bed."

His reply was no surprise to me, "No, we have to go to Temple, but you can take a nap with me while Cantor Glantz is singing."

We all chuckled and finished our breakfast with discussions of what else we were going to do for the weekend. I couldn't go into detail about my plans with Elena lest my secret gets out, so I just listened and ate.

As we made our way to the car, we saw Elena at her front door. I glanced nervously in her direction, as my family and she exchanged greetings. She gave me a knowing look and winked at me; that made me blush hurriedly out the door.

Once in our car, Mama told me that today's services would be very special because Bumpa was invited to read from the Torah and give the sermon to the congregation. Mama was especially delighted about Bumpa's honor, as she was always so proud of the man she loved so dearly.

At Temple we took our seats; they were in the front row and the first three seats from the aisle. This was a position of honor, and everyone in the congregation was aware of our status. We were the "Singer" family, co-founders of the first temple in Miami. The congregation considered Bumpa to be the most important man of their minion; even the Rabbi would ask for Bumpa's opinion on religious matters, and the congregation always deferred to his opinions.

My Bumpa was a tall handsome man; he looked even taller and more handsome to me that day. The Rabbi called Bumpa up to the pulpit and his rich baritone voice my Bumpa began to read the Torah. Even though I didn't understand the words he was saying, I knew he was wonderful. The congregation thought so, too. Some people were reading along with him, some were nodding their heads in agreement, and others seemed to be mesmerized by him.

After several amens, the Rabbi then reintroduced Bumpa, and told them that he would deliver the sermon. Again my Bumpa took the pulpit, and again my heart swelled with pride. His powerful voice began to ring in the subject of his sermon.

"Should we as victims of intolerance be ourselves intolerant? Should we cast judgment against differences as it was passed on us? Or should we be enlightened and tolerant of those that are not like us? What is the definition of a true Jew?"

This brought the congregation into a riveting gaze and captured everyone's attention. And this I understood, this topic had my total interest, then it dawned on me that this subject was hitting too close to home. Did he hear me at Elena's, or could he read my secret sins of the mind? I was very worried, and yet somewhat relieved. I was sure my secret was out and that he was going to expose me as the blaspheme that I was. I knew that I would have to explain myself, and better do so quickly. I was found out.

Every Saturday after services my family had a ritual. It was to go to the local Deli and get our lunch to take home to our guests and enjoy the rest of the Sabbath with family and friends.

Uncle Saul's deli was a wonderment of smells, tastes, sights, and conversation. There were two large wooden pickle barrels guarding the entrance to this magical place. The wooden floor was stained with splashes of pickle brine, and littered with sawdust. The left side of the room had white deli cases stuffed with Jewish fare, like pickled herring in sour cream, golden chubs, and ruby red lox. The left side of the room had the aroma of freshly baked bagels, rugelah, and honey cakes wafting under your nose like an enticing dancer. But, best of all, in the back of the store were huge cases that were as tall as Bumpa and held the true treasures of every Jewish princess. There were large bricks of cream cheese, some plain and some with chives or vegetables, also large bricks of butter, sweet and salted and the best of all, large bricks of Halvah. Halvah is a candy made of sesame seeds, honey, and sometimes chocolate. If Uncle Saul liked you he would stop all business and get down to the business of giving you a free piece of Halvah.

But that day no one noticed me, the focus was on Bumpa and his riveting sermon. And frankly I was not in the Halvah eating mood. I, too, was preoccupied by my grandfather's words, and the task ahead of me.

Later on that day, after our company had left, I knew that my time had come to confess my sins. Pensively I asked to talk to my Grandparents. By the seriousness of my tone we naturally gravitated to the hub of our family discussions, the dining room table.

I began my confession with a question, a habit that has remained with me to this day.

"Bumpa, did you really mean what you said about being tolerant of other people's differences? I mean, is it okay to be Catholic, and to have Catholic friends; is it okay to know about their religion?" By this time my questions were being asked through a cacophony of tears, and hiccups. I was so upset that I didn't even notice that I was enveloped in his arms and Mama was wiping away my tears. There was a long silence, a pause that made me tense up anxiously awaiting his answer.

Slowly, he began his answer, "Of course, Princess. If we want to eliminate prejudice in our world, we have to educate ourselves about differences of race, religion, and creed. Prejudice is nothing more than fear and ignorance. Why do you ask, and why are you so upset?"

Now my tears really began to flow and I began to tell my beloved Jewish family about how I betrayed them. How Elena taught me to say the rosary, to bless myself by doing the sign of the cross, and to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary. I told them how the Blessed Virgin Mary looked like she loved me, she had such a sweet smile and loving eyes, that the Catholics had to light candles every night, instead of just Friday nights, and Holidays.

After my purge of sins I was expecting to hear those dreaded words, "I'm so disappointed in you, Dianne." Instead I saw and heard my Bumpa's approval, with Mama nodding her head in agreement. Bumpa explained to me that I had done nothing wrong, but sought to educate myself about something that was important to my best friend. That it was nothing to be ashamed of, nor something to keep secret. He then said something I would never forget, and that I try to live by, and have hopefully passed on to my two sons.

"Religion is a private matter between you and your maker. We are all God's children, and he loves us no matter what our color, or religious beliefs. God would want us to know how to pray, and that there is no right way or wrong way to say our prayers, as long as your prayers are said."

This day has had and will continue to have a profound effect on my life. I grew up in very intolerant times, and have fought for more tolerance in this world. I truly believe in what Bumpa told me that day, and sincerely wish that the hate mongers of the world had my Bumpa as their guide into tolerance. Bumpa was truly a holy man, a man of God.

# The Little Red Hen In The "Decade Of Deceit And Fraud"

by  
Kathleen Davis

An adaptation of the classic childrens' tale

There once was a little red hen, and she and her chicks lived on a farm with lots of other animals. One day, while walking through the farm yard, she spied a stalk of wheat that all the other animals had passed by. The little red hen decided to pick up the wheat and use it for flour to make bread. It was just one stalk of wheat and not enough to make bread. She realized that she would have to grow more.

She and her chick went out into the yard and the little red hen asked the other animals, "Who will help me plant this wheat, so we can make bread?" "Not I," said the cat, "I come from an underprivileged background." "Not I," said the dog, "I had a really bad childhood." "Not I," said the pig, "I don't want to jeopardize my unemployment check." "All right, I'll do it myself" said the little red hen; and so she did.

The wheat grew and grew. Then, when the day came to harvest the wheat, again the hen and her chick went into the yard and asked all the animals if they would like to help and again the others refused. The little red hen and her chick worked and worked, and harvested the grain.

The next thing they needed to do was to take the grain to mill to be ground into flour. The little red hen again asked all the animals, "Who will help me take this wheat to the mill?" "Not I," said the cat, "you don't have any cats in management." "Not I," said the dog, "you don't offer any drug counseling." "Not I," said the pig, "you don't offer health insurance, and I don't want to take care of that myself." "All right," said the little red hen, "I'll do it myself." And so she did.

When it came time to bake the bread, the little red hen again asked

the others if they wanted to participate in the work, and again they declined with many excuses. As the bread baked and the aroma wafted across the yard, the other animals went over to the little red hen's place and waited for the bread to be ready.

When the bread was ready to eat, the little red hen asked, "Who will help me eat the bread?" "I will," said the cat. "I will," said the dog. "I will," said the pig. The little red hen said, "No, you won't. You didn't help plant the wheat. You did not help harvest the wheat. You did not help mill the wheat. You didn't help bake the wheat, and now you can't have any of the bread."

Just then, the farmer's wife and the farmer came by with a group of their friends to see what was going on. The farmer felt the animals' pain and he took the bread away from the little red hen. The hen protested, but the farmer said, "you profited unfairly in the 80's." And he broke the bread into pieces, keeping a piece for himself for "administrative costs" and handed the rest to his friends. The friends of the farmer, in turn, broke the bread into smaller and smaller pieces. The farmer and his group then handed a few crumbs to each of the animals and allowed the little red hen to keep a few crumbs for herself and her chick. None of the animals were happy about this arrangement, but they were told that they didn't know what was the best and that their only hope to live a good and correct life was to listen to the farmer and his group.

The next day, the little red hen spotted another wheat stalk. She picked up the wheat stalk, saying nothing to anyone, and moved to another farm where the atmosphere was friendlier to enterprising souls.

The End

# School

school...what does it mean?  
i'm caught up in some existential dream  
i waited so long to get here  
now it seems  
i'm flying.

high above the crowding of my life  
i'm in flight  
a dream deferred, now met  
a challenge faced, now get  
on to the next thing...  
u know what i mean?

this collection of buildings, of places  
of many-hued, rainbow colored faces  
of smiling-frowning-friendly-intense races  
running to be run  
like me, many have begun  
anew.

a lifestyle not-so-rich-n-famous  
but varied..challenging-fun-creative-paces  
stretching-yearning-growing-learning-knowing  
i have so much more to learn  
to see-to-do-to feel  
new perspectives  
i reach beyond  
myself.

school...what does it mean?  
it is a place to grow, to go, to know  
fulfillment of my dreams, potential met  
the power, the enablement to get  
what

ever

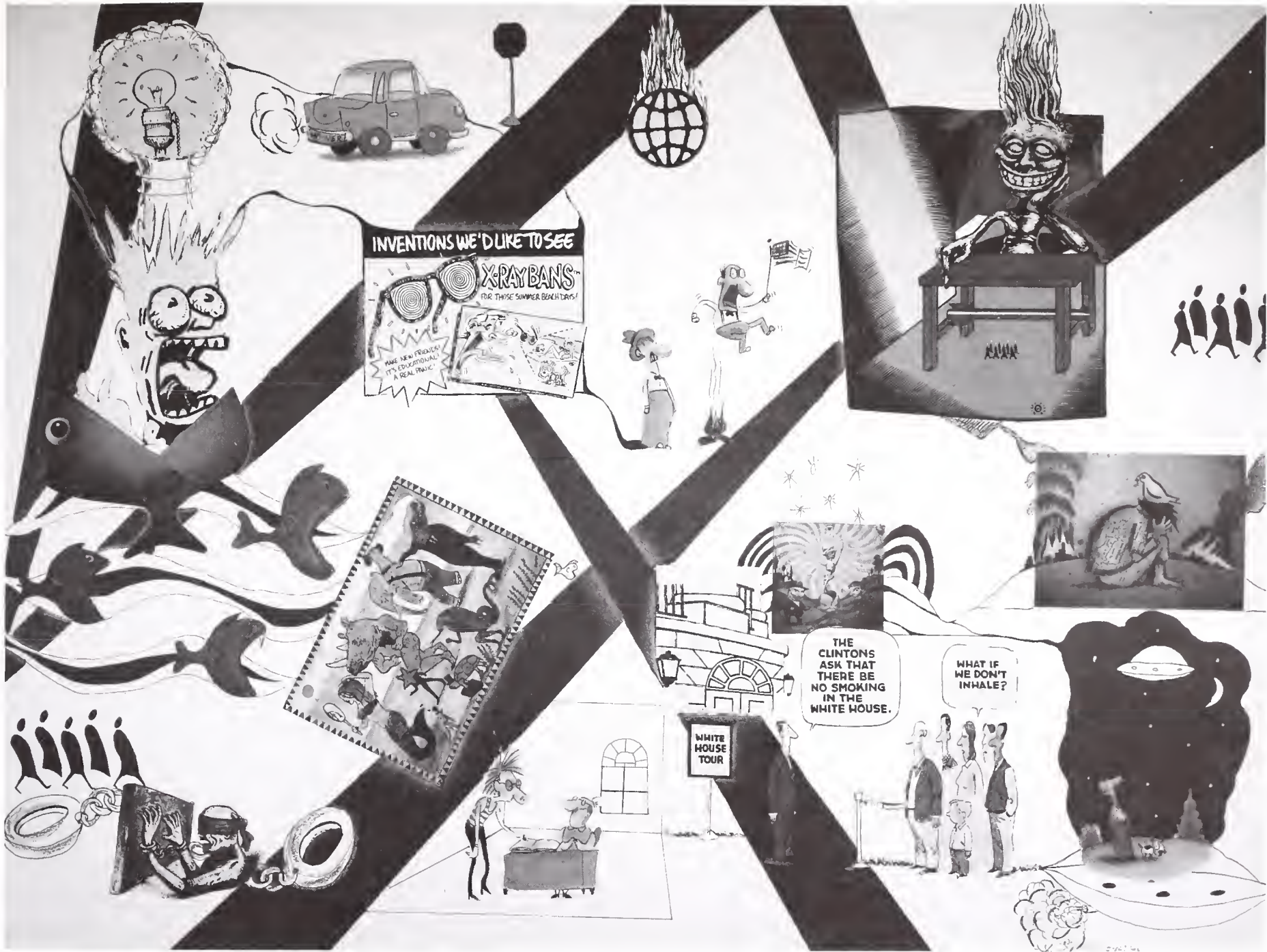
i

want

...the choice is totally mine...freedom of the mind.

e. j. prince





"My Life" mixed media by Gregory P. Bosowicz

# Love of a Grandfather by Greta Costa

I used to cry. I used to cry a lot, but I don't anymore. I learned how to bury tears in silent graveyards. I know now that crying is just like watching the sun set, makes you feel better, that's all. I used to do that a lot. Sometimes I can almost go back when I sleep and feel the sandy breeze going up through my nostrils, until filling the hollowness of my body. I can almost see the waves clashing against the rocks, making birds rise from their settled spots. And even some rare nights I can reach farther and grasp the warmth of those glorious days.

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I lived only three blocks from the sea, and I really didn't care more or less about her (the sea). I never went near her because I had always been told that if I made her mad, she would come out one night and scatter throughout all the land until she sunk the earth. I never really understood her until my grandfather introduced me. I did not know of her true beauty. I refer to the sea as "her" because living in Cuba my grandfather and I spoke in Spanish, and in this language masculine and feminine properties are given to nouns.

"So, she is a woman?" I would ask him.

"Yes," he would say. "And her husband is the sun," he would continue. "And every night after a hard day's work he sets behind her to find comfort and love."

I never really understood such a concept, but I enjoyed the story itself and every day when we watched the sun set, I would ask my grandfather to tell me the story again. My grandfather was the best man, at least I always thought. He lived with us, my father, mother and me. He was my companion, my best-friend, the only individual in this planet who always had time for me. He never underestimated my intelligence nor wit, but he could always tell when I was lying. I remember the day my mother told me we were leaving. She woke me up one morning, and right away I knew something was

wrong because it was he, my grandfather who woke me up every morning.

"Greta, I have good news," she said, "we are going to the United States," she stated happily.

Half asleep not fully understanding what my mother had really told me, I jumped off the bed, and told her very joyfully, "tell grandfather he is going to see auntie again after all."

My mother's sister had left Cuba many years before and my grandfather thought to never see her again. I was happy, not for myself and the many material things I knew I would have, but instead for him and the joy he would feel. I saw my mother frown and turning her face as she used to do when punishing me for something I had done wrong, she said in whispers, "Greta, he isn't coming. He can't." Without arguing or complaining I turned my face back to my pillow and swallowed my tears that I knew not to be of help at all. My mother left me alone and I stayed in my bedroom all day. In the evening I heard my grandfather walk into the house and minutes later he came into my bedroom without saying one word. He picked me up and carried me with easy steps to the place where life seemed worth living, and peace of mind was an indefinite stage of life. He sat me down and looked at me with his usual rusted half smile, and holding me tight in his arms he wished my sadness away. I held him the closest I had held anyone, wrapped my arms around him the strongest I had ever had, and with salty tears that wet my face I prayed to stay warm in his embrace forever watching the sun set.

I left a week following that day. Leaving behind my grandfather, the hero that taught me to see the sea as not a body of water occupying space, but as a human being, as a redeemer of innocence, as a comforter of loneliness, and best of all as the place to go when the world seems to fall on you, and you can't fight back. I left him for a land of opportunities, but what my grandfather never understood was that I stayed with him, and truly I only took with me a hollow body to function as a being. My grandfather still lives and still goes to the place he used to take me. He sits in the same spot and wonders if I still remember him. And I, when I want to remember him, go to the sea. I find in her the comfort I used to find in my grandfather, and in the sunset I see the tears buried in the silence of his eyes that are now buried in mine. I feel my grandfather's love reflect off my face because we both know that we are watching the same sunset, at the same time, over the same sea.



B&W Photograph by Lisa Goldworm

## Grandpa's Hands

i have my grandpa's hands,  
i have my grandpa's hands.  
the hands of a man  
more my father than my father  
(or the folks i called "Dad")  
hands of a man that taught me to count  
and clap  
hands that held my head as  
i cried  
[ah, sweet injustices of life....]  
hands of an artist/insomniac/painter  
my hands splayed out against his  
nail shape, finger form, vein placement,  
nearly identical.  
i have my grandpa's hands.

and with them all his love and beauty.  
i have my grandpa's hands

## Lush Life In A Laundro-Mat

isn't the TIDE just FAB  
you can BOUNCE back and get a FRESH START  
or BLEACH beach memories

clean?  
clean?  
black under-garments laced in lace  
smoke layered and drool-slopped sleeves

ABSOLUT stains and whet silken hose whirl  
sin rinses from spin cycle-  
dry.

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Dear Customer:  
if machine fails to operate,  
explain trouble on back of top portion  
and hang on machine  
detach  
fill out bottom portion and drop in box-

Dear Owner:  
machine number three  
dud suds mal \* func \* tion mal \* func \* tion  
comfortable snug jeans shredded  
cost of jeans: twenty-eight dollars  
six years  
five pounds just this past weekend  
send remittance to fat farm

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laundered eyes see  
and see  
a little attention thriving  
blonde haired girl  
soft untamed natural curl  
orange soda stained upper lip  
in one place for only a minute  
bobbling to every other beat  
of loud crazed teenaged music

only 10:10 A.M.  
beer-breathed bums  
huddled in a roach ridden corner hoarsely whisper  
a language known only to alcohol

25 cents for 10 min. dryer  
THIS ESTABLISHMENT IS NOT RESPONSIBLE  
FOR GARMENTS LEFT BEHIND !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
THANK YOU MANAGEMENT

inl



B&W Staff Photo

EAT ME

Once I Was a heifer living in a pasture

Thinking bovine thoughts

Craving sweet green clover

And a bullish mate

Then they changed my scenery

Moved me to a slaughterhouse

Drained me, grounded me

Seasoned me, shipped me

Now I am a burger

Sitting on your plate

One Blind Mouse

You almost get used to the fact  
that your country home is gone  
the green meadows of childhood  
the apple orchard and forest

You almost get used to the asphalt

You almost get used to the fact  
that a simple good morning is now  
Get out of my way asshole  
and leaving an unlocked car  
and not returning to a void

Avoiding trouble becomes a way of life  
but when you're there, you know where you are

You can't keep looking back to regret  
nostalgia can get heavy sometimes

But when I stepped out of the country  
I left my rats' ass with the farmers wife  
and I don't have it to give anymore

And besides  
even the country is a city now



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