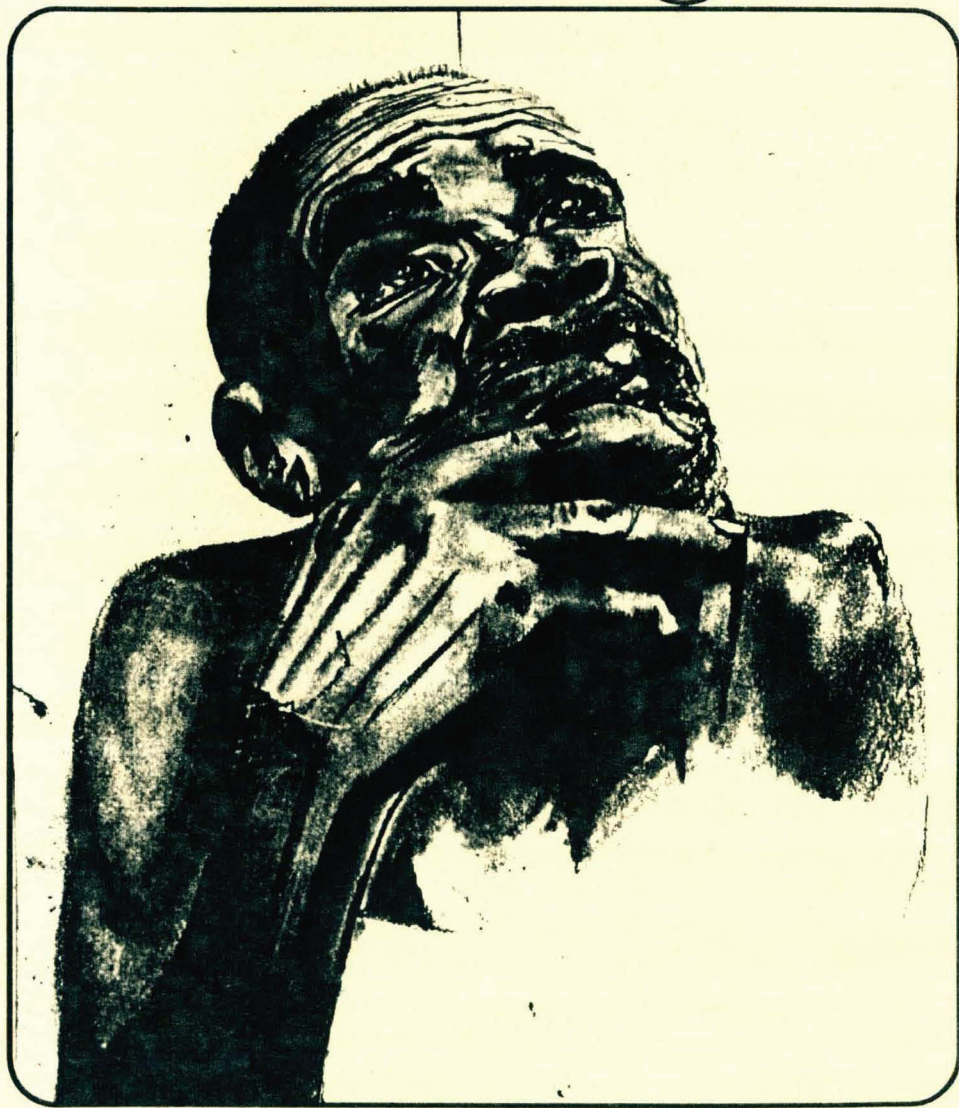


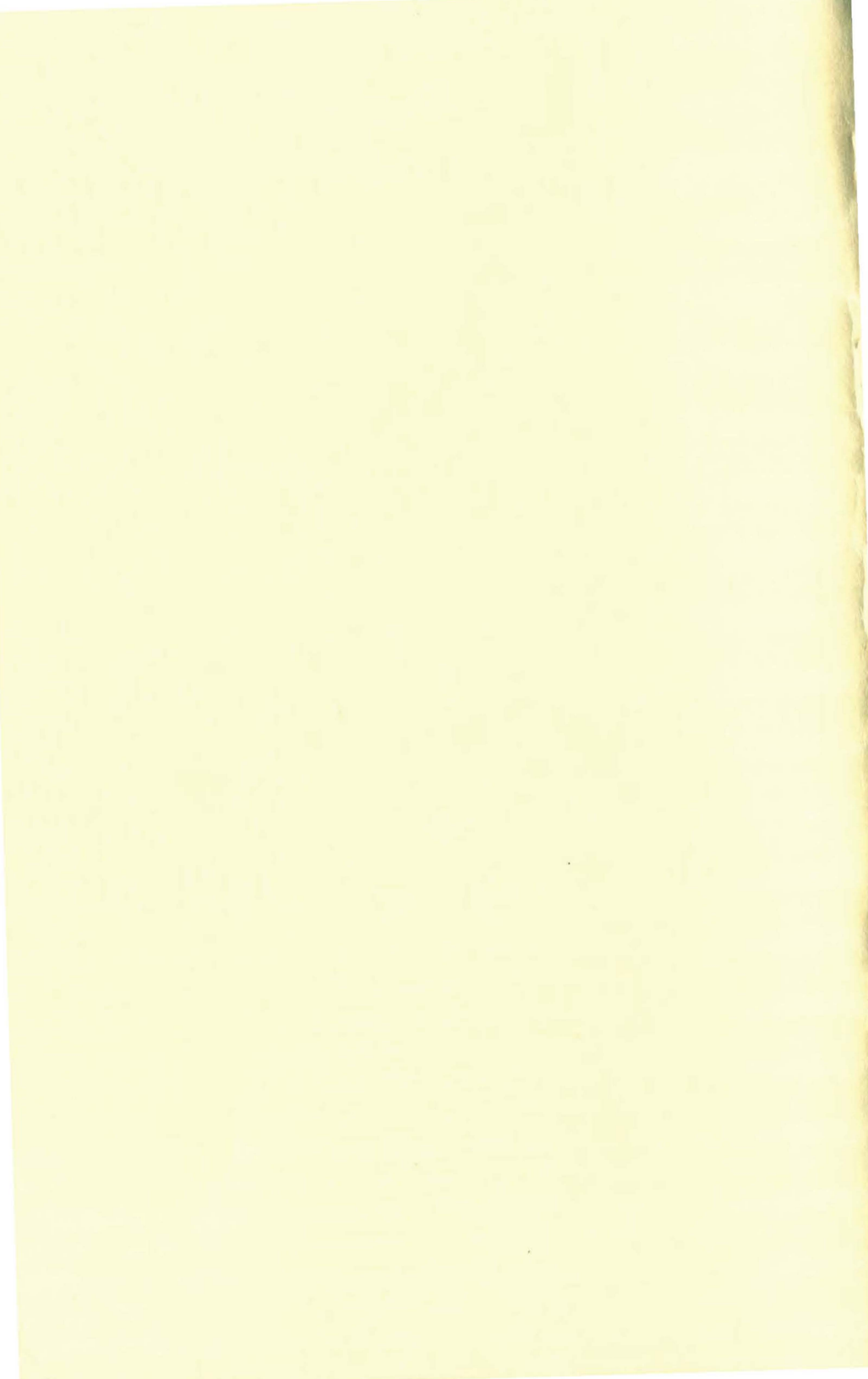
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THE *Roaring* Muse



Literary Arts Magazine

Vol. 1 Issue 1 97
WINTER



The *Roaring* Muse

Literary Art Magazine

*We commit ourselves
to the devotion of
the creative elements,
to sing our songs with full
accord to the music of our minds.
In the imagination and wonder
of the muses,
We receive the burning torch of
passion, laughter and song,
wishing only to pass it
onward...*

Vol. 1 Issue 1
Winter 1997



by Mike Lenz

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The Sweet Life-Breath of a Poem

Beginning with a thought or a tiny notion
A verse makes its way to its meaning blind.
It lingers and floats on the air of emotion
For a poem is a kiss of the mind.

-Tim Veddar

Native Flute

Trill me, ... calm me into
Deeper reflections of our
United HOMELAND.
Loney, wispy air --
Calling all to join our
Breaths with the Breather.
EERIE yet transfixing
Spirit sounds: Eagle calls,
Looney interludes --
Harkening toward the
Old/New day.

-Dan Ondrich-Batson



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Standing on the Edge

standing
entranced
on realities
precipice
illusions
abound
and
surround
and
confront
move
back
from
the
edge
lest
the wind
blow
you
over
and
you
fall
down
nothing
to





catch
you
falling
ever
onward
all
sense
of
direction
lost
reality
gone
into
the
mist

-Daniel Dean



Some Haiku

The filling station
in neon light. You making
me truly holy.

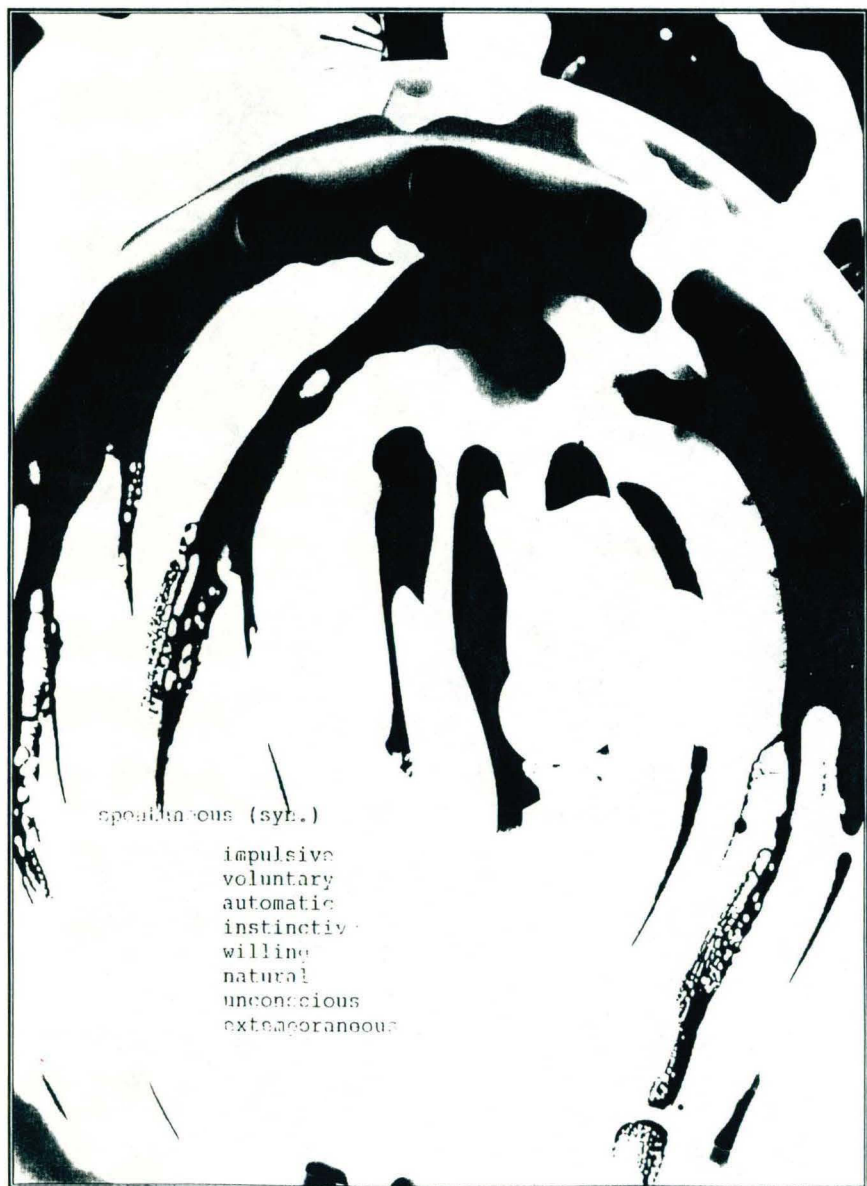
Dublin is nowhere
Zen St. Martin— I wearing
my grandfather's yarn.

Chalk full of seance
East is West is Sky is Green
willows weep with me.

I lean on a tree
— the sky swallows my thinking —
the tree rests with me.

-Mike Lenz





spontaneous (syn.)

impulsive
voluntary
automatic
instinctive
willing
natural
unconscious
extemporaneous

by Stu Mullenberg



why more men should proofread

what weakness offers
your strength should learn to refuse
lies are a common enough thing
you believed them first

and that was up to you so there.

my fault in this underlined
because you, with the magic marker in your head
forgot to highlight my sincere apology

so there.

-Mindy Zapp

Auburn Dreams

My heart is fighting to be heard
Overcome by the passionate breath
Never before this timeless day
I have I ever felt her rays of sun
I dipped my foot into a cloud
As my cold bitter hands melted on her back
And were met gently by hair of silk
I hours I stared at her closed eyes
And had auburn dreams

-Jon Thorston





It's a New Cold

It's a new cold.
on cobble stones,
a film of salt
dried in a puddle
patterns like milk
across a table.

Dark red
from a spotlight
tints a man,
he steps a beat
of scuffs and drags
without rhythm.

Across the street
a chin brushes
against a scarf,
and steaming breath
rolls in curls
around the bus stop.

Oh, she rocks
boot to boot
so slow!
Oh, holds a baby
who's breath
rises around her face.



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There's a shoe,
(one might say
it's on my foot)
that seems to be
stirring the sand
on the sidewalk.

-Jamie Ness

Dreams

Vivid and intricate:
of birth of life,
the journey of time,
the waters of happiness.
Never let me wake.
Drift away
to the land where dreams are king
and laughter pours from the queen like maple syrup.
The princess plays amongst the bramble bushes
Dodging the prickly thorns.
She has disappeared.
Where can she be?
"This is a nightmare!" cries the king.
Please let me wake.

-Anonymous





Despair

In thick lidded early mourning blues,
sunk into the bottom bottle gruel.

Head in chains, nodding the daily grazing routine
of decaffeinated monotony and muted roars.
Grave emotions of twisting mania and turnstile descent.

Ahhh the Fortune,
strapped into talk show memoirs and mega-mall shell-shock,
with whirl-wind shots of Razor, blaring fire.

Bitter bottles downed
in Throbbing undulations of cranked court music,
jagged plunging notes, pale background scream.

Swift jaunts into swirling, sordid fuck you smiles,
cast uneasy in the morbid mess of the of the evening news.
Though the seams are breaking,
the bitter cast of phantom nightmares
rein in the dark- bringing in the glared light and letters.

Ohhh, the grand-old sport
of paper jockeys and riders of the pen,
out onto the horizon in dancing destitution.

Mayhem jaunts of gray
in exploding riots of black sentiments,
wasted cerulean deep, in morning glory aftermath,
pouring sweat with tears, the tempest fury.

Desires falling empty to the white wall storm.
The blank Nausea, the War of survival, to go or stay,
in the minefield of the lost pipe nightly reels.



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Ahhh the grounded morning,
the swollen bursting afterbirth in the fires of time...
Tasting the hot sweet barreled metal into the mouth.

-John Vihara

The Killer

A cold dagger,
cyanide
The shadows hide him,
Cloaked in black,
Darkness his only friend,
but expendable
(You can get more friends).
Cat steps
Squirrel climb
Fourth story
Through a jimmied window
Cat steps
Move the curtain
Peaceful sleep
Young
Beautiful
Blood
Cat steps
Squirrel climb
Merge with his pal Darkness
Another night at the office.

-Peter Wagstrom





"Burroughs"



Julian



by Aaron Trompeter

"Julian. *Julian*," said nurse Rafferty as she placed her pudgy fingers around his sleeve and shook gently on his thin arm.

"What? Where?" he asked, as he looked up at the tired, pale face and soft opal eyes edged with crows feet. "Who are you? Where's my boy? Where's Marie? Do you know her? I'm taking my son fishing tomorrow." He raised his thin fingers and pointed weakly out the frosted window. "Where's my boy? Where's my wife? Marie!" he called. "She must have gone to get some groceries. I should have told her to pick us up some wine, maybe a little romance could follow, she has a nice smile you know. I need a bath," said the old man from his wheel-chair as he stared out of the winter window. A longing for yester-year spread across his face. "I want to die," he said.

The wide-hipped, over-worked, over-stressed nurse said, "It's time for medication, Julian." In the last twenty years she had seen many people like Julian, and somehow, even though she is a wonderful person, and would remember Julian for many more years, a tone of resentment was in her voice.

"Are you my wife? That bearskin has been soaking too long. I have to make a blanket for the baby. Darn dog anyhow. You'd think that porcupine would have taught the darn fool to leave things be. Where's my wife? I'll be going fishing with my grandson tomorrow you know. Marie! Where are you, Marie? My wife, you know my wife don't you?" His indistinct eyes stared up at the nurse waiting for an answer to the question he had forgot.

"Here's your medicine, Mr. Blais."

"Medicine? I don't need medicine any more than I need a hole in my boat." Mournfully, in the long fluorescent echo hallway, an old she-wolf of a woman whimpered for her lost lobo. Julian swallowed the pink and yellow pills that were pushed past his thin white lips. "Where's Marie!?" he demanded.





She died a long time ago Mr. Blais," said the nurse with a sigh. All the meaning of death and separation was stripped from her tired words, all the emotion left out like there never was a Marie. Like he never was a person, or a man, but always old. Always senile.

"What?" he questioned softly, as if he were speaking to the Holy Spirit.

"She died a long time ago!" she half shouted in his ear before she turned on her heels to leave the stuffy room.

"Oh," he said to himself. He turned his head to stare out the window at the empty snow encrusted bird feeder. "Oh," he said, as his chest sunk. Somewhere, among the random images that danced in his head, a memory began to form: He saw the kitchen of the old family house; he was mixing some frozen orange juice in a plastic pitcher when he heard the shuffle of Marie's bedroom slippers on the oak floor behind him; he turned, and saw the woman he had been married to for sixty-six years standing in her faded cotton night-gown.

"What are you doing out of bed?" he asked politely.

Feebly, in an old woman's whisper of a voice, she said, "I want to have breakfast with you, Julian." He saw the rouge on her cheeks, and the pale coating of mauve paint on her withered lips. He noticed that her thin, gray hair had been brushed, pulled back, and held with an alligator clip. These things had been his job for the last year, and he was happy to see that she had the strength to do them for a change. Maybe she is getting better, he thought. He walked over to his wife and smiled the smile that knocked her off her feet so many years before. Taking her hand in his, he helped her shuffle her way to her place at the kitchen table.

"I would love to have breakfast with you, Sweetie," he said, as she sat down with a grimace of pain that came from her previously broken hips. Marie looked longingly up at his face into his brown eyes. Her mouth hung half open as she tried to say just how much he meant to her. "I know," Julian said, before she



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could speak. "I love you too." A gentle kiss was placed on her cheek, and they held each other for a little bit in the soft light that filtered through the closed shades. With his lips close enough to tickle her ear, he asked, "Would you like some toast and cream cheese, Marie?"

"At the bottom of his vision he saw her cheeks, which had once been full and firm, raise in a smile, as she coyly said what he knew she would say- "Can I have a little touch, perhaps a smidgen, of raspberry jelly on it, too."

Julian replied, "You can have anything you want, Sweetie."

On his way to the toaster, the old Hundred and First Airborne Ranger, the expert in Kung Foo, the World War II Veteran and successful banker, hobbled past his mementoes on the shelf, and the placards that hung proudly on the wall. He stopped along the way and took the wheat bread, the cream cheese, and the raspberry jelly out of the fridge. He dropped the bread in the toaster and set the darkness where she liked it, golden; yet, not crisp. He poured her a glass of orange juice and sliced a disk out of an orange he grabbed from the fruit basket. He took the round slice of sunshine and cut it from the center to an outside edge. When the toast popped out, he spread the cream cheese and jelly on it, then cut it diagonally like she liked it. The disk of orange was twisted, and stood on edge in the center of the plate for that extra touch of love that she always noticed. He then brought the food and juice to her with a smile that sparkled like some corny tooth-paste add.

"Thank you," she said, as he set the toast and juice down in front of her.

"You're welcome," he said. "Let me grab you a napkin."

Julian was at the counter and had just turned around when Marie, as she was taking her second bite of toast, went rigid. Her hands swung out and knocked the toast to the floor. The glass of orange juice tipped over and rolled in a wet mess across the table. She saw her husband staring at her, as her hands, palms out, leveled at





her sides. Her cloudy eyes rolled back in her head, and she died right there, in the soft mourning glow of the kitchen window.

When the sirens and paramedics got there, they found Julian on his knees lying across his sweetie, whom he had laid out on the plastic covered couch. It was an hour before they could get him to let go of her cooling body. When Julian looked up, he saw that there were two ambulances, a fire truck, and two squad cars in front of his house; all of them had lights swirling on top. One of the older officers tried hard to keep the tears in his eyes while Julian, for a long while, let himself be hugged and patted by them all...

The memory faded as quickly as it came. "Oh," he said, as he looked out at the empty bird feeder and gray sky beyond it. "I wonder who that woman was," he asked himself quietly. His chin fell and his eyes shut for a moments rest. Five days later. Alone in his dark room. Julian did not bother nurse Rafferty with any further questions.



The Roaring Muse



by Laura Thielges



In the Arms of God

There is a place not far from here.
Just over the hillcrest and beyond the wood
Where there is no use for words.
Where the sun drips down from its heavenly home,
And cool breezes breathe on the thistles
In time to the rhythm of the bees.
In this valley where the slender grasses are soft as satin,
And the clear stream gallops down from a waterfall hushed by the
distance,
Time passes in leisurely, independent moments connected but by
threads.
It is in these places that time loses its restraining grasp.
You can appreciate, and look back on moments while you still in
them.
And by God, that gift is to truly live, if only for a minute.
The night falls and the lunar resplendence sails in along that stream.
You feel warm arms surround you and a smile somewhere in your
presence.
One that's worth a hundred smiles, and tells you you belong in that
moment,
And you are lulled off to yet another moment sometime, somewhere.

-Tim Veddar



The Roaring Muse



Seasons

The cleansing water of birth;
The earth of claustrophobic death;
The singeing fire of hate;
The wind of shifting love;
Swirling around me.
I twirl and stumble and fall,
But rise to focus on the stars above me.
The sun and the moon guide me
Through all the days and night.

-Anonymous

The Calling

The distant hum of wing reeled
and gently whistled through parched field
of hollow reeds dried in summer's heat.
First, one lone note mournful and sweet,
Then a chorus of voiced arose,
coaxing sleepy heads from weary repose.
An alien aria of strange allure...





...Or had I heard this canto before?
Perhaps a Georgian chant's meter
emitted from the gates of St. Peter.
Perhaps the whirring of a prayer wheel
or tumble of the ocean's crested reel
as it bows to lick the sanded shore.
In my stupor I could not be sure.

-S. B. Subah

C:\ILOVE.YOU

C:\ILOVE.YOU
FILE NOT FOUND
ERROR IN INPUT
ILLOGICAL STATEMENT
PLEASE RE-ENTER
C:\ILOVE.YOU
ERROR IN VARIABLES
ILLEGAL ACTUAL PARAMETERS
A:\ILOVE.YOU
CANNOT READ A:
ABORT, RETRY, FAIL? F
PLEASE REBOOT
FORMAT C:
WARNING! FORMATTING C: WIKK ERASE
ALL DATA AND FILES.
100100110010011001001...

-Peter Wagstrom





The Moon Remains

For almost ever, Yeats chased the moon.
He called her, inspiration and revealed in her frustration.
She, the moon, filled his days with interest and pursuit, gave
him the heart of a poet, the soul tormented by her distance
and her closeness.

The moon does not pass, Yeats' words do not pass.
She pushes forth into every new horizon, the time different,
the words different,
the soul different,
the poem different,
the lips are different,
the heart is different,
the chasing is the same,
the moon remains, chased.

I have dreamed of the moon, naked, hanging in her untouchable sky.
The stars dancing all around her. Petty distraction to her lunar
presence.

The sun has been eclipsed by the moon and her beauty,
the world unimportant and the moon remains, chased.

You are my moon. I chase new words religiously through the fog of
my twenties.

I find the old passions.

I am a moon chaser, who chases you with words, searching for mad
life,

the life of a poet and the hand of the moon.

The moon remains, loved.

-Sean Beaverson





Untitled

I saw your sinewy young face
 walking in my dream
And I gladly sketched your smile
 folding it neatly to keep in my breast pocket.

Where are you tonight?
Do you ever sleep when I do?
Here, I've got the eyes to narrow for likeness.
Let me try again.

You keep your eyes behind cool shades.
Let me follow you in the rain.
Keep smiling just that way
 with the water dripping off your hat.
Once more...I'll get it right.
Please don't put us in the same room
Don't take off your halo

I saw you in my dream
 leaving footprints on the asphalt.

Here I am sitting with legs crossed
 looking for a guru on every shelf
 waiting for the great Christ to fall from the sky.
Eyes bent on the cosmos
 if I blink now will you leave me?

When will you let me be?





???let ME be???

???let me BE???

Will we never be able to stomp on these shadows?
disastrous and taunting

Don't you think I don't see you.

Let go of my heels.

"Where will I go?"

For memory's sake, don't be spiteful.

I'll stay right here.

Suppose I want to go to the photo booth

How will it look?

with you playing Dirty Uncle behind my shoulder

My nose is cold and

I want to stand in the sunlight.

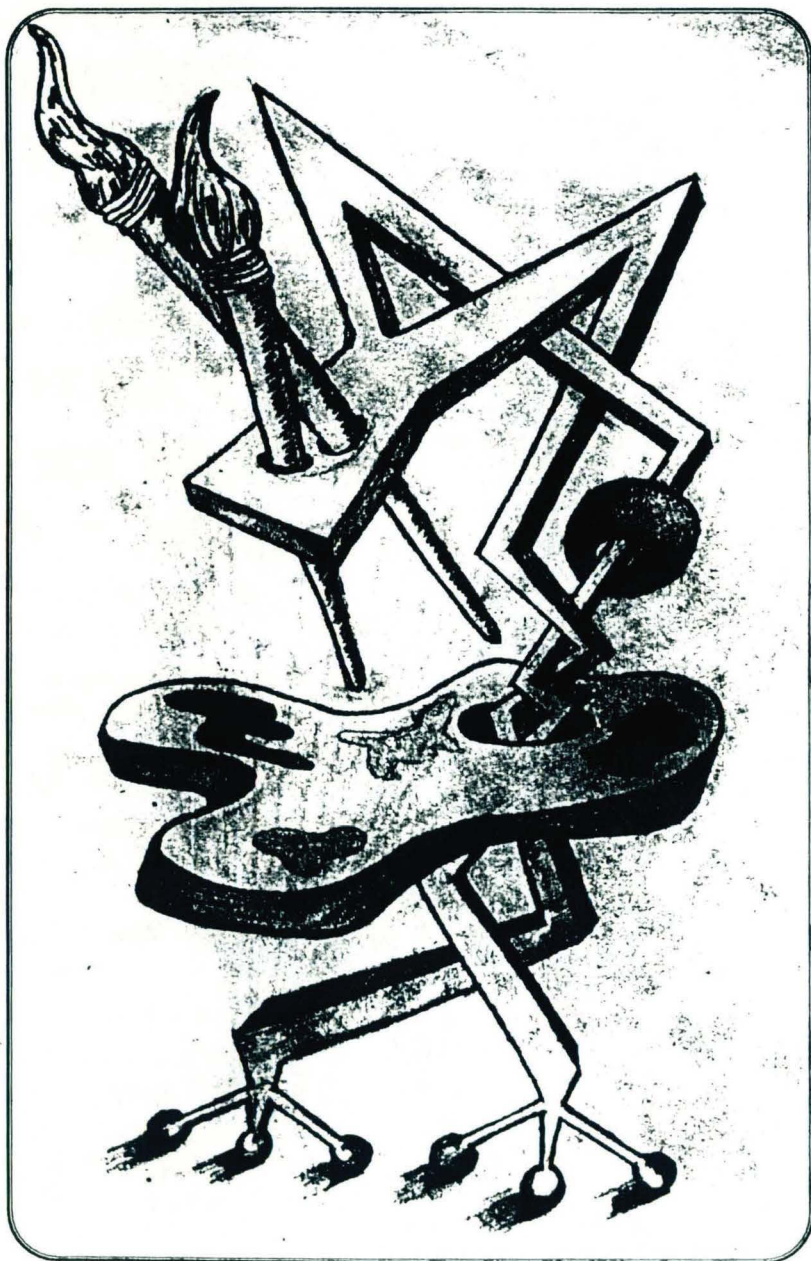
-Charles Cheez

The House of Love

Toast smells and strawberry jam pours into the sleeping room.
Blankets cover the sleeping floor and peace is written on the sleeping
door. The same sounds that wake me in my red, Emily home are here
beside me added with doorbell tones. The morning wakes up and rises in
its liltangy great gold glory covered in a haze of the same story told
years ago before the city, before wars, before hatred, before gods turned
into people. Friends wake their feet and arms to stretch form sleep's
solitic bless, cover their faces in sweet morning's kiss and whisper
cracked, low words— good morning sunshine— and know
it's good to be alive.

-Jeniffer Todd





by Chris Peterson



You Send Me
a play in one act.

by Judd Spicer

Cast of Characters

Patrick: A twenty-something who makes his home in Chicago. Patrick's apartment is where the play takes place. He is somewhat of a player, but you couldn't tell with all his smart-ass remarks.

Johnny: Patrick's best friend. Also a smart-ass, Johnny attracts women with his clumsiness, and bad timing.

Rose: Patrick's date. Rose has a taste for liquor, but wouldn't hug a teddy bear, in fear of hurting it. Ditsy, but harmless to the last bite.

Parker: Rose's friend. A true warrior. Will go to any length to save a friend from a dog. Attractive, but don't get too close.

Scene: Patrick's apartment.

Time: The present.

About ten o'clock, on a Sunday evening.

Setting: We are in the home of Patrick. Patrick lives in a one bedroom apartment located in Chicago. His apartment consists of a front door, a bedroom door, a kitchen door, one couch, and an easy-chair.

At Rise: It is around 10:00 on a Sunday evening. Patrick is lying on his couch, reading a copy of Hunter Thompson's Hell's Angels. All is peaceful, until Johnny comes through the front door.





Johnny! Patrick

Good evening, Patrick. Johnny

Well? Patrick

Well what? Johnny

Well how did she look? Patrick

She wore this green hat. Johnny

Oh yeah. Patrick

Yeah. Johnny

Wasn't she wearing that when you met? Patrick

No, that was the blue hat.
(Johnny sits down on the easy-chair)
I'm surprised to see you here. Johnny

Wadda you mean? Patrick

Well, I thought you had a date tonight. Johnny

I did. Patrick



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You did.

Johnny

Yes.

Patrick

Well, where is she?

Johnny

In the bedroom.

Patrick

Stud.

Johnny

Patrick

No, it's not like that. She must've been drunk when I picked her up, because two drinks into our evening, she falls off the barstool, I got to drag her out. Didn't even get to hear my songs on the jukebox.

Johnny

What tunes?

Patrick

Sam Cooke.

Johnny

"You Send Me."

Patrick

Of course. I read in GQ that "You Send Me" has an 18-31% success ratio for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd dates. Plus, it's a great tune.

Johnny

Well, don't you have it on vinyl around here somewhere?

Patrick

And CD.





Johnny

Well?

Patrick

Well what?

Johnny

Well, why did you even go to the bar, when you could've just brought what's-her-name over here with just you two and Sam Cooke.

Patrick

That's no good.

Johnny

Why?

Patrick

Because I need the bar.

Johnny

You need the bar?

Patrick

Yes.

Johnny

Why?

Patrick

Because the bar is my partner. He works with me. He provides me with distractions. He provides me with opportunities to look cool. To run the table. To throw a bullseye. To drink my drink in a certain way, or to not drink at all. Each of these gives me an angle. Here, I can talk. I could cook. Show her my work, show her my closet. But then my guard comes down. I get comfortable. And then she realizes I'm just like every guy she ever has or ever will sleep with.



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Johnny
What's her name?

Patrick
Rose.

Johnny
Like the flower?

Patrick
No, like the rows of men waiting to see her in their showers.

Johnny
Speaking of showers...

Patrick
Sorry pal.

Johnny
What?

Patrick
No dice. You can't shower in my place anymore. Yours' may not have the cleansing capabilities of mine, but it's acceptable. Besides, what kind of person goes to somebody's place and asks to use their shower?

Johnny
A dirty person.

Patrick
I'm glad my mother never met you.

Johnny
Yeah, me too. She probably would've got-

(Rose spins into the living room from the bedroom door, cutting off Johnny's sentence with her drunken rendition of "You Send Me")





Rose

"Dawlin youooooo send me. I know youoooooo send m-
(She falls to the ground, halting her ballerina-like performance)

Johnny

She's nice.

Patrick

You think so?

Johnny

I thought you left the bar before she heard the song.

Patrick

We did, but I put some headphones on her while she was sleeping.

Johnny

Oh! You must be that new Superhero I've been reading about,
Captain Salvation.

Patrick

Give me a hand.

Johnny

Should I put her with the others?

Patrick

(In Irish accent) You're a sick bastard.

(The two go to where Rose has fallen, between the bedroom door and the couch. Patrick grabs her feet, and Johnny has her hands. They begin to carry her to the bedroom, when the phone rings. Patrick drops her feet, and picks up the receiver)

Patrick

Hi ma.... Ma, how did I know it was you? Ma, you always call on Sunday night...Not much, Johnny's over...That's right, the guy with the blind girlfriend...Yeah, I think that's sweet too...Does she



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look like who? The actress? No ma, she's *deaf*... That's right...No, I don't think that show is on anymore. Look ma, I'm kinda busy right now. I gotta go...You too.

(Patrick hangs up the phone. In the meantime, Johnny has taken Rose back to the bedroom. When Patrick ends his conversation, he turns to find Johnny gone. Patrick walks quickly to the bedroom door)

Patrick

Hey! What did I tell you about the shower!

Johnny

(Walks out of bedroom door) That it was forbidden.

Patrick

(Surprised) Why aren't you in that shower? Is she in that shower?

Johnny

Yeah. She woke up after I set her on the bed, made a call on her cellphone, then jumped into your shower. Can I get a beer?

Patrick

Sure.

(Johnny walks into kitchen door, while Patrick takes a seat)

Johnny

(V.O.) You want one?

Patrick

No.

(Johnny walks back into living room. Patrick is staring at him. Johnny takes a seat)

Johnny

What?





Patrick

My last Guinness?

Johnny

What, this?
(Holds up beer)

Patrick

Yeah, that. Couldn't you have taken something else?

Johnny

You want it back or something?

Patrick

Yeah.

Johnny

Well forget it, kid.

(Johnny starts drinking the Guinness at full speed. Patrick jumps up and knocks the bottle across the room)

Johnny

Ah!

(Johnny runs to where the bottle has landed, in front of the front door, and bends to pick it up)

Johnny

(From his knees) You know Patrick! Sometimes-

(Johnny's sentence is cut off by the entrance of Parker, as she kicks open the front door, and knocks Johnny to the side)

Patrick

Mom,...you look younger.

Parker

Shut up Patrick. Where is she?

Patrick

Rose is a bit indisposed at the moment. Would you care to sit down, Parker. We were just about to watch Rais-



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Parker

(Cutting him off) Cut the shit, allright. I got a phonecall, it sounded urgent, I came.



Patrick

Settle down, she's in the shower.

(Johnny stands up from behind the door, holding his head)

Johnny

Am I bleeding?

Patrick

Oh great, look at this. You just broke a perfectly good Johnny.

Parker

Oh, hello Johnny. I haven't seen you since our date at the dog-track.

Johnny

I won that day.

Parker

Yeah, with my money you little crap. Then you used the winnings to entertain that cute little blonde teller, while I looked for your car.

Johnny

She brought me luck, I had to repay her.

Patrick

I thought you didn't believe in luck.

Johnny

I don't anymore. Now, it all depends on where I park in the lot, then everything unfolds from there.

Parker

Well, if you recall, Johnny, that day you parked in a spot reserved for Chicago Gambling Officials. Your car was towed, while I





unknowingly wandered three different lots for 45 minutes!

Johnny

Hence, my change in beliefs.

Parker

Rose!

Patrick

(To Parker): Will you marry me?

(Parker throws a couch pillow at Patrick)

Parker

Rose!

Rose

(V.O.) Coming!

(Rose jogs out of the bedroom door with a towel wrapped around her head)

(To Patrick): Great shower.

Patrick

I've heard.

Rose

I had a really good time. Call me this week?

Patrick

Probably not. Keep the towel though.

Rose

Sweetie.

(Rose kisses Patrick on the cheek)

(To Parker): Ready?

(Parker opens the door. Rose exits halfway. Johnny grabs Parker's hand)

Johnny



The Roaring Muse



(To Parker): Meet me for the 7:00 post tommorow night?



Parker

(Rudely) Please.

(Parker slams the door on her way out while Rose is waving goodbye)

Johnny

We could've made a lovely Exacta together.

Patrick

Did you really think she'd go to the track with you again?

Johnny

Women love gamblers.

Patrick

Bullshit. Women love honesty.

Johnny

What about honest gamblers?

Patrick

No such thing.

(Johnny walks into the kitchen to grab two beers. He then goes to the living room record player. "You Send Me" begins to play. It plays for about ten or fifteen seconds.)

(Silence)

Johnny

(Handing Patrick a beer) Wanna catch last call?

Patrick

(In Irish accent) You're a sick bastard.

(They clink bottles. Patrick gets up and grabs his jacket. They both take a drink of beer, then set bottles down. They exit, while "You Send Me" plays into the darkness.)



END OF PLAY





by Melanie Pearson



Love Afloat in Sinking Water

My blue suede dreams aloft
in a single bent fury of want.
Crashing at the sorrows of light.
Wrangle, whipped morning song,
thick-lipped chorus of movie desires
and candle-lit encounters.
A maze of the multi-plex,
Pictures in Story-book gloss.
Crisis crazed in stunt-double
mayhem, and I fancying it all...

Yet,

A glimpse of fleeting song,
color flash of singing movement,
dusk exhuming the dawn.
And out of the blind eye falling
down, away...

Running through and out,
I saw her, in rich orchestrated grace,
a siren song, a paper doll, a crystal figurine...
but courting the genesis of my portent face,
I fell, Crushed down and silenced,
brooding of sinking pain,
and lost sight of the racing music,
lost track of the dreams...

-John Vihara



The Roaring Muse



En mi Noviembre

Star still burns bright,
behind a cloud.
Walking the field,
beyond what I plowed.

Alone you breathe,
My world hidden away.
Lost to the silence,
en mi Noviembre.

Edge of thorns,
wrapped around me.
Binded by pain,
the one who mourns.

Rain keeps falling,
can't see past today.
Eye of the storm,
en mi Noviembre.

All my wants,
what did I really need?
Exists in my soul,
all that I bleed.

The silhouettes,
turned my world gray.
The sun never shined,
en mi Noviembre.

-Theodore J. Klutter





Bitterful Souls

Bitterness seeps seductively
and sweeps through the soul,
leaving its track,
icy paths of cold.
It spindles and weaves
a web made of hate,
that chokes and discards
a life in its way.
It's silent and deadly,
forming a face of stone;
often leaving behind
silent, whimpering moans.
Once the motions starts,
the damage has begun,
and while silent watchers stare,
the deadliness goes on.
Only the brave souls,
who aren't afraid to reach out,
can save the bitterful hearts,
that are left blindly searching the dark.

-Linda Prom



The Proposal

me a princess
 scrubbin' these ole walls
waitin' for the missus to pay me
 day in day out then one day
miss sue ellen she come over and
 say don't forget to water them
purple petunias or the ole lady
 will tan your hide or fire you
then what will you do I sez sue ellen
 it don't matter anymore cuz
I'm just plain tired I want to quit this
 life then out pops this ole frog
and he say will you kiss me if you do
 then we'll get married and
I'll take you away from all this and
 make you happy I swear
this really happen' sue ellen
 but I can't see spending my life
with this old toad so I say hell no
 get outta my bathroom
I'll be workin' hard here instead
 moppin'
 sweepin'
 cleanin' me a princess

-Faith Duvall





The Wazir's Widow

Once I was young,
I turned many a gentleman's head.
I caught the Wazir's eye, and his desires fed
on my swan neck and almond white skin.
So we wed under Cedars of Eden.

Once I was young.
My lips were full, my waist was slim.
Once I was young.
My hair was soft, my breasts were firm.
But now I am old, and everything is finished.

Once I was young.
I walked before kings with regal grace.
My fine children were dressed in lace,
and all heaped upon my husband praise
as I basked in the warmth of his embrace.

Once I was young.
My children sang, my city grew.
Once I was young.
My husband rose, my garden bloomed.
But now I am old, and everything is finished.

Once I was young.
But what are state dinners to me now?
My husband and one child dead long ago.
I am an old woman with rounded spine,
curved under the weight of time.

-S. B. Subah



The Roaring Muse



Untitled

every what in whatsville
wants to be a who.
now who can say
what the whats would pay
to be a who someday.
if the whats could choose
you know who'd lose—
without a doubt, it'd be the whos.

anonymity is the bane
of every what in town.
the whos are known
while the whats get thrown
to the lions down below.
if the whos could see
what the whats might be,
they'd be a little afraid.
'cause if all the whats
turned into whos
then who would be the whats?
for what's a who
without a what—

it's the whats that make the whos.

-Daniel Kernler





by Mike Lentz

Why Every Director Makes a War Film

by Mike Lenz

Staring at the poster in the store window, Jude squinted, trying to discern who the the star was, who had directed it. The poster was for a new movie. The past summer's blockbuster...now out on video. The image of the star, familiar looking, was larger than life, covered with sweat and grease, holding a very large weapon and gritting his teeth in real cinema time. Behind him was fire, that most Hollywood indication of apocalypse, or, he thought, most apocalyptic indication of Hollywood. He recognized the director as an accomplished one and wondered what he would gain in adding another war film to Hollywood's archive. Glancing at the passenger seat of his green, yes, conspicuously green automobile, he asked Mary if she'd seen it or even if she knew anyone who'd seen it. She hadn't and at that moment the traffic light flashed green.

For a long time he said nothing, though his curiosity was satisfactorily aroused. He watched the people around him, paying special attention to the way each walked, wondering how many of them had seen the movie in the window. Was it a movie for people with a macho stroll or was that just his own naivete, miscalculating the Hollywood expectations of those most rigid of walkers. Considering the cinematic needs of his fellow drivers on the freeway, it occurred to him that every director makes a war film. Every one worth his budget anyway. It seemed very matter-of-fact to him that it had little to do with Hollywood, but was more of a matter of personal resolution for the film-maker. Most of them probably weren't about war anyway.

Jude glanced again at Mary. Content, he thought, in the passenger seat with her satchel on her lap and her red coat over her shoulders. He smiled as he exited the freeway and started onto the bridge.

"Richard J. Bong, " he said, "our last and finest hero."

Mary smiled, turning her attention toward him, speaking at last...

"The first time my brother came to visit me here, he wouldn't believe me when I told him that we had a Bong Bridge. I actually had to take him out and show it to him and when he



Finally saw it, he couldn't stop laughing. For months afterwards, he would call me in the middle of the night, blazed out of his mind, telling me how he'd just gotten back from the Bong Bridge himself, verifying what a really swell guy that Bong fellow was."

"Personally," he said, "I think they made him up. I think it's a joke name invented for the amusement of older, but not too older, brother's everywhere. And they made up the wonderful hero story to take the edge off. So they could get away with it."

"And the black and white documentaries?"

"Forged, of course. Remember Hard Copy, my dear. Always."

Mary did not reply.

"How is your brother?" Jude asked, glancing out the window.

"Good. I think he's applying for university positions."

"And he still calls you?"

"Yeah. He does. Not quite the same late night rings I used to get, but it's nice. Usually on a Saturday afternoon, when I'm just sitting around, you know, sort of waiting for someone like that to interrupt me. He wants me to go to Florida to visit him for a week or two. I guess he bought an old boat to fix up. Says he wants to go fishing. He's on what he calls a 'mental sabbatical'. He just reads and works on his boat right now. He sent John an old copy of Howl he found at a garage sale. It's nice."

Jude flipped the visor down to block the afternoon sun. He sped past Wisconsin's happy welcome. Minnesota hadn't said goodbye. Hadn't wished him well. They never do. It detracts from the welcome...and welcome to what he thought, looking out his window at the multitude of retired sea vessels. Lined up like so many beached whales, he thought, deemed unworthy or too old or too slow and left to be knocked on by children and photographed by crude artists with tourist minds.

"What else could you do with them?" he asked. "It's almost by default they become spectacles. How do you begin to throw away something so enormous. What else can you do, but rent them out to ravers on Halloween or fill them up with felt ropes and mannequins?"

"They could have a government auction just like they do for the old army toys. All the charter fisherman could snatch them up and cruise around the bay...maybe have races."

Marvelous, Jude thought, amazed by her reply. Maybe

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 she really did relate to him. The thought of it made him anxious. "That would be beautiful. Profoundly beautiful," he said, "but unAmerican strictly on principles."

The green Nova with plaid interior sped past the last filling station at the edge of town and Jude turned onto Highway 13. Town's just too long, he thought. It stretches out forever and doesn't go anywhere—all gas stations and liquor stores. Good to be done with it and be back on the highway.

"God bless America," he said, noting the sign on the side of the road.

The sign was simply a flimsy board nailed to each side of a 2x2 stake and driven into the ground at an angle. It was white-washed with the words "GOD BLESS AMERICA" painted in black letters on both sides. Jude knew the sign and had always found ironic satisfaction in its rugged construction and the way it was situated, with false pride on the side of a lonely country road. It marked the driveway of a severely aged house. If it weren't for the fresh tire ruts in the driveway and the dirty Chevrolet van, one would have almost certainly guessed the place to be deserted, that the sign had been left behind as a neglected idol of a faith long forgotten. One whose temple had long since crumbled in the expanse beyond it.

"Do you still have the picture you took?" Mary asked. "With the sign and the road and the clouds?"

"Yeah, in fact, you can have it if you like. It's just sitting in a box in the closet right now."

"I was just wondering is all. You don't have to give it to me."

Jude drove on. He turned when the sign said to turn. He even watched for deer when he was cautioned to do so. He wound the car around curves and up and down hills of various sizes. Very comfortable, he thought. A familiar feeling to be driving on this road. The blacktop looped out in front of him as if drawn from a spool. It exhilarated him. Grinning widely, he accelerated the green Nova until he saw a car speed past in the opposite direction. He identified the unmistakable and ominous lights of the *law*. He thought for a moment that they would continue to fade into his mirror, but he saw very clearly as they flashed into action and the brake-lights lit up.

Jude waited anxiously for the officer's approach and, he thought to himself, they always sit in their car for a while first. At



last he could see the steady pace of a young figure in his mirror. Better keep my hands on the wheel, he thought. They like to be able to see your hands. Suddenly the officer was leaning toward the window asking for Jude's license and registration. Jude noted the officer's shiny boots and spotless uniform. His pistol seemed very large, bulging from his side. Cautiously raising his eyes, Jude looked at the steely young face. It hardly seemed real to him. The officer briefly glanced around Jude at the empty plaid interior of the car.

"Do you know why you've been pulled over today Mr. Christian?"

"Yes, sir. I believe I do."

"Mr. Christian, this car is registered to a Merideth Lynn Christian. Is that your wife, sir?"

"Yes...she's not here. We're separated." He would be safe. He was still listed on the policy as a potential driver.

"I'll need you to step out of the car and come with me while I verify that information, sir."

Jude slowly unfastened his seat-belt and got out of the car. The officer offered him the passenger seat while he called on the radio. Very efficient unit, Jude noted. Lots of gadgets. Looks like an automobile on the outside and a jet on the inside. Filled with all sorts of armaments and accessories to the uniform. The youth of the officer struck him again. Fresh from the mold, an eager young cowboy out for his quota, he decided. Still looking at the uniform, not like any cowboys he'd ever known.

Jude returned to his vehicle, speeding ticket in hand. He drove away slowly, watching in his rear-view as the patrolman resumed his original course.

The road finally curved to where Jude could see the yellow gate that closed the park. He looked at it with satisfaction, driving the car right up to it and parking there. He knew the park would be closed. He was counting on it. There were times when it was fine to sit back and observe all the people in their family moments, but he had always insisted that in order to really appreciate a tourist trap like this one, you had to see it in its dormant season.

Jude got out of the car and took off his sunglasses. He looked something like a transient or a drifter with the frayed sweater his grandfather had worn, his faded jeans and his t-shirt. His skin was tempered by the sun, making his eyes look dark,

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 almost hidden. His hair was windy and chaotic. He walked to where he saw Mary standing by the old bridge. 

"The water's high," she said, ascending the bridge. The water was high. It rushed and gushed, tearing it's way through and around. Jude could almost see it devouring the stones that held its course.

Walking along the bank, Jude watched Mary take pictures. He seated himself at the base of a willow tree that overlooked the rapids.

"I had a dream the other day," he said, focusing on Mary. "Really brilliant colors, I mean exaggerated. It was one of those dreams that only come to you napping on a Sunday afternoon. It was really obscure. Anyway, I was at a baseball game with J.D. Salinger. Batting practice, actually. The stadium was empty except for us, the players and the concessionaires. We were seated halfway up the first base side. Everything was going on as if it were an actual game in progress. The announcer introduced each new batter. The scoreboard was running, but it was just batting practice. Anyway, he, Salinger, was watching it all with this very fixed anticipation and I kept glancing at him to see if he noticed me. I was waiting for him to say something about what a farce the game had become or what a bunch of greedy bastards the players were. He just sat there, though. He didn't say a single word. Not a 'God damn', a 'Christ's sake', or even a 'phony'. I even tried egging him on. I remember thinking that I was going to be really clever. I asked him about Franny and the Jesus prayer and why it worried Zooey so much. Whether or not he really believed in the benefits of praying incessantly or in mantras in general. Was Seymour real, or fictitious? Was his character a version of his own identity? I was becoming only vaguely aware of how obnoxious I was being and what an ass I was making of myself, ignorantly blurting out whatever came to mind. And yet, he had not a word to give in response to any of my queries. He wasn't rude or even ambivalent. He just looked at me with great sad, tired eyes and a sheepish grin. The effect of all this was confounding and I didn't have the courage to ask him why in God's name he had stopped. What he had seen with those sad, tired eyes that turned such a magnificent fiery mind into a cantankerous old Mets fan. I meant to apologize, to shake his hand, pat him on the back, or, God forbid, embrace him. I meant to do something, but at precisely that moment a foul ball shot directly





up toward us. He was up so swiftly I didn't even realize what was happening. He stood there bravely and caught it in his cupped hands as if he'd been waiting for it all afternoon. After that, the scoreboard lit up the whole stadium with a yellow glow. I watched the replay in magnificent golden hue and couldn't help but stare at how gracefully he had risen. I was so fixed by the image that I almost failed to notice myself sitting beside him, awestruck and impossibly old. Older than he was. Almost unrecognizably old, with gray hair and sagging eyes. And that was it. It just ended there."

As the sound of his own voice trailed off, Jude's ears were filled with the roar of the running water—it's resonance. Lifting his eyes from the precipice he searched out Mary once again. He found her crouched in pale late-afternoon sunlight. She appeared to him shades of washed out color, cinematic gold and brown. She flickered as he tried to fix her in his gaze. He stretched out his arms, clamping them to the twisted branches of the willow tree behind him. He turned his attention, now, to the dull gleam of the sunlight on the metal handrails of the bridge and marveled at the way it sparkled through the rushing water. He could see the water cutting away the banks with ferocious intensity. Carving vigorously at the rock before him. He could see and feel the hollow earth beneath him washing away. He heard clearly the cracking and shrieking of the trees as they twisted and crashed against the rocks and were ultimately swept away in a deluge of water. It carried him quickly. The force was devastating and he could still see, in twists and turns, the sunny bright stare of time chasing after him.

Jude stared into nothing.

"Are you my angel?...are U my angel?...are u MY angel?...R u my angel?...rummyANGEL?"

The Roaring Muse



by Melanie Pearson

by Molly Zapp

I made up my mind at the airport.

I've always loved airports. I love the endless rows of empty seats. I love the busy people, especially the way they walk with an aura of greater purpose. I can walk like that. I learned how tonight at the St. Louis terminal.

At three thirty-eight this morning, I walked alone down the long terminal: from gate 18 to gate 34. It was the kind of dignity that comes from being on your own. I sat in one of the blue, molded, plastic seats and set my carry-on between my feet. My ticket was cool and smooth in my hand. I used it as a bookmark, but I kept the book on my lap. I couldn't help but look at the other people in the small cubicle seats, interlocked by silver looking bars.

The people in my corner of the airport were quiet. One middle-aged couple, who looked bound for CanCun, sat on the edge of our small square neighborhood. The wife reminded me of a twittering little hummingbird. She busied herself picking lint off her husband's twill shirt. She searched bag upon bag for the items that she accused her husband of forgetting. I could hear her.

"Did you remember your toothbrush? Every time we go somewhere we end up with another new toothbrush..."

Her husband stared blankly in the opposite direction. And I hated him for not looking at her when she was talking. I wanted to walk over there and place my hands on both sides of his head and turn it, so he would see her.

There was a girl about my age opposite of me. She looked a little nervous. Two seats away from me there was an Asian-American woman. I admired her black Ann Taylor suit, her shiny black shoes, and the way her hair tucked professionally behind one ear. She caught me staring at her once, and she smiled. I

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 smiled back.

I was less than 2,000 miles away from you, and you were already forgotten. I don't feel guilty about it. I knew this thing with us was going to last until one of us was dead. And now, since I'm tired of looking at your face, I guess you already are.

The mousy girl opposite me came and sat in the empty seat between me and the woman in the suit. She asked if I was on flight 609, to Mexico City. I answered yes, and she seemed relieved. Soon she bombarded me with questions about customs, traveler checks, baggage, drinking water, flight schedules... I was patient with her and reassured her. I felt like the woman in the Ann Taylor suit, dignified and self-sufficient. I was smart, confident, and in control. The girl needed my assurance and I gave it willingly to her.

But soon she left me alone. I opened my Annie Dillard novel and gained a glance of approval from the woman in the black suit.

If you were that young girl, I wouldn't have minded. But you never stopped with questions and insecurities. I was held down too long, I'm getting ready for the flight now. I have no reason to feel guilty. I answered the mousy girl's inquiries and eased her apprehension. And she left me alone.

I sure wish you'd do the same.

Sincerely.



9th street

dirt
& shadows
trapped in ice.

the end of a pine
bends
its tip pointing
back.

still faces
in passing cars
look
through separate windows.

cooked specks
of insect
dot
the streetlamp's glass,

where
One Piece of Wing
with shivers of electric hum.
is.

-Jamie Ness



The Roaring Muse



Last Plane Home

Filth and fumes engulf the busy metro airport.
In the glaring glow of neon signs,
a man, waiting, wanders the concourse.
Filth and fumes, ugly and malign.

Filth and fumes obscure the eternal paradox.
The man's eyes bulge and burn with strain,
watching and waiting, awaiting the final tic tock.
Filth and fumes, the indelible stain.

Filth and fumes carry a blaring boarding call.
Metallic and amplified, its electronic breath
Alerting! Alerting! Man to his awaited final fall.
Filth and fumes, laden with death.

Filth and fumes congregate as the jet taxis out,
roaring and screaming its frightful high tech poem.
Man stares out, worries, then leans back lost in doubt.
Filth and fumes, the last plane home.

-Brian Zluticky





The Echo of a Howl

I see the best minds of my generation subdued by mediocrity.
glassy eyed believers in tv gods, who's blue light invades our privacy
with jerry springer selling souls like k-mart specials.
the city streets are filled with cars
filled with people... that have long since fell asleep.
the cars sold to us by dealers like reefer,
the promises of a solitude fix
quiet time
alone time
when in all actuality we are standing next to each other
alone,
too afraid of tv news and horror stories of human nature gone bad.
we sit affixed like heroin addicts stuck in the basement of an old gutted
out building
never seeing life outside boarded windows.
madness is dominant, on her back
like a fallen angel
not heroin madness
not a burnt out madness,
but the madness that stirs souls!
It sleeps hypnotized by microwaves and television signals
tv devils selling promises like eden,
thieving our love for ourselves
making us believe we are not enough.
the devil and a promise.
but instead of an apple we are being tempted by apathy!
we are dangerously close to being robbed of mad life!
no longer excited about where we're going like kennedy and the moon,



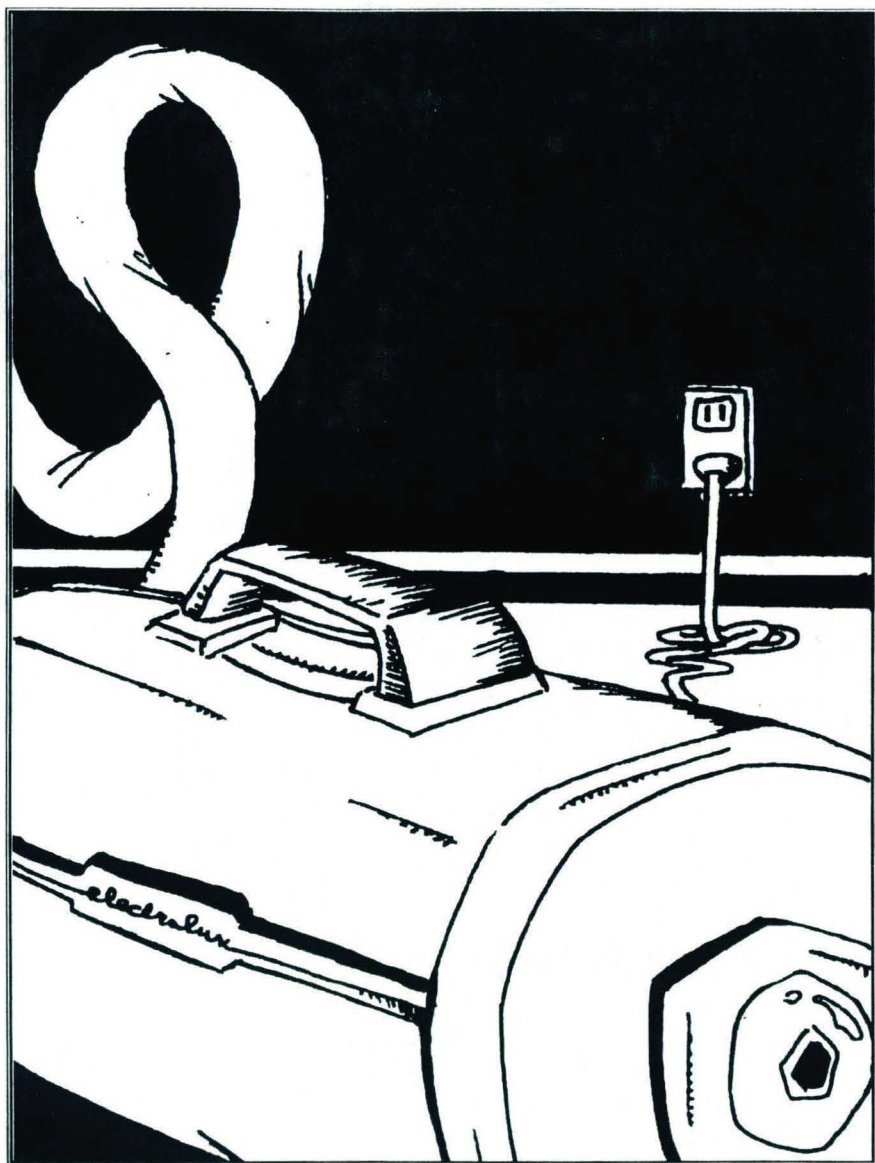
The Roaring Muse



and no longer revel in where we survived from...
like king and a dream.
black men turn on themselves,
frustrated by their surroundings
the red stop signs in front of progress
they are tricked into gnawing at their being.
it is life trapped in the steel jaws of ignorance,
life forced to chew off limbs in order to fit and be free.
we are a generation that has been reduced to consonants,
variables in an equation,
where x-hippies
turned ad-execs are selling us complacency like LSD
we are the offspring of these x's
the post party quick fix generation
we are not a generation of simple consonants
we are extraordinary words and phrases
we are a generation full of vowels!
we need to begin casting out the devils.
we are a generation that is brimming with love
we are on fire with frustration
we are the ingredients of passion.

-Sean Beaverson





by Tim Anderson

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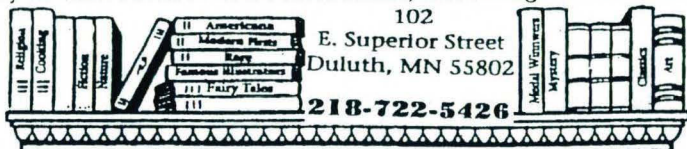
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The Roaring Muse

Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of dedicated citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever was."

I don't know that we, on the publications committee have changed the world with the creation of the Roaring Muse, but we certainly have done something extraordinary. In our eyes, this small journal has taken a much larger identity. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have helped us bring this first edition from its early conception to the copy you have in your hand.

A gracious thanks to all the people who contributed time, ideas, and hard work to the magazine..

A thanks to the UMD English Department.

A special thanks to Steve Adams, advisor to the UMD Literary Guild and The Roaring Muse committee.

To William Mitchell of The Wolfhead Quarterly for his early input which helped us to get on our feet.

Thank you sponsors and their faith in our project and idea.

To all the wonderfully talented and creative students who submitted work. The beauty and quality of the work submitted was truly amazing. Keep it coming!

And to you, the reader, for your interest in the arts and expression of UMD writers and artists.

Because of the enthusiasm generated, we not only put together this issue, we have started work on the second.

The publications committee will continue to carry the torch as long as the fires of imagination keep burning.

Thanks again,

Jake Wormiskirchen

Publications Chair, UMD Literart Guid.

The *Roaring* Muse
LITERARY ARTS MAGAZINE



spontaneity
exposes
alternatives