Crosscut

literary magazine



Introduction by Senator Olympia J. Snowe

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Crosscut

literary magazine

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EDITORIAL STAFF

Editors
Kevin Casey

Cover Design
Lisa Hand

Cover Photograph
Michael Mindera

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Preface

Another Spring at Husson College, another Spring in Maine. The new year, century and millennium — and the fears and hopes they each represent -- all arrived as planned. And with the promise of all these new beginnings ahead of us, but with the associated anxiety and hype all but gone, we can now begin to settle into the future that Spring symbolizes, and engage in pursuits that matter — cleaning up the yard, graduation, fishing. We might even crack open a window, grab a chair, and thumb through this year's edition of *Crosscut*.

And this year's edition is once again varied in tone and subject, and vivid in its honest emotions and perspectives. A broad cross-section of our Community has produced a fine, thoughtful and entertaining magazine, and I hope you enjoy it.

Thanks again to Vicky Thayer and Joe McErlain at Fast Forms for their expertise and professionalism.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Julie Green and Lisa Hand for their work and creativity, and to give special thanks to Husson College President William Beardsley for his on-going support of *Crosscut*.

—The Editor

Introduction

Dr. Samuel Johnson, a leading literary scholar and critic of his day, once said, "The two most engaging powers of an author are to make new things familiar, and familiar things new." This is a difficult task, but the writers featured in *Crosscut* have undoubtedly mastered this challenge.

Crosscut weaves together a collection of work submitted by Husson College's faculty members, students, staff, alumni and friends to construct an elaborate quilt of literary excellence. Not only does this publication serve as an extraordinary teaching device for the college's developing writers, but it is an outlet for authors of all ages to share their craft. The unique perspectives readers find throughout the pages of *Crosscut* are truly refreshing, and I am proud to have this opportunity to introduce such a remarkable literary work.

Crosscut captures the true essence of Maine. A compilation of writings by some of the state's gifted authors

and artists, the work reflects themes and images that are firmly rooted in Maine's communities, geography, and culture. Among these writings are stories from afar that reflect the traditions of countries from around the world. In step with Husson College's dedication to bringing students from Maine and around the globe together in pursuit of academic excellence, *Crosscut* blends these native and foreign voices into one and provides the reader with a chance to enjoy a variety of writing styles in a single publication.

For more than a century, Husson College has provided its students with opportunities to take lessons learned in the classroom and apply them to experiences that provide professional development. *Crosscut* gives the college's growing writers the chance to see their work side-by-side with compositions created by some of the area's best authors. These students are fortunate to have such an incredible opportunity, and Maine is lucky to be home to such a wonderful project. I have no doubt that every reader will find something they enjoy within the pages of *Crosscut*.

—Olympia Snowe

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Diane MacDonald Kasparek

Obituary in My Mind

I look for your face among strangers,
    Yet I find only blank stares
    Or occasional sympathetic smiles.
I listen for your footsteps, sounding in the hall,
    Yet I hear only echoes of scurrying feet
    Or the occasional scuffing of idle wanderers.
I look for your name in local newspapers,
    Yet I read only foreign names
    Or the occasional obituaries of old acquaintances,
Auld acquaintances.

I forget your name in the flood of faded memories,
    Yet I find I do not care,
    Or occasionally I will not let myself care.
Oh, I care for you of all people. Yes, I care;
    Yet I write your obituary,
    An occasional auld acquaintance.
Yes, I write your obituary in my mind,
    As I breathe life into your memory
    In every line of this poem,
Just an obituary in my mind.

Susmita Chatterjee

The dark girl

The vision that I have
Of the dark girl with
Her dusky garment of
Old rose here, and a
Choli[1] of black, embedded
With tinkling silver dew

She flings her arms, dark
As they are with bangles
Of ivory up to her elbow
Her Kamarbandh[2] holds
Tight her waist and
Her skirt knee length

Her dark slender legs
Admonished with tender
Silver bells from toe to toe
And a paiyan[3] round her
Anklets, her hair tussled
In silver tassles dangling
Carelessly as she looks
In wonder at me

Her dark eyeballs that
Float like a dot in the ocean
Of her eyes, her teeth sharp
And white, as she smiles,
Her teeth protrude
Her enormous youth on
Her bosom half clad
Lay in smoldering
Enchantment.

Her stockings are long and her
Burden heavy with twigs
Bundled on her head, she treks
Her slender body carries the weight

I saw her collecting twigs
On the side of the road,
Wondering at passers by.

---

1 Choli — a blouse
2 Kamarbandh — a metal belt that is beautiful
3 Paiyan — anklet

The Bhil tribal woman goes with her half-clad attire.

Rabrindanath Tagore

(Translation by Susmita Chatterjee)

Alien

Every place a home I have
But in search of that abode I am
Every country is my country
But after that land I am

A stranger I am at every door
And yet I have a place there sure
The secret of entry must I find
My soul friends are at every home
In search of them I am

At times in the fragrant sky of spring
Weeps my heart for longings of union

All my own around me
Couldn't I endear
All those are clamoring
In my heart in eternal separation.
My heart soars in the sky
Loosing the bonds so dear

The delightful earth before me
Is spread, I know not why
It calls me thus enchanted.
I feel beneath that earth
For decades I was grass and water in birth

By some magic the door opened
And I am out to travel
That same dumb earth
Which before me is spread.

Reg Urbanowski

Reductio ad absurdem

What is the end of being human?
The goal?
Moralist, Rationalist, Empiricist, Materialist?
Elusive as Zeno's arrow[1] –
Reduced to mere Forms[2].

In the myth of the cave[3],
Chained to the wall by Parmenidian shackles of paradox[4],
One thinks 'to be' always was –
And 'what was' is absolute.

What we have become
  Are shadows on the wall of the cave
    Reflecting the phenomena that are now behind us.

The shadows are the ghosts of the ancients
  Presenting us with what it is to be human:

Reductio ad absurdem[5].

---

1 Refers to Zeno of Elea's notion of time and change.
2 Refers to Plato's theory of Forms.
3 Refers to Plato's 'myth of the cave'.
4 Refers to Parmenides' notions of paradox.
5 "reduced to absurdity".

Reg Urbanowski

Oublie moi

Oublie moi de ta vie
Oublie moi pour chaque seconde
    Pour chaque minute
        Pour chaque heure
Que ton coeur bat pour moi.

Oublie moi
Dans tes reves
    et tes memoires du temps de l'amour
Oublie moi
    pour toujours

je ne serais pas la
    dans tes matins
        dans les temps heureux
        dans les temps tristes
je ne serais pas la

s'il te plait
    je t' en pris
        oublie moi

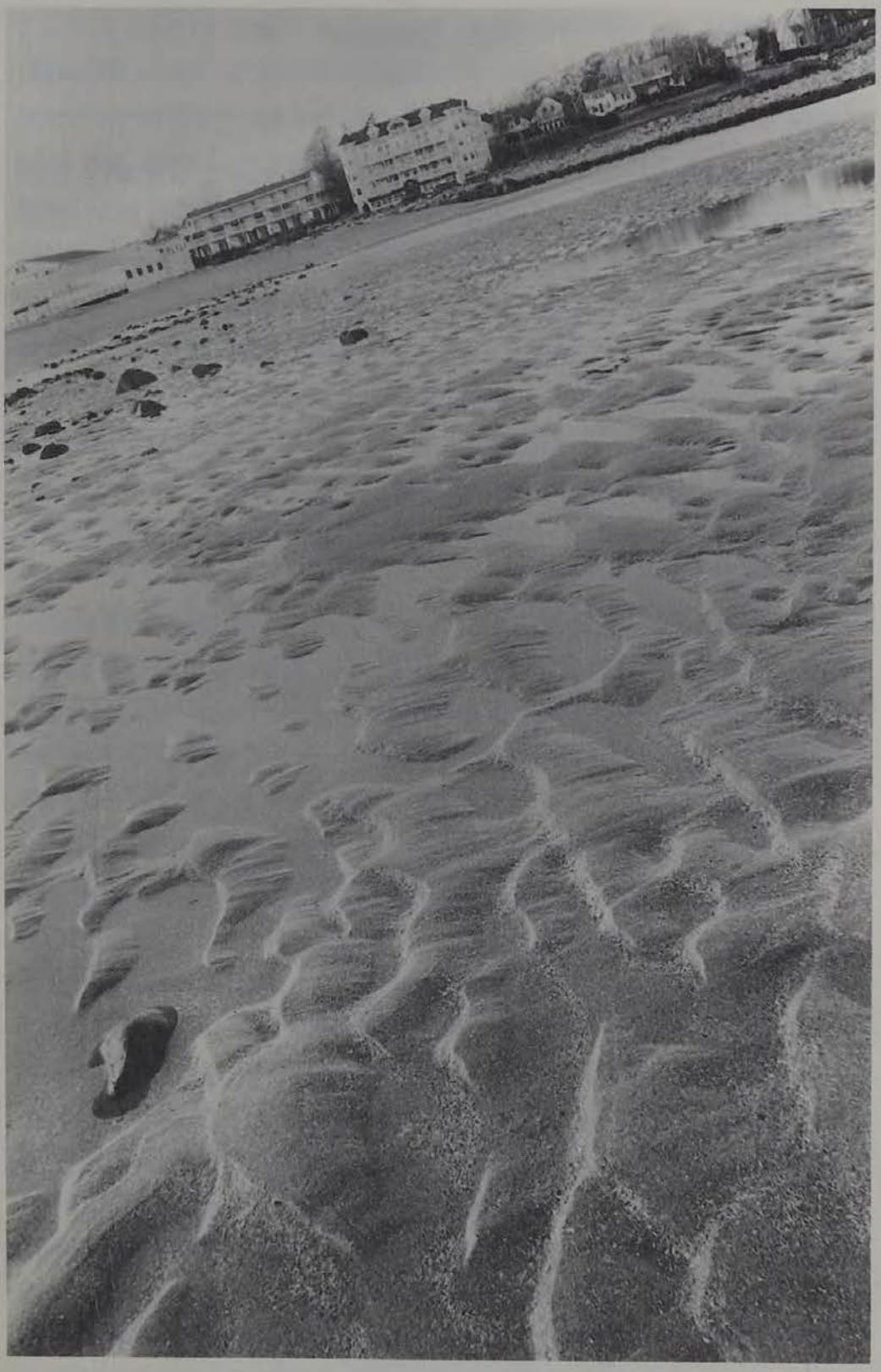
forget me

forget me in your life
forget me in every second
in every minute
in every hour
That your heart beats for me.

forget me
in your dreams
and the memories of our times of love
forget me
forever

I will not be there
in your tomorrows
in your happy times
in your sad times
I will not be there

please
I beg of you
forget me.



—Laura Elena Bisulca

Rene Collins

The Union

It was just like any other day. She was in a hurry, and a trip to the grocery store was an inconvenience. Nonetheless, the interruption might be a well-deserved break from the focus she maintained for writing, a task that required no expenditure of physical energy. Almost mindlessly, Alice Peabody walked out of the door and approached her car. Her thoughts were on what foods she would purchase to sustain her for the coming week. After all, more than one trip a week for groceries would be wasteful of her precious time.

"What was that?!" Her eyes caught a glimpse of something small and dark near the lower portion of the windshield. It moved quickly. "Must be a leaf" she told herself as she entered the vehicle, started the engine, and left the driveway.

There had been a gentle rainfall earlier in the morning. These days Alice cursed the October rain for the cold chill and cautionary reminder it brought as she peddled her bicycle through the neighborhood. It was so difficult to achieve an aerobic workout when the streets were slick with vehicle oil, which was somehow activated to a slippery level by rainwater. "Damn, I miss running" she thought for at least the twentieth time that Sunday. And as was the routine lately, she wondered "Is there anything I do that doesn't remind me that I really do need the effects of running to cope with life?" In spite of herself, she was getting better about ruminating. The misery was more momentary than constant, and she was adjusting to the decrease in mental and emotional energy since the injury stopped her in her tracks. Her thinking was clearer than it was a few weeks

ago, and her tenacious style of dealing with stress was reawakening more each day.

A heavy mist returned and without a conscious thought, Alice turned on the windshield wipers at slow speed. Back to writing the mental grocery list. The drive was short and the only thing she could think of that piqued her taste interests were red grapes. "I hope they are on sale; I'll buy at least.....WHAT WAS THAT?"

Time to resettle. Driving over the interstate highway requires somewhat of a focus, especially as the exit approaches. She was haunted by the shadow of an image that a split second before seemed a reality. But whose reality? Alice had heard of stories about small animals snuggling close to the warmth of a car engine. Could it be the case that her car was a haven for a mouse or a mole who used the opening for the windshield wipers as an escape route? Was it really an animal? Where was it now? She looked in the rearview mirror for evidence that the creature had become airborne. Nothing. She saw nothing to indicate there was or had been a small, dark creature on the exterior, or under the hood, of her car. "Maybe I didn't see it; maybe there wasn't anything there but a leaf. I'll check when I stop at the store" she reassured herself. Alice couldn't quite get the idea out of her mind that what she glimpsed might have been a living, breathing animal. Her fear wasn't related to the mouse, as in mice who by reputation, scare people. Her fear was about a creature that was in danger of losing its life or of being badly injured. If it hadn't fallen off, or off and up, had it crawled back under the hood where there was opportunity for it to be cut into pieces by the engine? She was more familiar with the anatomy of the mouse than she was the structure of the car. Perhaps the notion of damage from the engine was more a horror story, well developed over time, than a truth.

As she peered into the windshield wiper crevice, she

saw nothing. "Whew, that was close; it must have been a leaf after all" she thought. She would check again when she returned from shopping just to be sure. It was easy to leave thoughts of that image behind. They were fearful thoughts and she was using emotional energy these days to dispel many fears. This would be a good exercise she told herself—"Stop the thoughts!"

"Grapes for $1.29 a pound!" It was a good day after all! Alice was becoming skilled at celebrating the ordinary. She made her way through the store gathering items that she remembered needing replacement. Darn, they still didn't have the brand of soy milk she wanted. "Maybe next week", she thought.

The mist turned to rain as she quickly placed the groceries in the back seat of her car. Already, Alice was thinking of how she would resume her work once home. The day was still relatively young, and the break from concentrating on writing was refreshing. As she left the store parking lot, she remembered that she had not peeked into the windshield wiper space. It was raining and she needed clear vision for safety. As she turned on the windshield wipers, she was startled by what she saw as she drove onto the roadway.

There it was! But what was it? It didn't matter WHAT. It was crucial to Alice that she respond to the needs of whatever the creature was.

What happened next was predictably unpredictable! How does one prepare for coming face to face with a three, maybe four-inch creature, clinging onto the side of the car window where the rubber casing of the window meets the metal of the door? Perhaps face to face is less than accurate to describe the interaction between Alice and the creature. The glass of the window did not interrupt the vision of the creature's dark brown fur blown straight back by the car's forward motion. She could see the teeth, yes, the

TEETH, of the small animal as it seemingly, but silently screamed STOP!!!!!! Alice shook her head and thought, "This is incredible! Who will believe me when I tell this story?" This animal reminded her of a miniature version of Snoopy, the Peanuts character who flies his airplane with a scarf blowing as far back as his ears. And the teeth! They are the same teeth that Snoopy displayed. Perhaps the marked difference between Snoopy, who savored his flight, and this animal was the element of fear. The terror was evident on the face of blown-back, brown fur and in the claws, which were tightly wrapped around the window rubber. This creature was hanging on for dear life!

At that moment, union was formed between Alice and the creature. All of their mental, emotional, and physical energy was spent on what to do next. Alice was struck by the contrast of the animal's strength and fragility. In some way, it was evident early on that the animal spoke to the challenges Alice had been experiencing. Being fragile and being strong. Alice knew those contrasts well lately. She started asking herself questions. How long could it hold on? How far could she drive before stopping to offer the safety of a field to this animal?

Once on the main street, it was difficult to pull off and stop. There was no shoulder, nor any type of parking availability. Alice checked in her rear-view mirror for proximity of approaching vehicles. "Maybe a hundred yards back", she thought. She knew that she had some space so she could slow down, which would decrease the likelihood the animal would be swept away, and would try to make it to the small patch of grass up ahead. All the while, she drove with one eye on the road and one eye on the animal. The creature's expression stayed the same. There was no doubt that it was terrified. At the same time, Alice recognized her own fears for the animal.

In spite of her fears, Alice found herself laughing aloud.

This was the most odd situation she had been involved with in a long time. She kept staring at the expression on the animal's face, which was so human-like. "Goodness, am I assigning human characteristics to this animal? I'm losing my mind!" It was then that she first considered not telling anyone about this incredible happening. "Maybe I'm not as adjusted to the absence of running and its mental benefits as I think I am. I'm going nuts!" she mused.

Alice pulled off the road by a patch of grass. The animal scurried to the rooftop and sat frozen until Alice got out of the car and approached it. Then it ran from one side of the roof to the other, as Alice simultaneously ran from one side of the car to the other. Clearly, this was not the most appropriate or expedient avenue for its freedom. Alice wondered if this species was at high risk for having rabies. Just to be sure, she grabbed the only available thing that might protect her from being bitten. "Ok, now everyone will know I'm nuts!"

Her embarrassment was outweighed only by her concern for the terrorized animal. "I must look ridiculous", she thought as she coaxed it into the belly of a hot pink baseball cap. The dance of freedom continued—Alice on one side of the car gently offering the cap as the vehicle to safety for the furry creature, and the animal on the other, still wearing the face, and body language, of fear. Alice was amazed at the eye contact this creature held with her. She found it comforting that its hair wasn't parted by the wind, and it wasn't baring its teeth from the G-force like pressure of the moving vehicle.

Finally, after what seemed like fifteen minutes, the animal jumped from the roof to the hood, then off from the car. Without hesitation, it dashed into the grass, never to be seen again. "There", Alice thought, "It is free from the immediate dangers of the industrialized world, and off into an environment more friendly." As she watched the brown ball

scurry out of sight, Alice slowly entered her car and headed for home. "I wonder if it has a family that will be missing it. Is it even a creature that will seek 'home'? How will it get across the river?"

At this point, Alice knew she could spend too much time worrying about the companion who joined with her briefly. It was time to let this creature, and her own fears, go. It was also time to ask herself what had she learned from this union? It wasn't clear that Sunday. She needed time to think about the parallel process the animal and she herself had taken. She wondered if perhaps the real union was that of one with herself? For now, it was back to the reality of unloading the week's foodstuffs and resuming her writing. "My goodness, this has been an interesting morning! Someday, I might just have to tell someone!" ❧

Nancy Nichols

Vacation

the Coronado Bridge curves
like a rib above San Diego Bay,
and today the dark sky is the skin
that holds the rib in as we drive
its length in search of a Pacific view.
The weather is wild;
clouds huddle in an angry debate
to the west and the wind
threatens to shake us down
like ripe apricots from a tree. But we
press on, find a parking place, stop
at Starbucks for something warm
and head for the sand.
You hold my hand as we
navigate the rocks, the ice plant,
and the abalone shells.
When we get to the water, we each
tap it once with our feet, a ritual
something like making the sign
of the cross, throwing salt
over your shoulder, or knocking
on wood. But ours is less
for luck than to let the ocean
know that we were there:
that we stood on its shores and saw
the curve of its body roll into fog,
kissed its fish-fresh sigh with
our own lips, and felt our slight
bodies expand like air balloons
to fill a space made huge above

the pounding surf. And when we turn
to leave we aren't walking
but floating: we drift down Orange
to 75, back across the bridge to 5,
then take 805 south to Bonita
where we stall like weather,
a small but wild storm.

Nancy Nichols

In Answer To A Question

Hell yes, I'd date myself. I tell you
what we'd do, myself and I: I'd knock

on the door and I'd be there waiting,
wearing nothing but my birthday suit.

But that would be just to say, "hey,
we know each other pretty well—no secrets

here." I'd have brought me tulips
and spared no expense

on an excellent Cabernet. I'd turn
the lights, and The Gentle Side

of John Coltrane, *seductively low. I'd sit*
on the couch with myself, both

of us naked and tipsy, and tell me
jokes and whisper suggestive remarks

in my ear. We'd talk and laugh
and reminisce about the past as if

it were only yesterday. Finally, late,
I'd lower my eyes and touch my own arm

lightly; we'd know it was time for bed.
Room lit gold by a lover's moon, we'd climb

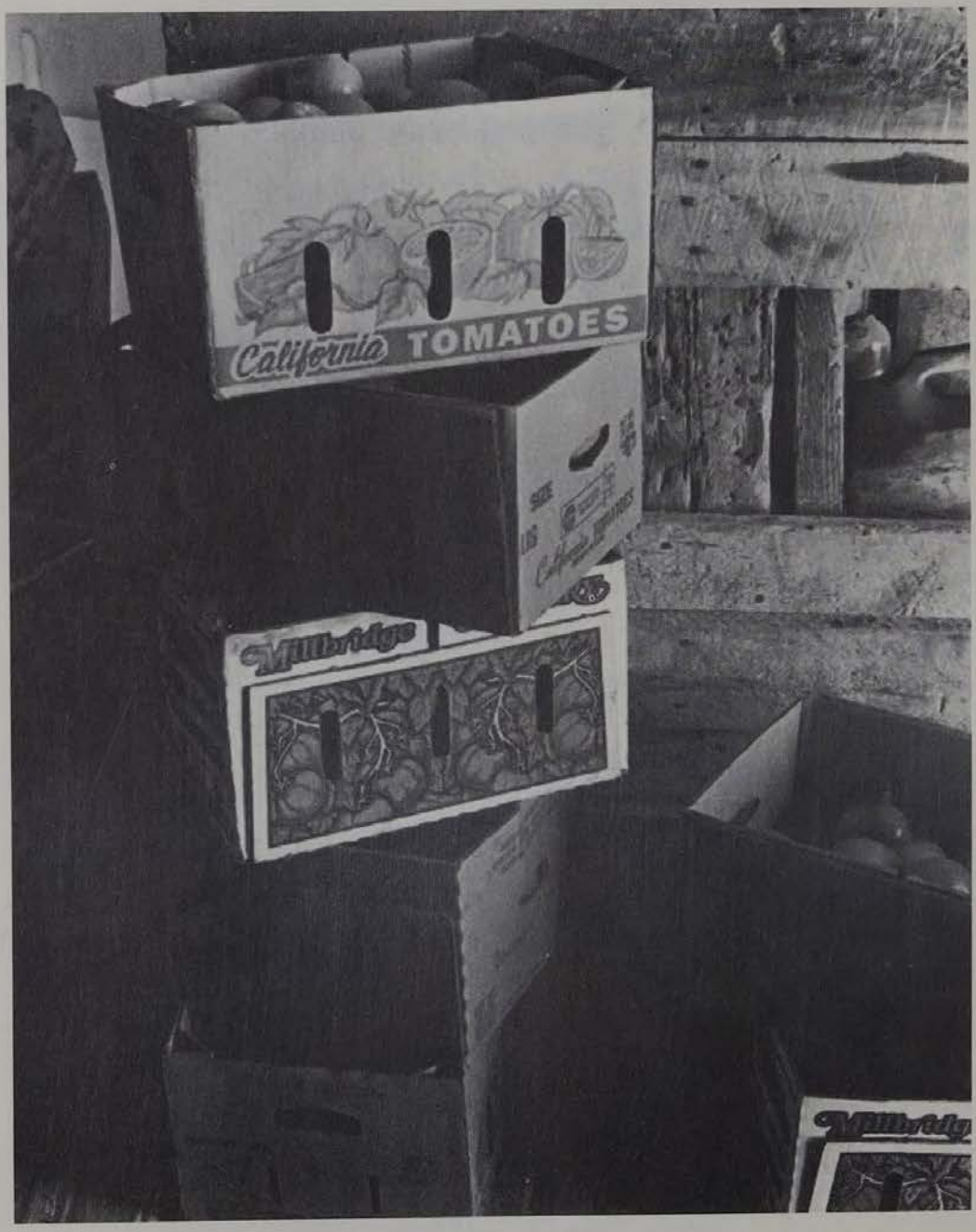
beneath the covers of the twin.
I'd watch me fall asleep

to the lullaby of my own heartbeat.
I'd see the warm flush of my face,

the curve of my satisfied smile.
I'd wonder, wrapped in the blanket

of my skin, where I'd been all my life,
and how I'd gotten along

without me.



—Candace Kuchinski

Mario Benedetti
(translation by Paul Garcia)

Death

"Better prepare yourself for the worst."

That was, in Octavio's concerned and friendly tone — not just a physician's, but, mostly, that of a former schoolmate at the liceo — the helpful phrase which, as though not even pausing at Mariano's ear, reverberated in his gut, where the pain had persisted for a month. In that instant he had pretended, had smiled bitterly, and had even said, "Don't worry, I've been prepared for some time now." That was a lie, he hadn't been, ever. When he had so earnestly requested that Octavio tell him the real diagnosis, considering their long friendship — "I swear that I'd do the same for you." — he had done it with the secret hope that his old friend would tell him the truth, sure, but that that truth would be his salvation and not his condemnation. But Octavio had taken the appeal literally, had devoted an hour and a half of his precious time to examine and reexamine him, and then, with damp eyes behind thick lenses, had begun to sweeten the pill. "It's impossible to tell you now. There will have to be analyses, x-rays, a complete clinical history. And that is going to take some time. The only thing I can tell you now is that this first exam doesn't leave a good impression. You have let yourself go for a long time. You should have seen me when it first bothered you." And then came warning of the first direct blow. "Since you ask, on behalf of our friendship, I will be strictly honest with you. I would have to say that because of the uncertainties..." And he had paused, removed his eyeglasses, and had cleaned them with the hem of his tunic. Hardly a hygienic gesture, thought Mariano, his heart thumping in his throat. "Be-

cause of the uncertainties what?" he asked, trying to make his tone sober, almost indifferent. And at that point the sky came crashing down. "Better prepare yourself for the worst."

That was nine days ago. Then came the series of analyses and X-rays. He had endured punctures, probing, and his own nudity with equanimity he didn't think himself capable of. On one occasion, when he returned home and found he was alone (Agueda had gone out with the kids, his father was in the Interior), he had lost control, and there, standing, facing the wide open window in his study, deluged by the most splendid autumn sun, he had wept like a child without even bothering to wipe away his tears. Hope, hopes, there is hope, there are hopes, sometimes in the singular and sometimes in the plural; Octavio had repeated it a hundred different ways, with smiles, with jokes, with pity, with amicable pats, with loose hugs, with recollections of the liceo, with regards to Agueda, with a skeptical frown, with crossed eyes, with nervous tics, with questions about the kids. Certainly, he was remorseful for having been brutally sincere and wanted somehow to deaden the effects of the blow. Certainly. But if there were hopes? Or even one. He reached with a simple hope, a tiny hopelet in the minimal singular. And what if the analyses, the X-rays, the other nuisances, finally, in their esoteric language, prophesied that his life might be permitted a few more years?

He did not ask much: five years, maybe ten. Now, as he crossed Plaza Independencia to meet with Octavio and hear his final judgment (whether sentence, postponement or absolution), he felt that those singulars and plurals of hope had germinated in him in spite of everything. Maybe this was because the pain had diminished considerably, though there was the chance that relief had something to do with the pills Octavio had prescribed and which each day he took religiously. But, while approaching the moment of truth, his abeyance was again almost intolerable.

In a given moment, his legs weakened and became rubbery; he told himself that he could not arrive at the examining room in that state, and decided to sit on a bench in the plaza. He shook his head to refuse the bootblack's offer. He did not feel capable of maintaining a hackneyed dialog on the weather and inflation, and hoped to calm himself. Agueda and Susana. Susana and Agueda. What would be the preferred order? Was he still unable to decide? Agueda was comprehension and incomprehension already outlined; undisputed borders; the repeated present (but also there was an irreplaceable warmth in repetition); years and years mutually predicted, known by heart; the two children, the two children. Susana was secrecy, surprise (but also surprise evolving into habit), unknown, unshared, shadowy life areas; the emotional wrangles and reconciliations; jealousy, conservative and revolutionary; inconclusive boundaries, the new caress (that callously came to seem a repeated gesture), not to be predicted but guessed at, not to be known by heart but by intuition. Agueda and Susana, Susana and Agueda. He could not decide. And he could not (he just noticed the exact instant in which he had to shake hands with an old friend from work), simply because he thought of them as belonging to him, as parts of Mariano Ojeda, and not as independent lives, as beings that lived on their own account. Agueda and Susana, Susana and Agueda, they were at this moment parts of his organism, as much his as the abject, fatigued entrails threatening him. And then there were Coco and, above all, Selvita, of course, but he did not want, no, no he didn't want to think about the kids now, though he knew that at some moment he would have to face it. No, he didn't want to think about them because then, yes, he would collapse and would not have strength even to arrive at the Doctor's. He had to be honest, however, and recognize beforehand that he was going to be less selfish, incredibly more generous, because if he destroyed himself

by thinking (and certainly he would break down) he would not be thinking about himself but about them, or at least more about them than himself, more about the new sadness awaiting them than about his own practiced notion of going on without them. Without them, bah, without anybody, without anything. Without the children, without his wife, without his mistress. But also without the sun, this sun; without those straggly, thin clouds, so in tone with the country; without those poor, shamed, legitimate remains of the Passive; without the routine (blessed, beloved, sweet, aphrodisiac, sheltered, perfect routine) of Case Number 3 and its audits and its long sought but always found differences, without his meticulous reading of the newspaper in the café, by the big window looking out on the Andes; without his jokes with the waiter, without the sweet dizziness of watching the sea and sky; without these hurrying people, happy because they know nothing of themselves, who run to lie to themselves, to secure their armchair in eternity or to comment on the charming heroism of others, without the comfort of rest; without books as drunkenness; without resorting to alcohol; without dreams as death; without life as a vigil; without life, simply.

There, touching the bottom of his desperation, paradoxically, allowed him to pull himself together. He stood up, tested his legs and finished crossing the Plaza. He entered the café, ordered an espresso, and sipped it slowly, without agitation, with his mind almost blank. He watched how the sun was weakening, how its last rays faded. Before they turned on the café's lights, he paid his bill, left the same tip as always, and walked four blocks, turned to the right on Río Negro, and half a block down stopped, went up to the fifth floor, and pressed the button next to the little bronze plaque: Dr. Octavio Massa, Physician.

"What I feared."

"What I feared" was, in this situation, synonymous for

the worst. Octavio had spoken at length, calmly, doubtless had tapped his best repertory on consolation and comfort, but Mariano heard it in silence, even wearing a steady smile not meant to mislead his friend, but which surely had. "But if I am well,..." He said only after Octavio had asked him, concerned. "Furthermore", said the physician, with the tone of someone who pulls a hidden card from his sleeve, "furthermore we are going to do everything necessary, and I am sure, you understand, sure, that an operation would be a success. On the other hand, there is no great urgency. We have at least a couple of weeks to strengthen you with rest, with patience, with moderation. I'm not saying this to cheer you up, Mariano, or to ease your mind, nor should you be terror stricken. Nowadays we are much better prepared to deal with..." And so on. Mariano suddenly felt a driving urge to leave the doctor's office, not exactly to return to hopelessness. The security the diagnosis had given him was, incredible, a sensation of relief, but also a need to be alone, something like a nervous curiosity to enjoy this new certainty. Thus, while Octavio went on: "...and furthermore in light of the fact that I am a good friend of your bank's medical officer, I don't foresee any inconvenience in your taking all the time you need for recovery..." Mariano smiled, not his embittered, spiteful grin, but, instead, for the first time in many days, a satisfied and agreeable smile.

As soon as he left the elevator and saw the street again, he was faced with a state of mind that seemed a revelation. It was night, sure, but why were the lights so far away? Why didn't he understand, nor want to understand, the words moving in lights on the billboard facing him? The street was a major artery, sure, but why were those figures, passing at arm's length, such detached images, as if seen in a color film that benefits from (because in reality it was an improvement) an unedited sound track, in which each noise reached him as through infinite intermediaries, leaving in

his ears only a deadened echo of other deadened echoes? The street was an increasingly broad artery, agreed, but why were the buildings across the way shrinking to nothing, leaving him sheltered in shock? An artery, nothing less than an artery, but why did the swiftly approaching cars' headlights become smaller and smaller, until they seemed pocket flashlights?

He had the sensation that the pavement he walked was suddenly converted into an island, a leper pavement that was hygienically segregated from healthy pavement. He had the sensation that objects drawing away, were crazily leaving him but without admitting that they were withdrawing. A hypocritical flight, nothing less. Why hadn't he noticed before? In any case, that dizzying flight of things and of beings, of ground and of sky, gave him a sense of power. And this could be death, nothing more than this? He thought it with unexpected eagerness. However he was alive. Neither Agueda, nor Susana, neither Coco, nor Selvita, neither Octavio, nor his father in the Interior, nor Case Number 3. Only that focus of light, huge, that is to say huge at the beginning, from who knows where, not so huge afterward, it was worth it to leave the island of pavement, then smaller, it was worth it to face it all in the middle of the street, small, smaller, yes, insignificant, right here, no matter that the others flee, if the focus, the tiny focus, approaches, yet withdrawing, right here, right here, the tiny glow, the firefly, always further and closer, ten kilometers and also ten centimeters from eyes that will nevermore shine. ❧

Leon Raikes

Indigenous Buddha

i

Here the dark plains
echo
down to water
the April threat
of mythic tornados.
We call it
the Old Man River.
Generations of schoolkids
Learn its rhythm
by spelling its letters.
You can too.
Or you can repeat
into yourself
all night long
the eddies
of its bluish shadows—
until you know
its music
as part of your muscle,
parcel of your prayer.

ii

But I ask you:
you whose shadows fall congruent
with your churches,
you who never step too far east
of the Mississippi,

what could you know of the stillness
of Buddhas—
the seeds under unturned stones—
the currents
on whose shifting
echoes the one arrested flow?

iii

Once you saw, discarded in the muck,
a catfish head the size of a pumpkin,
and just as hollow.

Bearded and brown,
up it stared at you, its eyes
having been hollowed by horseflies.

Its skin had gone on flaking
in sheets of oily tissue
like pages of untranslatable bibles.

Its smile went on asking
only one line in its mouth,
about the real meaning of whirpools.

And I'm here to tell you:
its whiskers still could stun large birds
into uncontrollable limping.

iv

Why is it, you ask,
the artifacts
of the East,
each one as dark
as the rain,
are always
still as stone?
How can there be
at the root
of wind,
at the bottom of rivers,
so much quiet?



—Laura Elena Bisulca

Kevin J Jette

Call Me When You Need A Fool

When you left, you let me go
Leaving me with questions I shouldn't face alone
Didn't you know that I would be detached?
Without direction I must lead the path
You couldn't have changed
You shouldn't get help
Just leave me here
Let me fend for myself
And I will imagine
All the fatherly advice
That you should have given
Will never be heard.

Katherine Moody

Far off Faces

Far off faces
Sailing away
Further and Further
Every single day

They drift away sliently
Like a boat sailing out to sea
These faces were once known well
These faces you can not tell

There lives touched many
Even though they're just few
You might not know them
But I do

Far off faces
Sailing far
But not all the way
To the stars

Don't forget what you know
Don't forget the faces
swaying to and fro

Jodi Hersey

A Heart's Desire

To desire
To lust
To want
To touch

To hold
To care
To caress
To share

To long
To need
To yearn
To depend

Companions
Soul mates
Lovers &
Friends

Diane MacDonald Kasparek

The Foe Within

Your barbed tongue slices flesh
but does not pierce this mortal shell
to my soul within at rest

While I may never call you friend,
name not me your foe; look inward
for your enemy lies beneath your angry breast.

Poisoned tongue, insult-laced with sarcasm,
pricks and stings, but leaves no scar
as you no longer get beneath my skin.

I face your words with armor strong,
self worth fortifies my soul,
and pity you, unknowing of your sin.

Until you face the foe within,
I'll suffer your attacks in silence,
no more rail against the injustice.

Your pain must far exceed mine
given your need to strike out
with such venom and malice.

I prayed for me, prayed for you,
gained wisdom from above,
now I take refuge in poetry.

May the words this verse contain,
echo within my heart and reverberate
its refrain to quiet your misery.

I shall walk away a little saddened
that it must be this way
but I shall hold my head up high.

And when I gaze into a mirror,
reflected there I see, not you,
but a sadder person, I.



—Brenda Hart

J.T. Kenny

Excerpt from FISHWICK – ***a novel***

He moved with the others in an ant march of pedestrian traffic, but suddenly stopped and just stood facing upward. It was the insistent breeze that had grabbed his attention, and so, he looked for its source. In that magic part of Theodore Carey's mind, the Maine wind had a place, and he wanted to personalize it. Thus, head tilted back, he squinted and conjured up this hoary visage looking for limbs to rattle, leaves to loosen. Theo knew he would probably never see that special something that took random swipes at cedar tops and made eaves moan. Still, it was a marvelous thought; a white mystery like the invisible little push that jump-started the universe. Theo's daydreams were serious, always consuming.

His fantasy crash landed as he felt the first stinging drops of rain on his eyelids and cheeks. Getting himself repostured and in motion, he pulled the jacket collar tight around his neck, its scratchy herringbone irritating his skin. He continued moving along the brick pathway to Proctor Hall, going quickly now, head down, through pelting rain, flailing branches, dogfight leaves, students. How many steps to the portico? How many seconds to span the how many steps? His mind registered a dull thud of thunder, not the sharp crack of summer heat but a rumbling that came from October weather; the near cataclysm that occurs when Arctic cold sneaks up on Indian Summer air.

Thunder always reminded him of the south. As a child, he had spent time on the gulf coast with his family. His father had been an investment banker in New York. Dad's release valve was a place, Florida's panhandle and their beautiful coastal property there. Whenever he could find

the time, Art Carey and his wife Dory took Theo and his older sister, Natalie, to the white beaches of Navarre. Theo had good thoughts of his Florida days, warm memories.

But this wasn't Navarre and there wouldn't be a real thunderstorm, still, he had been warned that Maine's November gales, nor'easters they called them, could be nasty and very unwelcome guests.

Reaching the portico, Theo paused. He let go his collar and tried to flatten it, but only managed to get it half right as his attention left the errant wool and flew straight toward the young lady exiting the building, the one who paused to hold the door for him. It was Cilli Bradshaw, one of his students from the Great Issues class. He saw the wind-swirl of long hair flying over loden covered shoulders and a worn military backpack. So very pretty, he thought. She said a smiling something. It sounded cordial, maybe humorous, but he couldn't really tell. Returning her smile, he managed a hello and a quip, quickly realizing that the sound of a bully draft in the entranceway smothered both. He grabbed the long brass handle just as she released it. He moved in as she ducked out into the gray and restless afternoon.

Inside, he smoothed his flying hair and started toward his office. Walking down the hallway, he made a mental note, perhaps for the tenth time, that Proctor wasn't a proper college lecture hall, but then Fishwick College itself wasn't particularly high on his propriety list. No, it wasn't really a proper college, not even by a stretch of Theo's better-than-average imagination was it proper. He had thought of that, too, more than once since accepting his appointment as assistant professor for this 1962-63 academic year. Proctor Hall had the appearance of a low-budget junior high. It even had tall gray lockers in the hallways. Whoever heard of hall lockers in a college? For that matter, he wondered, whoever heard of building a college, with hall lockers, smack

in the middle of the northern Maine woods? This place, Fort Atkinson, was the end of the line...the Bangor and Aroostook line, a solitary stretch of rail that didn't even have a big city terminus.

The town and its academic jewel were cut off from the rest of the world by the long stretch of Maine second growth forest known as the Hainesville Woods. Maine's legendary Country and Western singer, Dick Curless, knew this weald. Had written a popular and dreary song about its evergreen and maple stretches and the lonely road winding its way north through them. For some reason, the locals loved that song just as they seemed to love their geographic isolation. The pride of this place was inexplicably epic.

A few weeks back in the very local Botting's Barber Shop, Theo had heard a few of the guys going on about how out of touch their little town was and how far away everything else was. Many silly things were said, and were heaped on other silly things that were said. It had been that kind of conversation. One flannel-looking neighbor with no visible teeth and a broad grin had slurred to no one in particular, "This ain't the end of the world, Mister Man, no sir, it ain't — but if ya look hard, you'll likely see it from here." The statement brushed the funny bones of most in the shop as did Esbun Botting's running commentary on his trimming of Theo's longer-than-average, blond hair—Esbun wanted time-and-a-half for the job. They all loved that one, so the hair cutter turned stand-up comedian said it again, twice more in fact. Esbun wasn't one to give up on a line just because it showed a little wear. Since then, that day, Theo had thought a lot about that conversation, their observations. Sometimes he though the whole thing was funny, and sometimes he didn't.

In spite of his critical assessments of Fishwick College, Theo didn't think he could live in, or would even want to be near, Fort Atkinson if there were no Fishwick. Some-

thing about the place fascinated him. The College, perched on a hill on the north end of town, was a little sanctuary with its own rules, personalities, and better than average sideshows. It had none of the classical charm of a small New England college. It wasn't pretty. It was plain. None of the buildings matched. None of the people matched. It was Fishwick.

Although all out of kilter, time, and place, to Theo and his wife, Tiger, Fishwick was really quite interesting. The end-of-the-academic-world experience was altogether new for Theo who had only just recently left Ithaca, New York. It was while attending Cornell that he had met Tiger. The two young scholars, very different personalities, had been working on English master's projects. During the latter part of a near-perfect spring, thesis and antitheses somehow merged into heated conjugation.

Theo was thinking of Tiger, her warm angles, Tiger in motion, raspy voice, love sounds, all this bubbled through his mind as he made his way down the hallway.

"Professor Corey!" From behind him, he heard his name called, mispronounced by a full-bodied, and spookily authoritative voice. He turned, slowly, reluctantly, not in the least surprised to see the serious, business-like face of Arthur S. Hennessey, United States Senator.

"Arthur," Theo mumbled.

Arthur moved toward him in long, political strides, back straight as an arrow, looking considerably older than his twenty-four years. The obvious charisma of the man was enhanced by today's wardrobe choice of a black, ambassadorial overcoat and flowing, white silk scarf. Theo thought Arthur must bathe in Old Spice. The ever-serious young man had dark honest eyes to match his dark honest hair. It was immaculately short-cropped, but the really interesting thing was the way that Arthur held his head. He had this way of tucking in his chin. It made him look grave. It also

constricted his throat, adding a bit more timbre to his voice. Appearance meant everything to Arthur. He had to look right at all times. A Senator's life was filled with challenges, service opportunities, photo opportunities.

Arthur was being followed, as he almost always was, by a much shorter man who today carried a large, black umbrella. It was Bruce Calloway, his Chief-of-Staff.

"My good Professor Corey," Arthur's right hand stretched out grasping Theo's as a firm left hand moved up to cup them both. The three-handed mass then got a vigorous pumping. Theo felt like he was somehow being violated; that his poor extremity had just gotten caught in a Tammany machine.

Theo always tried to avoid, and if he couldn't avoid, to make the most out of his encounters with Arthur. You couldn't hurt the impervious Arthur. Most everyone knew this, so it didn't really matter if the senator habitually mispronounced your name, or anyone else's name. Besides, Arthur wasn't really a U.S. Senator, although many believed he was, or at least sensed that he was something very important... like a senator. None of this really mattered though, for the decisive reality was that there was not a shade of doubt in Arthur's mind as to who he was, and what he owed his constituents.

"For you and your charming wife, two tickets to the Fort Atkinson Community Concert, Israeli pianist, top notch. Arrived at noon, Presequit Issel Airport "

"You mean Presque Isle, don't you?" Theo corrected.

"He's the best, Corey. Had one of my own staff pick him up."

"Staff...staff, do you mean those freshmen that follow you around?" Theo didn't think his own observation particularly rude. He might have if he had he been talking to anybody else, but this was Arthur. Theo knew by now, as most did, that Arthur never really listened. He just talked.

The tickets were ceremoniously produced from inside Arthur's black day-runner now held open by Bruce. They were delivered with an exaggerated nudge and wink from the Senator as if the worthless tickets were some kind of political payoff.

"Arthur, thank you, but Tiger and I already have tickets. We all do...what I mean is, I guess you know, don't you, that all of us at Fishwick...faculty, students, are given Concert Series tickets...We get in free?"

"No problem, Professor. Can get some more if you need 'em...connections," another knowing wink.

It was hopeless, Theo thought, taking the tickets. What would come next, a Christmas turkey? But then, why even try? "Thanks...thanks, Arthur." The latter didn't really seem to hear this either. The senator's attention had already shifted to someone, another potential supporter, farther down the hall. "Barry, my good man. Don't you move a damned inch! Got just what you need, brother, tickets to a concert..."

Theo shook his head and moved along quickly. Sometimes it was just a little too strange. When do things, people, stop being interesting and start being bizarre? What is the objective standard of bizarre? So absorbed, he almost ran into Bryant Babbitt, his office mate and co-anchor of the Fishwick English Department. "Whoa, easy big feller...hi Theo, how's it going? Be right back," said Bryant, not waiting for a response, as he ducked out and called someone else. Bryant, a conspicuous man of about fifty with a graying beard, had a pipe clenched between his teeth and wore a worn green plaid smoking jacket, a maroon ascot, and slippers. He wore slippers, everywhere and all the time, and always looked like he had just stepped out of a victorian drawing room.

Theo unloaded his books and papers from his worn brown briefcase onto his window-facing desk, hung his coat

on the hook behind the door and got ready to grade seventeen near-horrid themes, but not before wondering anew why a man would choose slippers for foot apparel in a cold, wet climate; a place for boots. Theo noticed it was too hot in the office. It was always too hot or too cold. Fishwick seemed a place of extremes.

With Bryant gone, it dawned on Theo that he had a rare moment of privacy, so he put finger to rotary and called Tiger. The kitchen wall phone rang six times and Theo was just about to hang up when she answered with a breathy, "Hello?"

"Hi, Babe. Was beginning to think you weren't there. Nothing important, just wanted to see watchadoin'."

"I just came up the back steps loaded with groceries." She paused for a breath. "Didn't think I'd make it. Glad you called though...need a minute to get settled."

He loved the labored breathing sound—fresh memories, last night's. "Oh...uh, well, while you catch your breath, I wanted to tell you, I met the psychologist today, Hudson Bradley. I'll be team-teaching with him. You remember, huh?"

"Oh yeah, team teaching."

"Very weird guy. Tell you about him later. Oh, speaking of which, Arthur Hennessey sends his regards."

"Who?"

"You know...the student, Arthur Hennessey."

"Oh yeah, the nut who thinks he's President."

"Senator."

"Does it really matter?"

"I think it does to him. Tiger, I love you."

"How much?"

"Can't even quantify it. Listen, I have to get going, work, work, work...Just had a few minutes without Bryant here in my lap. You know how cramped the office is."

Before he could finish up, a lower cadenced, soft and

silky voice came back. "Lovey, why don't you take the rest of the afternoon off and come home. I miss you too and it's raining and now I really want you here beside me...you know."

"Tiger woman," he whispered into the phone, "you make me crazy strong, really crazy, know that?"

"Is that what you call it."

Theo laughed softly. "After class...soon, cara mia, soon."

"Later." She sighed...CLICK.

Theo started on the papers, but his mind and imagination, were elsewhere. Bryant came back into the office with the someone he had been chasing down the hall. Bryant and his guest already deep in conversation, got themselves seated. Theo tuned out the talk, sensing that the two needed confidentiality. Besides, there was this work on his plate, the themes he should have had back last Friday. The students were getting a bit antsy. No, he corrected himself, it was just one student, Jack K., who was antsy. Jack was a boorish guy who lacked manners and impulse control, the archetypal class nuisance. He seemed at his worst when themes weren't returned on time, or if they were returned and he didn't like his grade.

About half-way through the scoring of his second theme, Bryant called over to get Theo's attention. "Theo?" It was then that Theo really noticed the visitor, a man in his mid-twenties with disheveled dark hair. He wore heavily refracted glasses and seemed a bit...thoughtful, in a sad, psychopathic way. Still, there was something, something what? mischievous? It was a look on that strange face that hinted at a deeper level of understanding behind the facade. Bryant, too, seemed to be part of the mystery. He gave Theo an insider's smile. "Theo...let me introduce Dead Bill Sullivan— someone you'll need to know if you want to move up in Fort Atkinson's quality of life department."

Bryant's knowing smile was then directed toward Dead Bill who now looked a little sheepish.

"I'm not really dead," Dead Bill mumbled through a faint smile.

Theo took a second look. "Well yes, I can see that." Dead Bill looked...dirty. He was wearing a string tie and an unironed white shirt, frayed and yellow. He looked from Theo to Bryant, back to Theo and then back again to Bryant, moving his weight in the chair. He finally said softly, "I hear this guy is OK." Theo was nonplussed. "I mean," Dead Bill said, "of course he's OK. We're all OK...right?. I mean, the day is OK." Bill's eyes started darting. He seemed now like a trapped animal. Conversation did this to him "The corral is OK...see Gunfight at the OK Corral? great flick, Lancaster, Douglas...ya' see it?" he asked, looking toward Theo. "Never mind me. Sometimes I start talking and can't stop. That ever happen to you? probably not...huh?"

Bryant short circuited Dead Bill's death song. "I think Bill's saying...uh, he likes you," he offered, forcing a smile.

"Yeah, that's it. That's what I meant to say. You're OK, professor Carey." Dead Bill got up out of his chair like an old man. "Check with ya later, Bryant. Gotta' get goin'...clean my bathtub." Looking toward Theo, he offered another explanation. "Well...back to the old crypt I guess...huh?" The parting remark was followed by a delayed-action smile that started at the corners of Dead Bill's mouth and crept across his pale face. Turning his body slowly and awkwardly, he slinked out of the office into the hallway traffic.

"Great kid," enthused Bryant.

"Yeah, sure is," Theo said mockingly. "What does he do, I mean,...besides hauntings and bathtub washings."

"No, not Bill. You got this wrong, Theo. I mean it," said Bryan with an almost defensive conviction. "I know he seems a little, uh...unconventional, but Dead Bill's a great

guy. Oh, wait...you'll see."

"How did he come by the name?"

"What?"

"The name...Dead Bill."

"Oh, that, funny you should ask."

Theo didn't think it funny that he should ask.

"Well, all that stuff got started about a year ago, more than a year actually. After spring classes, Bill went home to Connecticut...for the summer, right? That's where he's from. Well, he was in arrears for his tuition here and started getting letters from Charlie Rowe, you know Charlie, the College business manager?"

"Of course."

"So, one day Bill sees an obituary in some Connecticut paper for someone else, some other guy named William Sullivan. So Bill clips the obit and sends it to Charlie. Charlie tells President Norman that Bill, one of our students, has passed on and the whole college takes up a donation...you know, for flowers. Norman sends a letter of condolence to whoever's at Bill's mailing address. It was pretty funny actually...but weird."

"And that's it?"

"No."

"Didn't think so."

"Bill gets a summer job, works for a brewery in Connecticut doing deliveries, does pretty well for himself. He's able to get the money to pay off his spring tuition, even enough left over to buy an old car. So, he decides to come back to Fishwick, settle up his bills, and start school in the fall...last fall. This is where it takes off. Nobody knows he's still alive until he drives up one day just before classes start. He's in a big, black and red hearse, an old one, but still a hearse. He goes around acting real sober, sort of funerary I guess, and spends a lot of time trying to convince everyone he's a ghost of himself, maybe a changed man, or a changed

ghost, but certainly not the same guy who left campus the previous spring. Still, Charlie Rowe doesn't buy it. Gives Bill a pretty rough time since Bill made him look like a fool. End of story, Charlie is predictably glad to have the tuition money and so he doesn't quite ring Bill's neck."

"Pretty funny," Theo acknowledged, now hearing outside noises and thinking that the wind had picked up. He turned briefly to the window and noticed that maple leaves were flying everywhere. A slanted rain now drove the small panes, making a hollow, strangely melodic, sound.

"New story— there's more," continued Bryant, recapturing Theo's attention. He turned back toward his colleague. "By early spring, following year, Bill ran short of cash and needed to buy some equipment...stuff he really needed."

"Equipment? I don't understand."

"Not important. I'll explain later. So Dead Bill makes this one-hundred dollar bet with the guys at Omicron...you know the slugs in the place on the corner of Court and College?"

"Oh yeah."

"Bill tells them that he can organize a midnight party, with very live music and very hard liquor, on Saturday in the front parking lot of the Fort Atkinson Police Department. This is a tall order because Fort has a pretty tough police force for its size and the Chief, Filson Putnam, is a no-nonsense law guy who hates college kids. "Party" is one of his least favorite words. In fact, this guy goes out of his way to bust them whenever he can...a real SOB in blue. The Omicron guys, knowing all this, take the bet and put up one-hundred big ones. Dead Bill gets Peaches Stanhope to put up cash for him."

"Who's Peaches Stanhope?"

"She's Bill's landlady...bleached blond, heavy boozer, owns a big, rambling manse on Front Street, has a missing

back end."

"She's missing what?"

No, no...the house. Has no back wall, only three sides. I don't know why. Peaches is really down a quart, not the sharpest knife in the drawer—know what I'm sayin'? Claims to be a witch or something."

"A witch?"

Bryant nodded.

"Sorry I asked," said Theo.

"Getting back to Dead Bill...Cilli Bradshaw, you know her...gray tissues?" Bryant always called the Great Issues class "Gray Tissues," his own little joke. "Anyhow, she's one of the Sigma Tau sisters." Theo remembered the girl at the door, Cilli. "She and her sorority are asked to hold the wager. So everyone is waiting to see what will happen come Saturday night. The Omicron guys, and a lot of others in cars get near, but not too close to the police station. Nobody wants to tangle with Putnam or his storm troopers. So, everybody's waiting. At about eleven-fifty, a hearse, Bill's hearse, pulls into the front parking lot. Headlights go dead. The engine stops, but then nothing else happens. It's real still. No more vehicles drive up, no party starts. The Omicron guys wait until twelve-twenty but see nothing, and so head to Sigma Nu to pick up their winnings from Cilli. When they get there, there's no Cilli. Her sisters report that she and some of the others are at the party at the police station. The Omicron guys get nervous and quickly head back to the station. When they get there, still no party but the hearse is still there, under a light in the parking lot. Dingle, this big, dumb Omicron guy, is sent to get a look into the drivers side window, but it's all dark, like there's black crepe or something over the windows. He heads around back. He hears something and so opens the tail gate. A big rush of smoke, music and laughter hits him in the face. He sees Denny H. scratching the banjo and Dan W. flailing the gui-

tar. Sure enough, it's a bonafide party. Everyone's singing *Java."*

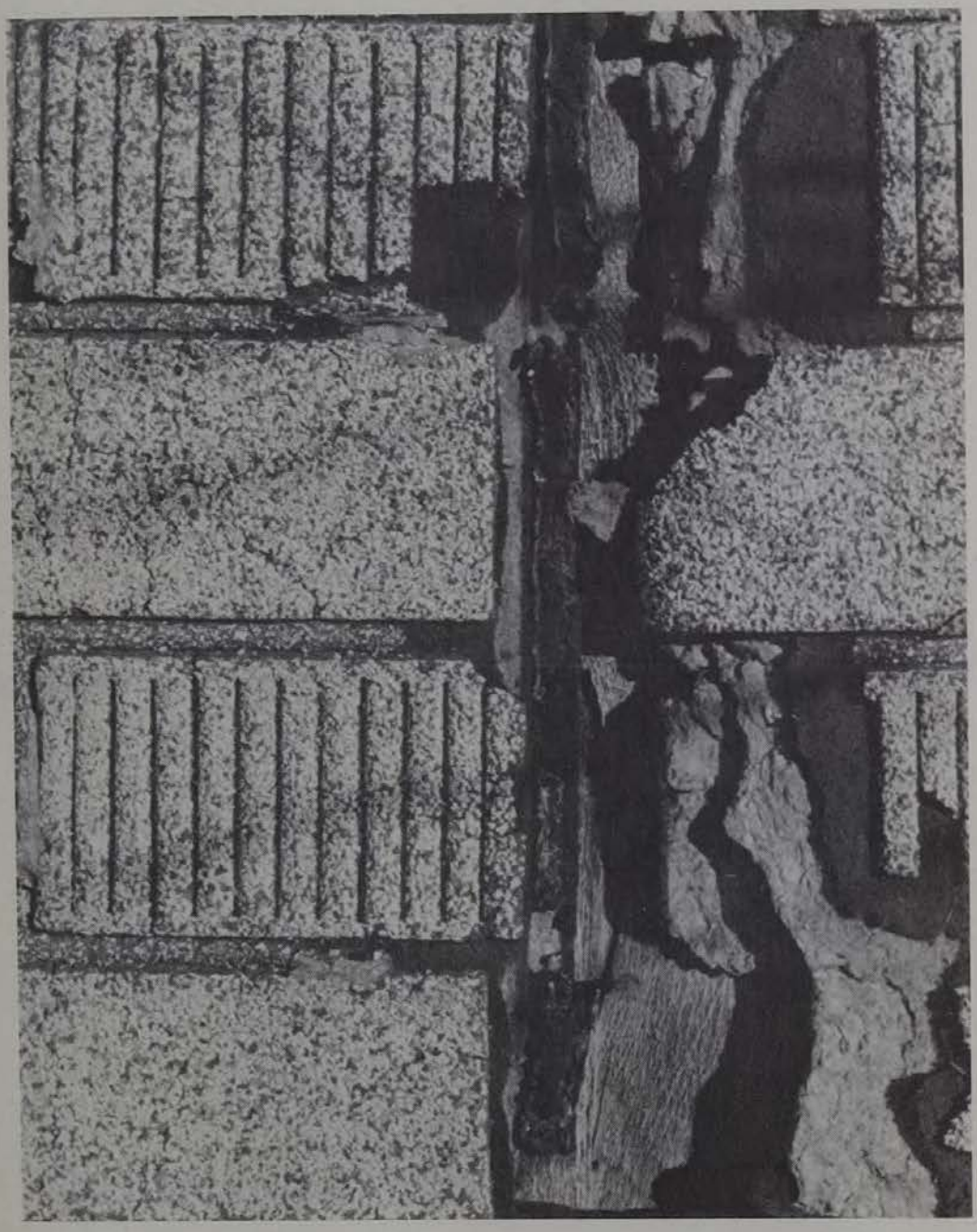
"Java?"

"*Java*, the song? It's a nonsense kind of thing our students love to sing when they're drunk; which by now you've noticed, is...well, uh..." Theo grimaced. Bryant continued, "So, here's Dead Bill, booze flowing, live music, about ten people packed in and everyone's having a great time singing...this Java thing. You with me? Seems that the hearse is practically sound-proof. To make a long story short, Bill wins the hundred bucks and is able to get what he needs."

"Great story," affirmed Theo, "but I still don't know why Dead Bill needed the hundred."

"Theo, you're a good man with a lot to learn about Fishwick, but listen, I've gotta' run, a meeting with Dean Little." As he got himself in motion, sadness came over Bryant's face. "God, I hate this weather. Rain can ruin a pair of slippers. I had these Egyptian loungers, imported, real sheepskin, just one day in this kind of weather and they were totaled....Oh by the way, will we see you and Tiger tonight...the dinner?"

Theo had forgotten, an immediate wave of guilt crashed over him. Tonight was Fall Dinner, a kind of an eating convocation. It was an important, first semester, college-wide event requiring his presence, everyone's presence. As Bryant headed out, Theo stammered an "of course, yes I...I mean, we'll be there." As Bryant left, he turned back to his work.



—Candace Kuchinski

Jason Cyr

Brighter Days

Sometimes I can feel my mind, daring to release
Shattered by this hell of mine, refusing to decease
Caring not about myself, foretting brighter days
Further on through the trees, other side I cannot reach
    Cannot reach, it's out of my hands
    And now, I must decide who I'll be
    And now, the pathway's blocked
    It sounds like silent defeat
    And now, the sun is gone
    I think it's gone with me
Sometimes I don't know myself, don't know how to be
Living life with all I've got, don't seem that much to me
And it comes with emptyness, forgotten brighter days
The search is lost I can't be found, what's inside I cannot reach

    What does it mean?
    Object of deciet
    Motive to pass on
    It circles me.

Hee-Seon Kim

Coffee

Coffee is like my boyfriend.
Sometimes it wakes me up
when I feel sleepy.
Sometimes it warms me
when I feel cold.
Sometimes it pleases me
with sweet taste.
Sometimes it saddens me
with bitter taste.
Sometimes it angers me
with no taste.
The difference is, only
coffee gets cold.

Glenn Geher, Ph.D.

Snowshoes

It was a perfect winter day. High pressure had taken over in Maine temporarily — basically, that means it was really sunny out. Snow had blanketed the landscape. The entire state of Maine now qualified for postcard status. It was mid-January. Kathy had some plans that afternoon. It was Sunday; I actually had free time ... It occurred to me that the stars and planets must have aligned themselves just so. The plan came to me in a matter of seconds — I was going to take out my snowshoes for the first time in 3 years. Murphy, my always-ready-and-willing companion (a beautiful 4-year old Husky/Border Collie mix), and I got in the car. The adventure was underway!

I knew exactly where we were headed — Field's Pond in Orrington. Murphy and I had been running by there on an almost daily basis that month and the idea of walking out onto the frozen, snow-covered pond seemed unreal to me; I was going to do it! So was Murphy!

When we got onto the lake, after I put on the rusty old snow shoes, I sort of had a plan. I had taken my boat out there the past fall with Jon and my Uncle Saul. We found a little stream that extended past a peninsula. We explored it in the boat for some way ... we must have gone a mile down this magical, windy stream into nowhere. I wanted to go back — I wanted to see where that stream went! Murphy and I hit the lake and headed toward the stream.

I had never snowshoed across ice before. Accordingly, I was a bit concerned of falling through. Initially, I was especially cautious — regardless of all the snowmobiles that had blazed trails across the lake (a sure sign that the ice was thick enough for my dog and me!). With time, I felt

more confident with my endeavors. I was becoming one with the landscape — the sun, the white pine trees, the omnipresent snow, Murphy dancing through the snow, and, perhaps above all, the perfect stillness of winter in Maine ... in one word: Perfect. I was in love with the world out there on Field's Pond.

Murphy and I came to the peninsula. We walked onto it. Clearly, we were the only ones here. We came to what would be a perfect camp site — Kathy and I will have to come out here in May! We could bring the marshmallows, the Thunderbird, and Murphy — that would be fun!

We eventually got to the other side of the peninsula. The stream was there, albeit not as frozen as everything else was. It was clear that I would not be able to explore this stream on my snowshoes — temporary disappointment set in. I would just have to go explore Brewer Lake (a larger, adjacent lake with several islands); not a bad consolation. Murphy thought it was just fine.

Between the peninsula and the stream was what appeared to be a solid strip of snow-covered ice. We would have to walk about 200 yards on that strip until we got back to the main body of Field's Pond. Off we went. Quickly, very quickly, I had an unnerving thought — my right foot, snowshoe and all, was completely submerged in icy water. Not good. My heart raced into overdrive. I suddenly had a thought that occurs to me about once-a-year as an outdoorsman; I'm going to pay for taking this stupid risk in the first place ... My left foot was still OK — and close to the perimeter of the land. I lunged toward the land, grabbing onto some vegetation — a bush on the shore — just large enough for me to pull myself to safety.

Within five minutes, this trip went from the most comforting, peaceful experience of my life, to a near-disaster. Great irony.

Murphy and I negotiated our way back to the main

body of the pond through the thick undergrowth of the peninsula. My next few steps onto the pond were, to be understated, hesitant. Sometimes my zest for adventure puts me in a dangerous position. It happens about once a year and it always makes me uneasy about whatever it is that drives my decisions. At least now it happened in January — I've reached my quota this year already! After about another 1/4 mile, I felt more relaxed on the pond. Eventually, we reached some snowmobile tracks — home base! I felt better now!

Murphy and I followed the tracks through a short path in the woods over to Brewer Lake. Like all Maine lakes this time of year, it too was majestic. Blue skies, snow-covered lake. Perfect. Directly in front of us was an island. To the right were some people icefishing. I figured we could head toward the island, check out the ice fishing, and then head back. Murphy agreed.

After a few steps, we saw a large bird flying toward us from the island. It was the only bird we had seen all day, so we took an extra look. As it came closer, it became unmistakably clear — a bald eagle — as proud as they come. The bird glided gracefully and purposefully directly overhead. It must have come within 15 feet of us. Murphy was just as attentive to it as I. Eventually, it soared over to Field's Pond — out of sight. What a moment — what a memory.

We walked along. Beyond the island, we came to the people ice fishing. I had never seen ice fishing up-close and so I was pleased to have the opportunity. Murphy and I approached them: A guy about my age tinkering with all sorts of gear, a young girl about 10 years old, perhaps the guy's daughter, and a small brown and white dog that welcomed Murphy with standard playful gestures. Murphy and her new friend played chase on the snow — it was fun just to watch.

The guy fishing was very friendly. He showed me his

gear, told me about what people were catching, etc. He indicated that people do catch salmon out here, although he had, to that point, only caught one white perch. He seemed happy with that. He pointed out several traps of his that were scattered in the area. A red flag sticks up from the trap when a fish bites. Great fun! When we were talking, he was in the process of baiting a live minnow — hook through both eyes, of course.

In what seemed like an instant of pride, my new friend suggested that I take a look at his catch. He pointed to another trap, about 20 yards away, and indicated that the perch was right near it. I headed over. By the time I got there, the sometimes-loyal Murphy had decided to join me. When we got to the trap, I looked around. No fish. I gestured over to him to ask if I were in the right place. He looked most surprised that I did not see the fish. In a moment of grave concern, he came running over. I continued my visual search — to no avail. In seconds, the ice-fisherman joined me — we were both stumped. He was upset. I felt bad. Once these emotions were at least somewhat manifest, I looked over to Murphy.

Murphy's behavior meant exactly one thing — someone had found this man's fish. Murphy was involved in that distinctive fixed action pattern of lying directly on her back and wriggling with joy — she was on the fish, alright. I gestured to her to stop. At that point, she stopped, put the fish in her mouth, and took off. Suddenly, the foot in the water did not seem so bad ... After a brief chase, I got the fish back. I then placed it where the fisherman stated it had been in the first place.

It was now all too clear at this point what course of action was most appropriate. I smiled. I eked out a, "Good luck!" ... or was it, "Take care!"? I looked at Murphy. We headed back across this beautiful winter wonderland. We made it to the car. What a day! We would do it all over again in a second.

Tim Gately

Never Ending Love

I feel
Your eyes
Your heart
Your soul
The kiss
I miss
It makes me whole

I'll touch
Your hand
Your heart
Your chest
Through my mind
You run
And will not rest

You make me
Feel a feeling
I've never felt before

You leave my body wanting
Lusting for you more

For you to be
Beside me
My dream
My world
I'll take you in
My arms
Our passions are revealed

I reach
To grab
Your heartbeat
Echoing
In your breast
Your pulse
Easily heard
And mine
Repeats no less

Only closer
We grow
Nearer till we're one
You are my life
My moon
My stars
My sun

You touch a part of me
That no one else
Could grasp
Held me with
Your calm caress
A feeling
Meant to last

I seize every moment
I can
To be near you
I long to feel
Your pure enjoyment
I pray our time
Won't pass



—Dorothea Witham

Giang H. Ho

I'm a Vietnamese Guy

I'm a Vietnamese guy
Who is a foreigner
I never had a chance
To do what I wanted.

I'm a Vietnamese Guy
Who is a refugee in the United States
I always have a hard time
In my school and in my neighborhood
Because I'm a Vietnamese guy
There is prejudice against me
I would love to make friends with them
But they never permit me to do what
I want most

I'm a Vietnamese guy
Who needs love like everybody else.
What is the invisible wall
That separates people from being friendly?
I need more friends to talk to.
I need more friends to play with
But why can't I do that?
Because I'm a Vietnamese girl.

Deena Sole

Letting Go ... The Beginning

I don't understand all these tears I cry, it seems as if there's a permanent sigh...I wrote no words about you, found no song that stopped me in me tracks, there are no beautiful memories that stop my heart, but for some unknown reason I can't let you go. My body is wracked with sobs for reasons that can't be fathomed. My mind runs in so many different ways, the dichotomy is unbearable.

My heart screams its undying love for you swearing allegiance to the bitter end.

Yet my heart/head swears at you and me accusing you of all the hurtful things that I allowed you to put me through.

There is no one to blame but me I reason, but somehow I think some of it rests with you.

Would I receive you back into my heart? No. Maybe for a little while I reason but the lack of trust would be unbearable, it would drive me insane just like it did before.

So what do I do?... How to let go of something I don't want.

Danielle Harris

My Camp

Dusk is always the most breath-taking time at my grandmother's camp. The big red sphere pours down its vibrant rays upon the gray swirling water. Like magic it seems to metamorphosize the angy waves into a smooth palette of light. The calmness and beauty overtake me.

Come nightfall, the camp trnasforms into a silvery collage of sparkling irridescence which falls from the massive moon that has just come out of hiding. The lake becomes a shimmering plain of diamonds, glistening in the moonlight. The clouds dare not pass and interrupt the splendor which has just enveloped the little camp. It would almost seem rude.

The air, although summer, has cooled considerably, but my fireplace has always had the power to comfort me with its stoney arms. The massive fieldstone fireplace contains the flaming heat protectively. My eyes sting from the smoke, yet they are transfixed by the entrancing, dancing light. The small breeze carries the inimitable scent of burning pine throughout the camp.

For a moment the gentle caressing waves on the shore seem to be whispering a hush. The eerie silence embraces the lake so that I can almost hear my heart beat.

Then suddenly, the silence is broken, and the haunting song of the night begins. The song, faint at first, then with the addiction of each new voice, grows louder and stonger until till the lake is full and alive with the enchanting tune. The chilling sound makes the hair stand on the back of my neck. Then somehow the song looses its frightening effect and fills me with sorrow. "Such a strange name, THE LOON, for such a beautiful bird," I ponder while I sit

on the dock. The melody, though it stays the same, is filled with sadness and lonliness. It tells a story of grief and loss.

Only the waters of the lake know the story of the loons' lament, but the secret will always be safe, locked away between the folds of the waves.

The memories of my little log cabin are embraced warmly into my heart. Every sound, every whisper, whether it be the creeking of the old swing on the porch or the incessive chattering of the wild life are held deep within my thoughts. I can't ever imagine life without my safe haven. The hidden treasure of my childhood is carved into the trees and planted into the ground.

One day, I will share those glorious evenings with children and grandchildren of my own. 'Til then, though, the camp is quiet of young voices, of kids playing in the water. I've grown up and the simple pastime of youth is now overpowered by the complications in life, but the sunset, will never change. If things get too overwhelming I can always escape, off into the woods to my little camp and sit and watch and listen. ❧

Bob Nichols

The Haunted Pond

for my father

Old Man Scobie drowned in, and so named,
a pond I grew up near. Though some locals claimed
his ghost still haunted there, I was too young for fear.
I loved to ride the pond at dusk. On a raft half-waterlogged
I stood and poled, gliding through the mist, always beyond.
One late fall night, the pond was almost ice,
and fog so thick, to part it I pushed twice as hard,
and nearly broke my stick.
To my surprise, that ghostly night I heard,
besides the usual lone bullfrog and bird,
the raucous din of human voices.
Their speech and laughter—slurred and loud—
rang through the heavy shroud with too much beer.
Curious, I poled near.
Four drunken fishermen gawked in fright
as I drifted from the fog.
They yelped and dove from sight
like four huge frogs all startled from a log.
Frantic, in icy fear they thrashed away—
the memory is fond.
And if you visit there today, you'll hear
the old ghost still haunts Scobie Pond.



—*Scott Anttila*

Bob Kaufman

Jazz Chick

Music from her breast vibrating-Soundseared into burnished velvet-silent hips deceiving fools-rivulets of trickling ecstacy-from the alabaster pools of jazz-where music cools hot souls-eyes more articulately silent-then medusa's thousand tongues-a bridge of eyes, consenting smiles-of cool rememberance, happy balls-wrapped in swinging-jazz-her music-jazz.

For Eileen
1925-1986

Elizabeth Ramirez

Future Sentimentality

A modern photograph
Reminding me of times long past.
Of times which have not yet been,
Of times that are yet to come.

The photo appears dark and dim.
However, under the only light
Lies a piece of paper written on
By little fingers long ago.

That long ago was really only yesterday.
And the memories floating in on me
Are, in fact, not memories
Only happenings still to come.

I am being overly sentimental to sit,
Teary-eyed, over events which have not come to pass.
But I know that some day
I will be doing exactly this;
Becoming dewy-eyed all over again.
This time, over memories which are real.

Elizabeth Ramirez

Melancholy Thoughts

Listening to sad, melancholy notes
Of music playing on the stereo,
I watch the unending flow of city lights
From my mountain vantage point.

However, I am not on that mountain
Even though the music is the same.
My thoughts are transporting me back
To a time of tranquility that I knew
Could not and would not last forever.

Peaceful moments are fleeting memory makers.
Full of sentimentally mixed emotions,
Welling up from deep inside your soul,
Escaping into the vast abyss of nothingness.



—Brenda Hart

Theresa Hainer

From a Memorial Service for George Peabody

It was the first week of January in 1974 that I met George Peabody. I was 18 and he was 62. Our lives have continually intertwined over these past 25 years and he will forever be a symbol of hope and mentorship for me.

We were brought together because of a gentleman from Bucksport, Maine. This man, born in 1876, was named Fred Forsyth. He was then 96 years of age. Though George was Fred's legal council in those days, they had actually met many years earlier when a younger Mr. Peabody worked a summer construction job building the bridge from Bucksport to Verona Island and Fred was the rural postman who delivered the mail to the island. They became friends. Fred retired from the postal service in 1936 at age 60. The following year, George began his law practice at the age of 25. Despite the 35-year difference in their ages, their friendship endured. I have been honored and blessed to have known both of these exceptional men.

I met Fred Forsyth in 1973. He was a patient at a local nursing facility where I worked as a nurse's aid. I had plans to go to eastern Maine Medical Center's Nursing Program in the fall. My plans changed, however, after my parents divorced and — due to lack of resources — I opted to attend a technical college LPN program instead. Fred became aware of my plans to pursue a nursing career. I left the nursing home to begin my course work in January of 1974.

The day after New Year's, I received a phone call from the office of George Peabody. I was asked to come in the following Monday at 9 a.m. Prior to this time, I had no idea who Mr. Peabody was. Upon arrival to his office, I was es-

corted to a conference room and seated at one end of a very long table. Mr. Peabody entered, introduced himself and informed me that his client, Mr. Forsyth, felt that I should become a "professional nurse," and that he had set up a trust fund through which this could be carried out. I was speechless! It was a dream come true. I felt overwhelmed and uncertain whether I should withdraw from the technical college that was to begin in two weeks and pursue my dream or go ahead as scheduled. I opted to complete the year-long program first, to be sure that I was serious about a career in nursing. If I determined that this was the right choice, I assured Mr. Peabody that I would be back. Upon graduation from the technical college, I became engaged to marry and promised Mr. Forsyth that I would take him home and be his private nurse. I cared for him until the birth of my daughter in March of 1976. Mr. Forsyth died on May 20, at age 99.

It was then that Mr. Peabody became my mentor and pushed me to pursue my professional nursing career. I attended school from the fall of 1977 until graduation on May 22, 1980. Each semester he would write reassuring letters indicating that my tuition payments had been paid in full and to stay focused on my studies. My only regret was that on graduation day, Mr. Forsyth was not alive to celebrate with me. To my delight, however, as we marched up the aisle past the smiling faces of family and friends, I saw the silhouette of Mr. Peabody framed by the doorway, and I marched right into his waiting arms! It was a memory I will always treasure.

Six years later, I decided to further my nursing education at Husson College. I attended school on a part-time basis from 1986 through 1993, while working full-time. Little did George Peabody know that he would become my "silent cheerleader" as I greeted his portrait every week while attending classes in Peabody Hall, named for him.

Later in the 1990's, Mr. Peabody came to Eastern Maine Medical Center's Ophthalmology Department where I was working as the charge nurse. This time he was my patient. "Well, we've really come full circle now, haven't we?" George commented. It was as we reminisced of earlier days that George made a confession to me. As Fred's legal council twenty years earlier, George was not in favor of Fred's decision to send me to school. I was young and Fred didn't know me well, after all. He smiled as he relayed how Fred argued with him: "Well, it's my money, isn't it?" "Yes," George conceded, "but I don't recommend you give it to her." "What do you recommend?" asked Fred. "I recommend that you give it to me!" replied George. Thus, the trust fund was born. "Sound legal advice!" I quipped, and we both had a hearty laugh that day.

In 1998, I received a letter from George Peabody. He was acknowledging and congratulating me as recipient of the Nurse Excellence Award. The letter reads as follows:

Dear Theresa:

I read very little these days because of eyesight problems. The office keeps me informed of things that I should be aware of. Lo and behold, I found on the top of my desk yesterday a copy of a news article which contained your picture and the article concerning you relating to "National Nurses Week."

I well remember you and Fred Forsyth. You made a particular impression on him and he wanted to do something for you. He was a very perceptive person and seldom made a mistake. Certainly in this instance, he did not. He helped make it possible for you to complete your nurse's training and I was delighted to be a part of it. As always, Fred knew what

he was doing and his choice of an individual worthy of assistance permits of no exception. I well remember another publication issued by EMMC recognizing you for the way you handled yourself during your nurse's training. Now to find you among those nominated to be recognized during "National Nurses Week" confirms my belief that Fred rarely made a mistake.

I congratulate you.

Sincerely,
George F. Peabody

Our last meeting was later in 1998. It was very emotional for us both. I had felt compelled to give something back to others in honor of the symbol of hope and mentorship I received so many years ago. Once again, I came to George for his sound advice and council regarding how to set up a trust fund for nursing education. He cried, and said, "You really pulled through, you really pulled through."

To the contrary, Mr. Peabody. I will always remember that it was Fred who opened the door of opportunity for me, and George who pushed me through.

Thank you. ❧

S.T.C.

Spring

Skunks are singing songs
concerning
scented misdemeanors,

While meadows slip on
vernal robes
just got back from the cleaners.

Frogs chirp out
like leather birds —
green buttons
pressed in mud.

A freshet flows
with melting snows
and grows
into a flood.

These frozen days in
spring garb are but
wolf weeks wrapped in wool
that sink teeth into certainty
and —
not too gently —
Pull.

Contributors

Scott Anttila is a Photography major at the Creative Photographic Art Center of Maine. He also serves as Lab Manager there and donates time for Gallery Maintenance. This is his fifth year as a photography student.

Laura Elena Bisulca is a portrait photographer by trade and enjoys environmental photography as a hobby. She received her Associates of Art, Photography in 1999 and is presently a senior in the Bachelor of Arts program at the University of Maine, Augusta. Her goal is to open a photography studio in Southern Maine specializing in children's portraits in 2002.

A lover of literature, **Susmita Chatterjee** holds a Master's in Philosophy and a Ph.D. in Regional Economics from Presidency College in Calcutta, India. She is dedicated to academics at Husson, and believes in the pursuit of excellence, the good, and the beautiful.

Rene Collins, who is the College Counselor and Clinical Coordinator of the Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nursing Program, earned a diploma in nursing from Maine Medical Center and a doctorate in Counselor Education from the University of Maine. She finds value in life experiences inclusive of animals.

Jason Cyr is a graduating student of Nescom and spends most of his time playing music and skateboarding.

Paul Garcia is a teacher of Spanish at Husson.

Tim Gately is a graduating student of the New England School of Communication. He is interested in video production, and his hobbies include collecting comic books and comic book memorabilia.

Glenn Geher, Ph.D. is currently an associate professor of Psychology at Husson College. Dr. Geher received his Ph.D. in social psychology at the University of New Hampshire in 1997. His dissertation, which will be published this year in "Current Psychology," addressed the Psychoanalytic theory of mate selection as a social-perceptual bias. Dr. Geher won the Sigma Xi Outstanding dissertation award for this work. For the previous two years, Dr. Geher was a member of the psychology department at Western Oregon University. There, he and many of his students as collaborators, completed several research projects addressing a variety of topics pertaining to social, personality, and developmental psychology. While at Western Oregon, Dr. Geher and his students gave 10 presentations on their research at national and regional psychology conferences. Also while in Oregon, Dr. Geher's research was featured on regional television as well as national radio. Since arriving at Husson, Dr. Geher's commitment to research has remained strong. He is scheduled to give 5 presentations this semester at national psychology conferences and University colloquia series. He has published research on several psychological topics and, currently, five of his manuscripts are under review by major scholarly journals in psychology.

Theresa Hainer graduated from Hampden Academy in 1973. She graduated from the EMVTI LPN program in 1974, the EMMC Diploma Nursing Program in 1980, and graduated from the Husson College BSN Program in 1994 with High Honors. She has worked as a cardiac care nurse, ophthalmology nurse, and charge nurse of Ophthamology/ Endoscopy, and has been a Diabetes Nurse Educator since 1998.

Brenda Hart lives in Bethel, Maine and is a second year student at the University of Maine at Augusta, currently studying at the Creative Photographic Art Center of Maine. She is working toward her Associate's Degree in Fine Arts and Photography. Brenda has a great love for nature and portrait photography and has future plans of starting her own portrait studio.

Danielle Harris is the daughter of Husson Continuing Education staff member Heather Upham. (Danielle's contribution was composed when she was a girl.)

Jodi Hersey is a junior at Husson College. She has received her associates in communications from the New England School of Communications. She is the Associate Producer of the six o'clock news for WABI- TV5 as well as a resident assistant on campus. She enjoys singing, working out, and acting.

Giang Hai Ho — Hobbies: swimming, soccer, travel, tennis. Favorite quote: "live life to the fullest today like you are going to die tomorrow, make every second count."

Kevin J. Jette is a NESCOM student from Cumberland, RI. His interests include Audio Recording, Drums, Guitar, Cheesecake!, and Mary.

Diane MacDonald Kasparek was born in Houlton, Maine in 1953. She was educated at Ricker College and the University of Maine, Orono. Her creative writing began while in high school, and continued throughout her life. Diane was tragically killed in a car accident on April 7, 1999.

J.T. Kenny is Dean of Science and Humanities at Husson. A historian and political scientist by training, he has long been interested in creative writing and has produced two novel-length manuscripts. In his spare time, he enjoys camping, canoeing, and performing as either end of a pantomime horse.

Hee-Seon Kim: I am from Seoul, Korea. I am a senior at Husson College, studying nursing. My most difficult things in the states are speaking English and missing my boyfriend. However, thanks to Mr. England and Mr. Nichols, my English is improving now. Thank you, Sirs!! These days I'm enjoying swimming almost every day. I am a little bit shy, but with a little more self-confidence, I'll try to make many friends, and do my best to study my major.

Candace Kuchinski is a native of California, but feels more at home in the Maine outdoors. Besides studying photography at the Creative Photographic Art Center, she enjoys snowboarding, sailing and swimming. Her dream is to explore the fun in life through photography and travel with Dennis and her very own doggie.

Katherine Moody is a sophomore at Husson in the Physical Therapy program, she is an active member of OPTS, the a cappella group and a member of the volleyball team. She is also a member of her hometown's fire department. Her hobbies are skiing, rollerblading, and anything to do with the outdoors.

International Center for Language Studies instructor **Bob Nichols** enjoys the flow of cultures and personalities through his classroom, life in the country with his wife and pets, and playful creativity.

Nancy Nichols, sister of Bob Nichols, grew up in Maine and is currently enrolled in the MFA painting program at Indiana State University. She has been writing since at least the second grade, where she once tried to earn some extra cash by selling copies of an original poem about kittens.

Leon Raikes, born in Salt Lake City, has also lived in Montana, Lebanon, and Michigan. He now resides in Steuben, Maine, and will never move again. An Associate Professor of English at Husson, his major interests include poetry, comparative religions, writing about nature or the wilderness, and birds. He lives with his wife Kim, now a Methodist minister in Downeast Maine, and their youngest son Jesse (age 17). Leon and Kim have two other children: Mary, now a student at College of the Atlantic, and Nathan, residing in Colorado.

Elizabeth Ramirez has been an instructor at the International Center for Language Studies for the past five years. Before that, she was an English instructor in Japan.

Deena Sole is a Husson Freshman, majoring in Psychology. She Enjoys travel, hiking and new experiences.

Reg Urbanowski is the current Director and an Associate Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Husson College. He has an Occupational Therapy graduate education as well as graduate education in Educational Leadership and International/Intercultural Education.

Dorothea Witham is the Assistant Executive Director of the Creative Photographic Art Center of Maine. She enjoys photography and digital imaging. She loves horses, animals and nature. Being a nature lover, her photographs show that.

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One College Circle • Bangor, Maine 04401-2999
207-941-7000 www.husson.edu