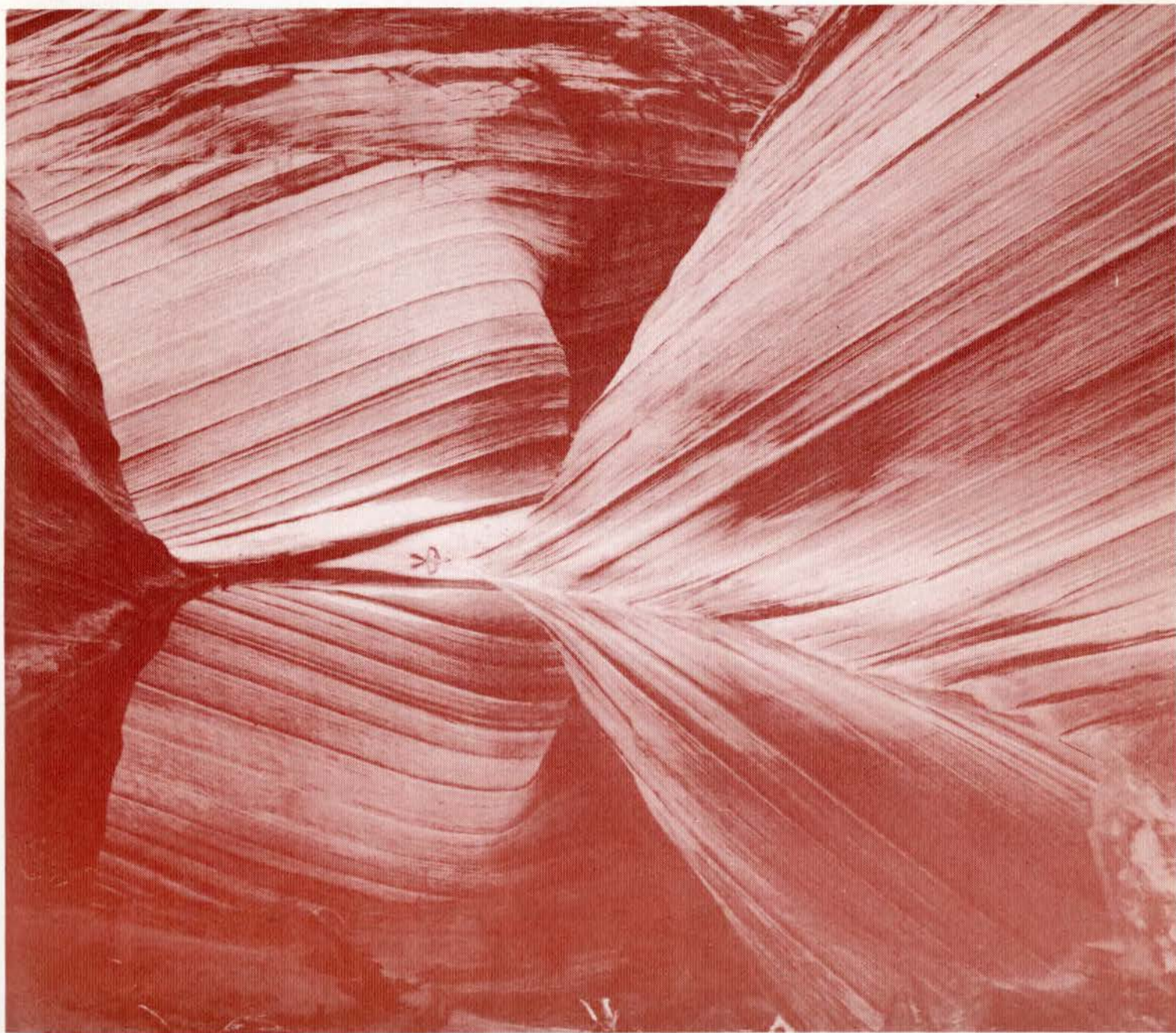


"Transfigurations"



The Southern Quill
1987-1988

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Volume 1

Editor

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"Transfigurations"

"we grasp

two things:

that rarely

two slightly different substances will grow

even together

but the one added ingredient

will transfigure

a colorless transparency

to midnight blue

or build the rubies' fire."

. . .Loren Eiseley

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I. Order and Disorder

'I

within my surging molecules

by nature cling

to that deep sapphire blue

that marks the mind of one

long isolate

who knows and does reflect

starred space and midnight,

who conceives therefore

that out of order and disorder

perpetually clashing and reclashing

come the worlds."

... Loren Eiseley



Melanie Starnes

Caliban's Gifts

In sequestered cell, ruptured of contentments,
Permeated by a hundred new infectants,
Hag Sycorax's seed sighs, recumbent.

Limp, lumped heap of art, untreasured lies,
Near his foot most scaled, diseased, scabied,
A thing despised by his ogreous eyes.

Vile tongue both man and master cursed,
Waiting to be human, his baseness burst,
Leaving him barnacled to nature's thirst.

Sensual, as the brutish sting,
Sucks from his mind an hideous ring,
Rendering him bestial, once again.

Contrived to mirror motley fool's quest,
Chasing moon master, absent of sense,
Soon sees, himself, a thing grotesque.

Is there a cursed flaw of conscience?
Thrice an ass, made more a monster,
Hissing himself into mortal madness.

Mere malice is too much mischance to alter;
Even Prospero couldn't free
A senseless demon in an endless sea.

Impish infant finally screams to sapient Setebos
His question. I, Caliban, the gift of nothing then?
Silence. A lonely devil in a wretched den.

Kirsten Busk

Ikebana

In private, silent quarters
A samurai warrior sits
cross-legged on tatame mat.
His eyes focus on black lacquer dish
then follow asymmetrical lines,
stretching branches and soft flowers

Shin

Heaven

Soe

Man

Hikae

Earth

Chestnut branches
rise above
chrysanthemums

white

rust

gold

reflected in still water.

He gathers peace into his soul.
Outside his sanctuary, war draws closer.



Rene Daniels

Ophelia

Innocent was her love,
Her name simplicity.
Was she what she seemed?
A pawn, a helpless piece,
Caught in power's dream.
She drowned in flowers slowly,
Sinking to the deep,
Utter madness of reality.

Bonnie McCowan

A Strange Season

They were not the usual species
Of small, dull moths pouring
Into the light while I watched
From my swing,
But large, bright, stately,
Unapproachable as the monarch,
Slowly beating dry wings
Against the kitchen screen
Like a field of poppies
Swaying in a May breeze--
Lured instinctively
By the female's pheromone
As bees to purple clover in spring.
After,
Dropping one by one, they fell to the porch,
Heaped at my feet,
Then blew over straw-colored grass
Through the pumpkin patch
And into the street.



Kris Shipp

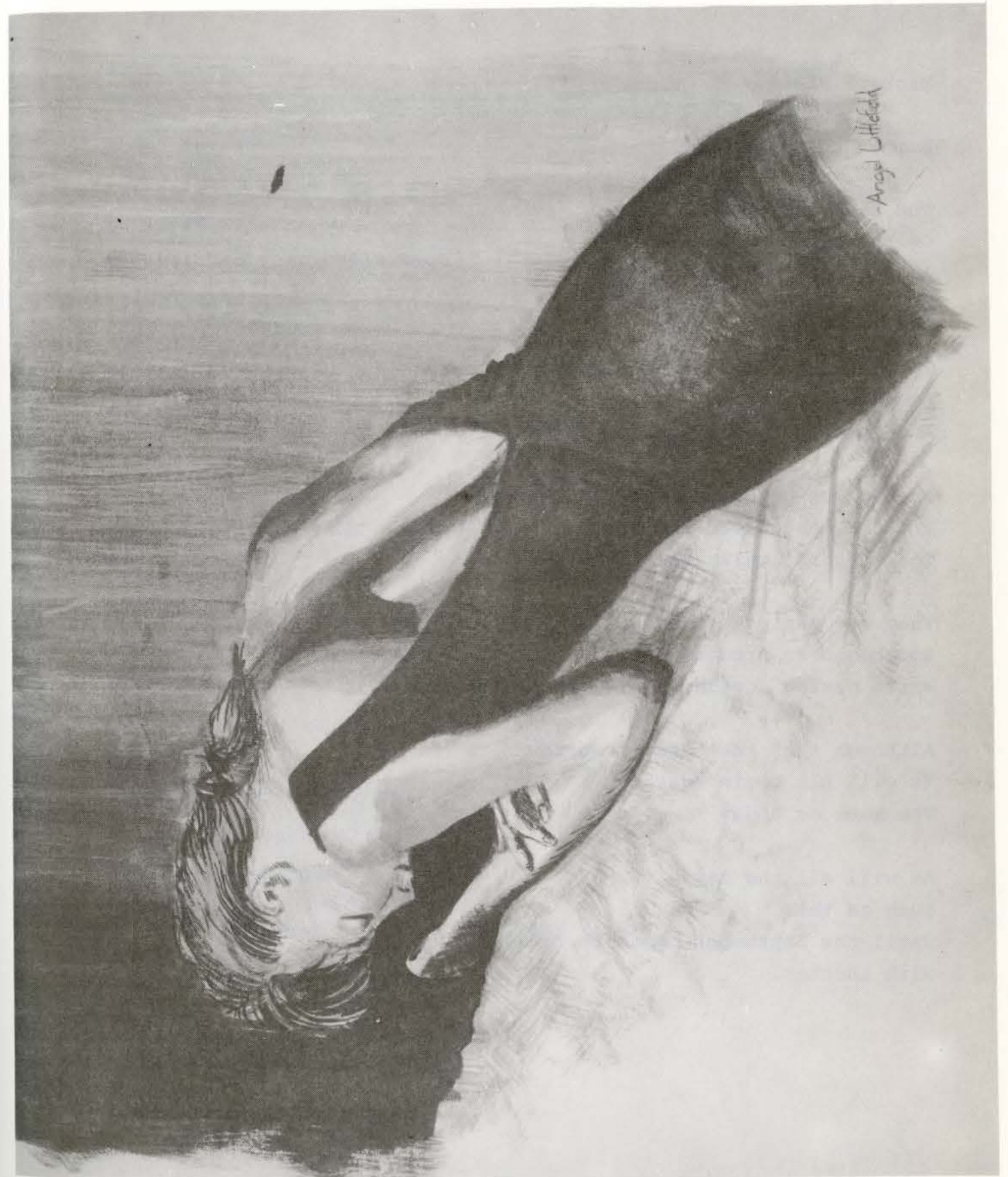
Over the Edge

Brilliant shades of red
Flashed through her eyes
As she slashed the freckled
Skin of her wrist
With the stainless, cold blade.

She watched as
The pain of her life
Sprayed from her veins
And onto the whiteness
Of the formica,
Leaving behind a calm numbness.

Death had finally
Been released.
He was coming to lead
Her into a black silence
Where cries were seldom heard.

All she could do
Was wait
And pray
It wasn't a mistake.



Michael Flood

Summer

The sun beats down
On the bench where I sit
As the ice cream melts down
My left hand.

The children play on heated plastic swings,
Laughing and joking
And wasting the day's rich light.

As the sun begins to sink in the west
And the mosquitoes and aphids swarm,
The mothers' calls break the dusk.

They say their good-byes
And begin to trudge home
While gazing longingly over their shoulders,

Although they know that tomorrow
It will all begin again
The same as today

As will all the days
Such as this
Until the September comes to break this habit
With another.

Kris Shipp

Love, for Now

As I sat
And watched your reflection
Illuminated against the fire,
Your self slipped
Through my hands.
I pretended not
To see you fall.

We continued to talk and laugh
While the heat
Slowly began to die,
Leaving behind only
Grey remnants.

Again we sit
In that cool, damp room,
Clinging to each other,
Trying to rekindle
The fire.

Michael Flood

These Are

These are the times that we
Want to last---
The days to remember for life--
When we speak to our children
And tell of these days,
It will be with the utmost respect.

These are the days of the wine
And the roses,
The days that can never return--
Because when we see tomorrow come,
It will be after we've watched
These days...BURN.

Karen Hansen

Absolutes

Speaking in tongues,
They have nothing to say;
Yesterday's scriptures
Have now given way
To the sacred architecture
Of the new age,
While the final verse
Slips from the end
Of the re-edited page.
We see passionless paintings
On passionate walls;
So stillness responds
When silences call,
And life ceases to stand
But refuses to fall.

Then, knowing it's wrong,
Rejecting ideas of retreat,
Are such selfish victors,
Unconcerned with defeat,
But they won't move
From their TV screens
Or rise to compassion
(Or even their feet)
Unconditioned to know
How absolutes slowly
Become obsolete.

Janae Foster

Faces

Faces inserted on the screen,
 Bouncing back and forth,
 Many, few, yours to choose.
 The way to boredom flows,
 Then, caught between two paragraphs,
 Bouncing, hitting word to word,
 Then slipping through a crack,
 Two faces hit each other
 And seem to play tag,
 Then, bounce they hit,
 And off they go,
 One in a paragraph,
 One that's caught between two words,
 And why? The way to boredom flows.



Rene Daniels

Visions

Her lonely eyes seem to search
 The silent soul
 Of a grandson--more like a son--
 He attempts
 To capture on film,
 To trap, the beauty
 --what is there--
 He freezes for these loved ones
 Who have the ability
 To see, to remember it
 Hidden deeply
 In her eyes.

Dawn Houghton

Mother Sostenuto

Their voices cantatas
 Ripened by monkey bars
 And porch lights. The season
 Of children finding broken
 Furnaces and drought to be
 Essence...

In the spring captured
 Dragon flies in jars held
 Prisoner for their beauty.
 She smiles softly, hoping
 Soon they will be free.

The tractor in the field didn't
 Have more rust than the autumn
 And her hands.

Arpeggios without discipline,
 Indigo outside as playful
 As the cut of the ground and the
 Leaves in their tangled hair. No
 Symphonies of passionate bliss,
 Twittered hands full with water
 Snakes and crippled pets.

In stained jars the
 Dragonflies lie dry
 From death; she weeps.

She dreams...

As stagnating time
 With rhapsody and compositions,
 A dragonfly whirring, softly
 Spinning over muddy rivers
 In cradle songs, waiting for the whistle
 Of storms to subside.

Bonnie McCowan

Yesterday

The old school bell,
Atop a clapboard, one-room shack,
Overlooking the valley, rang
Against the sun. In a mirage
A boy came,
New red underwear,
Books by a strap over his back,
Hair rusty as an old bell,
Blowing in a west wind
Like a field of ripe grain--
Next to the six-lane overpass.
Memories of grandfather
Echoed by time;
A sound so soundless,
No sound at all.



Natalie Nielson

Lying There Helpless

Lying there helpless,
 Emotions bleeding from my veins.
 Outside, the crying rain
 Makes patterns on the window pane.
 A last browned leaf
 Is clinging to the vine,
 Begging death to leave its side,
 With faith and hope in mind.
 Why won't life come
 And take me in her arms?
 She is utterly deserting me
 Like the sun does during a storm.
 All I feel is loneliness,
 And it's showering kisses of fear.
 Fear of what's in store for me,
 Realizing my last breath is near.
 My body then weakened
 And lay there benign,
 Surrendering to death,
 As the last leaf fell from the vine.

Karen Hansen

real life
 bloody
 nightmares end and
 shatter
 silent screams
 when i melt
 into my
 slumber
 i am
 tucked in
 by my
 dreams.



Kirsten Busk

Haiku

Vines journey up walls,
Climbing, reaching, stretching.
What is destiny?

Dawn Houghton

Summer Puddles

Rubber beach balls
Collide
Into my independence,
Square one.



II. The Borders Between Us

*"I have lived much among animals
in a small way,
bartering with food for information,
trying to discern
whether the bright flame in the mind of man
is at all matched
in fur or feather,
for I
love forms beyond my own
and regret the borders between us.*

... Loren Eiseley



Ace G. Pilkington

The Cost of Fox Fur*

Out there
 Where the silence of the sky
 Is larger than the clamour of the land,
 Foxes have the red implausibility of sandstone.
 That natural rashness flares on their fur like fox fire.
 An inhuman illumination
 Which we feel behind the masks of our minds;
 They run in desert spaces, arid times
 To the unused edges of the weather--
 A shimmer in the swift mists of summer,
 A whisper in autumn's dream shadow,
 A haunting through the shrewd winter wind.

Just here
 Where glass and rain are equally unclear
 Is a real fox fur,
 A wilderness of wonder now deprived of breath
 To feed our varied appetites for death.

*From Blue Unicorn, February 1988.



Dawn Houghton

Trying To Understand Where You Grew Up

The Murphys play
Jazz at Digbys;
Someone you used to
Love is there, so
Instead of conversations,
I sip cocktails
And tap my foot
To the music. When we
Leave, the April air is
Splashing cool wind through
Ohio. We walk to a dock on
Lake Erie, you talk of the
Parties in the park, vendors
With beer in plastic cups,
And rowboats on the water, then
You hold me; I haven't
Asked you to, but
As we stand, watching
Lights on boats, my mind
Fills with the night, with
What you used to be. I
Hear the soft, slight sound
Of the piano back at Digbys;
I breathe in the stars and
Begin to understand.



Stephanie Young

Deeper into You

As we sit
In the cafe,
Nobody knows how we feel
(Not even you or I).
We steal our glances,
Taking what is rightfully ours.
These taken looks
Drive me
Deeper into you.

You drain my lifeblood
Slowly;
Drop by drop
I bleed,
Playing, as the baby sleeps,
A game
Of fatal consequence.
My tears,
As warm as blood,
Come as they always do;
Do you really care?

Unbidden,
Unwanted
Thoughts surface,
Driving me past distraction.
Alone,
I question my sanity;
I know who you are
But still
I drive myself
Deeper into you.

Melinda Durrant

You gentle me.

When you are near,
I turn away from my dark and wild side
And shine.

By your eyes I am tamed,
And at your touch,
I quiver.

Karen Hansen

symphony of raindrops

...And i've watched a million
fall at once,
never sure how hard
they've travelled
or how far they've
had to come...
they flow
so effortlessly
and never
grow tired
of playing
for one who
begins humming
the melody...
their endless stream
of harmonies
echoes inside of me
long after they've
stopped playing...
i often wonder
who they play for
or if the song
is for me alone...
sometimes it's a requiem
or solemnity dissolved
in smiles
but the cadences resolve
perfectly...
i think that they must
hurt inside
as much as the ones
they play for
when they tumble
and fall
through the emptiness,
occasionally clinging to
one another,
stopping only
long enough
to smooth a
trembling leaf
or caress the petal
of a wind-slashed rose...
then they whisper
their final
deaf breath of silence...
it's when i hear
the splash i wonder
if they've come from the clouds
or fallen from my eyes.

Angel Williams

Comedy of Errors

It came,
The day of realization
And self-awareness.
They were all slapped to sobriety
With true identity.
Four, two sets twice,
They saw themselves
Mirrored in each other.
Finally filling the gaps
That had echoed with longing
For the unknown
For so long.
Newly awakened to old appearance,
Reflection on magnificent manifestation.
The awakening
Of long lost links
Only reconnected
Through a human looking glass.

Kris Shipp

Frozen Identity

The young
See my prune-like skin
As a hypnotic mask
Which has erased
All links to the past.
They see no beat pulsating
In my heart,
No life behind
My greying eyes.
To them I have
Never been
Two, ten, or twenty,
Only old--
And forgettable.

Dawn Freeland

Two Cold Worlds

An arctic world, white ground
Surrounded by mists of swirling snow.
Covered overall by grey-white clouds
Pushing down from above. White broken only
Occasionally by an eruption of black,
A tree, a rock, or the two tiny ribbons
Of highway stretching smaller into the horizon,

Reminding me of those, those with the dark
Unbending stances, with the granite visages,
Unmindful of me standing, pleading,
With outstretched arms in the evening mists.

Rene Daniels

Mother/Child

She called me mama again today.
 How can I tell her no?
 She looked into my eyes,
 As I gently tucked her in,
 And said "I love you," with a smile.
 What can I say without adding
 To the confusion in her mind?
 How can I keep from losing myself
 In the happiness she is trying to find?
 How can I break her wide-eyed gaze
 And tell her she is wrong,
 When all I want is for her
 To be the child who is mine.

Stephanie Young

The Game

Under the lights
 We dance.
 With lifeless eyes
 And black clothes,
 We move
 To our own funeral dirge.
 Cigarettes
 Clenched firmly
 In our beautifully manicured hands,
 Blowing our lives away,
 All in the name
 Of cool.
 Trying so hard
 To be
 Men and women,
 In this game,
 Wordlessly,
 We dance,
 Hoping adulthood
 Will set in.

Kris Shipp

Beaver Dam Beyond Thunderdome

To the kids
Of Beaver Dam
Each day is the same,
As they swim in a river
Of their parents' drink
And are scarred by their speech.

Behind hollow young eyes
Lies a reflection
Full of daisies
Waiting to be tasted
In the brightness,
Waiting to bloom in their eyes.

But for now,
They remain uncombed
And partially unclothed,
While the reflection
In their parents' eyes
Slowly dies.

Becky Scherzinger

Slow, sad,
Too young lovers struggling to survive.
Three quarters of a year the girl sweats and chills.
Three quarters of a year the boy sweats, does not sleep.
It is born,
A child full of life
In a dead world.
The father stares, under a solitary light, mourns
Over little white papers. The darkness engulfs him.
The mother weeps, grieves for the infant problem.
She's helpless.
The child sleeps, not knowing, unafraid,
Perfectly hypnotized by the night.

Karen Hansen

code

You remind me of a
book i've read
somewhere before...
i look at the pages
and the words jump
with a leaping thump
towards my throat,
but i refuse to choke
on the message you leave
line after neatly placed line...
what a clever disguise--
you seem innocent enough--
at least to the illiterate eye.

i mourn the poor,
pure and unsuspecting page
whose white has been chastised
by the chapters of
your leaded lies
and can't escape suffocation
unless i pick him up
and brush off last week's
mid-afternoon dust...
i separate and turn the pages
(at last he can breathe)
until i replace him
on the shelf...
but even then he stands erect
because he knows
I won't let him be
crushed under the collected weight
of you.



Kris Shipp

Never Save a Friend

Once I sheltered you
From violent winds
Which tried to capture
Your dignity and sweep
Your soul away.

Now regrets fill my eyes
As you look to me,
A woman only waiting
To be repaid,
Frozen from the heat
Of the love
We used to share.

Now I sit alone
Among promissory notes
And IOU's,
Missing your touch.

Amy Hayes

Silent Suffering

A single tear slowly rolls
Down her cheek and trickles
Into a puddle of misty confusion.
A reflection of her past lingers
Through her glossy eyes; then fades...
Now he enters the pool of shame.
His deep blue eyes
Show sorrow and pain;
She was foolish once again,
Uncontrolled desires struck,
While he was away.

Kris Shipp

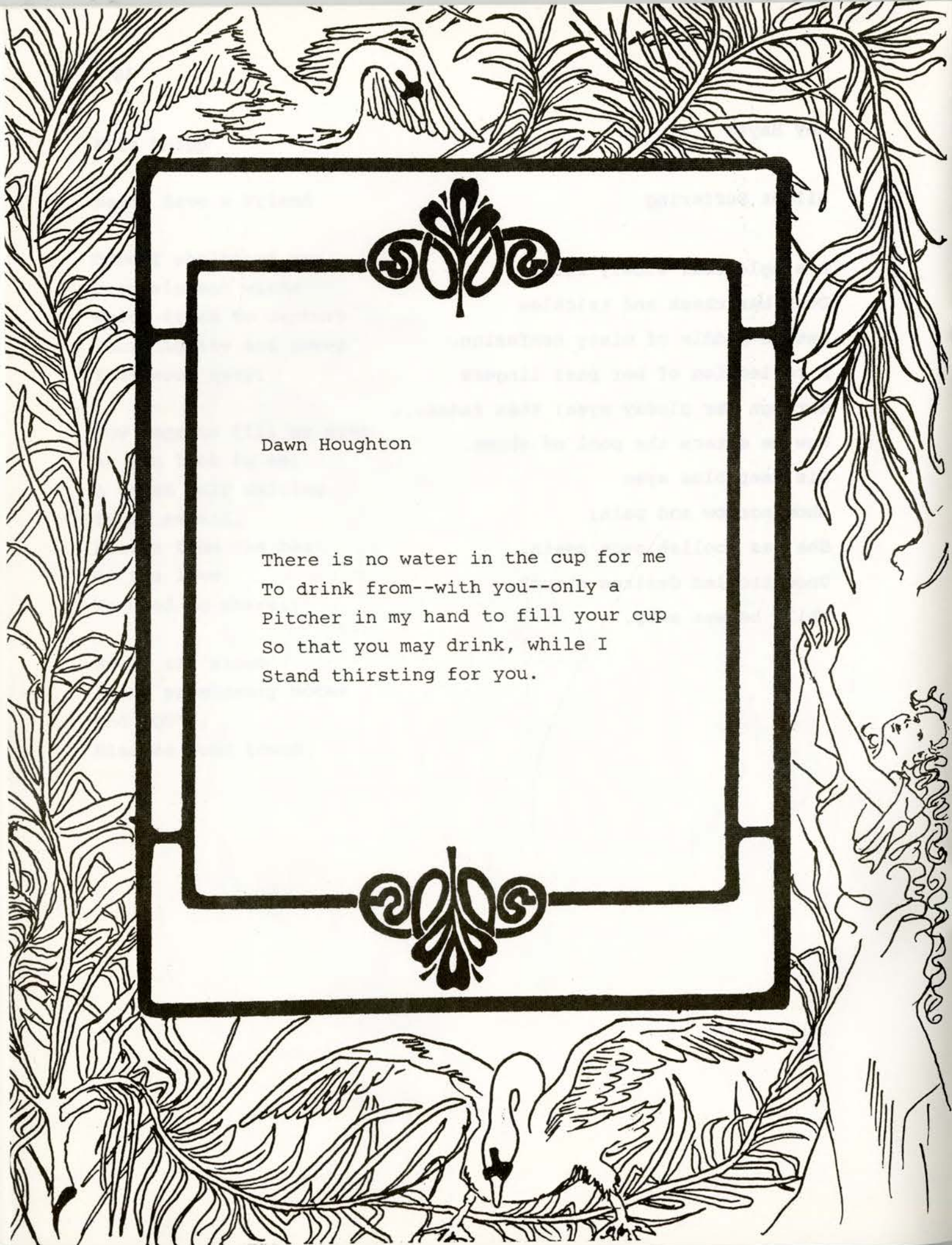
Grasping for Air

All at once
The sadness of your death
Flooded my heart.
I tried to fill
Blank pages with my pain,
But only black ink
Darkened the whiteness.

Now I sit
Smothered in black remorse,
Drowning beside your memory.

Dawn Houghton

There is no water in the cup for me
To drink from--with you--only a
Pitcher in my hand to fill your cup
So that you may drink, while I
Stand thirsting for you.

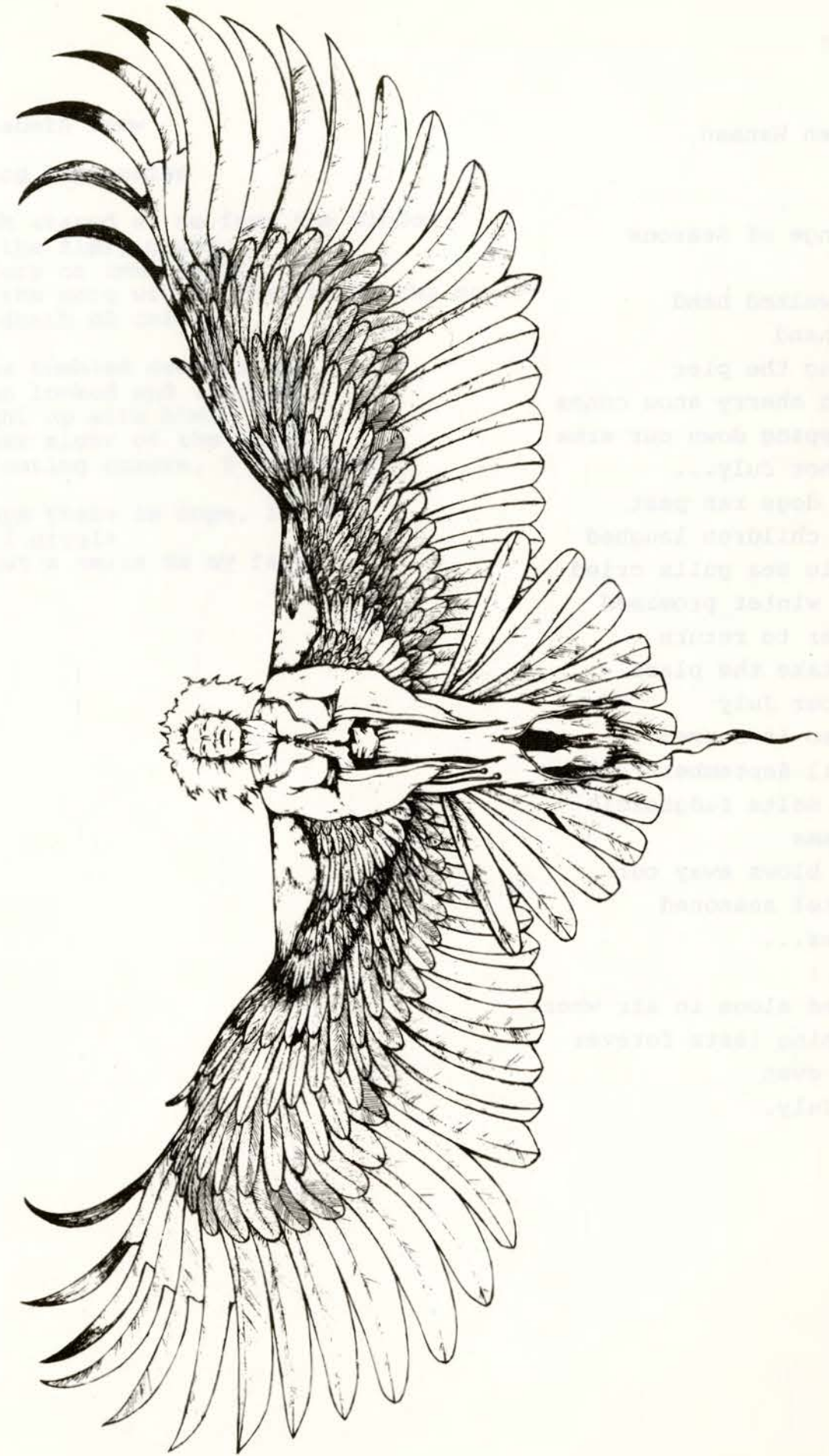


Ace G. Pilkington

Leda after the Swan*

She watches this river in all weathers,
 Her gaze skipping like a stone,
 Then, slipping the dark curve of a wave, gone.
 She hears the long sibilance of wings leaving,
 The swan sweeping away on the wind,
 The incredible lightness of seasons fleeing,
 A white silk smoke melting
 Or snow dispersing at the moment of watching.
 She remembers the weight of breath and feathers floating,
 Love flaring, like ice refracting the line of the sky's fire,
 As the sun sets behind trees that seem to bleed.
 She dreams a burning core of air, of war, of power hurtling
 On half-seen wings, swimming at stars.
 Her thought is spinning, a stone rippling the weathers of water,
 Resting only on the restless action of this small sea's passion,
 Where her distant reflection shows a city fallen
 For Helen, who is cold as a swan.

*From Amazing, July 1988.



Karen Hansen

Change of Seasons

We walked hand
in hand
along the pier
with cherry snow cones
dripping down our arms
in hot July...
and dogs ran past
and children laughed
while sea gulls cried
and winter promised
never to return
to take the place
of our July
or so it seemed...
until September falls
and melts fudgesicle
dreams
and blows away our
pastel seasoned
skies...
and i
stand alone in air where
nothing lasts forever
not even
in July.

Elizabeth Snow

Seeing Depression

Death stared at me from the window,
Not the fiery death
Of fury or immortality
But the more wicked that kills the soul--
The death of defeat.

Waves tumbled down on me
As he looked and laughed.
Caught up with him,
I lost sight of the beach.
My footing unsure, I panicked.

Always there is hope, I lie:
And I giggle
To put a smile on my face.

Dawn Houghton

As I Sat Watching at the Bus Stop

People sit
and think
with lemons in their mouths,
waiting
for the right number
to spin its wheels
and clank and hiss;
they find
holes in their pockets
from reaching too deep
to get warm
and bow their heads
from the crowd
to be obtuse,
until a screeching rattle
awakens them
to leave behind the cold bench.

Joni Kerr

Depositions

Colored thoughts
And crimson words
Echo mountain sounds.
In my mind
I have no time
To find the end
Of life.
The sky is crying
But no one knows
As it flows
Through my hair
In silent shadows
Cast upon
The violet rock
I call my own--
In the moment.

III. The Root of Magic

This is the root of magic

and science,

life's response to

uncertainties-

if a thing works

you try it

and try once more

and again

until

you are absolutely sure

it will never work,

then try it once more.

That is magic,

and animals and people

live or die

by the uncertainties.

... Loren Eiseley



Michael Flood

Autumn

The leaves fall in orange
And yellow uniformity
As the children walk home
From school,
Kicking rocks and cans
And whatever they can find
On the leaf-strewn autumn sidewalk.

The winds pick up,
Nearly blowing the children
Into the vacant street.
The leaves
That cover the sidewalk
Give the illusion of
Icing on a birthday cake--

For these are the days of color.

Kris Shipp

Summer Heat

Whispers of summer
Lure me from
My seat
In Human Biology
And into the sun.

As I begin
To fall asleep in
The shadow of the sun,
I think of
Anatomy one last time
Before it slips back
Into a winter month
When it was too cold
To go outside.

Ace G. Pilkington

April*

Spring eases itself into existence,
The half-green bud tremble
Of sticks matching flickers
Of wind. Superimposed in white,
Clover blossom, snow, and cabbage butterflies
Glisten away, tenuous as rain.
The long, watercolor wash of dissolving mist
Blurs the world with a Chinese brush,
Till even the dandelions are unsure
And summer seems postponed forever.

*From The Christian Science Monitor, 12 April 1988.

Becky Scherzinger

March

March is smart;
It knows what to do.
February tells it to start,
So it blows and mews.
It commands plants to grow,
It cajoles buds to bloom,
It controls life and living and colors and sun
And all of the things spring just starts and undoes.
It's known March comes in as a lion
Quits much like a lamb,
But this is what I guess,
March is charismatic weather
Which manipulates winter's mess
Into a place which flowers, burgeons with restlessness.

Dawn Houghton

There is a scar in the tree
That stands upon the sand cliffs;
Even when it is dark and the
Smooth breezes spray the air,
The tree stands naked and I watch the
Scar; it is deep.

I long to be a deep, rhythmic scar,
Leaving traces of mind dance, quick
Swirls of shells to listen; I long
For you to bear the scar as you
Sway and press and marvel at the
Richness and warmth of the water.

It is in the evening when the
Leaves wrinkle with the wind that
I know the chill of the season is
Imminent and the scar on the tree
Will fade from time into circles.



Kirsten Busk

The Sand Garden

At early hours,
a translucent rice paper
slides softly open.
An old oriental appears.
His aged, steady hands embrace a bamboo rake.
His bare feet plod down a gravel path.
He steps over a border of small, smooth stones.
Then gently glides rake over familiar white sands.
Concentric rippled lines
follow his back-bent body.

Patterning

Shaping

Blending

All to promote harmony.

He waits for wind
to shift the sands of mind,
and waits to grasp the rake
to shape anew his self.



Bonnie McCowan

Child's Play

At age ten,
Feeding an innocent curiosity,
I squeezed my eyes closed, tight,
Pushing the world back
To fetal darkness.
Rat-a-tat-tat,
My stick swept lightly,
A white cane,
Striking the fence
With the precision
Of grooved machinery,
Like chalk on a chalk board.
I shuffled my feet,
Sun pulsing against
My red plaid jumper
In an exaggerated rhythm,
Warm as mother's womb.
I pictured space,
A monochrome in darkness,
Where time pressed upon me
Soft as a purring kitten,
Timeless as the past.
"There," I said,
Reaching the end of the block,
"That wasn't so bad,"
In child's play
When you're ten.

Kirsten Busk

Child's Play

The shifting sands across the desert flow;
Small children blindly cascade down the dunes,
Their jackets lift to catch the sandy blow--
With sticks in sand they trace their given runes.
But soon the wind and gusts erase.
The marks engraved in shallow sand are lost
While children shift and dance and twist in space
Their minds extend to other plains uncrossed.
And then the wind accelerates its speed
And drives the children racing from its sting.
Now childhood's dance no longer takes the lead:
Across the desert, parting voices ring;
Now dunes are silent waiting peacefully
For future dancers and the dance to be.

Bonnie McCowan

Small Hero in the Dark

"Take that!" he grunted through clinched teeth. "And that, Angelo!" Cold steel glinted against the sun. "There," the courageous King Daniel sighed, "at last--it's finished."

"Yeah, Daniel! Yeah, Daniel!" Cheered the crowd of admirers, carrying their hero aloft through the streets of the village. Daniel rode proudly, brandishing Excalibur, and bowing over and over--in his imaginary play.

Then he struck the water with the freshly stripped willow branch, distorting the image. His vision cleared. Reflected in the water was a nestling boy sitting close to the river among some willows. Their heavy-blooming branches drooped down around him and into the rushing water, and their roots, where Daniel sat, looked like frightened knotted fingers gripping the bank. His sandy hair rippled with the water. He rubbed his shin; the bruise was turning yellow around the edges.

"I'll get you for this, Angelo," he threatened. "You'd better watch out next soccer game!" He looked over his shoulder and hollered, "Right, you guys?"

The sun-baked sand was a confusion of children's footprints. One of Daniel's sneakers lay on its side a few feet up the main trail leading into the woods; the other one was next to the fence post where his soccer shirt hung snagged on the barbed wire. His socks were inside out in a pile behind him. There was nothing else.

"Hey, you guys, wait up!"

Hurrying to his feet, Daniel upset the plastic pail that held the day's catch, spilling out the crawfish. Caught by the swift spring current, they were driven downstream.

"Darn! Darn!" he stomped.

"Don't lose your socks, Daniel!" His mother's earlier warning echoed. He glanced at his socks, hesitated, then kicked them under last year's leaves.

"Darn shoelaces! Darn shoelaces! Wait up, you guys!"

Tearing his shirt from the barbed wire, he stuffed it into the back of his shorts; it flopped behind as he ran into the woods. The trail was nearly overgrown by an

unyielding desert tamarisk which made its home along the river. Its thorny branches swarmed with minute pink flowers, and the floor of the wood was covered with a thick carpet of fallen blooms. Downstream the tamarisk grew dense, mixing with willows where they hugged the shore, and dotted here and there were gnarled old cottonwoods, indigenous to the area, were nearly choked out by the impending masses of tamarisk that made a wide-stretching wood on both sides of the river. This dense wood followed the river eight or nine miles across an otherwise barren, sun-bleached plain, then disappeared behind the soft desert slopes into the mountains.

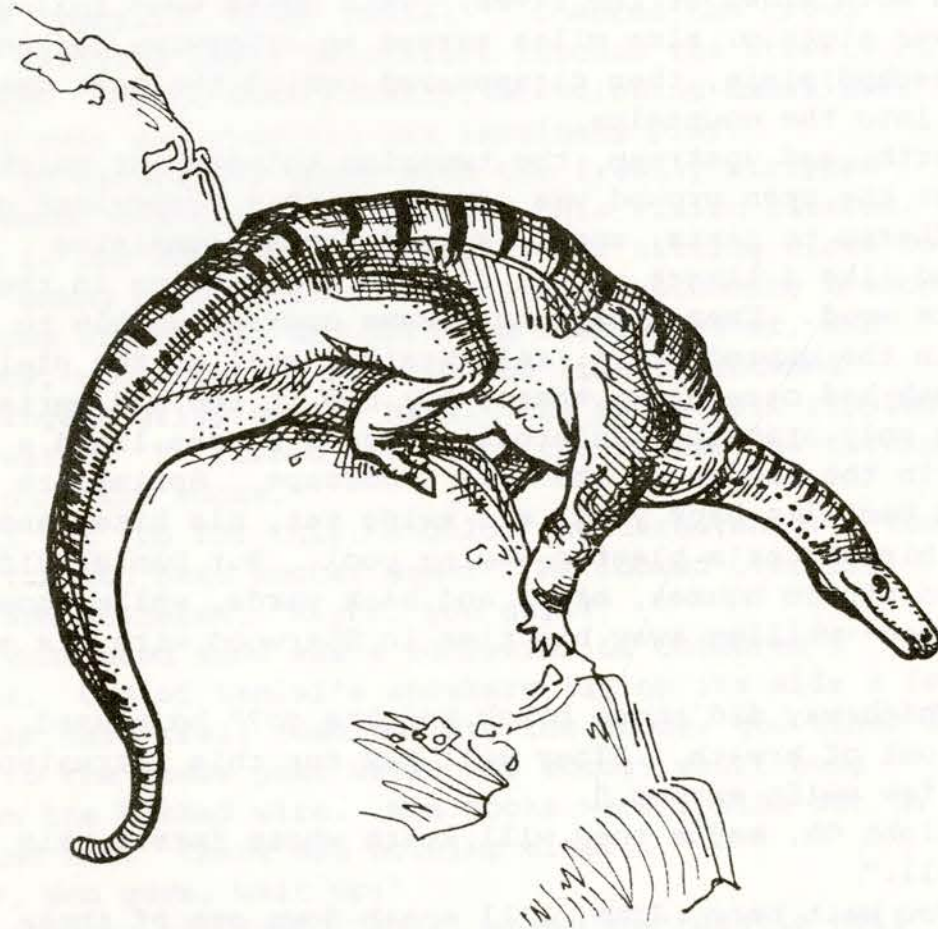
North, and upstream, the tamarisk thinned out quickly. At first the open ground was covered with a broad-leaf grass that adhered to pants, sneakers, and socks, remaining attached like a limpet, as if to hold its victims in the obdurate wood. Then the grass became sparse, unable to exist in the unproductive, salt-stained soil of the plain; sagebrush had once grown there, but now it too had perished, leaving only standing skeletons. Stucco houses lined a cul-de-sac in the middle of the dull landscape. Sprinklers watered Daniel's back yard, the swing set, his bike, and filled his sister's plastic wading pool. But Daniel did not envision stucco houses, bikes and back yards, while--now Robin Hood--whiling away his time in Sherwood with his merry men.

"Which way did those black knights go?" he paused, nearly out of breath. "They will pay for this intrusion with a few swift arrows."

"Right Oh, maybe they will learn whose forest this is, after all."

"You wait here, John, I'll sneak down one of these side trails and fake them out. Listen for my signal."

Twisting through the expanse of tangled, obstructing underbrush was a network of small trails that worked their way into the main trail at this point. A roof of living branches loomed far above Daniel's head; only patches of light shone through, dancing about on his bare shoulders and arms. To Daniel, the twisted trails seemed more like the Minotaur's labyrinth. A lizard ran across his path--he chased after it, diving deeper into the woods.



"I'll rid this island of your evil curse once and for all. You have not seen the likes of Daniel before. Minotaur, you have eaten your last fair maiden . . ."

"The tree house shouldn't be far from here . . . Those guys better not mess around with my marbles . . . Maybe I'll get a chance to win back my blue cat-eyes . . . Can't wait until Thursday's soccer match with the Deputies, ol' Angelo's team."

Daniel stopped short, his unadorned chest heaved.

"Maybe you took the wrong trail," said Daniel's good friend Merlin the magician, who just happened onto the trail.

"Well, what's the big hurry anyway, Merlin?"

"Joey said you shouldn't try to find the tree house by yourself, remember?"

"Oh, what do big brothers know anyway, and won't he be surprised to see me?"

"Daniel, come here and look at these footprints. Who do you suppose they belong to; did they just come by this way?"

"Those s-m-a-l-l prints? They couldn't be mine. There must be a poor little lost child somewhere in the woods. Joey says, 'if a person gets lost in these woods, he may never find his way out again.'"

"That lost child's parents are probably worried sick about him, Daniel."

"Well, let's go have a look around for him."

The summer sun seemed bored with the idle play; it was almost as if it couldn't wait to drop from the pale blue sky. A chill crept silently up from the river and stole through the woods; night creatures woke, and dusk came alive with the screeching of bats and the calls of birds; toads hopped and squirrels scampered about, showing no sign of fear or concern for the small hero that walked by them.

"I bet I could catch one of those squirrels."

"Well, Daniel, maybe you should come back here with something to feed it tomorrow--if you can find the way," Merlin said, not concealing his concern. "I don't remember it taking us so long to get to the tree house before; do you suppose we are lost?"

"Some magician you are . . . Joey says there are cats that have gone wild that live in the woods and little foxes

and owls that swoop down and snatch up the pocket mice. Wouldn't that be radical!"

"Daniel, it's nearly dark."

"You worry too much, Merlin. My pals will be heading home for dinner any minute. We'll just mess around here for a while and wait for them to come by."

"I'm afraid we'll give them a fright."

"They better not have touched my marbles. Bet some old wild cat lives in this hole." Daniel looked around for a fallen branch, fastening it into a fine hole-poker stick.

"Come out, you varmint! Come out! I never thought a wild cat could live in such a deep abyss. You can't hide down in Moria from me, you mean ol' Balrog. Come out and fight like a man."

A large, bright yellow beetle crawled up out of Moria. "Awesome!" Daniel examined the beetle closely and then put it in his shorts pocket along with the other dreams and nightmares that he carried with him as he searched for a lost part of himself in the woods. The beetle and Daniel actually belonged to, were a part of, the passing time.

It was dark, as dark a night as Daniel could remember. The thought of his friends coming by no longer sustained him.

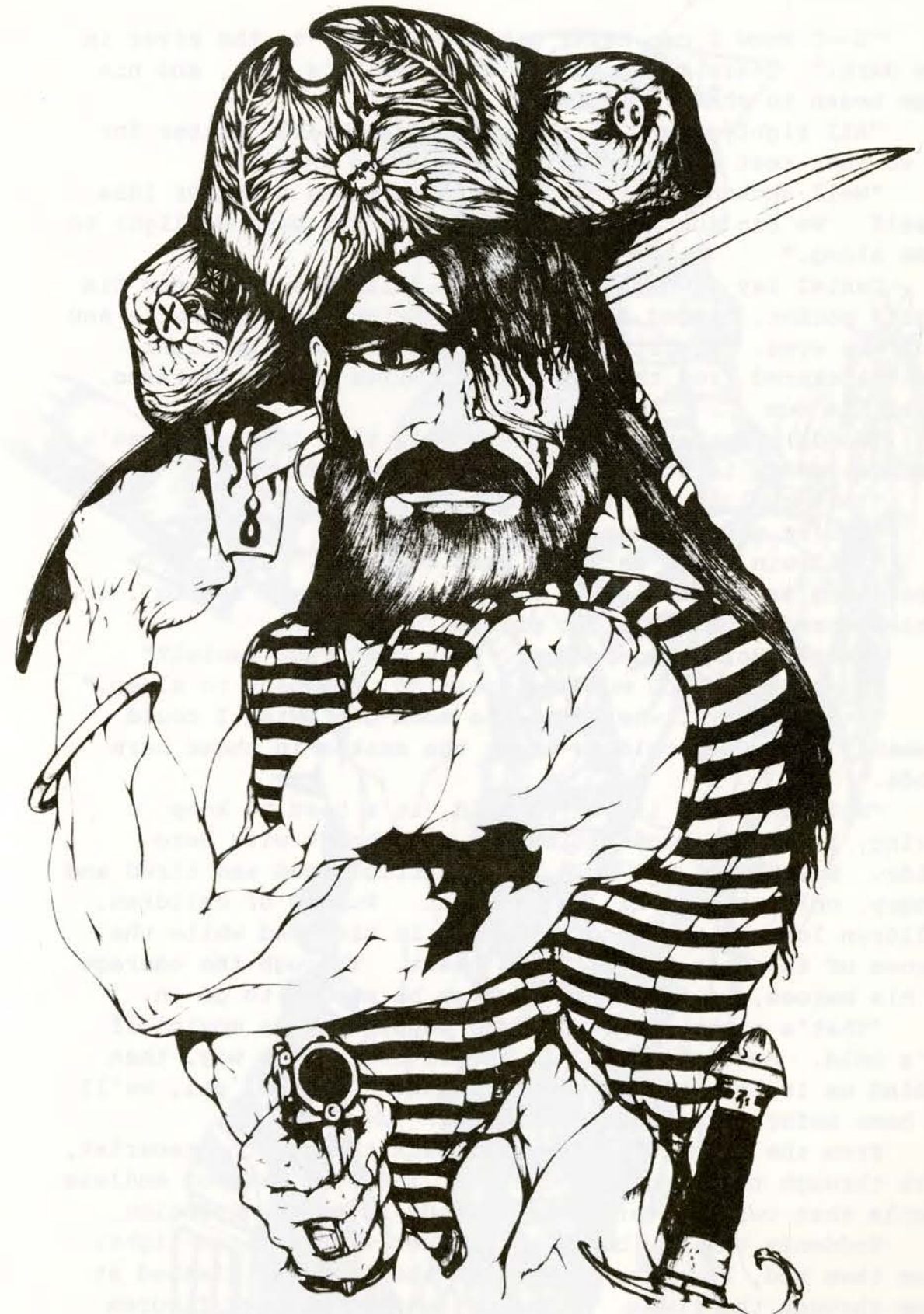
"Wonder how we can get out of this place," asked Merlin sounding rather bewildered.

"Shhh, a minute," Daniel waited, listening to the night noises and the voice of the river. "Yah, the river! All I gotta do is follow the river upstream. Daniel, you're one smart hombre, even if I do say so," he exclaimed, puffing up his chest. "Let's get a hustle on, Merlin, I've worked up an appetite." So, pulling on his soccer shirt, he began to make his way towards the river in the darkness through the great masses of tamarisk.

After what seemed to be hours, Daniel stood at the edge of the woods. "Well, Merlin, we made it."

"I didn't think it would be like this," Merlin quivered. "I didn't think it would be so hard, or that it would take so long to get through the tamarisk," he rubbed his scratched arms and legs and swallowed the lump in his throat. Some twenty feet below was the river, straight down a rocky bank. The water turned silver under the moon.

"What do you say, Merlin? Should we give it a try?"



"I--I know I can never get down there--to the river in the dark." Tears began to swell in Merlin's eyes, and his legs began to shake.

"All right, don't blubber. It's probably better for us to just rest here and wait for morning anyway."

"Well spoken, Daniel, couldn't have had a better idea myself. We can just rest here and wait for some daylight to come along."

Daniel lay down on a warm rock, slid his hand into his shorts pocket, closed it around the bright yellow beetle and shut his eyes. He tried not to think of the tiny lights that flickered from the cul-de-sac, miles in the distance, or of his mom . . .

"Wonder if that pink popcorn ball that I got at Gwen's birthday party is still in the back of my drawer?"

"That girl is a nuisance, Daniel."

"You're the nuisance, Merlin."

"I'll win those cat-eyes back tomorrow. Stop scratching around and go to sleep, you mean ol' Balrog . . . Daniel dozed, and the night pressed on.

"What?" Merlin jumped up. "Was that you, Daniel?"

"Hum? A--no, you must be dreaming. Go back to sleep."

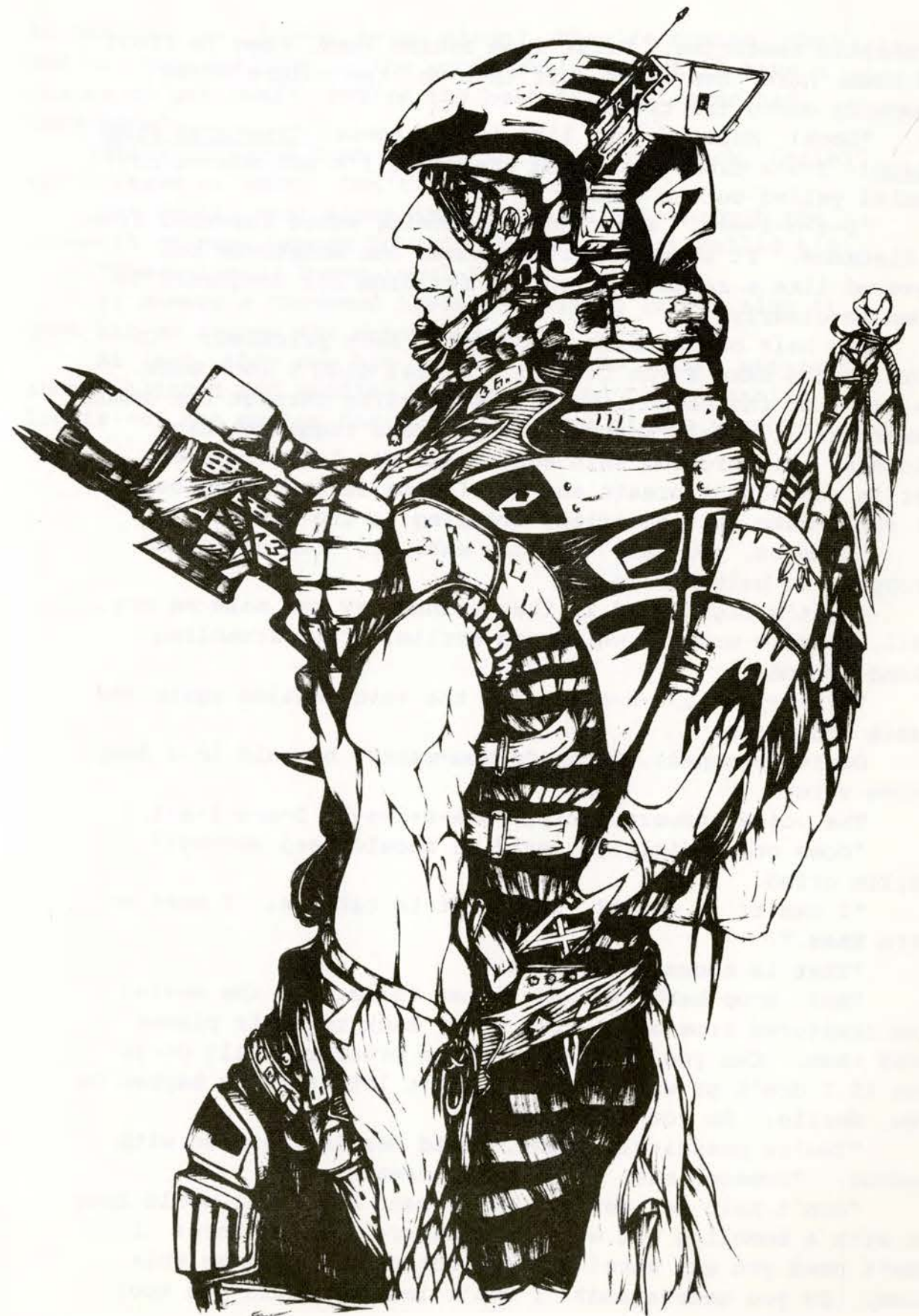
"It's so dark, where did the moon go? Wish I could remember what Joey told us about the snakes in these here woods."

"Well, Merlin, if you're cold, it's best to keep moving, I hear." Daniel cleared his throat with hero pride. But Daniel was cold too and frightened and tired and hungry, only most of all he was lost. Rumors of children, children lost in the woods, churned in his head while the heroes of the past lived in his heart. Through the courage of his heroes, he found the courage he needed to go on.

"That's right, Merlin, a guy ought to keep movin' if he's cold. Now let's see, if the river is this way, then behind us is the way out of the woods. Come on, pal, we'll be home before breakfast."

From the river, they trudged back through the tamarisk, back through the tangled underbrush into the maze of endless trails that twisted through the woods in every direction.

Suddenly the sky began to flicker with strange light. Blue then red, blue then red, blue then red, it flashed at once through the trees. Gigantic twisted colored figures with gaping faces reached out from the tamarisk with spiny,



arthritic tentacles. First from behind them, then in front of them, here then there, off then on, the colors moved suddenly among the trees.

"Look! Merlin, just like in the movie, Creatures From Space! Y-o-u didn't scare me then, and I'm not scared now!" Daniel yelled out to them.

"D-a-n-i-e-l," a strange, beckoning voice answered from a distance. It sounded neither human nor monstrous but wavered like a radio station too far from its frequency to come in clearly.

The hair on the back of Daniel's neck prickled. "OH BOY! Let's make a run for it!" Daniel didn't look back. He ran from the beckoning call, struggling through the demon tamarisk; it rudely snagged his body and tugged at his clothes. His bruised shin ached, and his legs trembled. Merlin was out of breath and had fallen several feet behind. "I can't make it," he cried, dropping to the ground.

"Come on, you can. You can make it," Daniel coaxed, stopping to help Merlin up.

"That's right, and if they think they can make me cry, well, they're wrong!" whimpered Merlin, still stumbling along behind.

"D-a-n-i-e-l, D-a-n-i-e-l," the voice called again and again and again.

Daniel stopped. "What-do-you-want?" he said in a deep, brave voice.

The voice answered only, "D-a-n-i-e-l, D-a-n-i-e-l."

"Come on, Daniel, you said we should keep moving!" Merlin cried.

"I can't! I can't! They want to take me. I must go with them."

"That is nonsense, Daniel."

"No! Stop babbling and listen to me. In the movie, the creatures from space took a boy back to their planet with them. Can you imagine what the creatures will do to you if I don't go with them? I can't let anything happen to you, Merlin. Do you understand?"

"You're positively right," said Merlin frenzied with horror. "Someone must go with the creatures."

"Don't help me, Merlin. They want me. What would they do with a bumbling old wizard? You are staying here! I don't need you any more! You're not coming with me this time. Do you understand? I won't let them take you too!

Do you hear me, I have to go alone? They're coming, run! Merlin, run and hide in the woods while you still have a chance to get away! You're the best friend I ever had. Good-bye."

Tears streamed down Merlin's face, "Come back, Daniel! Don't leave me here! Don't go with them!"

But Daniel went alone into the tamarisk through the gigantic colored demons towards the voice that called him.

"D-a-n-i-e-l, D-a-n-i-e-l."

It seemed a thousand lives had passed in the time it took him to escape the demon tamarisk . . .

At last, they saw him coming out. He walked straight ahead, blinded and baffled by the red and blue flashing lights--of the police car--into the arms of his parents.

Kirsten Busk

Bonkei

Mother places gray clay
Into my eight year old hands.
I place it on a white cloth covered tray.
Together, we would create my world.
I clench wedge shaped brass sculpturing tool
And form mountains.

Her steady brown eyes look over my shoulder,
Carefully watching my world evolve.
When small shoulders tense
And frustrated eyes look up,
Her experienced hand then encompasses mine.
Re-creating, we smooth out roughness,
Seeking for the ideal,
Communicating beauty inherent in
Natural harmony.

From tiny bottles I carefully choose dyes
To mix with water and drop on sculptured clay.
I sprinkle blue-green mosses through a fine sieve
Making my landscape come to life.
I create ocean currents, deep and shallow,
With soft and shadowed blues,
Cresting waves with white sand sifted through
My fingertips.

I choose a frail sailing boat to make
Its uncertain way through the waves.
And I smile softly for my turn at
The helm.

LuAnne Smith

I long to hold a palette in my hand,
Illuminate a canvas like Miro.
I yearn for grace and freedom of the dance,
To leap and spin on satin slippered toe.
I wish to weave a tapestry of words,
Forming images for rich communications.
I dream of merging harmonies and chords,
The blending of melodious syncopations.
My hand is not well suited to the brush,
My willing pen lacks clarity and verve,
My music needs a master's magic touch,
My leaden step is rooted to the earth,
So I applaud in jealous adoration
The mastery of artistry's creations.

Kris Shipp

One Windy Afternoon

Against rays of sunlight
The wind teased through
Your tawny hair,
Catching my eye.

As I gazed into
Your world, the wind
Blew your breath into mine,
Leaving behind the taste of your
Innocence frozen on my lips.

At that moment
I felt your virgin air
Enveloping my heart,
Controlling my mind,
And ruling my life.



Janae Foster

Waves

Waves running through high speed all in sync,
 Moving together creating low but high
 Motion with a sound like a mild ocean with no birds.
 The ocean sound is constant but not striking;
 This melodic sound drags the thoughts to still.
 The eyelids close and thoughts drift on,
 But flight is still inside,
 And so we drift back and forth.

Natalie Condie

The pain lingered in her chest,
 Meandering like a bored child
 As intaglio memories clouded
 The onward way of life.

Emptiness was unfamiliar,
 As were solitaire single settings.
 Perhaps forever it would stay,
 Pits of echoing darkness.

Evadene Long

Flight of an Angel

She comes to me--
 A fairy phantom floating
 In the misty fabric
 Of my dreams.
 No longer shackled
 By pain-racked bones,
 Abandoned in the grave,
 Her soul flies free
 In ageless beauty,
 The blush of youth,
 Soft resting on her cheek.
 But I, whose soul would follow,
 Must wait a while
 Until my time is due,
 Until my task is finished,
 And I can fly free, too.
 Not yet, my love...but soon.

Natalie Nielson

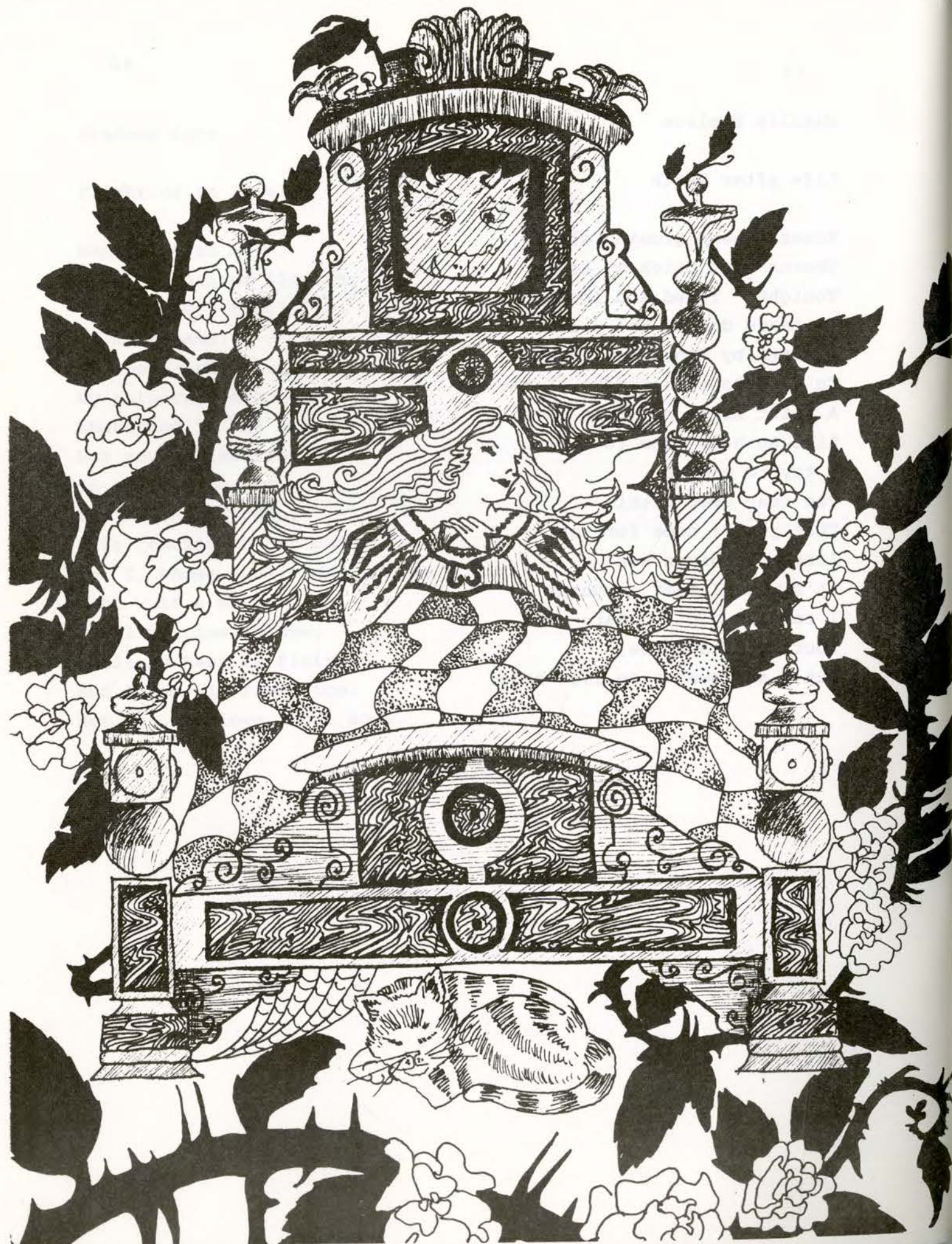
Life after Death

Roses, roses growing slowly,
 Thorns that prick my soul
 Tonight. Tired and lonely--
 My tears dampen the pillow,
 Haunted by dancing figures
 In the closed darkness of the sky,
 A faint light clinging to them
 Like an hour does to time.
 I try to escape
 The fear deep within
 That you've gone forever
 Like a forgiven sin.
 It's when I hear laughter
 I realize you're near--
 Your body has gone,
 But a shadowed rose lies here.

Karen Hansen

escape

i lay sound awake
and hear shadows
on the wall
that reach out
but cannot touch me.
i shout
to someone i know
will answer
but who remains
silent...
the thoughts
i've forgotten
are helplessly
crammed inside
my mind's
empty halls
and corridors
and so
i run and stumble
and run
until i cannot
walk any more.



HISTORY OF THE SOUTHERN QUILL

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 (second volume published)	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, and 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	Juliana Burton	Ace G. Pilkington
1985-86	Janae Daley	Ace G. Plikington
1986-87	Bonnie McCowan & Kris Shipp	Ace G. Pilkington
1987-88	Karen Hansen & Kris Shipp	Ace G. Pilkington

CHRONOLOGY OF THE BOSTON CYCLE

1940-41	Joseph Taylor	Joseph Taylor
1941-42	Joseph Taylor	Joseph Taylor
1942-43	Joseph Taylor	Joseph Taylor
1943-44	Joseph Taylor	Joseph Taylor
1944-45	Joseph Taylor	Joseph Taylor
1945-46	Joseph Taylor	Joseph Taylor
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1986-87	Joseph Taylor	Joseph Taylor
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