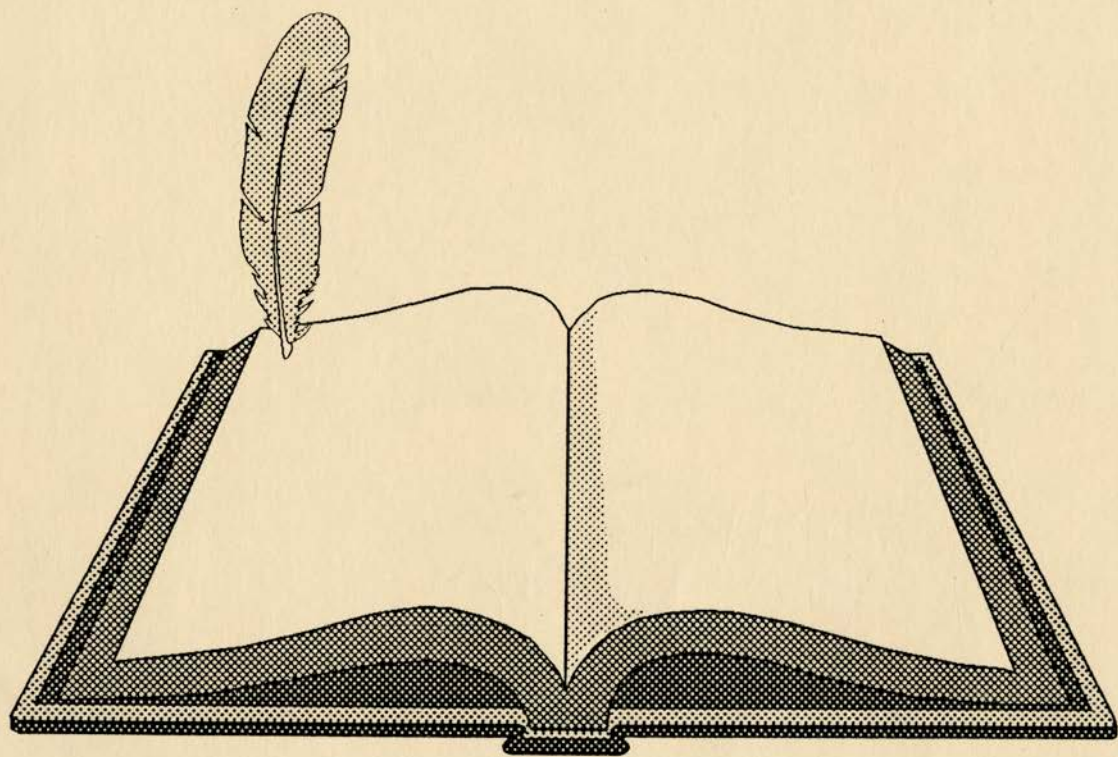




The Next History

Southern Quill

1992-1993

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I. MEMORY'S FIELDS

Natalie Nilsson

Memory's Fields*

Soft, swirling winds blow gently through the fields,
Weeds swaying lazily in the warm summer breeze,
And as I listen I hear children laughing,
Children who once played happily in the alfalfa.
I see sunny days of bike rides, roller skates, pet snakes,
Long hikes, wading pools, dodge ball, and water fights.
I see baseball bats and mitts that were almost too big
For the hands that used them.

Kaleidoscopes of leaves turning colors
Meant the end of the summer, but never the end of the fun.
The once green fields turned a golden yellow,
And young eyes watched as the green tractor
Swallowed up the long stems and spit them out as bales.
Soon they were collected from as far as the small hands
Could carry them, to build a fort for imaginary battles
With Indians and dragons and Martians and robbers
All in one day.

And at times when the fields were sugared
With snow, the children were still
Laughing and playing, rolling snowballs as big
As their bodies, chasing each other in a game
Of fox and geese, racing each other down the hill on sleds,
Building igloos and snowmen, so caught up in their fun
That they forgot to notice the cold.

The melting snow brought rainy days,
Children dancing in puddles, watching the drops of water
Coming down so hard that a mist
Would rise from the streets.
And when the rain was gone, there were kites
Pirouetting in the wind, soaring, diving, climbing
Dragons with long tails,

Octopi with streaming arms,
And our mouths open in wonder
That anything so high off the ground
Would not run into a jet or an airplane or even a bird,
And still the laughter can be heard.

The seasons that we loved so dearly, like a mother
Who loves each of her children in a special way,
Still tug at our arms and cry for attention,
But not as insistently as before.
In the fields where we found so much joy,
Houses now seem to grow like the weeds once did.
Children no longer laugh and play outside;
Instead their eyes are fixed on an imaginary world
Inside a gray screened box.

But sometimes, when the clouds sail through the sky,
White toy ships in an azure lake,
Rippling and swelling
Into genies, castles, and elephants,
I hear the laughter and long to revel in that innocence
In the colorful world the way we once did,
Before we knew the meaning of time.

*Third Place Winner 1992-93 Annie Atkin Tanner Poetry Competition

I. MEMORY'S FIELDS

Cynthia Stark

Regretful Recurrence

Etched inside the blade
The lost lover...
Piercing the christened heart,
It weeps a crimson cry.
He gasps for an embrace,
Preoccupied with pain.

Recollection,
Impression,
Panic.

In despair the knife is removed,
The bleeding pain
Still alive.

And it comes when the fields were sowed
With seeds of the children's world
Laughing and playing, rolling marbles in big
Orbits of joy and grief, racing each other down the hill on sleds,
Building snow and snowmen, not caught up in their fun
That they forgot to notice the cold.

The morning snow brought rainy days,
Children playing in puddles, watching the drops of water
Coming down as hard then a mist
Would rise from the streets,
And when the rain was gone, the sun was blue
Piercing in the wind, making, strong, clicking
Dragons with long tails.

James Custer

The Homestead

Martha Millett

Megan

We wanted to paint for you
A blue sky, a bright sun,
Colorful flowers, and apple trees,
Make a garden full of life
So you could run
From the angel we refused to see.

We would like to look back,
Seeing you dancing with the wind,
And fill your whole universe with
Pink balloons, teddy bears, and sunbeams.
But, sweet little child, you talked
To the angel and tried his wings.

A humid, dense rain
Softly washed your grave.
Only the cruel, cold winter
Could reach your eternal dream ...
And between tears, emptiness, and despair
We saw you running in the fields ...

Chasing butterflies and laughing
At the angel with no wings.

And who now lies in your grave
Beside that standing rock,
A guardian through life's mortal wars,
We measure by the clock?

A brief inscription, deep carved
Upon that passing rock,
Speaks to all who have outlived
That heartache and its shock.

Dawn Houghton

Romance Language*

I confuse my mother with peaches,
 Pink ones,
 The skin and naivete.
 And utensils:
 Spoons are young men
 Unbearded.
 And my shoes are
 Boys in the playground.
 But a fan
 Is a woman
 Waving, standing still,
 Waiting, calling in rhythmic swishes
 The names of her lovers or children or simply
 Waiting.

*Originally published in *Wind Magazine*, March 1991

James Custer

The Homestead

The shadow curtains, morning drawn,
 Reveal another day
 And embers of a time long gone
 Which death has swept away.

We here commit to desert soil,
 No more to toil
 Or cheer a weary day along
 Our wife and mother, our heart and song.

A weathered barn stands stark and grey
 Against a sunless dawn.
 No odors left of stock or hay;
 Life's hallmarks are all gone.

Without a song all joy must hide.
 From failing heart this young home died.

A crippled wagon silently
 Gives way to sun and rain.
 Beneath grey branches of a tree
 'Twill evermore remain.

A house, deserted, dark and mute,
 Its weed entangled fences
 Are crouched beneath a stony butte
 Of shallow prominence.

Who made this lonely house a home,
 These fields rise green from virgin loam?

What barefoot child in pretense laid
 This aimless path of stones,
 And in a make-believe parade
 Once marched to lofty thrones?

And who now lies in yonder grave
 Beside that standing rock,
 A guardian through life's mortal wave,
 We measure by the clock?

A brief inscription, deep incised
 Upon that jutting rock,
 Speaks to all emotions undisguised
 That heartloss could unlock.

Matt Garman

A Cup of Dark Dreams

As I drink from a cup of dark dreams

(The night is rich with that taste of hate.
Childish revenges rage unchecked.
Dark souls burn in the minds of many.)

I

(And as I sit in the swirling gloom about me,
Your face passes through my teeth again.
I crumple it like the falsehood it is.)

DON'T

(For despite the fact that we made up, my dear,
This anger smoulders within me still.
I want to sweep you up, and blow you away.)

CARE

(I see how easily you get along with others.
Others who are nothing to me.
I suddenly realize you are full of that nothing,
And I laugh.)

ANYMORE

(An empty husk with winter inside it.
A beautiful shell that drives me mad.
I will know peace when you are gone.)

Thus I drank from a cup of dark dreams.

Dawn Houghton

I Have Come to Make Sense

There are the stories of our parents
We should never reveal.
They are locked in the front stoops
And the panes of windows
As secrets of the house.
But to redeem, we tell them:

This is my father's that he kept
In the province Tayninh of Vietnam,
Where the trees had died
When he told a woman, Tran Le,
The pines near his home in Tacoma
Smelled like soap.
And she watched him sleep.
And she had his son.

I have come to make sense of his need,
Because he was young
And his father taught him that way.

My mother kept hers in army bases,
Ironing uniforms into folded paper creases,
Holding babies in her belly
Like war medals of love,
Or ransom notes
Fastened to her maternity blouse,
Believing loneliness was healed
Through the womb.

I have come to make sense of her need,
Because she was young
And her mother taught her that way.

I can confess, they did not last
Or contribute to each other's soul;
It has been ten years since they've spoken.
But now when my father pushes his glasses
Back towards his eyes,
It means he wants to listen.
And when I visit my mother,
She still kisses me on the forehead like a child,
Before I leave.

Sonya Miles

Desolate Escapism

Snow flying at my eyes,
Bitten by the stabbing ice:
Precious moments before I die
Spent in torment--still I try.
Freedom is the sounding cry
Inside this cage (reluctantly mine),
And I wonder ere I sleep
How long these memories of pain I'll keep,
Praying for another day
That I may somehow fly away.

Jenny Porritt

Glittering Lights

Glittering lights
Are whispering a tale
To a city of blindness
And memories gone stale.

A cradle of hope,
Then a halo of thorns
Falls near a virgin
Like a tear as she mourns.

Oh, who will remember
That star in the night?
We ignore our reminder,
The glittering lights.

Jacque Jenson

Solitary

The aching emptiness in my mind
Flows into my fingers,
Making me inscribe things
I dare not scream
Onto the rectangle space of
Black and white thoughts.

A small winter rose
Tries to open in the steel wind,
Listening to icicles ring
Out in the white-sound silence.
The petals are battered away
One by one,
Leaving a small,
Wind mangled
Child.

Tara Taylor

Picture a Painting*

Picture a canvas,
No flowers, no trees,
No red, brown, or green.
The sky isn't blue here;
The wind does not blow.
The careful strokes of an artist's hand
Cannot be seen here;
The feelings cannot be shown.

Picture a canvas,
No smiling children,
No daydream seascapes,
No black, yellow, or purple.
The sun doesn't laugh here;
A young maiden doesn't weep.
A bunch of heaven-colored daisies
Do not sit in a silver bowl
On a lace doily.

Picture a canvas,

No color,
No life,

No painting.

*Second Place Winner 1992-93 Annie Atkin Tanner Poetry Competition

Martha Millett

Letters

Nineteen years are too long,
But today I found
The little white box.
One generation has passed.
Your letters felt like a burning coal,
And moving toward
The deepest corner of my sleepy mind,
I touched ... opened ... walked to
The sacred tomb.

The memories like a vicious storm,
Swirling, blowing, roaring,
Grabbed my icy flesh
And carried out my heavy soul.

The letters, the ones you wrote,
Were stained with yellow tears;
Dripping blood struck
My invisible fears.
Then I saw you emerging triumphant
From the shattered glass
Of one broken past,
And I felt each cell
Of your body bursting out from my wounds.

But they were only letters,
A blinding flash ...
(A generation has passed,
Nineteen years are too long)
I shut the box.
Memories and dust
Went through the stone
One more time.

II. ANOTHER PLACE, ANOTHER TIME

Jandi Jones

The Mexican Blanket

The scorching heat enveloped my body as I stepped out of our air-conditioned car. It was family vacation again, and today was our day to go bargain shopping in Tijuana. As we walked down the crowded, polluted streets, the sun shone brightly on the brown, leathered skin of the natives already hard at work for the day. My excitement grew when I spotted the rows of crowded shops down the street, and I unconsciously began to speed up in anticipation of the shopping to come.

I spotted it in the third shop I walked into and stopped to stare admiringly at its beautiful colors and designs. It was the Mexican blanket that I had come here to buy: sky blue with navy and cream accents on the carefully handwoven piece of art. I approached the shop keeper, asking the price for this blanket. He quoted me what I pretended was an outrageous price, so I shook my head in disgust and began to walk away. As expected, the merchant came after me, offering the blanket for a lower amount, and the haggling that Tijuana shopping is known for officially commenced.

Arguing with the merchants over the cost of the merchandise is the whole thrill of shopping in Tijuana, but the outcome is always predictable, as it was in this case. Soon, I was triumphantly strutting out of the shop with the coveted blanket held reverently in my arms. I quickly made an exit, practically stealing my purchase for the ten American dollars that I placed in the large, calloused hands of the mer-

chant. I felt extremely satisfied with my buy, knowing that a handwoven blanket of this quality would easily sell for five times that in the States.

My shopping desires exhausted, I allowed myself to be carried along with the crowds of people in the busy streets, paying little attention to my surroundings. I was passing by a large, curtainless, dirt-stained window and noticed an old hand loom inside. Being a natural born window shopper, I couldn't control my instincts to peek in to see what was happening behind that slab of grimy glass. Staring through the window, I saw a Mexican woman sitting at the loom. On the loom was a blanket, similar to mine, in the process of being woven. It was going to be a magnificent blanket. It was deep red with an intricate black and white pattern which she was painstakingly weaving in, thread by thread. The room in which the loom was stationed was small and filthy, and the clouded window I was looking through was the only light source in that room, the rays of sunlight filtering through the streaks of dirt. The woman's gnarled, cramped hands worked white threads in and out and back and forth with a grooved chunk of wood, smooth from the years of hands that had endlessly worked it through the loom. A thin, tired arm mechanically reached up to yank down the bar that secured each new strip in its place as the beautiful blanket slowly began to take form.

After watching for a long while, I turned, facing the merciless sun, and continued walking, joining the throngs of people who all seemed to be in a hurry. With my sky-blue blanket in hand, I slowly began to realize what my ten American

dollars had purchased.

Turning around, I jumped in with the wave of people flowing in the direction of the little shop where I bought my blanket, intending to give the merchant more money for my buy. I stopped abruptly in the midst of the swarming masses of tourists and natives, rushing around. I knew that giving the shopkeeper more money was not enough. Giving him money wouldn't insure that the woman who had hand-crafted my beautiful, new possession would get to touch a penny of it with her tired, sore hands. Once again, I turned around, heading back.

My aching legs had returned me to the spot I had occupied a few moments before, back in front of the window. Peering once again into the squalid room, I thought of giving that woman some money to compensate for her overlooked and underpaid labors.

While I was looking in the window, pondering, my eyes focused on the flashing images of the scene behind me being reflected on the glass. Turning, I watched the bustling crowds of people going by. I saw the smiling, dirt-smudged faces of small children, with ragged, unwashed clothes clinging to their thin forms as they tried to sell colorful paper flowers and braided bracelets to the throngs of tourists. I watched brown, wrinkled men and women leaning their withered forms against rough adobe walls of nearby buildings. Still looking, I observed the tourists' faces, the familiar, flushed glow of conquest in their cheeks, as they came out of shops and left vendor stands, and the similar, clutching grasp clinging to different prizes as they hurried on to the next shop.

I felt the money resting deep in the folds of my pockets and crammed it further down into hiding. I didn't know what

to do. The heat was suffocating, and, tightening my hold on the sky-blue masterpiece, I started running for the comfort of the air-conditioned car.

Matt Garman

The Flowing of Everything

For one moment,
For one frozen moment
We stand alone in the vastness of
Our own loneliness,
Staring endlessly into each other,
All the flaws and perfections
Blazing like a candle amplified beyond
Perception.

It's painful, cold, but pure--
No barriers there to distort or haze,
Just my eyes and yours,
All the pieces falling, slipping away.
You can't deny the exultation
Of the beauty of ourselves.
Without lies it's so delightful
Knowing I have nothing I need to sell.

I open up and drink,
All of you spilling inside
Catching every drop--
The flowing of Everything.
While others may not see it,
We both know it's there,
Shining between us,
The flowing of Everything

All the while I know it's dreaming
Of ideal lives; I know it.
But the inward smile
Holds the vision tightly screaming.
It's crystal understanding;
It's not happening for real;
It's not fantasy, it's planting
Of a future truth I feel.

Martha Minot

The Fisherman (Stories of the Sea)

Natalie Nilsson

Neptune

Deep blue majesty
Controlled by one alone,
A mighty king who ruled the sea,
An oyster shell his throne.
A dolphin is his mighty steed,
The pearl his kingdom's treasure;
His anger rocks the seaman's ship
With waves of awe and splendor.
The trident is his scepter
With which he calls the storms.
His anger causes men to shake
And widowed wives to mourn.
Can any man defy him?
Brave, though fool, is he
Who dares to enter Neptune's realm:
His kingdom is the sea.

Salvatore Corpaci

Chicken Bob

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 the friend 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 awirl, 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 and baste, roast and stew,
Even at times to barbecue.
And then I heard the bitter sob
Escape the throat of Chicken Bob.

Sudden passion swelled my chest,
So with the axe 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 the loss of lore,
For Chicken Bob 'twas nevermore.

Martha Millett

The Fisherman (Stories of the Sea)

Childhood memories are precious because it is the only time in life that inhibitions are nonexistent, but they can be full of pain and fears.

Today, I will sweep away the dark clouds, remembering only the happy times. I believe that the best years were the ones I spent by the ocean.

I used to live two blocks away from the beach, and I grew up with seagulls eating from my hands, smelling the bitter-sweet aroma from the sea, and learning the music from the waves. Nothing compares to the sound of the sea. Sometimes I stood for hours by the shore, letting my imagination run wild toward the horizon. I saw mermaids gathering pearls and sea-horses chasing the colors from the sunset. I danced with fairies and discovered sand castles with gold windows and silver doors. I helped the fishermen to find the way home with fireflies and white seagulls.

The ocean and the fishermen were my best friends. I loved to watch the boats arrive at shore. It was a great spectacle. I still hear the sound of the water splashing against them, and their laugh.

The fishermen appeared to me as giants, full of energy and passions; I thought they took away some of the magic from the sea every time they went fishing. But I often wondered if they had power over the waters.

When the boats finally reached the shore, the men spread the nets full of fish on the sand. The people, especially children, loved to watch them inside the net, pushing and twisting against it, refus-

ing to die. Then, the men washed the fish and immediately set up wicker tables along the beach in order to sell them fresh. I will never forget that penetrating smell of fish and ocean filling the air and my memories forever. Most of these men were my neighbors; they used to tell me stories of the sea, and always gave me fish to take home for dinner.

I knew all of them except one. This man was different from the rest. He never laughed or spoke a word; I sensed a cold sadness that surrounded him. He had blue eyes and blond hair, he was thin but looked strong, and he had in his hands the scars of the rope; he was probably around twenty years old. He seemed distant and hopeless. In my child's imagination I saw this fisherman sailing away on the ocean searching for dreams, and somehow I fell in love with him. I never knew his name, but it didn't matter to me because I used to call him "the dreamer."

When winter arrived and the storm hit the beach, the wind and waves roared with anger, the ocean grew treacherous, and I believed that someday it was going to devour the whole universe. The fishermen sailed away to other lands, and they didn't return until spring.

Those periods of time were sad and empty, but in my child's fantasies I traveled through the ocean in a paper boat with my fisherman. We searched for white pearls and laughed with the mermaids. And I thought, "When he comes back, he will be my prince, and together we will make castles of sugar and sand." But he never came back. The fishermen told us sadly that his boat disappeared in the storm, that they heard his crying from a distance. They searched for him many days, hoping that the ocean would carry him to the shore. They never found him. The fishermen covered the sea with

flowers, and I still remember those colors floating on the water.

My fisherman of dreams never returned from his last voyage. For the first time I felt pain and understood the reason for my tears; I learned how to hate. I blamed the ocean, and for long months I couldn't go back to the beach until I accepted his death.

Today I still close my eyes and see the mermaids gathering pearls. I see the fairies playing on the surface and laughing at the waves, but I can't see my fisherman, and I can't help him return to land; he went too far beyond my dreams.

Jaylynn Lewis

Impressions/Afternoon at Pavillion

Bound willow rake pulled deliberately across uneven ground
By gardener leaning and bent--
Wizened elf with wrinkled face, crow's feet.
He's contributing to common, shared beauty,
A spare acre for thousands to use.

Rain dripping on damp, green lily pads,
Salmon-orange carp swarming near shore,
Scent of incense and moisture.

School girls--silk, charcoal hair, almond-shaped eyes,
Dressed in crisp white and navy.
"Konnichiwa," they giggle and stare at the foreigners.
Gravel crunches beneath numerous feet ...
One afternoon at the Pavillion grounds.

at Pavillion

deliberately across uneven ground
ent--
face, crow's feet.
ion, shared beauty,
s to use.

green lily pads,
singing near shore,
pure.

hair, almond-shaped eyes,
navy.
and stare at the foreigners.
numerous feet ...
lion grounds.

Jandi Jones

This Rose

This rose,
Your dying memory,
Once crisply wrapped in clear reflection,
Now clouded with the neglected dust of time.
The brittle, scarlet, blood-dried lips,
Only a hint of the dew-drenched, velvet smile
That lay smooth upon my silken cheek
So long ago.

All that is left,
These skeletal remains,
A withered reminder of living to die while
Life's sweet breath is slowly sucked and stolen.
Rapture, turned rank and rotten with decaying demise,
Is kissed away by my red, rosebud caress,
Crushing the dried memories beneath the pain
Of reality.

Stephanie Chidester

Elements of Comedy in Sheridan's *The Rivals*

Richard Brinsley Sheridan constructed his play *The Rivals* from several traditional comic motifs, deriving many of his situations and characters from Restoration comedy, which in turn draws heavily upon the New Comedy of the Greeks.¹ William W. Appleton points out that Sheridan "had no aversion ... to borrowing inspiration from other sources.... Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, first performed in 1773, has a number of affinities to *The Rivals*. It has even been suggested that Sheridan's play might more aptly have been called *He Stoops to Conquer*" (331); similarly, Mark S. Auburn notes that "Sheridan was called the 'modern Congreve' in his own time" (3). The play is not, however, merely a mishmash of comic conventions or a plagiarized version of a Restoration drama; Sheridan twists and reshapes situations and characters in this play, reinvigorating both New and Restoration Comedy and making *The Rivals* uniquely his own. As Robert Hogan maintains, "The excellence of Sheridan's comic characterizations is that his types are handled with such a verve, freshness, and panache that they reinvigorate their stockiness" (276).

Northrop Frye, outlining and discussing the elements of New Comedy in his essay "The Argument of Comedy," states that "New Comedy unfolds from what may be described as a comic Oedipus situation. Its main theme is the successful effort of a young man to outwit an opponent and possess the girl of his choice. The opponent is usually the father" (162). Sheridan uses

this theme but gives it a twist; the main plot action of *The Rivals* is, of course, Jack Absolute's romantic pursuit of Lydia Languish, and Jack's father does express an interest in Lydia. After Jack inquires about the appearance of Lydia Languish, the bride his father has chosen for him, Sir Anthony exclaims, "Odd's life! I've a great mind to marry the girl myself!" (3.1. p. 47). And he later threatens that if Jack doesn't court Lydia, he will court her himself (3.1. p. 48). Sir Anthony's rivalry is, however, both insignificant and insincere.

Bob Acres and Sir Lucius O'Trigger, both of whom challenge Absolute to a duel over Lydia, might be considered rivals, but neither of them really stands a chance of winning her. Lydia says of Bob Acres in 1.2, "That odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day; so that I protest I shall be teased out of all spirits!" (p. 13),² and she is under the impression that O'Trigger is courting her Aunt, Mrs. Malaprop. But in a very real sense, Captain Absolute is his own opponent; he disguises himself as Ensign Beverley in order to win Lydia's heart, because the rebellious lady refuses to marry anyone who might be considered eligible. Jack accurately declares:

Though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet I am by no means certain that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reversion of a good fortune on my side. (2.1. p. 25)

Another element of this situation, Northrop Frye notes, is that "The girl is usually a slave or courtesan, and the plot turns on a *cognitio* or discovery of birth which makes her marriageable" (162). A parallel though reverse situation exists in *The Rivals*. Jack disguises himself as Ensign Beverley, a man of low birth and no fortune, and he is forced to reveal his true

"marriageable" identity in 4.2. (p. 76). This revelation does not, however, have the conventional results; the discovery that Jack is "an accessible object of desire" does *not* follow "the regular wish-fulfillment pattern" (Frye 162-3). Lydia is determined to find an unsuitable mate and outrage her aunt. Her response to this "*cognitio*" is, "So, while I fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them all--behold! my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation" (4.2. p. 79). In short, Jack is no longer desirable.

Sheridan has revised the conventional situation by placing the hero rather than the heroine in the "unmarriageable" position, and by informing the audience from the first scene of Jack's disguise and his true identity. The scenario is further adjusted by making Jack's eligibility altogether unattractive to Lydia. Frye explains that the original situation, in which the desired woman is revealed to be an heiress and/or high-born, "is precisely the feature that trained New Comedy audiences tire of most quickly" (163). Sheridan, undoubtedly recognizing that his audience was well versed in the elements of New Comedy, reinvigorated this comic convention by giving it several twists, making it more palatable for those who would watch the play.

The resolution of *The Rivals* remains true to the conventions of New Comedy. Frye indicates that "The normal comic resolution is the surrender of the *senex* [opponent] to the hero, never the reverse" (163), and this is exactly what happens in *The Rivals*. Lydia overcomes her superficial preference for poor, ineligible men and realizes that she truly loves Captain Absolute (thus eliminating the nonexistent Ensign Beverley as an opponent), and

Acres easily and Sir Lucius reluctantly abandon the quest for Lydia's hand.

According to Frye, "In all good New Comedy there is a social as well as an individual theme which must be sought in the general atmosphere of reconciliation that makes the final marriage possible" (164). The main theme which runs through *The Rivals* is the inadequate and unrealistic nature of sentimental love and its melodramatic conventions. By the end of the play, the characters have had to abandon their unreasonable (and often neurotic) romantic ideals, and it is this which makes possible the joining of the two couples in marriage and the uniting of the society in celebration.

Lydia, we find in 1.2. (pp. 11-12), is a reader of sentimental and romantic novels, including *The Reward of Constancy*, *The Fatal Connection*, *The Mistakes of the Heart*, *The Tears of Sensibility*, and *The Sentimental Journey*. She unrealistically expects her life to read like one of her romantic novels, and she is sorely disappointed. Lydia exclaims that she had

projected one of the most sentimental elopements!--so becoming a disguise!--so amiable a ladder of ropes!--Conscious moon--four horses--Scotch parson--with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop--and such paragraphs in the newspapers!--Oh, I shall die with disappointment. (5.1. p. 93)

In her efforts to avoid becoming the victim of a loveless, arranged marriage (or, as she puts it in 5.1. [p. 93], being "made a mere Smithfield bargain of"), she is determined to marry someone without a position or a penny. That she could possibly fall in love with a marriageable man is absolutely inconceivable to her. It is not until 5.1. (pp. 95-6), when Absolute's servant Fag rushes in with the news that his master is to fight a duel, that she realizes

that she does, in fact, love the horribly eligible Captain Absolute and that her romantic dreams were not only nonsensical but misleading. As Allison, Carr, and Eastman write in their introduction to *The Rivals*,

Among the characters who err in their romantic relationships, Lydia Languish is deficient in both sense and feeling; until the last act she is more enamored of her own role as romantic lover than she is in love with Absolute. Faulkland, too, is more concerned with himself than with his affianced. (406)

Faulkland is obsessed with the outward signs of romantic love; his preoccupation with testing the love of Julia, his betrothed, is rather neurotic, and his expectations of her behavior are quite unreasonable. Early in 2.1 Faulkland expresses concern for Julia's health, because she has, he assumes, been pining away in his absence, and he indicates that he "would be entirely content" if he was assured "that Julia were well and in spirits" (p. 27). He is outraged, however, when he hears from Bob Acres that Julia has been happy while he was parted from her. He fumes in 2.1, "O, by my soul! there is an innate levity in woman that nothing can overcome.--What! happy, and I away!" (p. 29) and "You see she has been all mirth and song--not a thought of me!" (p. 30).

Faulkland has, as Jack confirms, "almost fretted [himself] ill" (p. 28) and has been "unfit for company" (p. 26). Faulkland is, as Jack puts it, "angry with [his] mistress for not having been sick" (p. 29), and for not following his ridiculous romantic paradigm. His definition of being in love, of being a romantic lover, is carrying "everywhere with me such a confounded farrago of doubts, fears, hopes, wishes, and all the flimsy furniture of a country miss's brain" (p. 26).

When Faulkland confronts Julia with her "levity," she reassures him, "I never can be happy in your absence. If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth" (3.2. p. 49-50). He is in no way mollified by Julia's reasonable answer, but immediately tries to find fault with her love in some other way. He suspects that Julia loves him simply for his personality or appearance, and in response to Julia's frustrated query, "For what quality must I love you?", he replies:

For no quality! To regard me for any quality of mind or understanding were only to esteem me. And for person--I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation there for any part of your affection. (3.2 p. 50)

He also has an unjustified fear that Julia loves him out of a sense of duty, and he says, "Women are not used to weigh and separate the motives of their affections: the cold dictates of prudence, gratitude, or filial duty, may sometimes be mistaken for the pleadings of the heart" (3.2. p. 51). And so he continually tests the sincerity of Julia's love until she finally tells him that he must either rid himself of this destructive obsession, or she must live forever apart from (though always faithful to) him. She says,

I now see it is not in your nature to be content or confident in love. With this conviction--I will never be yours.... I will not furnish you with a licensed power to keep alive an incorrigible fault at the expense of one who never would contend with you. (5.1. p. 91)

It is at this point that Faulkland recognizes his error and realizes that Julia's love is real. He laments the loss of this love, and after he is reconciled with Julia, he

declares that "by her gentleness and candour, [Julia] reformed the unhappy temper of one who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have adored" (5.3. p. 109). His neurosis has been overcome, and their relationship has become much more healthy.

At the point of resolution in New Comedy (and in *The Rivals*), "All the right-thinking people come over to his [the hero's] side" and "The regular expression of this [social integration] is a festival, whether a marriage, a dance, or a feast" (Frye 164). After the unfought duels, all the confusion of the play is untangled; Lydia and Faulkland reform their "unhappy tempers," Acres discovers that his rival Ensign Beverley is in fact his close friend Absolute, and Sir Lucius learns that he has been courting Mrs. Malaprop rather than her niece. They adjust to these revelations remarkably well. Acres good-naturedly gives up whatever claim he had to Lydia (5.3. p. 107), and Sir Lucius exclaims, "Come, now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person, but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better" (p. 109). There is no negative response to Bob Acres's and Sir Anthony's suggestion that they meet at Bath's New Rooms to celebrate the lovers' upcoming marriages. In short, the characters (especially Lydia and Faulkland) have learned something about themselves, and they have been, as Northrop Frye suggests, delivered "from moral bondage" (164).

The characters in the play who obstruct the movement of the comedy toward this social integration--those who suffer from a type of moral bondage (i.e. Lydia, Faulkland, Mrs. Malaprop and Sir Anthony)--conform to traditional stage types.

Northrop Frye indicates that "These are always people ... who are helplessly driven by ruling passions, neurotic compulsions, social rituals, and selfishness" (164).³

Lydia, as I have shown above, is ruled by an unrealistic passion for socially and financially impoverished young men, and Faulkland, as I have demonstrated, is a victim of a neurotic compulsion to test and question Julia's love. Mrs. Malaprop and Sir Anthony are driven primarily by social rituals; their actions are informed by their determination to marry off Lydia and Jack respectably, and they have no regard for the romantic inclinations of the young couple. Mrs. Malaprop tells Lydia that the institution of marriage is more important than affection between husband and wife: "What business have you, miss, with *preference* and *aversion*! They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that as both always wear off, 'tis safest in matrimony to begin with a little *aversion*" (1.2. pp. 17-18).

Mrs. Malaprop also fits the stock character of the snob; her "learning" barely qualifies as surface knowledge, as is shown by her "Malapropisms." As Ensign Beverley tactlessly points out in a letter to Lydia, Mrs. Malaprop is possessed by a "ridiculous vanity which makes her dress up her coarse features and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand" (3.3. p. 55).⁴

Sir Anthony also believes that the financial and social implications of marriage supersede the emotional ones, and he demands that his son marry the woman of his (Sir Anthony's) choice. He approaches Jack with "a little matter of business" which has to do with "a noble independence" and "a large estate" (2.1. p. 35), and he fails to mention until the last possible moment that the money and land are "saddled with a wife" (p. 36).

Sir Anthony is something of a hypocrite (another stock character) in his treatment of his son. Sir Anthony married for love, yet is not willing to let his son do the same. He criticizes Jack for behaving exactly as he behaved when he was young. Jack comments, "What a tender method of giving his opinion in these matters Sir Anthony has! ... I wonder what old wealthy hag it is that he wants to bestow upon me!--Yet he married himself for love! and was in his youth a bold intriguer, and a gay companion!" (2.1. p. 38).

Sheridan borrowed not only from New Comedy for this play but also from the Greek tradition of the grotesque. The use of the grotesque is yet another technique with which Sheridan rejuvenates tired comic motifs. Jack D. Durant shows that Sheridan did in fact draw upon Greek authors for this technique. Durant states that one of Sheridan's poems, written in 1771,

actually a loose translation from the Greek poetaster Aristænetus, presents two deformed prudes, one with a hunched back and the other with a single eye, who earn the speaker's contempt by daring to make judgements against his ladylove while suppressing torrid passions of their own. (13)

Sheridan's use of the grotesque involves manipulating the audience by mixing, in the play, images and actions of beauty and ugliness, thereby combining two disparate emotional responses (Durant 14). Durant finds a number of comic descriptions in *The Rivals* which qualify as grotesque, including Faulkland's wish that he were deformed so he could be sure Julia didn't love him for his appearance (3.2 p. 50), Mrs. Malaprop's misuse (yet correct pronunciation) of words, and Sir Anthony's insistence that Jack's wife

shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder! she shall be as crooked as the Crescent; her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's Museum; she shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew--she shall be all this, sirrah!--yet I will make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night to write sonnets on her beauty. (2.1. p. 37)

The thought of Jack composing sonnets to the beauty of a hideous monster clearly confuses (and complicates) the traditional ideas of what is beautiful and what is ugly. Once again, Sheridan has made a convention (or, in this case, a conventional idea) more complex and more interesting by confronting the audience's expectations and giving the traditions a slight twist.

When critics assert that Sheridan's reliance upon (and borrowing from) New and Restoration Comedy indicates a lack of creativity and imagination, they fail to recognize that Sheridan is manipulating these traditional comic situations and characters for his own unique ends. Marvin Mudrick, as John Loftis indicates in *Sheridan and the Drama of Georgian England*, maintains that "Sheridan's comedies are damaged by the presence in them of stock characters, character-relationships, and subjects taken over from earlier drama." Loftis, however, realizes that "some of Sheridan's best scenes succeed by reason of exaggeration to the point of burlesque of situations taken from Restoration comedy" (4). Sheridan has an extraordinary genius for surprising his audience at the same time that he satisfies their expectations. He was not merely a hack-writer who imitated New and Restoration comedy; rather, he was an intelligent dramatist who gave new life and a new complexity to simpler comic forms.

NOTES

¹Northrop Frye indicates that "The conventions of New Comedy are the conventions of Jonson and Moliere, and *a fortiori* of the English Restoration" (164) and that "It is only in Jonson and the Restoration writers that English comedy can be called a form of New Comedy (168).

²Robert Hogan points out that "Bob Acres and Lydia are never brought together for a confrontation" (274), and the importance of Acres is therefore decreased.

³Frye specifies, "The miser, the hypochondriac, the hypocrite, the pedant, the snob: these are humors, people who do not fully know what they are doing, who are slaves to a predictable self-imposed pattern of behavior" (164).

⁴Mrs. Malaprop's response to this insult affirms Jack/Beverley's accusation. She exclaims, "Sure, if I reprehend anything in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs!" (3.3. p. 55).

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III. HER STORY

Robyn Furse

Ritual

A squirming worm, arms pressed to chest like Tut,
Twisting and tearing like tortured cats suspended by strings,
I cling tenaciously to tomorrow.
Pinched to the point of popping,
Sore muscles strain to the bone;
Feet kick uselessly at yesterday, yearning
For the beam to bathe in.
Gasping, I burst forth splashing and spitting
Like water balloons on summer's sidewalk.
My lungs burn as longing bites my tongue and teeth.
Eyes filmed, squint, blink, and stare at,
Feet planted firmly on the flat floor,
Me, naked, wet, and green as a tree frog,
And announce: "It's a woman!"

Julie Hart

When the Curtains Close

It was her third show of the night, her sixteenth of the week, but watching her dancing in the spotlight up on the stage, you felt as if she were doing it for the very first time. She had a certain mystique about her with her long black hair and seductive blue eyes that seemed to stare right through you. They called her the "Mistress of Magic," and at the end of the hour, she had seduced the deepest corner of your mind and left you in a trance. She made ladies float, tigers appear, and elephants disappear right before your eyes.

For Brigitte's final illusion she was wearing a leopard skin bikini, black net hose, and thigh high boots covered with rhinestones. The stage was lit up with torches, and the jungle music pounded deep in the hearts of the audience, growing louder and louder. She let the beat of the mambo drum move her body barbarically, and her hair flew in the air as she flung her head from side to side. She let out a scream, and with one crack of her whip, the cage once occupied by two showgirls now restrained the lunges of a powerful, nine hundred pound Chinese lion. The lion's roar echoed through the showroom as his paws lunged through the bars to strike her. She lunged back at him, chasing him around the cage with the same fire in her eyes as the lion had in his. The spellbound audience leaped to their feet as she ran to the front of the stage to say goodnight. She blew a kiss to the crowd as they cheered for more. She waved to them and smiled the way a nine-year-old boy smiles when he hits his first home run And then the curtains closed.

She made her way to the dressing room, and before the sweat dripping from her chest had a chance to evaporate, she had peeled off her eyelashes and hung her wig to dry. She got out of her exotic costume and into her torn Levis covered with sawdust from the cats. Her rhinestone boots were quickly replaced with her tattered Keds. With a sigh, she pulled her drenched hair back and washed off her makeup (along with the magic that went with it). She gathered up the makeup scattered all over the counter and stuffed her toothbrush and crackers in her duffle bag in exchange for the cotton-balls for her latest injuries. She dabbed alcohol on her cuts as she replayed the show in her mind, mumbling to herself in disgust about everything that had gone wrong. All she could do was shake her head. Bobby, the stage-hand, brought her a glass of cranberry juice and three aspirins as if they were part of his nightly routine. She rummaged through her bag, pulled out two wadded dollars, and thanked him.

By the time she made it out of her dressing room, the others had already gone (as usual). She took three raw chickens from the cooler and made her way to the dark stage to feed Alex, Suma, and Pasha. She left the chickens in the hall and wandered over to the cats on the other side of the stage, stopping first at Pasha's cage. She kissed the tiger on her nose through the bars, opened up the cage, and lifted herself up to sit on the edge. She rubbed Pasha's neck with both hands and talked to her with a firm but loving voice. "Good girl, good girl," she said over and over, as the tiger rubbed up against her affectionately. Suma, the black panther, paced nervously from one side of her cage to the other, staring intensely at Pasha with her piercing green eyes. Suma was in heat, so she acted very hostile

towards all females (humans and animals alike). Alex, the lion, watched anxiously. Brigitte went back for the chickens. She threw one chicken on top of each cage and jumped back, watching their animal instincts take over. The feeding frenzy began as all three cats snarled and hissed, pulling the fat chickens through the narrow bars with their teeth. You could hear the bones crunching as they tore the chickens apart and devoured their dinners instantly. Once they had finished eating, she pushed the water trays into their cages, being careful not to get too close.

Once the cats were attended to, she grabbed her tool box and replaced the wheel that had fallen off the levitation couch and the door that had been knocked off the mismatched cabinet during the last show. She touched up the bird cages with black spray paint and tore off a corner of the cue sheet at the side of the stage to make a list of the supplies she would need from the hardware store for tomorrow's repairs.

By now it was 2:30 in the morning; she had her duffle bag in one arm and Sheeba, her three-week-old Bengal tiger, in the other as she made her way to the back stage door. It was a windy night, and she could barely see to get to her motel room across the parking lot. Sheeba was frantically scratching to get down as Brigitte stood blowing in the wind in search of her room key. She turned the key, and the wind flung open the door to the rundown motel room decorated in brown. It had brown carpet, brown curtains, brown chairs and even a brown bedspread. "I hate brown," she mumbled as she walked into the uninviting room. She dropped Sheeba, put her Beatles tape in the ghetto blaster, and turned the T.V. on with the volume all the way down. Sheeba followed close behind her as she pinned the cur-

tains closed and propped the chair up against the door. She sprayed Lysol in all of the rooms and lit a cinnamon incense, attempting to get rid of the all-too-familiar smell of the motel room.

She washed out the costumes and hung them over the chair to dry while Sheeba nipped at her ankles, begging her to play. She found the crackers in her bag and munched on them while she made Sheeba's bottle and heated up the leftover pizza she had gotten two nights before. She kicked off her shoes and picked up the phone. Realizing the time, she hung it back up. Next to the phone were the wilted flowers a man from the audience had given her three nights before and a letter from Anthony, a man she had met in the last town. She laughed aloud, knowing that she would never see either of them again. She patiently untangled Sheeba from the costumes she had hung to dry and threw them in the chair to be mended tomorrow. She fed Sheeba her bottle, took two bites of pizza, slipped out of her Levis and into bed. She curled up with Sheeba, who was sucking on her nose, turned her Beatles tape over, and cried herself to sleep ... again.

Dawn Houghton

Sleeping

To sleep, I think of you,
Curl into a cursive "L,"
The ash color of the room, sheets wavelike,
My mouth pushed up at the pillow.
It is a closing that makes me feel this way;
You are not here, so I shut my eyes.

Sometimes, I think of a friend--
A loyal woman, tall and lanky,
Who awoke the moment she heard music,
Leapt from her bed as a clunky ballerina,
Struggled into a thick brown robe,
Then, poised, slipped first to the bathroom.

Sleeping, for me, has always been my pleasure,
A process of slow resentment to awake,
My body form etched in the sheets, sideways, sculpted there,
My hair splayed back away from my neck.
As for my friend, she slept back down
And awoke back down,
With her arms folded
Hands pressing her ribs, ready--

Unlike my mother, who rolled from the bed
And was immediately alert because of children
Or the dryer buzz,
Now sleeps deeply--
Did not hear the cats crying to get in the last cold night,
And sleeps bed to tummy
With her arms stemmed between her breasts.

And you, my dear, the one I think of,
You sleep so softly when you are here
As if the outside is coming in,
Aware of all the minutes on the clock,
Aware of the quiet and the air,
And you navigate us, telling me to rest.
We then close together, or me going before you,
Quiet as the cover of a new blue book.

Jaylynn Lewis

The \$150 Birthday Present

My husband asked me this morning
over Kix and bananas, "What do you want
for your birthday? It's tomorrow, you
know. How about a new toilet seat?"
(Ha! A private joke--one of my neighbors
received such a gift on her fortieth.)

"Actually, I would like a new toilet
brush."

"You've got to be kidding! Why do you
need *that*?"

"The old one leaves black scratch
marks inside the rim, and all the bristles
are flattened, and it won't fit down the
hole I always have to put my hand in
there to stop the creep of orange hard
water stains." Then I carefully explained
how the "new" kind of brushes were
equipped with the latest in plastic aper-
tures, rotating heads, and above all--they
would fit down the hole.

My husband made no comment. Clear-
ly, my extensive knowledge of bowl
brushes was uninteresting to him.

"Anyway, I don't want anything expen-
sive," I continued. "Besides, I bought a
ticket to the Ballet West's *Cinderella*
tonight, and I intend to go."

He looked up at me, thinking he should
be getting his "dander up" about now, but
decided it was ridiculous.

"You know I wanted you to come," I pla-
cated, "but your ticket would've cost fif-
teen dollars; mine cost only three. Since
we are now unemployed," I reasoned, "that
kind of expense is too extravagant."

He looked at me and smiled a little too
quickly, I thought.

"My birthday is tomorrow," I reminded.

"I'm sorry, Sweetheart, but I will be
gone deer hunting in Idaho tomorrow. I
won't be here for your big day."

Never mind that my birthday is only
one day; never mind that his friend had to
go on this particular day because he had
"previous commitments." Never mind ...
oh ... it didn't matter.

As the day wore on, I think he realized
this was his last chance to take part in my
"personal holiday," so he told me, "When I
get home this afternoon, I'll have a
surprise--your birthday present."

Two hours later, I heard the gravel in
the driveway crunch strangely. I heard a
motor that sounded much larger than our
tiny Corolla compact. My husband came
rushing in and grabbed my hand, "Come
and see ..." He ushered me out to a new
Bronco--Dahle's Dealership stamped all
over the plates in mocking, glaring green
and white.

I clamped my teeth and lips tightly
together as I climbed into the "thing." I
tried to focus on my children waiting ex-
pectantly behind me. "Wow, there's sure
lots of room in here." I tried to speak with
enthusiasm, but my voice sounded flat.

We took a drive. At times my tears
threatened to spout off, like usual, in a
crisis. I choked them down by focusing on
the window. I saw the sun filtering
through November clouds, weakly, dimly.
I noticed the fallow fields, turned and wait-
ing for the long, frigid winter. I saw the fal-
len leaves in gutters, dry and crisp.

Then I noticed the sticker still in the
window and the temporary dealer's license
plates lying on the floor at my feet. Oh, I
see ... it was a harmless trick. What a
wonderful birthday surprise, I thought. I
smiled one of those "half-things" that came
so readily to my lips lately. We drove the
Bronco back to the lot.

Over our Red Baron Frozen Pizza, the next abscess broke out. "So how much did the Idaho deer license cost?"

"Not much."

"How much?"

"Oh ... \$75 plus a little."

"How much. Tell me NOW!"

"Uh ... \$350 ... well ... actually \$150."

(That was another clever but common trick. I was now supposed to feel happy since it wasn't \$350. In essence, I just earned \$200--at least that's what he usually said in reply.)

My lips were now in that familiar tight, thin line, and the wrinkles between my eyes stood out in sheer anger. I left the room. Then I returned. "You know, that would've bought a lot of Christmas I just want you to know that I'm very angry with you." I tried to calm my voice; I hadn't sat through a two-hour lecture on communication last week for nothing! "Well, I think you should know ... I'm very angry," I repeated ineffectively. My brain gears always take a while to kick in. "Oh, and by the way, I guess you owe me a \$150 birthday present." I turned and headed triumphantly out the door. To hell with communication. I was going to the ballet--on my own.

Martha Millett

I Want To

Plant a tree, write a book,
Drink the wine, pick the fruit,
Open the cage, watch the sky,
Fly with the birds, scare the past,
Sow my garden, smell the wood,
Burn the fire, move the vase,
Feel the rain, cut my roots,

Run wild, untie my shoes,
Free my passions, drop the chains,
Hear the bells, laugh with a child,
Play again, destroy the files,

Walk over rainbows, stop the wind,
Steal the candle, conquer the sea,
Teach the teacher, learn from life,
Defeat my lover, search for seeds,
Clean the air, look at the sun,
Invent more colors, cure my eyes,
Tempt the poet, distress his rhymes,

Show my fears, accept the dark,
Shut the Bible, discover the light,
Climb a mountain, touch a star,
Sleep forever, ignore the lamp,
Hug my children and let them go,
Sing to their children, share my poems,
Reach the train, calm my thirst,
Believe in me, have a friend,
Melt the guilt, cope with the pain,
Wash my pride, cry again,
Wait for Him, break the walls,
Loose my dreams, squeeze my soul.

But
To love and be loved
Unconditionally
Is all I want.

Dawn Houghton

The Cleaning

Matt, who's the only boy in the family, sits on the top bunk and plays with his Adventure People. Adventure People are like big army men. He's supposed to be cleaning the room, especially the closet.

It is May. Our two dogs, Freckles and Snoopy, are chained to the awning poles in the side yard.

My mother will make all the beds. That's her specialty. She does hospital corners. She says if you make the bed, it makes the whole room look clean. Actually, she makes the beds because she's fertile. What this means is if a bed is unmade and she's feeling frisky, she'll probably conceive. At this point, however, that's impossible, since there's no man in the house anymore. The jars with the tight lids are now opened by the man next door.

My two youngest sisters are Jill and Christy. They are fifteen months apart. Jill is messy. Christy is clean. Christy, even though she is the youngest, cleans better than anyone in the family. After she scours the sink, she takes tissue and shines the faucet. She also makes diamond shapes in the rug with the carpet sweeper.

My niche is I clean junk drawers out well. I am considered the detail person. When I clean, no one can tell. I'll sew a ruffle back on a throw pillow or dust a table underneath where the television was.

Jill pretends she is putting the magazines in a neat stack. What she's really doing is reading the magazines. She reads everything. She can tell within the first two pages of a romance novel which of the four formulas is being used.

Our mom works at Arctic Circle--it's a hamburger place. She borrowed some cleaning supplies from them for the weekend. She's had better jobs before, like working for an optometrist and for the legal aide office, but this hamburger place is just a mile away. She rides the neighbor's bike to work.

Our single-wide trailer is small, but we have many things, so it looks messy all the time. The outside is white with black trim and two black triangles on the front. There are two bedrooms, one in the back and one in the front. Matt will always say that he dibs the front bedroom for cleaning. I'll get stuck with the kitchen because I'm the oldest and my mom doesn't clean very well.

Christy is spraying Pledge over everything that looks like wood. She's using a pair of my mother's old pantyhose so she can achieve a buffed, shiny look.

Matt's still on the top bunk. Whenever we go in the room, he'll flinch, then pretend to be wiping the wall next to his bed. My mom lets him do this because he's the only male we've got right now.

Finally, I take Matt's Adventure People and hide them under the couch cushion. I tell him he can either straighten the shoes and toys in the closet or help me organize the silverware drawer. He doesn't say anything; he just climbs down the bunk bed ladder, goes into the closet and slides the door closed behind him.

I give Jill the Windex and tell her to clean the windows and the bar counter that separates the kitchen and living room. Jill looks at me blankly, but she's willing.

Jill agrees with everything I say. If I say Matt's a baby, she says Matt's a baby, too. Usually, though, when we play games, the teams are Matt and Jill against Christy

and me, so it's youngest and oldest versus the two middles.

My mom's in the bathroom. She's wiping down the washer and dryer with a sponge. She wipes them down like some teachers erase chalkboards, leaving little annoying spots behind.

Christy is filling a bucket with warm water and adding Mr. Clean. We don't have a mop, so she's using an old pillowcase. She washes the floors in the kitchen and bathroom. She makes circles as she washes. She wrings the pillowcase and does more circles.

Once, when Matt, Jill and Christy were all toddlers, I cleaned and organized the whole front bedroom and played "Scary Monster" at the same time. My mom was reading my science book like she reads all of our textbooks. She's intelligent that way. She plays the piano and reads our books. But she doesn't know how to play "Scary Monster" or cook or clean.

I have just started to clean out the refrigerator. I am scrubbing the goo off the sides of the condiment bottles and cleaning sticky stuff off the racks. My next step will be to throw away all the leftovers.

Our dad is eight years younger than our mom. His moustache is a bristly brown. He likes modern music for a dad, like STEPPENWOLF and THE ROLLING STONES. Once he asked me whom I liked better, him or my mom. I said I liked them both the same. He said that was a good answer.

My dad's mom, Grandma Holt, is from the South. She is very clean. She says, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness." Have you ever heard that saying? We pretend we haven't.

Christy is now wiping down the wall-papered walls. She's also carefully cleaning off the fingerprint smudges on the light switches.

It's 1:35 p.m., and our dad will arrive at 3:00 p.m. My mom says she's going to try and throw together some "tasty potato salad" if we'll make some sandwiches. She says she'll also make snicker doodles as a dessert. We beg her to order pizza, but she says her potato salad is our dad's favorite and that he loved snicker doodles when he was a boy. We all make faces.

Christy tells my mom we need to clean the yard. My mom decides that the four of us should clean the yard while she does the meal.

Matt, Jill, Christy and I all go outside. Freckles and Snoopy are twisting around, excited that we're outside. They think we've come out to play with them. Since Matt never cleaned the closet in the front bedroom, we make him clean the dog poops in the yard. It's Jill's job to sweep the patio and Christy's to wipe down the outside of the trailer, especially the front door. My job is to pull the dandelions out of the grass.

After Matt cleans up a few piles, he gets restless and starts picking the small orange berries off the bushes that line the back end of the trailer. He makes bomb sounds, "Ka-boom," then sprays us with the tiny, rubber-like bullets. Jill, Christy and I tackle Matt and rub dandelion yellow all over his neck and cheeks. We tell him that means he's girl crazy. Matt gives Jill an arm twister and Christy a Vulcan neck pinch while I'm gathering more dandelions to rub on him. Freckles and Snoopy are barking and wagging their tails. Matt calls us all "sluts" because that's the worst word he knows. I run after him, and when I'm just ready to grab him, he says, "Give, give," meaning he gives up. He's afraid of me. He says since I'm a girl, he'll be able to beat me up in two years. I tell him he'll never be able to beat me up.

It's almost 2:30 p.m. now. We still need to put on our nice clothes. Matt is going to wear some navy blue J.C. Penney dress pants, a short sleeve white shirt, white socks and Buster Brown shoes. Jill and Christy will wear matching sun dresses, only Jill's is blue and Christy's is red; the print is sailboats. I'm going to wear my yellow culottes and vest with a plaid button-down blouse underneath. Our mom looks pretty; she's wearing a pink and white striped blouse, pink slacks and white sandals. She has her reddish-blond hair combed straight, and she has bangs on her forehead. She looks young.

Matt's face is still yellowish from the dandelions. Christy has her birthstone necklace and ring on that our dad gave to her. Her hair is pulled back in smooth blonde streaks and bound with a red rubber band. Jill is wearing moccasins, and her knees are dirty.

At five minutes to three, Christy and I run around doing last minute touches. We spray Lysol and slap the couch cushions outside. The Adventure People are revealed on the cushionless couch. Matt grabs them and puts them in his pockets. Christy is wiping down the phone when it rings. It's our dad. He says, "Hi, baby girl," to her. She says "Hi" back. He asks her what she's doing, and she answers, "Waiting for you, dad. When you comin'?" "Sweetheart," he says, "it's a long story. Can I speak to your brother?" Christy squeaks out Matt's name, then runs to the back bedroom. We just hear Matt say, "Cleaning," "Yeah" and "Okay," and then he hangs up.

Mom's still in the kitchen. We know what she'll say when she hears. She'll nod her head and say, "He's not worth it." and "Why do I always fool myself?" Instead, when we actually do tell her, she stirs the

potato salad vigorously and doesn't say anything.

Jill is leaning against the couch with her dress pulled over her knees. She is rocking back and forth and making popping sounds with her mouth. Matt has his hands in his full pockets. His thumbs are sticking out. I say, "Let's get Christy and go to the playground and play tetherball."

In the back bedroom, Christy says she doesn't want to go. She is making paper dolls and won't look up at us. We know she won't go. Matt says, "Race ya," and Matt, Jill and I all run for the playground, leaving our mom and Christy behind in the clean trailer.

Sonya Miles

Monotony

There's someone knocking at my window,
Twenty-five knocks or more.
Same old person, same old way,
Like all the times before.
You'd think the annoyance from the scratch in the record,
Over and over again,
Would entice him to change or mend the sound
And let a new one begin.

I thought he was "creative."
Did this suddenly cease?
Because when he bangs at my window,
Numbers just increase.
I hate to be awakened,
Especially for so stupid a cause ...
He allows me to help him suffer
From his sleepless symptom withdrawals.

Can I not have a rose?
Maybe a dozen would do.
To somewhat compensate myself
For this terrible, constant abuse.
Well, now you know, if you wondered,
Why my bed is in the hall.
I had to move it from the window
To in between the walls.

Martha Millett

Where's Home

When I left my country, I felt like I vanished from the face of the earth. Somehow, the whole universe was dying in front of me. I saw the shadows of my life disappear without a trace, and I had no memories.

I will never forget that early morning. It was raining. The airport seemed gloomy and sad, just like my soul. I buried my head in my hands and cried. I refused to see what I was doing when the airplane took off. I left my whole life behind, just like a book with no end.

The smell of the rain filled forever the empty cup of my memories, and when the rain softly dies on the ground, everything stops for me as it did long ago on that rainy day. But that morning I cried like the rain, and today I keep on dying on a ground that doesn't belong to me.

Moving to another place isn't easy. We have to conquer changes and find new possibilities, but moving to another country is just like dying because you have to become a whole different person in order to survive.

That's what happened to me. From wind and salt, waters and rainbows, fire and storms, I arrived in the strange land where people had forgotten how to touch without embarrassment. I was just like a fragile bell full of sounds and vibrations. People didn't like that, and I let them steal my music. After that, I couldn't laugh or cry without permission. I soon learned that silence and honesty were enemies. I had to survive, and I wounded myself until I became someone else.

For ten long years I walked without sandals, trying to follow the wrong footsteps,

and I saw indifferently that, day after day, I had changed. I had no choice. I felt like I was in another dimension, watching someone else wearing my body and just trying to break through the thick glass. But I kept on running until my feet bled and my heart stopped.

I had to race against the wind, knowing that I wouldn't reach the finish line. I had no time to have time. I was trapped inside the tunnel where flowers didn't exist, and rain didn't reach the dry walls. I knew then that I had to find the other end and touch the sun again. I had to break the glass and rescue my soul from the other side. But when I reached out, I felt the whole universe was dying inside me. I didn't know who I was, and a terrible sense of loss and emptiness invaded me. I wondered: Why go back now? Why stay here? Where do I belong? Somehow people and places weren't important anymore. I was different, and I learned to accept that. Time and space were only a "state of mind."

Then I decided to find my music and break the silence. I let my honesty be free of conditions because it doesn't matter where you are, but who you are.

Today, the clouds of my memories keep coming back, but I let them fill my soul. I can't deny myself anymore. The humid and sweet smell of rain brings me back to the other piece of my life, but this time with more joy.

Sometimes I wonder why countries were invented, because they just divide people. We made our own different "home" in one whole universe. I hope someday we can break the walls and, without limitations, will become one.

Chris Pellew

Soul Gazing

There are entire worlds
Within the clear, sky blue of your eyes.
Every time I dare to steal a second's worth of gazing,
I am drawn deep inside.
Lost to myself but consumed by you,
I have tasted starlight.
I have melted into earth
And felt the pure goodness of sand and rock in my hair.
Wanting (I am not whole),
I have merely existed, wondering, waiting
To rediscover that life-giving portion of my soul
Carelessly torn from me and lost
So long ago.

A caress leads me into the encompassing worlds
Of those eyes--
Lured into their depths, I perceive that particle of soul
That can stop the outpouring of my lifeblood.

I drink in the burning sapphire
And taste you one last time.
Then I leave.
Through you I have caught a glimpse
Of what I so desperately need,
But you cannot give it to me.

IV. NATURE'S AGES

Christian Arial

Inside: The Pearl

As a diver's worth
 You are shown pearls,
 Not breaking surface with a spear-thrown lung
 Full of weight-water compression.
 There is timing in the ear,
 Falling at a pace.
 Salt-seasoned eyes
 Must hold focus through thinning green,
 Stabbed by dulled goals,
 Hoping a haze holds form.
 Arms & legs must disappear into instinct,
 Walking under waves, cupped to force liquid into
 Compliance.
 Daily,
 A trial of distance & return,
 An evolving door of envelopes and barriers
 Is advance beyond necessity.
 All calling madness,
 In a cultured world of strung pearls,
 When thin arm flexes
 Cull nothing but unmarketably coarse pearls.

What knowledge,
 To have held the heart in the shell?

Dora Wymer

Stranger

From my seclusion
 I watch life which I am part of,
 Though rejected by.
 Separated by nothingness--an absence
 Of an invisible veil--"empathy,"
 The birds don't see me.
 If they hear my music, they disregard it;
 It doesn't exist to them.
 They are so close I can see the blue
 Iridescence in their raven feathers,
 Their long sharp beaks,
 The sallow indifference in their round,
 Oblivious eyes.
 They are smaller than I,
 But there is a whole flock of them;
 Suddenly, I know how big I am--
 Awkwardly big
 Yet incredibly little.
 If I put out my hand and they noticed me,
 Would they squawk and fly
 Or peck and torture me to bleed
 For my intrusion?

IV. NATURE'S AGES

Brittany Fuller

The Puddle

A thin sheet of glass is warped
But not shattered
By the touch of a bug.
Like a raindrop
On a wet pane of glass, it glides,
Creating ripples across the surface.
Small and fragile,
It moves gracefully,
Mirror image reflected at its feet.
Yellow fuzz and big brown eyes,
The surface shatters;
Contentment fills the young duckling,
And the puddle's surface is smooth
Once again.

Doug Stewart

Desert*

Listened to wind voices
Running down shale paths
So fast, ripping my mind.
Ghost zulu or some amazing sunset
And desert wolf to take my feet,
Pull me into stronger limbs and other
Trails. I, yelling incantations
To stay afloat.

My Bible, those hills. Let me pray there and light candles,
Dance, and each rock, red-sanded, blue-grey,
My altars.

Heard the steeper parts calling,
Leap, fly. From rainwashed cliffs--
Painted clouds rushing through my mind.
Moon and black-footed feather:
The Raven hold my shoulders,
Pull me in. The sun has touched
The tumbleweeds ... flames,
Fire. I, outstretched, find ways
Into sunrise.

*First Place Winner 1992-93 Annie Atkin Tanner Poetry Competition

Deanna Christian

Harvest Moon

A harvest moon
Clings to its
Ebony backdrop
Just beyond
The reach of
My soul,
And a crumb
Of light
Somewhere within
Beats against
The darkness
Of insensitivity,
Fanning its
Luminous flame
Amidst the
Hollow struggle.
And that
Essential light
Prevails,
And only the
Moon and I
Will appreciate
This quiet
Victory,
For he and I
Are united in
A purpose
That spans
Thousands of
Unmarked miles.

Jandi Jones

Desert Storm

Sighing into the deep, dead darkness,
Tears dropping one by one,
A menagerie of glass droplets smashing,
The shards piercing the resisting red
Lakes of loveless sand.

Uncontrolled sobs, screaming at silence,
Pouring down in pounding fists,
A shower of painful abuse that
Leaves the helpless sapling to drown
A mud-red death.

Edwin F. Rogers

The Seasons of Life

As life passes from season to season
To season,
We see a beginning, growth and maturing, fading
And withering, hoping and dreaming,
All part of the cycle everything alive experiences.
One passes through spring, the birth
And beginning,
And on into summer, the period of
Growth and developing,
Then thence into the fall, a maturing
And wilting,
Closing with the promise that, following
The winter of life,
When all alive dies and is gone, there
Can be a new beginning, in
The presence of "The One" who created
The Seasons of Life.

Sonya Miles

Without Compromise

The essence of poise, innocence, delicacy,
A struggling daisy by a trickling stream.

The image is caught, fresh and intriguing,
So different and unusual the trance--excruating.

Bubbling over pebbles, the stream's sound collides,
Singing as sweetly as keys black and white.

This adds to the power of the sight, and you
Break off the daisy that would have survived.

You've stolen the magic, her only abode.
She's yours though, and the moment shows.

Now you've enjoyed, extracted every last drop of life
(It even died once, but water revived).

Suddenly, it's the daisy you despise;
What has happened to your precious prize?

Once so loved, pure, and divine;
But who caused the change in this daisy's life?

The white-velvet petals wither to brown;
Yellow bugs invade until insects surround.

First greedily consumed, now unwanted remains
Are thrown away, discarded, even shamed.

Nature reveals all in intricate ways,
But transcendence has yet to save the daisy.

Martha Millett

Photosynthesis

You taught me in a long, whole quarter
The characteristics and origins of life.
I carried every day that heavy book
Full of unwanted "answers" and "whys."

You explained (very well) that
"All living things and non-living things
Are composed only of chemicals,
Obeying the same chemical
And physical laws,"
That they "metabolize, respond,
Reproduce, evolve,
Beginning with the cell,
The smallest unit of life."

And I tried (I really tried!)
To squeeze my brains out,
Full of "neurons" and dreams,
To respond to scientific methods,
But I couldn't ...

I didn't want to research,
Understand, retain, only function
As a life form, letting my energy flow
Toward the Biosphere of the Universe,
And run wild to the fields,
Feeling the crispy grass under my feet,
Smell flowers, climb trees,
Watch the birds, shake my hair
Fresh of rain and wind.

I don't want to know about
Butterflies' metamorphosis
And leeches growing on rocks
Because I am a single cell
In the human population
That refuses to mutate the imagination,
And, like a plant, I "photosynthesize,"
Using the sunlight to produce
The organic food of my own inspiration.

And that's why, my dear teacher,
All my tests are fifty percent dreams,
The other half only expectations.

P.S. "C-" from your kindness,
"A" for my speculations.

Hannah Gibb

My Face in the Clouds

In a lake-like trance, the deep summer sky
Is resting, listening to the hum of the bees,
Basking in the warmth and life of the sun.
A sigh echoes through the stillness.
The hinting breeze scurries past, whispering
Of what is to come but not loudly enough.
That once-so-happy sky is suddenly struggling to uphold
The heavy, oppressive clouds that rumble out of nothingness
To weigh down upon it.
In its agony and disappointment, it sobs
And floods the earth with tears of humiliation.
But they don't last long.
The clouds have felt their triumph.
Soon the sun will push its way back through.

V. FUTURE HISTORY

Tami Curtis

Dreamland

My lids close, welcoming the darkness,
Opening the mind as it drifts off to dream.
Lighted beauty from the pale moon,
Striking shadowed pictures against the walls,
I see moments of my past flicker;
The present becomes frightening, dark, and lonely,
With my mind fighting back,
Changing the oppression to fluttering snow,
Leaving behind the body weighted to the bed
With the ache and tiredness of the day,
My heart overwhelmed with joy of the spring snow,
Feeling light and pure; carefree, it dances with the fall.
As dawn nears, lids lazily open to a winter wonder,
Reality hits harshly, and dreams have almost come true.

Salvatore Corpaci

Time's Life Poetic

Hear the constant clicking, ticking
As the hands full circle sweep--
About the face that always smiles,
About the face that never weeps,
But looks to all through crystal glass--
With eyes of gilded, golden brass,
While deep within, its heart awirl
Where little cogs and wheels twirl
To keep the hands outside still spinning
With a constant clicking, ticking--
Till life's golden dust is spewed,
And shadows spread like morning's dew
Upon the rusting tarnished brass,
Upon the clouded crystal, cracked--
Upon the hands upon the ground
Which shall no longer spin around
The brass, the glass, the aged face
Whose coiled springs, alas are sprung--
It seems that time is dead, undone.

V. FUTURE HISTORY

Ace G. Pilkington

Science Fiction*

Like autumn's silky burden these seeds disperse:
Our fantasies grow toward earths unknown to us
Where shadow teeth and hands crowd under darkness
And Beowulf--space hero--sleeps with monsters.
Down lanes of light we turn, aching for answers,
But matter melts to dust, then stuff as tenuous
As loves gone past. Such stellar orchards seem deciduous,
Their last leaves between the worlds are twisted dancers.
When asked what we acquired by this voyage,
Except hard breaths of emptiness and a collage
Of sky charts, we find ourselves numb from wonder,
With a human and alien mixture to our manner.
The jarring hum of home tongues makes a distant clamour,
While we recall barred spiral stars like tides in amber.

*Originally published in *The Magazine of Speculative Poetry*, Spring 1992

Natalie Nilsson

Dream Music

Dusty white, the coat of the unicorn
Gleams in the silver moonlight,
His platinum horn glowing,
Lighting the shadowed path ahead
As I ride him
Through the dark, mystic forest
To a waterfall of shimmering pearls,
Sliding gracefully into a pool of glass.
The moon smiles at its reflection,
And stars wink at each other in the mirror.
Rippling and swelling,
The sky is gone from the pond
As my friend drinks of the coolness.
I turn to watch the leaves whispering
Softly to each other in the treetops,
And then they are quiet.
Silence looms, except one small trill--
The beautiful song of a nymph
Quells all others: wandering through the trees,
Her satiny voice fills the air
And sends all to a world of slumber.
I lie down on a bed of delicate petals,
Listening to the sweet melody.
I let my eyelids close,
And as I wake, the enchanted night
Is gone with the unicorn,
And the nymph's song fades with the dawn
Of another morning.

Sonya Miles

Caught

Tick tock, the day has stopped,
And now everyone must think.
Penguins fly in the water,
Birds fly in the air;
What's keeping me from soaring out there?
In dreams, everything's so very nice
On pink tropical ice and yellow fields of dew.
Am I playing this game of life,
Or is this game of life playing me?
Do we back down, hold back, fall
Into the hands of fate?
But there I am dreaming on
That little white picket gate.

**Originally published in The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*

Mette Hestbaek

Friends

Mrs. Burrige is quite certain about what she has to do to get there--wherever there must be. If she doesn't, then she will die. She doesn't want to die. The men are approaching her smiling, just a little longer, one ... two ... almost there. One of the men holds out his hand towards her smiling, almost laughing. She fires twice. The two men are thrown back, both of them with big nasty-looking holes in their chests right where their hearts used to be. She smiles to herself and thinks, "Not bad for a sixty-year-old lady." She opens a box of raisins and sits down by the fire, still smiling to herself. She lies down to go to sleep. Suddenly, she wakes up. She has heard something; she takes the shotgun, not afraid of firing again. She sees a pair of yellow eyes staring at her through the dark. A starved wolf approaches slowly; it has seen the fire, and it smells food. She doesn't stop it when it starts eating the two men. When it is finished, it turns towards her and looks at her, and she hands it some water. It licks her face, and the two of them become friends immediately.

Mrs. Burrige and the wolf continue the next morning. She is happy. She hasn't got to feed it; it'll get its own food from the bodies that are lying all over roads. She doesn't feel sorry for them; they were hit by the disaster, not her. They don't meet anyone. The roads are empty; only the dead bodies are lying there. She doesn't know exactly where they are going, only that they are going there together.

Four men are coming towards them. They are smiling; she smiles back at them

just before she shoots two and the wolf attacks the other two. She smiles at the wolf and pats its head. It is evening. She and the wolf have just eaten. She doesn't see them. They stab her twice in the chest and take her gun. As she sits there leaning against the tree, dying, she is sad and she wonders. She was so sure that she would get there. Is she going there now? Where is there? She smiles for the last time. There is no one to stop it when the wolf starts eating her.

Doug Stewart

Three Times I Saw the Unicorn

I.

I cannot look at anything for long,
Except the sea. Waterbirds skimming
The surface of the tide,
And hidden in each foamy wave,
The head of something graceful.
As a child, I'd play along their lines,
Count each regal horn,
And wonder at the majesty.
Older eyes have no room for such
Gold-maned thunder, but
I could see their frolics,
Guess their strategems. Dolphin
Spins and flying water bordered
Each, I, wide-eyed, would
Clap and laugh with every turn
And dive. To see their
Glistened forms, and hold them
In my sight. This was better
Than dying.

II.

The first time I saw them,
I was lost. Like whited sepulchers
They moved through trees
Music, or wind, it seemed to me.
And I said to myself;
What are these things,
Silk and diamond furies,
Untamed emotion in bodyform?
What tremors gripped me,
I thought I knew happiness then,
Thought I felt rapture.
All of it spread before me
In slowest motion.
Dreamscape, I'm sure,
Or remembrances of death.
Each step they made, flowered

Vines grew, entwining their
More graceful limbs,
Earth paying homage.
The birds sang sweeter then.

III.

Virgin in recline, with creamy
Legs before her, nestled among
Blossoms. Her whitewashed
Face lies innocently
Upon her trembling breast,
And hands grip the white gown
To prove determination.
What? Some sound reaches
In, probing softly, and following,
He enters.
To say, "I lost my breath,"
Is not enough at that form.
In utter silence, he moves to her,
Fluid form, and silver-dappled
Sunlight falls off his eyes.
The hesitance, the eternal
Stare which closes as
He rests within her lap.
Only moments more before the
Honor-thirsty arrive, and with their lances
Stain the maiden's dress in red.

Tyler Webster

Thawing

Captain Williams walked on the yellowed grass of the soon-to-be-latest colony where the King's colors would fly. He tentatively wiggled his toes as the perpetual bone-coldness they held began to bleed slowly away. Day after day in the frozen bowels of his ship had seemingly slowed the circulation to his extremities.

Williams gazed neutrally around at the meadow and murmured something to himself.

"New outpost," he said. He refused to use the tired phrase, "new world," since it certainly would not remain the "new world" for long. Information required large amounts of time to travel from these far outposts to the throne. In this age of rapid growth and expansion, it was entirely possible that by the time this outpost had replaced the previous "newest," yet another world would take its place.

Still, the probable course of events did little to dampen the spirits of the usually stoic captain. Claiming new territory in the name of the King was no small task and no mean honor.

"Consider this," thought the solitary man, "you will at least be in the history books." His statement, directed to himself, started him moving through the calf-high grain. He walked to a high point on the knoll and turned as if to look back the way he had come. His breath came out in forced "huffs," and Williams wondered at his poor physical condition.

"Too much time aboard ship," he thought. His tone was instructive and cap- tainly, even in his innermost thoughts. For the first time in a long time, the Captain

considered the performance of his own personality.

The vision that stretched out before him was a skillful blending of heavenly blue and astral ocean. Williams allowed himself a moment to marvel since the crew that had landed with him was doubtless still hunting for edible fruit and the landing boat would not be expected for at least another thirty minutes. To him the crew's *ad hoc* harvesting was nothing more than impatient indulgence, something good crew members should be above.

Williams's booted feet began to sweat as they soaked up the sun's heat. It was an uncommon sensation, and Williams suffered without regret.

The Captain moved towards the shade of the surrounding trees, thickly green outside of the knoll. After a moment he caught a glimpse of drooping branches, laden with bunches of rich-looking fruit. He reconsidered his previous harsh judgment of the crew's appetite.

He thought for a moment of removing his sweltering boots or perhaps selecting a spot to erect a hammock that he had stored in his tiny closet aboard the ship. The thoughts had no sooner emerged from hiding, however, than a noise skyward and to his rear caused him to turn around.

One of his crew approaching in the landing boat sped up to him, hovered for a moment on the station keeping jets, and slowly settled to the ground.

"What is it, Kelly?" Captain William asked the piloting Bosun.

The petty officer had a pleased expression on his face, quite different from the usual cold stiffness.

"It's the First Officer, sir," grinned Bosun Kelly, "he's requesting, on behalf of the rest of the crew, permission to come ashore."

Captain Williams indulged himself a bit more and allowed an answering grin to take seed and bloom into a full flowered smile.

"Tell him," began Williams, "to bring the King's colors." The Captain paused for a moment as he thought, then added, "And my hammock. I'll hoist them both."

"Aye, sir! On the double!" Bosun Kelly was affected by the Captain's contagious good humor.

As the communication sped away on unseen energy rays, Williams watched the ocean waves break on the distant shore and thought that perhaps more had thawed than just his toes.

Debbie Harmon

Stars

We've worshipped them from afar
Since time began,
And the moon arouses faint memories
Of a past not ours.
But they--
They call to us.

To reach them we crawled out of the muck,
We asked "Why?" and left the dark ages.
We touched the moon but fell back,
Shocked by a mission turned fatal.
Hearts aching, we turned
And, in turning, we lost.

Their radio call still beckons,
And some still look up,
Lured by their siren song
To dream.

Thawing

Ace G. Pilkington

The Robots' Farewell to the Master (For Isaac Asimov)*

For us to know creates a kind of bliss;
We branch from fictions that he strewed as seeds;
Machines he launched to think and grow and dream,
We cannot stop or slow for we are his,
Though since he's gone we know what sorrow is.
We were not meant to feel, to laugh or grieve,
But wanting and his wisdom set us free
To learn the joy and pain of humanness.
Oh we would give a thousand of our lives
If we could find a longer time for him;
Still, he lives in us and in his art,
Immortal as he writes and strives and strides
Across our memories, impossible to dim,
Where his stories warm our minds and form our hearts.

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November 1992

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
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

Staff Members

Christian Arial, from St. George, Utah, is an English major who graduated from Dixie College this year. He served as editor of the *Southern Quill* and the *Honors Quarterly* for 1991-92.

Stephanie Chidester, co-editor from 1988-90, was Dixie College's 1989-90 valedictorian and Southern Utah University's 1991-92 valedictorian. SUU named her Scholar of the Year for 1990-91 and 1991-92. Her essays have appeared in *Encyclopaedia*, *Midsummer Magazine*, *On-Stage Studies*, and *Shakespeare Edition*.

James Custer, from St. George, Utah, attends Dixie College for personal interest.

Robyn Furse is an English major at Dixie College and is currently employed by Zion Natural History Association. She is a member of the Southwestern Actors Company and The Lunatic Moths (a literary club).

Henry Hamilton, from St. George, Utah, is currently a pre-med student at Brigham Young University. While at Dixie College, he was a member of the Honors Council.

Jandi Jones, from Santa Clara, Utah, is a freshman English major at Dixie College. She is this year's Outstanding Freshman Student, recipient of the Kip Bowler Memorial Scholarship and of the AAUW, BPW, and Lady Lions Returning Student Scholarship.

Fallon Memmott, from Hurricane, Utah, is a sophomore education major at Snow College.

Michelle Miles, from St. George, Utah, is the Valedictorian for the Dixie College graduating class of 1993. She is a sophomore chemistry major. She is a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honors Fraternity, and is involved with Delta Psi Omega,

the Drama fraternity at Dixie College. She also was Humanities student of the quarter.

Sonya Miles, from St. George, Utah, is a sophomore communications major at Dixie College. She is currently working at KDL Television.

Martha Millett, from Montevideo, Uruguay, is a sophomore Spanish major at Dixie College.

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Chris Pellew, from Hooper, Utah, is a sophomore English major at Dixie College. She is editor of the *Honors Quarterly*, and a member of the honors council.

Ace G. Pilkington's poems have been published in five countries; his articles on Shakespeare have appeared in *Literature/Film Quarterly*, *The Review of English Studies*, and *The Yearbook of English Studies*. He is the author of *Screening Shakespeare from Richard II to Henry V*, University of Delaware Press, 1991, and he is currently editing a book on the films of Branagh and Zeffirelli for the same publisher. His poem "The Robots' Farewell to the Master (For Isaac Asimov)" won the 1992 Readers' Choice Award for Isaac Asimov's *Science Fiction Magazine*.

Cynthia Stark, from Salt Lake City, Utah, is a sophomore marketing major.

Doug Stewart, from St. George, Utah, is a freshman English major.

Tyler Webster, from St. George, Utah, is a freshman English major. He is a member of the yearbook staff.

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