



The Southern Quill

1996-1997

Whispers of Reality

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SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Associated Students of Dixie College

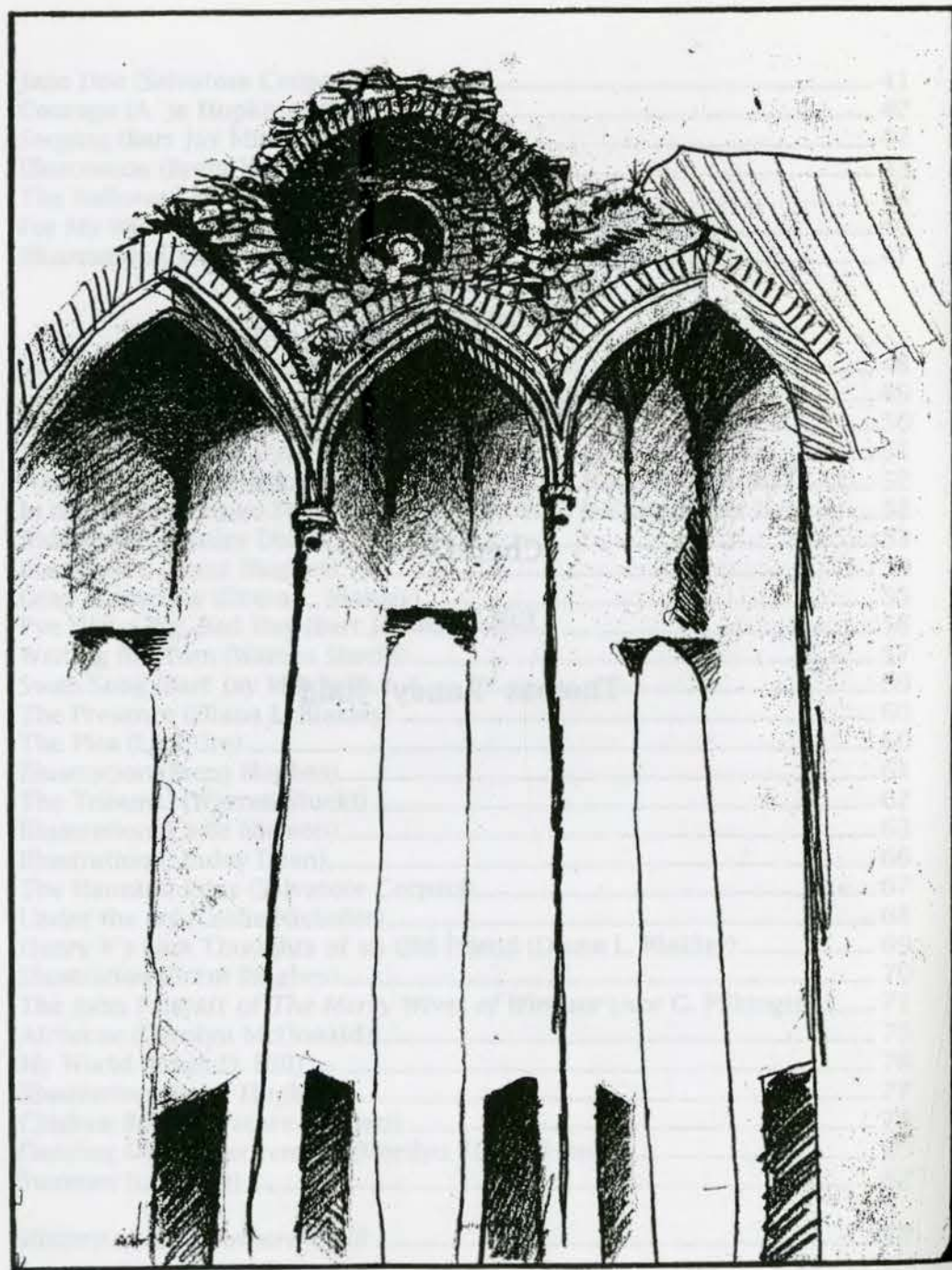
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The Division of Humanities and Social Sciences

Cheri Drew

Bill Fowler

Thomas "Randy" Judd



I. Visions

*"Within this three mile may you see it coming."
Macbeth, 5.5.37*

Lisa Ure

*Grandma's Castle**

The fortress of my mother's mother
Looms over the corner of First South and Fifth East.
The antiquated orange brick buttress
Is guarded by climbing ivy and rose bushes.
Italian Cyprus stand as sentinels
For the precious human treasure inside.

The gray-topped turrets that serve as lookouts
Watch for approaching embassies
Or a returned princess-winning knight.
The cement drawbridge
Hangs over a moat of ankle-deep grass
With tricycle sharks and stray dog crocodiles.

The warmth of the inner court
Emanates as much from the Queen of the palace
As from the big coal burning stove
Casting its dancing glow into the farthest corners.
Nobles, peasants, paupers, kings,
Each is welcomed and reminded
They, too, are of royal birth.

**First Place Winner, 1996-97 Annie Atkin Tanner Poetry Competition*

Amber Hyde

The Road That We Forgot

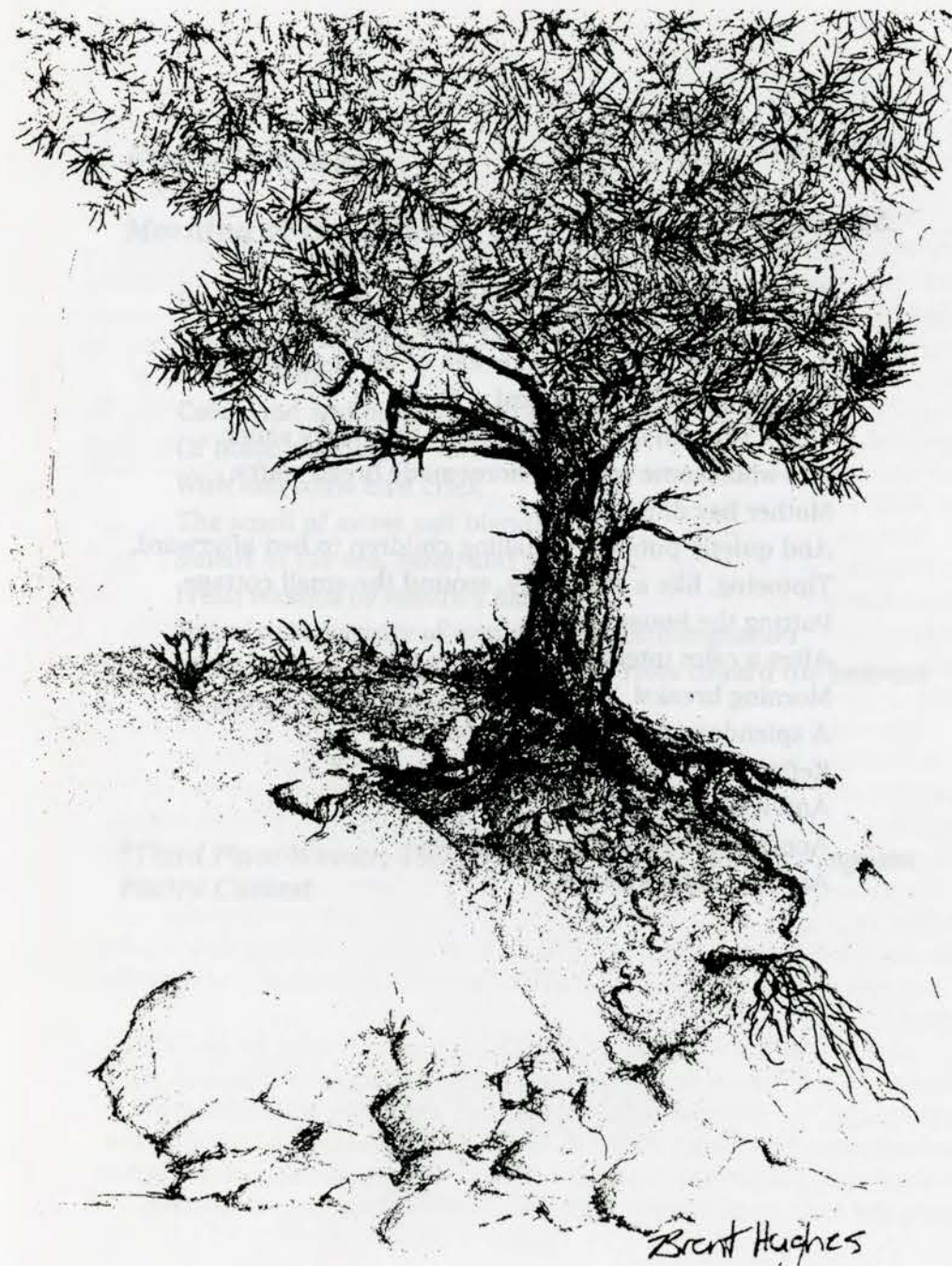
Weathered barns and shacks dot the countryside.
 The smell of golden hay permeates the air.
 Dry creek beds, lined with sun-bleached skeletons
 Long left to decay in the scalding sun;
 Old, dusty roads thread through colorful displays of leaves,
 Making a rainbow on the horizon.
 Rarely seen by anyone
 Is the road that we forgot.

Marsha K. Lawhorn

Crocus*

Buried alive a winter,
 She springs her sodden jail
 In lemon-gold explosion
 On wings of emerald, frail.

**Second Place Winner, 1996-97 Dixie College Honors Program
 Poetry Contest*



Brent Hughes

Lisa Ure

Sea Laborer

Wind blows through the long grasses
 Like a golden wave rippling to the shoreline;
 A warm sun sinks into an ocean of waist-deep wheat.
 Our farmer sails homeward,
 Where warmth and love welcome the weary sailor.
 The wholesome smell of homemade bread wafts;
 Mother has dinner ready
 And quietly puts the squalling children to bed afterward,
 Tiptoeing, like a stowaway, around the small cottage,
 Putting the house to bed.
 After a calm interlude of sleep—
 Morning breaks!
 A splendor of sun and bird song
 Reflects the new day.
 And it begins again.
 Another sea's labor,
 Another night's peace.

Diana L. Blakley

Morning at the Beach*

Green flashes quickly change to pink
 On a sandy sun washed beach
 At water shore.
 Cold wind and breaking wave make a cacophony
 Of noise blending in your ear
 With lonesome bird cries.
 The smell of sweet salt blends with
 Smells of the sea, sand, and sky
 Fresh washed by nature's hand.
 Quiet, soft, serenity allows peaceful contemplation
 When a flurry of wings and feathers rises toward the heavens
 Encircling you in its breezy arms.

****Third Place Winner, 1996-97 Dixie College Honors Program
 Poetry Contest***

Kerry Sherman

Observing the Gallery

Every day the old man perched himself on a stool, his back hunched, his elbows resting on the windowsill, staring out his kitchen window. The windowsill hung like a picture frame two stories above the street below. The street on which he lived was a gallery of such hangings, most of which were an empty canvas of white curtain, but some were stroked with the color of plants and flowers. The walls of the gallery seemed to stretch infinitely upward to a ceiling of sky which appeared to be a painted canvas constantly being pulled across the sky, as if being rolled from one giant scroll to another. The walls rested atop two lines of businesses, small stores and grocery markets.

The old man sat observing the flocks of people who, with invisible eye blinders on, raced up and down the street, going to and from work and in and out of the stores. The main object of the old man's observation was a youth whom the old man, not knowing the youth's name, had called Mabon. I say youth because Mabon appeared to be eight or nine years old.

The old man had been watching Mabon for months, but the first time Mabon noticed the old man's observance was an early spring morning after the skies had opened their eyes and showered the gallery with rain, leaving a notable number of puddles behind. Mabon, taking advantage of the adventure that nature so generously afforded, played in the puddles on his way to school. As he skipped and leapt from puddle to puddle, the sole of his shoe caught an inch of the gutter and was the pivot point of a stumble. Books took flight and, as they landed, found company with Mabon in the darkest puddle of mud water on the street.

Jumping to his feet and cursing the sole of his shoe, he quickly looked around him to see if anyone had noticed his fall. Mabon's eyes soon caught the old man laughing; at first Mabon heard nothing, but focused entirely with his sense of sight. It was moments later that the sound found the picture, and when it did, Mabon rapidly found shelter under the trees until the old man disappeared from the windowsill.

From that day on, Mabon—knowing of the old man in the window—entertained him from time to time by playing games and acting plays in the street. But Mabon never revealed that he knew the old man was watching.

Mabon thought of the man as an old, bald buzzard perched in painted glory on the gallery wall. One day, as the old man was watching, Mabon played that he was the old man, snooping into everything. Then, Mabon looked up at the old man, gazed into the old man's eyes and laughed. The old man disappeared from the window.

Mabon continued playing in the street from time to time for months, trying to bring the old man back to the windowsill, but he never returned.

Pawel Twardecki

Ordinary Man

You shall obey!
You shall be good!
You shall be quiet!

You shall not rebel!
You shall not be bad!
You shall not scream!

Shut up, old man,
I have a dream.

Salvatore Corpaci

Armani in Red

With a compelling rat-a-tat-tat,
The peaceful meal bangs to a close.

Italian pinstripes splatter red, while
Goey threads escape in a slippery ooze,
Slowly rappelling off the boss's ruined suit.

Startled patrons stare wide eyed across
The smoky interior, both shocked and relieved
As crimson soaks the checkered cloth.

With awkward smiles and nervous laughter,
Stumbling infectiously around the room,
Worldly men of respect, flaunting
Silky ties and double-breasted Armanis,
Marvel at good fortune.

Feeling threatened, a frightened waiter
Clamors for help amidst the commotion,
Even before the clattering dishes fall silent.

After all, nothing makes a mess
Like spaghetti.



Bart Jay Mitchell

The Roman Crowd

Bring out the bears and away with these actors
 Reciting wretched poetry and prose.
 Take them to the tigers!
 Tear them to bits! Boring us and all!
 We cannot wait for the climax to come!
 Oh, be brief. Better yet, be quick,
 And then we'll cheer for you.
 More bread! More blood!
 Why, that one's not quite dead!
 Frenzied and fiery, our fancy needs to be fed!
 While Crassus burns our town to the ground,
 We will not, cannot leave
 Till our appetite is appeased!
 For gore is good, and the food is free!
 Oh gods, our games are great!
 Bring out the bears, bring out the bears!
 How can you make us wait?

Diana L. Blakley

The Elf

I see you standing tall in golden fields,
 Walking softly, calmly thinking thoughts
 As deep as restless waters.
 Your soft hands run slowly up the
 Yellow stalks of wheat as Lady
 Autumn runs her breezy fingers
 Through your sun-stroked hair.
 Your nose, like the noses of ancient kings,
 Stands strong and noble on your face,
 Claiming you for Royalty and Grace.
 You lift your velvet blue eyes to
 Where I stand and smile with
 A smile that warms my heart like a summer breeze.
 Slowly you walk to me;
 Like a Parrish painting, your body curves with the brush
 As you bend to press your lips against my skin;
 Then, you pull me in.

Christy Johnson

Creation's Battle

Hear the song of creation's cry as she sings
The story of the world's savage birth—
That misty world called Therra
Where magic reigns and dragons fly.
This is the story of that legend's song,
The eternal battle between the tyrant Chaos
And the immortal Mother who bore the world.

Before time began and celestial skies,
Before the light of burning sun,
Before nature spread her feathery wings,
Before elf, dwarf, and human kind,

There was Chaos.

The Mother beheld the cosmos with pensive eye,
Brought forth the Sun from stellar womb,
And two sisters to share night's sky—
One of crystal frost and one of crimson gold—
Then sprinkled Her tears among the heavenly orbs
And with the powers of creation,
Joined a solar river of yellow fire
With glassy, astral ice,
And out of the billowing clouds,
Came the world of Therra in balanced throes.

And Order claimed the universe.

But Chaos retained his infinite domain,
Calling upon His tumultuous minions of discord,
Imbued his power in Niron, the Master,
And waged Creation's Battle on the infant world.

The Mother carved dawn's polished rays with golden fingers;
Born of Chaos twirled ebony's heavy cloak.
From starry tresses She sculpted terrestrial soil—
He spewed unsettled oceans from hidden bowels.
The Mother wove liquid ribbons of silver and
Draped them over kneaded peaks of stone;
Chaos belched noxious swamps with putrid breath,
Gouged distal grottos in earthly mounds.
She traced the contours of green and moving life;
He sowed ghastly death, provoked mortal pain.

Thus a balance embraced the world.

Yet the sidereal conflict burned in stagnant stalemate,
Millennia rehearsed its lethargic ministry,
And the shining globe ripened in temporal life.
So the Mother spoke in words that flew
And graced the world with five brilliant gifts—
One from each of Her immortal children.

From the eldest were conceived the elves:
In her own image delicate Atheris endowed
Her people with supple limbs and ethereal grace
And touched their visages with her flowing fingers.
Placed in earthy forests, the merry elves emerged
As keepers of Nature's intrinsic gardens
And guardians of woodland creatures.
But sweet Atheris had grown to love her creation,
And silver tears caressed her ivory cheeks,
Her lyric voice rang with anguished mourning
Whilst she clutched her bright hair in heavy grief;
For on the world her children bowed
To the rank decay of death's black curse.
Yet the Mother felt her daughter's sorrow
And kissed the elves with timeless lips
To prolong their lives and comfort Her weeping child.

Fane, Her second born, chose the forest's oldest oak,
 His great life extending to the world's beginning,
 And implored of him a single branch
 From which to form her divine gift.
 A gentle touch collected the ancient wood;
 With ax and chisel she carved a figure,
 Whittling stocky stature and a bulbous nose,
 And added earthy moss to cloak its naked cheek.
 Then snipped a strand of her golden hair,
 Whose locks contained her sacred power,
 And wrapped the cord round the sculpture's base
 To bestow her children with godly vigor.
 Lastly, Fane pricked her tender finger
 With a silver shard of captured moonlight
 And in the statue's heart, lodged an immortal ruby
 To insure the creature of stalwart spirit.
 When heated in the Sun's fiery forge,
 The wooden image burst forth
 The sturdy race of dwarves to dwell in
 Darkened corners of Therra's gritty bones.

The Mother's middle child, dark-haired Imbra,
 Wandered the heavens with a pestered stride,
 For her two siblings had claimed of Nature
 The choicest homes for their creations,
 Leaving only dry sands of leeward deserts,
 Haphazard slopes of mountain crags,
 Two sea-tossed islands of violent shore,
 And the biting cold of southern glaciers.
 She implored her sisters to share the world,
 And in haughty voice came this reply:
 "Dear little sister, we think thee too
 Heedlessly whimsical, frivolous and rash.
 Why, the little world would fare far better
 If thou bestowed it with briars and thorns
 Than attempt a race of thine own design."

Imbra's violet eyes burned with golden rage,
 And in defiant hues her rebellious heart
 Conceived and bore a violent tempest
 And hurled its furor upon the world.
 Floating amidst the turbulent clouds,
 Dusky Imbra performed a frenzied dance
 And sprinkled sweet honey from a waxen comb—
 Dappling the harsh terrain with golden dew.
 Each amber orb became a human, but
 The newborn race fell heir to their mother's fury.
 Thus their ardent passions flare with brilliance,
 And unruly emotions blaze with fervent intensity.
 Still, human blood flows the briefest,
 So as tranquil Imbra turned toward heaven,
 She tempered the curse and stained her people
 With radiant slivers of her trailing rainbow.

The Warrior,
 Son fourth born from Motherly core,
 Sheathed his lustrous sword to
 Cloak its flagrant sheen,
 Donned his burnished armor and raised a great silver shield;
 Then, he captured a hearty flame
 With glowing coals and seducing warmth,
 And as he rode the flaming globe
 From blushing dawn to shadowed dusk
 He dropped the fire upon the world
 To guard its people from Niron's wraith;
 When night's cold gale swallowed day,
 And blinded Therra with raven mantel.

And the youngest, the Mother's favorite,
 Mystic Kirathi-atron,
 Her blue-back scales gleaming
 In the polished moonlight,
 Spread her leathery wings and brushed

Their silver tips against the shining stars.
 She circled the globe with winged gait
 Till the highest point of Therra's face
 Rose from the earthly surface with a somber, snowy veil.
 Perched atop this lofty summit,
 She breathed her blessing upon the world.
 Praying to heaven with its circling orbs,
 The last of creation's children
 Suffused Therra's inner spirit with
 The language of ancient dragons,
 That force called magic by mortal tongue,
 Then soared to heaven's throne
 In a cyclone of frosty wind.

And yet, dire Niron obeyed his master
 And countered the gifts from the Mother's hand,
 And bred yellow-eyed ogres of ribald hide,
 Repugnant trolls with inky talons,
 And fetid goblins with ash gray shells,
 Then poisoned the gifts of the Mother's children—
 Injected the wise elves with intolerant pride,
 Tarnished dwarven honor with obstinate suspicion,
 And twisted human creativity with ambitious greed.

Then the gods withdrew their presence
 And mounted the sable sword of space
 To wage their war from heaven's view,
 And granted the creatures of life
 And death
 The spinning of Therra's uncertain future.

Tina Washburn

The Beauty of Change

I once held a grain of sand.
 In my sight it looked perfect;
 It sparkled, twinkled in the sunlight.
 I then placed that grain into the sea, out of my reach and power,
 and left.

Over time, while I was separated from that precious speck,
 We changed continually.
 The grain was shaped, molded; it grew and strengthened as I did.
 Still, through it all, I longed to have that very same grain back.

Then, one day, I went back to the sea to be with my grain of sand,
 And I found an oyster.
 Once able to see inside, I beheld a pearl.
 This pearl did not sparkle or twinkle, but shined!
 It was white, pure, delicate.

I knew then why I had gone back to the sea...
 To retrieve my grain of sand that had been molded into a precious,
 even more
 Perfect particle, one that I cherished from the changes during our
 Separation.

Diana L. Blakley

The Dance*

You wrap yourself around me
 As ivy round a tree.
 Your fingers steal across me
 As fog fresh from the sea.
 Your voice fills cold November
 As silk and summer wind.
 You enfold my body in the
 Warmth of your breath
 And skin.
 In smooth, sensuous moves
 We slip across the floor.
 Twisting to the music,
 We glide like water on the shore,
 Lost in tender dancing
 And dreams of something more.

**Third Place (Tie), 1996-97 Annie Atkin Tanner Poetry Competition*

Sarah Davie

Kissing Night*

Fire in the sky kisses evening darkness,
 Glittering marshmallow clouds caress the rolling hills.
 Silhouetted Joshua trees gather and pray to the moon.
 Stars like diamond angel eyes sparkle and watch over below.

The deep blue night sighs a symphony in a breath,
 Serenading the souls of all creatures that will hear.
 Silence tumbles lightly with chirps and howls and rustles,
 While a breeze plays tag with the wind,
 Swirling between the sage and cactus,
 Tickling leaves and needles—night smiles.

My bare feet step gently on the warm desert floor.
 I take a slow breath of the sweet crystal blue air,
 And I wiggle my toes in the soft sand—night giggles.
 I can smell the rock, the sage, the life.
 I smell night.

I close my eyes, standing still; I hold my breath,
 Hoping to stop time in this perfect moment.
 Flawless creativity paints this heaven,
 A kingdom with no second thoughts—no regrets.

Night holds me tight, keeping me warm.
 The rocks take my hand and blanket me,
 To sleep in their arms,
 So calm now
 In this desert night.

**Second Place Winner, 1996-97 Annie Atkin Tanner Poetry Competition*



Sarah Davie

Only

The sun sinks lower into its glowing pool of glassy fire.
Birds fall softly back to the land.
This canvas of life stretched over struggles,
Only to strengthen.

We must play our roles,
Acting out several parts,
Even though at times we are
Acting alone,
Left on the stage with no audience
And only an echo to answer.

Grip the rock with strong fingers.
Never let go; never give up.

*Amber Hyde**Snapshot*

Old dirt roads wind like ribbons
 Through large mountains of stone.
 Wooden structures are long left to the past,
 Poorly protected by barbed wire fences
 With splintered cedar posts,
 Dilapidated gates and rusty old trucks left to the cows;
 Yellowed scraps of paper blow across the barren land.
 The horizon is littered with weeds and leafless trees;
 Train tracks lie in the distance,
 Forgotten and left to decay
 While burnt ashes of yesterday
 Are scattered along the roadside;
 All of this to be choked up in the dust as people pass on,
 Never looking back.

*Diana L. Blakley**Intruding on Silence*

I've turned out the lights
 And unwound my head
 And crawled beneath covers
 On my warm, cozy bed.
 I spread out my ribs,
 With one last deep breath,
 Then close my eyes
 And wait for sweet rest.
 At first it is silent,
 Not a sound do I hear,
 Then one loud *Ping!*
 Rings out far too clear.
 Deeper I sink and worm
 My way in,
 Feeling cotton sheets
 Press against my skin.
Ping!
 Not again.
 I roll on my side
 And pull up the covers,
 Trying to hide.
 Sneakily I hold
 My breath and listen...
 My lungs are on fire!
 How long has it been?
 My mind's screaming,
 "Breathe!" So I let out a
 Sigh of relief.
 "It's gone," I think,
 Then grin.

Ping!

With a whimper and groan
I roll on my back;
I throw my arms wide
And give the pillows a smack!

Ping!

With a low growl I
Throw off the covers,
Then climb out of bed
And storm across the room.
With hands on my hips
I glare (it's quite late,
My eyes are half shut,
And I appear rather sedate!)

And I wait...

And wait...

And wait...

I cross my arms

And tap my foot;

I snort

And then I wait...

And wait...

"Well?" I holler.

Then wait a bit more.

"You'd better be through!"

I mumble as I stumble

For bed

With one hand on

My heavy, hanging head.

I crawl back into bed when,

Ping!

"Ha!" I shout as I

Leap out of bed.

I dart for the switch

And hit my poor head.
Ignoring the pain, I turn on the light,
Then swear under my breath,
"Damnit! That's bright!"

With mostly closed eyes,

I charge forward again,

Stubbing my toes and

Whacking my chin.

I find the counter

With my unfortunate gut.

My face finds the mirror,

I'm having such luck!

Now I know that it's near,

So I swing out my hand,

And I found it all right,

But now I can't use my

Hand for the rest of the night.

Ping!

With my other hand

I bang on its knobs

"Off!" I shout. "Off!"

"Stupid faucet," I mumble,

Then back to bed

I wearily stumble,

Where atop my sheets

I gratefully crumble.

II. Emotions

"I must also feel it."
Macbeth, 4.3.221

Bart Jay Mitchell

The Waiter's Lament

And I'll be your server today,
Bow down and kiss your ass
Like a sixteen year old on a date,
Obsequious, hoping to get some for the first time.
My gluttonous guest,
You retch commands, and I'm
Only too Happy to serve;
This demi-godhood you've made from me
Is a sinking platter
In an orange sky,
Somewhere where I am free
And my lips hurt
From the puckering.

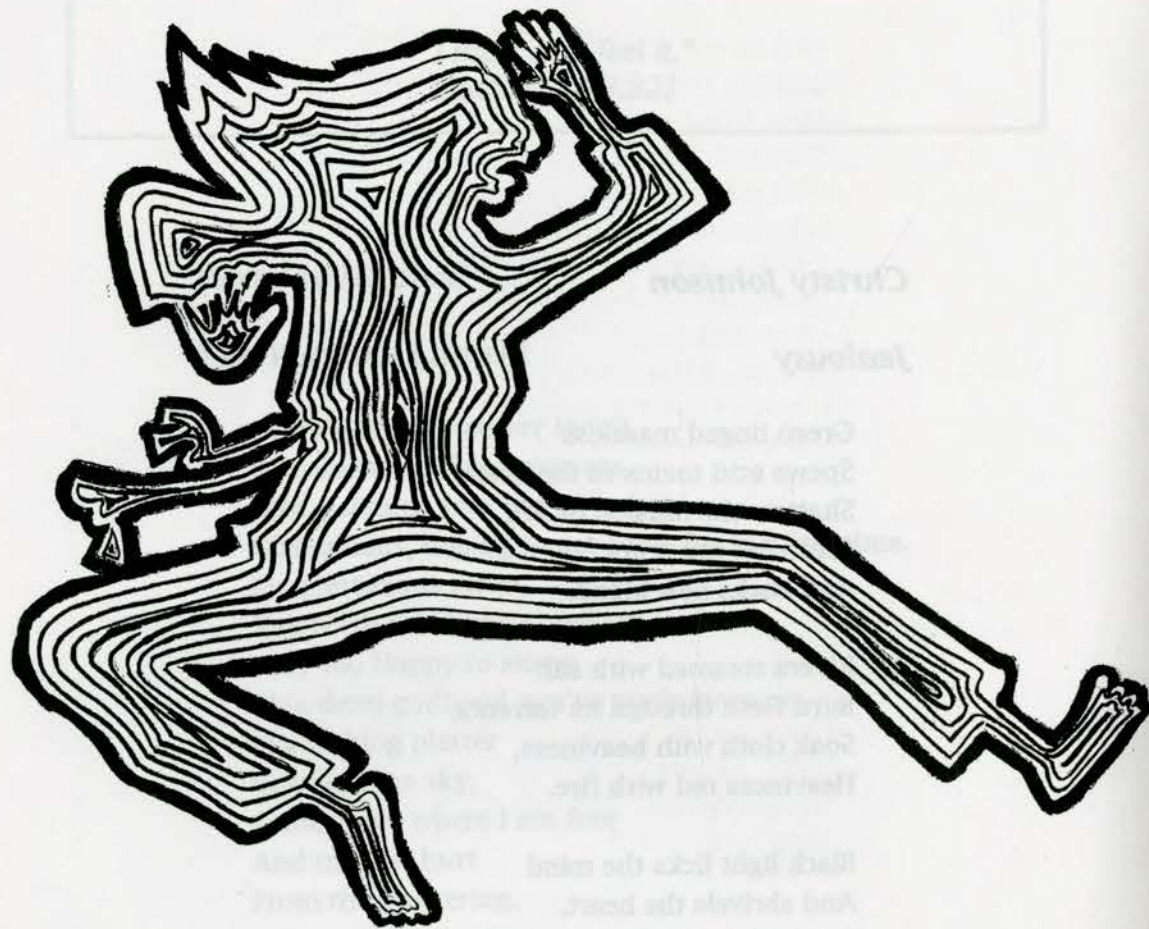
Christy Johnson

Jealousy

Green tinged madness
Spews acid toxins to the heart,
Shatters the illusion of self,
Scratches old scars,
And sucks new blood.

Rivers steamed with salt
Burn flesh through its torrents,
Soak cloth with heaviness,
Heaviness red with fire.

Black light licks the mind
And shrivels the heart,
Retching in newly turned stone.



Christy Johnson

Stressed

Criss-crossed filaments entangle
In a web of crossfire.
Nervous images flash
From unlighted corners.

Aching eyes dart hastily
Through a smoke of glittering crystals.

Inscribed plates of fiery fantasies
Circle in endless repetition.

Outstretched hands claw from the edge of the gaping abyss.
I am trapped in the confines of my mind.

Diana L. Blakley

The Victim

The first tear fell from the dry eye,
 And pain was born in fire's bosom.
 Broken wind uttered its first shrill cry,
 And the hearer willed that love should die.
 Hatred first reared its ugly head,
 And love, that eternal traitor,
 With down-turned face, joined the dead.
 Beneath the weight of emptiness
 And cracks brought on by time,
 The weathered heart shattered
 With the midnight chime.
 The withered victim was left
 By this display
 In crumpled form until the light of day.
 Then reaching out with hands
 As empty as its chest,
 It sought to find the ice and stone
 With which to fill its breast.
 But all that met its fingers
 Were shards of reality,
 And soon the emptiness
 Was filled with shades of fear
 Who built there walls and towers
 To keep sanity from getting near.

Christy Johnson

Lord of the Shadows

Noble Knight of the fair Black Rose,
 Into your embrace I yearn to fly
 And escape the glare the harsh day sows
 In the cloaking mask of night's dark sky.

Forgive the tender tears I weep,
 Enfold me in your velvet darkness.
 From purest heart my song doth seep
 To claim the warmth of raven harness.

Somber Master, austere Shadowlord,
 Free me from my watery grave and
 Guard me with your sable sword,
 My life, my heart, my soul to save.

Touch me with your burning lips
 From blushing dawn till night's cool shrine
 Envelops passion with spiral mists
 And conquers light with darkened shine.

A 'ja Hopkinson

Words

Words,
Empty explanations—
Promises...fading.

Fighting,
Screaming,
Crying.

"I Love You."

Blaming,
Hurting,
Weeping.

Words, empty promises—
Speaking only confusion.

Amber Hyde

Broken Threads

The dark hours of the night slowly faded away into what would be a nice day. Finally finishing up the farm chores, I came around the house to see the old, rusty truck in the backyard. One of the many things I had never gotten around to. My father was a farmer and raised me as a farmer, but I had always wanted more out of life. The outside world looked so much more exciting than the life I was leading.

From the kitchen sizzling bacon could be heard. Sauntering into the kitchen, I found my wife, Helen, busily working in front of the stove. I watched her for a moment before waking Brian, our son. Breakfast was almost over when Brian plodded into the kitchen. Wiping the sleep out of his eyes, he sat down and slowly ate his bacon and flap jacks. When he was finished, he disappeared into the back of the house, leaving Helen and me in the kitchen.

This was the moment I had been waiting for. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in December, I saw my chance out of a life I had come to hate. War had always excited and intrigued me. I always felt more alive when I was hunting and killing things than I ever was just looking after the farm. The war seemed to offer me more than what I already had. This war seemed like a dream come true. It was all I had wanted out of life but had never had before. Helen would not approve of my decision to enlist in the war, but I had to do it.

After finishing the breakfast dishes, I escorted Helen outside, where I knew Brian wouldn't hear us. There was no use in sugar-coating what I was about to say, so I just spit it out.

"Helen, I've just enlisted myself in the army. I'll be leavin' for Germany later on today," I proclaimed.

"You *what*? You're leavin' Brian and me to fight in some stupid war? Why didn't ya tell me?" shrieked Helen.

"'Cause I knew you wouldn't like the idea. It just feels like I'm doin' the same things all the time, and I hate that. This war is like a dream

come true. I'll be able to see the world and actually fight. It's better than anything that's goin' on around here," I replied.

Panicking, Helen wailed, "You can't just abandon us. I can't raise Brian by myself. What am I supposed to do?"

"You can move back with your parents. You'll be better off there. I've hired some guys to take care of the place while I'm gone so ya won't have to worry about that," I said.

The pain I saw on her face was too much, so I slowly walked into the house and started my packing. A few hours later, after I had finished my packing, I said good-bye to Brian. I told him to take care of his mom while I was gone and to be brave. Walking out of the house, I could see Helen lying in the yard crying softly to herself. I watched her for a moment, then quickly got in the car and drove away.

Salvatore Corpaci

Jane Doe

I knelt anxiously, adrenalized by the austere beauty of naked
Innocence standing before me. The upheaval of her breast, a
Sequence of flowing curves, fair as winter's ice creamed
Peaks. Angled demurely atop a slender pedestal, the
Delicate face rose, smoothly seductive, bashfully
Blushing its charming serenity. Mesmerized
Momentarily by the fawning of those
Big, black eyes, my heart raced,
Shuddering with every flit
And flutter of the lashes.
My thoughts swelled in a sea
Of frothy passion, each wave projecting
Outward in a flash of masculinity. Sleek muscles
Rippled deliciously at my approach, while wounded breath
Escaped through quivering lips. With shivers tracing the length
Of my spine, I reached out to where my love lay still, sprawled fatefully
Across the verdant swards, each hand tasting the tender flesh, even as
Bewildered eyes began to glaze. Carefully, I laid the Winchester to one side,
And dressed methodically. Once again, the yearly hunt is over; the
Freezer...full. Of unconditional love, I'd know little, if not for the
Occasional rendezvous with Dear Miss Jane Doe, my favorite
Femme-fatale. When Jane's in season, I'm never in a rut.

A 'ja Hopkinson

Courage

Courage,
The strength of a tree
In the storm—
Blowing, bending, enduring.
Mother is Courage.
And I, with roots so shallow
But yet entangled...stand.
Mother says "Courage,"
And I hold on.

Bart Jay Mitchell

Seeping

We breathe,
Swallowing the sky's savor.
Bodies of sweat, glowing moonlight,
Stains of grass, we groan,
Gulping glistening globules,
Devouring, consuming, embracing,
Fully fanciful like frolic.
Soul essence churns;
Fainting touch liquefies,
Dripping, grasping, flowing.
We two are seeping
Two are seeping
Seeping.



Warren Stucki

The Hallowed Hatpin

Upon entering the living room, Laura erupted into tears, colossal drops coalescing to streamlets, then cascading off her cheek and falling to her thin mandible and meager breast below. She had a slight figure, a narrow, sensitive face crowned with frizzy, cedar-bark brown hair. Her reticent hazel eyes reflected depth and intelligence. When nervous, she often displayed a timid, perpetual-victim smile. A kind of a rhythm was developing; sobs followed tears, then sobs, then tears. Laura had been doing a lot of this lately, ever since her mother died. It had been a lingering, wasting death, and then towards the end, when the hypernephroma metastasized to the bone, it had been painful. Laura had felt helpless and inadequate, but did all she could, primarily two things—vainly trying to comfort her mother, and long fervent hours of prayer, trying to coax God to intercede.

Jack, becoming exasperated, sank tiredly into the sofa. "Was it sacrament meeting? Was it something the bishop said?" More unintelligible sobs. Jack searched his memory. Was there anything Bishop Hafner had said that would generate this emotional catharsis? He saw the bishop's sun-corroded hands, thick with walnut-shell callouses, firmly tapping the pulpit to emphasize his words.

"Brothers and Sisters, I know that Jesus Christ died for our sins, that Joseph Smith was persecuted and also died for us," Bishop Hafner raised a crusty hand and wiped sweat from his equally crusty face, "and I know if you will just have the faith of a mustard seed, you will know that this is the true church also." More tapping of the pulpit, "It is our duty to share this message with everyone. All young men need to prepare for a mission. Prepare to be God's instrument to share this boundless joy...."

Carefully, Jack considered the bishop's speech. Nothing tear-provoking about that, but it did weigh heavily on Jack's mind. Like all young men his age, Jack was waging a personal battle, to go or not to go. A mission was a big step, and it was two years, but Jack was pretty sure he believed the words of the bishop, and after all, his father was

expecting it. On the other hand, if he did go, there would be no college football next year, and Jack wasn't entirely sure he could do without women for two years, especially Laura.

Jack got up slowly from the sofa and wandered to the picture window. "Laura, come on now, was it the bishop or something else?" More sobs. "No, Jack, it was the second lady, the one with the blue hair and thirties-style hat." Jack was thoughtful. That would be Sister Wiliston, an older lady with a bland, trusting face, orange-peel thick make-up, and glacier blue hair. What could she have possibly said that would result in this torrent of tears?

Sister Wiliston was immensely enjoying sacrament meeting. Bishop Hafner's remarks literally filled her with such buoyant spirit that she was about to burst, like colic when she ate too many raw vegetables. She was on her feet immediately after the bishop sat down, her left eye twitching, creating crow-feet fissures in her make-up. "Brothers and Sisters, I want to testify to you that God lives and that he hears and answers prayers." More eye twitching. "Last week I lost a family heirloom, a gold-cast hatpin my grandmother gave me on her deathbed. Needless to say, I was devastated." Now tears started running down the cracks of her make-up like water in irrigation furrows. "Well, I got down on my knees and prayed, really prayed, to my God; and you'll never believe it, but I found my hatpin the next day. It had fallen into a crack of my hardwood floor." Tears were overflowing the fissure banks now. "And I know in my heart, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that it was God who led me to that hatpin."

Jack combed uneasy fingers through his thick, harvest wheat hair, then turned pensive blue eyes toward Laura. "Really, Sister Wiliston's remarks seem harmless enough to me." Laura's sobbing vanished instantly, replaced by indignation and seldom seen fire. Her voice rose an octave, and she bristled, "I prayed just as hard, to the same God, for my mother's life! Why, Jack, why would God answer a prayer so trivial as Sister Wiliston's and completely ignore me?" Jack did not answer, probably didn't realize it was a question. He was deeply immersed in his own thoughts.

Bart Jay Mitchell

For My Wife

Languid and soft
Shivers like cool water,
You are dripping into me,
Into my eye.
Green and forest wise,
Pine scent and sunshine hot on my skin.
You are trees and rocks
Flowered and drip-drop rain.
You are Salvation from sweet, sickly city life
Still acrid and caught on my teeth.
Like the smell of chocolate on your skin,
I melt over you, and you flow sticky in my soul,
And in the end
You are every thing.

III. Cogitations

"There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."





III. Cogitations

"There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."
Hamlet, 2.2.253-4

Lisa Ure

Carpe Diem

Forget for a moment
Everything you've ever heard or read.
Come play with me—
Let's go lizard hunting
Or find rocks that fell from the sun.
Let's cook mud pies
And make grass tea.
Do a handstand
And walk on the ceiling.
Let's plant a sucker
And see if it grows.
Come hold my hand—
We'll pick dandelions.
Let's climb the crab apple trees
And race each other.
You fall down,
I kiss it better.
We tunnel through the garden like moles
And build sand castles that sink to ziggurats.
Come with me,
And we'll find who we really are.

Bart Jay Mitchell

My High School Friends

Yesterday is the rising dog bite
Still festering and hot
Like a Corvette summer's ride,
Hoping and gin sopped.
I'm a prowler in the one-room
World of my mind.
Madness and fancy splattered
Equally into the abysmal somethings of
High school, and it's ohh so fine.
You're a sports bar junky,
Twinky-toting and on fire,
A whistler and a "what's happening"er.
Used to be we were eye to eye.
Still, yesterday is sacrificed with so much ceremony;
Me for tomorrow,
You for what used to be.

Patsy Stradling

Deep Within

She is buried well.
Not beneath the moss, wet with morning dew,
Or hidden in a dark, forbidden room where muted light dwells.
You will not find her there.

Draped in her disguise, she hides safe from discerning eyes.
Like an epitaph written for the casual passerby
Or billowed clouds in sullen skies,
She is a figure cloaked in obscurity.

Entombed in the shadows of a mausoleum
Where thoughts, hopes and aspirations are interred,
She's constructed a hollow cenotaph of words and actions,
Becoming a flickering apparition, only inferred.

In a cemetery of acceptability, she conceals her flickering light,
A flame suffocating in shadow and clinging mist.
In a shroud lies the forgotten who might
Have been. Buried is she, deep within.

A'ja Hopkinson

Wandering

I wander the woods at a calm, easy pace
 And consider the tranquillity of this quiet place.
 The moonlight reflects the slumbering trees
 While my reason strays with the drifting breeze.
 The crickets' sweet music perfumes the air
 As I journey on—too weary to care.
 I recall the day, full of strain and of sorrow
 And pray to stop time—
 Can't I hold back tomorrow?

Bart Jay Mitchell & Christopher Nelson

In the Forest Named Felicity

She is night and covered in wizard,
 (What waylaid resentments does the city hold?)
 Staring empathy, drinking deep—saturated knowledge.
 What love is missing? What passion doesn't he know?
 She is truth and phantom, Nature's child—spilling coy.
 She says, "Burn your calendar and run with me into the freedom of
 night..."
 And her eyes, green, piercing things that eat him whole,
 "Leave your path and come with me."
 Beckon and seep into existence beyond the Man Machine
 (And the uncaring moon moves silently into tomorrow.)
 Salvation's drink, iridescent and blue, and she is an Angel.



in Hopkins

Wandering



Warren Stacks

Diana L. Blakley

Gray Rainy Day

Tiny ripples pierce the bronzy surface
Of still waters filled with autumn's gown,
Tears of heaven's sorrow
Gently falling down.
Silently they touch the
Cracked and broken earth.
No song bird left to sing
Of joyousness and mirth.
My heart cries out in pain
That I can share this beauty with no one,
So I walk alone in a world with cloud-bound sun.
My arms wrap around me tight,
Seeking warmth for my skin.
The soft and gray dim light
Chases shadows in calm wind.
Serenity sets, and peace is found within.

Bart Jay Mitchell

I've Had a Big, Bad Day

Today I woke up all prickly big.
 BIG. Bigger than New York City.
 I could have swallowed a mountain
 'Cause I felt Great.
 Great Big.
 My hands were huge, Huge 'cause I was
 Feeling like I was playing with stars and comets and things.
 I had my life and yours cupped in my palm,
 Spacious.
 Spacious and vast 'cause I was feeling huge,
 I was going to take it home; this was my oyster,
 And it fit in my hand, and I was big, Great Big.
 Then nobody saw me—
 I was too huge, bigger than the sky.
 Nobody talked to me—I was too Great,
 And suddenly I find myself very small.
 Smaller than a fingernail.
 Screamin' to be big,
 Big like Jim.

Warren Stucki

Waiting for Tom

I eyed the big bay with a mixture of admiration and unabashed hate. Truly, I was sorry that I'd ever purchased her even though she was a magnificent animal—almost sixteen hands tall with exercise-sculpted muscles, intelligent crafty eyes and a charcoal brown coat with a lustre like the midday sun reflecting off the new corrugated tin roof of my tack shed. Even now, as she paws the ground, her posture, her demeanor is one of defiance. My kids can't ride her; really, no one can ride her but me, and I use the term "ride" loosely when referring to me.

The first time I tried to ride her was on the mountain at the summer pasture. Walt (Witless) Evans had just delivered her and assured me that she was broke and that her name was A.C., then drove off in a parachute plume of dust. A.C. looked innocent, almost doleful, as I threw my Carl Darr saddle on her and put a split bit in her mouth. I bunched the reins and saddlehorn in my left hand, then put my left foot in the stirrup and swung my right leg over the saddle. Timed perfectly, right in mid-arch, before I could secure my leg, all hell broke loose. When she flattened her ears and lowered her head, I should have guessed what was coming, but even then, what could I have done? I bounced a couple on the cante using my testicles to protect my pubic bone, then dove backwards off the rear of the horse like a malfunctioning Roman candle, landing with my eleventh and twelfth ribs draped around a quakie log. It was sometime later I learned that A.C. was short for Alice Cooper.

Inevitably, when I get to the end of my patience and have made up my mind to take her to auction, she behaves like a model prisoner, we have a wonderful ride, and some neighbor comes up and says what a splendid animal she is. And I fancy I must cut quite a dashing picture on her back. Lately, she has been better; I think it's either my excellent training talents or perhaps she is finally being dominated by the sheer force of my will.

Either way, I'm almost finished with her. I've found a buyer, Tom Kratz, and he's offered me twice as much as I'd get by the pound at the

auction. Tom's the local banker; in fact, he holds the note on my place. I wouldn't say he was dishonest, but there's not a dollar spent in this county that Tom isn't aware of who spent it and for what. Five years ago, Tom arrived from the east in a three-piece business suit but lately has been wearing regular clothes—I guess he's trying harder to fit in. He was supposed to be here an hour ago, but Tom likes to make people wait. Puts him in the dominant position, he says.

Finally, Tom arrived, his navy blue Mercedes dragging a horse trailer and wearing a thin veneer of dust like early morning beard before shaving. Tom stepped out of his car wearing a Garth Brooks shirt complete with the packaging wrinkles, never-been-washed Wrangler jeans with a manufacturer's tag still on his right rear pocket, new Tony Lama boots with no flex creases, and a recently acquired black felt Stetson with not so much as even one grain of salty lint on it. "Morning, Tom, glad you could make it. You want to just take her with you?" I was trying to be polite. Tom walked over to A.C., then circled around her, like he was looking for a tire to kick. "You know I never buy anything without trying it out first; saddle her up." As I threw the saddle on A.C., I was praying that this would be one of those days when she would behave herself. I handed Tom the reins, then stood back. Tom put his left foot in the stirrup, and just then I noticed A.C. drop her head and flatten her ears. I smiled; it would be just as good, perhaps even better, this way.

Bart Jay Mitchell

Swan Song

She's a dancing angel
Dust, dusted like a pixie,
Raging a heroin cactus throne straight to hell,
And everybody's her whipping boy.
She's riding hard and checking out
Every devil she sees,
Walking on bastards like you,
Bastards like me,
'Cause who's real after all
In neon veins and
Candy-coated surprises.
She's gonna rape your brain
Till all you've left to give
Is a blue-streaked tear for pity...
'Cause she was an angel,
Butterfly princess
Now just dusted.

Diana L. Blakley

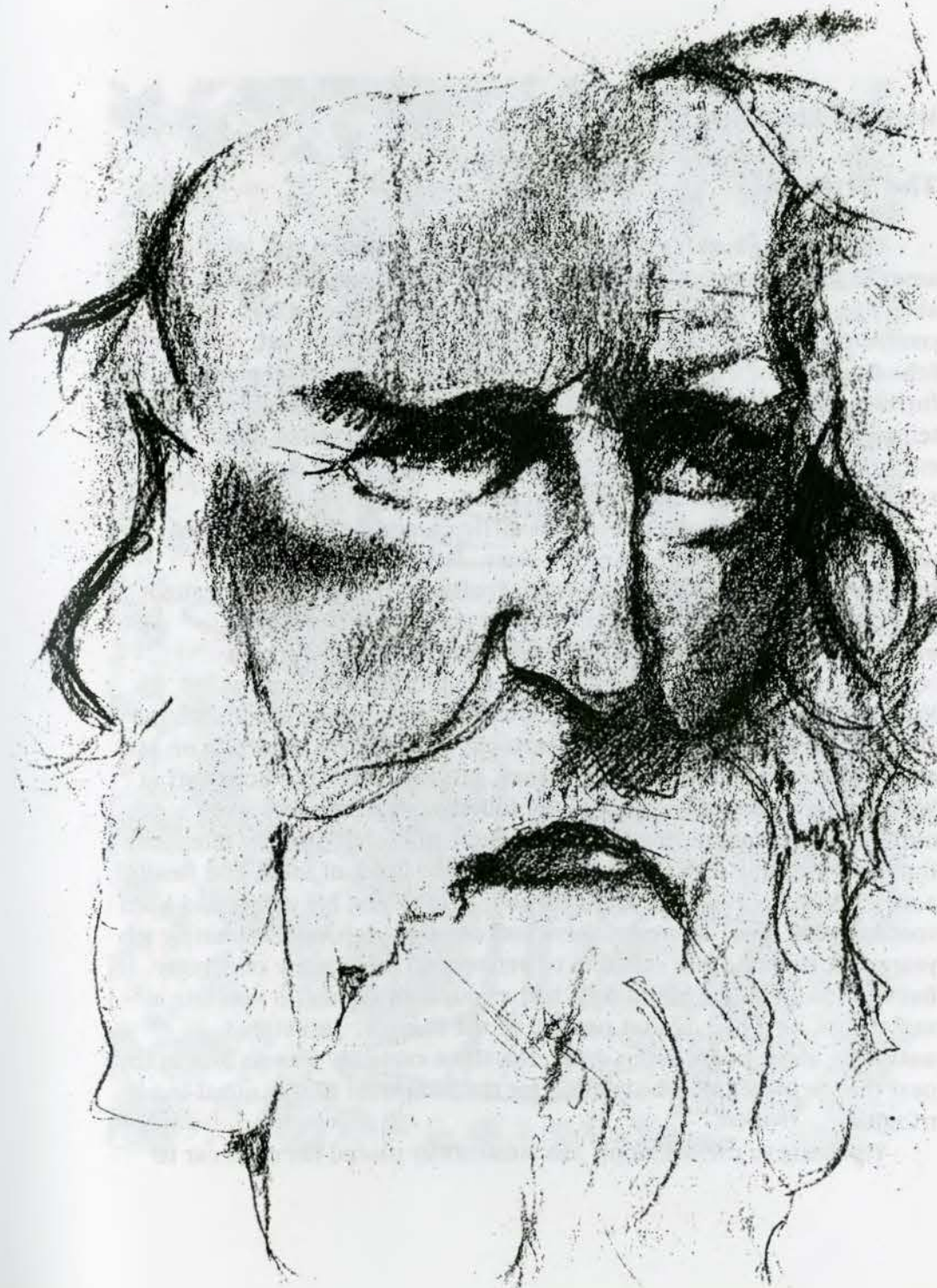
The Presence

Prickling, tingling sense of touch.
 Pulling, dragging not so much.
 Shrink away from former pain.
 Born again in burst of rain.
 Pressing in is stubborn time,
 Taking all that is sublime.
 Open here is plain to sight
 Hidden from the dark, the light.
 Sliding through with silver sails,
 Spin your web, tell your tales.
 But your distance still you keep
 From the presence dark and deep.

Lisa Ure

The Plea

I approach the Generous Creditor
 As an officious fool,
 Where I should hang my head in shame
 For again indebted myself to him.
 I plead favors
 Where an offering of payment is more fitting.
 Oh, impetuous heart!
 A soul, unworthy of the bounteous boons,
 Seeks again a pardon.
 Debt is already greater than any recompense;
 I am so freely offered forgiveness!
 Mercy pleads in my behalf.



Warren Stucki

The Tribunal

The meeting had lasted too long, and that troubled Jim Johnson. It amazed him that twenty years of work, his reputation and, yes, even his ability to make a living hung in the balance of this one ad hoc committee and subsequently this meeting. Jim was worried. Using his lithe fingers, Jim wiped the excess moisture from his permanently furrowed forehead, then combed it through the patchy gray above his temples. How had this happened? He had always excelled in almost everything and was a superb surgeon. Pacing the floor, Jim began sorting through the elements of his career.

Medical school hadn't been that difficult, and he had graduated with honors, in the top third of his class. But there was that one incident in his sophomore year, when Professor Wolcott almost caught him cheating on a biochem test. Wolcott couldn't prove it, and eventually it was dropped. Then there was his general surgery residency, where he discovered he had a real talent for surgery. However, he did get suspended for a week for having an affair with the Department Chairman's wife, but certainly that was no reflection on his ability as a cutter. Following residency, Jim joined the medical staff at Washington County General, and the following twenty years were nothing if not distinguished. He was elected Chief of Surgery after only three years on the staff, subsequently became Chief of Staff, and finally a member of the Hospital Board for four years. Yes, his career had been spotless until now. However, there was one occasion, approximately ten years ago, when he was called in to perform an emergency colectomy. But who could blame him if he'd had a couple of drinks? It was late at night; plus, he'd had all that turmoil of the divorce. Jim stared anxiously at the board room door. No, there certainly was no hint in the past that he would now be waiting for the judgment of this quasi-legal tribunal.

Tiptoeing to the oak door, Jim stealthfully placed his right ear to



the wood. He caught some garbled noise, but he couldn't make out a single word. What was there to discuss? Why so long? Yes, he had made one mistake, but that should be more than canceled by his years of excellent service. This whole affair was trivial and should never have generated this kind of response. The patient would have died anyway; what's the difference if he died then or six months later? After all, he had hypernephroma! The fact that he bled to death from surgery was probably a disguised blessing and definitely not a punishable offense.

Like all proceedings of this kind, the wheels, no not wheels, but the travois of justice moved at a neurotic pace. It had been months since that inauspicious incident, and like the siesta and the fly, it would not go away. If there was anything positive about this thorazine pace, Jim reasoned, it was that Rusty, Dr. Russell Jensen, had moved away. Rusty was the assistant surgeon, and Jim was pretty sure he would have had nothing good to say. He was glad Rusty was gone, though they had been partners for twelve years. It had been a turbulent and somewhat icy partnership.

The baneful door opened, and Acting Chairman, Doctor Joshua Higgins, emerged with a poker face. Jim couldn't read Higgins, and he immediately began to feel nauseous, almost panicky, wishing he had a valium. "Jim, could you come in? The group has a few questions they want to ask." As Jim entered the room, he noticed the medical magistrates seated around an oval, solid oak conference table. There was Dr. Joshua Higgins, present Chief of Staff, Dr. Catherine Connelly, Chief of Surgery, Mr. Edwin Starr, Hospital Administrator, and Ms. Janet Morgen, President of the Hospital Board. The only one who worried Jim was Catherine. She was a small, energetic woman who surreptitiously viewed men as the enemy and obviously had an excellent understanding of surgery. Jim flushed with humiliation and indignation--this was akin to being sent to the principal's office.

Dr. Higgins cleared his throat, a signal to start. "Let's first get rid of some old baggage, Jim. Tell us about that incident, ten years ago, with the perforated colon."

"Not much to tell. I had traded calls with Dr. Jensen and had

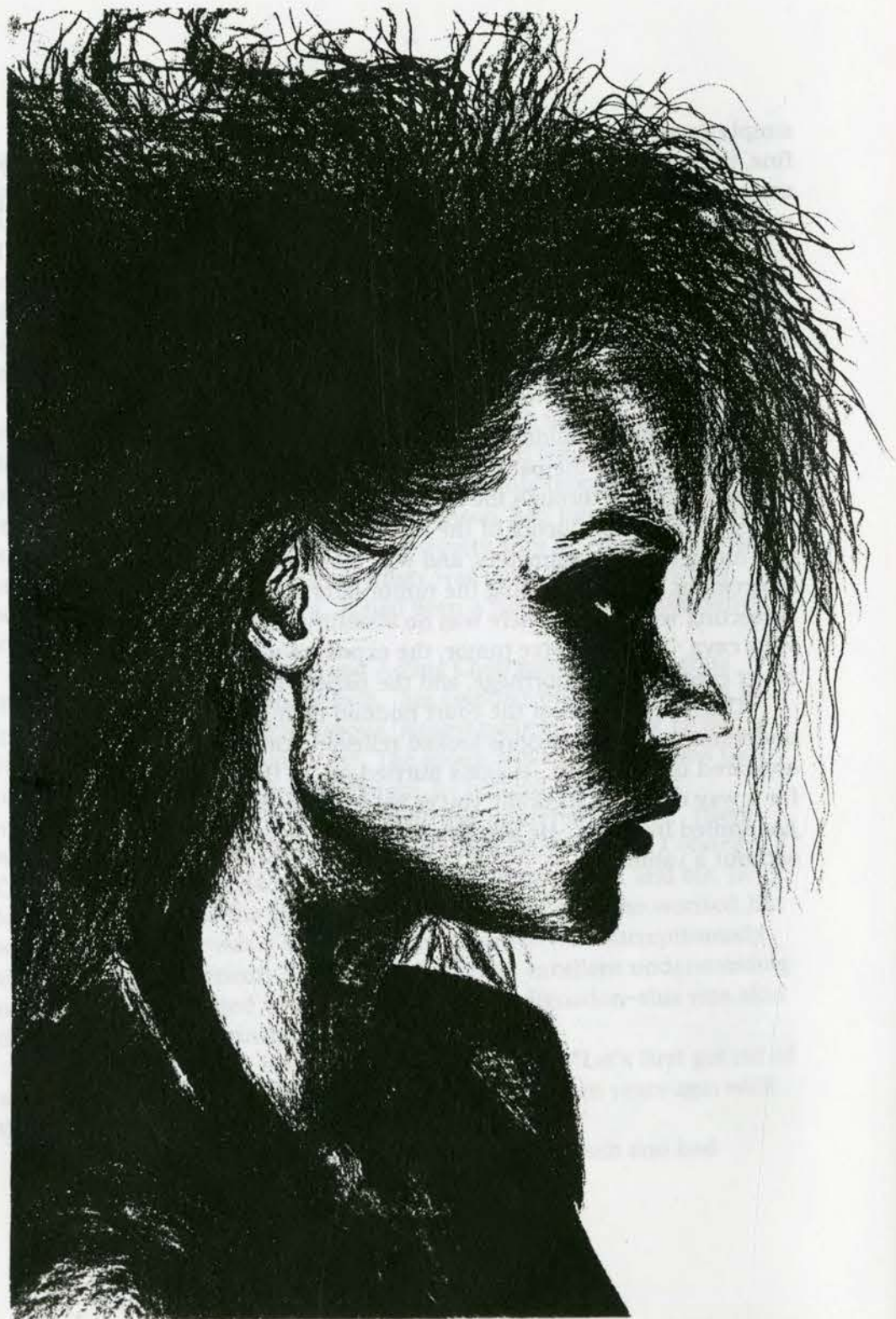
simply forgotten that it was my night in the harness. The surgery went fine, the patient went home in five days. My blood alcohol was certainly under .08; the nurse just smelled scotch on my breath. And, of course, I was depressed about the divorce."

"That is certainly understandable." Higgins was obviously uncomfortable with the situation, like a man forced to listen to the details of his parents' sex life.

Dr. Connelly seemed dubious and spoke in a self-righteous tone. "Well, Dr. Johnson, I would like to hear about the fiasco with the nephrectomy."

"Catherine, I wouldn't exactly call it a fiasco. We—Rusty was assisting me—had the patient in the left lateral decubitus position. We had already gone through the abdominal muscles and were trying to dissect out the confluence of the renal vein and vena cava. The tumor was huge, twelve centimeters, and was plastered on top of the bifurcation. I was retracting the tumor laterally and Rusty was dissecting with Metz. There was no visibility and Rusty cut into the vena cava. With that size tumor, the exposure was awful. We could never control the hemorrhage, and the patient simply bled to death."

The lay members of the court nodded their heads as though they understood, and Dr. Higgins looked relieved. Only Dr. Connelly appeared unconvinced. Higgins hurried on, as though he were looking for a way out. "So, basically you're saying that Dr. Jensen was at fault." Jim smiled inwardly. He was starting to feel much better now, even without a valium.



Salvatore Corpaci

The Haunted Edge

Except for fear,
 I have no friends
 To hold me when I scream
 Or look beyond,
 Each distant stare,
 A bridge drawn on my dreams.
 For behind these walls,
 In dungeons deep,
 Far beneath the light of day,
 Where spirits roam
 Through catacombs
 In catatonic state;
 Each mask of pain,
 A mirrored thought
 Which long outlived its use;
 The haunted edge
 Of youth betrayed,
 Reflections of abuse.

Leslie Nicholes

Under the Ivy

Under the ivy all wet and green,
Hiding and somber until I am seen.
Sometimes I want it, but sometimes I'm scared;
So much that I've hidden, so nakedly bared.
The dew is my honey and sometimes my tears:
Bittersweet mirrors reflecting the years.
In sleep I remember; awake I deny
The truth of the matter. At least I can try.
But will I survive? This no one can know.
So under the ivy is where I will go.
The cobwebs are moistened; my world remains cool—
My memories collected: The widow's fine spool.
I turn my face down away from it all.
I'll be like the ladybug—away I will crawl...

Diana L. Blakley

Henry V's Last Thoughts of an Old Friend

I pray to ears stopped up with age
In a voice that cracks like desert sage
For understanding from a friend
And forgiveness in the end.
For it is my hand with bitter sorrow
That strikes the bloody stroke.
When yesterday's friend is foe tomorrow,
Kings shed the blood of simple folk.



Ace G. Pilkington

The John Falstaff of The Merry Wives of Windsor

(Originally published in *Midsummer Magazine*, Summer 1992)

Sometime between the fall of 1596 and the spring of 1597, John Falstaff first stepped onto the boards of the Globe Theatre. His coming was an extraordinary event, like the sighting of a new and huge planet in the sky. In his case the planet must have been a gas giant, accompanied by a number of smaller satellites and so luminous that it all but eclipsed even the royal son it accompanied. In large measure because of Falstaff, *Henry IV Part I* was an instant, and has been a continuing, success. If quarto editions are anything to go by, the play was the most popular of all Shakespeare's works during his life and soon after his death, with seven editions before the First Folio and two following it. Falstaff's fame (and unmistakable form) were carried on into *Henry IV Part II*, and his dying words give a reverberating pathos (even in the Hostess's mouth) to the early scenes of *Henry V*.

The roguish old knight and highwayman, whose cowardice was exceeded only by his cunning, established himself as the best known of all Shakespeare's creations in the seventeenth century. The *Shakespeare Allusion-Book* cannot deal with him as a mere character in a play but indicates, "For the purposes of this Index, Falstaff is treated as a work." He has, as the *Allusion-Book* says, "131 references while Othello (the next highest) ... scores only 55" ("Introduction," *Shakespeare: Henry IV Parts I and II, A Casebook*, ed. G. K. Hunter, London: Macmillan, 1983, 16).

According to legend, Falstaff's popularity was not confined to the groundlings and middle class but extended to Queen Elizabeth herself: "The Restoration theatre tradition recorded by John Dennis in 1702 and Rowe in 1709 was that the Queen had demanded a play about Falstaff in love, and Shakespeare wrote it in a fortnight" (Peter Levi, *The Life and Times of William Shakespeare*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1988, 209). That play was, of course, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. But as Falstaff knew, honor will not live with the living (or even with literary immortals) because detraction will not suffer it, and the fat knight's very popularity engenders arguments, just as his many incarnations

inspire partisans. He says in *Henry IV Part I* that "I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men" (*The Complete Signet Classic Shakespeare*, ed. Sylvan Barnet, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972, 1.2.9-10). He is in addition the cause of wits' combat and critics' conflict; there are those who believe that even for someone of Sir John's appetites, his appearances in the second tetralogy constitute a surfeit of sequels, and the *Merry Wives* is one course too many. Further, they believe that Falstaff in moving from history to comedy has lost much of his savour and most of his weight and is not, so to speak, a "twentieth part the tithe of [his] precedent" lard (*Hamlet*, 3.4.98-99).

A. C. Bradley, who calls this comic Sir John "the imposter," wrote in 1909, "To picture the real Falstaff befooled like the Falstaff of the *Merry Wives* is like imagining Iago the gull of Roderigo.... The separation of these two has long ago been effected by criticism, and is insisted on in almost all competent estimates of the character of Falstaff." ("The Rejection of Falstaff" in *Shakespeare: King Henry IV Parts I and II, A Casebook*, ed. G. K. Hunter, London: Macmillan, 1983, 57).

I am about to insist that Sir John is "constant as the Northern Star," jumping genres with the same nimbleness that he avoids debts and finding himself much the same man whether he is matched with the wild prince or the merry wives. Part of the problem with Bradley's position is that, having rightly idealized Sir John as a wonder of wit, he insists, against all the evidence, that the fat knight is also a master tactician. Nothing could be more wrong. Falstaff is a superb talker, an incomparable performer, a veritable "star of England," but he could never be considered for the criminal mastermind Oscar. As W. H. Auden observes in "The Prince's Dog," Falstaff and his cohorts are "by any worldly standards, including those of the criminal classes, all of them failures" (emphasis his; in *The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays*, London: Faber and Faber, 1962, 183).

In *Henry IV Part I*, Falstaff has his horse stolen, his pocket picked, and is outmaneuvered by Poins with Prince Hal's help so that the fat knight finds his ill-gotten loot stolen from him in turn by two mysterious figures in buckram. Further, even the first part of his robbery goes awry; he is recognized as a result of his size and pursued to his tavern lair. Only the intervention of the Prince of Wales and the paying back of the twice-stolen money saves Falstaff from prison.

In *Henry IV Part II*, the Lord Chief Justice accuses Sir John of crimes

in general, the Hostess joins in with the specific accusations of evasion of debt and breach of promise, Hal and Poins fool him by disguising themselves once again, Prince John threatens him with a hanging for coming late to the battle, and finally, when Jack Falstaff interrupts Hal's coronation procession, the young king rejects and banishes him. At the last, the Chief Justice gives orders to "Go, carry Sir John Falstaff to the Fleet" (5.5.93). The Fleet was a prison for distinguished prisoners, but it was a prison just the same.

Where is there anything in Falstaff's history to justify Bradley's confidence that the fat knight cannot be fooled? It is true he cannot be outfaced or outtalked, but he is constantly being caught by a plot or caught out in one of his schemes. Indeed, Poins early identifies the central comic satisfaction which attaches to Sir John, "The virtue of this jest will be the incomprehensible [unlimited] lies that this same fat rogue will tell us when we meet at supper" (*1 Henry IV*, 1.2.183-5). It is vital that Falstaff be caught so that he may save himself with his wit, be fooled so that he may whip his persecutors with words, and be abused so that he may strike back with his most unsavory similes. In short, Falstaff is funniest when he fails and most enjoyable when he is least at ease, giving us his best when he is suffering the worst. It is a measure of his comic power that no defeat can vanquish him and a feature of his character that no disappointment (until Hal's rejection) can put out the light of his optimism.

In *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Falstaff suffers the pangs of three several deaths and gives birth to much humor. Here, he is among the bourgeoisie and not the aristocracy, and (as Sir John to all Europe) he tends to underestimate his opposition, but he is the same Falstaff still with the same glorious foibles and follies. As Ruth Nevo writes, "The character of Falstaff has not changed. The craft, the shrewdness, the brass, the zest are all there. The very accents and rhythms, the vivid similes, the puns, the preposterous hyperboles, the loving ingenuity with which he enlarges on his monstrous girth" (*Comic Transformations in Shakespeare*, London: Methuen, 1980, 155). It is a prose that in Peter Levi's words "sparkles and crackles along.... crammed with short, sensuous phrases" (*The Life and Times of William Shakespeare*, 210).

There is, however, one difference between Falstaff's defeats in the second tetralogy and his griefs in *Merry Wives* that may be troubling some critics. In *Merry Wives*, the fat knight is not bested by that royal manipulator Prince Hal but by two middle-class women. And here, I

suspect, is the real center of Bradley's outrage, the real reason for his cry of "imposter." But this, after all, is Shakespeare's universe, a place much like the real thing, where women are almost always as clever as men and usually cleverer. Indeed, Ruth Nevo sees *Merry Wives* as a turning point in Shakespeare's development, a shift from masculine to feminine merry-makers, and "Comic heroines, it will transpire, may even better their instruction" (*Comic Transformations in Shakespeare*, 153).

If Falstaff is defeated in *Merry Wives*, he is the same Sir John still, unsinkable in any water, irrepressible in any difficulty, impervious to discouragement because he knows and loves his own ability to slip from the grip of any adversity. He is a scapegoat whose own weight of sin is so great that he can bear all of Windsor's in addition without noticing the difference. And if, at the end of the play, he is laughed at, he gets to laugh in his turn. As James J. Christy writes in his director's notes to the 1992 Utah Shakespearean Festival production, "The Pages, who fancy themselves so well on top of things with respect to Sir John, find themselves the dupes of their daughter and Fenton and have to accept an aristocratic alliance that has the blessing of true love" (1). Fenton, too, is a friend of the wild prince, and the victory goes at last to Falstaff's party, as it must in any stage performance where that great, glowing, humorous planet fills the skies with his unique warmth. And, oh yes, there is only one Sir John, wherever he may show himself and whatever laundry baskets he may hide his light under. "Is not the truth the truth?" (1 *Henry IV*, 2.4.230-31).

Carolyn McDonald

Airborne

I saw Nureyev once dance Don Quixote.
He took that stretch of stage in such a flight
And hung there timeless in the windmill night
With force no physics could explain to gravity.

Five miles a day I run on graveled granite
At a rate no witness would describe as fleet,
But glad am I for light beneath my feet,
For the portion of each pace that's off the planet.

In Zen we claim, through discipline, tranquillity
And learn to levitate us from the earth.
But Dalai Lama smiles, eyes brimmed with mirth.
What if the lift we seek is merely levity?

Whatever course we wing toward ether's gate,
It's joy that lifts us off the earth's bright weight.

Brian D. Hill

My World

G.I. Joe! "The Real American Hero, G.I. Joe is there." I sang at the top of my lungs as I ran down the street, each step painfully taken as the pointy, toeless feet of my miniature super heroes poked my thighs through my tight Levi's. The pain was a small price to pay if I was going to bring Snake Eyes, Duke, Storm Shadow, Dusty, Sgt. Slaughter, and the rest of the boys in one trip. After all, it was a long way to the field downtown, and I couldn't leave at home the new "six-wheeled-desert-rattler-people-mover" I had gotten for my birthday. Two trips would take too long, and I needed all day if I was going to defeat Cobra and his men.

I ran as fast as I could to the vacant field, a hard thing to do with an army in my pockets fully equipped with guns, swords, and gear. My heart was pounding, my feet hurt, and the Velcro straps on my dusty Pro-Wings had come undone, but I didn't care. I wanted to be the first one there so I could set up my men in the best spots. As I turned the corner, I saw the "field." It was a great field. It was big and empty with dried-up tumble weeds in the corners, and you could see dirty boards which were half hidden in the dirt, a reminder of the days when forts were built to protect us from the Indians. The wooden fence surrounding the lot was weak with splinters, cracks, and was falling down. Yet it was strong enough to keep the field hidden from the reality of the outside world. This field was special; it was my world.

Every Saturday the field turned into a whole new world. Last week, the seventh game of the World Series was played there. The week before, it was the site of the closest Indy car race ever. This week, the forces of Good and Evil would fight to see who would control the world.

As I pushed my hands into my faded pockets to pull out Storm Shadow, I could feel his black ninja suit and Samurai sword fit into my finger tips, reminding me of the day I went to "Toys R Us" and spent all of my allowance on the new G.I. Joes. I bought Storm Shadow and Shark because they were the newest. Each man came complete with a shiny new uniform and enough arsenal to take on the world. I carefully

pulled out each of the plastic figures and placed them on the ground, noticing the "newness" was gone. The dirt was hard as I dug with my Swiss Army Knife, but the trenches had to be dug deeply enough to give the men protection. After the camps were built and the army was in place, I waited to begin the end.

As the images of the upcoming battle filled my mind, a loud noise woke me from my trance. I looked up and saw that my Velcro Pro-Wings had turned into Cole Hanns and my worn-out Levi's had been replaced by a navy blue suit. The loud noise was a tractor dragging the "field." Just then, an overweight man with a hard hat and white tank top, soiled with dirt, sweat, and the remains of a bean burrito, asked me to move so they could "get on" with their work. As I walked back to my car, I realized that those days were over, and I wondered if that field had ever been mine. Turning to go, I could hear the bombs dropping and Storm Shadow yelling "charge." It was my world.



Salvatore Corpaci

Chicken Bob*

(Or: Edgar Allen Poe Meets "The Far Side")

Late upon a midnight gloomy,
While asleep within my roomy,
Came an eerie high-pitched clucking,
From perhaps a goose, or duckling.
Hence quickly down the steps I fell,
To look from out my kitchen cell.
I slid the bolt, threw wide the door,
Beheld'st the fiend of ancient lore.
My skin grew cold; I gasped for breath,
Transfixed I knew the taste of death,
For there perched high upon a log,
The hideous sight of Chicken Bob.

Thus now before me stood the beast
To take account of every feast.
A thought, a flash, of chickens' past,
My mind a whirl, my heart aghast, as
Chickens fluttered 'round me bout,
I knew I'd plucked them all no doubt.
For chicken was my heart's desire,
So oft I'd lit the funeral pyre,
To broil, baste, or roast and stew,
At times to even barbecue.
'Twas then I heard the bitter sob
Escape the throat of Chicken Bob.

Sudden passion swelled my chest,
So with the ax I struck my guest
To break the demon's binding spell
And cease the bitter cries of hell. Then
A wing, a breast, a leg, a thigh...
More tasty than Kentucky Fried;
Till once again I sat alone,
To make a wish, and split the bone.
Then licked my fingers, wiped my plate,
To contemplate this change of fate,
And ponder on this loss of lore,
For Chicken Bob, 'twas Nevermore.

**Third Place (Tie), 1996-97 Annie Atkin Tanner Poetry Competition*

Marilyn Richardson

*Dancing Out of Retirement**

I am wearing my flowered chiffon dress,
The one with the full skirt that hangs to my ankles,
The one my daughter doesn't like
But I like, because it flows, it goes.

On the sofa, two-year-old Lexie
Rests on the pillow of her
Grandpa's stomach, watching.

"Shall I dance for you?" I ask.
"Yeth," she answers softly.

On the four-by-five stage of the area rug covered with
Stains from spilled juice and raisins,
My soundless flower garden skirt swirls and twirls,
Floats and falls around me as, silly grandma,
I prance and pose, feeling younger than I look.

Colors fly through the air,
Coral, green, yellow, blue.

Freed from self-consciousness by my costume
And the uncritical gaze of little Lexie,
I sing my own accompaniment.

Twisting and tilting, whirling and laughing,
Panting and puffing,

I continue longer than I've breath for.

A fine-featured pixie face
Focuses just on me, fascinated.
A hint of a smile on her tiny lips
Comes and goes, but her
Blue eyes hold steady.

"Do you like it?" I ask.
"Yeth," she answers sweetly.

I never had a better audience.

**First Place Winner, 1996 Heritage Writers' Guild Poetry Contest*

Lisa Ure

Summer*

The sun's heat on my back,
Hot pavement warms me.
I rise from the peace
Of the quiet, blue underworld,
Surrendering to the sea
Of undistinguished sound.

Lying with head at rest on my arms,
A book open before me,
I note its figures from an angle
And watch cool, blue splashes
Clash—drop on drop
With the penetrating heat of my browned skin.

A straying rivulet,
Diving down my arm,
Tickles my attention
And is answered by a wandering glance.
Carefree world of constant light.

**First Place Winner, 1996-97 Dixie College Honors Program Poetry Contest*

History of the Southern Quill

Year	Editor(s)	Advisor(s)
1950-51	Loraine Taylor	Juanita Brooks
1951-52	Loraine Taylor	Juanita Brooks
1952-53	Rose Workman	Rose Esplin
1953-57	No magazine published	
1957-58	Karen Vawdrey	Juanita Brooks & Betty J. Allen
1958-59	Karen Vawdrey	Juanita Brooks
1959-60	Barbara Larkin	Juanita Brooks
1960-61	Titine Spillsbury	Reed Blake, Jr.
1961-62	Joan Esplin	Robert O. Dalton
1962-63	Joan Esplin	Robert O. Dalton
1963-64	Ilene Harmon	Pansy L. Hardy
1964-65	Emily Cottam	Pansy L. Hardy
1965-66	Kay Lichtenwalter	Pansy L. Hardy
1966-67	James Force	Robert O. Dalton
1967-68	James Force	Pansy L. Hardy
1968-69	Linda Sue Hunt	Pansy L. Hardy
1969-70	Linda Sue Hunt	Pansy L. Hardy
1970-71	Roxanne Schmidt	Pansy L. Hardy
1971-72	Michelle Thomas	Pansy L. Hardy
1972-73	Gordon J. Peterson	Pansy L. Hardy
1973-74	Connie Gifford	Pansy L. Hardy & John G. Hacking
1974-75	Cathy Pam Heaton	Pansy L. Hardy & John G. Hacking
1976-77	Michael Perry	Janice F. DeMille
1977-78	Marilee Camp	James Force
1978-79	Bill Batzlie	Pansy L. Hardy
1979-80	Laura Lee Graff	Pansy L. Hardy
1980-81	Kurtis Crist, Linda Hedrick, & Aderianna Smith	Ace G. Pilkington
1981-82	Melanie Madsen	Ace G. Pilkington
1982-83	Dianna K. Kearney	Ace G. Pilkington
1983-84	Dawn Houghton	Ace G. Pilkington
1984-85	Julianna Burton	Ace G. Pilkington
1985-86	Janae Daley	Ace G. Pilkington

History of the Southern Quill, cont.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Editor(s)</i>	<i>Advisor(s)</i>
1986-87	Bonnie McCowan & Kris Shipp	Ace G. Pilkington
1987-88	Karen Hansen & Kris Shipp	Ace G. Pilkington
1988-89	Stephanie Chidester & Chris Metcalfe	Ace G. Pilkington
1989-90	Stephanie Chidester & Chris Metcalfe	Ace G. Pilkington
1990-91	Tiffany Durrant & Joni Jones	Ace G. Pilkington
1991-92	Christian Arial	Ace G. Pilkington
1992-93	Jandi Jones, Natalie Nilsson, & Chris Pellew	Ace G. Pilkington
1993-94	Jandi Jones & Natalie Nilsson	Ace G. Pilkington
1994-95	Dina Gerhauser	Ace G. Pilkington
1995-96	Aubree Howard	Ace G. Pilkington
1996-97	Diana L. Blakley & Bart Jay Mitchell	Ace G. Pilkington

Southern Quill

1997