

1998

UA68/6/1 Zephyrus

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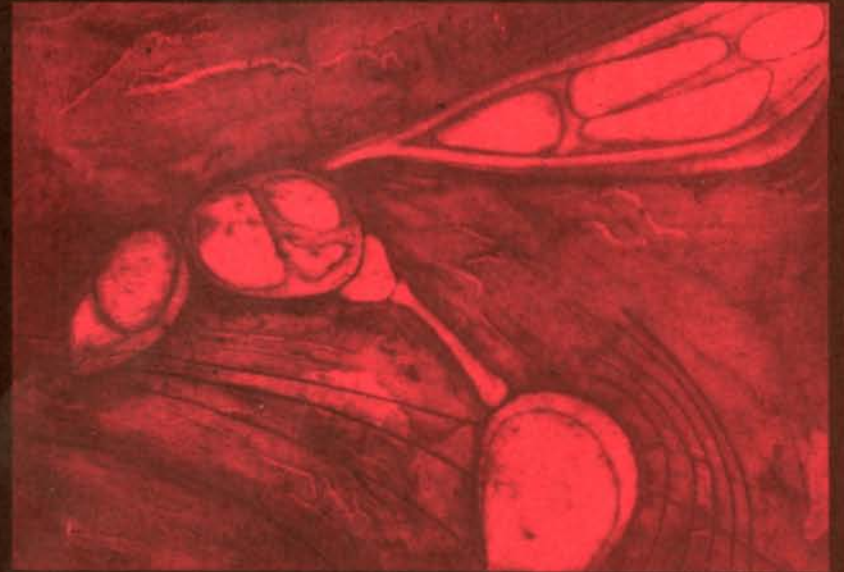
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ZEPHYRUS

A Student Literary Publication of
Western Kentucky University




WESTERN
KENTUCKY
UNIVERSITY

1998

Zephyrus

Spring 1998

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of Western Kentucky University
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Editor's note: Our selection process is based on complete anonymity. If an editor recognizes an author's work, he or she abstains from the decision-making process for that work.

Dedication

The staff would like to dedicate this year's issue of *Zephyrus* to all our grammar gurus, punctuation pedagogues, document doctors, and composition coaches: the creative writing staff here at WKU.

Thanks to all of you.

Award Winners

Geoffrey McCelvey Memorial Award

Amy Croslin

Browning Literary Club Poetry Award

Linda Watkins Price

Ladies Literary Club Fiction Award

Kevin Blankenship

Wanda Gatlin Essay Award

Sylvia Ahrens

Writing award recipients are chosen by the Creative Writing staff of WKU; art award chosen by *Zephyrus* staff.

Zephyrus Art Award

"Untitled" by Carrie Foster

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Zeus

Jennifer Miller

I-40 West

Tracy S. Epley

Virginia Beach faded slowly from my sight
from the back seat of our brown station wagon,
the tinge of sea salt slowly evaporated from the air
as the sand and tall pine trees gave way
to the tedium of the interstate.
I sat with my older babbling brother as Momma drove
and my sisters and other brother talked
as quietly as old people at church.
Dad remained behind to finish packing and to
say goodbye to the Navy as I silently
said goodbye to the beach
from the back seat of the car with
Travis lightly punching my arm.

Teeth Like Stars

Tracy S. Epley

Tell me something of love
that is fresher than the crumbs in Christ's beard
No allusions or illusions
of hearts that beat as one
like a piston pumping
love machine cliché
Discard the chubby cherubs
forlorn eyes that speak of a
heavenly Union (Local 471) of bliss.
The same eyes as puppies
pillow humping or tilted head confusion
No Browning or Byron with eyes
like deep pools of blue water,
but teeth like stars:
"They come out at night."
Exit the coy Victorian naughty wit
as alluring as the thought of a hard day's labor.
"Do you like Kipling?"
"I don't know, I've never Kippled."
Reject the overt pure red sex
of Free Love that spoils as easily as ignored
bananas on top of the refrigerator.
Ignored like the tedious aspects of love
that the poets never
pine
moon
swoon over
only gloss over like the dirty pink waste
of an eraser blown off a page of prose.
The rough grit of love
that wedges under fingernails
but will never
part lips or open legs.

Small Cigarette Burns

Tracy S. Epley

Over my head
the three-dollar light fixture
beats its cheap sunlight
on my bent back
knees drawn
elbows tight
forehead carpet burn.
This close to the carpet
I smell inherited
tobacco smoke.
The small cigarette burns,
like pock marks,
map the course of disease
by frequency and location.
The other stains and
smells of sickness
welcome me back
to Mother's home.

Hanging from a Willow Tree

Chris Harrison

Hanging feet
swinging in the willow tree.
No shoes.
No socks.
Just bare
hanging feet
swinging in the willow tree.

The giggled at him
low--
like sinner boys in a back pew--
holding their noses
at the urine
and excrement.

Their white faces--
cold,
wet,
and shiny--
shone like twenty-two moons
circling,
orbiting
one dead
black planet.

They trembled--
nerves shot.

They grinned--
stupid-like.

They hid
from the black man
swinging in the willow tree.

The Departure of Ms. Angie
Chris Harrison

Her wrinkled prune arms lay on the pillow so still,
weathered from time and pale from no sun.
Crisp wisps of white-silver hair shifted to feel
his lips come close to let her know it was done.

The pump sputtered once and wheezed into silence,
seeping away the life it had granted.
Yet her chest rose again as if in defiance,
bringing new hope that her time had not ended.

The doctor took a breath and held it forever.
He knew what was coming and winced in pain.
I looked at his face and saw that he loved her--
his secret amour, slipping away.

Her chest fell so slowly in the hospital air,
as her breath seeped out and caught in her throat.
She bid us farewell as it rattled there,
and on the tear-soaked chart the doctor wrote.



Portrait

Leslie Scheidler

Baby Birds at Feeding Time

James Fritz

It's wide outside
And her knee is in my ribs,
Between seventh and eighth, softly.
She's alive and her breasts are simple and good
And hang on her, making sense, like the
Vodka and orange juice, sweet and bitter,
Fitting like taste buds fit, crammed together on one person's
tongue.
Ash flies and time collects in piles on
The bed.

And when she's not looking, and
When the city breathes in through the window,
At that moment I vomit my headache,
And my mouth is gross, and it makes jagged corners
That plough my face up and
Up, and my nostrils open like baby birds
At feeding time,
And the lines between my eyes sink inside me.
Someone lifts my head up, and back,
More breath hits me and I suck more in,
And realize,
For the first time in weeks,
With a hand pulling my hair,
With puddles stinking in my throat,
With my nose on fire,
With my eyes spilling,
That I am happy.

Grooves

Kevin Blankenship

He used to plow, then,
with a plow long disused,
handle bleached
a drawn-out white,
blade webbed with
rust, too fragile
to crack the seams
of the earth. I remember, too,
standing by the seams of his
old work-pants, callused
and planted with dirt,
looking at his oaken
hands as they wore
down the plow handles,
furling the handle
to a handprint,
furrows I could never plow,
my hands were too small. We plowed
the shadows out of the sun
and the dirt brushed my hair,
until I walked his
shadow home.

Visiting Granny Baker

Kevin Blankenship

We had often wondered
what she held in
the quiets of her corners,
the silks so dark in shadows.
But, sitting there in dust
that curled and shifted
with scents of musty flowers
and hard rock candy,
scents that bound us, hands
in laps, eyes pinned,
listening to coughs that lingered,
sliding down our backs
and lifting our chins, making us stare
at one weak balloon eye,
sagging to no particular breeze,
we were glad
we had not stopped at night.

Lucy's Garden

Kevin Blankenship

She walks the emerald thread
of vining beans and
smells the scattered scents,
honeysuckle, tomato.
Twenty-five years
of planting gardens,
watching them grow,
she has staked
her plants now,
and seen them rot,
year after year. The vines
grow, spread, and soon
they tangle the corners of her eyes
and pull down
tears.
The salt rivets
the earth,
and her dreams are
staked in the afternoon sun.

Smoking

Kevin Blankenship

They say smoking will kill you,
they lie.
I don't smoke,
but I do
second-hand.
Surrounded by poets, specks
around the president's statue,
I inhale their
second-hand smoke.
Here an image floats
on tendrils,
and tiny words of wisdom
fall from the coughs
that pull the clouds
from the windows.
In a sudden cloud of smoke
that falls
down the wet steps,
we cycle through life
day after day,
pack after pack,
and ground out our lives
in a smear of ashes
on the wet concrete.



Where she stops nobody knows

Karena Pendley

This is Beauty
David C. Spence

What if
When the world
Was first made
And man did pluck
The bud before
The flower bloomed
And then came along
To a bramble bush
And did say
This is beauty

Empty Mason Jar
Leah Treesh

Flies swarmed over our sticky bodies
making our naked feet twitch
and twist in the blue plastic pool
where mosquitoes made love
while we made war
Our rusty lawn chairs creaked
a protest to each accusing word
and one more Kentucky August night
spent wearing their fibers thin
and grasping like a child
with an empty mason jar
surrounded by swarms of fireflies
blinking like a cheap bar sign
on a dusty dead-end road
in the middle of the black night

Nine to Five Plus Overtime

Leah Treesh

Green eyes try to peep over puffy swells
of another too early morning
after another too late night
Sleep crusts in the corner of one eye
and matches the tired green that remembers:
Remembers a time when nine to five
was a dress-up game
played with dresses buried in a Goodwill bag
in the back of Mom's shadowed closet,
a time when under-eye creases
only appeared during noon-time squint sessions
with a sand-filled tire and a toy Tonka dump truck,
a time whose only reminder
is a morning mirror's reflection
of new, tired creases
and too many days gone by.

Indiana Cornstalks

Leah Treesh

You remind me of the big kids,
lining up to get on that stinky, squeaky bus
standing in a straight row, but kind of fidgety too
I wonder if the gnats bother you
since they always seem to itch behind your ears
and play leapfrog around your rough, green stalks
I wonder where your rows end and if it's dark enough
for monsters to play hide and seek where the crickets stay
and sing me to sleep at night

An Open Apology to the Waitress I Tipped Badly
Andy Washburn

Doris:

I know you are worth more
Than the pathetic pocket of change
That clutters the table now.
I guess you could blame
My heritage for this crime.
(We Southern whites have become infamous
For our history of cheap labor.)
But, I am sure this is no excuse
For reminding you,
Coin after coin,
That you should have had it better off.
When you use this minor offering
To pay for groceries, gas, rent, or cigarettes,
(Or, more likely, the sales tax)
Please don't batter me
With a clenched notion.
I appreciated all you did for me,
But one mother and several ex-girlfriends
Have insisted
I never had enough to offer a woman
For her care.
Sadly, I understand
Change is impossible for you to chew,
Much less to swallow.

Heart

Linda Watkins Price

for Pablo Neruda

Oh no, I told him
Neruda is not for reading now
when I am so disappointed
with suicide bombings, famines,
and murdered children.

When you drop that book
into my lap,
it is as solid as a river stone,
smooth and worn into timeless
sadness, speaking of the river's
progress over those who lie
heavy and motionless.

So do not bring me
these words smelling of sage
and old women
and salt in the sea
unless you read to me
in Spanish,
where
the only word
I understand
is *corazon*.

I Think of You at the Oddest Times

Linda Watkins Price

I think of you at the oddest times--
when I prick my finger mending
and wait for the new scarlet to grow round,
when I forget my shoes going to the mailbox,
and a bee takes advantage,
when the frying pan licks my palm,
or fresh coffee bites my lip.

You told me once
breasts are not important,
but I saw your face when I came to you,
hair still damp and my swimsuit
making an outline in my clothes:
you reached out for my shoulder;
I had an itch in the shape of your hand.

The last day I saw you,
my fingers felt bandaged:
I could not suffer the warmth of your cheek.

Yes, the oddest times--
just today, a kitten scratched my face,
marking a tear-trail exactly.

After Buying a Used Book

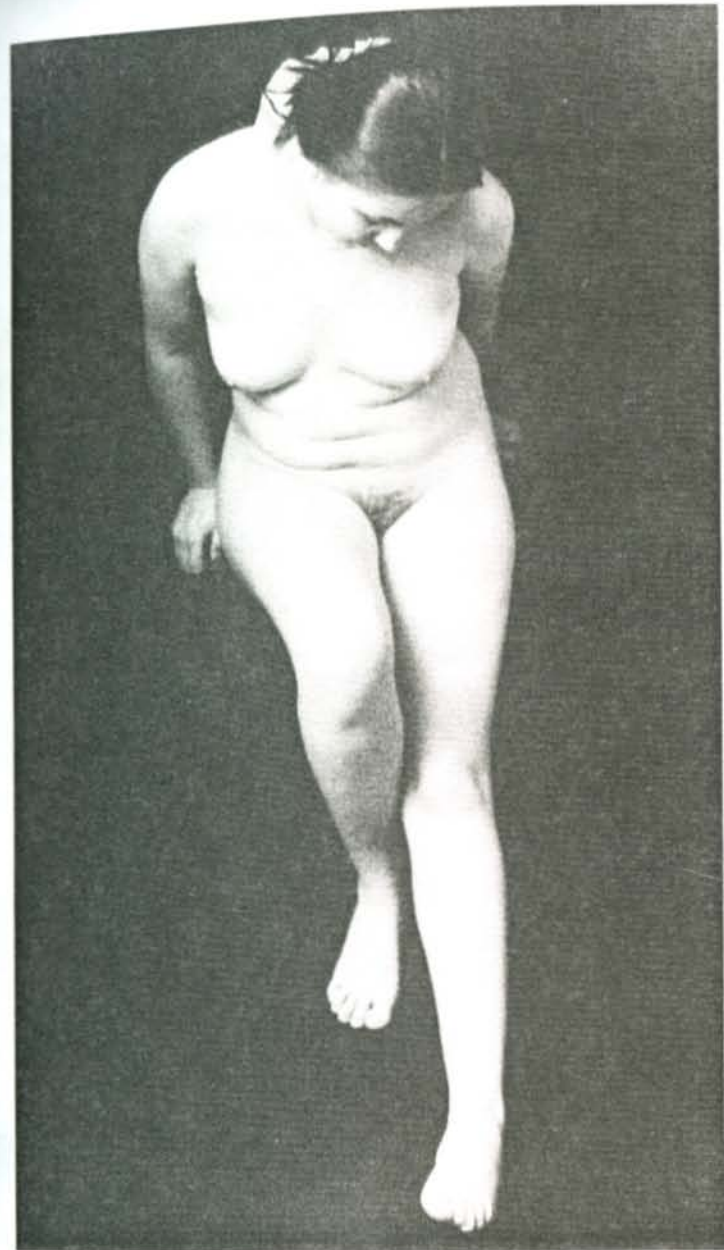
Linda Watkins Price

The flower lay between the pages
in dark, unintentional beauty.
Once lively purple, unfurling its plumes
in pride to the sun, it was plucked
by zealous fingers in its prime, given
as a seal of one heart against another.
Now maroon like blood
that has flowed and returned to earth,
mixed with mud, aged,
it is flat, pressed with fond memory and perhaps
a smile into my book, forgotten now
in the thrill of trading for something new.
And if I, to whom this flower means nothing,
should lay it on the windowsill, daylight
will destroy what remains. I open
the book to see the darkness upon the light,
touch its dry petals and stiff, fragile stem, forgotten
by the one who gently closed
these pages with prayerlike hands.
This flower, absorbed into history now,
leaves me in as much wonder
as any words you ever wrote.

Pick Me Up at the Edge

Linda Watkins Price

Standing in the cold,
the pattern of your conversation drifts
over the receiver, right shoulder hunches
to cradle my voice to your ear,
one hand plays with the cord, the other,
a penny someone abandoned when he found it
not enough for a friend's thoughts.
You sound as if you are in a cave, the cave I stood in
once and wondered at the steep edge:
If I fall, will anyone hear the scream
scraping my throat raw on its way out?
Pick me up at the edge
of town, you say, and my keys jingle in my hand.
In your background, I hear an oncoming train whistle,
its long breath making puffs of white in the air.



Nude

Melodie Baggarly

Letting Go

Amy Croslin

What is it like
to beat brown wings
on a limb
above a Sunday church door
and feel one feather,
letting go,
to drift softly
below
to catch in the lace
of a young girl's
skirt?

In Memorium

Crying

Robert "Levi" Jackson
(1977-1997)

Seep endlessly into the sewers of insanity
Entangled within the web of fear
Trapped
Confined

Where is the freedom?
A freedom like no other
To exist. . . in reality.

To exist
To shred away this flesh
Letting my soul soar above the clouds
But yet, not touching the sky.

To touch the heart of madness
And free it from the fierce beast
That lies within.

Sanity, oh sanity,
I sing your sweet song.

Weeping as I look
Through the eyes
Of the millennium.

To spread my wings
To fly. . . .



Untitled

Carrie Foster

Where We Look

Sylvia Ahrens

A year after my husband died, I packed up my clothes and my daughter and headed for England. It was a trip we had always meant to take as a family, but life had its own agenda. My dream of becoming a writer also seemed to die. All the feelings and emotions I hoped to put to paper dissolved into month after season spent petting the cat and staring out an ever-changing window. With nothing to lose and only possible sanity to gain, I left the tears behind and flew off. Somewhere within that isle of literary backbone, I felt, I would find my strength, my much-needed muse.

Before I knew it, London opened before me like an eclectic treasure chest. I was ready for a sign should one appear. Scouring the old streets and pathways, I zealously traced the steps of Keats, Byron, and Yeats. I pored over plaques, scrutinized townhouses once rented by Emerson and T. S. Eliot, swilled a pint at the Dickens Tavern, gazed at the Thames with poetic longing, hounded Baker Street in search of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, communed with the pigeons of Trafalgar Square, rolled in the grass of Hyde Park, meditated to the chiming of Big Ben, paid homage to the Beatles at the Royal Albert Hall, reflected on the ornate vastness of Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, celebrated the antiquity of a Beowulf manuscript and the Rosetta Stone in the British Museum, applauded the Phantom of the Opera from the balcony of Her Majesty's Theatre, saluted the Buckingham Palace guards, even surrendered to my daughter's insistence on experiencing the London Dungeon. But the urge to move onward prevailed.

Our journey into the West Country and Cornwall conjured up Arthurian legends at every stop. Glastonbury--purported Avalon--mixed new-age alternatives with ancient Christianity. Crystal shops, candle stores, and massage parlors dotted the town where the flowering thorn tree supposedly sprang from the staff of Joseph of Arimathaea, and the Chalice Well spouted water thought to have arisen from the chalice of the

Lord's supper. The old abbey grounds nearby cried they held the bones of royals. The city of Bath misted the aura of Jane Austen. The sea resort of Lynmouth whispered Shelley. The bleak greystone Jamaica Inn on Bodmin Moor resounded of Daphne du Maurier's smugglers. The caves and windswept fortress of Tintagel splashed Tennyson's "Idylls of the King." The glorious seaside bluffs of St. Ives summered Virginia Woolf's spirit. My daughter bought headphones for her tape recorder and the latest in British punk rock. I saw no sign.

The trains took us along the South Coast where the English Channel sparkled in deep blue sovereignty. The coastal village of Felpham offered Blake's cottage. Brighton's Royal Pavilion recalled Don Juan. The white cliffs of Dover sang to Matthew Arnold and Lear's bout of madness. The walled city of Canterbury cast Chaucer's tales around every corner. The small sea town of Broadstairs revered Dickens. But I always got back on the train.

Cambridge, Oxford. . . the universities and colleges spawned the scholarly ghosts of Milton, Spenser, Thackeray, and Dryden. Lewis Carroll peered out from a looking glass. But not here, not here, something seemed to say.

Stratford-on-Avon beckoned, as I knew it would. The birthplace of Shakespeare could awaken my genius--the tragedy and tradition, the drama and costume, Anne Hathaway's cottage--the accompaniments of the master shrouded that modern Elizabethan market town; but the bard proclaimed us fools, all.

Into Wales then! The sylvan Wye Valley hovered about us in gothic beauty. The power of nature to nourish the soul and mind was strong among the green hills and merging rivers. We took a frightening bus ride along the steep windy roads to Tintern Abbey. Scouting the ruins, we tried to imagine closure surrounding the massive roofed arches. In a small enclave, I shut my eyes and felt the presence of brown-cowled monks marching in slow chant around me. Hay-on-Wye, a tiny secluded hamlet, supported 25 bookstores and an international literary festival. We pounded the streets of Carmathen, Merlin's birthplace, but his myth was sleeping. I hoisted a few in Dylan's bar, then wandered the lanes of his beloved Swansea while his phrasings

splashed in the seafoamy air of rooks and castles. On to Aberystwyth, Caenarfon, Beaumaris, Llandudno--names we could not pronounce--over countryside so wondrous it sparked the creative urge. But the words were not mine. And a sign still eluded me.

Back into England we traveled. Through rain and mist we trekked the Brontes' Haworth, trying to conjure the passion of those bleak moors. We rambled Nottingham and Sherwood Forest, but neither good nor evil was at work that day. Scarborough romanced Simon and Garfunkel. York offered traces of artistic pleasures and a yawn from my daughter. We were running short of time.

I almost bypassed the Lake District--home to Thomas De Quincey, Robert Southey, William Cowper, Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit as well as Wordsworth and Coleridge--because of the crowds, but the flowers bloomed so magnificently and the lush hills nestled protectively. So I endured the Prelude Restaurant, fed popcorn to the tourist-trained shore birds, and took the obligatory boat tour around the lakes. Tired and confused, I flopped to a seat up on the windy deck and glumly sipped a glass of wine. Three hours of rocking solitude would allow me time to figure out what to do next. Go back home and stare out my window? Take a job at the bank? Coax the cat into becoming my muse? I closed my eyes as the wine and the gentle motion lulled me. My daughter had met another American girl and was busy below exchanging musical intelligence. A few noisy sightseers came up on deck but found the wind too bold and left.

Nearly asleep, I stretched my legs, and my foot bumped against something under the seat in front of me. I opened my eyes. There, dirty and shoe-scuffed, I spotted a book. Something urged me to pick up the ragged volume. It was a journal by Dorothy Wordsworth--William's sister. I vaguely remembered a passing reference to her. Now on that blustery boat as I leafed through the book, her words came alive. Her fine descriptions of everything from the making of gingerbread to the baggy clouds on a blackened evening to the composure of William's poetry sang with wondrous simplicity. The jottings in her journal

captured the very essence of a writer: writing, that basic recording of life and one's relationship to it. Dorothy's delightful expressions embraced all that I was seeing and feeling--the miracle in the mundane, the deity in the daily, the exultation of the earth. I scanned the pages hungrily until the tour ended.

Suddenly I was impatient to fight the mobs outside Dove Cottage, the cherished home where she lived with William. The long lines leading to the cottage enabled me to read more as my daughter lingered with ice cream in the shade. She had had her fill of literary endeavors. Inside I saw Dorothy's fragile spectacles behind glass, touched the bed that dominated her small room, read the yellowed newspapers she had pasted to the walls to keep drafts from William's children.

I bribed my daughter with chocolate as I made the voyage through the Wordsworth Museum. There on the wall was the one portrait of Dorothy--a dust-capped stern profile so unlike her flowery words and poetic eye. I absorbed all I could about her, but the puzzle only deepened. Who was this woman who had conversed with masters? Who had edited William's immortal words? Who had walked with William and Coleridge and heard the latter declare they were "three with but one soul"? Who had worn her future sister-in-law's ring the night before her brother married? In the bookstore I bought her small book of poetry, her other accounts of village life and its people, the descriptions of her walking tours through England and Scotland.

Backpack overloaded, I pleaded with my daughter to make one last odyssey--the short miles into Grasmere. Before an ivied brick church I saw the sign--Wordsworth's Grave. We strolled with the crowds along the narrow shady path to the family burial plot. And there she lay, abandoned and ignored beside her famous brother. I leaned against a nearby tree and reflected on the forgotten woman. My pilgrimage had brought me from country to country, grave to grave looking for answers. Now I felt I had found a few. I would start with a journal, record whatever the day brought--the spark of a smile, the size of my window, the antics of my cat--anything as long as I was writing. From there, who knew?

Suddenly I was charged with an excitement I had thought

lost. Reaching through the black iron fence, I touched the sun-warmed marble of Dorothy's grave. The stone seemed to vibrate with a heart of its own. A breeze caressed my face, invading the air with a cologne of flowers, and I knew it was time to go home.



The ones that mother gives you #2

Brandon Hayden

To Take the Plunge

Patricia Ann Jagers

Looking down through the clear blue frictionless mass, fear suffocating me in its grip, I know I cannot jump. My heart pounding in my ears, I hear my voice plead for someone to get me off of this thing. I cannot move for fear I'll fall. Only moments ago, my greatest fear was of being found out—of being a failure. Now I had failed not only everyone around me, but myself—the only one who believed in me.

When I was eight years old, my father built me a pool. It was only three feet deep and nine feet wide. This pool I loved. I would spend hours in it, my hands shiny and wrinkled as crushed silk, blowing whisper bubbles through my nose and mouth. Fear never visited my pool. The bottom, aqua, crinkled, and soft, was never more than a few familiar inches from my feet. I was completely content until the day Daddy said I needed to learn how to swim.

"But I know how to swim," I countered. "I float on top of the water—on my back." And I did. The bright sun toasting my wet cheeks, my closed eyelids, the world was scarlet, soft, warm, and I was floating in it. An only child, I knew quite well the sound of silence. I also knew the sounds this "quiet" water made: the tinkle of it as I slowly raised my hands from it, the lapping of it against the pool sides, the explosion of it as bubbles burst to the surface. My world, and it was perfect. Why couldn't Daddy see this? Why was I suddenly so very afraid?

Daddy, big, strong, fireman that he was, had always meant safety, security to me. Now, he threatened to take away my confidence—my safety net. Hands under my stomach, he instructed me, "Kick! Kick your legs! No, bend them more at your hips than at your knees. Swing your arms! Make one circle at a time. Kick your legs; don't stop kicking your legs!" After a few minutes of these orders, I felt his hands slip away. I started flailing wildly and promptly sank; I never trusted him again.

Intrusive chlorine burned my throat and nose and etched an odor deep inside my head. Months later, I could still smell

that pool. Far worse than the humility I suffered from my father's incessant taunting at my failure was the knowledge that I was no longer one with my pool. It called to me from the backyard; I ignored it and never entered it again. Neglect had her way with it.

The water, now shallow and olive in color, teemed with life. Tiny tadpoles, endlessly busy, circled in a fruitless race, while wiggle-tails went about their daily business of keeping the water moving. Even dragonflies (snake doctors, as Daddy called them), skitting across the water, would alight on the pool's edge, quiver briefly, then lift as if undecided which direction to pursue, and fade away. I would watch the little life forms busily taking for granted their ability to swim. They thought nothing of it, but I did. I longed to know what it felt like to be a part of the water, to move with it. I could float. That's all. But wasn't that the supreme purpose of swimming? Daddy swore I was a quitter, that I would never learn to swim as long as I remained afraid. I was not afraid; I was defeated.

That fall, he angrily tore down my pool, saying he had wasted his money. He told me, "When I was a kid, I never had it as good as you do. I learned to swim when they threw me in." I often wondered who "they" were, and if "they" would have prevented him from drowning, if it had come to that. I managed to avoid the subject of swimming for two years—until the day at Kentucky Lake.

We had been there the better part of a scorching summer day when my father decided a dip in the lake was just what we needed to cool us off. Skillfully, Mom knifed into the water; Dad did a tidal splash feet first. After they frolicked in the water for a few moments, they beckoned me to join them. As if on glass shards, I carefully picked my way into the water, checking for a bottom with each footstep. Close enough to the edge to crawl out if necessary, I eased myself onto my back. The old familiar tranquillity descended upon me. I could hear my mother's muffled voice telling my father, "She could swim if she wanted to."

"She's too afraid of the water," he replied.

"People who are afraid of water don't float on their

backs," she retorted.

The sun a scarlet glare through my closed lids. . . "People who are afraid of water don't float . . ." The water tinkled as I raised my hand. I would learn to swim, I vowed. It just took some time for me to get up my courage.

Twenty-three summers later, I took swimming lessons in a child's group at Camp Joy. My children, also in the group, were older than I was that day at Kentucky Lake. Shame flamed my cheeks as I took my place along the wall of the pool with children, some of whom were already beginning swimmers.

How in God's name did I talk myself into this?

While, like ivy to a fence, I clung to the wall, the students splashed and kicked fearlessly in the deeper portions of the water. "People who are afraid of water don't float . . ." I eased myself into that old familiar position once again and heard our instructor comment that the back-float is used as a life-preserving technique in the event the swimmer gets into trouble. Confidence anew, I finished the day's lesson—and the next, and the next. Finally, I was swimming across the pool without groping for the sides, touching the bottom, or stopping for a breath. I was *swimming*. The instructor told us that during the last couple of days of classes we could invite our families to come and watch us "show our stuff."

For today, the next-to-last day of class, I had arranged front-row seats for my husband, my dad and my step-mom (Momma died thirteen years ago). Fear knotted my stomach. *What if I screw up today with them watching? They'll never let me live it down.*

I take my turn and ace my performance. After we practice our laps and backstrokes, excitement ripples through the group as she announces that today we will dive. No one had mentioned *diving* before.

Long, glistening, blue, and perched over the ten-foot end of the pool is the monster whose gaze I had avoided, until now. I had told my father, my stepmother, and my husband that today would be the day I would *swim* the length of the pool, not *dive* into it. However, I am determined not to fail once again; I can swim, and this will be the final proof.

What if I cannot? What if someone has to pull me from the pool? What will Daddy say?

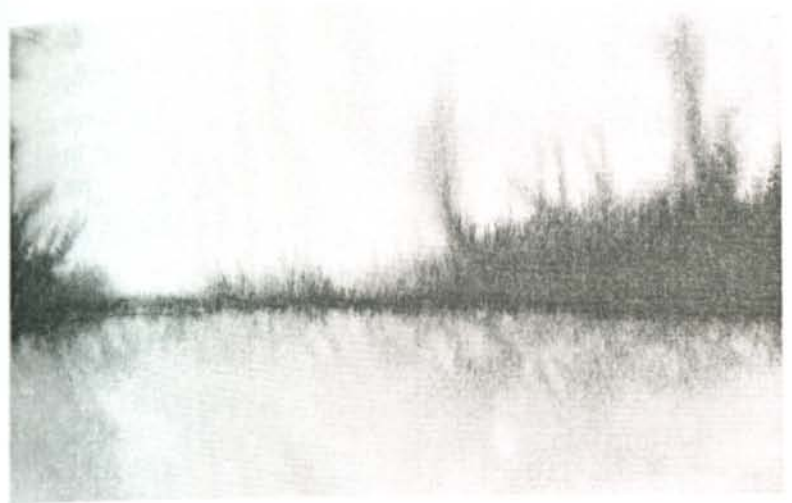
I want to dive last. Shaking, I climb onto the diving board, its surface a rough, sandy texture to my wet feet.

With hot tears flowing down my cheeks and fear searing through my belly, I find I am frozen to the spot. I can neither dive nor turn away. Strong hands take my arms in answer to my voiced pleas, but I do not wish to be a “quitter” as my father had said. I am afraid, but I can float. I look through the diamond patterns of the fence around the pool at my husband, my father, and my stepmother—maybe for the last time—take a deep breath, and jump.

Grasping at and touching nothing, I hit the water hard and sink forever. Kicking madly, I remember my arms and pushing against the water succeeds in propelling me upwards. My nostrils on fire, my heart screaming, *I am going to die*, I break through the surface and begin to tread water. *Yee--eess! I did it!*

I put aside my fears for once and trusted in my ability. I hadn't failed as the result of my fear; I hadn't even tried. Success didn't come to find me; I had to entice it to my door. Softly, amid the congratulatory cheers of the group, I hear my mother say, “People who are afraid. . . don't float . . .”

I can float.



Sleepy Horizon

Kaylie Finnis

The Sound of the Bones

Kevin Blankenship

It is impossible to sleep at night when you lie awake and listen to the sound of your bones growing. The sound is horrendous, the squeak, the groan, the agonizing stretching sound like ten thousand cars and trucks in one big accident that stretches for miles and miles inside my head. The problem with all this is that I do not want my bones to grow.

Don't get me wrong, being tall would not be a problem except when you get to a certain height new expectations are forced upon you, like jobs, responsibilities and money all summed up in one word: *adult*. That word is a trap, a bottomless pit where they take all your childhood, all your toys, all the pies in the summer and hot chocolate in the winter and put them in a little box that is locked up and opened only for memories and stories to tell children.

As I sat at the table on a warm spring morning and looked at my mother as she swished around the kitchen making breakfast, the sound of my own body rebelling against me, growing and broadening, made me want to run outside and vomit my anger up into the feathery wisps of clouds in the light blue sky.

"Do you want some milk, Tommy?" my mom asked.

Milk, I thought, and suddenly the thought occurred to me that food was all part of the problem. When my parents gave me food, they just made *adult* slither up even faster. All those vegetables and meats and milk they gave me was just a poison, a poison to make me stop wanting chocolate chip cookies in bed and jawbreakers that make my mouth turn all yellow inside.

"I'm making your favorite breakfast this morning, blueberry pancakes and maple syrup," my mom said as she set a plate down in front of me. "Remember, tell your teacher this morning that I am going to bring a pineapple cake to the spring party Friday."

"Okay, Mom."

My mom placed two steaming pancakes on my plate and

poured syrup all over them so that it dripped off the plate and stained the white placemat a dull gooey brown. The smell of maple rose up into my face and curled into my nostrils. At that moment, the smell was the most sickening aroma in the world.

"I'm not really hungry this morning," I said.

"But it is your favorite. Are you sick or something?"

"No, I'm just not very hungry. I'll just pick up something at school."

"Okay, but just make sure it's not candy."

"Sure."

As I walked to school that morning, the cool spring breeze playing through my hair and bringing me the smell of opening flowers, I thought of all the things I loved now. I thought of my toys, the toys I brought out every day and put back every night. I thought of all my books I read, my comics and my adventure novels. I didn't want to replace those toys with calculators and pencils and replace my comics with books of poetry I couldn't understand anyway.

I heard the sound of running feet beside me and turned around. Freddy Tucker and Ronny Berringer were running toward me.

"Hey, Tommy, wait up!" Freddy yelled.

I waited until they caught up with me.

"Did you do your homework?" Ronny asked.

"Yeah," I mumbled.

"Man, I didn't know being in the sixth grade was going to be such hard work," Freddy said.

"Just wait a little longer," I said.

Freddy and Ronny exchanged puzzled looks. Then Catherine Benjamin crossed the street in front of us.

"Hey, Cathy, what you been doing? Been playing with all your dolls like a little girl?" Ronny yelled.

Freddy and Ronny both fell into fits of laughter, but Catherine only gave a little smile and kept walking.

She looks a little unsure of herself, I thought, although I was not sure why. *She's starting to get breasts* was my next thought, and I felt my face redden.

I didn't say anything else on the way to school, although

Freddy and Ronny talked all the way there about the new Superman comic.

School started much the same way as it always did. First period was math, a subject I always dreaded. I didn't mind it much today, however, because I was too much in thought about how the stuff was starting to make sense. I looked down at my math problems and thought of the tax forms I had seen my parents fill out time and time again, year after year.

Second period was English, my favorite subject because we were reading about knights and castles. Today, however, I barely listened and instead looked out the window and watched the sun play along the highway and light up the different colored sparkles in the road. The grass at the sides of the road was starting to grow up, and it waved in the wind or to each passing car as though it wanted to tickle someone.

Something hit the back of my neck, making me jump. I turned around to see my teacher standing there amid the giggles from around the room.

"Well, Tommy," she said. "Just what is so interesting outside the window?"

"Nothing, really. I was just looking at the grass."

More giggles erupted from the room.

"The grass, well, that is interesting. Hmm, do you suppose you can tell me anything about *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*?"

"No."

"Well, try to pay attention."

My teacher walked back to the front of the room. I looked around at all the grins from my friends. I looked away and caught Catherine Benjamin's face. She was looking at me and smiled a brief smile. She reddened and looked away. So did I.

Next period was a science class which, unfortunately, was a lesson on anatomy. I looked up at an overhead of the skeletal system and shuddered. I could hear the sounds of growing bones all over the room. *So this was why they fed you all this information. Book by book, bit by bit, they chopped away at your childhood, digging a great hole to be filled by education and experience, making you into a stuffed scarecrow*

filled by bits of air and straw with nothing left of the wonder and the innocence that a child has. Where go the days of mystery and pure fantasy, are they carted off and thrown down that great big hole of adulthood?

I could not concentrate the rest of the day because my bones were getting longer.

After school I did not go home as I usually did, to play with my toys or to play outside in the sandbox out behind our house. Instead, I walked down the streets of the town, looking in windows at the world of the adult. Here were pictures of men and women at picnics, at parties; here were mannequins advertising the latest spring dress. At last I wandered into the drugstore, a place where I could find shelter behind the rows and rows of candy and comics.

The owner looked up and smiled.

"Hi, Tommy, anything I can help you find today? My, you're getting taller."

I reddened and looked down at the floor.

"No," I managed to mumble, and fled to the licorice sticks.

As I walked down the candy aisle, a thought rumbled up: *adults sell these things.* All the candy and comics, they were made by adults to fill up the children. With their sugar and their action, they meant to blind the children, to block their senses, while they scooped out the innocence and replaced it with newspapers and ties.

I looked around. The gumballs leered at me with reddened eyes, the licorice whips snaked towards me, meaning to bind themselves around my newfound bones. I fled the drugstore in horror.

Eventually I wandered down to Cedar Creek and sat on the old railroad bridge that crosses at the end of town. I watched the dark flowing water below me and smelled the odor of algae coming from the creek. I listened to the sound of water and felt it mix in with the sound of my body changing. In the distance I heard the rumble of thunder and looked up to see a spring storm building on the horizon.

"Hey, Tommy!"

I turned around to see a group of boys coming down the other side of the bridge. Freddy and Ronny were among them.

"Hey, Tommy," Freddy said. "Still watchin' the grass grow. We're all going down to swing on the old grapevine out at Cypress Park. Wanna come?"

I thought about it, but being around all those boys and listening to the sounds of their laughter and their bones growing sent shivers dancing down my neck and into my shirt.

"No, I think I'll go home."

The boys turned and headed in the other direction. I got to my feet and started walking towards the end of the bridge. As I was walking, I noticed that Catherine Benjamin was sitting on the edge of the bridge. As I approached she looked up. My face reddened.

"Hi, Tommy. What are you doing?" Her face shone in the light.

"Just walking."

"Mind if I come along and just walk, too?"

"Sure, come on."

We walked towards the town. I looked over at her face and the curve of her body in the half-light that gave her blond hair a silky shine. The thunder sounded again, closer.

Big raindrops began to fall on our bare arms and hair. I looked over at Catherine.

"There is a cave not too far from here," I said, and we ran.

We ran as the rain fell in huge drops and splashed our arms and our eyes and the wind tore through our hair and sent cold air quivering over our faces and along the curves of our necks so we laughed as though we were being tickled. We ran as lightning cracked around us and made the smell of ozone strong in the rain.

At last we made it to the cave and pressed ourselves up into the dark. The stone was wet and dripping and smelled of rain and moss, an earthy smell that lingered in the still cave air. We were both drenched and shivering from the cold, so Catherine pressed her body up against mine and I shivered from a lightning flash of excitement.

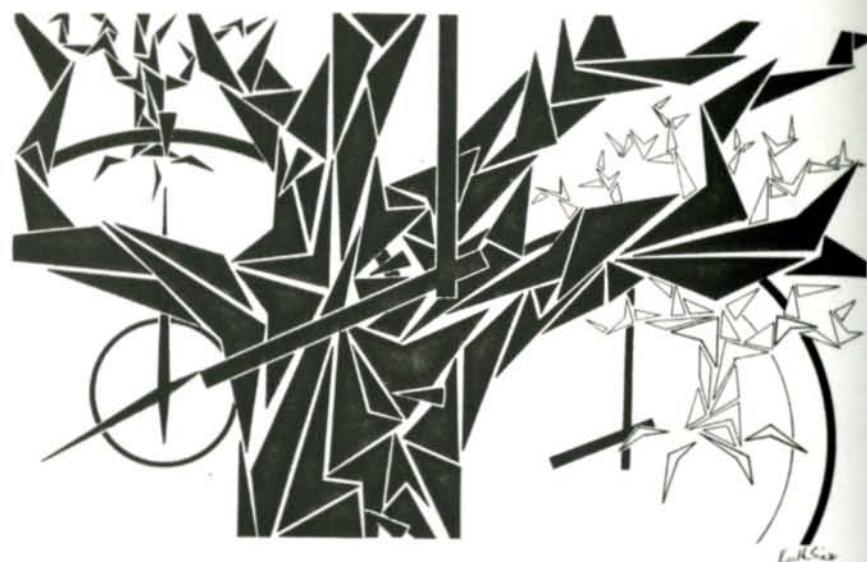
Her hair was against my cheek and I could smell her shampoo, a flower scent, mixed with the smell of earth and rain, smells that tore into my mind and made my body stiff, smells that danced and sang along our bodies as I looked down and saw her small breasts outlined in her shirt and felt her hands as they pressed into my stomach.

She looked up. We kissed.

We kissed and the taste was at once salty and sweet and the feeling was warm and wet. We kissed as the rain tore down outside and pattered against the ground, echoing against the walls of the cave and drenching over us as the sound of the rain merged with the sound of our kiss and became the same.

The rain brought in the scent of fresh water and a sudden blast of air made our skin quiver. We kissed, and slowly, so slowly, the smell of woman overcame me, showering me in a song of rain and lightning and wind that still drenched me long after the kiss had ended and I was at home, in bed, still and silent as our cave had been.

That night, the sound of bones grew quiet.



Untitled

Keith Sinz

CROSSING THAT BRIDGE

Linda Watkins Price

Knowing I probably am not supposed to be here, I go walking across the bridge anyway. There is no sidewalk for pedestrians, only a knee-high railing that I have to lean against if a car passes me, but I don't care. So what if I fall into the river? I'm already cold and the bright fall colors don't cheer me up at all. I can't stop thinking about Bill, and these thoughts doom me to walk, freezing, across this bridge.

Leaves flutter by me, dipping and twisting in the wind as they fall, inevitably, into the gray water beneath this bridge. I want to laugh; there haven't been any butterflies for weeks, and here I am thinking of the leaves fluttering as if they were still alive. I suppose it is denial, that I want to see butterflies where there are none because that reminds me of summer, and summer was the time I was with Bill and he still loved me then. Now everything is damp and cold, and I keep walking across the bridge and watching leaves spiral down into the cold water like dying ballerinas. It is the first time I can remember looking down at the water as I walk across. I never have liked bridges. All that open space under my feet, inviting me to fall. I want my feet on firm ground.

I reach the other side of the bridge without falling in, and I'm a little bit sorry. The wind dies down some, and I look at the half-naked trees standing in the yards of the houses I pass. Smoke curls from some of the chimneys, twitching in the now-light breeze like the tails of cats on the prowl. As I watch, a single golden leaf suddenly gives up its last hold on life and drifts down, spinning in a sudden gust of wind. This town is my home, I think as I pass the car wash, abandoned until the clouds pass. Why do I feel so out of place here?

I finally reach my studio on Warner Street and unlock the door. I reach for the light but change my mind and step inside the darkness. It swallows me up and I become invisible. Just what I want to be at this moment in time. An invisible woman with an invisible heart. Knowing the studio so well, I don't need the light

anyway. Carefully I make my way across to where the clay wheel sits like a gargoyle in the dim light from the one tiny window and ease myself down onto the stool. Swiveling around, I reach for the block of clay I wedged yesterday and unwrap it. The clay feels smooth against my skin, damp like the weather and cool like my mood. I slam the clay down onto the platform of the wheel and the noise startles me, like a thunderclap would on a sunny summer day. It seems to echo in the tiny room that is my studio. I haven't been here to actually work for some time; rather, I have only cleaned and wedged clay and packed finished projects in boxes. The last time I was here actually creating anything, Bill was the model. And yesterday I came early in the morning to dismantle that sculpture and pound the clay mercilessly against the block until no resemblance of him remained. Now I will rework the clay, shape it into my pain.

I jab my thumbs into the moist clay, wondering where to begin. Should I make falling leaves? No, too easy. My fingers begin to stroke the clay unconsciously. Bill's face melted? Too gruesome. Finger and thumb begin to pinch, shape clay while I think. Trees, maybe. Yes. Trees, impervious and steadfast. That's what I want. My fingers begin to move with more purpose now, pulling the clay and pinching and twirling, making it struggle toward the sky.

The late afternoon light comes through my one tiny window, weak and listless. How far can I go in the dark, I wonder. Has it ever been done? Should I keep going without seeing what I'm really doing? After all, that's how I got involved with Bill in the first place. My fingers begin to take on the clay independently of my mind, poking and prodding and pushing without any conscious thought on my part. I vaguely feel a branch taking shape as I think about Bill.

I can't even remember why I was attracted to him in the first place. I can remember when we first met, at a poetry reading one of my friends invited me to (she was reading that night) and Bill told me he was a musician. I thought him arrogant and rude, but his dark hair and eyes and tall slim figure had spoken to my body, and I thought it was a shame his personality didn't match. Then he came by the studio a couple of days later, which

surprised me, and we talked about my work and what it meant to me and he said that he felt the same drive and passion to create, that he had ever since he was a child, and he had taken up the violin at the age of six--the same age I was when I began to scoop pond mud from behind my house and shape it into animals. Both sets of parents had thought their offspring were crazy. Then suddenly after that I felt I'd misjudged him and we were spending nearly all our time together. We were together two months that spring before we ever slept together. I thought him a lousy lover at first, but I forgave him that and kept loving him, and eventually I forgot that I ever thought him inadequate. He played the violin and I molded clay as the summer passed. I worked as a waitress, too, and he gave concerts with his orchestra in the city and finally I had a gallery owner take interest in my art and I even sold enough pieces that I didn't have to waitress full time any more. He got a duet with a flute player, then a solo. His conductor said he was headed for New York on an express. I was going to go with him. Then he decided that he should move into my apartment with me. That was three months ago. Then that woman started calling and I could see in his eyes that he couldn't tell me the truth about who she was, and he became a lousy lover again. He still played his violin, but it didn't sound as if he were playing it for me any more.

When I decided to quit making myself crazy-jealous, I asked him to leave. And the third night without him I called and begged him to come back. I swore I believed the woman was only a fellow musician and that was all. He knew I didn't believe him, though, and he said if I didn't trust him he could never come back. And he told me that I'm the one who's a lousy lover. I didn't know he knew about *that*.

Now he lives only a short way down the street from my apartment, staying with his cellist friend, and at night I can hear his violin and his friend's cello twisting together and waltzing out the window. He really plays beautifully--the first night I heard it, I knew it was his violin. And I cried and sketched some ideas for clay and told myself how stupid I was for ever having loved him in the first place. Once I walked down the street and stood beneath the window and listened until I heard a woman laughing

up there. Then I went to the studio, walking across the bridge in the dark, and wedged clay until my shoulders ached. I was sore the next day.

Now my fingers continue to shape in the dark, and with my hands I can see what the sculpture is becoming. A tree trunk, thick and strong, twisted with knotholes and broken branches. Somehow I push in just the right place, pull in another, and I know it is going to be a good piece. I begin to work faster, nearly reckless now, for I don't want to start crying and I feel very close to it. I feel used. I feel like a fool. My fingers are flying, attempting a desperate departure from pain. If I can put it into the clay, maybe I can leave it there.

I remember once at a party--a party I only went to so that I could be with Bill, which should have told me something--the music was so loud that the drums resonated through my body, altering my heartbeat to its own rhythms. I just sank down in a chair, closing my eyes, and let the music take my heart over, felt my skin pulse and my bones throb, and everybody thought I was drunk, which made me angrier than I could remember being in years. I feel out of control like that now, but the sculpture feels right under my hands.

Three hours later, I am ready to make my way home. I never did turn on the light in the studio, deciding instead to just go back in the morning and look at it, or maybe even later than that, when I feel better. There is some solace in the fact that it sits on the platform like a moist secret, that it comes from the earth and my hands and my passion and now holds my pain like a funeral urn. It needs time to rest in its tomb before the light disturbs it and makes it green and fresh again. I cover it with a wet cloth to keep it pliable in case I need to make changes, but I have that tingle in my hands that I get when something goes perfectly, is absolutely *right*. I haven't even washed my hands. Little dregs of clay cling to them, slowly drying, contracting my skin.

It is full dark outside, but the street lights are on as I leave the studio and I have never been afraid to walk back to my apartment after dark. I've lived there for two years and know all the troublemakers, most of whom consider me one of them. I

don't fit in with so-called normal people, so I must be one of them. That's my theory as to why they leave me alone, anyway. I never really ask for verification, just enjoy my immunity. There is no one else on the street anyway. If anyone sees me they will take me for a crazy, like we sometimes get here until the regulars of the street corners run them off. I walk along staring at my hands, watching the clay dry, feeling the skin pucker, thinking my nails are ruined for sure this time, and wondering what I have done. Is the thing on the platform *real*? Will I wake up in the morning and look at it and see a shapeless mass? Or have I created a masterpiece? It all seems like a dream, suddenly, and for that matter, so does Bill. I pay no attention to the trees now, standing in the dark, sentinels over the lonely and the lost. The bridge draws the wind in to itself, still cold but somehow not deadly any longer. I do not look down into the dark space above the water as I cross it. I reach my street and the wind dies down. It brings snippets of violin music to me, but I pay no attention to that, either. I am suddenly very tired.

Back in the apartment, I find a key lying on the kitchen table. A note from the landlord lies underneath it: *B. asked me to give this to you. Peggy.* I pick up the key and heft it in my palm, then toss it up and catch it a few times. Supposing his leaving is now official, I use the end of the key to clean the clay out from under my fingernails. Then I scrub my hands in the kitchen sink and make a cup of chamomile tea. I take the tea into the bathroom with me and have a quick shower before going to bed. As tired as I am, I can't stop wondering about the sculpture, but even the wondering wears me out and I soon fall asleep. I dream I am trapped in a tree, unable to feel, to see, to cry out. At four a.m. I wake up, shaking. I think I called Bill's name.

Two hours later dawn comes, and I'm still awake, thinking about trees. I dress in a hurry and make more tea, Earl Grey this time for the caffeine. I hardly need it. The sun is out, and bright, and my blood pumps with excitement and fear. Now I will see what I did in the dark. I will see my pain encased, inescapably, in my work. Pulling on my jacket, I fly down the stairs and out the door.

As soon as I come out into the street, I see Bill. He's

walking with his cellist friend, his violin case in hand, his other arm linked with a blond woman's. I don't stop but turn the corner and try to keep from running to the bridge. I hope they are on their way downtown and won't walk by. But I'm not going to let Bill stop me from getting to the studio ever again. That decision comes consciously and clearly into my head and I know it's right. I walk on, even when I realize they are behind me; they're probably going to the cafe just down the block from my studio for breakfast. I scuff the leaves along the pavement, watching the toes of my boots. My hands are in my pockets and I worry the key to my studio between my fingers, turning it over inside the pocket. I keep the key in the dark until it's time for it to do its job.

Bill and his friends pass my door just as I close it. He doesn't look at me, but the woman does. I wonder if she knows who I am, then decide she probably does and even if she doesn't, it doesn't matter. She's pretty enough, but I wonder how long she will last. Longer than I did, I'm willing to bet; something in her laugh tells me that she can never be a tree, the way I'm becoming one.

I turn on the light in the studio and slowly cross the room to where my sculpture sits covered. The cloth dried out some during the night, and the dry spots make a mottled, random pattern. Gingerly I reach out and pinch a corner of the cloth, drawing it slowly from the sculpture, until the piece of clay, shaped in the dark by my unthinking hands, is revealed. And my breath stops in the middle of my throat and becomes a lump.

My pain is caught there all right: I sealed it up in a tree. But the tree is more than a tree; it's me, too. I shaped a woman of wood from the waist up, her head thrown back and her hair flowing down behind her like a willow's branches. One hand, palm up, covers her face; the other is flung out before her as if warding some evil away. And her arms are sinewy, lean, gnarled and twisted like the limbs of a tree. There are knotholes where her eyes should be and her breasts are knotholes, too. Her waist spreads and becomes roots, firmly anchored in the ground. Several minutes pass before I can draw normal breath. I stare at the wood-woman, walk all around it, turn the platform. My eyes

won't believe that I did it.

But it's there. I touch it gently, as if it's made of smoke and might disappear at any contact. I sit down, hard, my mouth open. Then I carefully re-cover it with the cloth, make myself a cup of tea, and realize I still don't feel much better about what happened with Bill. I remade myself out of the remnants of him, and I don't like it. I don't like it at all.

Once more I unveil the work and study it, trying to be critical but without much success. And I know that I never want anyone else to see it, to touch it, to exclaim over it. I have to throw that pain to the wind, let the funeral urn have its final rest. I finish my tea.

Gathering the wood-woman up in my arms, I find she's quite heavy. Heavier than I want to carry, but I know where I'm going, and it isn't that far. I keep it wrapped in its shroud, for wet clay is cold and its chill has already started to invade my fingers, and start off down the street.

The sky has started to cloud up again, and it looks like it might rain by afternoon. The sun somehow manages to stay in a clear patch of blue and shines coldly as I make my way toward home. I walk past a confab at the carwash, where a group of teenage boys stand around in a loose circle with their hands on their hips, waiting either for someone to say something or to start fighting, then past an old man sitting on the bus bench, holding his hands clasped over his stomach, that curious paunch exclusive to the very young and the very old who possess otherwise thin limbs, swelling out like something hadn't tightened up or something had just let go inside them. I think he looks like a sculpture.

When I get to the middle of the bridge, I stop. For the second time that I can remember, I look down. It doesn't seem so far to the water now. Not far at all. Placing my wood-woman carefully on the railing, I rub my chilly hands briskly together and gently tip the sculpture over the edge. Then I walk to the other side, toward home.

The big rocks on the side of the road are inviting, and I'm tired from carrying the huge piece of clay this far. I think I'll sit on a warm rock for a while and watch the water with the sun at

my back and let my mind erase everything that has happened to me, but when I sit down, the sun is in my eyes and I find I have forgotten my sunglasses, and the rock is cold. I don't watch the water for very long; instead, I begin looking at the blue soil beneath my feet. I reach down and poke the clay with my fingers, already shaping something new.



Untitled

Marissa Kirby

Notes on Contributors

Sylvia Ahrens is a graduate student from Sulphur Well, Kentucky, majoring in English and Creative Writing. She works with her county's literacy program, is a moderator for the high school academic team, serves as membership chair for the Kentucky State Poetry Society, and plans to go back to England before the year 2000.

Kevin Blankenship is a graduating English major from Hudson, Kentucky, who will pursue a master's in Folk Studies at Western next fall. He is continually working on creating new ideas and refining old ones in his writing. He is currently working on a volume of poetry which he will, hopefully, publish some time in the future.

Amy Croslin is a senior writing student from Bowling Green. Her inspiration comes from friends, family, and her bizarre sense of humor. She has earned awards for her poetry, essays, and short stories and plans to continue writing (professionally, if possible).

Tracy S. Epley is a senior currently wondering why he double majored in English and History. A firm believer in the "Less Strategy, More Nonsense" philosophy, he has tried unsuccessfully to publish under the name "Big" Richard McGee. An accomplished procrastinator and slacker, he still wonders what the "S" stands for.

James Fritz could not be reached for comment, but is believed to be at large on Western's campus.

Chris Harrison, presently finishing his psychology and English degrees, plans to return to WKU and complete a biochemistry and a genetics degree, although he has found his greatest challenge stands two-foot six-inches and constantly spouts the phrase, "No, Daddy."

Patricia (Trish) Jagers is a freshman living in Brownsville, Kentucky. Currently majoring in Office Systems Technology, she is "sneaking in" all the extra English and Creative Writing courses she can get away with. Her first love is poetry, and she is striving toward being published. An avid journal-keeper since childhood, the full-time student with a husband, two teenage children, two cats, a dog, fish, and her children's six pets, has enough to write about but very little time to do so. Her advice to new students? Stay away from Cherry Hall. You may fall in love--as she did--with this old, romantic place in time and never want to leave.

Linda Watkins Price is a graduating senior who has had work published in *Zephyrus*, *Pegasus*, and *Chance*. After receiving her bachelor's degree this May, she will be moving with her husband, four children, and numerous animals to New Mexico, where she will pursue a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing.

Leah Treesh is an English (writing) major from Owensboro, Kentucky. Upon graduation in December '99, she plans to pursue a career as a high school English teacher while still finding time to write freelance.

Andy Washburn is a junior originally from Bowling Green. When he is not writing, he plays guitar for the local band Half Sloppy.