

HIKA Literary Magazine

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2010

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# HIKA

*an undergraduate journal of arts and letters*





# HIKA

*An Undergraduate Journal  
of Arts and Letters*

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\* These three pieces were the winners of *Hika's* flash fiction and children's literature contest.

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# FALSE MEMORY

*by* LUCY TIVEN

In one story, an adult woman  
discovers that her entire recalled childhood  
is actually the epilogue of a detective novel.

In the epilogue a man and a woman  
steal various neighbors' valuables in their sleep

and each morning wake absolved. Upon realizing the nature  
of their conscience they of course also realize  
that they have fallen in love. The man is less attractive,

though more clever. It is he who discovers  
they are suspect. On one date he keeps her out past midnight  
at a Spaghetti Restaurant downtown

and waits for her behavior to turn criminal.  
She thinks he is merely being forward.



# GREG RACHEL SACMONDO

*by* WILLIE PLASCHKE

**G**reg Rachel Sacmondo enjoyed a girls' middle name, a taste for the thoughts of stories, and that's it, but bathing, having a wife, those living things. His wife's name was Acura. She drove him wild.

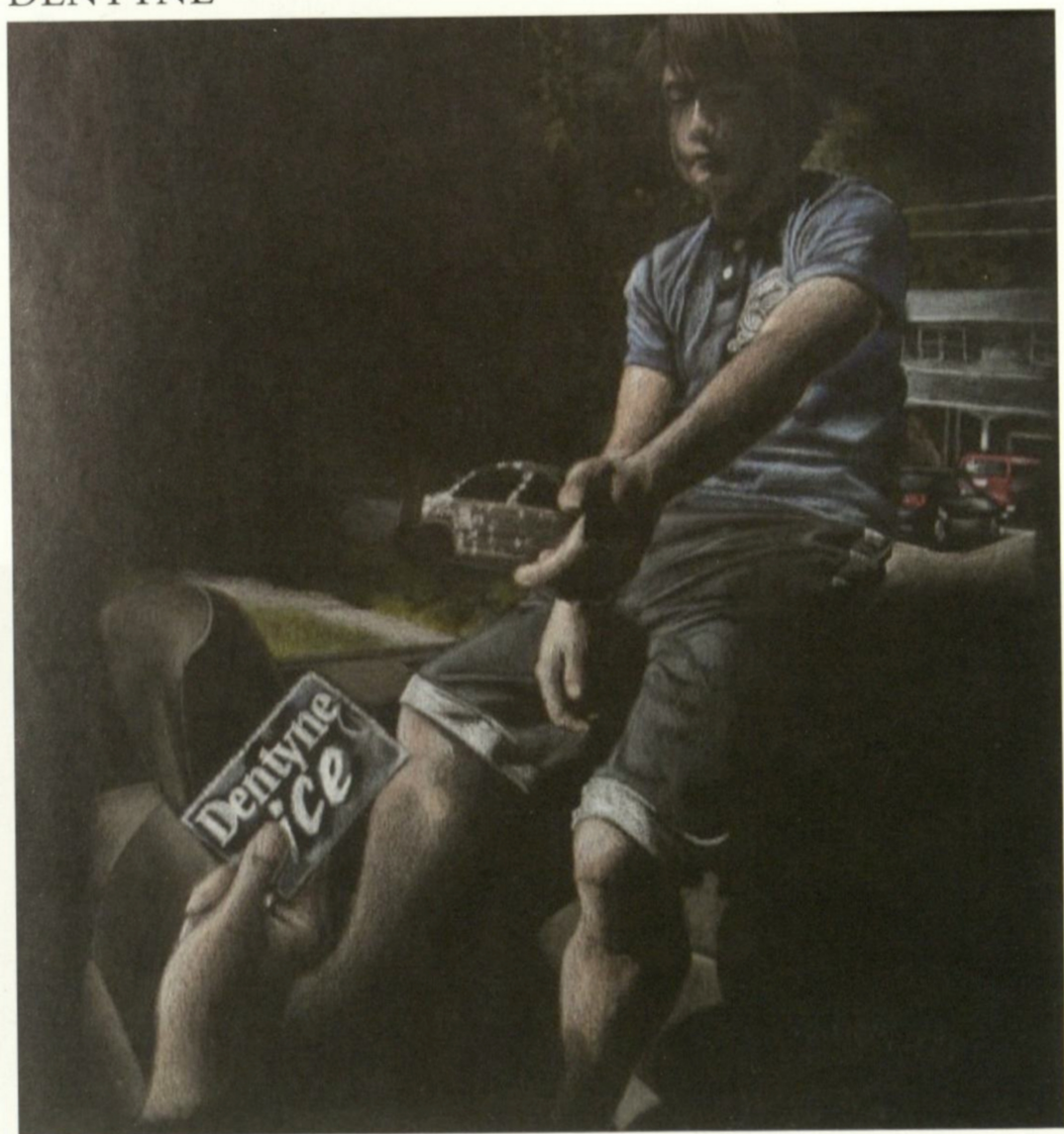
He bought her, seven years ago, Acura, waiting in line, signing papers, taking a chance above the night on the street in his mind. In Gahanna, Ohio.

Three years into their marriage, she was hot-wired and taken to her relatives to get away from Greg. She took the kid with her.

She forgot to leave the kid behind with Greg because she couldn't leave the kid behind with Greg.

Plus she was hot-wired and the kid couldn't get out.

# DENTYNE



Leah Fulton  
{colored pencil}

## LITTLE WING



Annie Severe  
(pen and ink)



# FIRE

*by* CARLING FITZSIMMONS

Watch!

Pines and poplars, poplars, eyes.

See worlds collide. Vomit! Respond!

Palms and pines, cones, nuts.

Glimmering, snickering teeth

in puckered faces, puckered desire.

Fingers and fingernails. Chew! Whisper!

Spit them out, palms and poplars.

Caught it, caught it, never caught.

Want! Covet!

Palms and tongues, seeds, stripes.

Rusted, coiled springs in mattresses

Wincing under the weight of

Eyes, poplars, poplars, pines.

Applaud! Perish!

# THE BARN

*by* THEO GOA

In the barn that swallows night,  
sister, hammer, formless father,  
owl, swallow, goat milk dapple,  
winnow, willow, window shutter,  
lung and pipe.

In the barn that swallows night,  
haybale, bucket, dogbane whistle,  
nightgown, tackle, thumb and pistol,  
skiver, scuttle, grandpa's spittle,  
hose and scythe.

Tonight in the farmhouse full of light,  
not a hickup, not a peep, not an eyelash  
stirring in the sheets, not a father,  
dog, or daughter creeps  
inside the farmhouse full of light  
for the fear, oh the fright,  
of the barn outside that swallows night.

# FAMILY CROSSING

by THEA GOODRICH

ELISSA

Jeanie's mouth was open just the littlest bit and every time she breathed a tiny whistle came out like she was a baby teakettle. I wanted to put my palm under her chin to see if it would fit, let my fingers feel her soft soft cheek. Her eyelids fluttered and I hoped she wasn't having a nightmare. My Jeanie pie.

I turned back around and crossed my legs (flexible hips, mom says, just don't open them for a boy says dad). Tugged at the seatbelt. It never fit right now, always dug into my chest and I couldn't reach the acorn dad gave me that had fell in one of the ridges near the slidy door.

The headlights made it look like we were in a tunnel made of trees.

MICHAEL

Driving back from the cousins' is always the quietest part, dad fiddling with the radio knob at every stop sign but never loud enough to wake up mom in the front and Jeanie in the back. Lissa's squirming around like usual as if it's her God-given duty, keeps rearranging her atoms so they won't go stale. *Get off my side* she would say if I looked at her, *I'll tell dad about that thing, you-know-what*, so I try to count the fence posts rushing past the window.

Uncle John had made to toss me a beer bottle in the kitchen when everyone was eating crackers in the living room but I said "No thanks, still too young" and he said "Are you sure? Look old enough to me" and I counted my life on my two hands and then another and said "Yes sir I'll stick with milk." "All right then, suit yourself" he said and I did. I suited myself just fine.

DAVID

Maybe I should have made Lily drive, but too late now. Head's a little clunky. Three beers during the catch-up, wine with dinner. Jack kept topping me up. Not good for much else, that brother o'mine, all that talk about securities and short selling, but the liquidation bit I liked. Eggnog with that almond cake the girls made... I'll be fine. We're near the Rosenthals, almost there.

Brake slowly... left, right. No reason for revving, mister, each in his turn. "Hey Mikey boy, you see that car just passed? '76 Mustang that was. A Stallion."



"Okay dad." Yeah, yeah, okay. Don't know what I did to raise a son liking books more than cars.

JEANIE

The light made me wake up but that was good because of the bad dream with the chasing in the castle and the thunder lightning. "Mom?"

Lissa's face popped around the chair. "Mom's asleep, Jeanie doll. You want something?"

"I want mom!" I kicked Lissy's arm that was reaching toward me and she turned back around with the sulky face that makes dad mad at her sometimes. I knew Michael was just staring out the window and maybe drawing pictures on the glass like he showed me to once.

"Shush honey, we're almost home, don't wake her up. She had a long day watching that turkey." I could see dad's eyes looking at me in the mirror way up front.

ROSENTHAL

I was just getting a mug from the cupboard when I heard it, a noise that'd startle heaven. Happens all the time out here, the trees even without their leaves so large that they block the view of the turn. Probably just going too fast and nicked a deer. Lord knows we've got too many of them running around anyway. Still: not my property, not my problem.

I dropped the tea bag in then poured the steaming water over it like a miniature waterfall. My glasses fogged up.

MICHAEL

There's a thump and mom nearly leaps out of her seat and Lissa and I snap forward and Jeanie lets out a wail and something rattles forward near the door and Dad curses but we aren't moving anymore and the world outside is so small and so dark. Jeanie is crying crying crying and Lissa is unbuckling her seatbelt, her eyes wide, and something is wrong.

Lissa is standing up and gripping the door handle but dad is saying "No, kids, you stay inside" and he unbuckles and gets out and is a shadow in the yellow beam of the headlight.

JEANIE

Mommy crawled over the baskets and she gave Lissy a kiss but Michael wouldn't look at her and she came back here to me and now we are hugging and whispering and she is saying that everything will be all right even though dad isn't in the car anymore and Lissy is trying to open the door without the loud noise. I snuggle into mom's sweater and she strokes my hair the way I like.

DAVID

Really got it good, damned poor thing. Came outta nowhere. Must've. Boy. At least it's not breathing or anything, that'd be too much for Michael and the girls, to put it out of misery. One fell swoop. Damn. Swear I didn't see it—those eyes, the way they glow in the woods like little spooks. Just chose the wrong time to scoot on out. I was looking at the road, wasn't I?



Yes.

Yes.

Head still aches. Heh, not as much as this critter's did though, I bet. Damned poor thing.

ELISSA

Dad said to stay in the car but I wanted to see what happened. I opened the door and jumped out, hit in the face with cold. When I turned around to close it so that mom and Jeanie wouldn't freeze together, Michael was looking at me, like he knew something. Like he knew why dad was standing in the road looking at his feet and with one hand in the pocket of his jacket where he keeps all those peppermints in crinkly papers.

As I walked toward where dad was I pulled my arms inside my sweatshirt and remembered the time when I wrapped Jeanie in a blanket and told her she was a caterpillar in a cocoon and when I unwrapped her she would be a butterfly. We had learned about that in science class. She didn't believe me but mom agreed.

And then I was there in front of the car and I saw it and it was bloody so bloody the fur like it was glued to the road and the mouth open like it was crying for help and the stuff leaking out and we did it we did it I know but we didn't mean to I swear I'm so sorry I'm so so sorry.

## ZI YE'S AUTUMN SONG

*translated by DJ HEO*

長安一片月， 萬戶擣衣聲；  
秋風吹不盡， 總是玉關情。  
何日平胡虜？ 良人罷遠征

### VERSION ONE »

One sliver of moon shines on Chang An  
As countless poundings of washed clothes echo in the night;  
The gentle blow of autumn wind touches my heart  
Always taking me back to the Jade Pass;  
When will the Hu face defeat  
So that our men could return from their journey afar?

### VERSION TWO »

A sliver of moon shines on the home capital;  
Even the moon has lost its half;  
Washing clothes by moonlight,  
The women pound their sorrows away;  
Even the gentlest of the autumn wind  
Touches the deepest of their hearts,  
Time after time bringing them back  
To the grief of the jade mountain pass;  
The women sing their mournful song;  
When will our enemies be defeated,  
When will our men return home,  
When will we rejoice in harmony?

# THE WAY IT IS

*by* STELLA RYAN-LOZON

Give me lovers whose fingertips don't touch.  
I deserve the truth,  
spiraling down, thick and heavy.  
It's supposed to be like a seventeen-hour flight  
like a race you didn't train for  
or perhaps a little bit like sandpaper.

It's not your world filled with hot tea  
movies every afternoon for free,  
and summer sun in February.  
February is gray and cold.  
It always has been.

Fitting seven in a five-passenger car.  
Eating cereal with a fork.  
That's more like it.

## X-RAY

by LUCY TIVEN

*—what I wanted was to be all spines*

She clings to her torso  
when she removes her blouse  
and recalls a garden  
she used to walk in with her mother  
for the first time in ten years.

Shamefully, she is afraid  
that the radiograph machine  
can read her mind  
and allows her thoughts to pass quickly.  
Free association Becoming a transparency.  
Like trying to fall asleep  
in a subway car.

Both city dwellers,  
they called it the Botanical Garden,  
though comparatively  
many things were botanical then.  
There were two kinds of trees  
and she always sought out  
the climbing trees with thick gruff  
branches close to the earth, exuding  
with the inelegance of thumbs.

—The others my mother made into gods, she just stood there  
reverent, bark in her eyes;  
she wouldn't even look at me

Often in shop class,  
she had sat behind a boy  
whose shoulder blades formed a trapezoid  
when he bent forward to check the clock.  
11:45. Even in May, his spice wrack  
refused to stand up straight.  
Scoliosis, too, was a joke then.



UNTITLED



Kristy Foss  
{digital photograph}

# GRAVITY



Shelby Ziesing  
[acrylic on canvas]

## FABLE

*by* MICHAEL RABENBERG

**I**n Boston dwelled Martin, a man of great scruples, who fashioned out of soda cans a sculpture in his likeness. Before meals he would sit before the simulacrum and return its gaze, that he might learn the state of his soul.

Days, weeks, and months went by, and yet his meditations seemed in vain. Though he thought in good moods that the idol brought joyous tidings and blasted a soundless trumpet blast to a choir of exultant seraphs, at night his optimism vanished, for his dreams were filled with wild running horses and many-pronged lightning bolts flowering in the sky.

One day Martin came home and found a crow circling the sculpture's head at great speed. This he took to mean that the soul does not exist, and he spent the rest of his days sculpting his friends, that they might learn the same.



## SHAKESPEARE IN BED

*by* CALEB MACDONALD BISSINGER

After, when they had collectively remembered to trash not flush the condom and its nacreous substance, she quoted him Shakespeare. It was an attempt on her part to transport them from the rusted bedsprings and dirty sheets to a scene of romantic pliancy. It was also part of her attempt to lead him to believe that her perfervid orgasmic shouts (which at times reminded him of the sounds she made when a rubber-band bracelet is snapped against her wrist) were real. As usual, they had been faked, but she had grown to accept his lackluster prowess as a lover, and accepted that her fruition was often just beyond reach, like the nuclear obliteration that the Bay of Pigs quietly missed. While the other, more endowed men she had been with had not let her cold war endure, none of them put up with her post-coital Shakespearean lessons. They turned over, interrupted, or, in the milliseconds between stressed and unstressed syllables, thought it necessary to point out that Shakespeare might have been gay. She was alarmed by how many men had made that comment, but he never had. He simply listened quietly, and used his index finger to trace circles across her back, mapping a solar system between her shoulder blades. And, as she quietly realized that none of her other lovers had considered the proper method of prophylactic disposal, or even the use of one, she thought perhaps she had reached a state of mild happiness. "Love sought is good, but given unsought, is better."

## A HALTING SONNET ON WYATT'S POETRY

*Or the Author's Sundry Thoughts on "Tanglid I was yn loves snare"*

by BECCA KOBAYASHI

In stanza one the lover's not to blame,  
By stanza six we understand his plight.  
To this false tree in earnest love he came  
And now the winged god denies him flight.  
"But ha," in repetition makes a net  
And demonstrates how Love entraps the mind.  
"For I am now at libretye" is set  
To catch us up, enthrall us now in kind.  
Although he writes of freedom in refrain  
His structure makes us into reading birds  
Who flit enrapt amid our poet's pain  
And lovely "wylke lokes" of echoed words.  
Within a twining "tanglid" cage of rhyme,  
We get caught up in literary "lyme."



## DOLUMBRIA

by ARIANA MCSWEENEY

The game of sardines was taken seriously at Dolumbria. The children had played it in every area of the manor in which they were allowed, and in each location they adhered to specific rules with the utmost strictness. The children couldn't remember when exactly the rules had been created or whose idea it had been to start the game. Sardines seemed to have started itself in Dolumbria's rambling hallways and dusty servants' stairways. There were doors which opened to walls and some that opened to nothing at all, and there were staircases that climbed only to reach a ceiling. It was simply the right game to play.

Today sardines took place in the garden. The morning was still, and the seeker's dress seemed to hang on a body of stone as she stood before the overwhelming rows of flora. Her head was tilted in an attempt to hear some nonexistent hum made by her siblings as she counted. She began to feel impatient. When she finished counting and opened her eyes, not a stem was out of place. There were no footprints marking the lawn, soggy as it was from the recent rain, and she could not hear a syllable of a whisper. The girl felt a hot itching on her palms and under her fingernails. She curled her hands into fists. Releasing herself from her solitary pose, she dashed into the fragrant maze. She grew more frustrated with each unproductive second. The game was worthless if they stayed hidden; the excitement was all in the satisfaction of the discovery. It was the seeker's place to win.

The rules required that they be somewhere between the field and the kissing gate that lead to the wider garden. The space was compact; it would be humiliating not to find them. She felt short of breath at the thought of failure. She quickened her pace, flitting between the hedges as she scanned her surroundings.

There was an artificial snap and a giggle and a flash of deep red which her eyes quickly discerned from the leaves of the hedges. It was the dress of one of her sisters – she couldn't remember which – and the seeker was almost upon her. The choking sensation in her throat swelled upward, closer to her mouth, so close that it almost surfaced in a thoughtless gasp. She felt strange. She staggered sideways briefly, her hand reaching out vaguely to grasp the creeping ivy that stretched itself over the hedges, her eyes locked intractably on the place where she had seen the swatch of red. She shifted her head a little, and from this new angle she could see that it was still there. Her sister was too inattentive, too slow. She almost had her.

The seeker sucked her heavy breath back inside of her. Silence was imperative. She planned to tiptoe over the azaleas, at which point she would have only to spin quietly around

the hedge in front of her and she would have her sister cornered against its other side. Her chest ached; her head buzzed. She rubbed the skin underneath her collarbone.

In a reckless movement of intuition, she abandoned her plans and flew. She dug her heel into the fleshy wetness of the earth and used it to propel herself at the place in the bush where she saw the cloth. She trampled the azaleas on her way to the patch of red fabric, saw it grow bigger and bigger as though it were coming towards her, as though it wanted to be found, as though it existed only for her to find it. Her sister shrieked and laughed. She spun away from the seeker, tripping briefly before she regained her balance and fled. Before the seeker could stop herself she was tearing her way into the bush, not running around it but in the thick of its prickly gut, its vein-like branches sticking into her skin, pulling and pushing her, tearing at her hair and eyes and dress. The seeker's eyes were closed in protection but she crawled on, whimpering in pain, confused as to why she was here inside the bush and not running after her sister.

Finally she fell through to the other side. For a moment she did not open her eyes but stayed frozen in a crouching position on the ground, her skin a collection of burning scratches. She blinked and found that her head was facing down toward her body, and that she was on all fours in the mud like an animal.

She looked up and her sister was before her with wide eyes. The seeker did not know what to say. She could only see the red of the dress and the way it echoed its color upon her own body in the ruddy dirt and the blood of her fresh scratches and the pink azalea petals from the flowers she had trampled.

## BELLSONG

*by* JAMIE KATZ

Song we sing the song  
of love, sing we sound  
the bell of song,  
bells we ring the bells  
for love, and yes, we are  
a battle of bells in song.

Dance we dance for love  
of song, string of dance  
through days of love,  
built by hand in name  
of song, our bodies are bells  
we ring for love.

Eat we ate the flesh  
of song, so song is bare  
as bones of love,  
bake our bodies through  
with love, for the Sun  
is baked in rays of love.

Love our love is flesh  
and fallow, hollow bones  
and bells that dance,  
birds and bells, love  
and flesh, yes, my love,  
yes and yes.



# WIND SEASON

*by* LUCY TIVEN

On nights when I cannot bear  
the finality of sleep I remove  
jam jars from fridge  
and empty their prism bodies  
of dust and carbon fibers.

I sit them on the windowsill  
half filled with tap water  
and listen to their lulled rattle  
over the radiator, pouring  
shrill steam into a pulp sky.

My mother said the key is  
to believe in one thing.  
I chose condensation,  
the sleepy analog of the water cycle  
in the months when the Kansas air  
is brittle and refuses all moisture.

The first time I returned  
to only dry glass veins  
I thought some strange god  
had appeared to claim them  
between my fits of waking.  
I still imagine genesis this way:

inverse evaporation, nothing material  
left but the fragmentary bodies  
of fireflies and you, insistent  
to fight off the dry season,  
never sure if this world is merely  
some fable you dreamed up.



# WIDELENS POLKADOT

*by* ANDREW EBNER

burrowmoss cakes candles  
nature spouts apexes and song, moles  
relinquish as we stare

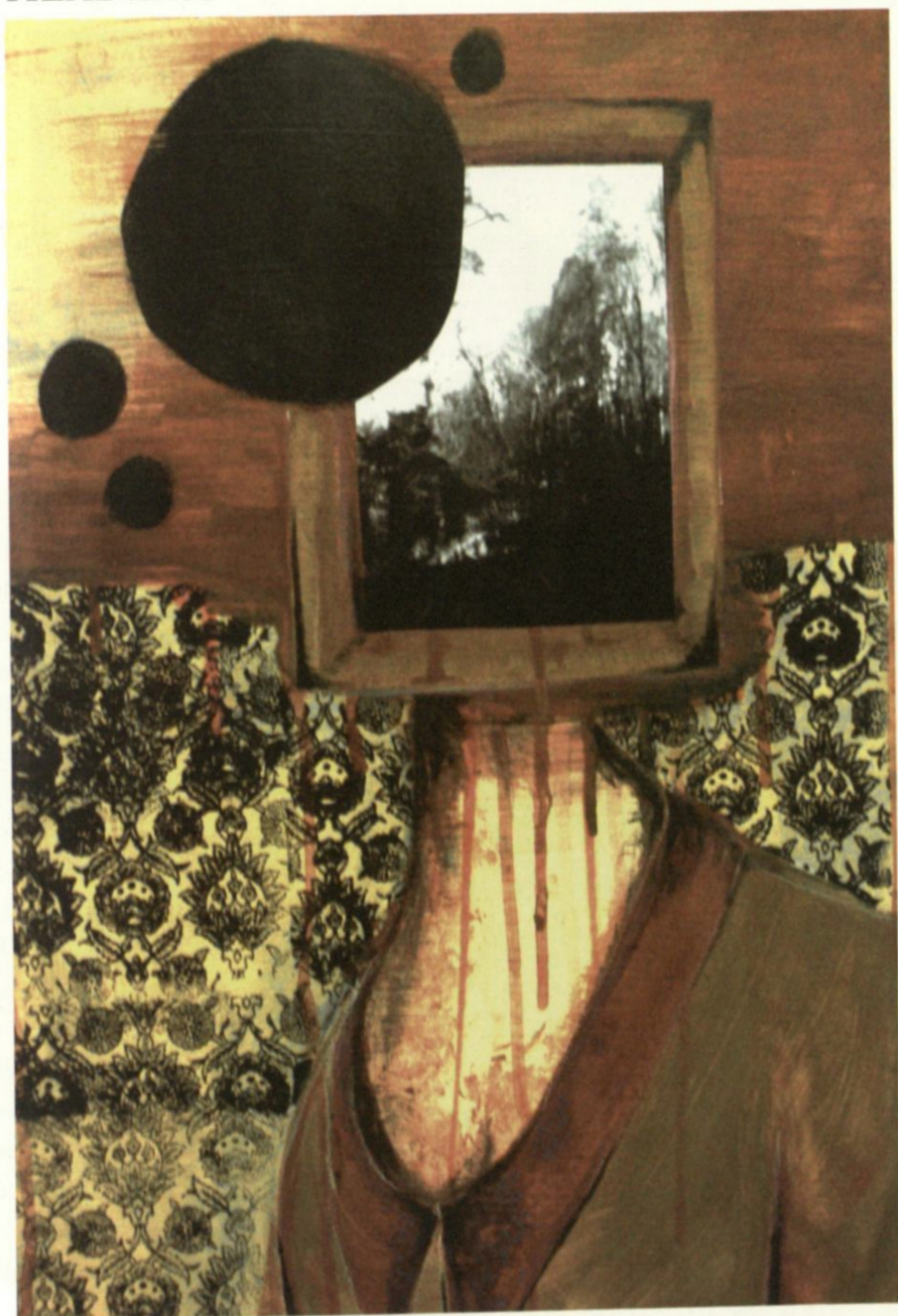
out at house,  
shake in bits at chill  
(leaves and light  
remain on pane-crack glass  
letting breeze),  
vines eased in chairs

fill home-volumes  
torn with bitter buzzing,  
the menaced ones' movement  
enjoys vibrations of lizardskin tremors  
we take off  
our quaking hands

our gasp, the green pulls in lungvolition  
we are still for moments  
over our splinters table and rent cloth.  
we remember we left our shoes out front  
where goodlimbs and deer lie

and climb the vines to castledskies  
to trips-end, blueberry  
bushes signal  
the arrival of murmuring us  
when we trip bluefeet on cold halls  
and bed our rest; below; birds  
borrow our halls.

# HEADLESS



Lauren Ross  
{mixed media collage}

# PUDDLE



Shelby Ziesing  
{mixed media collage}



# EMORY

by BECCA KOBAYASHI

The problem was, of course, that Emory was a girl. Or even more simply, that she was not a boy. Everybody knew only boys could be knights; all the same, knighthood was Emory's dearest wish.

First, she had decided to focus on her most concrete hurdles to knighthood. One: No proper knight trains for battle in Hyde Park, next to squealing kids on swings and their posh Saudi-Arabian mothers. As Emory peered out the car window, and away from her worn copy of *Faerietales & Folklore*, she wished once more that Mum would get a job outside of London.

Two: A knight needs a horse, and the London bobbies were not about to let her use theirs. After moving out of Town—away from the Tube's ever-present queues, the phone box fliers for hookers, and the stray plops of dog doo decorating the grey sidewalks—the next step would be a proper horse.

Before that, however, they had to move to the country.

When they rolled into Dad's gravel drive, the twins, Harry and George, ran out of the house waving their wooden swords. Janet, two years older and exponentially more mature, followed them with an aluminum foil tiara in hand. Unlike Mum's flat, Dad's house, with its antique weapons hung on the walls, seemed always to have been an exciting place.

"En garde!" shouted the twins, a bit off-sync, but in very heroic postures.

"Prepare to meet your doom, you knaves!" Emory answered, as the twins danced out of the reach of her home-made sword.

"Emory, please say hello to your father before you run off," Mum said firmly. "Keep track of all your books, love. See you Sunday afternoon."

Emory waved as Mum drove off. She dragged her heavy rucksack into the house. Dad was in the breakfast room with Susan, Emory's step-mum, working on his dissertation.

"Hey, Dad! Hi, Susan," called Emory.

"How're you doing, Em?" Dad replied. He put his arms around Emory and she rested her nose on his chest for a brief moment, before pulling away to brandish her sword.

"Look, Dad, I wrapped the handle in cord like they did in the Medieval ages, yeah?"

"Nice job," he laughed, and sat down again. "Oh, our new gardener, Kieran—one from Ireland—is clearing out lots of weeds and rubbish. Try not to bother him too much, hmm?"

"Yeah, Dad," Emory called over her shoulder, as she ran out the French doors.



Today, Emory was Sir Gawain facing the giant Green Knight. Harry wanted to be Lancelot but George didn't care who he was, as long as he got the shield with a hand strap that worked. Janet was Guinevere, because in her opinion, there really were not any other women in Arthur's court worth speaking of, let alone being.

They hadn't yet defeated the Green Knight when they heard Susan calling them in to tea. Sir Lancelot and Sir George left a trail of knightly apparel on their speedy retreat to the house and Guinevere followed, lifting her skirts delicately over the mud puddles.

"Come on, Emory! Before the twins eat all the biscuits!" the queen pleaded.

"In a minute!" her knight assured her, for Emory had caught a glimpse of a little streamlet just beyond the tree line that beckoned her on.

As a rule, water in any form must be played in: waded in if deep, disturbed if still, and muddied if clear. Emory took off her new plimsolls and, squatting with her knees to her chin, she dipped her toes in the shallows. After a moment, she stood and shuffled across the pebbled stream, touching the water with her sword point to watch the v-shaped trail that formed from her interference. She walked back and forth so many times that she lost count, but after a while she remembered the promise of biscuits. So she went to find her shoes. Where had they gone?

"Lose something?" said a tenor voice.

Emory looked around. To her surprise, she noticed a dark horse standing in the water to her right. There was, however, no sign of where the voice had come from.

"Hullo, horse," she said softly. "Are you lost?" Oh, I dearly hope so, she thought. I want Dad to keep you for me.

"Not as lost as you are, lass," the horse stated in a very matter-of-fact way.

Whatever one can say about Emory, one cannot call her a coward. She took remarkably well to a speaking horse, for in her mind it would have been very un-knightly not to.

"I'm only a few feet into the woods—" she began. But she did not finish, because turning to point out the historic house and gardens, she suddenly saw that they were not there anymore. In their place was a ruined stone castle.

"Your shoes are on the other side," remarked the horse. "Back where you came from."

"Oh."

The horse came and stood beside her. Emory wanted to pet his shiny mane, but feeling that this might be offensive she instead clasped both her hands around her sword hilt.

"Do you want to go home then?" asked the horse solicitously, his left, large brown eye watching her.

Emory thought for a moment and then replied, "Yes. But only if you come home with me or I can come back here whenever I want to. Tea's not worth wasting a chance like this."

The horse snorted. "You're no fool, lass, I'll give you that. Look, I promise you'll be able to return if you help me. A bit of a quest, you might say."

"Only if you think I can get it done quickly."

"Quite the bargainer. Very well, we'll be back in time for tea. Get on."

Emory enjoyed the view of the strange landscape from the back of the black stallion (although he was still rather damp), and only reluctantly dismounted in the mossy courtyard of the castle. She immediately noticed the lone tree planted in the cracked paving stones. Or rather, she noticed the man trapped in its leafy clutches. He appeared to be unconscious and the tree had wound its branches around his legs, arms, and torso in an immovable embrace.

"I'm going to guess that this is my quest," said Emory.

"Right you are. A man does not belong in this poor tree...would a kiss break the spell?"

Emory whirled on the horse. "I'm not about to snog some stranger! And besides, only princesses can break spells with kisses."

The horse looked at her for a long moment and then said, "You know, lass, trees like this are often more alive than the normal ones."

Mentally sifting through the stories she knew, Emory remembered reading of Merlin's entrapment in a tree and how he had to stay there until modernity, the supposed end of his world.

Emory stepped up to the tree and started whispering to its curling branches. Then she began repeating dates and making wild noises to accompany them. In the following minutes she had outlined a spotty history of England from the Middle Ages to the present, complete with snippets of royal proclamations, air raid sirens, and a rendition of the Beatles' "Dear Prudence." If the horse noted any inaccuracies (such as Elizabeth I's intense involvement in the Glorious Revolution), he said nary a word. The impressionable tree wouldn't know the difference.

As Emory's tired lips formed the words, "...and on the day the gallant knight, Sir Emory, and her noble steed came along, the prisoner fell free of his spell," the tree groaned and creaked. She watched, holding her breath, as the man tumbled groggily to the ground.

After the horse (apparently a local) gave detailed directions to the released, and now very boring, miller, he deposited Emory back at the stream.

"Repeat what you did before and you'll be home," he said, nudging her forward.

Before Emory could ask why he had staged that man's rescue, he had vanished. She was pretty certain that it took fewer times across the water to arrive home than it had to leave. Her shoes were a welcome sight, but she was surprised to notice that it was already dark. A moving torch flickered in the trees ahead of her and she heard Dad calling her name from the yard.

"Stupid horse. So much for tea" she muttered.

"Sorry about that, lass," said the familiar voice. "Over here! I've found her, sir!"

Emory gaped up at a smiling, dark-haired young man as Dad scooped her up in his arms.

"Thanks, Kieran!" Dad exclaimed. "Now, where've you been at, love? And I told you not to be a bother to the gardener."

# SONNET WRITTEN IN THE MANNER OF JOHN CLARE

*by* MICHAEL RABENBERG

If—when in wanderlust I chance upon a pond  
Of murky water flecked with croaking toads  
My mind sets sail upon a fallen frond  
Besmirched with soil and flies down bendy roads  
Past meadows, dales, and hillocks kissed with dew  
And lightly powdered all with cotton took  
By gentle Zephyr o'er a nearby brook  
From fields alive with tilling servants—you  
Perchance espy this sky-borne boat and snatch  
It from its airy course (which makes it dance  
As one at joyous Whitsun Wedding cants  
In merriment and every wind-whisk catch)  
And rescue it from beating, thoughtless draught,  
O dearest! do not crush my tender craft!



# WHAT TO DO WITH NOTHING

by JAMIE KATZ

the milking parlors bottle nothing  
but lust for strange economies.

This hot July night is dense  
in the presence of your tongue,  
your mouth of smoke and fireworks  
remembers trademarked tomatoes: I knew

I would spend my days  
sifting pulp and flesh  
though my teeth, saving worthless seeds. The lingering  
tails of fireworks grasp at ripeness.

From the park we saw a  
sky of corkscrew epithets,  
vast sea glass braced by green hills  
volunteering like seeds or soldiers.



## MR. HEMINGWAY. UNDERWATER

by CALEB MACDONALD BISSINGER

First, there was the issue of the beard. No one, particularly its wearer, was quite certain how it would react to the ocean water. Some had speculated it would sag down under the burden of its own soggianness. Others wrote in to say that the beard, if submerged for long enough, might become a breeding ground for sea anemone, or a school of small fish. Still a whole other contingent argued that the only reasonable option for Mr. Hemingway was to shave the beard before he dove to see the wreck. That way, they said, the chance of Mr. Hemingway becoming an oceanic-terrarium was almost entirely eliminated. Hemingway himself was unsure. He lay awake at least three nights running his middle and index fingers through his white mane, imitating the action of scissors. He did this slowly, the tendrils of hair resting for minutes between the soft-skin shears of his right hand.

All this came after a long discussion I had with Mr. Hemingway. We were sitting on the porch of his house in Havana. Beads of sweat led charge down Mr. Hemingway's forehead. They advanced slowly. They tiptoed across the barren terrain until they hit some invisible marker and then moved quickly, like birds dispersing along a beach front. They plummeted across the landscape forcing their way through the strategically placed bushy eyebrows. Mr. Hemingway issued a counter attack. He drew his thick hand up and wiped the sweat out of his eyebrows before it could reach his eyes. The salt was unbearable. There was gunshot residue caked almost invisibly between his fingers.

"This is what Havana is for, to make men hate everything that spills from their temples."

"Have you ever been scuba diving?"

"No," he said, pausing. He wiped his eyebrows once more. "But I've always wanted to see a dead ship. See some hulk, see man's awesomeness, barnacled and bitter, sunken underwater."

"We'll go then. I'll talk to Wall, we'll plan the whole thing."

---

Wall stood aboard his small sailing vessel, his hand loosely gripping the mast. The boat rocked gently against the dock. The sail lay furled on the boat's body. The thick canvas rippled over the wooden frame of the boat. Wall did not look out at the vast blue in front of him, but rather at the rudder. He stared intently at the wooden handle dipping off through a hole in the boat's

hull and disappearing into the brackish deep. This had become tradition. Wall was not making peace with the sea; there was no time for that. There were too many miles, too many swells, too many rugged shorelines shouting, accusing into the breaking white of the sweating sea. Wall was making peace with his vessel.

Wall made his living on these shipwreck expeditions. Several times a week he took three or four hungry tourists out into the calm. They hid their bravery in their trembles and the thin craft made its way through the water, taking on some and creaking. He knew a boat, an old Spanish merchant ship, four miles off land where he would drop the tourists to explore. They would dive into the wreck, their wetsuits turning glossy in the water. They were like nothing, their bodies covered in the black. Only their hands shown out pale and holding flashlights.

Mr. Hemingway was not built for a wetsuit. His chin aside, his shoulders looked like strange protrusions once the zipper was strung up his back. His chest rose and fell in a natural mountain range. When we were ready he dove first. Wall watched Mr. Hemingway's body disappear into the deep. He saw his hands flail out in front of his chest, tugging the water to pull him deeper. Slowly the air tank on his back dissolved, like a medicine tablet in water, disappearing deep below the surface, hidden by a storm of bubbles. I dove in second. I listened as the oxygen passed from the airtank, through a tube that warmed my mouth. I looked up to see Mr. Hemingway. His head was darting around excitedly, his flippers flailing to keep his body in the same position. He pointed behind my head.

I saw behind me the barnacled beauty. The wood boards of its body arched and curved in the blue-green light of underwater. A flag attached to the mast, placed there for tourists like us, spun in the breeze of the current. Fish darted in and out of the broken windows. Rope lay in coiled heaps on the deck. Boxes of cargo were scattered everywhere, the sea floor strewn with broken shards of wood containers. It looked of sorrow, ransacked by time.

Mr. Hemingway swam in close. Without fear he reached out and touched the beast. I expected it to jump—fury, vengeance—woken from its sleep by an intruder, roll a rock in front of the door. But it did not stir. It rested. Mr. Hemingway's rough hand felt the wooden skin of the ship. He scraped at a barnacle, and then he rested, and he peered into a window and turned excitedly, motioning for me to come close, but I didn't move.

Up above, Wall sat on the boat. He stared again at the rudder imagining the feel of it in his hand as he charted the way home. His eyes shifted to the water. He could see nothing but his cool reflection in the green. He waited patiently for Mr. Hemingway and me to resurface. He watched with calm to see our heads rise up through the ocean. He waited for us so once more the shipwreck could disappear.



# ONE OF THESE DAYS WE'LL RISE UP SINGING

by SARAH KEMP

*Wanted: Male for Carrying Out of State Duties at Penitentiary.  
Compensation Upon Completion of Task.*

I was conceived some twenty yards away,  
My mother combing the slatted shadows  
Back from his scarred-up face. Some kind of  
Singularity, me, to burst forth red-petaled from seeds  
Stolen from cold ground, kept alone in silence.

I needed money, hanging above the river  
By the landlord and the tax man and  
The thousand men with axes that I face.  
So there was a name, a call, four lungs breathing down a line.  
We speak the lithe tongue of death. No one burns.

I see my birth in these familiar places.  
I will become Death out of desperation  
And I, my work, will all be blessed.  
A man is dancing on the wired walls outside.  
(I am not afraid to die.)

They walk me to the place where women  
Are stories of softness and forgiveness of the flesh,  
The knife, the bullet. The breathing dead will never see me  
But we taste the copper and smell fried hair.  
I would someday like to be forgiven.

The warden hands me cloth with holes  
For eyes and I am suddenly the end,  
The switch, the straps, the hymnal  
Turned to mud by miles of walls.  
My father is awake somewhere.

I can hear a weeping woman through the mirror glass.  
I'm sure my mother was a cold Madonna, bowing  
To the spoken word of a higher power than she.

I am the dirty fist of a higher power than she.  
(I am not afraid to die.)

I hear his prayers. Clumsy begging, the passwords  
Of the corridor that only has one exit.  
Our Father who art in Heaven. My father is under my feet.  
He tries so hard to see me that maybe he knows who I am,  
My mask, my street clothes, and this shaking heart.

I hear the first notes of his last words tremble on his lips.  
"One of these days, I'll rise up, singing."  
And then he started to dance.  
I am not afraid to die.  
(I am not afraid to die.)



## THE FAKIRS

*by* MALLORY EWER-SPECK

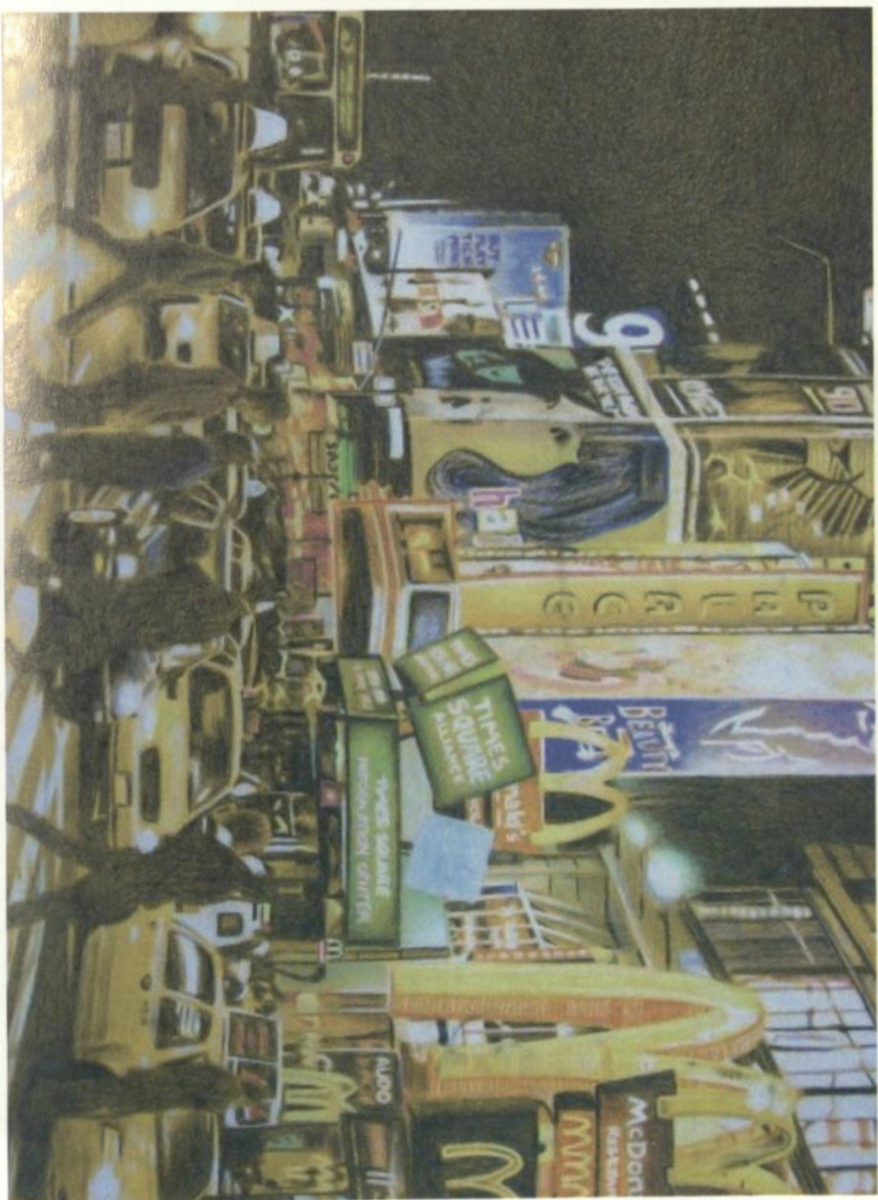
**T**hey did not want to look like tourists; this was the reason the couple shopped at the local grocery store.

"We need prunes," the woman said.

"Should do the trick," replied the man.

The couple bought the prunes and ate them by the river while the Venetians walked by thinking, "constipated tourists."

## NEW YORK LIGHTS



Leah Fulton  
[colored pencil]

20th century, the experience as a civil servant in Ceylon (1904-11) that made him an anti-imperialist, and the atmosphere of the Bloomsbury group of artists and writers, in which he and his wife, novelist Virginia Woolf, played a formative part. In 1917 they founded their own publishing house, the Hogarth Press, and their discerning understanding encouraged such writers as T.S. Eliot and E.M. Forster.

BIOGRAPHY:  
The Spater  
An L

Woolf wrote two biographies: one is fanciful, a fragment of the life of the Brownings through the imagined memories of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's dog (*Flush*; 1933); the other is a full-length biography of the art critic Roger Fry, the best critical studies of the artist (1925). *The Waves*

After her novels *The Voyage* (1975) and *The Voyage* (1976), Woolf, 6 vol. (1975-80), ed. by D. J. Trautmann. Biographies: *Woolf*, 2 vol. (1975-76). *Woman of*



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# PAINTED WOMAN

*by* SARAH KEMP

Never sleep to wake from, always the moon  
To tell my skin it loves me, charms away  
My blood each night and leaves me with my dead.  
You see, you are that old world that I grieve for,

Time when flesh was reds and greens and yellows  
Pillaged from greenhouses, laboratories. You make  
My thighs from cadmium, I make your hands by bearing witness.  
This is why your fingers work. Did you not hear,

There is no sentence to be heard, there are only the roses  
In your stomach blooming, and the boiling acids in your toes?  
Pity yourself, and sleep out of sight of the moon.  
Pity me, I cannot leave my dead,

But though I would smear myself in gory blooms and go  
Smelling of chloroform, away from them,  
I wonder if these colors could endure the turn  
Away from you toward sleep, the briefest walk

Amongst the mute. See the rows of blossoms ranged,  
See through the rows of glass. When I am gone at night,  
Do remember me as body and not a voice,  
Remember me as I made you.



## OR SOMEWHERE IN OSTEND

by CALEB MACDONALD BISSINGER

James Buchanan slept well. He always slept well on these diplomatic trips, the exhaustion of travel and heaviness of strange food, which he ate, out of deference, in large quantities. He had hoped not to dream. This was no time for dreams; it was a time for diligent work, for political action, for diplomatic rectitude, but when he sank into the bed the dormant flock of eagles embroidered on the blanket took flight and dragged him, with their talons, into a sorry state of fantasy. It was 1854, and he was Minister to Great Britain, a title he held with homesick honor.

Cuba. In his dream, Cuba. The air was different, muggy, like holding your face over a cup of tea. Steam flushed his pores. The sun was sitting low on the horizon, a basketball forgotten on the gym floor, reflecting its leathery sheen onto the court in strange triangular rays. He stood on a street corner, a whitewashed building standing over him like a scolding parent. It was three stories, and green vines hung down from the roof, brushing up against the windows and the building next door, like a beard scratching a lover's face. Buchanan knew why the southern states wanted this land so badly. It would give them another slave state, strengthening the slave trade and the southern economy. But standing there, in the Cuban dusk, he understood why the Spanish were so reluctant to let it go. He felt the boyish quiet he had felt playing hide-and-go-seek with his friends in the Pennsylvania woods, listening to every twig snap and birdchirp, but hearing only the scratch of his own breath. What would America do to this place? What would become of its mysteries once America opened her legs to it? Cuba would have no choice but to shave the beard off its rooftops and make room for its new lover.

Hungry, Buchanan made his way through the streets, which grew crowded as he walked farther from the ocean. Soon he was in a small café with a pretty waitress. For Buchanan, who had spent a year in England, this Cuban woman was a different species. Her skin was tawny, and firm from the sun. Her hair was black and unwashed, like a piece of combed driftwood. Her breasts were pushed tight against her body, held firmly in place, and Buchanan wanted nothing more than to dislodge them from their holsters. It had been a long time since he had been with a woman, and in the dizziness of travel he felt a tumescent shape developing under the table. He repositioned his napkin.

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Then the dream cut, as dreams do, information missing, and place barely intact. Buchanan has no idea what he had ordered at dinner from the swarthy, saturnine waitress, but now he finds

himself inside of her, her hands driving his shoulders into the mildewed mattress. She stares at him, with a silent passion, her eyelids flicking rapidly with pleasure, but her gaze fixed, like a guard at Buckingham.

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When he wakes, Buchanan will write a document suggesting the United States acquire Cuba by whatever means necessary—fiscal or forceful. This document would bring Buchanan on-estep closer to the Presidency; it would also make him one of the most hated men in the north. Tomorrow, Buchanan will also wake to a hard stain on the sheet. Now, the eagles are quiet and resting, but their talons are still sharp; their tongues are still outstretched.

## WAX LEAF PRESS

*by* LUCY TIVEN

"That's the problem with our generation—"  
She paused to stir her soup.  
"We need to accept the moon  
as a corporeal body."  
We had just watched a video frame  
of Neil Armstrong. Tracy was seventeen  
and believed that watching public television specials  
could make us into sophisticates.  
I was two years younger,  
as I have continued to be without rest.  
"Okay," I said. Reject abstractions.  
Allow empirical memory.  
Be convinced of the substance of things.

The day water is contestability found  
between lunar craters  
I walk on the bank of to the river  
that runs beside the overpass  
and gather the dampened sheddings of oak trees.  
Later, blisters emerge  
between cookie sheets  
and the leaves release a sticky dew  
that smells like apple cider or burnt latex  
as I press the iron down.  
Spectroscopic measurements  
are taken and analyzed on the radio.

To some people the solar system is a fable.  
To others a bar of soap in the sky.  
If what they found on the moon  
really was water what will separate us  
from our parents?  
Imagine the noble team of researchers—  
always looking upward,  
longing to actualize beauty, to return  
with something physical.



Perhaps it only lasted  
the night in Dallas and one man  
went crazy when it evaporated  
into the night air. Still, I know now  
that I will be a scientist first.

SONNET FOR THE BLOOD I COUGHED  
INTO THE TOLIET

*by* MICHAEL RABENBERG

O ribbon, crimson as a commie's rag,  
Which cuddles with the furry glob of phlegm  
I also vomited, I hope your hue  
Portends consumption sweet as Keats's! Death  
Ensured his verses wouldn't suffer from  
A mediocre batch of "Later Keats"—  
His twenty-five-year bucket-kick: a gem  
Of timing. Say I've got an oeuvre true  
As Aristotle's and a taste that beats  
The pants off even Wrigley's Chewing Gum,  
You lovely hideous aquatic hag—  
Just tell me truth I want to hear. The heath  
Of Lear's dementia brought him clarity;  
Perhaps the Scythe can do the same for me.

# RURALITY

by ABBY WARDELL

Half moon  
Seems like country  
poems all sound  
alike seems like  
city readers all  
read the same  
whittled image  
limping cycle: moon,  
grain, curved  
cut of the scythe  
sliced vegetable  
platter forced  
cocktail ignorance  
broken fence  
cries repeated prophet  
and we trailer  
transplants  
immigrant mosquito  
you write children's  
books paste and  
cut fever read  
the black seeds  
of your pupils  
dilated farmer  
overheated and all  
the lettuce goes  
to seed.

When you don't know the difference  
between a thrush and a swallow, both  
words just signify "bird"

A generic image begetting choice  
associations: bright fluttering beauty;  
freedom opening wings; morning

The imposed language: say whatever  
subtleties you please, convey the irony  
of rurality, but you print, inevitably, a  
parody

Those who once encroached now  
encroached upon. Another generation of  
territorial dogs, pissing on the same soil

The poets and the farmers compete for  
minority status. No winners. Languages  
die out and become pictures, feed the  
image-greedy culture, disrupt and titillate  
the rhythm of the river flooding. We sit  
down to dinner and wonder, how will we  
communicate?



## BOY WITH UMBRELLA



Liz Flynn  
{photograph}

# YOGA

*by* KARA GILPIN PELLEGRINO

I went to yoga to get calm;  
instead I had to look at your thong.  
It was blue.



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