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A

Literary Supplement

of the

Daily Nexus

May 22, 1992

[pl.] Chem. The univalent
called the *arsine* group.
n. [From a [pl.] Chem.
which arsine is the hydride.
is. See 1st ARM, n. Cf. R-
l, dexterity, or the power of
quired by experience, study,

end in books. Spenser.
ings in the natural world to
contrivance or ingenuity.

nature and of art. De.
ence; esp., a science such as
s, serving chiefly as a disci-
knowledge; specif., pl., those
in the academic course of
THE LIBERAL ARTS.

of learning.
w human wit. Pope.
ny branch of learning of
rules or of organized modes
the performance of certain
engraving; the art of war;

's no art
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J. S. Mill.

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s, and nerves of living men.
F. H. Giddings.

ledge or skill in effecting
oation or business requiring
; as, industrial arts.
led fire and snow. Shelley.

unning; artifice; craft.
scontented warriors. Macaulay.
no art at all. Shak.
ed to their superiors. Crabb.

ill. Obs. Shak.
e to production according to
tion having to do with the
he expression of beauty in
movement. Specif., such

beauty in plastic materials
inting and sculpture; as, the
FINE ARTS. Art (in this
in this Dictionary to indi-
l or sense is typically used.
e for the simple beauty, the san-
ment which she introduced into
ory a true exponent of the human
Percy Gardner.

s paintings, sculpture, etc.,
aste.
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orporation of the dealers in wool.
C. E. Norton.

avior; also, an instance of it.
ood and wink. Browning.

pression in the f

May 22, 1992

Dear Supplemental Writings, Art and Typings reader,

It has been slightly more than a quarter now since we last were joined. This compilation of prose and poetry represents the second volume of a new campus literary supplement we call S.W.A.T. Different than the first volume, this edition focuses more upon poetry and independent works of art. It seeks to give the finer things a little breathing room. Sprinkled across these pages are paintings, drawings and sculptures from just a few of the laudable artists on this campus. And, of course there are also the words of many local locutionists.

Thank you to all those who showed the interest and artistic courage to submit to S.W.A.T. The submissions were much more plentiful on this second round. They were also of a diverse and notable quality. Space and resources, however, are limited. Art is an expensive business these days. To those who were not published, we hope your interest in this magazine continues. See you in one quarter. Enjoy.

Sincerely,

Dylan Callaghan,
Editor

EDITOR:
Dylan Callaghan

contributors:

- Maxwell C. Donnelly,
- Melissa Lalum
- Charles Hornberger
- Mai Harmon
- Shira Gotshalk
- J. Christaan Whalen
- Mom

cover art:

Untitled,
Dana Freeman

C O N T E N T S

Short Fiction

- Ink Is Blood 5A
by Steve Allen
- Child in the Desert 9A
by David Katz
- Wake Up Call 12A
by Dylan Callaghan

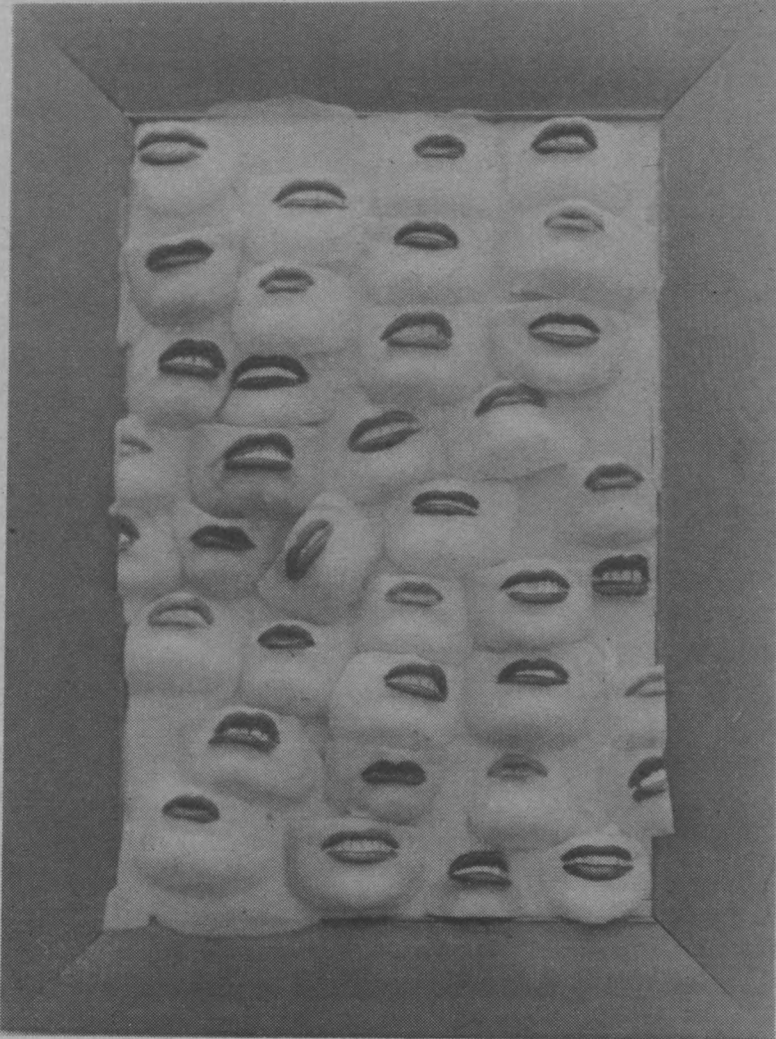


Poetry

- Untitled, *by Traci A. Rossman*
- After Hearing That the U.S. Laureate Doesn't Dig Bob Dylan
by Tony Pierce 3A
- Patently Jealous, *by Wendy Bayless*
- Death of Love, *by Wendy Bayless*
- Outsidin', *by Derek Carmean* 4A
- Moved, *by J.D.*
- Victimless Crime, *by Sara Seiberg*
- Untitled, *by George Charles* 6A
- Break Away, *by The Lull*
- Delta Blues, *by M.A. Rasmussen*
- The Washer Woman, *by Mark Pollock* 7A
- Fruit Cocktail, *by Sara Seiberg*
- Wise Old Lube, *by Traci A. Rossman*
- Smiler, *by George Charles* 8A
- May 23, 1990, *by Sara Seiberg*
- Pinetubo's Love, *by Don Frances*
- Angel of Death, *by Heidi Anspaugh*
- Swim, *by Pat Stull* 10A
- Raw #1, *by Traci A. Rossman*
- Rejilted, *by Pat Stull*
- Black Bug, *by M. A. Rasmussen* 11A



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"Smile: An Open Wound" Janine Klees**Untitled**

You need to cash in on that advice
 chunk it down to clanking nickels
 put one under your pillow
 dunk a few in your afternoon teabag
 and if "a rock feels no pain,"
 pile the rest up in a reclusive island.

Funny how they dish out criticism
 while their own steaks go rare.
 Half-baked out of a box their cornbread
 banished from real down-home;
 be wary of a simple "just eat it"
 where the ingredients list should be.

— Traci Alane Rossman



Tim La Douce
Untitled

"after hearing the U.S. Poet Laureate doesn't dig Bob Dylan"

you've got your Hollywide smile and your clean blue shirt
 your fat black wallet and all the money that goes in it
 nobody questions or likes or knows
 you but your title

while cobwebs creep in the
 corners of your gray temples
 and butter cookies stale on the tables in the back room
 where literary dignitaries drool on your suede scuffed shoes
 repeating essays they've heard and cuddling thru world news
 the signposts ahead have staples where the clues once stood
 they say "please just smile
 we don't really want to hear from you."
 you play the role quite beautiful
 and after all we elected you
 as the blind seek to see
 the dumb drunk wants to pee "Dylan is not a poet"
 you say as if you really know it.
 sometimes some folks say the wrong things
 other times people push their heads 'tween their knees
 and shove their skulls so far up their asses
 they peek wheezing from their fuzz infested bellybuttons —
 and nothing can be said to such a
 misguided oaf of a man

Hendrix Zeppelin or even Eazy-E
 combined don't get the radio play of your Bon Jovi
 but that doesn't mean that Nagel painted better
 than Vincent Van
 go back to Massachusetts and write about snow
 jobs blow jobs write about something that you know about
 like bugger snots or the nail in your big toe
 see that dirt stashed in it
 pick it out and smell
 but don't write about it unless you're gonna mailit
 back to Hellecticut as that's the place
 where boredom and ignorance dwell

meanwhile Monday menstruates
 thru soiled sheets of weekend's sin
 and finds you curled up and shivering
 listening to Maggies Farm
 believing and crying and asking
 "my god what does this mean?"

beauty queen
 jelly bean
 jimmy dean
 sausage
 au age
 ge
 e.

Tony Pierce

POETICS



"Sister Without Accessories" Pamela Wilson

Patiently Jealous

If I were a
daisy
I would let the laughing-eyed
girl pick each petal and toss
it to the wind —
"he loves me, he loves me not"
If I were
mistletoe
I would hang quietly
above her eager, childish
lips brushing against your
surprised ones
But if I were a
rose
I'd bow my head and
blacken before
I'd be given
to her
by you.

— Wendy Bayless

Death of Love

I watched him as he watched the windblown sea,
and you watched me.

His musing face aroused sensations yours
once stirred in me.

Your pleading fingers tangled with my hair —
his hands were bare.

My roaming eyes met yours to face the tears
that lingered there.

— Wendy Bayless



Untitled
Dana Freeman

Outsidin'

The only tears
I've known since childhood
are the kind that flow
from the outside in,
give their weight
to your bones

It's heaviness that floats
like the clouds.

These waters have an advantage,
they make you heavy,
make it easier to hold
yourself to the bottom,
let the sadness pass
over your head.

This isn't the way
I've heard it told most times,
but I believe you can live
your whole life
taking everything in, always in,
and the weight of in
will help you on your way,
help you settle back
into the ground.

Derek Carmean

POESY

I spoke with her on the phone and we agreed to meet at Aldo's at 6:30. By 6:07 I was already beginning to develop a serious headache. The pain started at the base of my neck and slid over my cranium like a lead cap. I sat at a table by the window and struggled to read a few paragraphs from the front page of *The Times*.

In these situations, time tends to kill me instead of vice-versa. Twenty-three minutes may as well be infinity. I became irritated with her for not having the foresight to arrive early to our date. I felt she was being heartlessly inconsiderate.

"Would you care for a cocktail while you wait, sir?"

I looked up at the eager, young waiter who wore a purple bow-tie and dark, green pants. "All right. Bring me a bottle of wine."

"Have you had a chance to look at our wine list?" he asked, gesturing to the thin brown book wedged between a vase of pink carnations and an unlit candle.

"No," I said. "Just get me something red."

The waiter nodded and moved off.

I looked at my watch. It was 6:10.

The red tip moved across the black marks — twenty minutes. I looked out the window. The sun had gone down, but there were still many people walking up and down the sidewalk. Two young couples, engrossed in a heated conversation, passed by the window. One of the women clasped a wrinkled program in a tight, velvet-gloved fist. I watched their lips move, but couldn't hear what they were saying. I didn't want to hear what they were saying. They entered the restaurant and my waiter led them to the table adjacent to mine.

"I watched their lips move but couldn't hear what they were saying. I didn't want to hear what they were saying."

"I thought Johnny was fabulous," said the woman with the black velvet gloves. "Your bias is cute, dear," said her husband as he helped remove her coat. "But if you want the honest truth, Johnny is one of the worst actors I've ever seen."

He wiped an embroidered handkerchief over his bald, sweaty head.

"Oh, he wasn't that bad," said the other woman, as she maneuvered her large frame around the table. "I liked the scene he did at the fountain. That was classic."

"It could hardly be called

classic," said the woman's husband. He was already sitting in his chair. His stomach was so big it touched the edge of the table even though he was leaning back. "Let's hurry up and order. I'm starving to death."

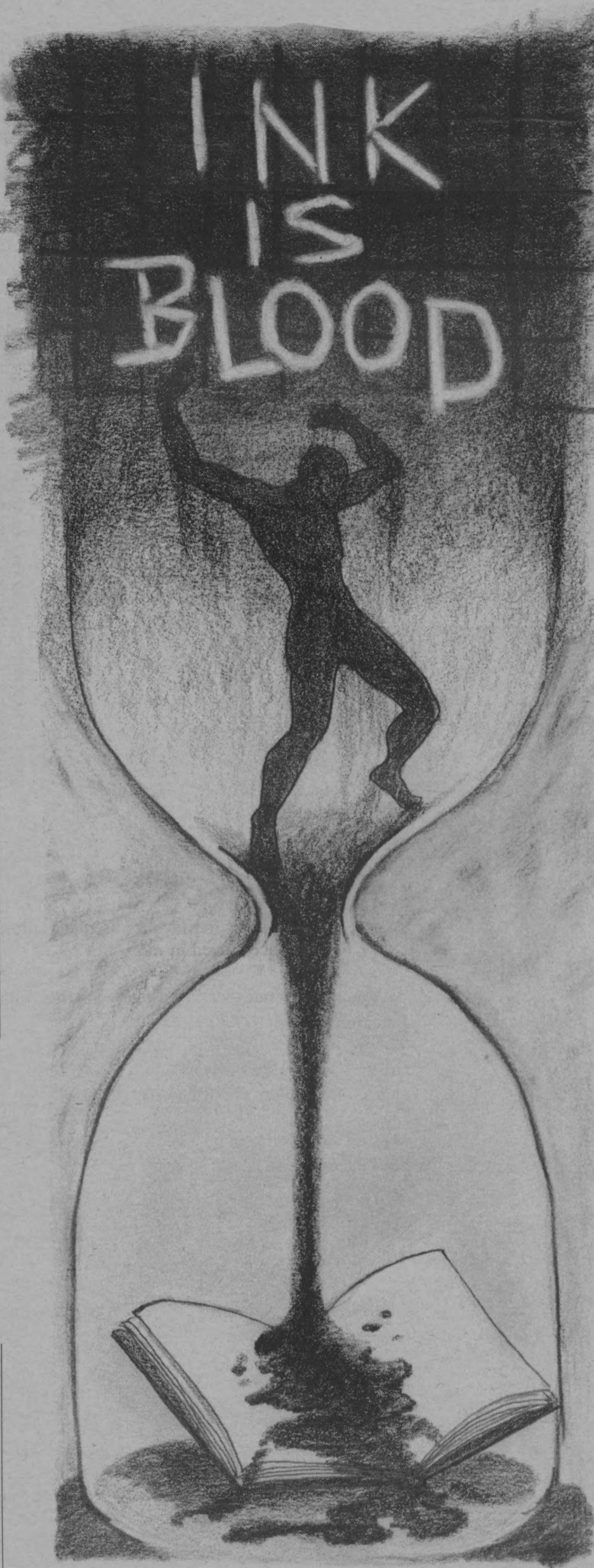
"You men," said his wife. "You never understand anything but food."

I looked at my watch. It was 6:14 — sixteen minutes.

I stood up from my chair and walked toward the men's room. Once inside, I entered a stall and sat down on the toilet seat without dropping my pants. Painted in red on the stall door was a message:

INK IS BLOOD
And books are axes.

She used to write children's books for a living.



By Steve Allen

Literary imbeciles often asked her what age group she wrote for and she would tell them that she didn't write for age groups, she wrote for people. Once, when we were alone, she told me that she wrote for anyone damned with the ability to see things for the first time.

I had no idea know what she meant by this. My watch said it was 6:17 — thirteen minutes.

I left the stall and walked back to my table. My waiter had left a bottle of wine with two glasses. I filled both. The two couples next to me were making a lot of noise. The woman with the black gloves was on the brink of tears.

"You don't know anything about Johnny," she said to her husband.

"I know quite a bit about Johnny, Claire," he said. Perspiration trickled down his forehead.

He mopped it up with his handkerchief. "I know he's a bum and a loser and I know he still has the hots for you."

"That's ridiculous, Al," said the other man as he buttered a slice of sourdough.

"Listen to your fat friend, Al," said Claire. She began to cry.

"Don't talk about my husband like that," said the other woman. "I know you're upset, but he's only trying to help. You don't need to insult him."

The fat man pulled the slice of bread into two pieces and stuffed one half into his mouth.

"Oh please, Judy," said Claire. "I'm only telling the truth. Why do you think we have him play Santa Claus every Christmas for the kids?"

"He's just got big bones," said Judy. "Isn't that right, Frank?"

"Mmph," said Frank. His mouth was clogged with

"Listen to your fat friend, Al," said Claire. She began to cry."

bread.

"Yeah, right," chuckled Al, who had just stopped sweating. "Big bones, that's a good one."

Frank swallowed his cud.

"What do you mean, Al? What are you trying to say?"

"Oh nothing, Frank," said Al. "Don't get defensive. We're just joking around."

I looked at my watch.

6:23 — seven minutes.

Where was she? My headache was getting worse. The pain moved to my forehead and was slowly sinking down between my eyes.

I sipped the wine — frequently. Soon my glass was empty and I filled it up again. The buzz didn't cure my headache. It made it worse.

I wanted to move to another table, or maybe another restaurant. The place where I was sitting didn't satisfy me. I couldn't stand being by myself for another second, and I mean that literally.

My watch said that it was 6:27 — three more minutes.

If anybody could help me it would be her. She had an instinct for this kind of thing. But she might just make things worse. The plan to meet after all these years was not a practical one. The idea of seeing her again both tortured and pleased me.

I finished off the wine and refilled my glass with the remainder of the bottle. When that, too, was gone, I drank her glass.

I looked at my watch.

6:31.

After pulling a twenty-dollar bill out of my pocket

and setting it down on the table, I stood up and moved toward the exit. As I passed the four-some, one of the women spoke.

"Look at that man. I think he's about to be sick."

She was right. I walked quickly out the door and threw up on the sidewalk in front of the restaurant window. When I looked up, Judy, Claire, Al and Frank were staring right at me. I took off my watch and handed it to a young boy who was standing silently next to me. He frowned at me and then at the watch.

"Thanks, mister," he said.

"You're welcome, kid. Enjoy it." I headed down the street to find my car. My headache seemed to be disappearing.

SWAT

SHORT FICTION

Steve Allen is a senior majoring in creative writing. Franz Kafka and Ring Lardner are among his favorite authors. Allen calls *"Ink is Blood"* a story about "isolation and neurosis."

Art by Stacey Teas



Untitled Tim La Douce

Moved

Just moved, a month ago, unmoved
in the new/old place, remembering
rooms and visitors.
How little rooms hold, unlive in
like picked at meals,
untouched by me, my visitors,
talking carefully, while the sky goes black
and engines grinding outside.

But this room idea of an inside place,
decorated, hung with certain things,
where I stay or when I leave.
Once, not to return but to go to
another new/old room, again to
have visitors, careful always
while the rooms, newly painted and hung,
witness the repetition.

Blind, deaf boxes in time,
passed through, but better inside,
but I must go out, somewhere,
to another room, a visitor,
staying a while, to while away
inside a room, looking out.

J.D.



Jedediah Dougherty



Victimless Crime

I can fuck you
Because I don't care.
I can use you
And dig my nails into your
Aching flesh
Lick the dew off your
Tattered morning petals
That I shred the night before.
I am so alive
With your tongue in my throat
And your hand
Between my legs
And you are faceless
For these moments
And we subside to nectar
And you look lovely
And I want only to
Taste you
And make you
Screamrise wilt
Torture you
Inhale your pleasant agony
Ingest the time we created in our time.

Wash it down with rain
And the gritty aftertaste of
Lemonade.

Sara Seinberg

Untitled

I distrust and abhor the
Notion of Power.
I cower from death as it laughs through the door,
And I feel at the hour comes hands wrought with all.

George Charles



Jedediah Dougherty

DELTA BLUES

Seven days we swam that slatted beach till corduroy
seemed softly old and sighed as dust flew dry

Each night we came ashore where lilies bloomed, the ferry
trolled the river searching, always searching stubbornly

We huddled in the dark. Their lights became a worry
and we swatted at the gnats, no fires for us for them to spy

We couldn't leave. They further searched. Our fancy
turned to home cooked meals; dry socks began to occupy

our dreams as in the reeds we sheltered. Still and clean
were words gone past as now the shelling started. Access

to all the civil world was now undone and we were captain
to our thoughts no more. Our very dreams were villains

if we tried to sleep the days. At dusk we came a study
as we watched the darkening sky and still the lilies vicious

by the ferry as we swam to beaches past. Time had no mean
no noon, no plot. We saw the end. We met the fall.

— M.A. Rasmussen

BreakAway

Cellophane Sally spreads her skin on the floor
Unlocks her window — bolts up her door

Turns off the light — peels back her eyes
Extends to the ceiling for diced paper pies

Coiled in the corner her shredded sweat flies
While rainbows of tissue wipe tear-soiled skies

Tangled in tree tops shriveled leaves blow
A ride a — glide on a moon beams glow

by The Lull

The Washer-Woman

It is a hook in the sky
to catch the souls as
they fly upward
seeking the stars.

Wearily
the washer-woman waits
with her tub of stars,
and fishes darting to and fro,
to catch them with silver
moonlight.
She waits
to wash their dusty scales
and throw them to heaven.

It is a hook in the sky
and a washer-woman
sitting above the stars.

Mark Pollock

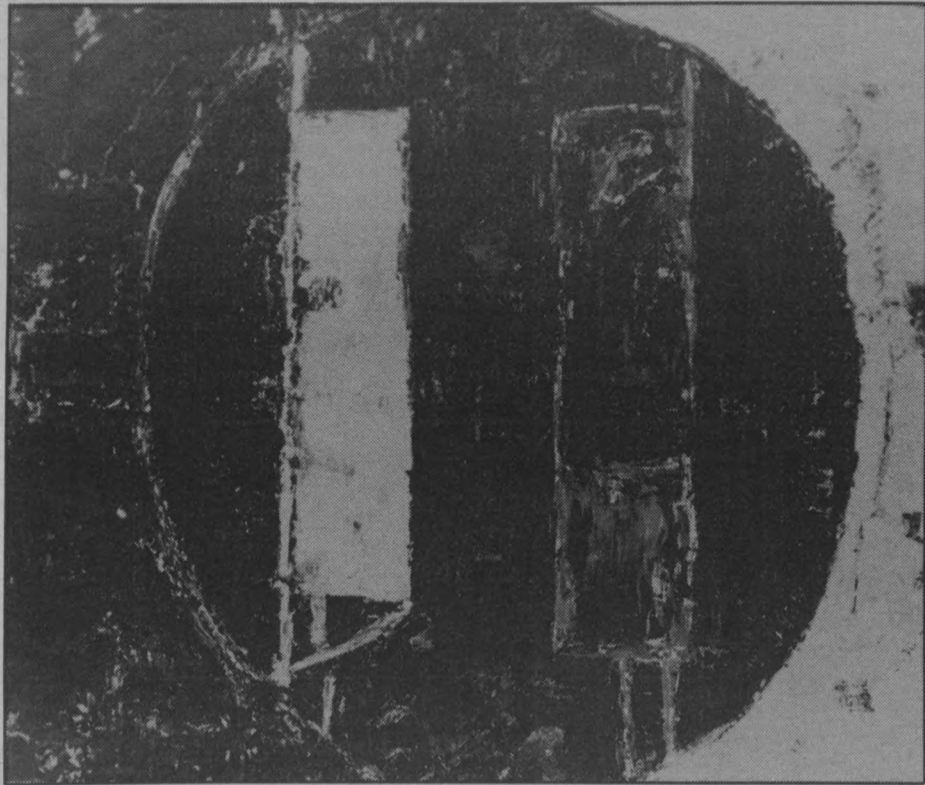
POETRY

PROSODY

Fruit Cocktail

bruises on the fruit
scars of purpleblue
soft inside
gushy
wonder if
fruit hurts
too

Sara Seinberg



"Knowledge" John Bower

Wise Old Lube

Most of 'em let me drip from their engines
then just walk right past me.
If only they would look down at me
lying on the pavement,
my colors swirling into each other,
I'd show them mystery,
wet and shiny in the sun.

—Traci Alane Rossman



Jedediah Dougherty

Smiler

As a kiss-ass bastard
He's rarely alone
In viciousness, vile, demure.
As a cover-up salesman of cheapness and fraud
His bargains are gleaming for fools.
As master of destiny of all his young fate,
He's scheming to get the best deal.
As clawing means nothing to claws like he owns,
He's scratching for fleas in his fur.
And scratching and biting his word to the wind,
For promises don't hold the law.
As tools are existing to twist the screw true,
Then so does he smile and grab.

— George Charles



Child in the Desert

by David Katz

I was sitting in a coffee shop when I saw a man that looked a lot like my father. He was sitting at the counter sipping some tea. He was a big man, like my father. He had big hands like my father did. He was sitting at the counter and sipping tea and reading a newspaper. He didn't look at me but I know he felt me watching him. I know he was watching me too, but he didn't look around. They never do.

I sat in the park today and smoked my cigarettes. I like smoking cigarettes, it makes me feel better. I like watching the smoke blow out of my mouth and circle around in the air. Sometimes people come by and sit on the bench and eat lunch. I like to watch the people in the park. I pretend that I'm talking with them.

They say, "Hello, please join us for lunch." They look all dressed up in nice work clothes and I'm just in sweats and my T-shirt but I fit right in. I say, "Hello, my name is Daniel. I'm a big boy." They like me. That's what I pretend.

But sometimes I don't pretend. Sometimes I can tell that they are talking about me. They don't point or laugh, but their eyes move in my direction and I can feel them on me. I know that sometimes they can read my mind and that they know I'm having bad thoughts.

The angels started talking to me again last night. While I was dreaming, they came and they spoke to me. I always sleep deeply when the angels are about to come. I dream of a big white light and lots of figures twirling around me. They make me feel safe. They tell me special things. Last night they came to me and said, "Daniel?"

In my dream I reached out to touch one, but it moved away from my hand. I said, "Yes?"

They danced around me in the light. They said, "You're a big boy, right Daniel?"

"Yes."
"Be careful of the demons, Daniel, they like big boys."

The light started to dim and I knew they were going away. I screamed because I didn't want them to go. I wanted them to stay and talk to me some more. I wanted them to keep the demons away. Then I woke up and I was screaming. I don't like it when the angels come and talk to me at night. But they're better than the demons.

I have to be careful sometimes. I walk down

the street and I know that people are out watching me. The angels tell me that they're all working for the demons. The demons pay them lots of money to watch me. I have to be real careful.

I found a bug behind my mirror today while I was shaving. I flushed it down the toilet. I pictured the FBI men sitting in their van across the street from my house, hunched over their dials clutching headsets to their ears. All they can hear is the flushing sound of water and the drop drip drip of the sewer. I laughed when I pictured this. But I have to be careful. If I'm not careful, I know that at night the demons will come for me in my dreams and I get scared.

I dream that I'm walking in the desert and

"The woman kept grinning. Her rotted teeth wanted to latch on to me and grind me up. The screams and howls got louder and louder and the demons circled around me."

there's no one around for miles. The wind is howling in my ears and the dust is blowing in my eyes. I'm thirsty but there's no water, just wind and dust. I'm screaming but no one hears me. Then I know I should stop screaming. I know I should stop making any noise and hunch down in the sand and bury myself because the demons heard me and they're coming. I trip and fall to my knees. I'm crying so hard now and the tears are falling on to the sand and the sand sucks them up because the sand is more thirsty than I am. I'm crawling in the sand and kicking up the dust behind me and I know I should lie still because the demons can see the dust being kicked up. My heart is beating very fast and I can't breathe and then I hear the howling start. The demons always howl before they come. They twirl and twirl around me in the air and reach out to touch me and I scream every time they touch me because it hurts so bad. But worse than the demons touching me, worse than their howling, is what they say to me.

"Daniel?" they say. I can't talk so I just cover my head with my hands and try not to make noise but they never go away. They just never go away.

"Daniel?" they growl. I have to answer.

"Yes?"

"You're a big boy, right Daniel?"

"Yes."

"Do you know what happens to big boys, Daniel?"

"No," I'm crying now. I can't help it. It hurts so bad and they are going to say bad things to me and I can't stop them.

"Daddy's coming for you, Daniel. He knows you've been having bad thoughts and he wants to talk to you about them."

I don't want Daddy to come and talk to me. I don't like it when Daddy comes and talks to me.

I went to the park again today. It was a nice day. I like sitting in the park and smoking my cigarettes and watching people. Except today was weird. I never thought the angels would speak to me in the daylight but they came to me today. They told me that I had to stop washing myself. I have to stop washing because that's how I can win the war against the demons. I also have to stop taking my pills because they make me weak. I have to keep my power to stand up against the demons. I talked to the angels for a long time. I sat in the park under the trees and talked to them. I never worry about anybody reading my thoughts when I'm talking to the angels because they protect me.

Then I went to the coffee shop. I was hungry and I had enough money for a roast beef sandwich and a cup of soup. I went in and the waitress recognized me.

"Hello, Daniel," she said. She was real pretty and real nice.

"Hello, Susan," I said back.

"You look like you're in a good mood today, Daniel." She pointed to a table where I could sit. I smiled, "Yeah, I feel real good today."

I sat down and Susan brought me the menu but I already knew what I wanted to order. I told Susan about the roast beef sandwich and the cup of soup and she said it would be coming right up.

I pulled out a cigarette and started to light it when I heard someone cough at the counter. I looked up and saw this woman staring at me and at the cigarette in my hand. Her eyes moved from my face to my cigarette and back to my face again. I felt like I couldn't move. I started to shake, I wanted to smoke real bad but I knew that the woman could read my mind and she knew that I had been having bad thoughts. I wanted to get away from her. She just kept staring at me while my cigarette burned and burned and burned. The smoke drifted up into the fans on the ceiling and started twirling around. It twirled and twirled and I thought of my dream last night. My dream where the demons twirled and twirled around me and I started to hear their howling way off. They were coming for me right now. The woman was smiling now, a big grin that seemed to stretch from one side of her face to the other. I saw how her teeth were all rotten and yellow. She looked like she wanted to swallow me whole, to eat me up. Her smile kept getting wider and I could hear voices in the background getting louder, yelling, arguing. The howling was getting closer to me and I looked out the window and saw the FBI van pull up to the spotlight outside of the coffee shop. I could hear them laughing inside the van, with their headsets pulled close to their ears, listening to the howling. They were laughing and saying, "Ooooh, Daniel. You're going to get it now."

I couldn't move. I sat there shaking and listening to the howling get closer. The woman kept grinning. Her rotted teeth wanted to latch on to me and grind me up. The screams and howls got louder and louder and the demons circled all around me. They started touching me. My hand was on fire and they were screaming at me. I covered my ears and stumbled out of my seat, crying, "No no no no!" I stood there in the middle of

the restaurant trying to block out everything and suddenly realizing that it had become completely silent. I looked down and saw the butt of my cigarette red and smoking on the ground. The demons had stopped howling. I looked outside and the FBI van was gone. I looked to the counter and the woman was gone. I looked around and everyone was staring at me. Then Susan came up to me and asked me if I something was the matter. I told her I had to go.

I went to the closet that night and looked underneath the floorboards for the gun my father had given me when I was small. He took me out hunting with him and we went to Big Boulder. We were out in the middle of the desert and it got cold at night so we slept close together because we needed the warmth. We just had one tent and when we had finished setting up camp, we made a fire and sat together and talked. Then he said, "Daniel?"

See CHILD, p.11A

SWAT

SHORT FICTION

Dave Katz, a sophomore English major, cites Stephen King and Clive Barker as two of his favorite authors. Though he currently works on computers for extra money, Katz hopes to some day make writing his profession.

Art by Pat Stull



ANGEL OF DEATH

Hollow-fanged child
of a marriage 'tween cloaked doom
and the betrothed mother night
... The blood-fire quickens
and spreads into a thousand
pulsating crimson drops
The hunger within is
enveloped with desire
only to be left with nonsatiation
What child is this?
Ancestry rejects the bastard wanderer
who feeds on the night
with visceral intent
He comes back with a greedy look in his eyes
which ought to have alarmed her but did not
For he embraces her insanity,
her evil blackness,
her scent of death and damnation
her eternal loneliness ...
The true vampire.

— Heidi Anspaugh

Swim

My direction is all out of keker
My ears filling up with water
Sinking down in the pool

I heard some crashing, some smashing
And a shiver crawled up my spine that was cool

Swim motherfucker swim

Pat Stull

May 23, 1990

He smiled at me and it was
Like indigo smooches and
My body felt real wonderful
Lying in the dark, everything
Shaded in fuzzy purplishes
Sort of spinny and all happy
Like icicles in the sun or
Warm windiness over a cold still
And I slept like kindergarten
Naps on my little lion mat
And now I just want to go play
In muddy arenas of fun.

Sara Seinberg

Pinetubo's Love

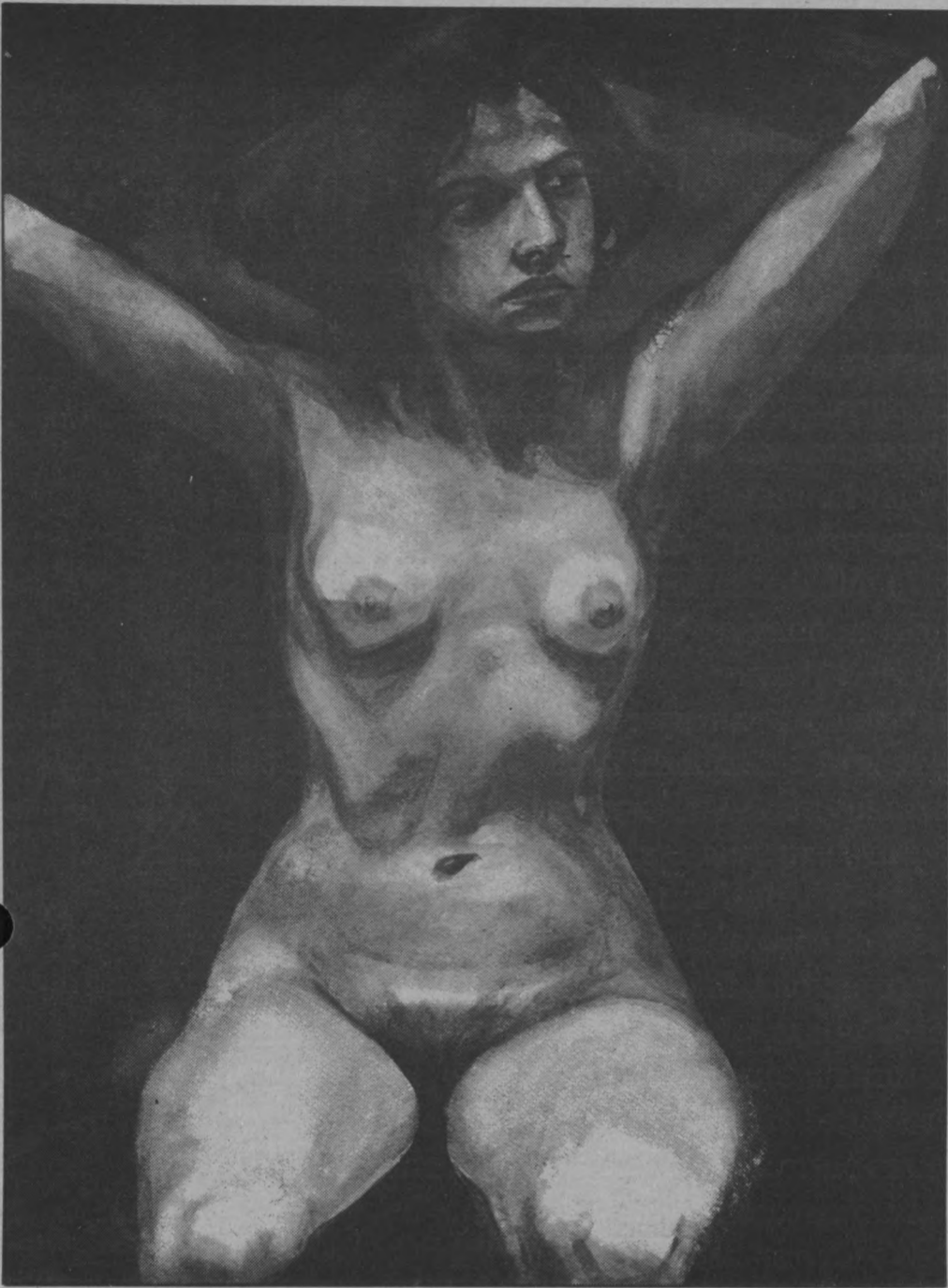
Sitting with you, on ruby sunset waterline
I remember the Times headline:
How we failed as lovers, and how
God billowed in the Philippines -- fire
And burning ash-winds tumbled down the mountain
Singeing so many lives to dust, to souls
Violent gales sweeping
That swirled red, screaming to the sun
Up, up ...
calmer
Shuddering groans
Drifting

Only a whisper, slowly
At night, or in glowing twilight
Until the giant cloud melts in the Western sky
And orange fingers curl, trickle into deep blue
To bathe our quiet hearts now.
Venus flits, like a bat in the swaying branches
So drink
Drink the ruby red, for we are a generation
Of failed lovers.

— By Don Frances

"Elvis" Bob Mask





Debbie Urlick

Raw #1

I wonder when they play
 tennis in the Boston rain
 if they like to lick their ice creams right after
 or if they are having too much fun to think about it.
 I know all about that Boston rain;
 it rejected my fuzzy grey jacket —
 "Too light," it said,
 so my thoughts ran shivering away.

— Traci Alane Rossman

BLACK BUG

of all his works
 the one he favored most
 was that of the black bug
 found at the dime store one day
 as he sat reading in hushed tones
 while looking into the pale mirror
 that went right to the heart
 he sat straight up gasping
 and clutching his lesser opus
 while words and phrases crystalized off the pages
 and took flight into the blue
 or scurried under rocks and into crevices
 where retrieval was impossible
 he grabbed for them
 snatched wildly and clawed
 at the polished surface
 but there was no key
 only a dim silence
 erie in its glaze
 and he knew for sure
 that his heart had been bugged
 life was never the same
 after that

— M.A. Rasmussen

rejlited

For a second, I thought that life
 Was really going to be good
 All of that food, and the air too
 That I have breathed and eaten
 Wasn't going to be looked back upon
 As a waste.
 But the sigh of relief that accompanies reassurance
 Abruptly halted like an unfinished song

CHILD

Continued from p.9A

And I said, "Yes."
 "It's been a good day, huh?"
 "Yeah."
 "Ready for bed?"
 "Yes, Daddy."

But I knew that my father wasn't really tired. He was just saying that. He always said that. He said, "I love you, Daniel. Go to sleep and tomorrow I'll have a special surprise for you."

But he didn't let me sleep very well.

The next day he gave me my very own gun and we went hunting together. I even shot a rabbit. "Wow," my father said, "that was a pretty good shot." I felt really good. We were hunting for a long time and I got really tired. I started thinking about the night before and felt bad. Once, when he

was in front of me, looking out on the horizon for any signs of movement, I brought the gun up behind his head. "Pow," I whispered. Then he turned around and pointed to another rabbit still on the sand a couple yards ahead. He pointed his rifle and shot it. "Wow," I said, "that was a pretty good shot." I was really proud of my father then.

I took the gun out of the closet and looked at it. I tried to clean it regularly and keep it polished and nice looking. It was a good gun. The angels had told me that I shouldn't wash and that not washing would protect me from the demons. The demons had come today and they had almost got me. I was scared and I thought that I would need the gun soon. I slept with it under my pillow.

I had the desert dream again last night. "Daddy's coming for you," the demons howled and I screamed and screamed and woke up screaming.

I went back to the coffee shop the next day. I didn't shower because the angels told me not to. I walked in and Susan came up to me. She wrinkled her nose for a moment before she spoke, "How are you today, Daniel?"

"Just fine, Susan, could I please have a table and some of that roast beef sandwich and soup."

"Sure, Daniel," she smiled but she had a strange look in her eyes. She smiled at me but it was a slim smile that didn't show any teeth.

She sat me over by the bathrooms in the back of the restaurant, where no one else was sitting. I knew then that I was not safe there. I was nervous. I felt for the gun in my pocket and it was cold beneath my fingertips.

I was sitting and eating my roast beef sandwich when the man that looked like my father walked in. I just sat there, eating

my sandwich and watching him. He ignored me and read a paper. Susan went up and talked with him. The fan whirled on above my head and the murmur of the people talking in the restaurant continued in the background but all I saw was him, and all I felt was the grip of the gun in my pocket. My hand was squeezing it then letting it go. My breathing was slow and regular.

He sat there, reading the paper, ignoring me, but I knew that he saw me. Susan came a little while later with a cup of coffee. He drank it slowly, both hands around the cup. My stomach was clenched tight and I couldn't finish my sandwich.

Putting down his newspaper, the man got up from the counter. He stood there for a moment, adjusting his shirt and then turned to face me. I felt dizzy. He began to walk slowly towards me, first looking me straight in the eyes, then looking away.

Jason was having a dream that was so good his mind hid it from him in the morning. In it there was sunshine, sweet smells, and magic — and things that made his chest swell with an inexplicable sense of contentment. It was a blissful stupor that he never seemed to experience while awake. It only happened in dreams he could never remember. No matter how splendid or pure they were, they always dissipated into forgetfulness like sea-bound rain clouds slowly breaking apart over the horizon, out of view.

This seemed cruel. But for the moment, still floating in a deep sleep, Jason knew what it was that made him happy.

"Jase honey," a garbled voice rudely cut the dream off in its stride causing it to vanish like a spooked lantern genie.

"Honey, get up. You gotta move your car." The voice seemed quietly annoyed, half asleep. "That girl's at the door. You must have blocked her in again."

With this Jason awoke. Kim had already turned over to resume sleeping and a slow even knocking penetrated his ears. A chain of "Oh Gods" ran through his head as he opened his eyes and realized he'd done it again.

"Oh shit," he mumbled. Then to himself he thought, "She's here." This was the fourth time in a row Jason had come home late to Kim, his live-in girlfriend and parked behind the cloud-blue toyota belonging to the girl next door. It wasn't so much that he meant to block her in, but that there weren't many parking spaces at 2 in the morning. There was only one thin, potted drive between the two duplexes where he lived. He had no choice.

Then there was Jason's neighbor. Like his forgotten dreams, she had brought a tiny refreshing element of excitement to his days without Jason even realizing it. In fact, over the past three mornings a small mysterious part of Jason's brain had started anticipating his neighbor's wake up calls. Like Pavlov's dog, Jason was learning what to do to get his meat-powder biscuit without understanding he was part of a grander experiment.

Like so many, Jason conducted an amazingly large portion of his life at the behest of drives and ideas of which he was consciously ignorant.

"Shit," he hissed softly as he clumsily struggled to throw on the very same pair of shorts he had worn to move his car the three previous mornings.

"Shhhh!" Kim announced from the bed. "Come on honey, please be quiet. I have to get a lot of sleep."

"Sorry," Jason replied with a dutifully hurt tone. Having put on shorts, Jason ran to the mirror in a misguided attempt to style his matted locks. He wasn't sure why.

"Shit," he said, as he knocked over Kim's giant container of "Spritz" making a bouncing crash. It was still dark in the little bedroom/bathroom suite where he slept with Kim every night. To dark to function, Jason decided.

"Honey, pleeeese!" The steady knocking at the front door continued patiently.

"Shit," he mumbled again as he threw a baseball cap over his tumbleweed of hair and rushed from the bedroom.

A combination of puffy sleepiness and nerves had his heart beating unevenly as he opened the door. With the purple-red glow of the pre-dawn sky behind her, his neighbor was a tall faceless silhouette framed by the door and blurred by maladjusted eyes. "Hi ... hi," he fumbled squinting out at the figure of a brown haired woman.

Wake Up Call

— by Dylan Callaghan —

"I'm really sorry, I got home late. I was working over at the paper and I ..."

"It's alright," the figure replied. Her voice didn't shatter the silent morning like other noises. Instead it blended delicately with it. The neighbor had a mane of red-brown hair, large watery eyes and what seemed like a permanent fleeing grin.

"I'm Jason by the way," Jason announced, extending his hand as if to make a long-awaited introduction. "I figured I might as well tell you my name since we're getting to see so much of each other these days," he chuckled gruffly. She just grinned on and took his hand.

"I'm Jenny," she replied as she turned toward the stairs.

"Yeah, listen I'm real sorry that I keep doing this. I've been working on this story and it's been kinda slow going. I've been coming back late and there's never any parking, you know?"

It was true, Jason had been working on a story at the newspaper office where he worked. He was a writer. It was fiction — a short story. Very short. In fact, so far it was a story with no words. Only fleeting ideas and concepts over which Jason had no control. Mostly Jason had been smoking cigarettes, talking about rock and roll and walking around the office. Jason had been doing a lot of walking around the office, but not so much writing. Lately, it seemed, Jason had been in the midst of a personal winter of discontent. He just wasn't sure what he was doing anymore. No idea, really.

Yet at the moment Jason still felt flush with the buzz of a dream he was having only moments ago. As he continued down the stairs behind his neighbor, he wished he could remember what was so great about that dream.

"It is pretty terrible," Jenny said. "What?" Jason replied urgently, filling with panic. What did she mean by that? And why was she grinning?

"The parking here. There's not enough space."

With that the two separated, walking to their respective cars in a silence that disturbed Jason

for reasons he could not understand.

He then watched his neighbor walking away. Why was she so damned calm about being blocked in four times in a row? What was going on with that smirky grin of hers? Why in the Hell did she get up at the crack of dawn every morning? All questions which suddenly presented themselves as a great matter of concern for Jason. He wanted some answers.

"You ever have dreams?" he blurted suddenly into the still purple air, almost shocked by the sound of his own voice.

"Yes, Jason. I think we all do," the neighbor named Jenny answered, turning. Now the grin was a full smile.

"No, I mean, I know, but I was just dreaming and, well ... I guess that's why I'm so foggy. I'm sorry, haven't quite woken up yet." Jenny smirked and looked down at her door lock. Jason took the opportunity to look at her again. There was something very troubling about her image. It was familiar. Weirdly kind. He didn't know her in the least and yet felt an overwhelming sense that he could confide in her his wildest imaginings. He was sure he knew her but he couldn't remember how or why. Damn it, he had questions.

"So, Jenny, do you ever have a great dream that you can't remember? Why do you think it is that the good dreams, the ones that are filled with all the things that make you happy, are the ones you can never remember? For the last few nights I have had the most spectacular dreams. You know big energy dreams about everything you secretly hope for, no matter how fantastic."

"I don't know if that's true," Jenny interrupted with a calm, knowing assertiveness that was becoming more and more apparent.

"What?" "I'm not sure that everyone forgets the good dreams."

"No? You?" "I usually remember the good ones. Those are the ones I don't forget."

"Really? How?" Jenny grinned real big. "I don't know. I don't try really. I just go with them. I just sit back and smile and they come to you I guess."

"I don't think I can do that. I've tried ..."

"Look, just don't think about things so much. Just do things instead. Don't think, just do."

What Jason might normally have considered the ramblings of another co-ed hippy guru, now appeared as the most brilliant truth facing his existence. For several moments the two simply stood in the drive, with the sun getting brighter by the second, facing each other with fifteen feet between them and their car keys dangling from their hands. She started chuckling softly to break the dead air.

"Not thinking is what's gotten me in trouble with you, though. I mean you must ..."

"You're not in trouble with me, Jason."

"This will sound odd but, do I know you from somewhere. Am I still dreaming or have we talked before?"

"Nope, I don't think so. Listen I gotta get out of here or I'll be late."

The car seat was chilling on Jason's shirtless skin. As he sat in the street watching Jenny pull out, he mulled over her last comment. Watching her cloud-blue toyota sputter into the horizon, Jason still wanted to believe she was wrong. She doesn't think so?, he thought.

Pulling his car into Jenny's vacant space, Jason's face curled with a grin as he decided she was probably right. He wouldn't think so anymore he decided.

SWAT

SHORT FICTION

Dylan Callaghan, a graduating senior majoring in English, names John Prine and Seth Morgan as two strong contemporary influences. Callaghan is the creator and editor of S.W.A.T.

Art by Stacey Teas

