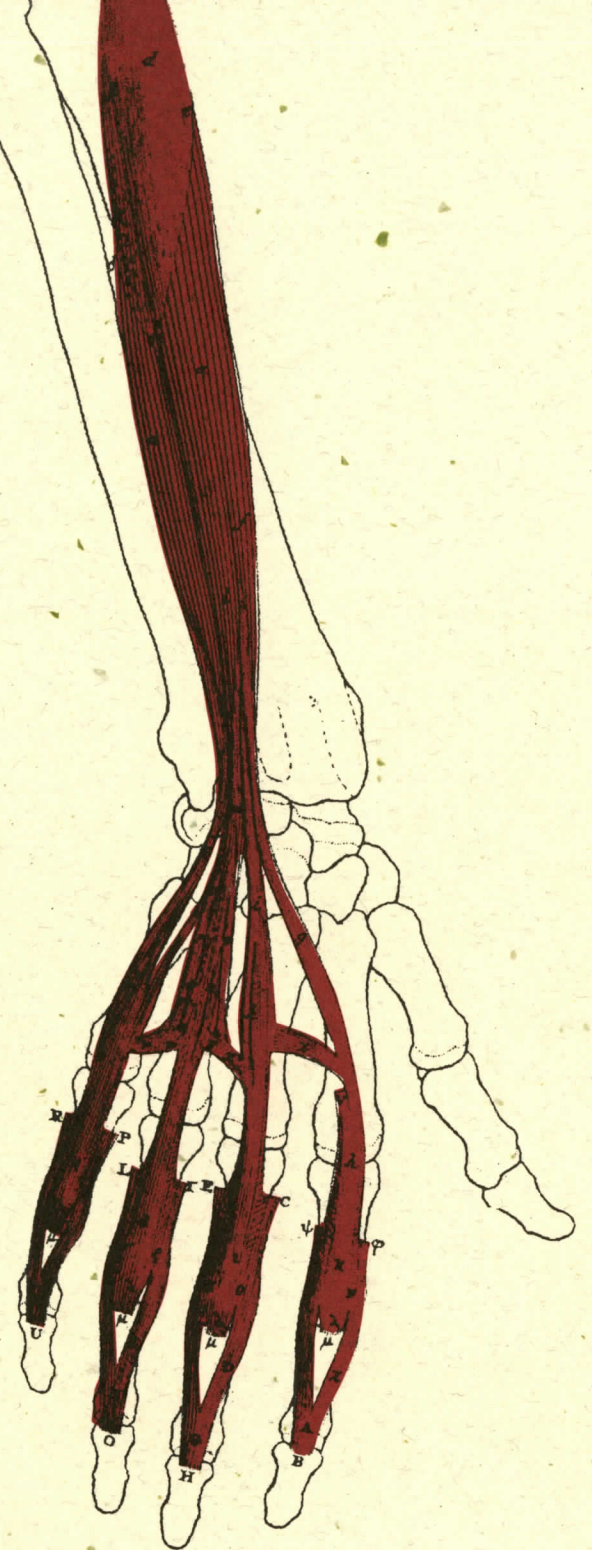


COLLAGE

FALL 93



ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF COLLAGE

When I took over editorship of COLLAGE last spring, I knew very little about the history of the magazine before the two years that I had worked on it. As I began to search for clues, I came upon a discovery that I considered of significant importance, one that probably would have gone completely unnoticed except for my curiosity. I was surprised to learn that COLLAGE is 25 years old.

Perhaps the apparent ignorance of this landmark event is a perfect illustration of the problems that have plagued COLLAGE consistently over its brief existence. Lack of exposure, lack of funding, lack of resources, and general apathy from both the students and administration; none of these are new to COLLAGE.

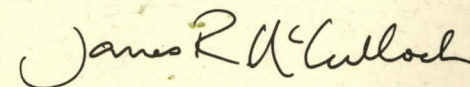
First editor Lynn Small gave the magazine its name in the spring of 1968. The name is an important aspect of any magazine, as it puts forth, in a single word or phrase, the publication's identity. I, like many others, have often questioned the name of MTSU's arts magazine. Collage. What on earth does it *mean*? Over time, I began to form my own opinion of this, but I think the meaning was finally made clear to me when I read an editorial in a 1979 issue of COLLAGE by then-editor Jackie Gearhart. "A collage is an artistic composition of various materials that blend together to form one picture," wrote Gearhart. "Therefore, our magazine defines itself...It is simply a creation, and so it has no boundaries." Perfect. As I've always said, COLLAGE is an attempt to create the finest composite representation possible of the artistic talent at MTSU. It is an attempt to bring culture both to and from the school. It has been the only consistent effort of its kind at MTSU, and if it lasts, I believe it will continue to be the only one.

Despite its problems, I think I can honestly say that COLLAGE has improved enormously in the last few years. Both the look of the magazine, as well as the quality of the work showcased in it, are aspects I would put up against those of any publication of its kind. Indeed, in 1992, COLLAGE was awarded All-American with Four Marks of Distinction, one of Collegiate Press Association's highest awards.

Choosing work for the magazine is never easy, and this semester, we received many fine submissions, more, in fact, than any semester in the recent past. I think you will be amused, engaged, provoked, impressed, and hopefully pleased with what I feel I can safely say is another landmark issue of COLLAGE.

Finally, COLLAGE is your magazine at least as much as it is ours. Without the students, faculty, and administration of MTSU, it wouldn't exist. We welcome your comments and ideas at COLLAGE, Box 42.

James R. McCulloch

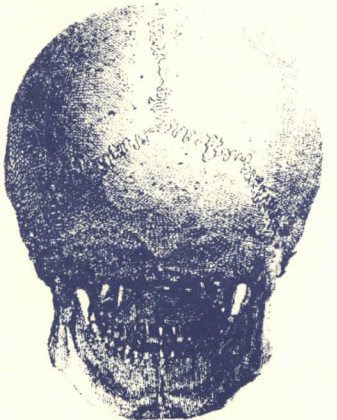
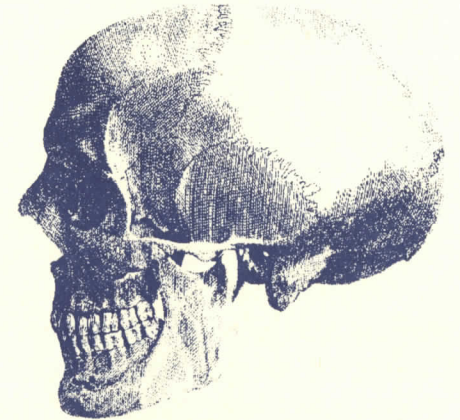


Editor

This issue of COLLAGE is dedicated to Rick Medley, our faithful butcher from Smithville.

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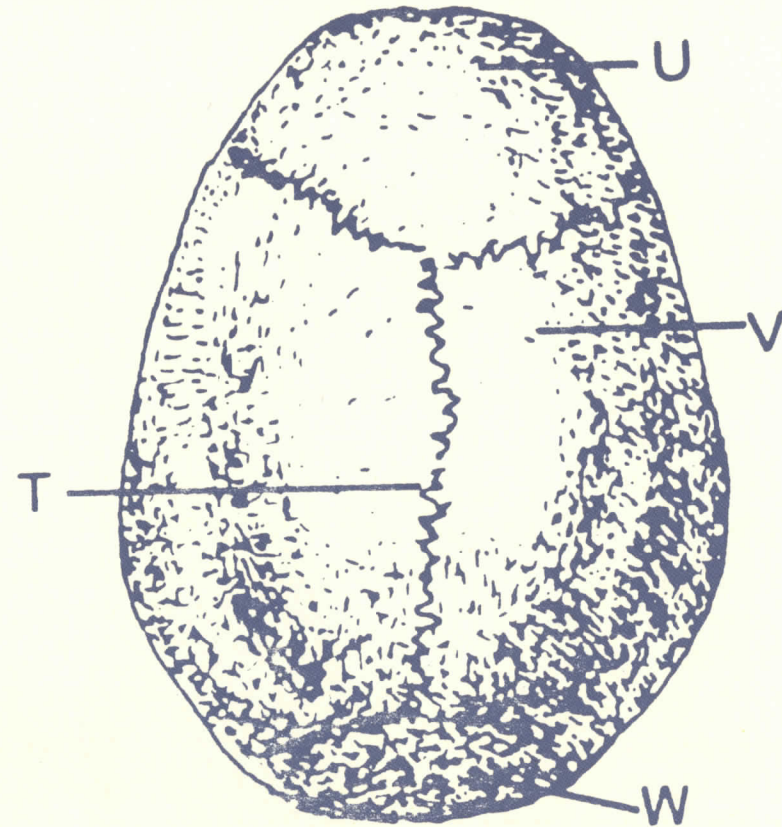
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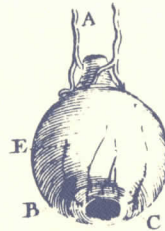
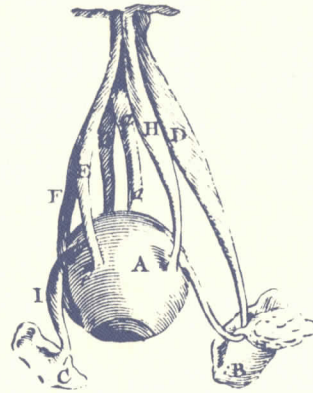
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Submission guidelines are available in the COLLAGE office, Room 306 James Union Building, or by writing COLLAGE, MTSU, Box 42, Murfreesboro, TN 37132. (615) 898-5927

SPACKLE

I don't do it
I Just like to say it.

Kevin McMillin



CAPTURED

He spoke to me - winked -
And I - envisioned dumping a bucket
Full of water over his head.
Laughing maliciously -
Clapping hands with glee -
And dancing in the Puddles.
Drip Drop.
But...Instead...I sit there -
Placid on that hard oak chair -
Crossing my legs against the
Tide of revolutionary conversation.
I pleasantly smile - but my eyes
Gaze longingly at the empty bucket -
In the corner -
By the Cat.

Jennifer Hefner

JUNEBUGS

J. S. BIVINS

"Hey dad!"

"Hey What?"

The child came running from the back yard to the wooden deck, stomping loudly on the stairs as he went up. He pressed his face to the sliding screen door and looked past his father to the plates on the table. Richard had been busy making BLT's for lunch.

"What's up?" he asked the boy.

"They're here."

"Who's here?" He silently hoped his neighbors weren't about to knock on the front door.

Andrew's blue eyes were shining through the blond locks that were pasted with sweat to his forehead. Richard vowed to himself to take his son for a haircut first thing Monday morning.

"The junebugs," Andrew replied, as if it were a secret.

"Oh." Richard was relieved. "Are there lots of 'em?"

"Millions, dad."

"Well—come eat. You can go play with them after you finish

your sandwich. And don't even think about sitting down at the table without washing your hands first. They're filthy."

Andrew looked away, taking his face from the screen. For a minute, Richard thought his son might play deaf and return to his bugs. Richard said Andrew's name sternly and shot him a quick look. Seconds later, he heard the water in the bathroom sink turn on. Andrew came back after a few minutes, held his hands out for inspection, and sat down to eat.

"Did mom call yet?"

"Not yet," Richard sighed. "She will. She always does. Finish eating."

Around four, the phone rang. Andrew was out in the yard again, and wouldn't hear. Richard was on the bed folding laundry. He thought for a moment that it would be better not to answer; he knew who it was and the machine could get it. After the second ring, he changed his mind and picked up the receiver.

"Hello?"

"Hello Richard."

"Andrew was worried that you wouldn't call."

"He knows me better than that. Unless you've been filling his head with..."

"I haven't said much of anything about you, or us, to Andrew. He doesn't ask, and I don't offer."

"How are you?"

"Fine, I guess. This vacation is nice."

"Good. You really needed some time off. I'm glad you finally realized that. Have you and Andrew been getting along okay?"

"Yeah, I'm enjoying all this time we get to spend together. How are you?"

"I'm alright. Is my son around? Can I talk to him for a minute?"

Richard's face began to get red. Ever since she had walked out the door, she had been referring to Andrew as if she was the parent and Richard was some hired help. Andrew was their son, not his, not hers; theirs.

"No," Richard lied curtly. "He's down the street playing with some friends. I can go yell for him if you want."

"That's okay. I really need to clear some things up with you. Is that fine?"

Here goes, Richard thought to himself. Prelude to divorce. He had heard about these dreadful conversations from some of the divorced men at the office, and in spite of the pain he knew would come, he was interested in seeing how much of the dialogue would be similar to that of his co-workers.

"Richard," she began. There was a sudden exasperation in her voice. "I talked to dad's lawyer last week. He said I should have no problem getting custody of Andrew. I don't want anything else, besides the divorce. You worked hard to give us a life that anybody would be proud of, and gave us some things that now I wish you hadn't. I don't. I don't want you to be responsible for us anymore."

Richard's body went limp. He had assumed all along that the reason Andrew was staying with him was because she didn't want him. He expected the divorce, even somewhat accepted it, but custody of Andrew was an entirely different matter. He laid down on the bed and shut his eyes.

"I t-t-thought..." He was stammering. He opened his eyes and began again, slower. "I thought you wanted to start over. I understood that to be the reason behind your leaving."

"I know this is a shock, Richard. I have realized over the last three months that Andrew is what keeps me going. After all this, I think he needs a fresh start too. So do you. I'm sorry I didn't bring this up sooner, but I wasn't sure if you could handle it. You will still be his father. You could still see him whenever you want."

"How many times have you seen him since you left? Two, maybe three?"

"Richard, I..."

"No!" He interrupted her. "Don't take away the one thing that is forcing me to go on, enabling me to survive. I wake up every morning, crying because I have to deal with the fact that my wife is gone. Gone! Andrew gives me hope, something to hold on to. Something real. I need something real in my life right now. He keeps me going too."

"Richard," she tried again.

"Please don't take him away." Richard was pleading. "He loves me. No matter what. Like you did. Remember? Don't cheat me out of that again."

"Richard, you work fifty or sixty hours a week. It wouldn't be fair to Andrew—just like it wasn't fair to me. You know that. You may not want to believe it right now, but think about it. You only have one week of vacation time left and then it's back to reality. I hate for it to have to be like this, but it is the only way. I need to go now. Hug my son for me and tell him I'll call him on Wednesday, probably go to the movies too. We'll call you.

"Goodbye, Richard."

The anger and pity in her voice stung him.

He hung up. Speechless. He had taken for granted that he and Andrew would get through everything together. Even though he hadn't sat down to figure out a way for Andrew to stay with him. With the up-and-coming layoffs at the office, he would be traveling more frequently

and maybe even putting in more hours on the weekends. People from work had even been calling him daily since he had been on vacation. They always acted like they were calling to see how he was enjoying things, and if he was feeling any better; it usually ended with Richard being asked about a certain account, or how to approach the boss about losing an account, or whatever.

Everyone at the office had pushed Richard for a vacation, and in the end, the majority won out over the man. It had simply become a matter of necessity, both for Richard's sake and Andrew's.

Andrew came running into the house, breathing heavily. Richard caught him in the doorway of the bedroom.

"What's up, champ?"

"Look..." Andrew panted.

The boy held out his hand. In his palms was a juniebug. Richard bent down to take a close look. The smell was overpowering; Andrew's free hand was covering his nose. Richard remembered washing his hands for hours when he was young because his mother wouldn't allow such an offense at the dinner table. He started to giggle, caught himself, and leaned over again to look. There was something odd about this juniebug. Richard moved Andrew's hand slowly into the light so that he could see better. The juniebug was not the usual green, but a bright gold.

"He's different, dad." Andrew's lungs had finally caught up with him.

"Come on. Let's take him into the kitchen. It's brighter in there."

He put his hand on the boy's shoulder and led him to the kitchen table. Andrew set the bug down. It wasn't moving.

"Is he dead?"

"No, the cold air makes them still. Watch."

Richard turned it over on its back. All six legs immediately came to life in a desperate attempt to right itself.

Andrew's eyes widened.

"Turn him back, dad." There was an urgency in his voice.

"Okay." Richard turned the bug over. "See, he's not dead."

"He's beautiful. I've never seen one like this before. I bet he's the king of the junebugs."

"I don't know, Andrew. Maybe." His son was a little young for genetics.

"Hey dad."

"Hey what."

"What month is it?"

"July. Why?"

"Why are they called junebugs if they come out in July?"

"Well... my father used to say that they come to say goodbye to

June."

Andrew bent down towards the still bug. He cocked his head, as if he were listening for the bug to actually say "Goodbye."

"Did mom call?"

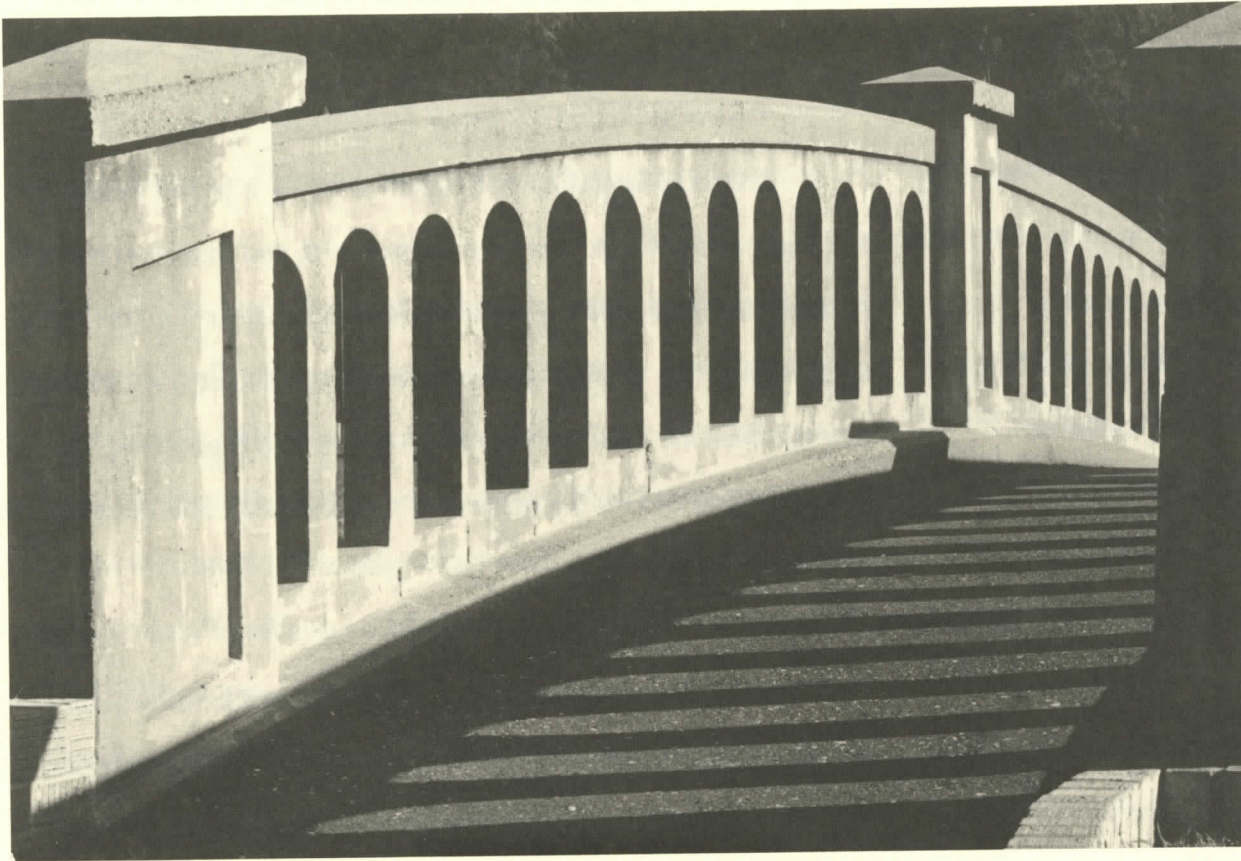
"Yes. She told me to give you a big hug for her."

Andrew was smiling.

"So? What are you waiting for. C'mere."

Richard hugged his son tighter than he ever had before. When he finished, he held Andrew away from him and looked at his son. Andrew was still grinning when Richard kissed him on his forehead and sent him out to play with the group of boys that were making their way towards the back yard. Before Andrew had scooped up the June bug and raced out the door, his eyes met Richard's and he said, "I love you, dad."

Richard was washing the dishes from lunch and watching his son play with his friends in the back yard when he started to cry. Above the gentle sound of the running water and the faint odor of soap, he heard his father's voice saying, "They come to say 'goodbye'." And he smelled the junebugs.



Bridge to a Park

Bradley B. Adler, Jr.

THE BROKEN BRIDGE

I can hold you in the palm of my hand
but I can't touch you without bleeding

and I keep telling myself
how I feel stronger when I'm near you
like I can do anything-
you are the best thing about this place
even the air here
weighs down heavy on me
pushing hard against my chest
waiting for me to suffocate

I need you-
but I always let you down
I could listen closer to you
if my ears hadn't grown numb
you could lean against me
if my legs weren't so brittle

and I remember watching you
as you sat on the broken bridge
your stiff legs hang over the side
legs that once
could dance on the tip of a needle

I walk up behind you
my clumsy arms fold around you-
it feels good to hold somebody-
you lean forward
breaking free of my arms
as if they were made of sand

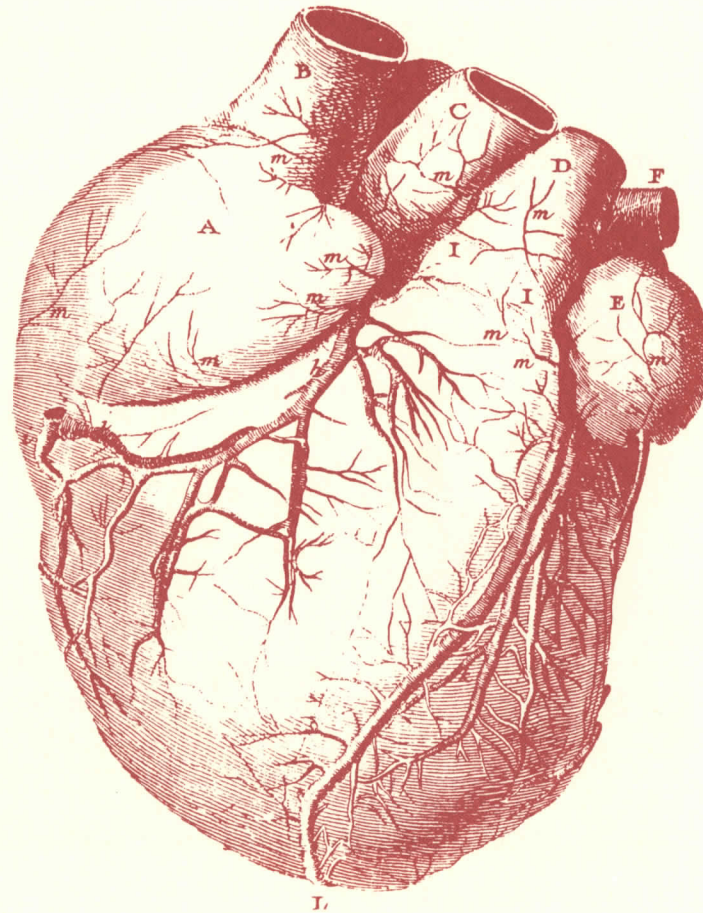
you fall off the broken bridge
you sink into the warm face of the water

the waves swarm over you
like a white sheet
spreading over a corpse

you don't fight it
this is where you belong
waiting beneath the water
for a better time to haunt me

Dan Bernhard

If time passes by
and I
didn't even know it
because
I wasn't watching
but
I was living,
then let
time pass
by
all it wants to
and
my heart will
never
grow
older and
my dreams
will never
die
young.



Marie Turley



Ah,
The times I have
pulled you close,
while gazing lovingly
into your eyes.
Caressing the soft flesh
of your arm with a touch
as tender as a
reed
broken
and savagely twisted
with
only fire in my eyes
you'll get yours
but for now I
am so mad I can't see
and my cup
spills
over
scalding
your skin.

Now the bruises on that fair arm are
the badges of my terry cloth
character. All absorbant
flimsy
and out of style.

Mark Miller

THANK-YOU TO MAYA ANGELOU

Trees
Old ladies gathered
snowy coverings
beautify the ages passed

Firs
Tall-standing women
purified together
in winter's passionate storm

Robin Holmes

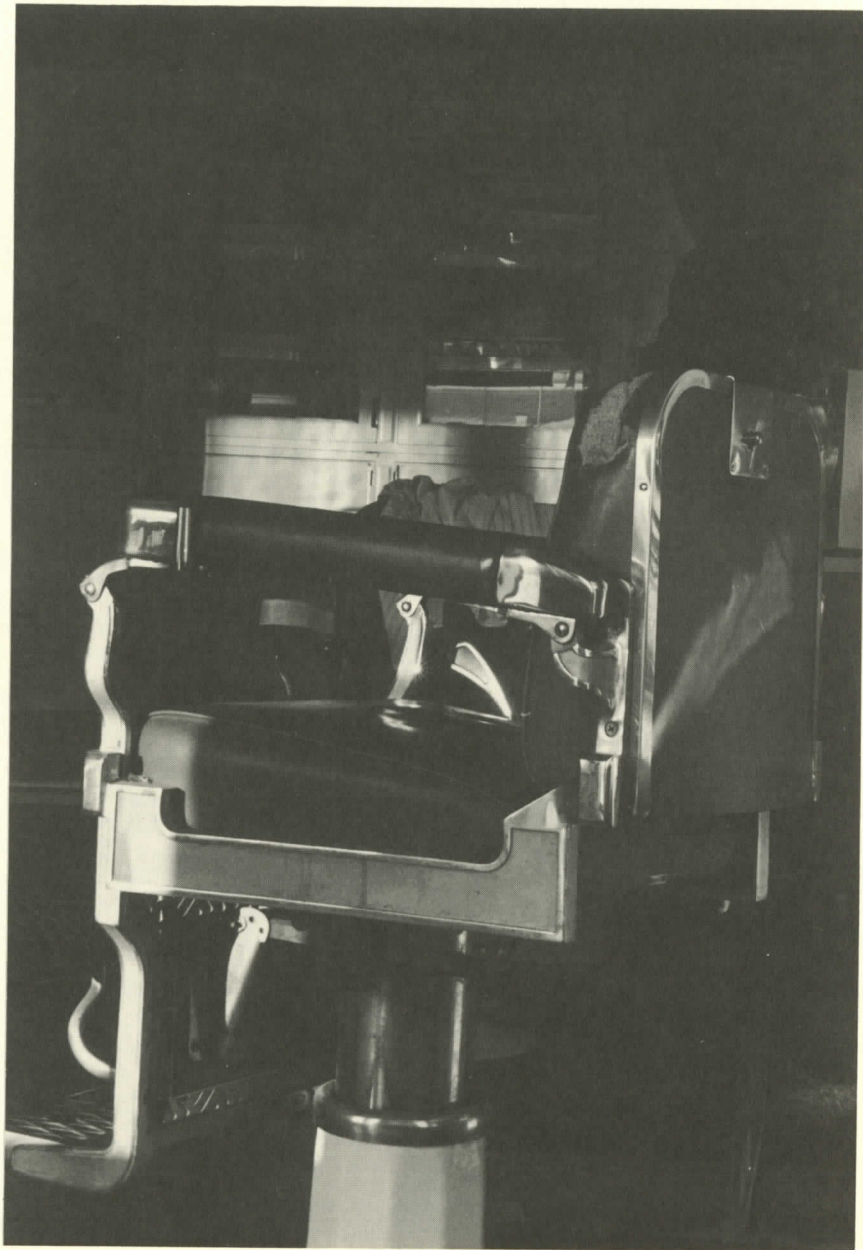


THE SPIDER

I watched a spider weave a web
Of silver strands suspended high
Across a wide expanse of wood
To catch an evening bee or fly.

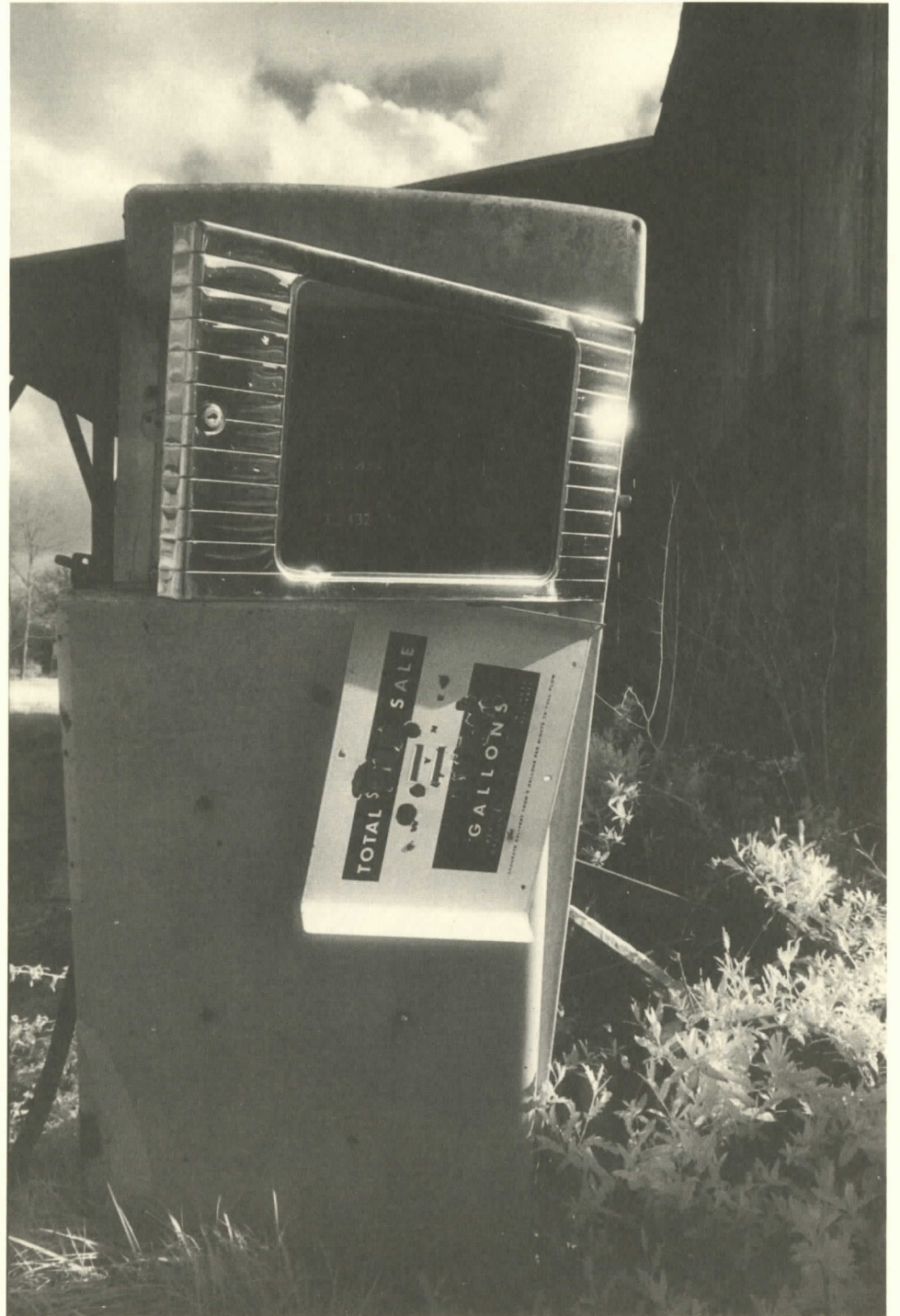
Without a warning wind and rain
Detached his trap and with a sigh
The spider crept into his leaf
And waited till the storm passed by.

Timothy Holman Hall



Chair

Rob Fuller



Untitled
Darrell R. Boles

Blind Jesus

Brian Pate

Pacing through the asphalt preserve
With a platitude on my back
Feel the hard grind turning
Find your heaven find your hell
In the lame who remain
And the blind who never see
You dead, who don't rise again,
Speak your sacrilege testament
Throwing shadows in your graves,
What say you to He who saves?
I say, blind Jesus
What happened to your eyes,
UnRedeemer,
They don't see me
Or the crippled legs
Of infinite lameness
No lepers, no whores,
To fall at your feet, with tears
No creed or holy order
Just me and man
me and man
me and man
Let me worship me

The sidewalk prophecy,
self-fulfilled tribulation
I can feel their stares yearning
for the hollow in the air,
the pocket of sound,

that brings my truth to the ground,
A megaphone of disparity,
and a handful of belief.
Hell disappears, heaven falls,
the pocket preacher finds his
infamy,
his daughter, his vice
you can have her yourself,
if you match the price.

What say you to he who saves?
Nothing, your words trickle,
dissipate in the rudeness
of your manner.
Do you see his eyes
or the sockets they filled,
Blind Jesus,
I mock you
No deaf or dumb
Or centurions at your feet,
and my life grows complete.

The tyranny of my anguish!
The trudging on the street,
reveals the lies,
The sight restored to the
seeing man, not blind
The fakery, pilfering my small religion
Who will atone?
Sanctify, who will then live?
Who will atone?
I

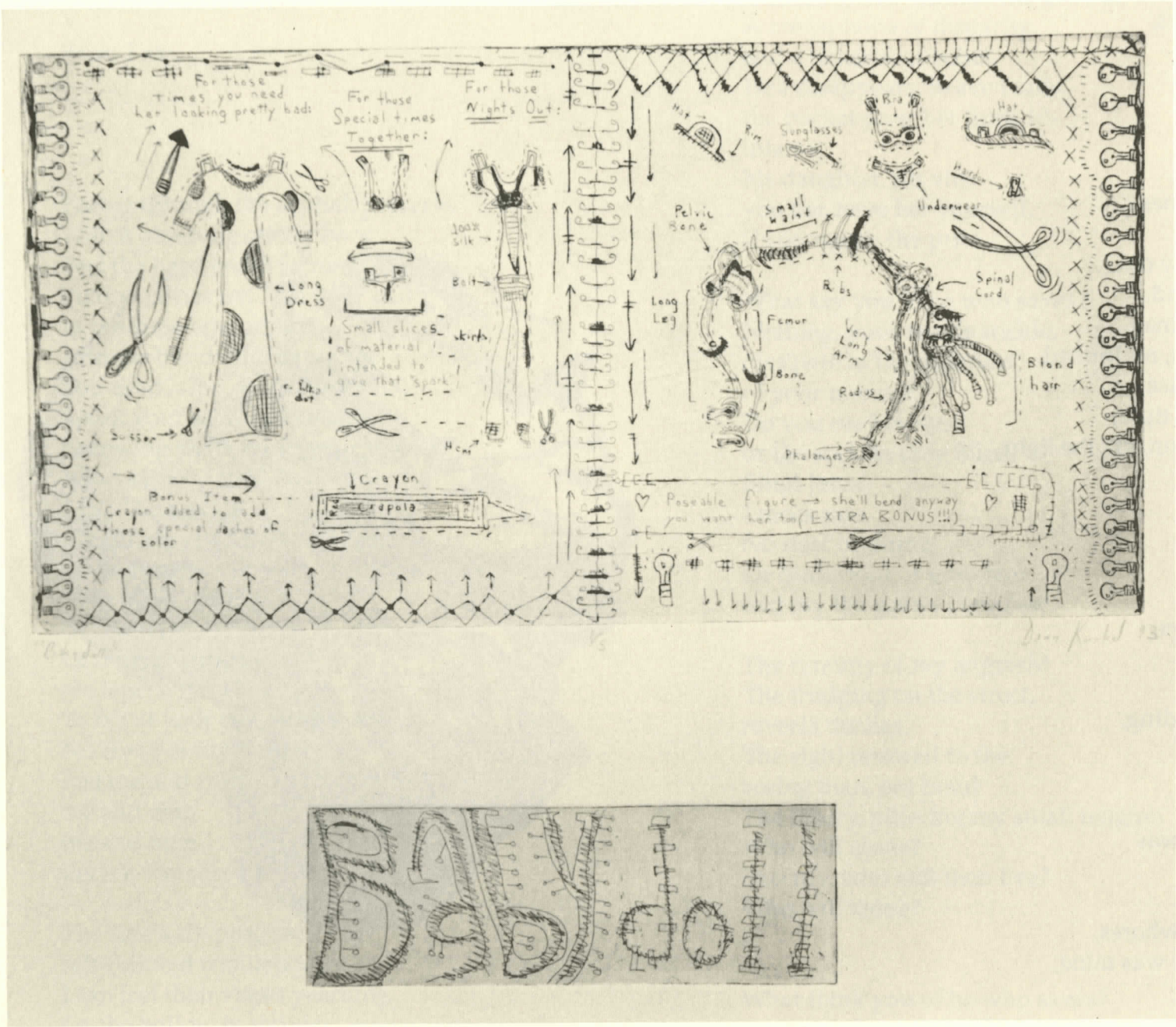
What think you of he who saves?
Your sightless grows dimmer,
my vision gone with it,

Blind Jesus,
walk among the graves,
the tombstone mill,
shining,
no fishes, no loaves
no water or wine
Blind Jesus,
The glimmer-rock shines

My eyes find their way out
by the knife in my hand,
one more non-seeing man.
The rocks in my shoes, multiplied,
and roses die in the vase,
wrap the barbed-wire tight,
it must keep out the sun, kill the light.

Unholy of holies,
your tabernacle veil is
unrent.
Blind Jesus,
here I'll spend my days,
the leper lord,
the pariah fading,
my lost eyes slowly jading,
Blind Jesus,
there is an echo,
a shattering of glass
I hear the mirror that was
falling,
I know you now,
and the lame and the whores,
Blind Jesus, the mirror was mine,
and it fell with a star,
UnRedeemer,
I made you who you are.





Babydoll, etching

Dawn Kunkel

AIR CONDITIONED SOULS: A DUET

CHRISTOPHER ALLEN

Verse 1:

After the ten o'clock news, I twist the blinds shut, flip the lights off, and listen to him humming downstairs—crouching, yes he and I, in a corner; he is very good. I am no musician, but there is something about a lone, low line—something inclusive, no, something caressing—that keeps me company like nothing else can.

I will not stop rocking. I am so well-mannered. Funerals are strange smells for children, large noses in coffins, sniffing (only the live ones though), and whispering. Sudden Explosions. And then, finally a joke, but now ultimately half-lit—numb, like I'd never been to a funeral at all. Yes, let's say that I have never been. *Six foot two, eyes blown through like a brisket in a basket, my brother's in that casket.* Let's say that I am real though. Not to have ever been, surely, but real just as surely. But I wander.

Have you ever felt like someone else? Not the usual identity confusion in dreams.

After study hall in the hall proper, You are given a sign: You are standing at the water fountain watching the sheep wipe dribble from their chins because they have not discovered how to drink from the Fountain. You, however, lean over, drink, raise Your head, flip the hair out of your eyes, and balance the single drop of holy water on Your lower lip until it gently disappears into Your mouth: You are Christ. And later that day, You are given a greater sign: You know all the puzzles before Vanna turns any of the letters

over. Who else could do that? Who else but Chuck Woolery:
I will not, I can not stop rocking. I told you that. One... two... three... four...eight rows of folded chairs. Deathbeds are calling, tenderly calling yea who are weary, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, come home.

The category is 'Poem.' Marge from Ohio (likes to bike, works for a MAJOR retail sporting goods store, has two lovely daughters, whom she would like to wish a very happy birthday: "Happy birthday Jessica and Brittany!"), spins the wheel. I *wept*. Bi-i-ig money. Buys a vowel. I *wept*. Vanna claps and turns the 'e'. I *wept*. I *wept* ' I *wept* ' I screamed.

Lazarus, come forth! Don't you know that I can just say one word and he will come back; he will come back; he will get up out of that box and scare hoodoo out of Aunt Neveda. So You're sitting there at the funeral, thirteen and Christ, feeling like You should do something. You can't sit next to your mother because she's sitting up there near the box with all those people hovering around her. You've got to sit with Aunt Neveda who has an unnatural dislike for rocking. Neveda who talks in quick, little trembling snips between her sniffs and puts her large Holstein-milking hand on your chair and says, "Be-e-e still, be-e-e still." But You know that if everyone would just shut up with the crying, You could work a miracle or something.

I know he sits downstairs. I see him sometimes through the blinds. I know I hear him humming late at night.

Verse 2:

Seven times.

Always shuffle seven times; that's the secret to Solitary.

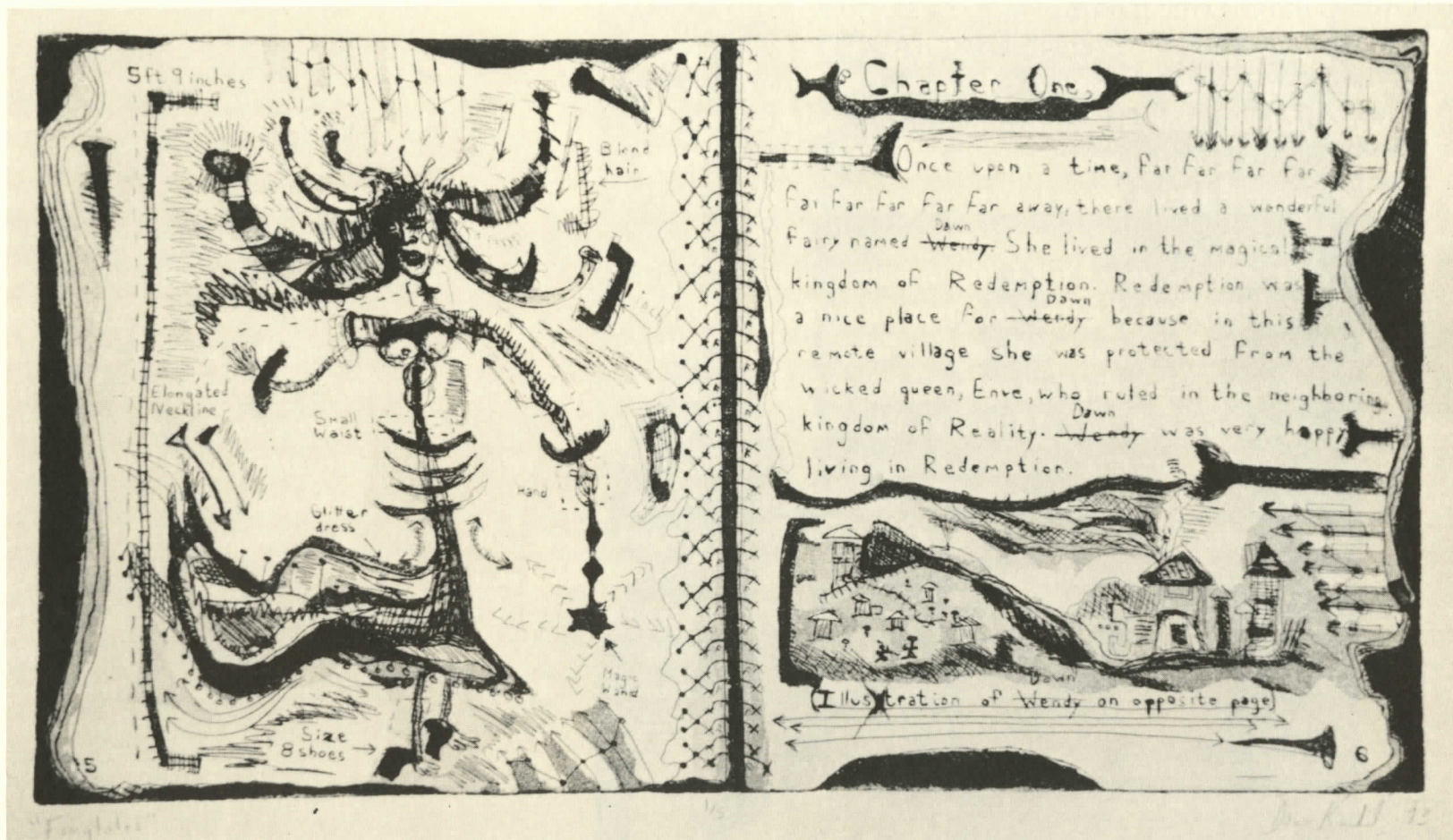
I guess it musta been ten years ago when I left Eliza; now I just sit here in my underwear—now, I know that ain't a thing to be telling—listening to the radio and watching the air conditioner like it was a T.V. The darn thing broke one time; when the air's agoing, the bad smells in this little box of a room kinda go away. It can get awfully quiet and stuffy without it. But it works fine now. I hear old men say "Well, I'm old, and I sure don't remember not having one. I'm real old *too old to be alone*. I'm fine though. I fill the time. I listen to Emmy Lou on the radio and play that Solitary game. I even hum along sometimes with the good songs. I get that sad feeling that feels good—like after you cry. Yes, old men cry. They cry more than anyone. You get all old and see if you don't look back and regret everything you did and hope to God you don't have to come back and do it all over again like those hippy, touchy-feely people think; you just see if you don't.

I do fine. I fill the time, and I know my neighbors—except for that little girl upstairs. Cute little girl, but damn strange. One time she woke me up banging on my door, screaming till I thought her precious little lungs would break, "Lazarus, Come Forth!" Spooked me. I 'came forth' and all, but I reckon I weren't the one she wanted 'cause she said something about someone being gone and disappeared up the steps. Now you tell me what to make of that. She'll be fine, I reckon.

We used to listen to the Opry on the radio, Eliza and me. She got her first kiss listening to Uncle Dave, I ain't ashamed to say. Right on the cheek. She smelled like roses; God only knows what a stockyard I smelled like, but she never said nothing about it. That gal was perfect, and I aint ashamed to say that her hindquarters was just about the most perfect thing about her. Well, now that I've gone and

said it, I am a little put out with myself. I shouldn't talk that way, I know, but it's as true as the world. "*Oh, have you seen my dear companion...*" I reckon I'm not ready to die just yet. But I guess it won't be long now. Gosh sakes, I'm 80 some odd.

I left her at the altar—not the first time, but the socond time when she was lying their with her roses. I bought them myself. 29.95+tax. She always said I never bought her flowers; she's got'em now. I can't go regretting not buying them flowers—wouldn't be right. Did what I could. She's fine, just fine. It's like when Eliza went to New York City to have that foot surgery. We only had money for one seat on the plane, so I stayed home. I stayed in the airport forever thinking about how I could get fifty dollars to get on that next plane. Oh, I don't know why I'm filling your head with this. I guess I mean that I've had to watch Eliza go off before. That was a long wait, and I never figured out how to get that fifty dollars. The way I see it, I'll be fine: I'm just waiting. Still it helps sometimes to turn out the lights, sit in front of that air conditioner, and hum along to our songs. It's a odd thing, but with that cool air blowing I can feel her all around me—I know you think that's strange. Sometimes I feel her go right through me.

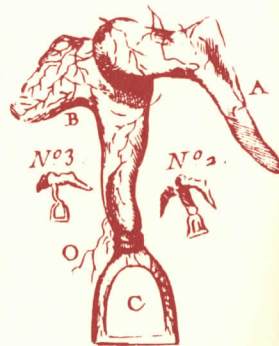
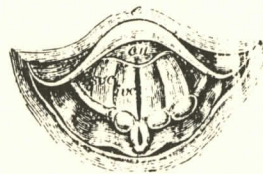
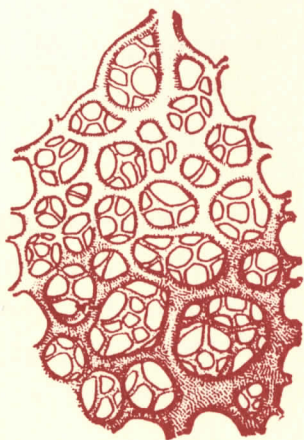


Fairytales, etching

Dawn Kunkel

One little girl...
 riding a bulbous sow
 Over a field of waving nostril hairs
 cannot also juggle small steak knives
 "Who can snatch the pebble from my hand?" Batman mumbled
 "You're soaking in it" replied Gilgamesh hoarsely.
 I wonder if he knew
 The grasshopper scribe
 Waited endlessly for Bette Midler's autograph
 Floating D
 O
 W
 N
 the Ob River
 On a raft of sheepskin brassieres.

Donald Qualls





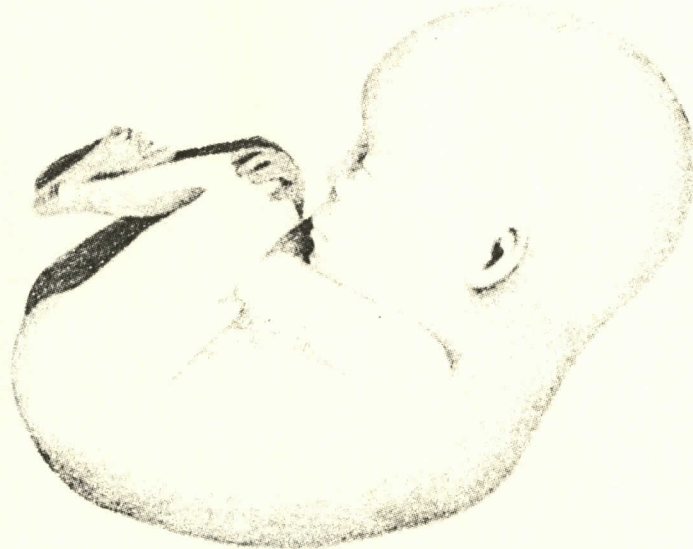
The Nude Photographer

Tyrus Kernea

RED

Touched with streaks of gold
like the last rays of sun
as it sets,
red
was the color of our daughter's hair.
(I still dream of tying ribbons
in long ponytails.)
and I called her Amelia—which is strange
because that's not a name I ever considered
for my child.
And everyone told me I didn't need her.
And you never wanted her.
And she was never born.

Melissa Vanderpool





Generation

Rob Fuller

FLOWERS

JOHN RODGERS

She sat behind the polished oak table tracing flowers in the various scars and burns which marred the much used, once perfect surface. The man beside her—*who was he*—seemed to be taking special pains to avoid any personal contact with her. Peeking from the corner of her eye, she noticed how young and nervous he appeared; he kept tugging at his immaculately knotted paisley tie as if her presence was strangling him. He leaned over to say something but caught her glance and quickly, coughing into his hand, turned away. For the life of her, she couldn't figure out the young man's problem. Since he wouldn't speak to her, she decided to speak to him.

"Excuse me, I can't seem to recall your name. I know it sounds silly...who are you?"

The young man's face twisted first to revulsion, then to mild annoyance.

"I'm your public defender, old woman, so just shut the hell up, sit quietly, and let me do my job."

"Oh! Well! Pardon me for asking a simple, little question."

She studied his face; it resembled the face of a man examining a not-so-pleasant bug which had, without invitation, crawled into view.

Seemingly of its own accord, her tongue escaped the pliant wall of her lips. The lawyer drew back in disgust as if his bug had spit some vile ichor upon his person. Shaking his head and tugging at his tie, he began to rifle through his briefcase.

A small, girlish giggle escaped the old woman, "Whatsamatter, boy, ain't ya ever seen a tongue before?"

She was pleased with herself: *taught that lawyer boy a lesson*. Uppity little snot ought to treat his elders with a little more respect.

Peering at the judge's bench, she tried to figure out the seal. It, like everything else in the courtroom, had seen better days. The paint was chipped and dull; the once bright hues had aged badly, further sacrificed for the sake of a few public dollars. In front, the bench was likewise worn by the thousands of hands and elbows which had held arcane conferences bespeaking unheard Latin incantations of Law. A slightly-past-its-prime chair sat behind, awaiting the presence of justice to plop neatly down and begin.

The old woman took all this in and leaned sullenly back against the stiff chair provided for her, wishing all the while her's was as comfortable as the one in front. She felt a mild autumn breeze whispering through the gallery and blanketing every nook with the musky scent of damp leaves. Smiling gently, she thought of how nice it would be to find that fragrant clump of wet, black remnants and roll the day away—roll until the earthy perfume permeated every fiber, every pore of her ragged clothes and body.

Her reverie was broken when, without preamble, the judge entered. On the bailiff's order, the crowd rose solemnly, but the old woman just sat there. Consequently, the young lawyer fixed her with a glaring frown and tugged harshly at her arm. She stood weakly, bones popping, and no sooner had she managed to get to her feet than the judge nodded, signaling everyone to sit.

The young lawyer then sprang to his feet, "Your Honor, may I approach the bench?"

The judge raised his head from the warrants on the bench. Staring out over the bifocals perched precariously

on the tip of his red, swollen nose, he looked first at the public defender, then to the prosecutor, and finally, with disdain at the old woman.

"Mr. Prosecutor, do you have any objections?"

"No, your honor."

Both lawyers strolled casually to the bench and placed their elbows upon the edge, thus adding their minute contributions to the polishing process. Like pagan priests, the three bent into a pyramid of privacy, whispering as they did.

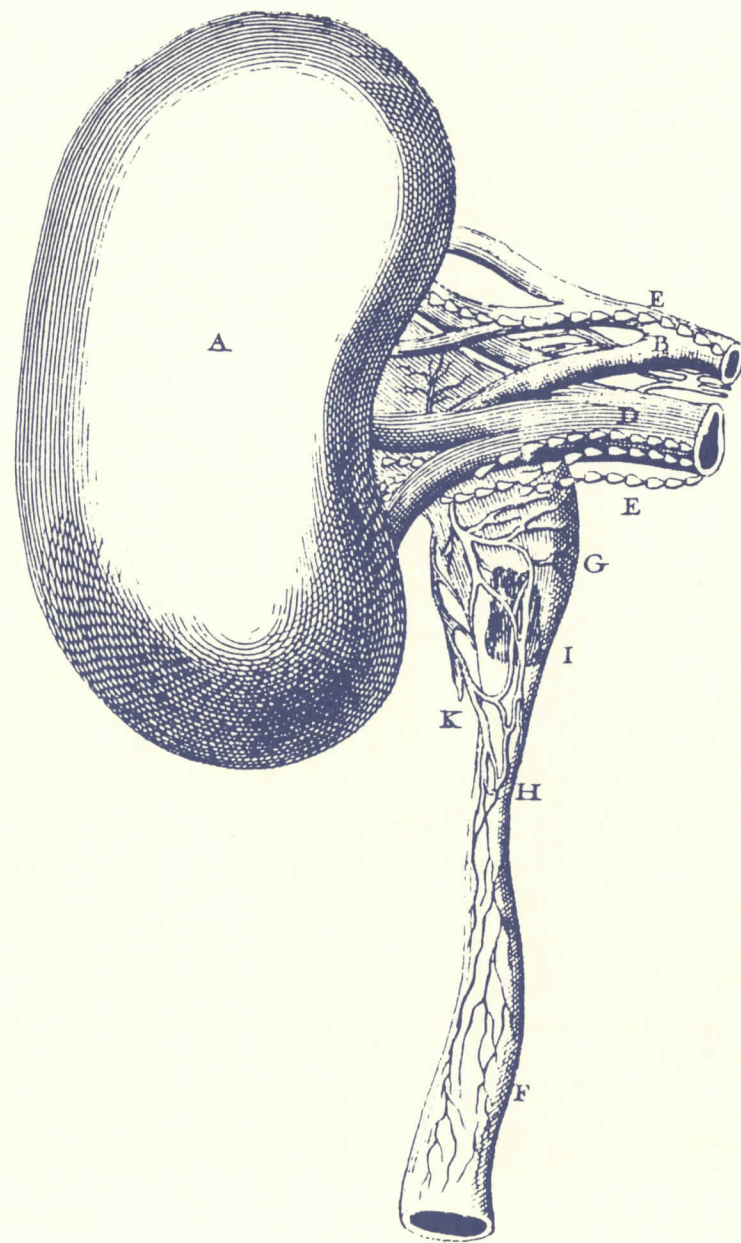
Snatches of their conversation drifted to the old woman: "...crazy...senile old bitty...why did...atric evalu...relatives...to do with..." But she soon tired of their silliness. Let them talk; didn't matter anyway. They were going to do what they were, and there wasn't a whole lot she could do to stop them. A glint of sunlight caught her eye, causing her to twist, her chair creaking, to get a better view of the window.

Outside, the world basked in an autumn glow where cruel winter had yet offered only the vaguest portent of her coming fury. Leaves, tinged with the fiery hues of Fall, swayed rhythmically to the silent music of a pleasant breeze. Outside, that was where the old woman wanted to be. To run and romp as she did in her younger days: Oh, to be young again! And to think, all this, this nonsense over a few plastic flowers keeping her indoors on such a perfect day.

"...stolen...grave sites...well, hell...mental...why graves...why junk flowers...where's...amn doc..."

She saw the prosecutor in his wrinkled, gray suit shake his head in what: Defiance? Compliance? Her lawyer was, on the other hand, inscrutable. The judge dismissed them with a wave, and they shuffled back to their respective places. Neither looked extremely pleased.

Framed sternly between the U.S. and state flags, the judge turned to the old woman. She recognized the disdain hidden in his stare; she'd seen it a thousand times before in





Brass Turnip

Jennifer Ford

untold faces on uncounted street corners. Yet her face still flushed with hot blood. Unable to withstand the knowing of that gaze, she sought the solace of the window.

There—yes, there—in a patch of fading green she thought she saw the delicate purple of a late-blooming crocus. Oh, how she longed to pick it and sniff its gentle perfume. A sudden desire to taste the bittersweet essence of its secret places overwhelmed her; her very being craved the intimate contact of placid souls, intertwined, escaping in a moment of incorporeal ecstasy. In her mind's eye, an image formed of their two spirits coalescing and wafting over a green pasture. And, in the final moments of their union, they would disperse like pollen in the wake of a Spring storm. Vaguely, she sensed her weight drift up from the hard-backed chair. The courtroom became a distant, faded reality; a reality she gladly traded for the dream.

A restraining hand grasped her shoulder, but she shrugged it off. It reasserted itself more forcefully, pushing her back into the chair. Not to be denied, she fought back.

The breeze ceased its pleasant ruffling, and the sun darkened. With the quelling of the light, the old woman's face twisted into rage—a rage as murderous as that of Cain. She lashed out with kicking, slapping, clawing at the invisible hands which held her. Those voices, those hateful voices ripped and tore at the fabric of the dream, likewise ripping and tearing at her soul.

"Order...Hold her down, dammit...get the fucking cuffs...hold...Order...her hands...in the Court...somebody find...I said, ORDER! I will...the sheriff...ORDER!"

Tears of acid burned the old woman's swollen cheeks; the clicking bite of the cuffs resounded in her mind like the creaking of a mausoleum door cloistering forever its soulless charge.

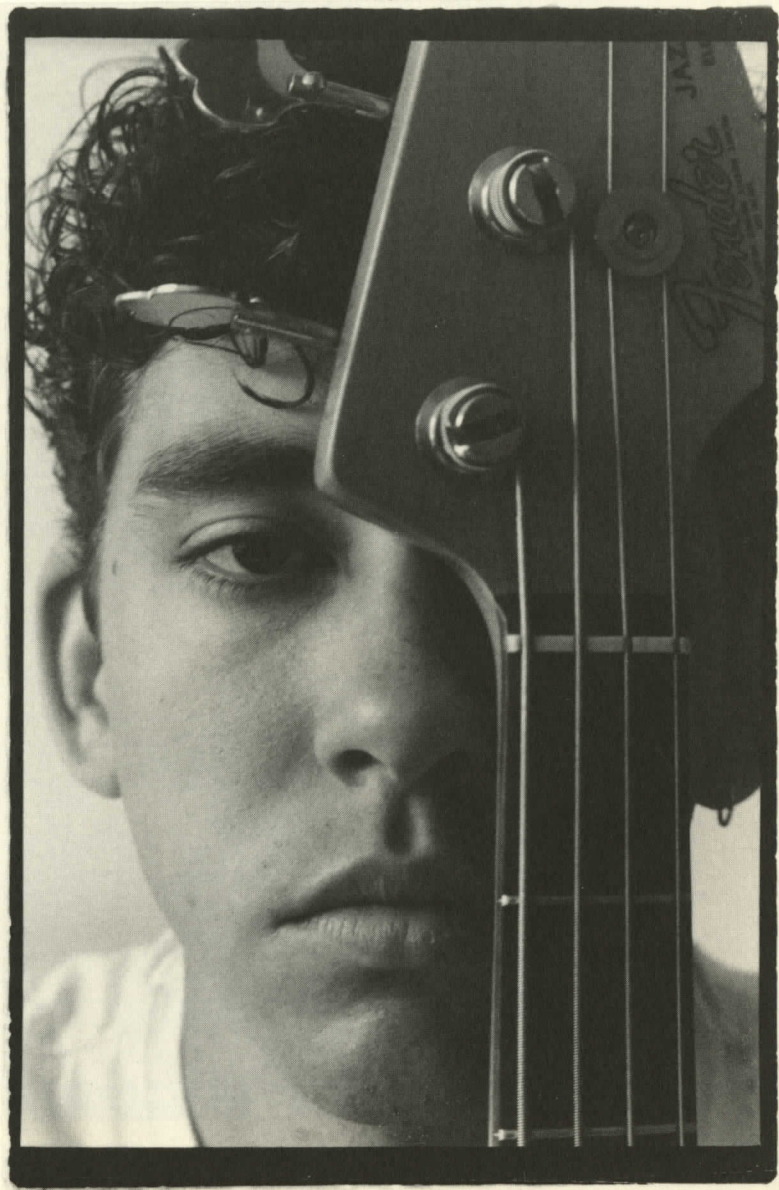
Unceremoniously, she felt herself hoisted from the floor; her eyes met those of the brown-shirted bailiff, who quickly turned from the emptiness he found there.

A pitiful moan escaped, as her tongue once did,

unbidden from the depths of her being. The bailiff jumped like a man stung, releasing the old woman who, in turn, fell—a modern supplicant—before the bench.

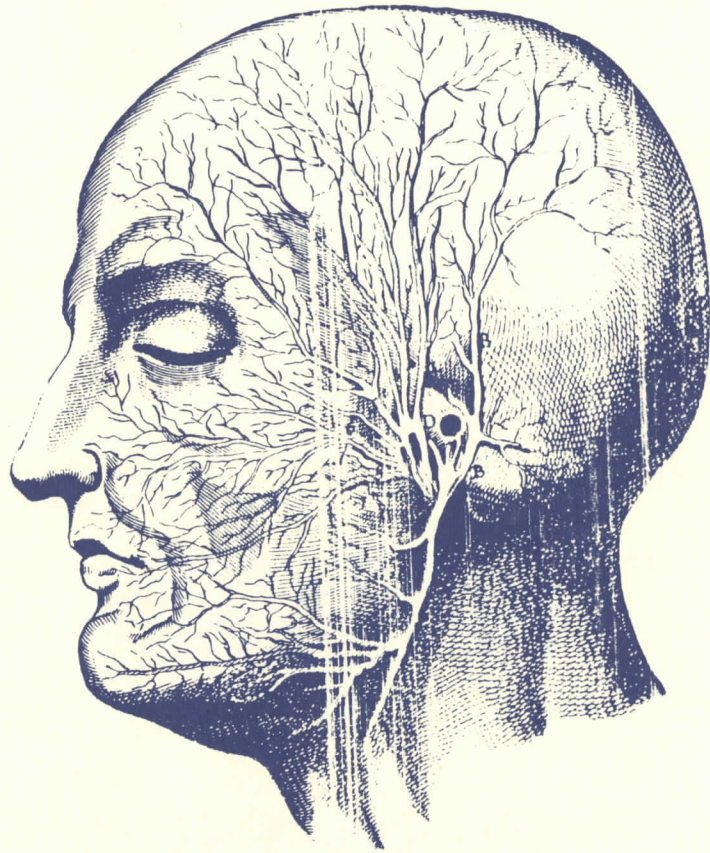
"They was just flowers, Your Honor, and plastic ones at that. They can't appreciate 'em like I do. Can't ya see, won't ya see? They was just flowers is all. They needed me to take care of 'em. They was just flowers."

The shades on the windows softly rattled with the return of the autumn breeze, yet it had changed. With it came the chill of a winter promise. On the lawn, a pale, purple crocus seemed to cringe.



Mike # 1

J. A. Hinton



DIONYSUS EX APOLLO

Everyday and everywhere
blind, mute people live
morphean desperation;

Unseeing, unspeaking—just
automata—life-
seeking mechanical dreams.

Yet love sustains and will not
fade like brilliant though
transient autumn colors;

Eternal Phoenix, only
a recurrent hope
to secret, angst-ridden lives.

Paradox, found solely in
renunciation
of Reason for reason's sake;

Can, from the body of truth,
loosen fetters of
self-deceiving Reason's souls.

Going-down to overcome,
Zarathustra—the
music-making Socrates—

renouncing the herd, bursts forth
the laughing lion,
a rope crossing the abyss.

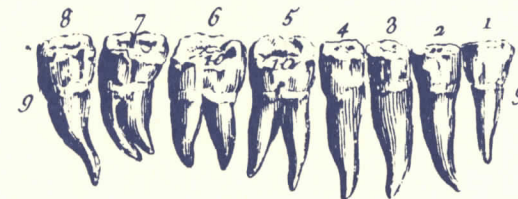
William Haliburton

MY FREEDOM RINGS

This land is my land
get off you crazy membranes
morbid agents in their psychopathic huts
in the dark scaring all the little children
those brats crying with their tales
of riding horseback naked
in the winds sounds like laughter trinkling
from their bedrooms
late at night mares wild headless
children gaping screaming
this land is your land
so come over here and kiss me you big fool
with your alligator mouth chomping
my cheek blood oozing
from the glands jaws breaking
tearing juicy flesh
from my fatty tissues saturated
fat from California
where the surfers cruise at night
on their naked
horses and women tatter about barefoot
mascara running teary down pimpled cheeks
bones scraping against the sidewalk
till dawn to the New York islands
where I want to drown with you
while Ms. Liberty stands
with her arms outstretched to sooth
this overbearing love
in Argentina I'll wash my bloody feet
on the shore
and sing this land was made for you

and me but I do not want you anymore
so I will follow my freedom sings
and drive a stake through your unsuspecting soul
the end is here

Shannon Byers



CONTRIBUTORS

Kevin McMillin is a Junior majoring in Music Industry. He doesn't do it; he just likes to say it.

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PATRONS

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