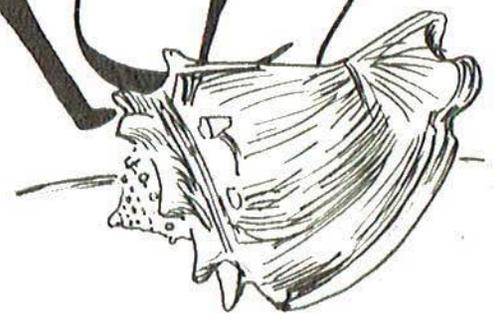
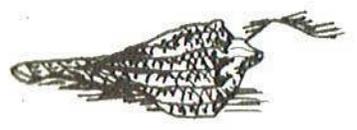
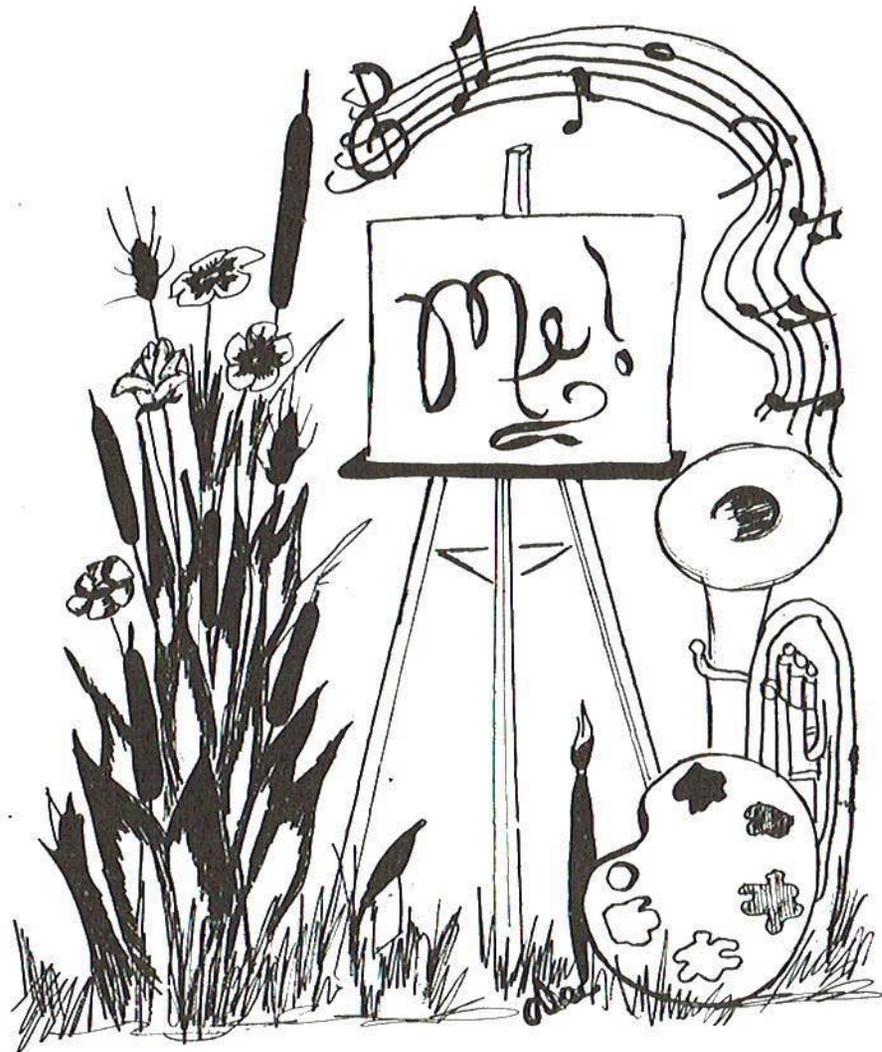


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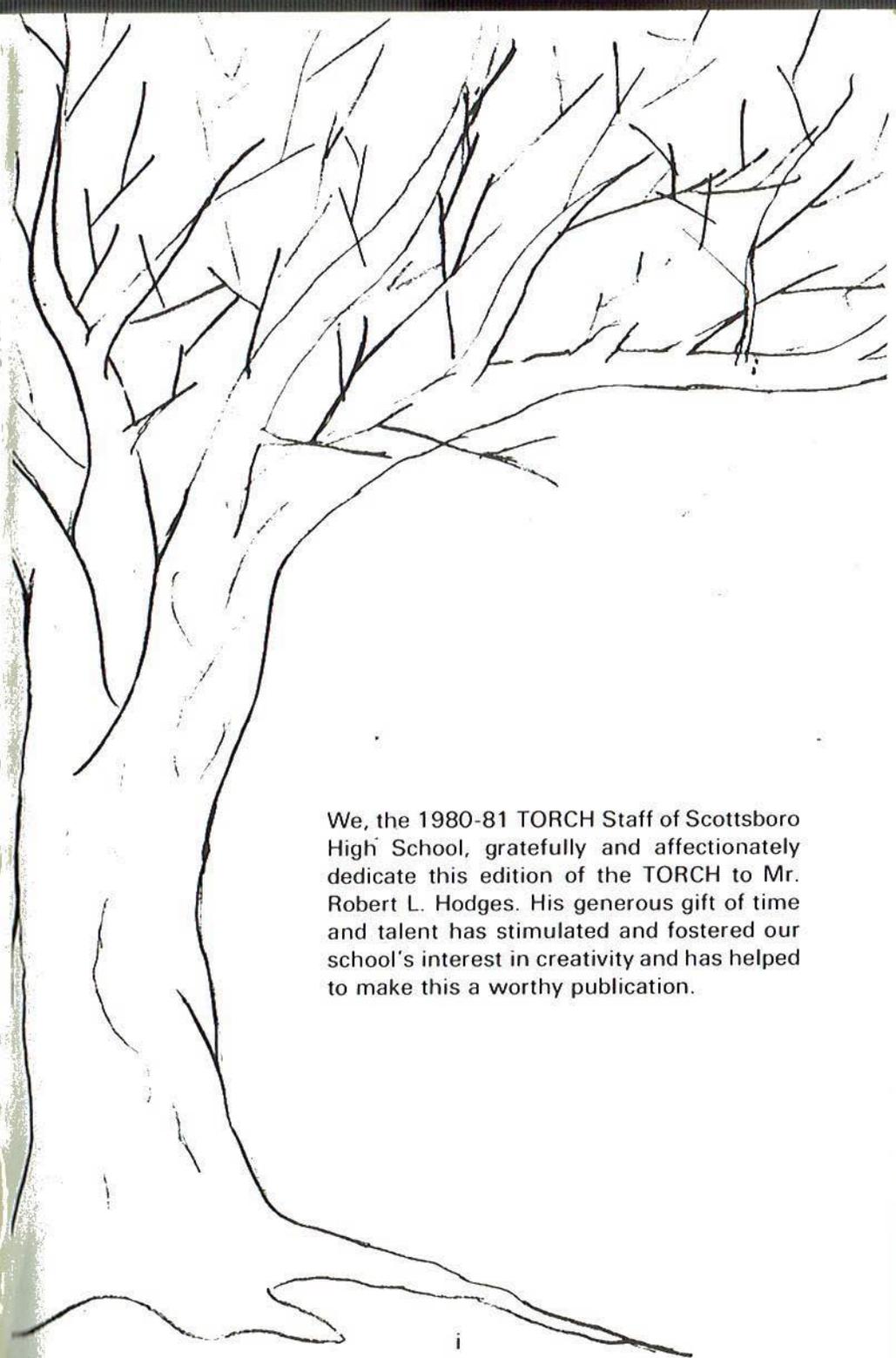




THE TORCH

1980 - 81

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS OF THE
STUDENTS OF SCOTTSBORO HIGH SCHOOL



We, the 1980-81 TORCH Staff of Scottsboro High School, gratefully and affectionately dedicate this edition of the TORCH to Mr. Robert L. Hodges. His generous gift of time and talent has stimulated and fostered our school's interest in creativity and has helped to make this a worthy publication.

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THE OLD MAN

He sits in the park on a bench all alone.

No one around who cares for him.

With crooked hands and shredded rags

He sits and ponders the beauty around him.

With the day slowly coming to an end,

The old man stands and turns to leave.

He has done nothing great by which to be remembered.

He hasn't left a mark on the world.

Deborah Blizzard

PASSING

With sunken eyes and wrinkled skin,
she stared.

Her face drooping over her neck,
she awaited.

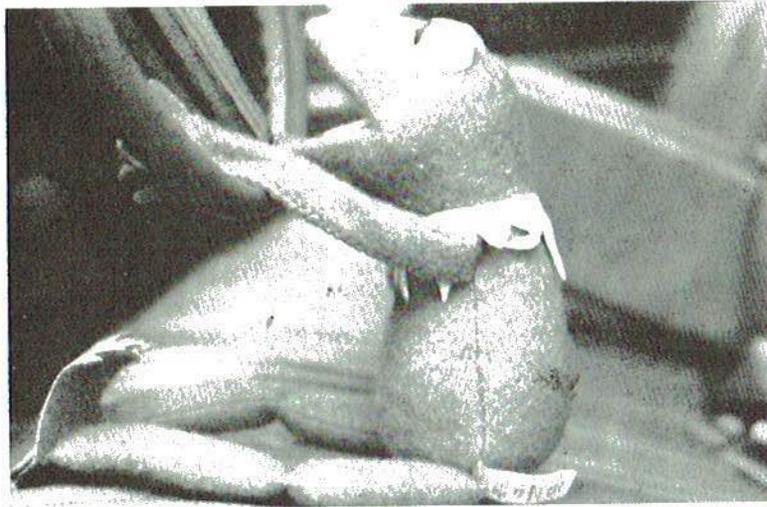
Shriveled hands pressed on sagging breasts,
she flinched.

With a heart drowning in a sea of memories
she sighed.

Though she knew she would join him again
she anticipated—

all too soon.

Sheila Callahan



THE FROG

While sitting on the
porch one day,
(I think it was
the middle of May.)
I watched a small frog
crossing the road.
It was slow,
this little green toad.

It stopped in the middle
and gazed at the sky,
and snatched from it
a big juicy fly.
While this little frog
ate his lunch,
along came a car
followed by a big
C R U N C H!

From this valuable lesson
in disguise,
I no longer stop
to munch on flies!

Bill Bogle

"A RIGHT-HANDED WORLD"

Have you ever noticed that the world is made for right-handed people? Even though it becomes more modernized every day, we still live in a right-handed world.

Civilization is prejudiced against "southpaws." The realization of this prejudice begins at an early age. When a child starts school he is given scissors; if he is right-handed, there is no problem, but if he is left-handed, it is proclaimed to the class that Johnny is different. Many times he has to make do with a regular pair of scissors.

Many materials used at school are right-hand dominated. Pencil sharpeners, notebooks, and desks are made without regard and concern to the left-hander. He must awkwardly sharpen his pencil, write in his notebook, and he must be uncomfortable at his desk.

In sports many objects are specifically made for left-handers. The only problem is that the companies charge a much higher price for these special objects than they do for a regular, right-handed object. Again, left-handers are discriminated against, and, as a result, have a harder time finding equipment.

Even after a person is grown, and all through his life, he is haunted by his left-handedness. Watches, jewelry clasps, automobiles, coffee mugs, belts, shirt buttons, sewing machines, refrigerators, and a never-ending list are predominately for right-handed persons. Even in the professional world, objects such as dental chairs are made for right-handers.

Maybe the world will realize this situation soon and at least sympathize with "lefties." Maybe the world will even make some changes. Right now it is a sad fact that one of the few things found made predominately for "lefties" are commode levers.

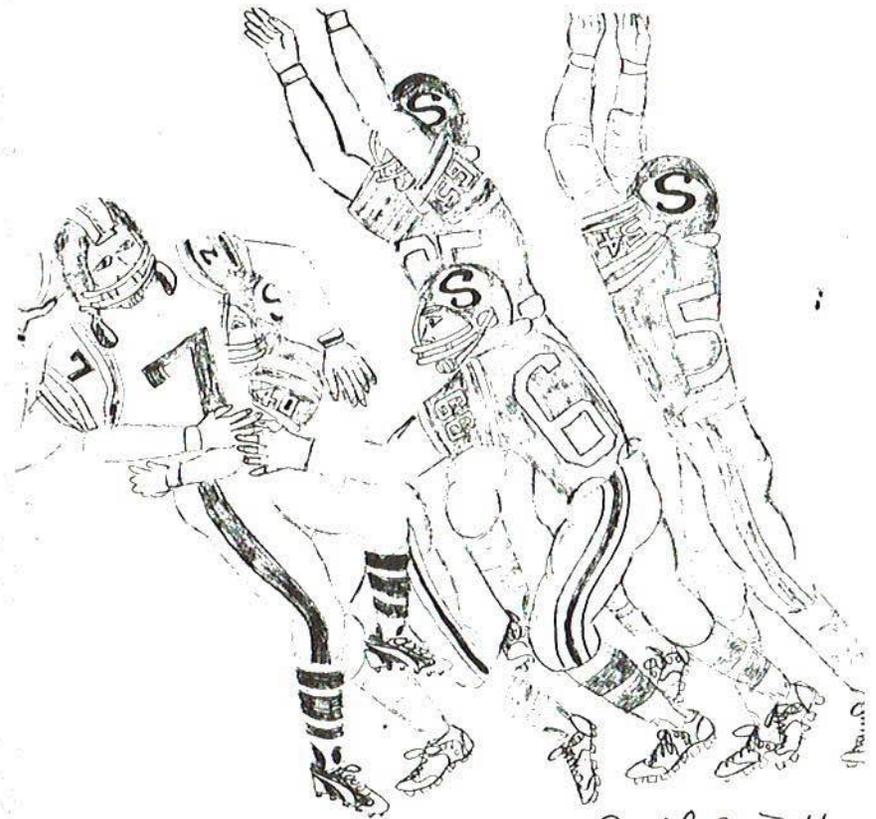
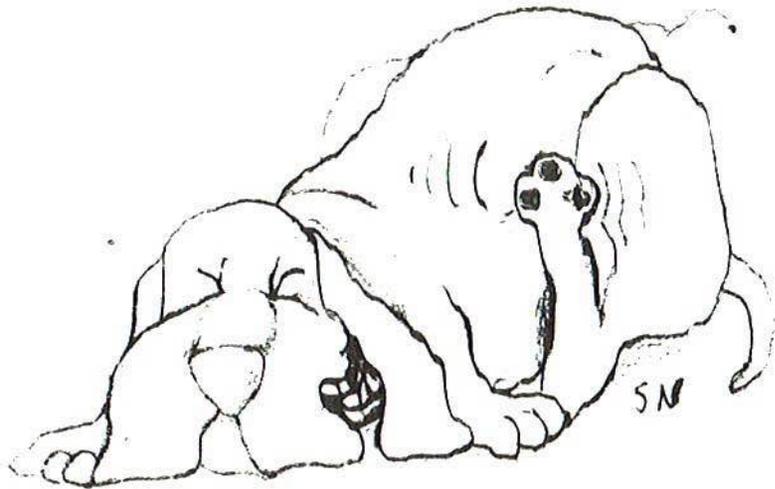
Carol Muse



THE FLEA

I think that I shall never see,
A thing as icky as a Flea.
A Flea whose little, bumpy back,
Looks just like a small thumbtack.
A Flea whose feet are small and brown,
And are found walking on my poor old hound.

Teddy Hea drick



David Bennett

THE BALLAD OF THE "FLEA"

There once was a player — very well known;
All over the field he used to roam.
Running the ball — the name of his song;
Most of the time he could do no wrong.
High hopes he had that reached to the sky;
But to all those hopes, he bid goodbye.
Some people believe he was the key;
Some know him by the name, the "Flea."

Vincent Hall



TO LEAH

How many secrets
Are you hiding —
There behind
Your little brown eyes?

What fears and
Dreams are there?
The answers
Are all yours . . .

If I could but fathom the depths
Of your little brown eyes —
The knowledge of a child
Could be revealed . . .

Samantha Noble



THE JESTER

The Jester

Dancing, capering, cajoling
(comically homely)

Banter for a king's court

The Jester

Dreadful puns — musical mirth
(a wink at the Queen!)

Witty for the damsels

The Jester

Alone in his chamber

(love songs for four walls)

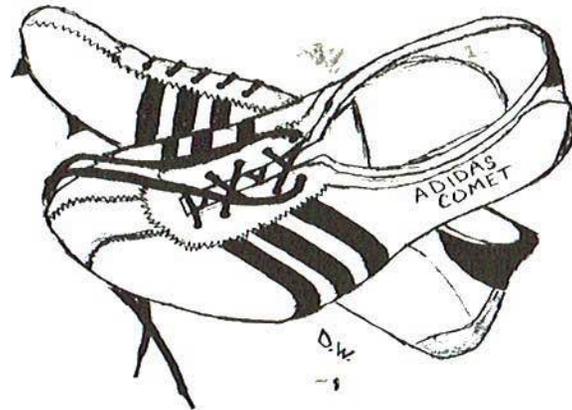
Did anyone care?

Dennis Nichols

COMPETITION

Caught in the whirlwind
Of whistles, guns, and cheers.
Shouts of exultation
From the winners.
While the losers
Quietly turn away.

Debbie Winkle



RELAY

Practice! Practice! Practice!
All season long.
When you're finally finished
Your relay team is strong!

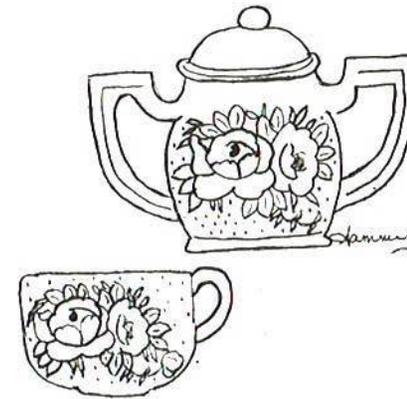
A relay team's practice
Is a never-ending grind
But every time the gun sounds
Nobody seems to mind!

Missing a day of practice
Is really a deadly sin.
One day's sweat
Is another day's win!
You practice every step
Over in your sleep
And when the season's over
You've lots of memories to keep!

Shawn Slaten

Go hard, set the pace,
Says Coach with a smiling face;
In the race he ain't.

Tamra Gadberry



OF DISHES

What is the nature of normality and abnormality? If a set of dishes are alike; if they are made with such precision as to possess perfect uniformity, then are they not normal in respect to each other? Would they not conform to the common standards of excellence in design and luster?

Now suppose one of the plates has a small defect, say, a tiny crack or chip. Does this dish still conform to the rigid standards the other dishes have set? Would not this dish, in effect, be abnormal?

Now suppose our set of china is observed with such care and scrutiny that, horror of horrors, minute seams and cracks are discovered on every member of the set. Do these "flawless" dishes still conform to one another? Of course they do! However; now the most distinguishing common characteristics that determine the uniformity and normality of the china are not flawlessness and duplication of design but the lack of flawlessness and the lack of duplication. After all, if all the dishes possess the same two characteristics of imperfection and discrepancy of design then are they not still quite normal in respect to each other?

Now let us turn our attention to that one unfortunate dish that is now collecting water under a potted geranium. Is that plate still abnormal simply because it possessed a visible flaw? Have we not established that the flaws and differences of that plate's peers are, after all, the very standards that determine normality and conformity in the first place. **It is now safe to assume that the only true conformity lies in nonconformity and the only true state of normality lies in the state of abnormality.** Thus the prodigiously defective plate can go back to being a respectable member of its society.

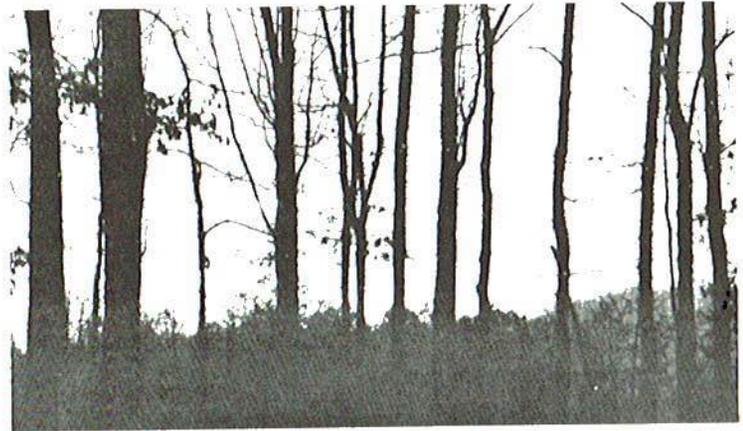
Now let us assume for a moment that a dish is made that is perfect in the strictest sense of the word. Divinely so, if you will. Would this plate be normal? Certainly not! By rising above the mediocrity of its counterparts, it has become a freak in the most monstrous form imaginable. Yet how we would marvel at its beauty: the beauty that arises from perfection and incongruity! Such is the nature of an abnormal dish.

Dennis Nichols

THE REAL THING?

He lumbers in the door,
Clicking the heels of his leather boots
On the cedar floors of the hall.
His large felt hat with its band of feathers
Gently scrapes the tip of the chandelier
As he passes under it.
He sits down to his beans and cornbread
On the fine Lenox china.
And then, after supper,
He sits on his velvet couch
Singing with a country flavor
And strumming his Martin with gusto.
Then he pulls out his Red Man
And spits in his gold spittoon,
Thinking to himself how much he enjoys
Being a real
Urban Cowboy.

Lori Parrish



STOPPING BY WOODS

Whose woods these are I think I know,
His name is Edgar Allen Poe.
He will not see me stopping yet
I feel his presence like a net.

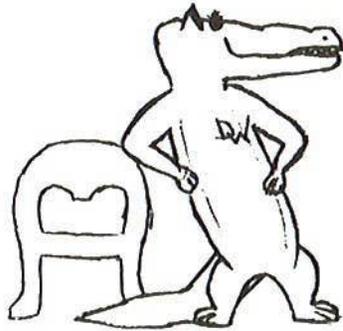
My little car must think it queer
To stop with no State Trooper near.
The one thing I have learned too late,
Is not to leave the interstate.

My wheels won't budge, my battery's dead,
It seems I failed to use my head.
Of country roads I wasn't leary,
Now my midnight's bleak and dreary.

I'd like to give my horn a toot,
But first I'll bury all the loot
Somewhere beneath this old oak tree —
(Is that a raven watching me?)

These woods are thick and dark and deep.
Next time I think I'll steal a jeep
But now I still have miles to go
A life of crime is full of woe!

Bill Scott



O BELOVED ALLIGATOR

Every culture has them. Almost every one wants to own one of them. They are the cursed symbols of social stature. The more expensive the better. The material possessions which separate the conformers and the nonconformers.

Everyone is, at least, familiar with a few of these little unspoken requirements for social acceptance. Izod's alligator, penny loafers, Etienne Aigner everything but underwear, and a new add-a-bead for every one hundred shares of IT&T a girl's father buys her. This list not only contains clothes but expands to include hair styles, cars, and even what college a person attends.

Society places entirely too much emphasis on these worthless material possessions. Is it fair to exclude a person simply because they don't have someone else's name on their clothes or the window sticker still on their car? Worldly goods should not carry so much importance.

Through these labels, individuality is slowly being diminished. Clothing and accessories are supposed to reflect a person's personality. If this is true, society is losing all of the personal expression that it prides itself on.

Our present culture is breeding a generation of passive conformers who are afraid to be different and innovative. These status symbols seem to dictate the only kind of accepted behavior. Do this. Do that. Don't do this. Don't do that. Above all, however, is the assumed rule that it is not acceptable to be different. What would this world be like today if no one had dared to go against the system?

Will these conforming preps and prepettes ever get up off of their blessed assurance long enough to make a name for themselves? Likely not. It is the heartless nonconformers of this world who will leave their mark.

JUST IMAGINE . . .

Just imagine for a moment, or more,
What could be lurking behind that door?
It might be your mother, making sure that you're well,
Or it could be a demon, from straight out of hell.

Just imagine for a moment, if you will,
What could be over the top of that hill?
The time-honored field of a battle so old,
Or a kingdom of jewels with streets paved with gold.

Just imagine for a moment, if you please,
What land there is across the sea?
A communist nation, enclosed by a wall,
Or an Arabian city, genies and all.

Just imagine for a moment, if you dare,
What lies on distant planets out there?
A simple bacterium, no other life higher,
Or a dark, evil lord with a sword made of fire.

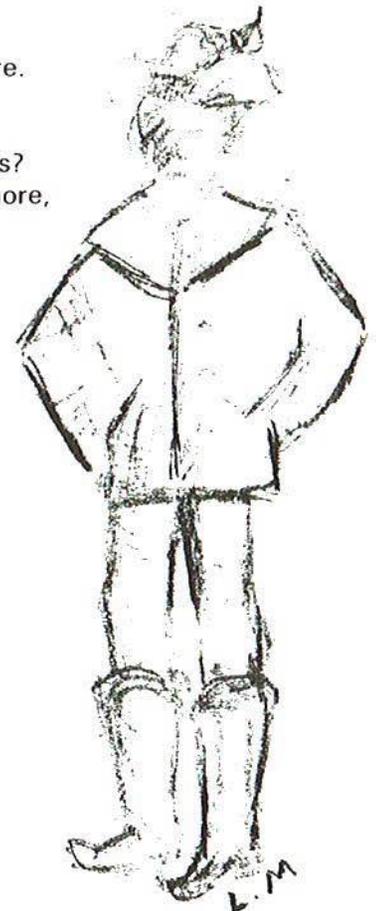
Just imagine for a moment, sitting here,
What earth will be like in twenty more years?
Will peace finally come, will we linger no more,
Or . . .

Just imagine.

Jim Thomas

College
Frightening, challenging
Working, studying, searching
Broadening our knowledge,
Career.

Ray Tolliver



Woke up this morning
At six o'clock sharp,
Birds were singing
Even though it was dark.

I looked out my window
It had rained during the night
I saw in the distance
A single ray of light.

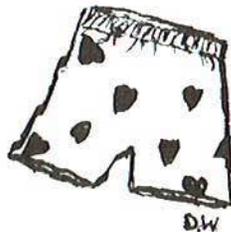
The road was shiny black
No cars passed this way
And I was thinking to my self
"What a pretty day."

I felt like crying,
It happened so fast.
The magic was broken
When a car roared past.

Gina Moseley

A young man in his car did zoom
Around town in his fruit of the loom.
He was trapped by the law
When the officer saw,
That he'd left all his clothes in his room.

Debbie Winkle



CHINA GEM

She stands in the corner
On a dust-covered shelf,
Forgotten by the little girl
Who once longed to take her
From her place of safety.
From china head to china toe
She is covered with the fine powders
Of many years past.
The painted face is chipped and pale,
The silken clothes now faded,
But still the outline of a whimsical smile
Can be discerned through the silvery threads
Of the spider's home,
Reviving fond memories of
Many hours — pleasure-filled.
She once was the prize possession
Of a quiet little girl,
But now she sits abandoned
On a dust-covered shelf
In her faded dress,
With her fading smile
Of hope, that someday,
She will again be someone's
Precious gem.

Lori Parrish

THE CANOE OF LIFE

Life, is a swaying canoe,
Tilting; swirling; pitching.
You hold on tight and try to fight
The raging, changing current.
The current of life is strong and swift
And sometimes pulls you under.
But in the end you struggle up,
Gasp for air and again go on.

Regena Campbell



DAY DREAMS

As I gaze into the sky,
I wonder about the clouds so high.
In the distance some birds are in flight,
Soaring to incredible heights.

The wind gently blows through my hair,
As I gaze at the day so fair.
My mind drifts to memories of the past,
And wishes that some would last.

Strange, how nature affects the mind.
How cruel, but still how kind.
To lose oneself in a beautiful day,
But to be able to retrace the way.

Blake Wright

P. C. 314

It was 8:30 in the morning when the small but respectable late model car sped past the open gate of Greystoke Memorial Mental Institution. As the large iron gate closed behind it, the automobile rounded a curve and stopped in a parking space designated for its owner, Dr. Silas J. Clairmont, Ph.D.

As the tiny car sputtered into silence, a tall, light-haired man of about 45 years climbed out onto the pavement. There he straightened his wrinkled slacks and casually made his way to the main building.

The morning at the institution seemed fairly routine to Dr. Clairmont. After taking time for a cup of coffee and yesterday's news he recognized the cadence of Nurse Dawson as she hurried down the hall and into his office.

"Are you busy, Dr. Clairmont?" asked the pretty, blond woman hardly a day over 24.

"Not at all," answered the doctor with a smile. "What's the problem?"

"It's Ellen Crawley; the patient in Padded Cell 314," answered Miss Dawson as she handed the doctor the Crawley file, "She's having another psychotic episode."

"I see," muttered Dr. Clairmont as he skimmed over his patient's record and escorted the nurse into the corridor.

Dr. Clairmont was all too familiar with the woman in P. C. 314. She had been a problem to him since the day he had had her admitted to the institution for drug-induced psychoses. In her condition, the psychiatrist felt, only sedatives and restraints could ensure the safety of both Mrs. Crawley and the other patients.

The doctor and Nurse Dawson stepped into an elevator held open by one of two orderlies.

"Third floor."

"Yes, doctor."

Dr. Clairmont gave a disgusted glance to the orderlies before addressing the young lady beside him.

"Miss Dawson, have P. C. 314's delusions shown any variation?"

"No, she still has basically the same one."

The orderlies looked at each other and stifled their snickers.

Upon reaching the third floor where the dangerously insane are confined, the elevator emptied. Dr. Clairmont walked briskly to cell 314 and produced a key from his coat pocket.

"Perhaps I should go in with you," offered Nurse Dawson.

"Not necessary," muttered the doctor as he entered the tiny room and locked the door after him.

Inside the cubicle sat a small, gaunt, middleaged woman. Her dull black hair hung lifelessly over her thin, withered arms. Her face was pale and void of expression with glazed eyes fixed upon the padded walls.

"Good morning, dear," said Dr. Clairmont with a wry smile, "How was your night?"

The withdrawn woman's blank countenance instantly changed to one of excitement; her eyes wide and moist with anticipation.

"Oh Silas, you've finally come for me! I've waited for such a long time for you to take me out of this place! You will take me away from here, won't you?"

"I'm afraid I can't do that, hon," calmly answered the doctor.

"But please! You must!" beckoned the now desperate woman, "I'll do anything for you! I'll cook and clean house for you if that's what you want!"

"No thanks, I'm getting along fine on my own."

"Please Silas, let me leave here! I'll be a good wife. Things will be just like they used to be for us. I promise they will!"

"I don't think so, dear," replied the bored and fidgeting observer.

"But I'll give you whatever you want!" pleaded the poor wretch, "Is it a divorce you want? I'll give you a divorce if it makes you happy."

"You know it's too late for that!" snapped Silas as he turned to unlock the door.

"All I want is to make you happy!" she sobbed as Dr. Clairmont opened the door. "Silas, please don't go! Please don't leave . . ."

The beleaguered psychiatrist quickly stepped out into the hallway and locked the door to P. C. 314 behind him. In front of him stood the attractive, young nurse.

"Miss Dawson, I want Miss Crawley's dosage of phenobarbital raised to 20 units every four hours."

"Yes, Doctor," replied the buxom blond as she smiled and jotted down the doctor's instructions on P. C. 314's file. "Anything else?"

"As a matter of fact, yes," answered Silas Clairmont with a grin. "Will I see you again tonight?"

"Of course . . . Doctor."

Dennis Nichols

YOU

Beautiful as a Waterfall
Graceful as a Doe
Free as the Wildest animals
Majestic as the soaring Eagle
Steadfast as the Mighty Mountain
You.

Teddy Headrick



AUTUMN TO WINTER

You don't know a tree until you see its bones
 It is covered part of the year,
 The jacket of leaves it dons,
 It sheds when Autumn draws near.

Leaves floating thru the air
 Making a blanket on the ground,
 Multicolor is their flair
 No greater beauty can be found.

The wind takes on a little chill
 It blows with a stronger force,
 The splendour of it is a thrill
 From Autumn to Winter is the course.

Ginia Bradford

VACUUM

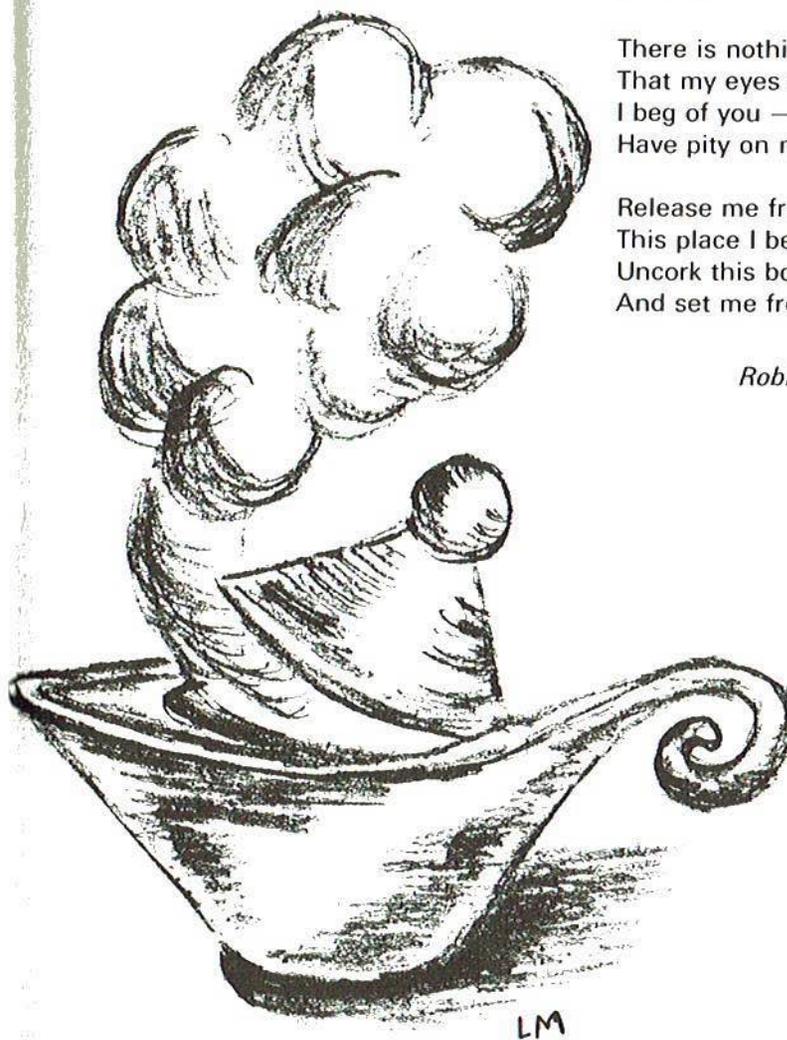
There is no air;
 I cannot breathe.
 This barren place
 I want to leave.

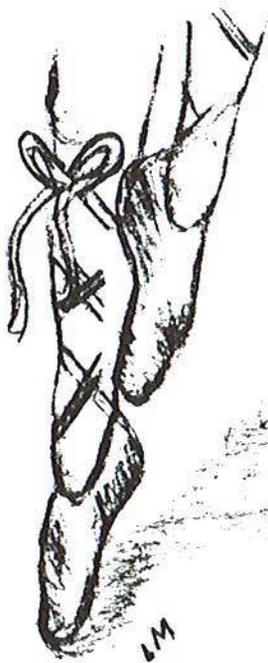
My mind is blank;
 No thoughts come forth.
 I cannot tell
 If south is north.

There is nothing around
 That my eyes can see.
 I beg of you —
 Have pity on me!

Release me from
 This place I be.
 Uncork this bottle
 And set me free!

Robin Thomas





BALLERINA

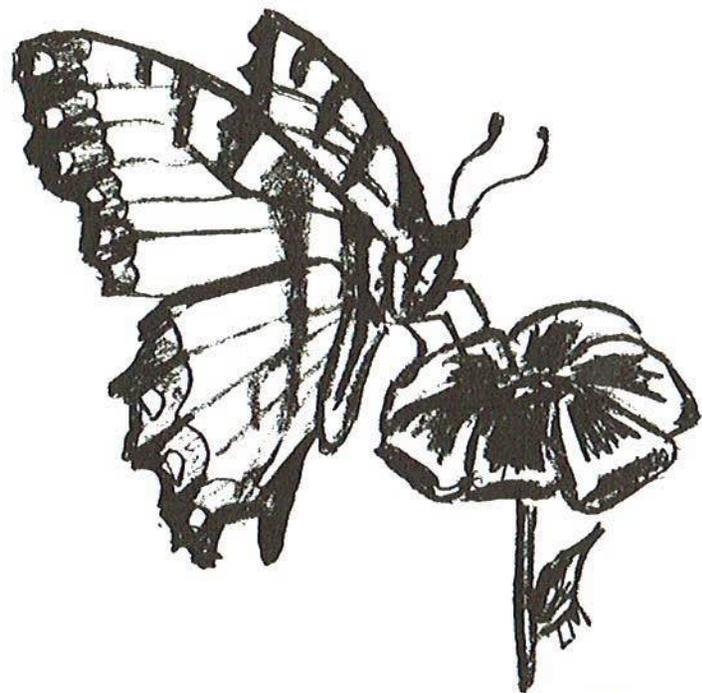
The mirror reflects her position
at the barre —
Clad in a soft blue leotard
poised on toes
arms in air.
She springs,
turns,
leaps in fluid movements.
She captures my attention —
Time momentarily stands still
as the dancer is lost
in her art.

Diane Jordan

TOMORROW, TOO LATE

"Follow me, my child," he says.
"Tomorrow, Lord," you say.
Tomorrow comes and you reply . . .
"Lord, it is still today."
Again the savior beckons you.
Still you reply the same.
He offers you a ransom;
You laugh and spite his name.
When times get rough and dreary,
You say, "Lord, why don't you care?"
Yet all the while you never notice
That he is always there.
Jesus beckons one last time
For you to heed his call.
You say, "Lord, I am so weak,
So frail, so young, so small."
You wake up in the dark one day
And helplessly you cry,
"Tomorrow's here, too late for me . . .
Why did I have to die?"

Jennifer Falkner



METAMORPHOSIS

Life is a butterfly.
Each with our own opinions,
Original patterns
Adapting wherever we land.

Life is a metamorphosis,
Constantly changing, changing
Going through important steps.

Kathy Jones

RUNAWAY

If I only knew which way to turn — or maybe how long I'll last out here on the streets. I only know that I've been staring out the window of a Greyhound bus for the past three days, and sleeping on sidewalks unfit for the mangiest dogs.

Money? When I first left home, I had sixty-seven dollars that I had stolen from my dad. It kept me going through four hotdogs, a pack of cigarettes, and two poker games.

It must be Sunday. Standing on this sidewalk, I can hear the chimes coming from that pretty church across the road. I've never seen so many shades of stained glass as in those windows, nor any windows quite so big. It seems like I've counted hundreds of people going inside!

I used to belong to a church like that. Oh, it was not nearly as pretty or quite so big, but, still, it was special. Just the thought of strolling through those huge double-doors across the street sends cold chills down my spine.

Any fellow with my appearance could only dream of such. My hair is almost to my shoulders now, and, needless to say, my clothes are tattered and rank. I've even grown a beard. Oh, if I only had a chance!

What!?

"Excuse me," said a young man, looking down at my forlorned image. "Did I frighten you?"

"Oh, no . . . no, I was . . . uh . . . talking to myself . . . that's all."

"We're having worship services across the street, and we'd like for you to join us."

"Man, how I'd like to! But I'm filthy. Why do you want me in your church, sir?"

"Follow me. I think you'll understand."

As we walked through the huge, mystical doors, he pointed to a distant picture in the furthest corner of the sanctuary. There he was — Jesus, with long hair and . . . and . . . a beard!

Doug Benson



LYCANTHROPY

Alone,
Among the haggard and wind-whipped pines
that softly chant timeless ballads
like so many muted minstrels
singing to the murmuring clouds.

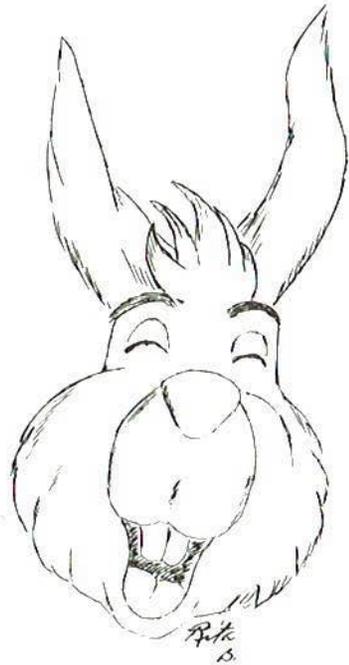
Keeping time
with the footfalls of the snow.

As the aimless winds wander
across timbered slopes
the pines whisper of the primordial hunt.
— scenting, stalking, slaughter —

A prophecy of death fulfilled
ages upon ages ago.

Here,
far from the incandescence of a lesser kind.
I sniff the air
and experience the exhilaration of the moment
— timeless and pregnant with prophecy.
A vision of the past is unfurled before me
and I tilt my head skyward
baying at the veiled-grey moon.

Dennis Nichols



THE CHALLENGE

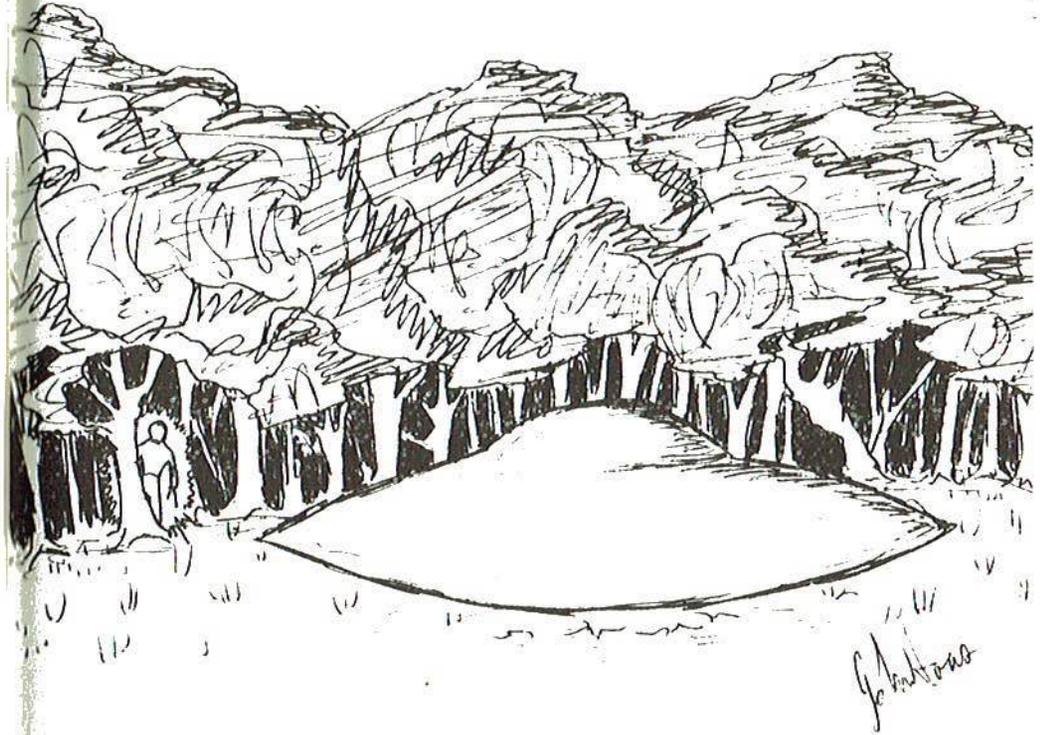
On a brisk, bright autumn morn
Thought I, "Oh what an idea,"
To rise early and rush the dark
And watch the light appear.

So quickly, quietly slipping out
I fled just like a deer
Right through the unlocked door
And prayed no one would peer.

Down the colorless corridor
I sped as fast as light
Until I reached the doorway
That opened into night.

Stepping fastly forward
My ears itched my name
I slipped into the shadows
And began my daring game.

Suddenly wicked world against me
They grabbed me arm in arm
And drug me back amongst white walls
Here at the funny farm.



THE U.F.O.

One night as I was going home,
I saw what appeared to be a dome,
Up in the sky it glided with ease,
Slowly descending behind the trees.

Frightened, I made a dash for the house,
And inside stayed quiet as a mouse,
Then as mysteriously as it came into the night,
The object rose and disappeared from sight.

Connie Willmon

AWAITING HER

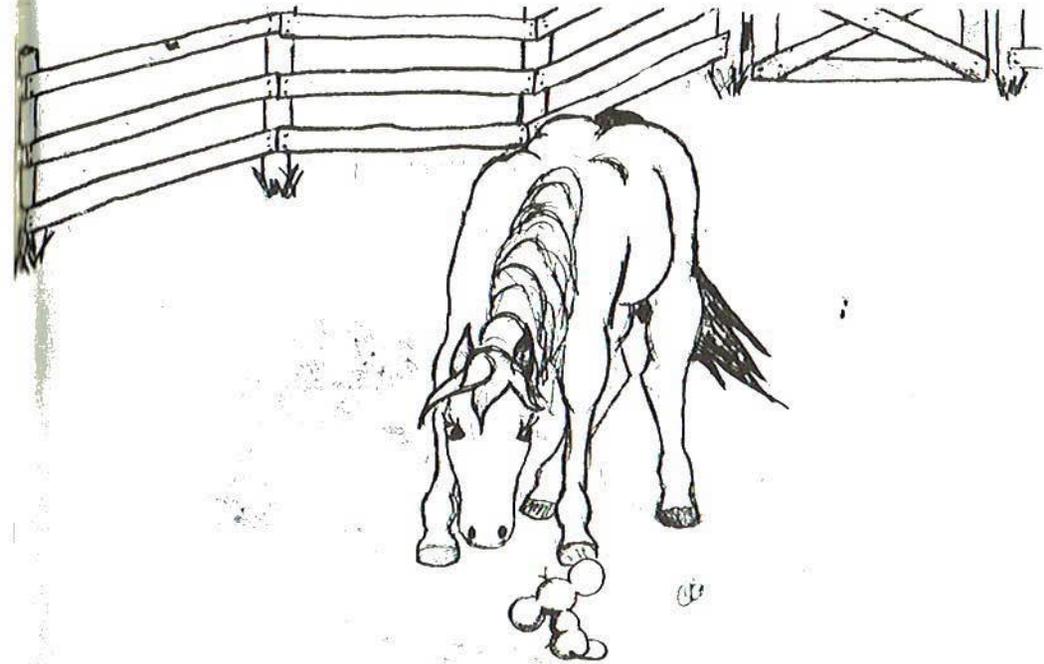
I sit in my dark room
Awaiting her.
It seems she comes less now.
There were times long ago
When I could keep her spellbound
For hours.
She tickled my ivories
With Bach and Beethoven
And Chopin — our favorite.
We accompanied.
We entertained.
We enjoyed.
Sometimes we composed.
I smile to think of it.
I longed to help her
With those atrocious melodies,
To show her those lost chords.

She hasn't sat down with me
For a long time.
At least
I am well kept now.
I am dusted regularly
And my music is neatly stacked
In the stillness.

Robin Thomas

Life's dreams lie within
longing to grasp
reality;
yet, remain clasped in union
with the soul
until the chance is taken.

Ann Stewart



Furry little critter
Inconspicuously scampering about.
Endangered only by the cat, who's
Looking, always, for a
Delicious lunch.

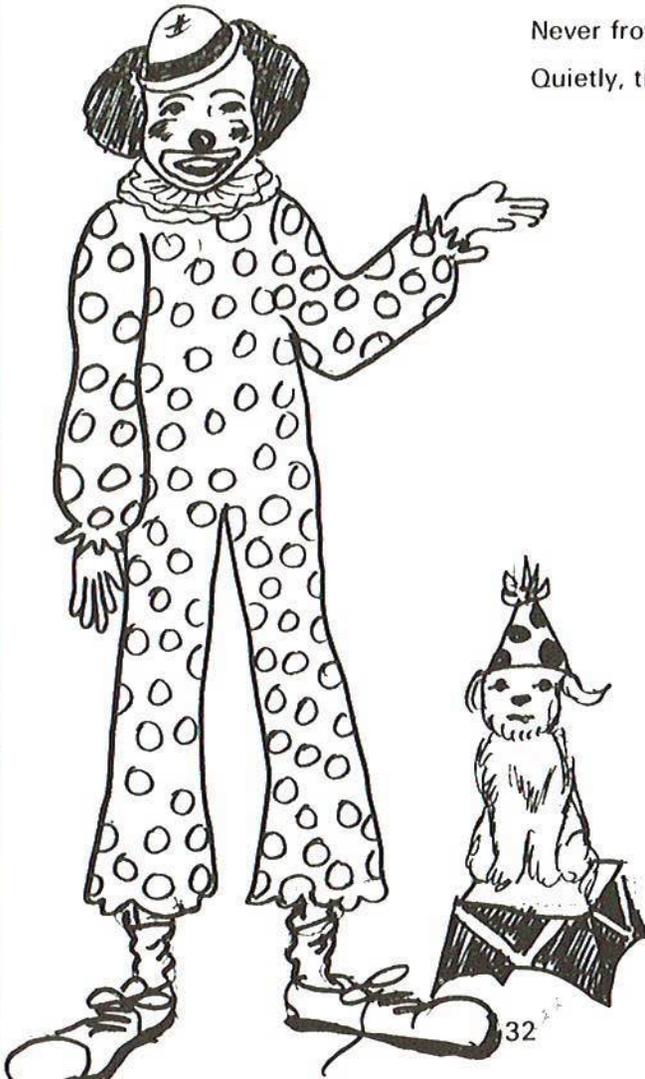
Much the torment of
Overbearing housewives who try to
Undermine him by
Setting traps to catch the
Evasive but ever present . . .

Debbie Winkle

COMPANIONS

Soft, cuddly, missing one eye.
My best friend when
No one else will listen.
Squeezed out of shape by
Many loving hugs.
Torn, where in anger, I
Lashed out against you.
You'll never complain,
Never frown. But just sit
Quietly, till I need you again.

Debbie Winkle



THE QUESTION

His hair is rather short,
I s'pose it doesn't matter,
He really is the quiet type.
Not one for silly chatter
Of 'course, I love to talk,
But I guess we'd get along.
He's really very handsome,
Tall and tan and strong.

He's got a steady job.
And seems to get good pay.
He's very dependable
(A girl feels secure that way).
What's more he's got ambition
He'll go very far
He seems to be . . . every thing
That most men claim they are.

So yesterday he popped the
"Big Question" after class
I swear I heard bells ring,
And saw a few lights flash.
I weighed every chance,
Considered every chance,
And have decided to accept his . . .
Invitation to the dance!

Gina Moseley

There once was a poet named Shakespeare
Who wrote many plays, including "King Lear"
The story is quite tragic
His daughters disappear like magic
The sad part is he loved them so dear.

Jennifer Lovin

ACHIEVERS

I begin at the trough and assert all my
 strength
I push ahead cleanly with an accurate
 force
I steady my pace as the beads
Merge from their cells
And wonder at the distance with deep
 remorse
I pant; I pant as the path grows still
 steeper
I gaze at the mount encloded in its
 sleeper
White and frilled with foam fallen down
Touched with the tips of unearthly fingers
Tipped at the top with a peaked crown
I'm nearing my goal but anxiety lingers
I think of the victory I hope to attain
I pray God will grant me the power I
 long for
As closer to the crest with each footstep
 I gain
The tower now that once seemed so
 awful
Is close under foot and beneath my brow
What seemed so much of a milestone
 then
Is none but a molehill, a pebble now.

Jennifer Falkner

HYPOCRITE

The old woman sits
Unraveling what she has just sewn.
Needling
And pinning her work
And progressing to infinite nowhere —
One hand
Accomplishing life's greatest feat;
The other
Blind to the raveling
Of the great network
Of threads
Which once held together
A beautiful piece of handiwork.
And why does she so digress?
Simply —
Her two hands do not agree.

Jennifer Falkner



Grandmother
Cheery, helpful
Comforting, protective, kind
Always willing to listen
Grandmother

Jennifer Lovin



NATURE'S WORLD

As I sat by my window, peeping,
 I saw a baby willow, weeping.
 And as I watched its branches sweeping,
 A thought occurred to me.
 Nature's world is always singing,
 And every song has a different meaning.
 O, how I love what she is bringing
 What a thrill it is to bel

Laura Estes

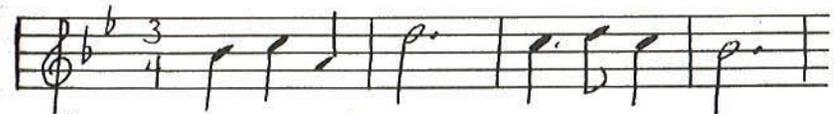
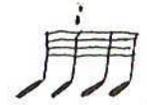
MUSIC

Music is the kind of thing
 That gets down to your soul;
 Be it Country, Jazz, or Good
 'Ole Rock and Roll.

Music is a way for us to
 Express our feelings strong,
 If you can't say what you feel
 You can put it in a song.

Music will never die,
 It is an everlasting song;
 It will be here for ever and ever,
 Long after we have gone.

Mark Clemens

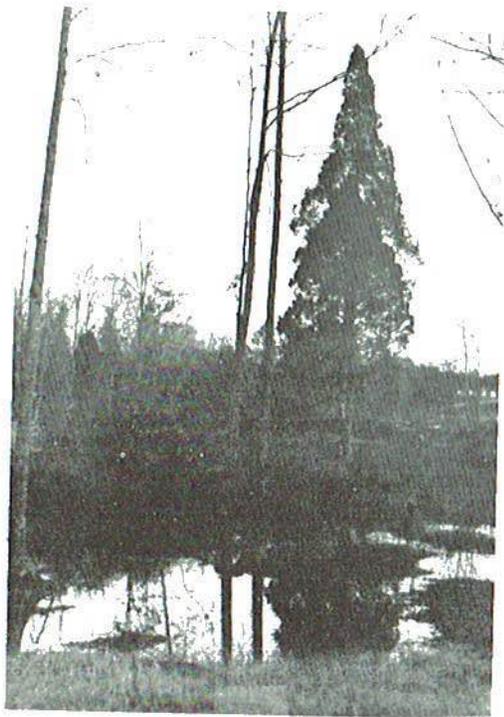


Positively boring
 Impatient parents
 Absolutely dull
 Never fun
 Overworked fingers

Little time
 Extra practice
 Successive mistakes
 Sour notes
 Obnoxious teachers
 Numerous recitals
 So rewarding!!!

Jennifer Lovin





THE PINE

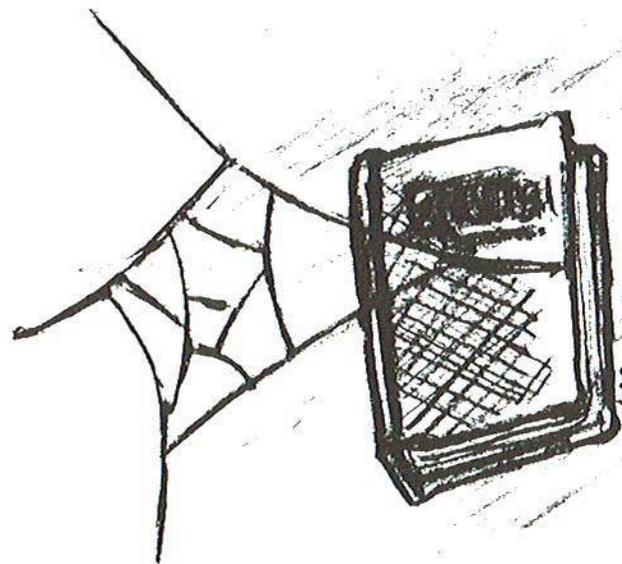
What wondrous beauty
Green pine does have —
Reaching upward to the sun.
Ever growing to its goal —
Continually ascending—unfolding its limbs.
Providing shade for others in its presence.
Home for hundreds of untold beings.
Needles swaying in the breeze.
Sunlight dancing off each one.
Sunbeams filter thru the needles
Producing pointed patterns on the ground.
Enhancing the loveliness of this gift of God.

Diane Jordan

"READING" BETWEEN THE LINES

As I lay here so placidly still
Unloved by mortal man
Untouched, almost extinct
I cannot help but think
That I have something to say
That is important
Important
Important enough to say over and over again
To the many generations yet to come
But how can I lest someone find me
And uncover my dusty pages
Dusty with time and misuse or . . . unuse.
I have something to say!
Please turn off the T.V.

Jennifer Falkner



Always there when you
Need someone to talk to; sometimes
Incorrigible, but,
Mostly
Always
Loving and
So much a friend.

Theresa Myers

THOUGHTS

My dog held secrets no one shall hear—

Thoughts no one shall know—

Memories no one shall ever see—

When he died, memories, secrets, and thoughts
died with him.

Michelle Bragg

DISORDER OF EARTH

Heaven views the sight —
The disorder of Earth.
Sun and Moon
Rays mingle.
Tides depart —
Never to return.
Water is aglow with fire.
Mountain melts —
Fills the valley.
Powerful winds
Break down the forests.
Brilliant light suddenly
Appears from Heaven.
Saved are the ones
Who've accepted Him —
The others are destined
To remain for Eternity
In this disorder.

Diane Jordan.

EYES

Darkly veiled,
Keeping secrets,
Deep pools of unknowns,
Hiding playful elves,
Inscrutable.

Cheryl Barrier



THE RUSH

Why does it always seem to be,
Everyone's trying to get there ahead of me?
As I go to work, rushing through the gate,
Hundreds of others impatiently wait.
The rush to clock-in will never cease,
Everyone's looking for a pay increase.
Now the whistle blows to go to lunch,
No one's trying to stop this bunch.
They flock and sweep down the halls,
Threatening even to break the walls.
As the day concludes, they head for the bus,
In a mad attempt to beat the rush.
We speed down the freeway, burning up gas,
Everyone seems to be trying to pass.
I make it home, now in a rage,
When I see that the dog ate the sports page.
Morning comes as others do,
Today I'll get there ahead of you.

Jimmy Anderson

POETS

As
it happened unplanned
to become lovers by words,
I knew not his thoughts —
When
our bodies, untouched,
yielded their souls to be bound,
He spoke not a word —
So
what happened from there
became a bit blurred,
I try to foresee —
But
the future is dim
for poets alone,
May we be friends?

Sheila Callaham



LOVE

Look into my eyes,
half closed, yet open.
If you read closely
between the lashes,
You will detect a small sparkle.
And in that tiny sparkle,
Are written the words,
Also engraved in my heart . . .
I love you.

Laura Estes

FOR A SPECIAL YOU . . .

Why couldn't I see you?
You were there
All the time,
Waiting

Just an effort
To reach out and find you,
Was all that was necessary,
For happiness.

For so long
I needed you . . .
Why was I
So blind?

Samantha Noble



RECIPE TO HAPPINESS

Start with a little caring;
Mix in a pinch of spice.
Add some trust and sharing;
And always be real nice.

Spoon out all the selfishness,
And throw it all away.
Add a pinch of thoughtfulness,
And a few kind words to say.

Add half a cup of sweetness,
A tablespoon of praise.
Mix with a lot of forgiveness,
And understanding ways.

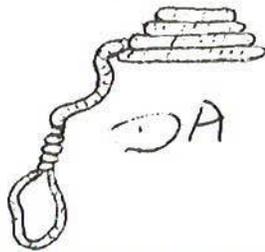
Mix in no artificial ingredients.
Add a little love instead.
Pour in a bit of patience,
And make sure a small prayer is said.

Blend all ingredients together.
Bake it in the sunshine.
Share it and live happily forever,
And you'll leave all your troubles behind.

Shelly Cox

We all know about Sleeping Beauty,
Oh my, but she was a cutie.
Prince Charming himself wasn't bad,
But his vanity drove us all mad!
Her hug for him wasn't alarmin',
But he replied, "Please don't squeeze
the Charmin'!"

Rachel Cook



THE HOUSE THAT SCOTT BUILT

The old house stood on the hill about two miles outside of town. The four story house was built by William Scott in the middle eighteen hundreds. After one and one-half years, he, his wife, Jessica, and his two sons George and Mark, were ready to move in.

This was no ordinary house. It had four stories and eighteen bedrooms. Every brick, every window, every door and every item used in the house was brought from a place called Hiershire Castle in England.

Robert Hiershire, a Satan Worshiper, owned the castle and lived there until he died a very violent death. He was found in a black robe, hanging from a rafter in his bedroom. His two servants were also found hanging from a rafter in the kitchen.

The Scott home always seemed to have a chill about it. No matter how hot the fire in the den or the bedrooms or no matter what season, spring or summer, it was always cold in the house.

One morning when William awoke, he found to his surprise, a coil of rope at the foot of the bed. He also noticed two coils of rope in the kitchen. This was strange, because he never kept rope in the house.

The October afternoon seemed quieter than usual. (There were no noisy kids, not even a nagging wife.) William was more bored than hungry but he decided to make himself a sandwich. As he walked into the kitchen he stopped in the doorway. Horrified, he was so shocked that he could hardly breathe. There hanging from a rafter were two ropes and at the bottom of the ropes was a noose. After seconds, which seemed like hours of horrified staring, William ran as fast as he could to his bedroom, flung open the door and saw just what he thought he would see, a single rope with a noose on the end. In a state of mixed confusion and massive horror he fled down the steps and out the front door. He ran around the house looking for his wife and children but they were no where to be found. He ran down the two mile road and was later found on the sidewalk of the lazy city. His death certificate stated "... cause of death . . . Extreme Shock." His wife and children were never found.

It was October 31st (Halloween) in the year Nineteen Hundred and Eighty. Phil and I were looking for some trouble, which was usual for us, when Phil suggested that we go up to the old Scott house. No one had lived in the house for over one hundred years. After thinking it over, I decided that it would be fun. At about 10:30 P.M. that night we were standing in front of the basement window. We crawled through the broken window onto the floor of the basement. Phil lit the candle and we began our search. We were looking for a way to get to the first floor when we heard a "Klonk," "Klonk." "Oh God!" was the only words that could pass my lips. "Stupid Rats!" assured Phil. "Hey look!" I exclaimed, here is a staircase." We climbed the stairs which seemed to reach for miles. Phil opened the door oh so slowly so as to sneak up on something or someone inside but to our surprise there was nothing but old furniture. We wandered about the house until we came to the last door. This time I opened it and I have never been so terrified in my life. There were two ropes hanging from a rafter. On each end of the ropes were two skeltons, each hanging from a noose. We both hit the floor at the same time.

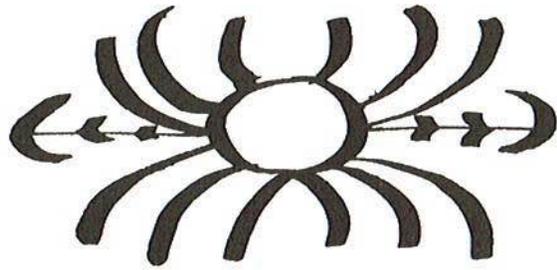
I have just awoken and as I look about I see Phil in the next bed. This must be a hospital. The smell of alcohol and a scrubbed look dominates the room. There is just one thing that puzzles me. What is a rope doing at the foot of each of our beds?

Morgan Ringold



There once was a bird named
Flicker
Who flew like a jet, maybe
quicker!
He flew through the hills
and into a still
And got drunk as a dog on
corn liquor!

Rachel Cook



ODE TO THE SUN

I peer deep into the rosy sun
And watch it trigger its gamma ray gun
The luster lightening rays to shed
Down upon man's unsuspecting head
The fire that goes far beyond the glow
Yields warmth to the creatures who
inhabit below

Burning, Bleating, Browning, Bleaching;
Affecting each subject; consequences
far reaching.

I marvel, I maze at the sun's glaring
blaze.

I wonder, I wonder how it must be
Far into the souls of mankind to see
The sun, our life-guard: it holds the
key

To life, to creation, to thee and to me
From seed, to bud, to flower, to tree
To life, to creation, to thee and to me.

Jennifer Falkner

SEA-SIDE STROLL

Sea's cold breath startles
and refreshes.

Sun's golden fingers play
the sky.

Sand's fragile strength gives way
to footprints.

Seagull's squawk as overhead
they fly.

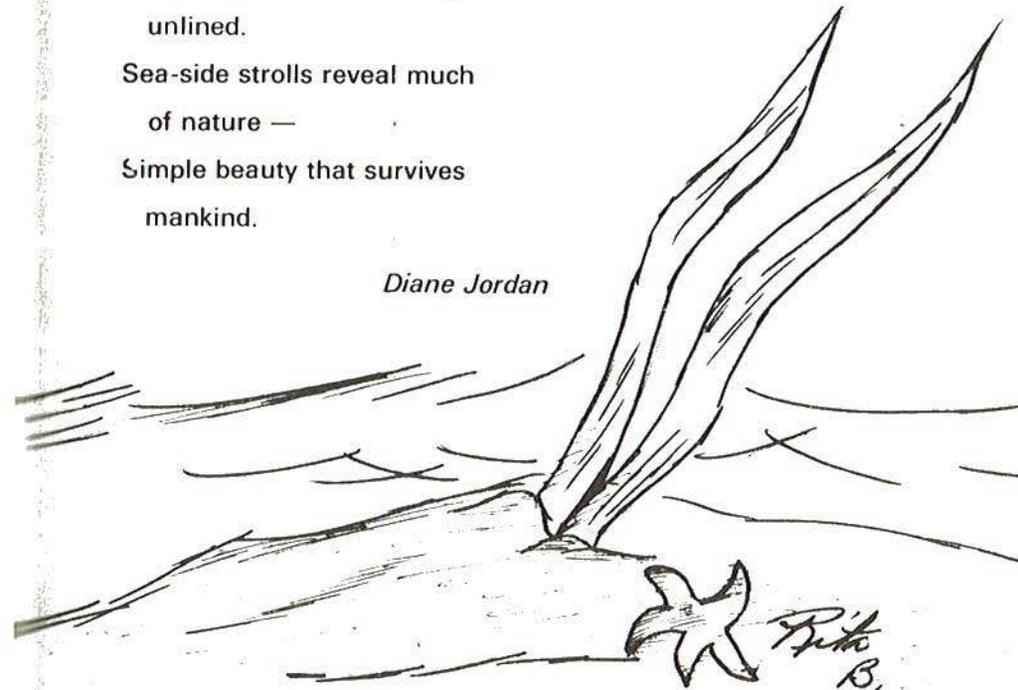
Seconds are lost as I stand
amazed.

Shore greets sea with delight
unlined.

Sea-side strolls reveal much
of nature —

Simple beauty that survives
mankind.

Diane Jordan



WINNERS NEVER GIVE UP

"Pump, pump, pump," that's all Steve could think about. That's the only thing he would let himself think about was more likely the truth.

Sweat was pouring from Steve's body like water coming out of a dam. His thighs felt like bursting out through his skin.

"This race is harder than I expected," thought Steve. He had already completed sixty-three of the seventy-five mile race. He was leading the race on a Bio Cam 2000 bicycle, with the next competitor two miles behind him.

"A hill," thought Steve. "Must downshift." His hands automatically shifted to lessen the pressure his feet put on the pedals. He counted the clicks of the shifter and knew he had only downshifted fifteen of the bike's one hundred gears.

After he went over the hill Steve came to a small town. He followed the painted arrows on the streets like a shadow follows a person in light.

Steve was doing fifty miles per hour through the city's street. When he took a turn around a pastry store a small dog stepped out into the street.

Stopping was impossible because each tire had less than one millimeter touching the road, he didn't have enough contact with the road.

"Turn," his mind ordered his body. The wheel turned, but it bent because it couldn't withstand his 150 pound body moving at fifty miles an hour changing directions so quickly. The back tire came up, throwing Steve off the bike.

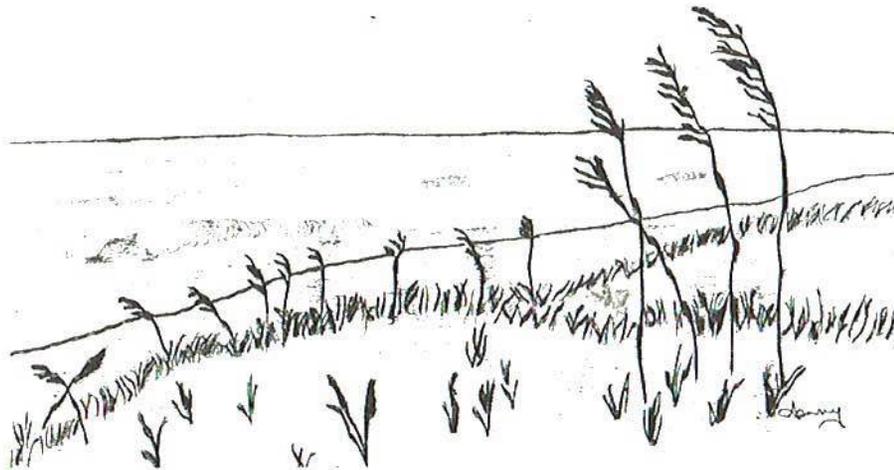
Steve, catapulted through the air, met briefly with a window, which he totally demolished.

The bike slid to the sidewalk where it banged into a stop sign's pole.

The people watching the race ran over to see if Steve was hurt. The few tellers in the bank in which Steve landed, jumped up and ran to see if he was badly hurt, but he was already standing.

"My bike?" he uttered.

"You can't go on. You're all cut up," one of the tellers pointed out.



PERFECT PEACE

As the wind whispers through my hair
And takes me by the hand,
I find myself in distant lands
Where people dwell no more.

Where softly dance the dandelions
Beneath the skies so bright,
Snow white doves soar in flight
Beneath the golden light.

Clear waters rush so swiftly by
The sound is ever sweet,
No other soul shall I meet
None other than myself.

These lands I find, no one knows
For those who can't release,
Their soul and mind least at peace
Shall never find such ease.

Like the mysterious oceans
Their secret held so divine,
What is there for us to find
Yet . . . truth runs deep.

Sheila Callahan

"Have to," Steve said. His legs were screaming, "pain!" to his brain, but it only answered, "No!"

Steve slowly stepped onto his battered bike and took off. His body was bleeding all over, but he went on.

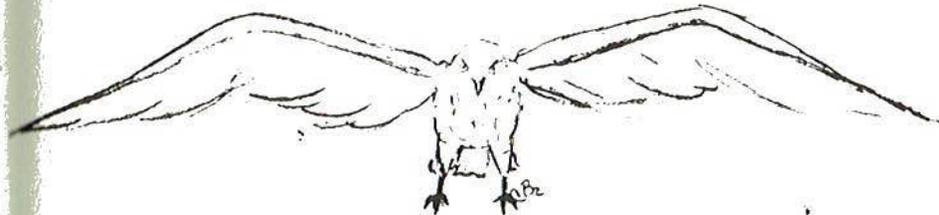
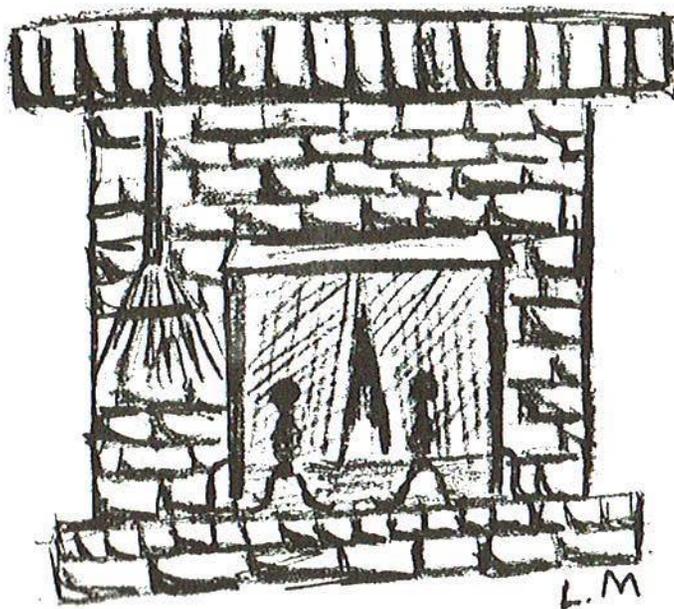
Steve could accept pain far more than he could accept defeat. He was a winner, and he wouldn't let a little accident stop him from winning this race when he was so far ahead.

By the time he started again the group behind him was getting really close. He could even see them.

Steve won the race. He had to go to the hospital later for a blood transfusion and the doctor had to put a cast on Steve's right arm.

"But it can't be broken. I have to be in a race this week," a nurse overheard Steve say as the doctor put on the cast.

Wayne Cease



WHY CAN'T I?

Red is his tail
Sailing the sky.
And I ask myself,
Why can't I?

He screams through the wind,
With his head held high.
And I ask myself
Why can't I?

He sights his prey
With his sharp eye,
And I ask myself
Why can't I?

Red tail hawk
Wild and free,
And I ask myself
Why can't I be?

Erin Kelly

OF A MERRY CHRISTMAS . . .

Please **don't** let me disturb you
But **I** came to wish you a Merry Christmas.
And seeing you in rapt repose
Among the fallen tinsel strewn about the floor,
I shall make **my** visit a short one.

I see the Season has come as no surprise to you.
Gold-colored garlands hang from the ceiling
In company with the withering mistletoe.
A dozen Yuletide greetings in a stack upon a table
Intermingled with last month's bills.

But this is **not** the time to ponder your Situation.
And a Silent Night and a White Christmas
Will forever sooth your pain **and** disenchantment.
Wake up my dear!
Your tree is on fire.

Dennis Nichols



. . . AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

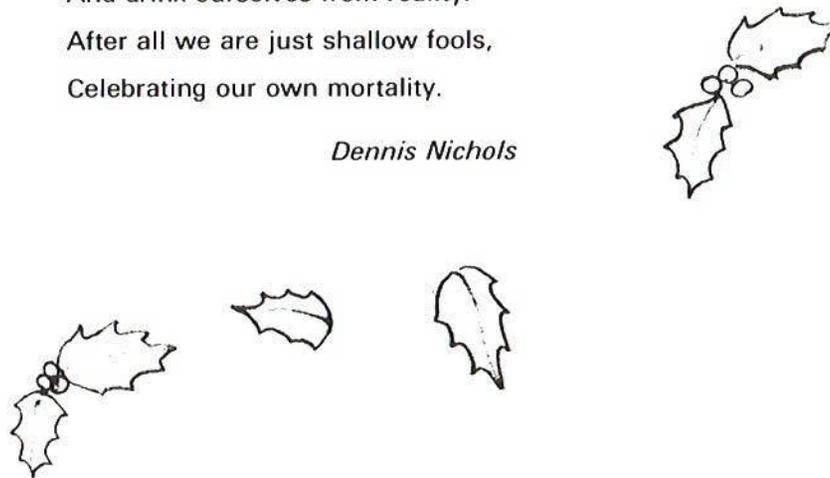
Another year is over,
Yep, another one spent.
We are all a little older,
Our backs somewhat bent.

Yet we revel as always,
Our rituals preordained.
Empty bottles in streets and hallways,
Let's pretend nothing has changed.

But it is only ourselves we are kidding,
When we laugh the old year away.
Time is but unforgiving,
We grow weaker with each passing day.

So tonight let's break all the rules,
And drink ourselves from reality.
After all we are just shallow fools,
Celebrating our own mortality.

Dennis Nichols



THE BIG THREE

The sky is torn
The sea is rent
With pain
 and death
 and hate
But all these three
 shall become as naught
When fear shall pass by here

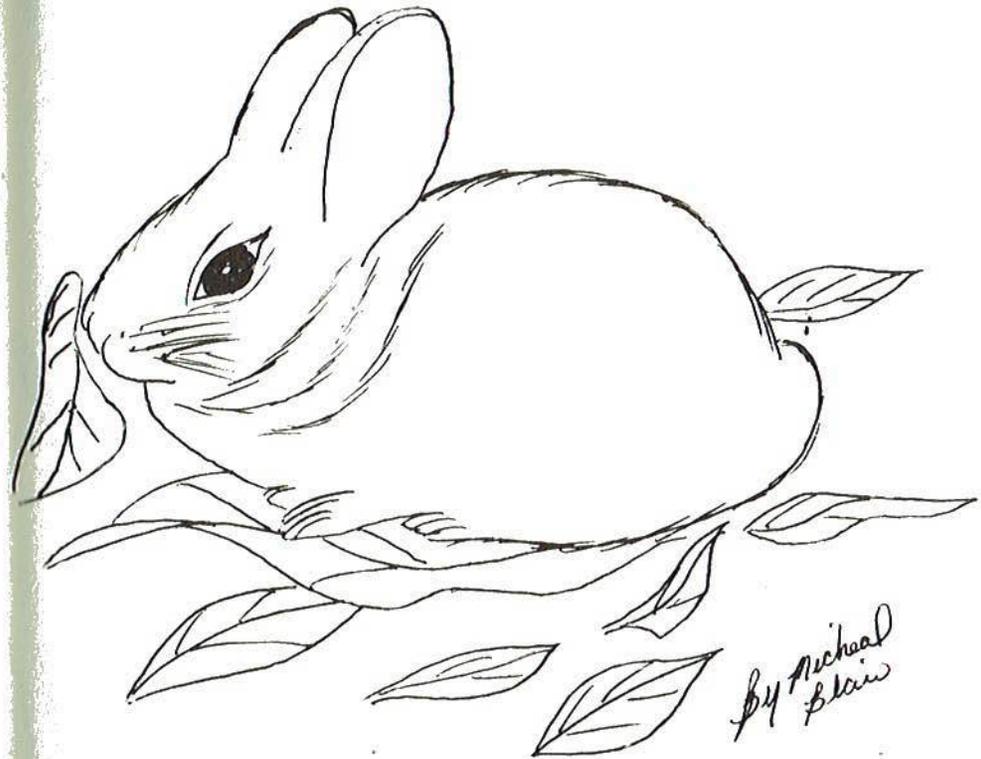
Some men shall fight
 some men shall die
For truth believed to be true
But when your turn to fight comes round,
Will you let fear trap you?

Now pain is bad
 But fear is worse
And with death — the curtains fall,
But none of the three can stand next to fear,
For fear can destroy us all

All men feel pain,
 Few men miss hate
 And death strikes everyone.

But of all the evils that infest mens souls,
Fear is by far the worst.

The sky is torn
The sea is rent
With pain
 and death
 and hate
But all these three
 shall become as naught
When fear shall pass by here.



SEASONS

Flowers, blooming in the spring,
Leaves, turning in fall,
The sun shining in summer,
The cold, snowy air in winter.
These are the seasons of the year
God made them to shine out His glory.

Babies being born in spring,
School starting in fall,
Children playing in the warmth of summertime,
The Christmas time of life in winter.
These are the seasons for the year
God made them to shine out His glory.

Donna Young

THE NEED TO WRITE

I am no poet yet words I yearn
To place on paper with rhyme.
For my mind in turmoil begs for peace
I find so hard to give.

"Find the door," it said to me,
"I must be helped quite soon."

"I have no no key," I replied,
"How then shall you escape?"

"Find the door," it said once more,
"I feel I'm changing form."

"And what of it?" I replied,
"For you have no soul."

"I am you and you are me,
We are one and the same.
If I go under so do you,
Without me you are lost."

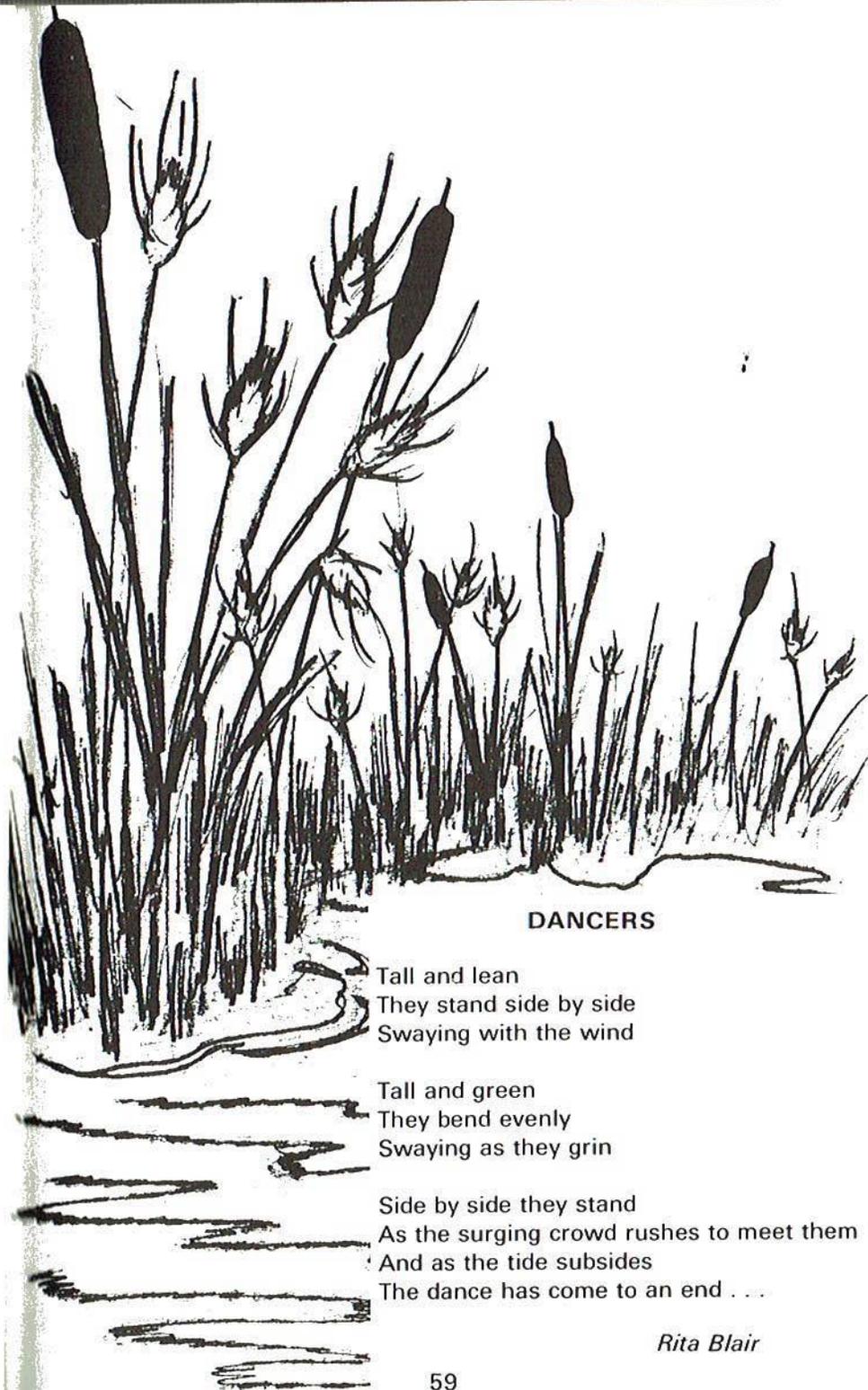
"Find the door," it said once more,
"I feel I'm getting faint,"

"How could that be?" I questioned,
"For I feel nothing."

"Why is it so?" I ask in truth,
"That you and I are one.
And without you I can not be,
I feel that too unfair."

"Since we are bound I have no hope,"
It said to me in pain.
"I can not live one minute more,
I beg you set me free."

I ask you now, oh world so great
Teach me how to free my mind.
Lest it die without its say
I can not help; I'm lost.



DANCERS

Tall and lean
They stand side by side
Swaying with the wind

Tall and green
They bend evenly
Swaying as they grin

Side by side they stand
As the surging crowd rushes to meet them
And as the tide subsides
The dance has come to an end . . .

A PROMISE

She rode through the fields with the skill and grace of the three time champion that she was. The beautiful black stallion jumped the fences with little effort. As she came into the lot she met the head trainer on the ranch, Steve Grenville. He was a tall, masculine young man of twenty-four, with dark eyes that showed his every emotion.

"Well it's about time you decided to come back," he said with a touch of impatience in his voice.

"Just getting a little exercise!" said Jan Williams, a rancher's daughter who was spoiled in every way possible.

"Yeah, well, if you keep riding 'Shadow' like that you're not only going to hurt him, you'll probably even hurt yourself!" exclaimed Steve with anger in his eyes.

"Listen, Steve Grenville, just because you're the head trainer on this ranch doesn't mean you can boss me around. Remember, you're just two years older than I, and not only does my father own this horse, he also pays your salary!" Jan smiled a wicked little smile and walked away.

At dinner later that evening Steve sat looking at Jan knowing he had to tell her the news that would probably break her heart but he saw no way out of it.

"Jan I've got to tell you something," he said aloud.

"What is it? Do you want to apologize for this afternoon?"

"Please Jan this is serious; it's about Shadow!"

"What's wrong with him?" she asked with a frightened look on her face.

"It's his shank. I think when you made that last jump you may have sprained it."

"Oh, no! Is he going to be o. k.?"

If his limp doesn't go away in a week or so then we'll have to do something about it."

"No! He'll be fine. You just wait and see! He probably has a pebble or something in his foot!" she shouted as she ran out the door.

"Jan, wait! We checked, that's not what it is!" Steve stood there for a moment, debating whether or not to follow her. Not knowing what she might do, he finally decided to follow. By the time he reached the barn he found both Jan and Shadow gone. He saddled one of the best horses on the ranch and rode off in hopes of finding them before Shadow's leg got worse. After searching for hours he finally came upon Shadow, limping away from a stream. Steve jumped from his horse to examine Shadow. He found that Shadow's leg was bleeding, but he didn't think it was anything too serious. He didn't see Jan anywhere. After calling her name several times, he began searching for her. He went to the edge of the stream, but he didn't see Jan. What he did see were tracks through the stream, so he figured that Shadow had come from the other side. He crossed the stream and found Jan lying next to a nearby fence. He immediately ran to her. There was blood on the rocks above her head, she was barely conscious but somehow she managed to utter a few last words.

"Steve I'm so sorry. Is Shadow o.k.?"

"He's fine, don't worry about him; let's just worry about you."

"Steve, please promise me that you'll make Shadow a four time state champion."

Steve, trying to hold back the tears, said, "What do you mean 'me' you'll be around plenty to tell me what I'm doing wrong."

"Promise me, Steve!" she said as her voice slowly faded away and she died in Steve's arms.

No longer being able to hold back the tears Steve said, "I promise Jan . . . I promise."

Two weeks later Shadow's leg was as good as new and within two months he won his fourth straight state championship. As he accepted the trophy all that Steve could say was:

"This was a promise I just couldn't break."

Phyllis Stultz



RAIN

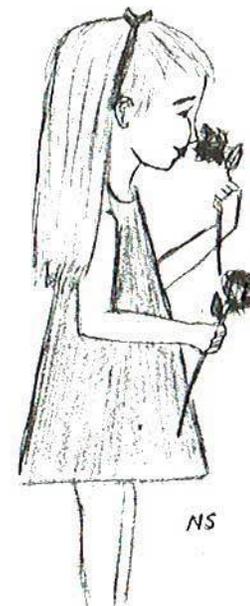
The yellow and pink streetlights
Illuminize the soft, drizzling rain
As it cleanses the earth.

Carol Muse

FIRST LOVE

My love, like a treasure,
Is buried deep within my soul,
Tossed and hurled but never found,
Slowly losing hold.
My desires, like the seasons,
Come and go as they please,
Never finding hope to grow,
Never finding ease.
My dreams, like shadows,
Trapse across my mind each night,
Bringing memories of the past,
Throwing me into plight.
What am I to do now?
Where am I to go?
Memories of my first love,
Stories left untold.

Sheila Callaham



NS

LOVE

It comes sweeping through your heart,
Making your heart beat fast and your breathing hard.
It comes sweeping through your window,
Leaving you precious memories that never seem to go away.

It makes your days more enjoyable,
Your sleepless nights tolerable.
It makes all your memories turn into ecstasy,
And fills your spare moments with wonderful thoughts.

But, what if you lose it?

It goes sweeping from your heart,
Making your heart beat slower and every breath struggle.
It goes sweeping out your window,
Leaving you precious memories that haunt you in your dreams.

It makes every day that passes bleak and sad,
Your sleepless nights long and intolerable.
It makes your moments turn to depression,
And fills your spare moments with lonely thoughts.

Debra Martin

THE FRIEND

Open your eyes wide to the world,
See what there is to see.
Disappointment is just a part of life,
Learn from the heartache it brings.

I'll be your friend, I'm always here,
Trust me if you will.
I'll never let your head hang low,
I'll never let you fear.

When 'ere you're feeling troubled,
Or in any kind of doubt,
Know I'm always willing,
To hear your feelings out.

Sheila Callahan

ONE SENSE TELLS ALL

Ears listening, but do not hear.
Eyes watching, but do not see.
People telling me a story,
But I know it cannot be.

Hands move toward me, but cannot touch.
Words spoken, but I cannot taste.
I'm asking you, is it true?
Tell me now, please make haste.

Now, I say, is time to tell —
Of whose perfume do I so smell?

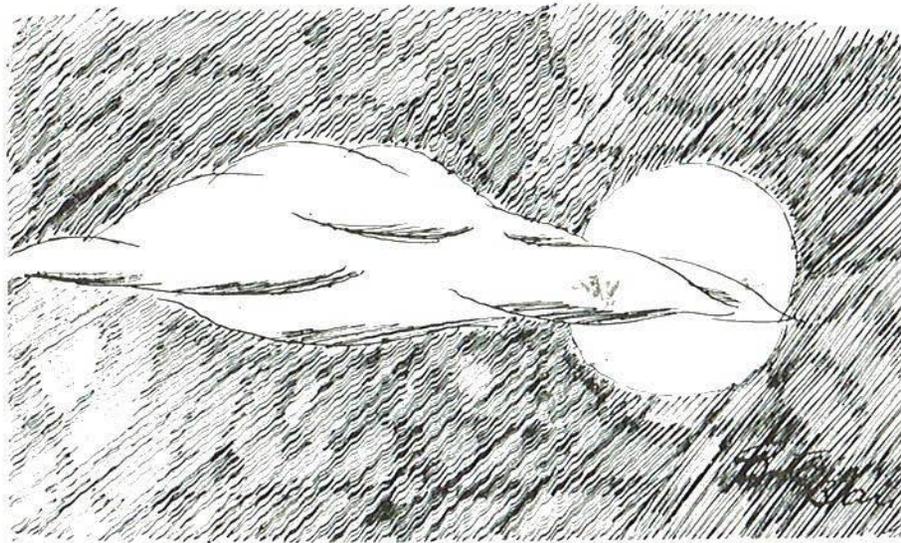
Laura Estes

EVENING'S COLORS

Have you ever seen a sunset;
brilliant, autumn ripened
Above the multitude of auburn and gold trees
giving their leaves to the frosty morning
And warming day
A sunset of crimson and turquoise
encircling the mass of sun
Retiring shortly behind the calico mountains
and half-harvested fields
Plowed by men who must also retire to the evening

Laura Planitzer





THE NIGHT

Creeping, he shadows the land.
Casting all into a sea of darkness.

Occasionally his is speckled,
With tiny torches, burning vibrantly.

His presence I do not fear.
For she, forthcoming with the dawn,
Will chase him away,
And brighten the night to day.

Rita Blair

A solitary rose—
Blowing in the turbulent winds
of time and space.
Where will it go
When the rains of darkness
and obscurity
beat heavily down upon it?

And here am I—
Lost and alone
in this almost unbearable
atmosphere of earth.

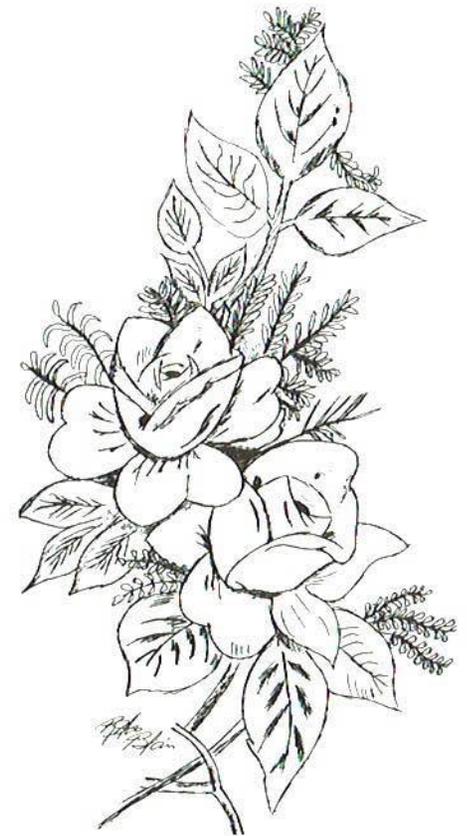
Shall I go like the rose?
The symbol of purity,
rebirth,
new beginning

which cannot fall into the
similar category with
something that is unclean
or has not been reborn.

No one knows the answers
to abstract questions
such as these.

(Or do they . . .?)

Holly Sims



As sparkles drip
out of the
leaky faucet,
hidden feelings
leak out as
shyness is
broken.

Ann Stewart

Bright, sparkling, crystal
Clear, but disillusioning,
I love the water

Tamra Gadberry

DRIFTWOOD

The stillwater reflects the light
And brings the driftwood into my sight.
The dead limb could tell so much
Of the places it's known—by sight or touch.

Diane Jordan



Crashing waves echo the endless ocean
Vibrating the sand of the
Great merciless body of sea
Taking, replacing, life within,
Bouyant water—
A dark cool void
Calming, relieving,
Rhythmic crashing of waves
To strong — to lovely and wide
To lure little boys from play.

Laura Planitzer

They say
she's odd
spending so much time
alone.

Time
can play strange tricks
on a mind
so young.

But I
in the darkness
think thoughts
of things I have
but don't possess
of things I know
but have not seen.

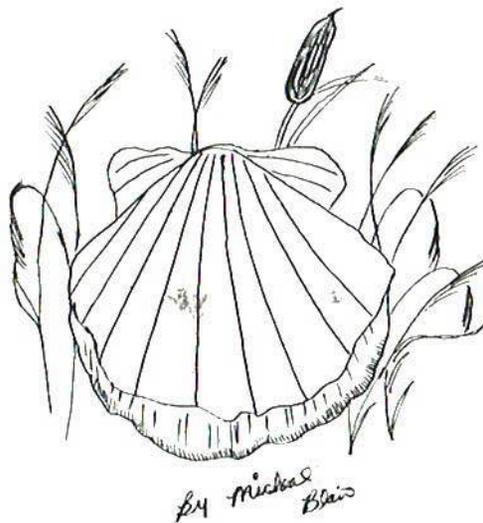
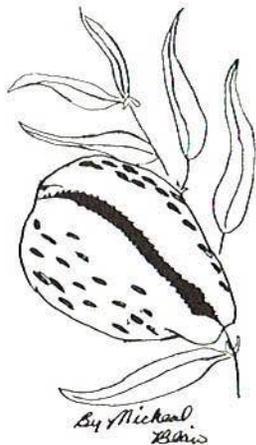
I
in my shell
am protected from
the world.

From all the hurt
and all the pain
and maybe
if I stay here
in my oyster shell
alone

and quiet

I
may become
a pearl.

Gina Moseley



FACADE

Is there no peace in this world for me
I've looked but nothing was found.
Can't I be myself in society
Without the scorn I've aroused?

Molded into a personality
I live each and every day.
Is this the real living part of me?
Let me have my say.

There is no real conjunction
Between me and the world I'm in.
Just a shell that hides my face
And the places I have been.

Sheila Callaham



WHITE WATER

The waves come crashing down
on the rocks.

White water surrounds them.

I stare as if in a trance and wonder how
nature can be so harsh, powerful —

Yet be so beautiful!

Diane Jordan

IN RESPONSE

I found your message
at my feet;
I've no more pain
for you to seek.
I'm glad it's over
the best was done;
Life too young
life undone.

Sheila Callaham

COULD IT BE?

This is the World News Desk in Los Angeles, California, and I'm Harry K. Ratcliff.

The whole world seems to be in a state of shock today as we have witnessed disaster after disaster.

Earlier today we reported to you that the private jet of the renowned Reverend Billy Graham went down near a small African village where he had just been to minister the Bible to the natives there. Flying the plane was the reverend's closest friend, Reverend John T. Machen. These were the only people aboard the plane. Their bodies have not yet been recovered.

We also reported that four buses have run off the Golden Gate Bridge. These buses were driven by four Catholic Nuns carrying three hundred fifty Catholic students to school. Witnesses say just before the buses went off that they could no longer see a driver or passengers in the vehicles.

Hospitals all over the world have reported mass disappearances. These disappearances have occurred especially in children's wards and nurseries.

There have been thousands upon thousands of car accidents reported. Some witnesses say that, strange as it may seem, most of these vehicle's drivers disappeared prior to the accident.

These are just a few of the many strange incidents which have been reported in the past few hours here at World News Desk. We have had no reasonable explanations for any of these occurrences. A few people, who have given way to their imaginations, say that these happenings coincide with what preachers have been predicting for years. They say the book of Revelations, in the Bible, proves it.

"Mary, Mary, wake up! You must have been dreaming; your face is so hot! Are you OK?"

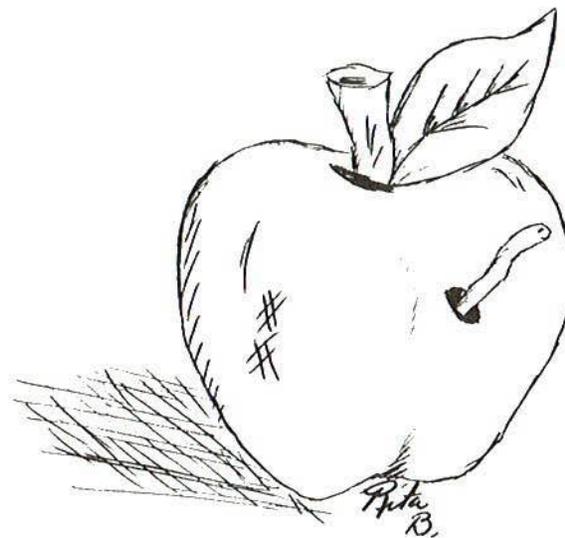
"Yeah, I'm fine I guess. I . . . I just had an awful dream!"

"Mary, I have something to tell you. I want you to really be strong."

"OK. What is it?"

"It's your mother, Mary. They've found her car wrecked on the side of the road. The strange thing about it is that they can't find her body anywhere."

Ann Sumner



HIS FIRST HUNT

Charging through the water
Like a wild horse racing over
A golden, windblown prairie,
She ran unfettered
Hunting with her master.
I saw the water splash up
On all sides,
Glistening in spectral colors
Painted by the fiery sun.
I watched in fascination
As the colors blended
Into the midnight blackness
Of her coat and changing it into
The shiny blackness of the barrel
Of her master's gun.
What fun that pup had
On her first hunt!

Sandy Kirk



ONE WORD

How often I have sought to pierce the mist
The shroud that hides your true desires
And under the cover of social graces
I long to peer beneath your veil
And inhale the lurid perfume
The Logic — The Madness
In silent suggestion
Your eyes impart
One Word

Yes!

Derris Nichols



Brenda "B"

He the sky — I the grass,
We meet with infinity.
We shall never pass
Without an exchange of dreams.

He the lion — I the cub,
He nurses my growing heart.
From the glass of which I sup
Come memories of lives past.

Memories tell us stories,
Stories of love and fame.
Of all the triumph and glory
Back in golden days.

Lend an ear and listen,
You learn endlessly.
Dew on grass does glisten
In the early morning sky.

Sheila Callahan

A BAD DAY

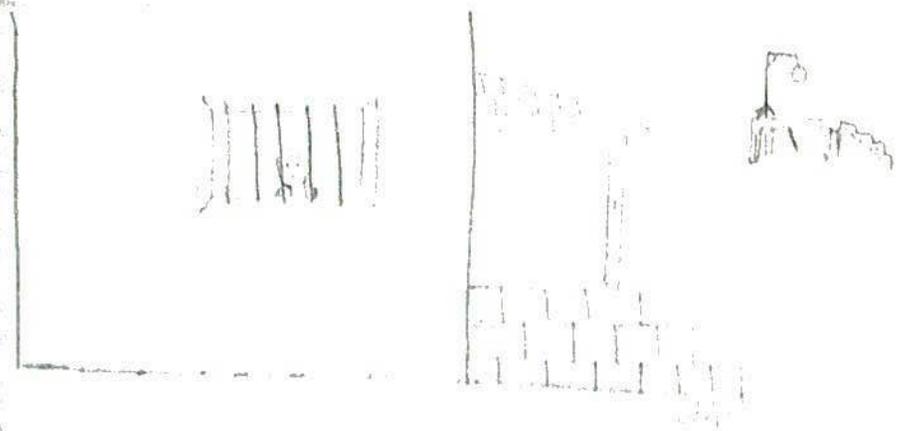
I walk down the hall
Someone trips me; I fall.
I'm late to class,
Now I'll need a pass.
I must have gotten up on the wrong side of the bed,
There's so much confusion here in my head.
I get an ink stain on my blouse
And Lori tells me it won't wash out.
I'm too skinny, or so my friends say,
"If you weighed any less, you'd blow away!"
This isn't fair,
It's just a nightmare!
I can't find a seat in the lunchroom,
I guess I'm just doomed.
I forget my lunch;
I have nothing to munch.
I walked in late to my club meeting,
I looked around, but could find no seating.
I'm going to go bezerk
If I get anymore homework!
I know this poem is not worth writing,
But it will keep Mrs. Thomas from fighting.
I'm weird and strange, you'll probably say,
When really I've just had a bad day!

Carol Muse

"CIVILIZATION"

Swinging slowly in the wind,
marking time until the end.
The tall, gaunt creature stands
as a tribute to the man,
suspended in the noose of life.

David Kirk



Near Future
92,956,000 miles in space

Mr. and Mrs. Earthling
Earth
The Universe

Dear Mr./Mrs. Earthling:

Please give me a break — store some of my energy. Don't waste me all at once. You see, I'm slowly dying. For many years now, I have provided all the energy you needed, but you didn't see that until recent times. Sure, the plants used my energy and saved some of it. I have also given you great tans, but not too many people saved any of it.

All the atoms that have been fusing inside of me for many eons are disappearing somewhere. So, I am sorry to say that I have nothing to leave you in my last will and testament except my sorrows for such a wasteful world.

Please, as you find other sources of energy to replace me as I die, (and I will) learn to conserve your resources. Please use your knowledge of the past and the present to help with your future. Use your abilities for the betterment of the world. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

The Sun

Tamra Gadberry



GENERATIONS

"I can't wait until I'm out of school! Things will be so different and easier then. I can get married and get out on my own!" thought Marilyn as she sat in English class. "Ah, only a few more minutes, and I can get home and watch **American Bandstand**. Besides, I don't think I can tolerate much more of Mr. Walter's rattling.

The bell rang, and Marilyn jumped up, flouncing her new poodle skirt almost completely around her hips.

"Hey, let's go get something to eat," yelled Margie from outside the door.

"Um . . . I'm sorry Margie, I have to get home. I think my mom wants me home early today!" she lied. She wasn't about to miss out on **American Bandstand** today. The Platters were going to be on!

Rushing through the kitchen, she barely spoke to her mom. She sat down, munching a cookie she grabbed from the cookie plate. She turned the television on just in time for the first song. Soon though, she was lost in thought. "What's it going to be like after graduation?" She pondered whether she'd go to college or start working. The way things looked, she'd probably be working. She could get married, but would Bob even ask her to marry him? It certainly was a lot to think about.

A new hit song brought her back down to earth, and she thought out loud, "Too much to worry about now, I've got other things to do."

Twenty years later Marilyn walked in the house and saw her daughter Angie working on homework.

"How was school today?" she asked.

"O. K. I guess," Angie mumbled, "But I can't stand all this homework Mr. Hunter is giving us. I never have time to do anything anymore with all this studying."

"I'm sure you'll manage; life doesn't get any easier."

Angie started reading again as her mother left the room, but was interrupted by other thoughts. "What does she know?" she mused. "Mom doesn't know what it's like. Parents always say things like that. I don't think they realize what all we go through; it was twenty years ago that she was my age. What could she possibly have thought that I think now? I wonder what will happen to me after graduation. Will I go to college? Yeah, more than likely, but what then? What if I never get married? What if no one wants to marry me? Oh, well, I'll worry about that later! I've got to finish this homework."

Dee Denson

STARTING OVER

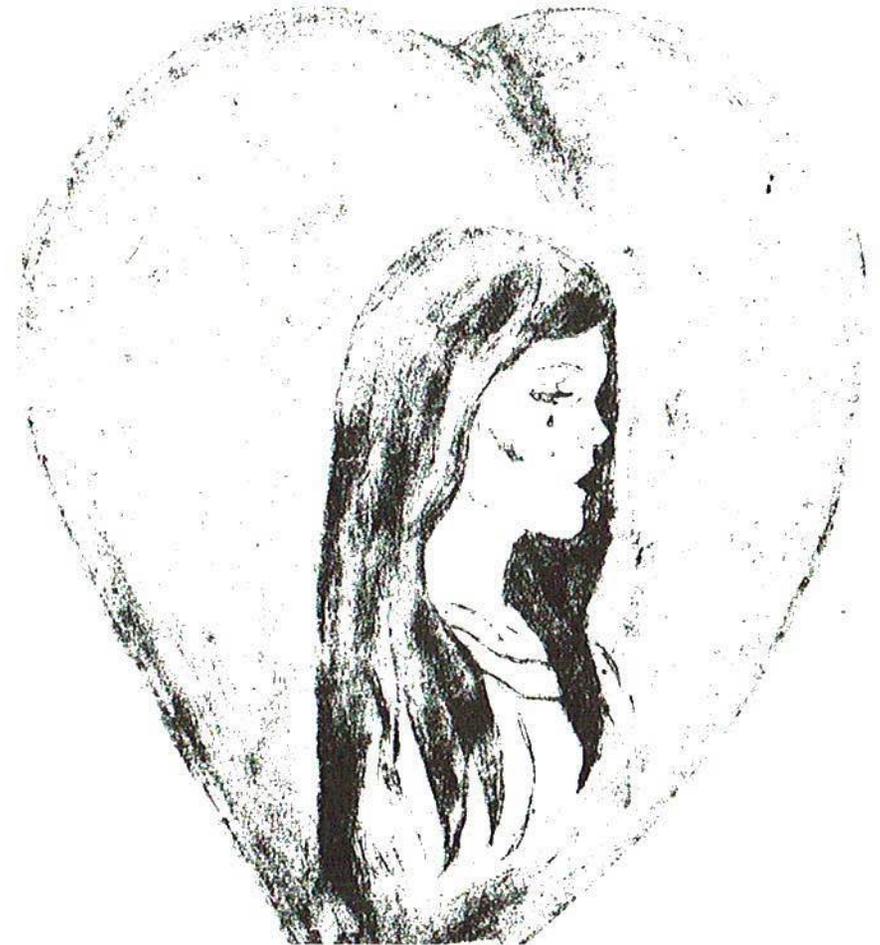
I wish we could start all over
Like the morning fresh and new;
Then maybe you could understand me
And I could understand you.

I would never want to force you
Into things you don't want to do;
I only wish you could see
Things the way I do.

I love you and I always will
You are very special to me,
Why didn't things work out
The way we planned they would be.

If you want me to go
I'll get out of your way.
Maybe we'll get together again.
Maybe again . . . Someday.

Lisa Holt



Touching
Excusable
Accepted
Relieving
Shed

Sheila Callaham

MY DREAM COME TRUE

"Oh, God, how those monsters seem to keep getting bigger and stronger all the time," thought Al, while walking out of the arena.

"Look at me," he said to himself as he walked down the corridor to his home, "I'm saturated with sweat."

"Walk down the same hall, into the same rooms, and do the same things everyday," Al thought upon entering his room.

"Well, it's your dream, Al," he yelled madly, "the one you always wished would come true! You thought it would be so fun; thought you could hide easier and couldn't be heard, even if you talked in a normal tone. Now look what it has done to you. You're in as bad shape as a slave. You can't go anywhere or do anything like any normal person. Everything you have is specially built. You can't even read books like every other person in the whole country can, because they also are specially made. Even watching television was a problem at first."

"I'd better get some sleep," Al thought. "I'll have to fight those stupid monsters again in three hours for those blood thirsty people."

"Oh yea, the alarm clock," Al murmured as he lay down.

"The alarm," Al heard the alarm buzz.

"I guess two-and-a half hours sleep is enough. I've got to work out with my weights anyway."

"One, two, three, four . . .," Al's mind started counting as his body started lifting.

"This is starting to get to my ego," he thought. "These weights feel like one hundred and eighty pounds and they even look like it, except I know that it's only fifteen!"

"Time to get to the arena," he thought and started for his front door.

"Sounds like a large crowd," Al said to himself as he walked down the hall to the arena.

"Good, the machine gun and four bullet clips are already here," he said when he reached the door to the arena. "Put one clip in gun and attach the other three to belt. Put one two pound fuel tank on flame thrower, toss flame thrower on back carry the other tank."

As Al stood by the door he heard the announcer say, "And here to fight five rats, is the world's smallest man, Al Turner, who stands only six inches high," then Al stepped out into the arena.

The rats cages opened and the horrible battle began once again.

Wayne Cease

FOOLISH PRIDE

Foolish pride —
Why do you linger in me?
Is it best to stand tall . . .
And alone?

I wish
For once, I could say,
I'm sorry

I'm sorry
And reform my ways.

It seems so hard,
My goals so far,
To admit I'm wrong
Is like taking steps back.

Give in,
Foolish pride,
Admittance,
I need you . . .

Samantha Noble

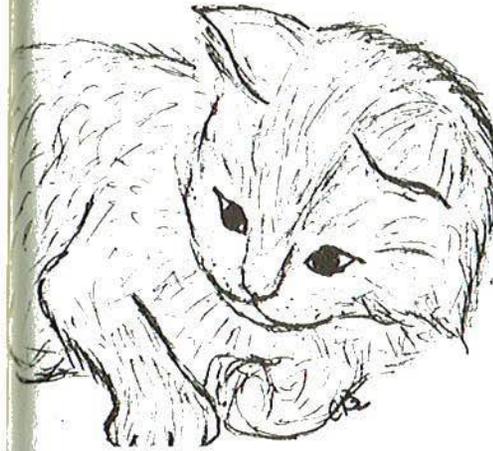
HERE THEY COME

So you think I'm crazy —
So do I.
But what does that mean?
If I'm crazy how do you
Know you're sane?
I mean — it's my word against yours —
To see who's sanest — you know . . .
Maybe, I'm normal and the rest
Of the world is crazy — But who's
To say the definition of normality —
Or that of sanity?
Maybe we're all crazy and no
One is sane enough to realize the world
Is crazy. Then again it could
Be vice versa — you can never tell!
Just because he has his doctorate and all those degrees —
How do you know he hasn't lost his
Sanity (or insanity — whichever applies)
Through all the years? He's just
Another member of this world as are you
And I — again the "Words vs. Words"
Case is in session — "Will the defendant
Take the stand?" "Blah, Blah, Blah"
"Sorry" says Judge, "Your word's no good!"
"Will the complaintant take the stand?"
"This nonsense makes no sense at all!"
"Sorry" says Judge, "Your word's no good — either!"
Now — where in the world does that leave us?
Back to the definition of Normality vs. Sanity.

"And it's my word against yours — ha! ha! ha!
They're coming to take me away! — but it's
Mine against yours and will be forever!"

HA!
HA!
HA!
HA!
HA!
HA!
HA!

—Tamra Gadberry



"FAT CAT"

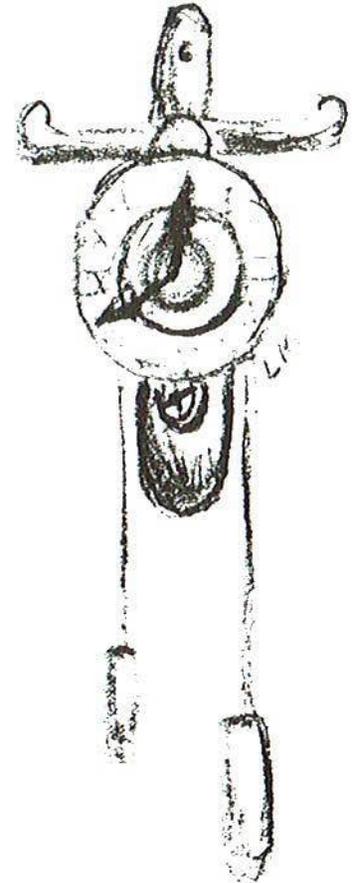
On the back porch sits my cat
Quietly sneaking across the mat.
He sits there fluffy, round, and fat,
Stalking his meal, a squeaky rat.

Regena Campbell

ELAPSE

There is another part of me
Lost forever I'm told
Swept away by the wind
Taking my very soul
Leaving me all too empty
Growing old, growing old.

Sheila Callaham



HE'S SPECIAL

You're with him night and day,
And say you'll never let him slip away.

There are good times and there are bad,
He makes you happy, he makes you sad.

You trust him with all your heart,
And tell yourself you'll never part.

People say all good things must pass,
But you know your love will always last.

You pray, "Lord just let him love me the way I love him,
and tell me we'll be together again and again."

When things go bad you have to say,
"Come on please, we can make a way."

Remember the night by the fireplace,
Remember the glow in his face.

Remember the night you walked under the sky,
Remember the gleam in his big blue eyes.

To you he has a special touch
that always means so very much.

While you're with him you're in a world of your own,
just you and him all alone.

Ever since you've heard his name
things just haven't been quiet the same.

Love is great and also grand,
But is often hard to understand.

You think of all the time you could spend,
But never stop to think about an end.

Madonna Williams



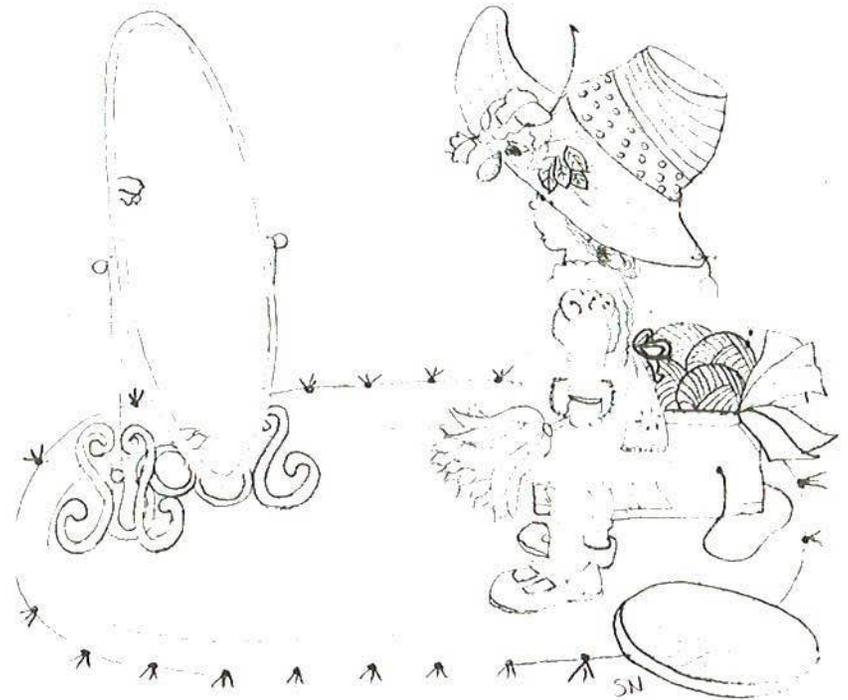


REVENGE

When finally the rush was over,
My timecard I did punch.
I headed for the freeway
To face the traffic crunch.

I battled through the hectic mess
And finally reached my house.
I opened the door only to find
A woman with my spouse.

My temper burst in a fit of rage.
I just couldn't stand any more.
The pistol was quickly in my hand:
They both lay dead on the floor.



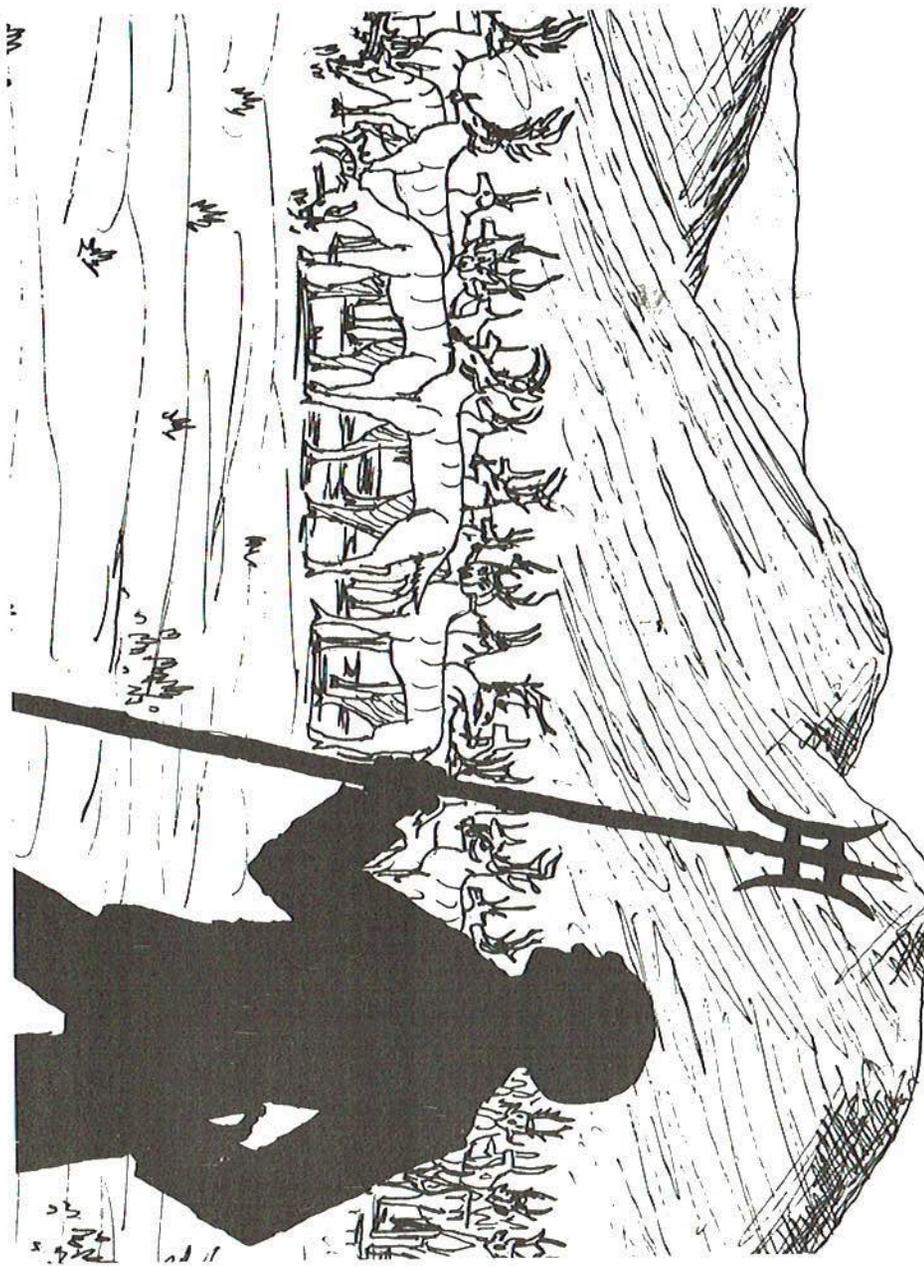
A REFLECTION OF YOU

Just like looking in a mirror —
I looked at you to see
A reflection of love,
Staring back at me.

Just like looking in a mirror —
I looked day after day
And I saw that reflection
Slowly fade away.

Just like looking in a mirror —
I looked at a once clear reflection
As it grew cloudy and distorted
It revealed your lost affection.

Just like looking in a mirror —
A memory, a token
Of a once dear relationship . . .
A mirror — now broken.



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Work presented in this book was selected from the many contributions of the students of Scottsboro High School. The staff considers all participants winners.