

There's Something Wrong With All Of Us

# SPRING ISSUE '96

# Table of Contents

Picture by Chris Kim	pg. 1
Chicken Fingers and Buffalo Wings by Brian Nitzkin	
and Liz Griffiths	pg. 2
Lemonade by Katherine O'Brian	pg. 3
Picture by Florance Pac	pg. 3
rear by Phil Marmet	Dg. 4
Untitled by Kristine Horseman	pa. 4
"True Love/Hurt" by Lauren Tario	pg. 4
Untitled by Michelle Brinkerhoff	pg. 5
"Dull Silence" by Lilian Tsai	pa. 5
Picture by Mary Hong	pa. 6
Untitled by Stew Witwer.	pg. 7
Clear by Peter Kim	Da. 7
"Petrified Reality" by Justin Ziemba	na Q
Picture by Michelle Brinkerhoff.	pg. 8
Untitled by Michelle Brinkerhoff	pa. 9
Untitled by Heather Helt	pă.9
Picture by Michelle Brinkerhoff. Untitled by Michelle Brinkerhoff. Untitled by Heather Helt. "Kitchen" by Will Furse.	pğ. 9
"I'm Petrilled" by Randi Kramer	na 1()
"Sorrow's Sleep" by Jacqui Conter.	pä. 10
Drawing by Tim Dose	pa. 11
"Sorrow's Sleep" by Jacqui Conter	pg.12
"Flower Poem" by Lilian Tsai	pg.12
"I WO HOSES" DV Sumi Nukovama	na.13-16
Picture by Brian Daley	pg.16
Picture by Brian Daley "The Guardian" by Jacqui Conter	pg.17
Drawing by Edie Faig	pg.18-19
Random Thoughts	pa.18-19
Untitled by Carlos Pineda	pa.20
Drawing by Susie Yeo	pg.20
Untitled by Alpa Shah	pa.21
"Silent Disgrace" by Leah Lefens	pg.21
Drawing by Jessica Danko	pg.22
"Last Performance" by Courtney Landers	pg.22
"Untouched" by rayontomo	20.00
"Future Rains" by Justin Ziemba	pg.23
'Future Rains" by Justin Ziemba 'Soft by Stew Witwer	pg.24
'Rose(s)" by Jacqui Conter.	pg.24
Who What Where When Why How" by Oatmeal	pg.25
Photo by Adeet Deshmukh	pg.25
Dog-Eat-Dog World" by Lauren Tario.	pg.26-27
Untitled by Alpa Shah.	pg.28
Untitled by Alpa ShahSing to Sing" by Katherine O'Brian	pg.28
Drawing by Dave Coons	pg.29
With Life" by sans	pg.30
Hate 4 Life" by Travis Edmonds	pg.30
Hate 4 Life" by Travis Edmonds	pg.31
Intitled by Alpa Shah	pg.32-33
Jntitled by Alpa ShahLos Suenos" by Melissa Hernandez	pg.34
To the ends" by sans	pg.35
Drawing by Mary Hong	ng 36
Submission To Calliope" by Jay Young	pg.37
Credits	pg.37



# Chicken Fingers & Buffalo Wings

If chickens have fingers and buffaloes have wings, what do camels have? Horns. Why? Why not. First of all, chickens are a common Friday night treat that are devoured flocks at a time. We pay homage to this ritual by giving them... fingers. To strum guitars and beat drums. That's it. They're very talented foul.

Secondly, buffaloes are not exactly what you call a "school lunch." The only kind of buffalo that middle America is accustomed to are the Buffalo Bills, of the National Football League, who have lost four consecutive Super Bowl titles. Our respect for these behemoths is to grant them wings, an ancient symbol given to the deceased (or dead) when they become angels. Which brings us to the question, "Why don't camels have horns?"

Camels have certainly earned respect throughout the years, serving as the double-humped members of the animal kingdom. Although no professional sports team is nicknamed "the camels," we feel camels should have horns because horns represent a miscellaneous part of the body, as compared to fingers to chickens and wings to buffaloes.

Brian Nitzkin + Liz Griffiths

# Lemonade

If dinner is burnt
there's always the wine
and after the rain
the sun will shine
from every teardrop
blooms a flower
because lemonade is made
with sugar sweet and lemons sour

# Katherine O'Brien



#### Fear

# The raw truth Sliding uncontrollably into a wall A compelling fore Sweaty palms slipping form the ledge The empty pit of your stomach

**Phil Marmet** 

Peering into the cage awaiting 'walk' to appear.

In the midst of the screeching and honking of the inner city.

To see nothing but to hear the gun being fired.

Your ears ring; the noise and traffic disappear.

You look at your left to see the man standing

Beside you fall to the cold ground of a cement curb.

To glare down at flesh laying in his own innocent puddle of blood.

Kristine J. Horsman

True Love/Hurt

In the beginning... It's the best thing ever, You're on cloud nine.

Then comes the break-up... You come down with a crash, He's out forever.

> Next is the new guy... The old guy's jealous, The new one's great.

Now things are dawning on you... The old guy's moving on, The new guy isn't the same.

Things are crashing into reality... Love always stays in your heart, No matter what--Feelings Don't Change.

You finally realize what Love is...
It seems too late,
You feel as if your life is over.

The story of Love... Not just any Love, Just True Love.

Was the Love True or not...
The only way to tell,
Is by the hurt.

The hurt...
It not only tears away at your soul,
It also rips out your heart.

What you feel... There is a large emptiness in your heart, And what's missing is your will to Love.

The question...
How can you heal,
How can you get over it?

Lauren Tario

And I'm playing with words like my friend played with fire at my sweet sixteen now I see how they lie the lies cover me like calories to an anorexic so there's no more room to think

and I gave away my heart or what was left of it

does that mean I'm a dreamer?

"I'm too much of a damned idealist!" laughing though I knew it to be true and she cut me deeper, so did he and I get to laugh because I did no wrong here as they both state it in sighs and it meant everything though it shouldn't have and still I run when anxious despite my asthma my body is screaming but I don't care 'cuz at least this way I'm alive

one night I crawled out of my window I wish I could hate him but I can't

Michelle Brinckerhoff

#### Dull Silence

We stand here together in shattered silence Staring at one another with frozen screams And painted smiles Shriveling up in the sheets wrapped tightly over our joints As the two hands move

Motionless, like scarecrows, we scare one another Flinching yet guarding our empty, paper hearts Dreaming of red and canary yellow pebbles While drowning slowly in our own fluids

Vainly we reach out for air Shifting our blank eyeballs back and forth Waiting until the hands meet For us to drop and kiss the ground

Lilian C. Tsai



In a desert
Painting hope
on a canvas barren,
even arter her soule
was blasted away
by the wind-swept
sand.

Can you blame her por hiding her eyes in her hands?
Can you expect her childlike acceptance or oasis. . . arter so many a mirage?

Derelici submerged in hot, white grains of time... searing her skin making her hate.

Accept that she needs to hold you away from the furnace in which she was tossed.

but she can't let go.

She won't.

There is life beyond have and hope beyond despair.

Stew Witwer

#### "Clear"

The darkness surrounds me
But it is not opaque
Pictures run through the fields of
My lonely mind
And I see your face
And ask to see it again
But he does not reply
The image burns my face
And I have fallen victim again.

Your silence catches me off guard
As you float beside me
I ask that you are real
But the image burns farther into me
The picture stop running
You break the grip
And the wall shatters behind me
I look up and you are there
So why am I so empty?

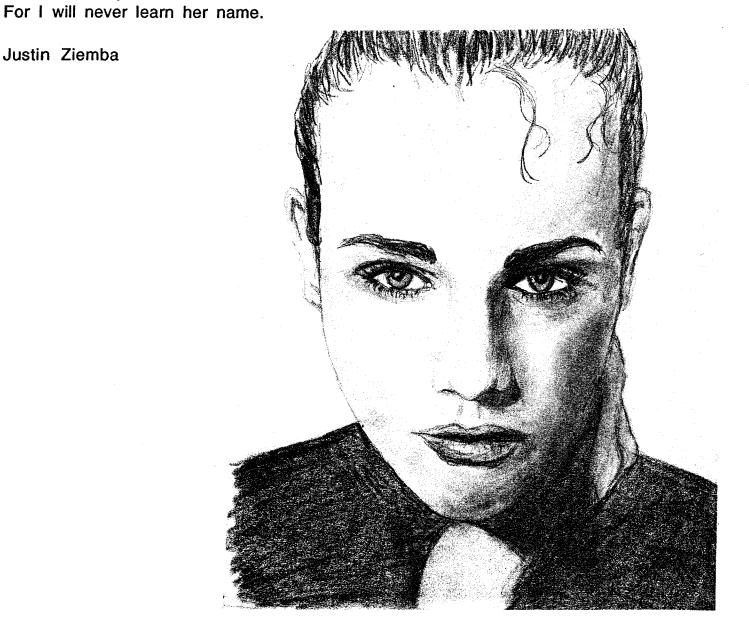
The gods laugh at my pleas
But somehow I have not what I need
You stand before me
Not knowing what you are to me
And the pictures stop running
Dance instead
He is envious of what we have
Because it is he
Not I
That is empty.

Peter Kim

## Petrified Reality

There she stands Frozen to the same smile I first saw Eyes so delicate They are hard to look at Voice so familiar and provocative My mother couldn't tell me otherwise Long, light brown hair Mystified her every move Her hands deprived of work and Abused by tenderness She unknowingly abandoned me Hopefully never to return

Justin Ziemba



# Not a Topic For Conversation

I stare at the photographs decapitated girls and enraged menripping what they could get their desperate fingers on

here in this classroom
bright yellow devoid of blood
he received no answers
for the need for
foreign aid

if only these raped girls could answer him but unfortunately tongues cannot speak without bodies to answer to

their silent screams echo more beautifully than drowning mermaids with vacant eyes emptier than the plastic ones of my forgotten dolls

the green men are delayed trying to tape back on those precious heads to those little bodiesvessels for semen and hate

but no amount of glue will save these doll-like figures

and that is something he cannot understand

Michelle Brinckerhoff

Confined to a corner
Isolated from all
Prisoner to his own mind
Words pierce like a knife
Face a violent ruby
Hands as wet as dew
Mouth dry as sand
Unable to speak
Humiliation
Emptiness fills the soul
Life a friendless destination

Heather Helt

#### Kitchen

Will Furse

i'M PETRIFIED OF WHAT IS INSIDE OF ME

DECISIONS ASPIRATIONS

CHOICES

**ACHIEVEMENTS** 

WASTING MY POTENTIAL

REALIZING MY POTENTIAL.

ONE MISTAKE

A LANDSLIDE OF FEARS

DiSASTERS.

IT ISN'T ENOUGH TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT MAKES ME

Miserable

TERRIFIED

iKNOWWHY.

HAPPINESS IS WHAT I DESIRE MOST

JUST TO RUN AWAY FROM IT AT EVERY POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY.

BEING CONTENT LEADS TO AN IMMEDIATE CRISIS

THAT I MANIFEST IN MY OVERACTIVE IMAGINATION.

CREATING PROBLEMS

DREADING WHAT

DOESN'T EXIST.

OPPORTUNITIES

Life SOAKS JUST BEYOND MY GRASP

AS I STAND IN THE WINDOW AND WAVE

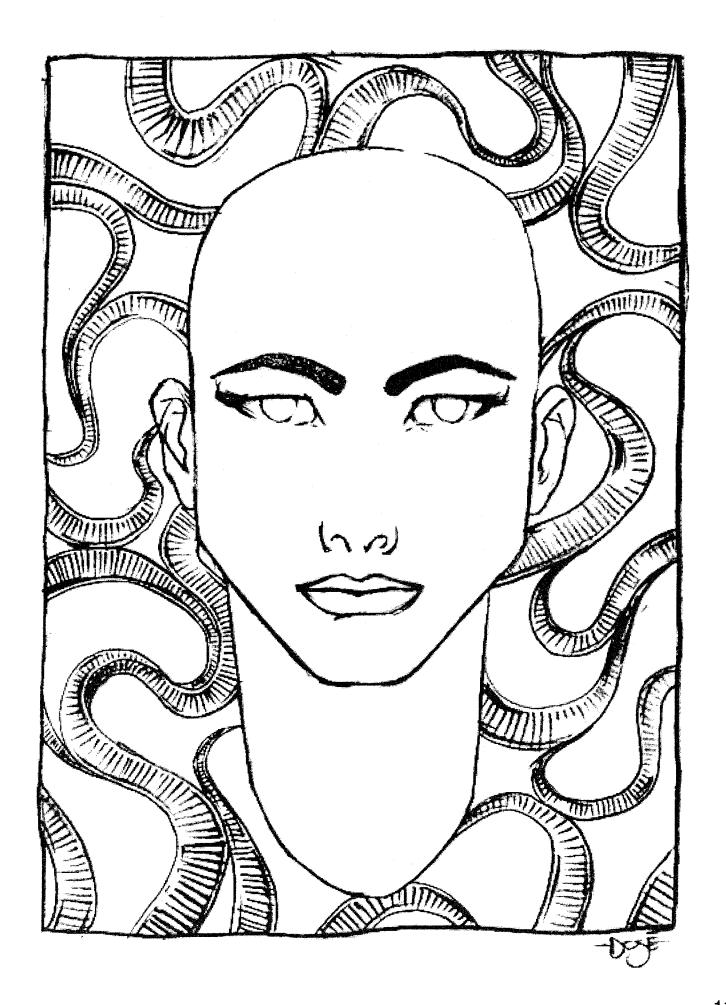
WHISPERING.

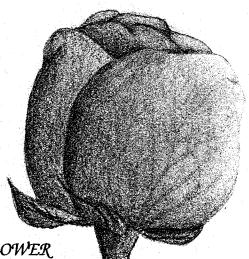
RANDI KRAMER

# Sorrow's Sleep

All the disfigured shadows that can destroy me in the dark, Call to me during dreams in Sorrow's Sleep. The weeping willows cry acid rain, And the nymphs in heaven teach the Gods how to destroy angels, All during dreams in Sorrow's Sleep. The bleak spirits crawl through the rising night And wilt the flowers with their tainted shadows The gold coated angels learn to fly with clipped wings, And the lost children breathe death to the cherubs in Edens Garden, All during dreams in Sorrow's Sleep.

Jacqui Conter





THE FLOWER

As my flushed cheeks drown in a sea of tears
I stand alone
Choking on the wailing sceams of a star wars night
Waiting to he swallowed in an abyss of black ripples

Like a shaking tof my sapped lips tremble
While time mercies by the glorious feeling
Of youth and beauty memy abandoned soul

Though the expert han is af the fierce wind Pierce me with sudder specks of blue Causing me to cough his specks of gray matter The bitter memory of sour musk of warmth And rough, molding unds Stings me with chillipliene And floods of fragmented language.

Yet I still wait for the off oreeze
To kiss me closer to hore

Lillian Tsai

#### Two Roses

One of the hardest things that I ever had to deal with in all of my thirty-nine years was the death of both of my parents in the matter of twelve months. Luckily, my wife and daughter were there to support me through both funerals and the devastating realization that they were gone, but even now I still think about my parents every day. I always think of how happy they were together, how my dad would come home from work and give my mom a huge hug and ask, "How did your day go today?" He would then wash his hands in the kitchen sink while Mom told him about her adventures that day in a sad, mad, happy, or excited voice, depending on the events that occurred. But most of all, I remembered how excited she would be if he came home with a bunch of flowers in his hand, present them to her and simply say, "Surprise!" As soon as she saw the flowers, she would run towards my father and throw her arms around his neck. Her usually reserved attitude disappeared during these moments; she would literally glow. My dad would hang back a little and shyly say, "You deserve them, honey." The picture of her twinkling eyes and her vivacious laugh is still ingrained in my mind.

My mom was beautiful. She had shoulder-length brown hair that she would curl only on special occasions and bright blue eyes that emphasized her thick brown eyelashes. She stood about five feet five inches tall, always wore jeans and a casual top which accentuated her slender figure, and enjoyed her life as a mother and homemaker. My mom had two dimples on each side of her face that would make her seem thirty years younger whenever she smiled and a cute button nose that she was forever conscious of. Whenever I teased her about her nose, she would playfully hit me, cover her face, and exclaim, "Stop that! You'd better watch out or I'll come home with a brand new nose someday!" As she grew older, her hair started to grow grayer and her eyesight began to fade because she started squinting at the paperbacks that she used to read, but she still retained her graceful poise and her never-ending kindness. I was long gone by this time because I had started my own family, but I still came around the old house on Maple Street to help my mom out when she needed to move heavy furniture and to do other odd jobs around the house.

My dad was the perfect complement to my mother. He could be gentle and kind, yet he had a terrifying temper that he showed on occasion. He worked for Pepper Construction Company and was one of the head associates of the company's branch located in Chicago. He was six feet tall but he always slouched when he was in a bad mood. My dad had short thinning brown hair and brown eyes, and an athletic build that wasn't too muscular but just right. My mom gave him a silver watch for their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, and after that day I never saw that watch off his right hand. He had a quick mind and always expected the best from me. When I joined the little league baseball team in town, Dad was ecstatic. He would go outside to the backyard with me to throw the ball around until it got too dark for us to see the ball. When I made the high school baseball team, he would come to every game and cheer me on while standing from the sidelines. "Come on, son!" he would yell. "Hit that ball and clear the boards!" He was proud of me and he always let me know it. We had a good relationship; we could pretty

much talk about anything. When I was younger, I felt closer to my mother because she was always around but as I grew older, my dad became the one who I talked to the most because he always understood me. We had very similar minds.

Even though my parents were always very open about their problems with me and with each other, the one thing that my mother did not tell me or my dad was that she was dying of cancer. She had gone to the doctor for her yearly check-up and she told him of her increasingly painful headaches. Because she was sixty-nine years old, the doctor was concerned about her health and ordered a CAT scan. The results of the test showed that she had a tumor in the base of her brain stem, right near the hypothalamus, and the biopsy showed that the tumor was malignant. However, since my mom had not seen the doctor as soon as the headaches started, the tumor had grown at an exponential rate. Because of her age and the location of the tumor, the doctor told her that he could not do anything to prevent the inevitable. He could delay her passing for maybe a couple of months with chemotherapy, but the tumor would prove to be fatal.

My mom didn't want to go through hell and back just for a couple more months, so she thanked the doctor and quietly went home. She didn't tell Dad until the very end, where she slowly withered away in the privacy of her own home. A couple of days before she died, I was holding her hand and trying to comfort her when all of a sudden, she opened her eyes and simply said, "Take care of your father when I'm gone." She paused for a moment and swallowed deeply, obviously in pain. "And remember, I'll always be with you and Amy and little Christy."

Later on that same night, Dad confessed to me that he felt powerless. "I've never felt this way, son. I keep on wishing that Mom would just spring up and be her old self again." Dad was systematically shredding a red napkin that was in his hands, unconsciously tearing it apart piece by piece. "I keep hoping that this is all a bad dream and the doctor made a mistake. I just want her to stay with me." Without a word, he dropped the napkin pieces onto the floor. That was the only night I saw my father cry.

Two days later, Mom died peacefully in her bed. I was there with my wife and my daughter, Christy, and we couldn't believe that she was gone. My mom had accepted Amy as soon as I brought her home with me for dinner, and Amy felt that my mom was her mother also. My dad was beside himself. He just couldn't believe that she had left him. He was mad at her for not telling him about the tumor, but after awhile I think he forgave her. He was just so upset . . . .

After mom died, Dad started to deteriorate slowly. At first, he couldn't bear to go to her grave, but he gradually started to visit her more often. Pretty soon, he was visiting Mom every day, and then he started buying her flowers. I offered to go with him, but he always told me to hug Amy and Christy instead. When I did visit Mom, I always saw the red rose sitting near her headstone that Dad had brought her. He replaced the rose every single day with a fresh new rose. I once asked him where he bought the flowers and he told me about a little flower shop that was located two minutes from the cemetery. "That way," he explained, "I can get the freshest flowers to Mom."

As the year went on, Dad never failed to bring Mom her daily rose. But I started to notice that Dad

was becoming more and more withdrawn; that he was coming to my house less and less. I suspected that he was spending more and more time at the cemetery, but I never asked him because I knew that he would deny it. Dad just didn't want to accept the fact that Mom was gone, but he wanted me to think that he had.

One day, a little after a year after Mom died, I received a call at work from the hospital. Apparently Dad had suffered a massive heart attack and was presently in the intensive care unit. Dad stayed there for two whole weeks before he quietly slipped away. I think the pain of being separated from Mom was too great, and Dad just decided that living without her anymore wasn't worth it. He died in the wee hours of the morning with a smile on his face, as if he saw Mom waiting for him on the other side.

After the funeral, I avoided my parents' graves for a week. But one Saturday morning, the sun's rays were shining into my bedroom and I decided to say "hi." As I was driving to the cemetery, I saw the flower shop that Dad told me about. I quickly stopped the car and entered the store.

When I walked into the flower shop, I noticed a short Asian girl, fumbling with a Windex bottle. She was trying to clean the doors of the huge refrigerator where all of the cut flowers were stored before customers bought the flowers. The girl was pumping the handle of the bottle, but the clear blue liquid wouldn't escape. She banged the bottle on a nearby counter and tried again, but the liquid refused to come out. Thoroughly frustrated, the girl unscrewed the lid of the bottle while muttering under her breath. She carefully poured some of the blue liquid onto a rag that she was holding in her right hand and started to clean the doors.

I quietly walked over to the girl and stood by the refrigerator for a few moments. The girl finally saw me and exclaimed, "Oh! I'm sorry. I didn't hear you come in." She quickly placed the Windex bottle on the counter and turned towards me. "Can I help you, sir?"

"Maybe in a couple of minutes." I replied. "Um, I'm just looking around for right now." I smiled at her and a look of surprise and recognition sprang into her eyes. But as soon as the look came, it disappeared. Confused and disorientated, I turned towards the bright flowers in the refrigerator for a few minutes and finally admitted that I needed help.

The girl, who had started to clean the counter with the Windex, looked up from her job and put the rag down. When she put the rag on the counter, she accidentally swiped the Windex bottle and it fell to the floor, its liquid contents spilling all over the place. "Rats!" she muttered. "Hang on a sec," she told me.

"Sure, take your time." I answered. The girl found a mop and quickly cleaned the mess up. When she had finally finished, she wiped her hands on her jeans and walked over to me.

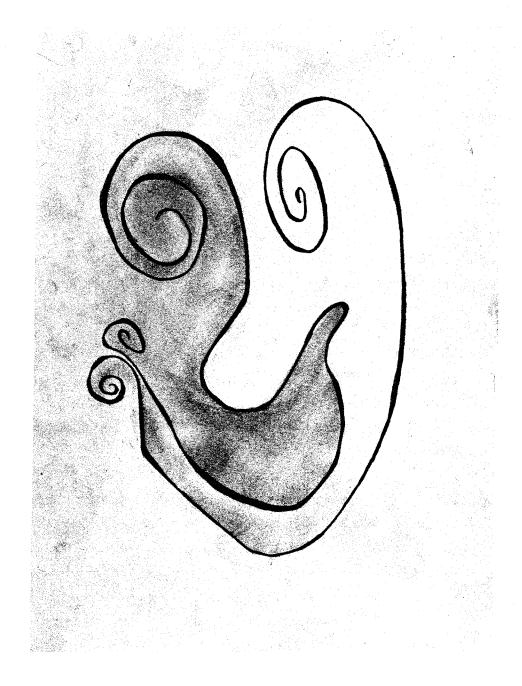
"Thank you for waiting for me, sir." She smiled. "Now what are you looking for?" As the girl patiently waited for my response, I noticed her warm brown eyes and her easygoing smile which seemed to spread across her face. With the exception of the water marks on her jeans, she was neatly dressed and presented herself in a gentle manner.

"My dad used to come in here every day for my mom who died last year," I explained haltingly. "He died last week, and I don't really know what to put on their graves."

The girl looked sad for a moment and I realized that she recognized me as soon as I had smiled at her due to the strong family resemblence. Without a word, she opened the doors and plucked the two most perfect red roses I had ever seen and silently handed them to me. I started to pull out my wallet, but the girl waved my money away. With a smile, she explained softly, "Everyone likes surprises now and then."

I was taken off guard for a moment, but I thanked the girl and left the shop. I went to my parents' graves and carefully placed the roses next to each other. I stood next to their graves for a moment and then sat down with my hands placed on their gravestones. The glistening petals gleamed in the sunlight as the three of us came together in peaceful silence.

#### Sumi Mukoyama



## The Guardian

Your white funeral orchids wilt and die in my poisonous tears.

Vivid foliage grows over my brittle bones, As I wait at your deteriorated tombstone. I perch and pray till I am stone, And the crows I feared become my children

Murmur to me with you celestial cry, Let me see through your plastic wings, And feel your silver lips release my soul.

Please wake me from this spell of loneliness,
My feet root into the hard frozen ground,
Green leaves grow from my dark hair,
And my bone white skin becomes rough like bark.
Wake me before my arms reach firmament,
And I become your coverture from the sun's rays.
Before the tired stars sleep on my fingertips,
And clouds are formed by my frozen breath.

Let me sleep forever, Your angelic rain will nurture my emerald petals, And the arms that are my roots can cradle you eternally.

Jacqui Conter

"Our greed keeps us separate from truth." -Kristin Haefke

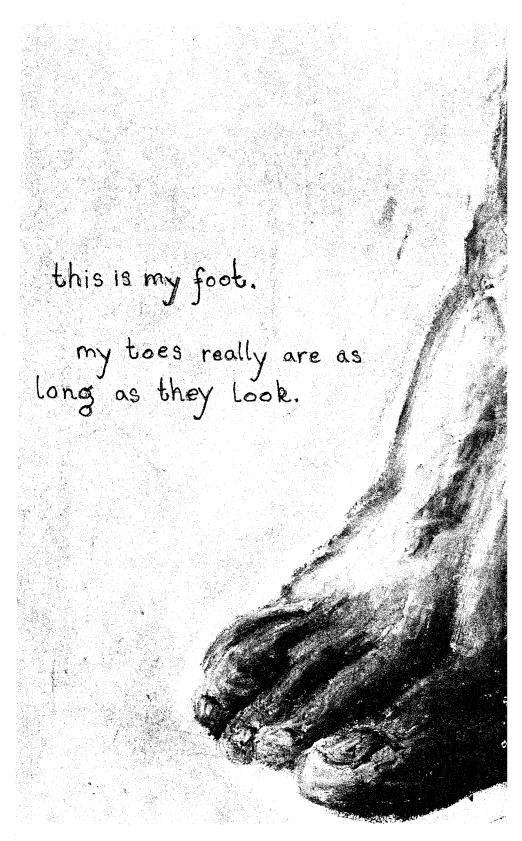
"I've become a shallow pond bouncing a distorted reflection back at myself." -Randi Kramer

"I saw a head emerge." -anonymous

-Kelly Schlitz

"I never have anything to say."
-Anna Vayner

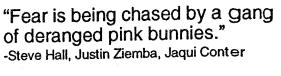
"I shouldn't, I couldn't, I did."
-Liz Griffiths



"Fear is being killed by your imaginary friends." -Justin Ziemba, Steve Hall, Jaqui Conter

"There's too many people doing too many things that I can't stand."

Jay Young





"Damp I'm dreamy!" -Travis Edmonds

"We are all equally evi -Kristin Haefke

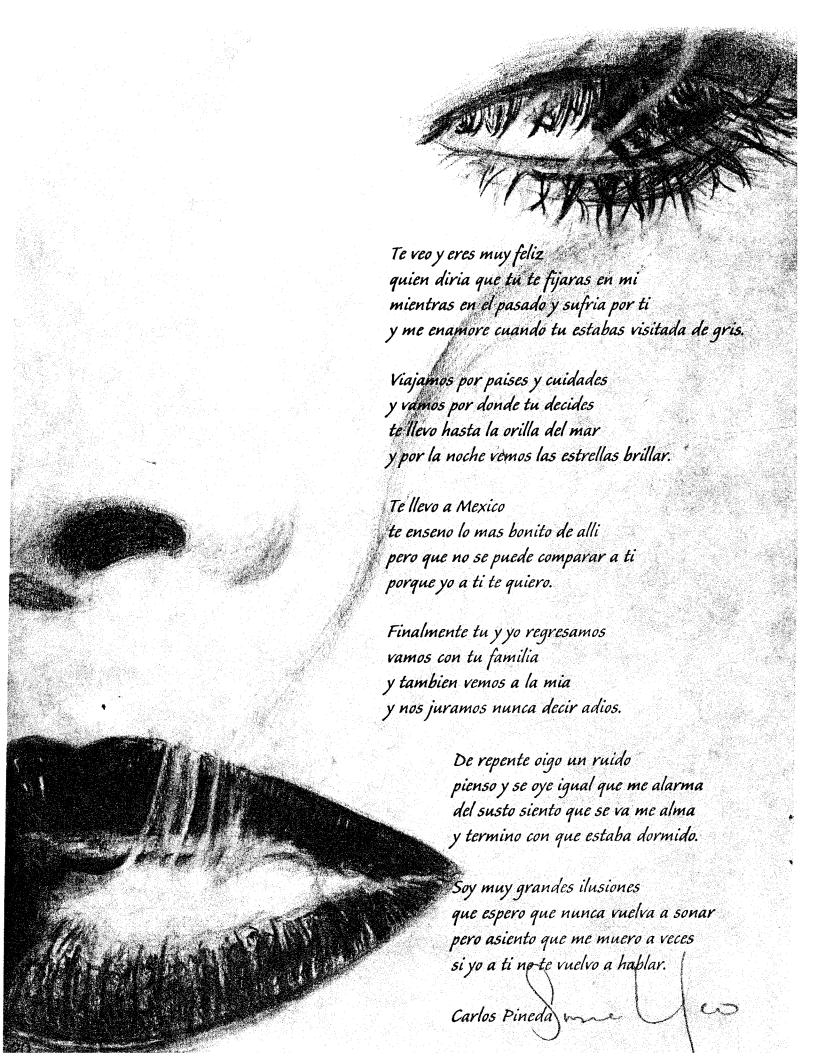
"Pin me, I am the Tail on the Donkey."

"Remember that now is just composed of before, and is destined to become later, later."

-Jay Young

"Dance with the devil a few times and you'll understand why he's so popular."
-Cha Song Koo

"Children playing an adult's game."
-anonymous



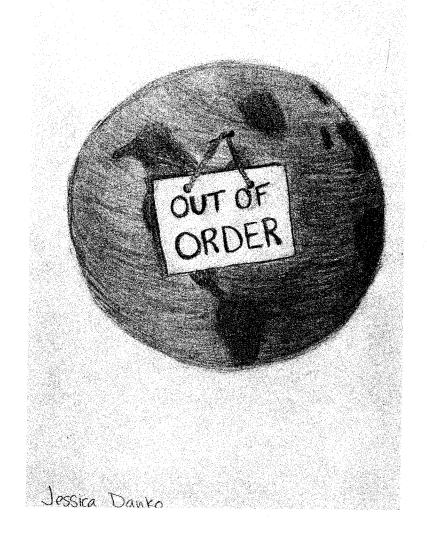
The door opens fingering soft down with pink hands a friend wanting to hold you tight, just for a second growing together, amidst screeching tires and playful punches changes within us like a pattern of white stars, twisting into pictures a yarn knit, like a hammock between two oaks in the wood nudges, laughs and twinkles, running breathlessly down a green rough hill longer legs push forward, breaking the tape first a spin, a hand on the knob, a selfish toothy grin The door creaks a struggle to stop the momentum as the hard wall approaches a look of puzzlement, a cry and whisper of confusion wet cheeks shiver against a suddenly cold wind no comfort only eyes like scissors snipping the threads of fabric woven long ago The door closes.

Alpa Shah

# Silent Disgrace

A baby wrapped in its own blood
A mother drowning in her own tears
A father huddled in enemies mud
A son lost in his own fears
A society where everything is wrong
But moves right
One breath that is smothered by the
Thickness of the night
I wish it would end
The smirks on their face
Looking down on me like I'm the disgrace

Leah Lefens



# Last Performance

Tremember the tears. They were of the pain That built up through the years, And of silent gain.

They disturbed the mask That gave to me a new identity, And although make-up repairs were a small task, Inner repairs were done more carefully.

> They were of longing For what could not be had, And they were from wronging The one T call dad.

They mourned the loss
Of a friendship still strong,
But who'd win the toss?
I'd know before long.

They were an expression Of butterflies inside. They released the tension; Returned to me my pride.

They helped me let go Of a fictional personality, And they let me know That Jeannine wasn't true reality

They were my good-bye; My first good-bye to the stage. They helped me to sigh, And then at last turn the page.

They let it all out-All those ripening fears. Yes, without a doubt, I remember the tears.

Courtney Landers

## UNTOUCHED

WHERE THE UNICORNS ARE
THERE IS NO SCHOOL
OR TELEVISION
BECAUSE WE DON'T NEED OTHERS
TELLING US THAT WE SHOULD
believe.

WHERE THE DAFFODILS GROW
WE HAVE NO COLORS
BECAUSE PEOPLE WOULD FIGHT
AMONGST THEMSELVES AND
INSIST ON THEIR OWN SUPERIORITY,
BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT OTHERS
TO TELL US THAT WE ARE
brothers.

WHERE THE MEN LIE
THE CHALK ARTIST DRAWS
AROUND THE ISSUE
YOURS IS A WORLD OF INJUSTICE
AND THE POLICE DEFEND
THEIR OWN WHITE KIND
BECAUSE THEY DON'T CARE FOR
OTHERS TELLING THEM ABOUT OTHERS'
sins.

WHERE THERE IS NO
PEACE IN THE FAMILY
SOCIAL FERMENT BEGINS
AND THE MOTTO OF EVERY
BROTHER SISTER AND PARENT
IS
kill.

raventome

# **Juture Rains**

Visualize the making of something better Where heartache frets And happiness dwells A humid haze hovers

Imagine clearly the tiniest details Jamily knots untangled Jinancial holes sewn together The air grows cold, a breeze ruffles the tree

The green bills are piled high Brick walls sturdy, shingles tight Multiple wheels in the garage Bursting clouds roll, sky darkens

Little ones tucked away
Her warmth spreads to you
With a life you'll have
It comes soft
And finishes hard, pelting the skin
Wait out the future rains
Dreams roll on with the clouds

Justin Ziemba

Soft
Painfully beautiful
and beautifully disturbed

Blind

The delicate rose that smells of cigarrettes and cheap perfume. nothing but thorns

A distant voice on a phone but once in a while, a smile and maybe a kiss

But always a kick to the ribs and a broken heart

... and now just a pain in the ass

Stew Witwer

Rose(s)

Shattered kaleidoscope, folds, and spins in spiral petals. Crimson red blood clots enmesh with emerald tongues, and white ladybugs.

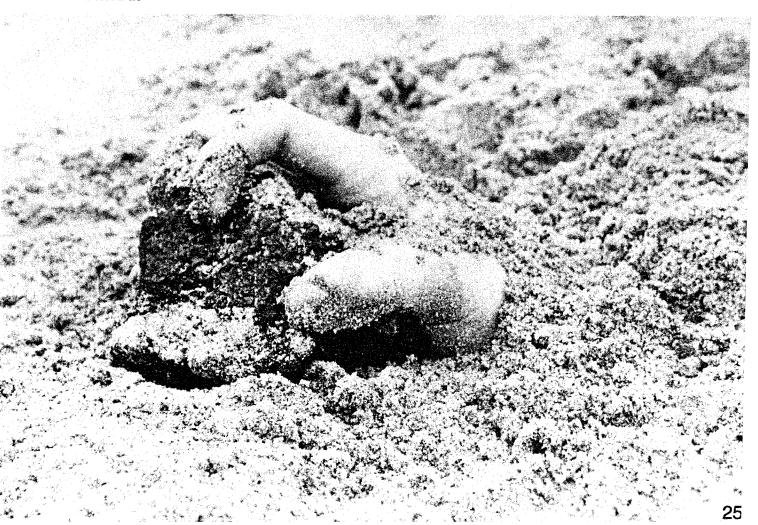
A dozen bleeding hearts, scattered among hungry hands, covered by blankets of crystal snow.

Jacqui Conter

#### WHO WHAT WHEN WHERE WHY HOW

Life is nothing to cheer about. We are born into blazing suns of light, and left to rot, as a forsaken apple on a table of lost hope. But, don't try to leave a world that takes you in and spits you out. No, No, my friend, we all live in this world for love. Love? In this land of promise, love is nothing more than ice in a summers heat. We all talk about it, think about it, Do it, Pretend to do it, and for what? A handful of kisses goodnight or shall THEY say a sensational feeling of passion. And just as you Accept you are in love it crushes you and it takes longer to get up FROM the blow of lost self esteem. And I ask you this is it the Blows, is it the passion, or is the feeling of knowing someone more as a friend to be called a Boy/Girl FRIEND. Love is Nothing but a meaningless excuse to increase a social order of friendship and this is TRUE LOVE?

#### **Oatmeal**



#### **Dog-Eat-Dog World**

There were no customers in the Vienna Deli that June afternoon. At most, James saw about three people in that little hole-in-the-wall. But the place had great food and everything was dirt cheap, so he enjoyed it. The bells on the door jingled as James pushed the door open, and Giftholz's head popped up from behind the counter.

"Hey, man. How's it going?" James asked in a relaxed way.

"It goes," replied the little man with his heavy German accent. "What would you like today, Mr. Murphy?"

"I'd like a meatball sandwich and cole slaw," replied James. "Oh, and lay a brew on me, would ya?"

"Lay a brew?" questioned Giftholz in a confused voice.

"A beer, Giftholz. I'd like a beer," James said with a slight smirk. He had to admit, the man amused him.

Giftholz came back from the kitchen and placed James' order in front of him. He had a smile on his face as he did it-a kind of proud smile. "That will be two dollars, please."

James opened his wallet wide. He had to fish through a few hundreds and fifties before he came to a five. He saw Giftholz's wide-eyed expression and waved his wallet under his nose. "See, Giftholz. This is what <u>real</u> money looks like. Five hundreds. Got that? Five aces," said James. His snotty attitude was shining through.

"Where did you earn so much money, Mr. Murphy?" Giftholz asked curiously.

"Little jobs here and there," he handed him the five. "Keep the change. I'm feeling generous."

James stayed at the counter bench to eat. As he ate, he wondered how Giftholz got by.

"Giftholz, how do you do it? How can you keep the place open with your prices so low, and hardly anyone knows this deli even exists?" James inquired.

"I charge what's fair," stated Giftholz.

"Don't you have any side jobs? It's a dog-eat-dog world out there."

"Dog-eat-dog?"

"Yeah, you know. Everyone has to fend for themselves."

"Oh. No, I don't have any side jobs. I don't even know the world," Giftholz replied.

James figured that was probably true. Giftholz was probably on of those dead honest merchants who were poor as hell because they

don't believe in screwing anyone over to make ends meet. After James finished off his sandwich and downed the hast of his beer, Giftholz pulled out some mints and toothpicks from behind the counter and offered them to him.

"Free mints? Since when?"

It is because I gave you a three-dollar tip, thought James. He grinned at Giftholz as he grabbed a big handful of mints and a toothpick.

"Could you do me a favor, Mr. Murphy?"

"A favor?"

"Yes. Could you come into the kitchen for a minute?"

"Why?" James asked as he worked a piece of meat out of his teeth.

"I just need you to look at something. It'll only take a second."

James agreed. *Might as well*, thought James. He had finished his jobs for the day, and there wasn't going to be any lady action until later tonight. *But he better make this quick*. Even though the man amused him, now Giftholz was beginning to really get on his last nerve. He went behind the counter.

"So, whaddya want?"

"Nothing."

"Huh?" He was getting slightly agitated, yet a bit confused.

"Do you speak German?"

"German?" James was beginning to feel short of breath and now really agitated. "What the hell does that have to do with anything?" He was short of breath and dizzy, too.

"Well, because of my name. "If you spoke German, you'd understand the English translation."

"Why should I care what your damned name means?!"

"You should care," Giftholz said slowly. "It means poison wood."

The toothpick in James' mouth fluttered to the floor as his jaw dropped.

Mr. Murphy was right, Giftholz thought as he dragged James' body toward the sausage machine after emptying his wallet. It is a dog-eat-dog world.

**Lauren Tario** 

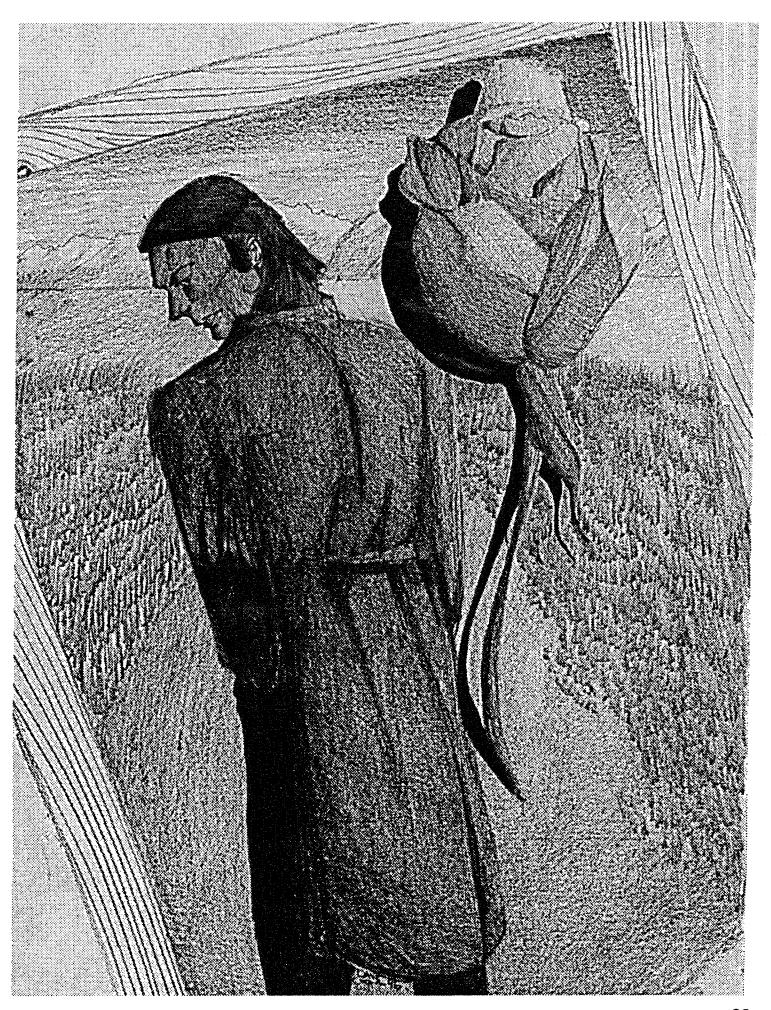
White square teeth laugh at me words drip like juice from a red ripe mouth eyes shoot promises into my hands. I refuse the silver offerings you adorn me with take back your lies and swallow them without water do not pretend to smooth the wrinkles between us the vertigo of this facade nauseates me memories bounce off me and fall worthlessly to my feet. I have crossed the chasm and left you in my distance the ropes of the bridge have been cut and I have covered my tracks.

Alpa Shah

# Sing to Sing

sing to sing to laugh to smile to be happy and enjoy the surroundings what we're here to do what we're here for why we've come to do what we're here for to enjoy the surroundings and to be happy to smile to cry to laugh and to sing to sing for the sake of singing for the songbird knows not when nor where nor who steals her sparkling note so why should we be forsaken lost in gloomy darkness when there exists eternal sunshine why sleep in the night we are all going to die are you dead or alive

Katherine O'Brien



#### With Life

Singing Sweetly
The words that fill your soul
With life, with love
All the things that you cherish
Watch over you
And take in the lyrics with happiness

All the things that haunt you
Leave you during these moments
Peace within
Surrounded by the darkness
And comforted by the moon's ligh

"sans"

#### hate for life

I have a hot burning lump in my body That pumps my life And colors my sheets. Slowly my life gets pumped. What was once my love and soul My hate and hell Is now escaping my body. And I can do nothing but cry Red tears From my arms. The red dulls the edge As the silver glistens on the floor. A killer that took my life away. What was hot and full of life Is now cold and still. Slowly I am losing And the ceiling looks down at me In my bed, My sheets are stained a dark crimson red And my porcelain face Which is saturated in cold Doesn't care anymore, Since my life is gone And I feel no longer The burning lump in my body That once was, My hate For life.

**Travis** 

the sky exploded orange gradually the stars spilled from their obsidian net

gentler than peacock feathers his sweet breath teased her auburn hair

this animal urgency was primitive no doubt blood racing time in her veins reason and logic blur like smeared fingerpaint

> "I am under the knife" she whispered his grin was raw as she refused the bite of the kiss

temptation stole her breath as the night came upon them and swallowed

Michelle Brinckerhoff

Snip. Snip. Snip.

"Mom, I'm going out now," Jo shouted as she passed by the back door. She stopped for a minute to glance at her mother, a pear-shaped figure bending over the azaleas in the large and lush garden behind the house. She watched as the flowers were tended to with precision, the work of a professional, the daily routine. "Did you hear me?" The constant sound of clipping reached Jo's ears and she immediately cringed.

"What? Oh, fine. Did you see the color this year?" The mother panted as she straightened, dropping the silver shears, her ovalish face red from the work. Mrs. Lapp continued to stare at her prize-winning garden, brushing her pale dirty blond hair behind her ears, as the orange April sun smiled at her objects of affection. A slight breeze gave the petals a momentary rhythm.

"No, I didn't," Jo replied with irritation. She bit her lip and stared with disgust at the garden and the pair of long hedgeclippers lying on the lily-lined pathway near the garden. She opened the screen door, slowly approaching her mother, her sandaled feet shuffling in the deep grass. "They've grown so much," Jo remarked.

"The azaleas? Oh, I know! Last week they simply shot right up, with not much help from me. I owe it to this terrific weather, really. Look how beautifully they've bloomed! I've heard compliments from all the neighbors this year. I think I've got a good shot at that contest next week," Mrs. Lapp raved, passing her glance over the area.

"So I'll be out with Mark," Jo said.

Mrs. Lapp turned to look at her pasty-faced daughter, who was now directly behind her. Jo was squinting in the sunshine. Mrs. Lapp's face saddened, for a moment. "Who?" she asked.

"Mark," Jo answered, staring at her mother, searching for signs of annoyance. "We're going to his place. His parents aren't in town," she said deliberately.

"Oh," Mrs. Lapp said softly, shifting her eyes to her pink bare feet. She stared at her mole on her big right toe. "When...are you going to come back?"

"Later," Jo's eyes pierced through her mother's head. She began to hate her again.

Mrs. Lapp bent down, toward her peonies. She fingered their stems, then the soil surrounding them. She picked up her tiny hoe and cautiously raked the surface near the emerging buds. "Do you remember when you used to help me out here? Every week we would come out and water the flowers

together. Then we'd go out for ice cream."

Jo rolled her eyes. "Not really," she said, trying not to remember.

Mrs. Lapp brushed the dirt off of her gloves. Suddenly her face
regained its composure. "Well, whatever." She stood up.

"Mrs. Lapp?" A voice called from the side of the house. An elderly man in a blue gardening suit carrying a small box followed the perfectly lined pathway to where Jo and her mother were standing. He saw the older woman and smiled. "Just like a dedicated gardener, always near her flowers."

"Hello, Henry," Mrs. Lapp laughed. "You know a gardener is all that I am," she answered happily.

"Well, I have the new seeds for you. Which would you like?" He opened the box to display a plethora of bright packages, full of potential flowers.

"Oh, you have more tulips! I would like to plant some here, along with the pink T-roses. And I want to have more lilies extending out from the border - they're so pretty I can't stand to have so few," she clucked over the packets like a mother hen.

Jo looked on with disgust. "I have to go," she said, annoyed. She began to stride angrily toward the screen door. She looked over her shoulder, with pleading eyes. Tears were beginning to drip from her pale cheeks. Mrs. Lapp was laughing about too many buds in spring. Jo was sobbing uncontrollably now. She threw open the door and slammed it shut behind her. She picked up her small suitcase and ran through the house to the front door, and out to the waiting car. The old corvette screeched down the street and away.

Mrs. Lapp turned toward the noise. She sighed and rolled her eyes. "I don't know what's gotten into her, Henry. She's so distant from me - she never listens...honestly, I don't know what to do," she said. "At least my garden always does what it's told!"

"Children are a different story, Mrs. Lapp," Henry confirmed.

"I suppose. Well, thanks for stopping by here first again."

"Hey, I gotta be sure my babies find a good home!" The two friends laughed. Henry turned and walked slowly up the path again.

Mrs. Lapp looked at her garden. She picked up her shears again and clipped the last of the overgrown ivys above the azalea section.

Snip.

Alpa Shah

#### Los Sueños

Vienen a la tierra prometida Llenos de sueños y esperanzas. Dejan a su pueblo y a su gente Para salirse de las montañas.

> El norte es su destino. Hacen todo para llegar. Lo importante es el pisto, Y el valor para olvidar.

Dejan tede atrás
Para comenzar una vida nueva.

En esa tierra no hay ni porbreza ni hambre.
Eso es lo que el pueblo piensa.

Nadan por el bravo río En toda oscuridad. Las aguas negras quitándole a uno Toda la felicidad.

Podrá ser por las peligrosas montañas O por esos túneles redondos Que viajan estos pobres, A la par de las ratas, escapándose de la Migra, Con tal de llegar al famoso Califas.

A California se van, distintos destinos también. En busca de la vida buena. Coches, casas, trabajo: Todo al alcance, como decían los hispanos.

Sin poder salir al campo
A oler las flores frescas
Sino que a la cale
A ver la brisa negra.

La verdad les pega en la cara. Sin papeles, sin inglés es igual que al sin trabajo. Nos decían que se ganaban muchos dólares, Pero no que se gastaban tantos.

> Los sueños rotos que sufren. La discriminación que pasan. Todo para una vida mejor, Que la de su Querida Patria!

Melissa Hernández

# To the ends of the earth

I went to the meadow today Over the swaying bridge, passed Granapple's Orchard, and around

**Everlasting Spring** 

But when I got there, I couldn't find him

Maybe he's running late I thought to myself

It happens to everyone

So I ran to Potter's Square and climbed Cayman's Bluff

But his presence was not there either

Confused and apprehensive, I sat down with a sigh on the rocky terrain

Night came and I saw the Marian constellation clearly among the myriad of stars that dotted the black canvas

And the moon peeking from behind the dark clouds that tried to hide its

luminous glow

Still, he was no where to be found

Maybe I'm early I thought to myself

It's possible

So I stood up and started to sing to pass the time

My mind wandered

As my voice reached the highest notes

And when the last words softly died from my lips

I saw him in his full form, waiting for me

the only thing that struck me were his eyes

Black and hard and filled emptiness

No mercy they told me

I started to run away from him, towards the end of the cliff

But he just laughed at me

He gently reached his arm out to me and asked for a dance

Defeated, I hung my head and placed my trembling hand in his marble-like fingers

And then the music stopped

sans



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# Submission To Calliope

Let's see...
It's given out to the school...
so no obscenity.
It's a high-school periodical...
so no publicity.
I have to submit it myself...
so no anonymity.
And I have to write it...
so no ability.

Jay Young