THE MITRE
1996-1997

BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY
The Mitre
1996-1997
103rd Edition

Editor: Kirsty Robertson

Bishop's University
A literary tradition since 1893
A special word of thanks...

As the 1996-1997 editor of The Mitre, I would like to express my thanks to Dr. Noni Howard for both her poetic and financial contributions. Although Dr. Howard graduated in 1971, she has continued to support Bishop’s University, most particularly through her creative contributions to this book.

Secondly, I would like to recognize Ralph Gustafson, one of Bishop’s most famous alumni, who unfortunately passed away in May 1995. Gustafson, during his productive life, received numerous awards, including the Governor General’s Award for poetry, and membership in the Order of Canada.

I would also like to mention all those people who helped me put The Mitre together, in particular Aaron Doucette and Jeremy Gruman, who were there to sort out numerous computer problems, as well as everyone else who helped to possibly make The Mitre a publication that will be sent to universities across the nation. In addition, I would like to thank The Campus and The Township Sun for the use of their facilities.

Finally I would like to thank all the creative and talented minds who made contributions to this year’s publication. There are some remarkably gifted people at this school, and perhaps some of that is demonstrated here. So sit back and enjoy...

Kirsty Robertson
Editor 1996-1997
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*cover art by Toge Heersink*
*illustrations by Kirsty Robertson*
Sleeping Figure under a Bedsheet in Moonlight

She brings to mind coastlines,
Dissolving gently to a moonlit expanse of sea,

I follow her curves, my hands,
Are clouds caressing the breathing slopes,

The folds of white become
Waves murmuring to a lover,
And the shadows, rises and descents
Swirl into a night dreamscape
Of memory and desire.

Here are the warm bays and coves, welcoming,
Where night birds sleep and ships seek rest,
Here is my sweet haven,
Angels dwell on the higher peaks,
And the starry sky serenades this soul in wonder.

A placid surface, a surreal sea,
Where with this scene grows a sense of calm,
And the knowledge that life is joy
And beauty is found everywhere.
Lines Written in Remembrance

An embrace that once loved me
In silk arm and satin cheek
Has silently slipped between
The depraving crack
Of a memory unaccounted for
And the need to have it back

An embrace that once held me
In diamond eye and crystal smile
Vexed me to vainly decree
The consecrating act
Of a desire unaccounted for
And the want to hold it back.

An embrace that once touched me
In effacing mind and ether heart
Corrupted me with plastic key-
The hollowed past
Of a friend unaccounted for
And the eclipse that holds her back

An embrace that once seized me
In turbid breast and tidal kiss-
Sham liberty turned violent tyranny.
Love's polaroid plagued
By a vision unaccounted for
And the spite that held it back.

An embrace that once forged me
In hollow promise and vacuous excuse
Left me alone to solemnly bleed
Into the debasing black
Of a self unaccounted for
And the need to take me back.

Matthew T. Meanchoff
Lone Wolf

There's a dance that Indians do.
It is for the spirit of the hear.
There are other times when spirits pass
without notice.

A dance, a seance, a rainstorm
All patterns, pitter-patter prayers.
An animal is eye to eye with mortality.
I and I, and by and by, in time we all pass on.

A wolf is trustworthy, a wolf is true.
On the hills surrounding the mine.
One would pass over snow with padded paws.
A lone wolf has genetic disposition to depression.

Survivors file in and dance.
A ritual movement of desire.
Stiff legs from frozen fatigue
And it hasn't rained in months.

There's a hand on a lever.
The rain is pounding on a tine roof.
A wolf finds its final resting place
Beside a disemboweled black bear

And a spirit goes unnoticed...

J.C. Raymond

Dad...

My Dad died in a car crash, June 28th, 1992.
It was Sunday night; one of those relaxing, I'm-gonna-pamper-myself nights, and after climbing out of the bath, around midnight, I was applying a green face mask when I heard a knock on the door.

Soon after, a man's voice drifted up to me mentioning something about a T.V., and then my Mom's. "Oh no, Keira!"

Being naive as I am, I trooped down the stairs, cheerfully, in my P.J.s, green face and all to see what was going on.

There in the living room stood two police officers, and quickly, my often silly mind put two and two together.

"Keira stole a T.V.?!"

Then I saw Mom. She was collapsed in a chair, and my stomach sank.

"What is it?"

As Mom burst into a fit of sobbing, the police woman answered, "Your father died in a car crash today, on the way home from the cottage. He died instantly." I felt my body grow hollow, as further details of the crash were mumbled, somewhere in the background of the space around me.

All of a sudden my green face was horribly inappropriate, my pyjamas too revealing. I felt naked, exposed.

"Dad?..." the question repeated itself over and over in my mind, in my body, as I emptied the dishwasher, cleaned the kitchen, hugged my little sister.

Over and over again, as my numbed legs and mind relentlessly wandered the house, this somehow meaningless word echoed inside of me.

"Dad..."

Annelise Ogle
As Cold As Words

Is there no colder Gift at times
Than a simple Phrase
Well-chosen Words
Sharp as a Surgeon’s Blade
Slicing and creating Deep Wounds
That are slow to Mend
But they Heal nevertheless
And Patience is essential
Because Time may pass slowly
Yet, Cuts never heal completely do they?
If they did, they would leave no Scar

L.G. Mitchell

I Wake, Though Not From A Sleep

I wake, though not from a sleep
Darkness gives way to light
Unfamiliar shapes turn back
into familiar faces,
and psychedelic distractions
revert into their separate colours.

Perplexed eyes, fixed and glossy
stare down on me, through me.
They show concern, but for
who, me or themselves?
Questions asked are left unanswered,
maybe it’s for the best.

Time passes is rearranged order,
jumping from one moment to the next
following the tangled and twisted
patterns of balled up string.
Like a puzzle without pieces,
I remain, unfinished in a world of unsleep.

Scott Doherty
L’Ami blanc

J’ai un ami tout blanc
Qui chante une mélodie triste
Au milieu de mon cœur.

Loin de toutes mes peurs
Il voit dans le noir et insiste
Pour moduler sa complainte éternellement.

Il se gorge de mon sang,
Se gonfle comme un kyste;
Il me rend ange de noirceur.

Si bien que rien ne secoue ma torpeur;
Qu’on le laisse sans risque
De ses chimères lacérer mes flancs.

Olivier Bouffard

Broken Box

I want to heal
To mend his broken box
The one he thinks is
Well and sacred.

I want to smooth
Seal his cuts with love
That’s real and won’t go away
Until he tells me to.

Then I’ll go.

Margaret Stuart
untitled

In the dim, inky light of the morning, coloured purple and perfumed with exdawn still across the horizon, the night hours struggle val-sweetness of light heating tiny roadside aching to open faces to the sun. Even the cool blue-stream is reverent of the day's approach, slowing its usual pace and hushing its song to allow the night its last breath as the day makes her way closer.

The night is pulling away. He searches for deep shadows to hide himself from the day's harsh beauty. The pine trees whisper their softness to the night and welcome him as he slips into their sweet smelling embrace. There are mingled sighs from the boughs of trees as they whisper with the night and settle themselves together, like old lovers.

The sun stretches her graceful arms across the surface of the lake, leaving a trail her wake. The sun stretches out the murky lake's belly. He stretches himself in, rolling and darkened re-splitting into the folds of his darkness around him. He waits patiently, quietly enduring the hours of heart stopping brilliance that the day inflicts upon him. He feels the stab of her rays filtering through the weighty coolness of the water. She is teasing him, trying to reach him - to draw him to her. He curls himself closer and burrows deeper into the lake's haven, burying his face from the day's inquisitive golden fingers, closing his ears to her softly whispered invitation.

She sighs and begins to pull away; her light, and strength, facing. She leaves the sand that hugs pulls herself from collects her from the lake, her bril-tain her crystalline, she begins to the horizon's As the last of her pull away from feels himself uncoil, powerless to resist the temptation to feel the sweet pain of her warmth.

He gathers himself on the surface of the lake for a brief moment, feels the weakening warmth of the day as she kisses him goodbye. He surges upward to capture her and his purple breath mingles with her golden one. They embrace and struggle painfully, hurting as their light and dark touch. Their bittersweet dance throws ribbons of colours across the sky, slashes of vibrant pink and spirited bursts of orange blend into smoky amethyst and desperate blue, leaving a tale of heart-break across the horizon for the world to read.

The day feels night's darkness taking her over and she rages against the inevitable even as her golden frailty fuses with his sombre richness. For a few, brief moments of joy, they paint their story across the sky.

The day has succumbed to the night once again. Sighing softly,
she blends into the night, accepting her destiny. He stretches to cover his domain with the heavy mantle of shadow he wears so effortlessly. Reaching across the darkness of the lake, he cools the fevered brow of the sandy tan beach and settles the crackling of the sunburnt birch trees. The night revels in his glory and strength even as he feels the pain of day, always beyond his grasp. But she soothes him, steadying his deepest edges with the delicacy of her fire.

September

I.
There have been times
There have been warm and troubled times
Times whose grim obscenity
still speaks in low whispers

And I wake amongst the leaves
I recall them with anxiety
And fright
(at their thought I run back
around corners and up the streets
that brought us back here to this autumn
looking back to the nights of daze)

The merriments which make us tremble
The pleasures which yet make us tremble
Their eyes watch us still
Looking for an entry
The skin of arms
The backs of knees
And we turn away in shame
Aware of our nudity
And without a leaf or a twig to spare
2.
There have been times of love
Times of tenderness and frailty
When names meant nothing
When a glance across the room
Was all it took
To send us reeling
How our minds played tricks upon us
How our minds flail still
At mere mention of those rooms
Which hold the lies forevermore
Of those nights of circumstance

3.
No knight of yore or Holy Strangeness
No spring of life could save us now
From the cool night air which floats around us
As we walk along these lamplit streets
To find our homes
To find retreat
From lies in rooms
From times of fear
From which we gain
Utmost serenity
In looking over the shoulder
To find them far behind
And out of breath

At least I have you
To pluck the dry leaves from my hair
To lift me from the mire
Of those warm and troubled times
Whose laughter haunts us still
In lowlit rooms where wonders never cease
In blackened rooms where whispers never cease

Aaron Doucette
She Was Thirty Eight

before she had her first responsible relationship, as she called it.

they were polite to each other civilized. Respectful even. They thanked each other for things and when wrong said I'm sorry.

hardly a raised voice in the nine years not a single knock down drag out which had been such an endearing feature of her other loves.

Love.
that was the word she wanted,
was looking for.
It was as if she had been in a dream these healing years a serene unbroken horizon beyond the cliffs.

the waves, the shipwrecks were beyond the rim of the house perched on bedrock, naturally.

What she really wants on this gray opaque day is a tsunami of the blood the heart rushing over the sides of the boat capsizing the emotion spilling in all directions and needing an impossible rescue by helicopters over the black white water.

From her safe window on the rim of the earth she sits and strains for the sounds of flying metal birds that will come crashing through the surf and make her whole again.

She can almost hear them in the silent dawn of the wet light so quiet still so far away.

Noni Howard
Roads

Long roads covered with the light morning dew
Ancient trees dancing with the melody of the ocean breeze.
Unsuspecting cliffs lose their souls to the crashing of the waves.

The unforgiving sea reaches up to shake the grass' hands and
retreats sharply when faced with the threat of being trapped.
Oh, how you would love to be a creature of its life.
Creating life with one touch and taking life in one hand.
Washing the sins of His people.
Could you live for all eternity, never holding that of the flesh
for more than an instant as she passes through you?
Could you live feared, hated and resented, without companionship?

If ever you disappear into the rolling waves, losing your soul
and human form, remember that I will always love you, and I will
hold you for as long as I can, until I lose my flesh and soul to you.
Entering with you into the eternity that shall give and take life
until the sun and moon no longer set.

Megan Carter

Fireflies

She walks through the room,
twilight caught
in her hair
Stops to wrap a moonbeam
around herself
as he sits on the bed,
holds his hand out to her.
But she is gone,
out chasing fireflies in
the cool autumn night.

Beads of light in the sky
sweat on sunburnt flesh
Alone he sits and imagines
papayas, melons glistening in
ice water, ripe and bursting

He eats rich words. Tastes them in his mouth,
on the tip of his tongue.

He licks his fingers, closes his eyes,
still aware of the space
that she left, and her
daughter in the garden.

Kirsty Robertson
**Untitled**

D susC
I want my name on the wall of quotes
A sus 2
I want my face in the hall of folks
and this is not my only wish
I, I also want a midnight kiss.

When is Uncle Pierre gonna rescue us,
I think Brian was a man of lust.
J.F.K., he was an egotist
I hope that you remember this.

No one ever really changed my mind
Caesar met his end through crime.
Napoleon tried and tried again,
but St. Helena was his end.

D
I am doubtful
C
You are wonderful and
G
I am full of wonder.
F G F G
I think computers rule your life and
cellular phones cause me strife
I think John Lennon was a communist
he was tops on Reagan’s list.

And some say this song is just for spite
they say the lyrics are so trite
they may be wrong and they may be right
but you and I, we’re out of sight cause
I am doubtful
You are wonderful and
I am full of wonder.

Tim Pearson

---

**2000...**

*A generation misguided*

Faces of confusion, desires of faulty ambitions, eyes of estrangement, allegiance in the artificial lifestyle of sugarcoated happiness for a quick fix, a swift hit, a fast paced society where joy is seized off the shelf and purchased in a robust attempt to satisfy a need, the dime a dozen strategies to fulfill contemporary hungers, pleasures explored not in the carousel of life but in the carnival of soap box derbies, cotton candy, racing wheels, snorting powder, and rides upon rides coated in glamorising gold, souls of anger, souls of wastelands, embraces of surface driven relations, majestically alluring to tantalize, happiness assured in a mirage filled vault of a splurging pool of millions, secured by the promise of the American dream but the fantasy is tarnished by the factory emissions polluting our dreams, rising capitalism, struggling proletarians driven by the face of a fat man in a smoking jacket pursuing tangible materialism and laughing as the ashes of his cigar dangle and drop into the cesspool of lakes unfit for fish and a contaminating green toxic burps and gargles as it rises through the purity of water and spreads along the surface, governing and muffling the acts of nature as a gull drops from the smoke ridden sky and dies in the acidic water and the trees shrivel and wilt on the shore and the tribes no longer dance, stationary and stoned by threats of industrialism, kinship suppressed by the gloat of the fat man and the eyes of Third world cultures saturated and bursting with the dreams of a simpler tomorrow, relishing in the paradise of protection in production, security in billboards, coke-bottles, computers, and Cadillacs.

“Am I a puppet bound to the hands of the fat man?”

I swim inside myself attempting to escape the emerging twister of a direction-less generation. Deeper and deeper I dive through the brain and proceed through the to the throat, lungs and diaphragm, through the veins of red enclosed by tainted flesh. I poke to get out from inside, screaming for air but stopping to relish in the serenity of silence - exquisite. I have become numbed, a prisoner of 2000...

Drew White
Untitled

I saw a river the other day
I went to feel its breath
It filled me up whole
Water fills me so cold

I found a way out of that park
And must have walked a thousand feet
Never stopping to touch or talk
My hands holding my heart

I'm watching all these eyes
A thousand per two feet
Why are they all staring at me?
How are they all seeing through me?

I don't have the strength
To fight them off
Someone please help me
Before I lose myself

I find myself naked and cold
Sitting by the river
The trees are laughing at me
I can hear their voice

The trees are laughing at me
The trees are laughing at me
Go away—
Go away—

Now I see myself bleeding
But the colour ain't red
I'm hunched over crying
I think I wish I was dead

Now I'm bleeding
My colour ain't red
How many times do I have to scream
Before I lose my voice

Scott Baker
Uninvited

On the fringes, self aware
Clamouring to break in but
Shielded by cold stares and
Empty glances.
Why have I
been chosen as this soul
to be toyed with?
Invited, then shunned
In a world that begs
For the answers I have, somewhere.

Caroline Cunningham

Dark Day in October

Why should I remember?
Yet, how can I forget
That Dark day in October
That hasn’t finished yet

Can Time relieve the Suffering
That lives within the Mind
Surely it is possible
For Life’s not that Unkind

The Pain now never ending
In Time may fade away
But the Memories and Emotions
Forever they’re Engrained

When will the Bright Light shine again
The darkness leave the Soul
Or will it just continue on
Until I grow too Cold

The coldness that surrounds Me
Is so hard to understand
For I know that there is Warmth
Inside the Heart of every Man

So “focus on the good things”
That’s all that I can say
To help banish all the Black Clouds
Of that Dark October Day

L.G. Mitchell
Chained

Eyes glittering with sadness
Looking behind them
Their past
Their deadly secret

Even the word future
To them seems vague and uncertain
A long, narrow, difficult path
They slip and fall
At any instant

But can they really start walking towards it?

Eyes glittering in sadness
In silence
A black chain doesn’t permit them to move
They are trapped in the past
Chained to their lost lives
Forever prisoners of the untold truth
No escape
No future promise of liberty
Chained to themselves
Chained to the ones they were and the ones they will ever be

People of the world
People you meet everyday
But you never learn to appreciate...

Karine A.F. Bibeau
Untitled

Empty houses on a lonely road
dust from dawn is painted on an
endless agony of lost love in a
wilderness of grasses.

Darkened sunlight warms
worn wood wrapped in musty memories.
Memories of long lost life
which gave this all some meaning...

(emptiness of abandonment echoes across this evening)

Kendra Thayer
To Ralph Gustafson #1

I'm looking at you now
as you were young once
black hair all shiny
and poems of wonder
not pedantic
as you clutch the book
you are again
the traveller and the seer
talking your urban sadness
with anti-climax
of a whisper

Noni Howard

To Ralph Gustafson #2

Your eyes are greying now
as your former counterpart
an accomplice
who has left us.
his hands were too heavy with care.

I love the way you are returning
silver gray flowing
the woman perceives
the child in man
the child becoming
the Man
the myth maker
as darkness falls
light to darkness
falls
like words
the heavy after
glow of love.

Sullen with destiny
their are no lines
to enclose your face.

Noni Howard
Hallucination

Like the crow who passed over my shoulder
I drowned into madness,
My soul, my soul it took away.

I fell, empty as a hole
Unexplained. The black wings of death,
So dark, so dark secrets surround, unholy.

I swam into deep, cold oceans,
Like a howling ghost of an old mermaid,
Lost on an ancient, ancient, sunken ship.

I lost my sight in his glazing eyes
Trapped in a crystal shouting iron cage,
Pure ice bars surrounding,
I weep, I cry, I cry.

I'm the white queen in a palace of snow,
Where the courtiers are carved marble statues.
Whispering, whispering at the wind.

As a dream. I floated through the walls,
I flew away from absurdity,
As a bat, I felt your breath on my neck.
Death, so death I became...

I Am.

Vada

Untitled

he looked at me, then i looked up
our eyes met across the room
we danced, closer and closer
our hands joined, his head came down
and then he kissed me

we sat opposite each other
his table with a deck of cards between us
he smiled, i smiled, he went to the kitchen
i followed, we stood by the fridge
and then he kissed me

i drove him home and stopped in front of his house
he asked for my address and i for his
i kissed him on the cheek
sparks flew, like i've never felt before
he leaned forward, very gently
i leaned forward
and then we kissed

Lara St. Onge
Driving Alone

Rounding, winding. Two-lane highway curves.
Funnel me through towering pine tree tunnels.
That summer evening sun shines strong
On the side of my face;
Like camera flashes as I blast past
Each open window column.

Carving, curving, spindle roadways.
Travel me through a yet to be captured time.
Those whistling winds will move along
Over spinning wheels;
Like phantom gowns, caressing existence
In the plight of an autumn night.

J.C. Raymond

Flicker of a Shadow

The candle flickers softly on the mantle and I catch a glimpse of my pages. There is a story written where it had once been blank and the pen had changed from blood to ink. I had once believed the cover was painted black and now light reveals the true colours. There is nothing but richness and wonder. I am reading a new story and will burn the past. I watch the ashes as they twirl about my body. The wind grabs a hold of the evil past and carries them off to their place of rest... to my place of peace. I can visit if I so choose, but they will no longer be chained to my ankle. I can step forward now without the guilt I so strongly held in my fingers. My hands are free to hold happiness and now it no longer runs from me, but sits quietly in my pocket. I have reached the end of this dark and evil journey. I reached the end... the moral... and as I look by I realize it was a tale, not truth. The purpose was to teach and I had always lost hope in the midst of pain, not reading the last line that put pain in its place and peace in the heart. The moral reads... we must never lose hope for the truth falls close behind.

Kim Lane
twisted reality

somewhere, sometime within my life
i think i may have fallen in love
but may have just been too scared to see
that it could actually be possible
for someone in this great big world
to fall in love with me.

sometime, somewhere within my life
i may have done something right
there may even have been a time
i might have, subconsciously, instead of feeling heavy inside
actually felt light.

sometime in my life
there might have been a time
when things did not seem so stark
there might actually have been a time
when i didn’t view life
as something so very dark

sometime in my life
i think i saw the truth
somewhere in time, i have a feeling
i did not hide behind the lies,
somewhere, sometime within my life
i genuinely did try.

sometime, somewhere within my life
i allowed myself to cry
somewhere, sometime within this life,
i stopped for a second to be human,
pausing long enough to let others get by

somewhere, sometime within my life
i looked in instead of out
somewhere, sometime while on earth
i took a moment to figure out precisely
what life was all about.

anna p. castillo
Ode to Toes

Way far away from the top of your head
Ten little friends stay warm in your bed
They are essential in maintaining your balance
Without them you'd fall when attempting to dance
Toes are fun, cute little guys
And Travis MacLeod's are hairy.

Krista Tilley

Runaway

“Show me how you do that trick” she said,
“The one that goes straight to my head.
Make me scream and I’ll make you dream,
Of running streams, splitting seams, and a sky so blue,
I’m trying to tell you, I want to run away with you.”

When I awoke I was all alone,
Alone in a raging sea, no one around but me.
Island bound, yet in chains wrapped round.
In the tempest fury, she gave her soul for me.
So in the arms of time, I’d give my soul for thee.

Should thy city bell be a ringing in the night,
Think not of life, yet flee with candle flame burning bright.
Should I die, before I reach the gate,
Take my sword and drown it in the lake.
Save it from the wrath, or shattered on the rock,
For when I return from Heaven, it shall be to life unlock.

Running wild, with fire in her eyes.
Devil’s child, or demons thrall and twisted lies.
One whisper, or perhaps some imagery sublime.
Lost in the crowd, or sleeping in the arms of time.
But now no trace of a sound,
For she’s far away and runaway bound.

Michael R. McCormick
Truth Box

Knowledge of visions old
At rest, never to be told.
Sleeping, awaiting for thee
To be pried open for all to see.

Through mourning hands of ambitious heads
May loose the grasp of visions spread,
Shall steal the shadows of salient trees
And cover thee with questions free.

All, to whom the world unknown
Feel the taste of visions shown,
Own opportunity to soothe the strains
And breathe the knowledge of shrinking brains.

At dawn, the world will applaud the smell
Of a fetal thought which tried and fell.
Through embracing visions thy dusky bed
Broke free on thee it touched and fed.

Karl C. Dancause

photograph by Margaret Stuart
A Final Remembrance

And so I've gone
So what, so long
You never asked about me then
I don't expect you'll ask again

Was it so hard to say goodbye?
Blow a kiss, wink an eye?
It must have been, for you never did
I find that sad, that you never did

Now listen, the wind blows my thoughts
It's cold, the feeling of my heart
To match the vacant stares from your eyes.
Never having the chance to say goodbye.

And I wish I could wish you dead too
But that's too hard, 'cause I still love you

Scott Baker
Victor and Vanquished Lie Side by Side
In Glorious Mortality!

cast your eyes from the valley to the copse
mark the fields where wild flowers grow
soon to be trampled and stained crimson red
so pure today, but tomorrow destroyed.

cast your eyes to the crest of the hill
spears bristle, a thousand points of death
the dawning sun glint on knights' sword
as though the stars had fallen to earth.

two armies meet amid the morning dew
come to kill and to die, to run and to cry
secure in their trust of the one who says “fight”
glory to country, honour, and might.

trumpets sound the charge, clear in the crisp air
part of the hill begins to move as one
the day we've gained is one filled with loss
a victor chosen, the vanquished revealed.

victor and vanquished lie side by side
mortality knows not the difference.
blood stains all standards the same shade
mothers search for their fallen sons.

Tim Pearson

The Paper People Planet

Transmissions from the antennae of insects
Soundbytes racing through wires across the world
turning into a message dropping off the screen
like so many pearls of a string of global
worrybeads like so many drops of a
virgin's lovejuice into the waiting eyes
and lips of the Almighty Dollar.

Janine Berger
My Country Is A Word In A Foreign Language

a woven bandage
from my infancy
a still cry
when a whole house had moved my bed
all by itself
to face a dead eyed window

when cantering to sleep
meant awaiting the spring midnight
of a frog chorus;

you
have removed yourself
from the accessibility
of time
you are time
are land
and old dirt
rising

my brown hilled green splitting land
where once snow fell
like cotton candy
under the bar room light
and i took
my first death
and kept on drinking
you away

there is no close to this diary
cracking my skin
with ancient memory.
I will sputter your wordless
songs
in my bad french
still go back
to see that only I have changed:

that love is stronger
than the cheap uninstinctual
marrow in my bones
and that above it all
my direction is north
where the pencil head
of reason
is sharpened to
a point only a laser
eye can see

and in that cold
my single
cascading autumn fire
sizzles
crying
to go out

circa 1979
Dr Noni Howard
No time of day

Tic
The clock shows 4:10
Another minute has passed
There are days when you don't know where to go
A Labyrinth in front of you
There are days when you don't want to leave
Too scared to continue
There a day when you want to do nothing

Tic
The clock shows 4:11
Another minute has passed
I sometimes wish I could stop time
Enjoy every minute and feel the instant
Sense the importance of life itself and not just let it
go by unnoticed
Every minute counts... truly counts

Tic
The clock shows 4:12
Another minute has passed
I sometimes wonder if it would be possible
To make time flow and avoid bad moments
No time for cries and worries
No time for pain

Still
Time is time
I hold your skinny fingers
And wish for the best

If it were in 2001, there would maybe be a cure
You would not be there, in this white room,
awaiting...
If it were in 1970, you would be in a box
And there I would be, flowers in my hand
Crying over you
If it were in 1986, I would enjoy every minute
Being able to escape responsibilities and
spend time with you
But
We are in 1996...

Karine A.F. Bibeau
anxiety

lust,
vioation,
complication, contemplation
of
the soul
the self, the animal
breeding
everything is reason
all existence flawed
a
hard thrust from inside
hands reaching out in desperation
urgent, pulsating need
life is death
destruction in creation
in side of me
outside of you

rising up from beneath you
i ascend only to fall
rapid crescendo,
sudden death

anna p. castillo
to escape the confusion...

a sharp shiver
is all i feel -
pain scraping relentlessly
at my spine.
the brisk night wind
laughs hauntingly -
taunting my bare flesh,
freezing my tears.
starved for heat,
my fingers clench my arms -
grasping...

i stand alone,
beneath the flickering streetlamp -
the metropolitan buzz
surrounding me,
mocking me.
there i wait in desperation -
my arms extended,
reaching...

they pass me blindly
like ships at twilight -
dark narrow paths
impair their vision.
eyes stare blankly
from all directions -
void of emotion
like tinted windows.
the mirrors hide the secrets.
countless experiences revealed,
concealed...

a cloud of angry gravel
attacks me,
blinding me.
rough gritty shards
digging blood
from my swollen cheeks -
as if in vengeance...
i lie alone
helpless,
i will not fight.
unnoticed
by faceless spirits,
unworthy...

above me,
the wind howls in fury.
i close my eyes -
to forget.

Vanessa Liston
I Laugh

'I live for your smile
and I’d die for your kiss.'
Those words you whisper,
out of some song.
I laugh.
Softly, gently.
But not at you.
The words are romantic, sweet.
No one else has ever tried to be that way.
I like it, that’s why I laugh.

‘One love, one life’ our song.
I wonder what you will whisper to me when we’re in bed.
If I laugh, don’t be hurt, don’t be intimidated.
I laugh because I’m in love. Love makes me happy.
When I’m happy I laugh.

Heather Coutts

Shrine

It still says April on the wall.
Cold black boxes filled with writing, frail writing, hardly writing at all. Meet with Alice April 16th, 4 o’clock. Where are they? outside on the back porch sipping mint julep, cake crumbs and tea falling to their laps like tears.
The room just sits and grows colder and colder and
Hello, I’m sorry there is no one here right now. The elevator doesn’t reach the top floor.
The lights are on but nobody’s home. Ever was home. Ever will be home. Cold draughts blow dust, grown thick and...
It’s May, it’s June, it’s July anytime but the present time to tick, tick, tick, stop.
A spiderweb of blue ballpoint pen.
April 4th, Jack’s birthday.

Kirsty Robertson
Showcase: The Kingdom

Precious moment of life
The last beat is going away,
Fading in the air
Crumbling under bare thought.

Spreading ashes toward the land
Although the fury ghost
Whispering to the sculpted trees
Enchanted forest of the pestifered.

Although salvation is gone
Hope is still on earth, fading,
Flirting with Demeter’s shadow
Demonic smile of the underworld...

Glowering at spectators
Crowded like a huge funeral,
Covering the gold-sand ground
O’ sacred, cherished little child.

Angel of mercy
You who shot the bird of paradise,
Let us hear the sound of glory,
Holy crippled musicians.

Breath of an insane clown
Deadly last show of a trapezist.
O’ white silk face
Broke bones, lying.

Threatening of a vulture
Silent scream of the butterfly,
Rapture of a pure soul
Cherish, O’ Cherish, unborn child.

In Face

"I" - shatters your illusions
forgive me if you may
for I am grieved by the long dark day.

We are no more - no less - no way
Goodbye - good rest
gentle sweet - good friend.

Take care along the path you choose,
Be cautious what you keep and lose.
Know where it comes, for who and why,
Many were led and many more did die.

Who bought the pleasures of the lie?
“I” knows well, why the children cry.
A lack of light keeps from them the sky.
And when in darkness tears you weep
Trust, true love is yours to seek

Goodbye, good rest, gentle sweet good friend.
Good speed, good conscience, no less
To send.

Greg Stirling
H.M.C.

The old man is there
in his chair
Visitors beckoning in
him a recall of the past
that seems like a
dream.
He cannot
satisfy their caring
(give them what they want).
We know him,
He knows us not,
We love him,
He knows not love

he strikes his own flesh,
his own blood, the
surface sanguine, but this
cuts deeper.
Hollow and cruel
and unbeknownst is he. No -
is the parasite who's host cannot
recall the party, the laughter,
the children,
the love.

they are faces,
faded photographs in negative.
They come, but cannot get in
He is not there.
In their eyes a great King who
no longer knows the rule.
His subjects faded photographs.

In a flash, they are gone.
he only knows that she is gone
he waits
for her.
but she waits for him
in eternity.

Caroline Cunningham
The Stars WANT YOU!

Come see your final day
Approaching, flying away
Shining through the gun
Of another man’s son
Hurting your head
The bullet hits your deathbed.

Remember her?
Remember how she seemed?

Now everywhere silence
Your sight goes blind.
Miss her forever
But see, will never.

All for a war, but the battle was not won.
One man’s death, caused by another man’s gun.

For territory, for land.
Fair, perhaps unjust.
Life has become death
And Hear they were wrong.

Karl C. Dancause
Third World Generation

As they walk around here
Hopeing, faking to be rich
All they'll ever own
Is their own show;
Self-made, ready for T.V.

As they hurt so much
That their brains go nuts;
They keep faking, pretending.
They strive to act for T.V.,
Cut the act and go home at night.

As their riches are raggedly poor
Their lives are remarkably lame
They are a future
Coming up too fast
A Third World Generation.

Olivier Bouffard

Ode on Inertia

Three golden manes hang proudly
in front of his waxing eyes-
proud in the tragically inert sense of fear
and poppied ecstasy
that they instill in his hopeless heart.
He hates them for their saucy ponytails
and sultry neck-napes-
for to them he cannot relate;
nor is he allowed to relate;
nor does he wish to relate.
(he lies.)
Do these dolls have humanities
that exist beyond the jiffy-pop
antechamber of their collective presence?
Or, better yet (and perhaps more prospectively),
does he deflate his dinghy-
a self proclaimed pedestal of awareness-
and float downwards in the mire
and murky depths of
automatonic
sleeping
wakefulness?

Matthew T. Meanchoff
One Track Mind

We arrive here at the station knowing exactly where to go. The trains' engines were all ready, our trip would start out slow.

All the pistons soon were pumping, and the engines began to race. We started on our journey, and quickly picked up pace.

Towards our distant destination Faster, Faster, Please, pulling in and out of stations with power and with ease.

Metal striking against wood were the sounds we heard that night. We pumped through hill and valley, until reaching our destination's height.

The engine blew its mighty horn as we came screaming to a rest. Our journey seemed now over, but, by far it was our best.

I am glad that you came with me upon this old train track. Now, what we must remember is the fun we'll have going back.

Scott Doherty

Burmese

My friend Riggs is crazy. He sends me messages encrypted in code, some real easy alphabet ciphers, others spelled out using enzyme, protein, and DNA structuring. Bits and pieces of various animals mailed to me, and I've got to put the time and effort into translating? Pshaw. Got a human eye sent to me at the office the other day (Riggs is convinced my computer at home watches me and takes notes, sending the info to some memory cache at High Command or something,) and the letter, a really long document actually, was nano-sized and etched into the cornea with what I'm assuming is a laser. The document went into lengthy detail about how Riggs was feeling just at that moment. It was difficult to read, not just because of the print, but the grammar was terrible, run on sentences, spelling errors, words made up and old words used in ways never tried before. Another time, Riggs sent me a series of postcards where the eighteenth letter in each postcard went to form words and eventually a sentence. After 56 postcards over a span of three years I had one complete sentence - a rather trivial one at that. "I want to know how you are getting along and how your life is being run..."

He called me the other day, which is strange considering his obvious affection for paranoia, and had this to say:

Hey Jack.
-Riggs?
I think I'm in Myanmar.
-Oh yeah?
What am I doing in Myanmar Jack?
-I don't know, you tell me.
Hey we should get together sometime, hang out.
Yeah that would be cool.
Okay, someone stole my wallet. I gotta go.
-Alright. Take care Riggs.
And then he hung up. All messages, phone calls stopped. That was a long time ago. I heard from this Gypsy girl I knew that she saw him working, blue collar type stuff, and I sort of believe her, but not completely. Then I spoke to this knight I was acquainted with and he said he gave Riggs a pair of boots a little while ago. The knight was positive that Riggs was high at the time, which I find harder to believe than the idea of him working. Riggs was crazy, but from a straight edge to a spoon?
There are times, marred in dreamlike quality and idol worship, when I thought Riggs really was an agent for the other side. One of his encrypted messages, which I had to decipher from a full box of Alphabits and a Cap'n Crunch decoder ring, was written telegram style, circa Any Revolution"
"Am working as an Unofficial Operative for the Linguistics S.S. stop Monitoring the Internet for blurry misuse of gender pronouns stop Fools stop I am a double agent staging the Apostrophe Revolt stop All punctuation of possession will be destroyed stop This one is for Marx Bakunin Kropotkin Guy Fawkes Snowball and the Novembrist Exiles stop I will destroy them all stop Hahahahahahahaha!! stop"

I'm kind of worried about Riggs' disappearance. I know he can take care of himself, but it still bothers me, on the off moments, close to sleep or given a quiet second during the day. I've heard, long ago, about places in South East Asia, on the human parts black market, that a deal can be arranged to trade a fresh body (48 hours old or less, worth $90,000 American) for a new identity. You become the person you killed. Right down to the habits and idioms. Fresh start for the New Dead. I heard that two places in Laos do this, twelve in Sumatra, and I think one in Myanmar...

Anonymous
Home

A wave
I crave
To sway my body
Sand me smooth
Till I lie flat
and even on the shore
To be picked up and carried home
A place to lie
A place where I
Can sing alone to everyone
Where there are other stones
Who understand why
Who don't mind why
I am the stone
I am.

Margaret Stuart

Home By Twelve

We open the door
and enter the room.
Everything is dark.
I turn on the light
and you turn towards me.
We embrace
You pull me close to
your hard, lean body,
and kiss me passionately.
The room spins.
I turn off the light,
you lead me to your bed.

Later I lie in your arms,
as the sensations subside.
You gently draw me closer
We talk of things in the air.
Our future, our lives.
Togetherness.

We leave the bed,
and find our clothes.
Everything is dark.
You turn on the light
and I turn towards you.
We embrace.

You pull me close to
your hard, lean body.
I turn off the light
and open the door,
we leave the room.
I’m home by twelve.

Heather Coutts
A Picture on a Wall

In every picture is a song
where sky and land can still belong
With the rhythm of the sea,
as its story teaches me.
land of green and sky of blue,
It reaches out to me and you.
I am sitting on a beach
Heaven seems just out of reach
In my picture on a wall
in some old, forgotten hall,
a boat sits up on the land
ravaged by nature’s jealous hand,
while sea birds circle overhead,
they come to take me to my bed,
but I must leave my place of rest
I understand it’s for the best.
For now I know that I belong,
In my picture, and my song.

Tim Pearson

Photograph
By Margaret Stuart
Time swims away
at evening tide
when we open our eyes

Everything new carried out
into the enormous blue
In shining we never saw before

Gone. Gone away
to be gone again
to return someday

But sometimes when we finally see
the water has taken
the treasure inside
never yours, never mine

And now as they go, we open up our eyes
shed a salt water tear
To the treasures which the ebbing tide brought here.

Kendra Thayer

...Vel Mori

If I give in now, I'll give up the fight.
I'll give in to sin and the voices in the night.
There is nowhere left to hide, so now I turn to suicide.
Now death is the one in whom I confide.
Maybe it could have been you and I,
Yet now I turn to suicide and the voices in the night.

Is it my fate, to hate, all that be, good inside of me.
To surrender to the light,
To surrender to voices in the night.
For only in a twisted view, could I ever see you.
The one bride, by my side, is now called by the name suicide.
I cannot be, that which thrives in me,
That which you could never see,
The darker side of insanity.
Now my candles I light, my ashen face I hide.
As you slowly watch me slip to the other side.

You knew my face, you saw a brighter side.
Yet you never took the time, to see where I hide.
Please reach out to me, please make me see, I beg of thee.
I sit here tonight, and slowly drip from sight.
I lay here tonight, and quietly do what isn't right.
I needed someone to show me the way,
It is too late, so I bid them pray.
I've lived my life in sin, for I only pretend,
When I say that I've got something to believe in.

Now the time is nigh, and I have to go.
My master calls me, I can't say no...

...signed, the boy next door, you know who I am

Anonymous
Poem On An Open Pasture

Beauty is an open pasture
Pastures are perfect.
Perfect hides in Beauty
Revealing the flowers.
Beauty is a daydream
Daydreams are love
love hides in Beauty
Revealing the truth.

Beauty is a colour
Colours are imagination
imagination hides in Beauty
Revealing the Honesty

Honesty Reveals imagination
Imagination is colour
Colour is a beauty
Truth Reveals Love
Love is a Daydream
DAYDREAM is a Beauty
FLOWERS Reveal Perfect
PERFECT is pasture
PASTURE is a beauty
BEAUTY is an open pasture.

Live from the Soul

The Mind fears dark caverns, yet the Soul knows no fear
The Soul knows the light that keeps drawing it near
Time is of the essence, that the Mind understands
Not the Soul though, for time was created by man
The Soul knows that Time is not what it seems
And it won’t allow Time to unravel its dreams
For the Soul senses things the Mind can’t understand
The mind holds strange thoughts only common to man
The Mind and the Soul are not one and the same
For the logic of Mind to the Soul brings great pain
The Soul is a pure thing, an all knowing light
And the Mind cannot see what the heart knows is right
So the struggle continues but the Mind must not win
For to deny the Soul would be life’s greatest Sin.

L.G. Mitchell
There's a wall... I can't move it
I can't go around it-
    And I can't see it
    And I can't feel it
...But I know it's there

It's much larger
    than me
And it'll never shrink in size. It will only
disappear or reappear
    whenever a problem arises.
I'm afraid-

I'm afraid that if I try too hard,
    the wall will surround me
If I remain still, it will fall on me

There's a forest on the other side
With a waterfall, and a river
    This is where I wish to be,
but am unable to move
The wall remains where it is-as a force
It's seemingly endless
    and I cannot understand it,
yet I am responsible for its creation.

The wall is a product of my mind
It exists to provide insight into my fears...

They can be sexual, physical, emotional.
They can be aggressive, social or personal.

It's a part of me...
    and the reason why I can't see it
    and the reason why I can't feel it-
is because it's inside me.
Summer Cottage
For Lonnie Hull DuPont

We are escaping
if only for this moment
out into the night air of stars
and heavy breathing

We three
pile into the car and drive
through the one lane night
under the canopy
searchlights
illuminating the thickening forest
radiating the iridescence of the moon
overhead
in the quickening dark water.

The summer people are gone; the lawn
chairs sit rusting on verandahs
and screen doors are left unlatched,
a scurry of mice and bats
between the walls.

With flashlights, towels and beer
we walk the dirt road towards
the farthest cabin on the lake
its pier a silver light
a beckoning torch between the whoosh
and sigh of the shoreline.

We are all in love,
Some of us with each other.

The silence deafens us with its hum
of sheer activity.
as we pass pockets of silence
then behind our backs
they start up: crickets, frogs, loons
the mating call of ducks.

II

The porch swing screams with protest.
Naked and dripping
We entwine in a jumble against the chill.

I want to touch you
through this thoughtless confusion
reach out to you.

it would be so easy
it would be forgiven.

I am
close to you, slipping sliding
so close I want to fall down inside you

and make you speak.

Driving the long tongue of night back
your arm touches mine
in the cold car
and I feel the softness of your skin
as if
for the first time.

Dr. Noni Howard
Futile Ambiguity

All alone, but with so many
Cold as stone, but warm as any
Nothing left, so much to give
Laying dead, with lust to live
Climbing out to fall right back
Pulling light, but forever slacked
Looking for, yet hiding from
Waiting for what can not come
All is lost, though never had
Our sanity has gone quite mad

Scott Doherty

I know where I am when I arise from my slumber, but I never really feel at home, even though I’ve been rising to these familiar surroundings for months now. Every morning I wake up on a twin mattress on the floor, decorated with colours and flowers to make it look happier and more comfortable than the reality of the bed. My roommate across the room sleeps on a futon, which is slightly more elevated, but neither compares to my wide, tall, dark wooden bedset at home.

Honestly, we couldn’t have it any other way; the abrupt ceilings of our loft intrude what little space we have to begin with. Smoky grey shadows shade all corners and overstep their boundaries. A red brick chimney with the strength of an ancient pillar protrudes from the first floor of the house to invade the middle of our apartment. This dwelling is a surreal hideaway like a cabin set deep within the woods. One thing we do have, is character.

Sundays are the best because they begin when we want them to begin, not when our mechanical buzzers tell us it’s time to start our weekday routines. If any negative comment could be said about Sundays, it would be directed at our two skylight windows, which are to blame for their allowance of sunlight and hints of outside life into our third floor apartment. The only thing routine about Sundays is that they are the only days of escape before tomorrow’s dreaded wake-up into a tiresome Monday.

Elizabeth is just beginning to stir in her cocoon of blankets and quilts as I plug the teapot in. A collection of our favourite mugs hang from the six branches of a metal mug-tree sitting on a small, designated coffee/tea/dessert
The Mitre 1996-1997 table. Bright yellows of little chicks on one of the mugs catch my eye. I smile as I gracefully reach for it, along with Elizabeth’s favourite purple eggplant mug - something vibrant enough to wake her up this morning, yet simple enough to maintain the Sunday relaxedness.

Two levels of aromatic, fancy, palatial goodies arranged on the table are the only forms of entertaining our guests that we have, aside from the modern, black stereo that once occupied a large portion of my desk at home. This accessory is located on the glassstop, wooden tables which separates our two plush, tan living room chairs. Neither Elizabeth nor I wanted a television. Too false and intrusive.

Across the room Elizabeth is slipping on a black, white and yellow flowery robe over her slender figure. Her long brown hair is matted and straight from a solid sleep, while my short cut looks tousled and unkept. Her green eyes meet my sparkling blue ones and smile brightly, affirming our mutually contented states.

As she passes the stereo, she suddenly stops and ponders. Leafing through her stack of seldomly-played cassettes, she decidedly chooses one and smiling coyly, places it in the machine and pushes play.

“Sleep well?” I ask, handing her a warm mug of Earl grey tea and honey.

She sips slowly and responds, “The best rest all week.”

“Me too”, I say, and there is a mutual acknowledgement of the absence of time as a constraint - momentarily.

From the stereo comes a beautiful European sound. Magical stringed instruments and a single pianist create a melody from another time and place. The deep voice of a French man flows from the speakers, singing of l’amour and la jeunesse. Our furniture is transformed into small, round tables draped with white tablecloths outlining pale yellow walls of a French café. I inhale deeply and can almost smell fresh baguettes and fine croissants of a patisserie française.

Elizabeth and I are glowing.

Without words, we both start to sway, taking a step back, one to the side, around we go, circling the apartment. Our nightclothes are dresses of simple elegance as we waltz, with no charming male partners except the mellow, intriguing Frenchman serenading us. His presence fills a gap deep inside us that social friends and parties did not reach this past week.

The song ends.

An hour of escape is all we are allowed as we must prepare to prepare for tomorrow’s classes. It’s amazing how short Sundays always seem.

Meghan Sullivan
If Only...

If only you could see you
When you are being true to Yourself
For you shine like the brightest star.
It’s a shame you can’t always be ‘who you are.’

What surrounds you; is what brings you down
You feel closed in, and wear a frown
It’s not supposed to be that way
Be who you are; Fuck what they say
For who are They to be telling you,
Who to be or what to do
Remember Time it does not wait
No one, my friend, should hesitate
It’s time for you to make a stand
You pass but once through this Land
So, now you see; It’s up to you
Know who you are; Do what you do
Then you’ll be happy, and you will see
The kind of life I want for Me.

L.G. Mitchell

This Night

We will always remember this night,
This warm impressionable night
When we softly melted,
softly became liquid gold,
liquid green
in this shadowed darkness.

These nights that have passed between us,
These ghosts that rise beneath us
mean nothing now
As this purple light
rakes us,
makes us
stand out against
these bitter promises

We will always remember these whispers
These mutterings that came to our lips
but died unspoken,
unsaid,
unneeded
in this soft embrace.

We will always remember this night,
This warm impressionable night
This nighttime touch,
This gentle touch
When darkness was broken
And tenderness woken
By this song fading away
Into velvet
darkness.

Kirsty Robertson
Thoughts on Cosmic Cognition

Shooting star.  
Bursts a gaping hole  
Through the latex roof  
Of my universe.  
Comet.  
Absorbed and exhausted  
Recharges its fallow soul  
And excitedly - violently -  
Exits my bubble.  

Into the abysmal mire  
Characterised by zero-gravity  
And asphyxiation -  
It dances  
A tango among the rings of Saturn  
A euphoric waltz through the gases of Pluto  
Some Upper-Martian small talk  
Over a coffee with  
Stout emerald dwarves.  

Shooting star.  
Bursts a gaping tear  
Through the skin lampshade  
Of your universe.  
Comet.  
With the electricity  
Of an anxious nailbiter  
Tangos and waltzes atop  
Your fertile muck  
Until it gets sore feet  
And blisters.

Matthew T. Meanchoff

disintegration

speak to me now:  
for tomorrow is a river of bloody excuses  
everything - songs of never  
is IT love? is IT forever?  
the self is a constant journey  
mystery - an everlasting refuge  
converging molecules  
peace - without life  
life without tranquility  
manifestation of need, desire - DARKNESS  
stolen kisses - sudden separation of the  
impossible, unified entity  
leave, stay  
anGel of gOd, cOme to me  
i mUst suffer  
the desire  
for there is no time  
the dawn weeps  
indifference is absorbed beneath the earth  
"what's in store?" asks the cHild  
indifference? insolence?  
false apologies, untrue prophecies  
whAt is knoWledge  
sep er a tion, unity  
the  
the dancing of souls  
attached to an enigma  
a cOllision  
you and me and them  
all wrapped up in life’s empty promises  
endless, futile waiting  
elation beneath wrinkled sheets  
loVe - a beautiful, uncertain face with no eyes.

anna p. castillo
Between the Lines

There is a girl here who wears her beliefs on her clothing. Last Monday her sorrowfully blue t-shirt informed everyone: “It’s not my reality”. Her hair is muted, a soft brown, and she has the same cast to her eyes. Some days they are more golden than others. Some days they are almost green. She is tallish and slender. Her hands are soft, surprisingly so. One would imagine that someone with such expressive attire would have stronger, more aggressive hands. She has a secret smile most days, as though there are things going on in her head that she wishes she could share. Other days her face is unreadable, her smile absent.

I watch for her. And then she wears a sweater, I am disappointed. It has become a habit for me, reading her t-shirts. On Thursday she quoted Swift: “May you live all the days of your life” whereas on Friday the small print quietly informed those interested: “Your day will come” - I wasn’t sure if that was a good thing or a bad thing, and the incongruity of it stayed with me throughout the day.

Some days I don’t see her, and it makes me wonder if it is because she is ill or simply that she has run out of things to say. On those days I wonder if she is at home, with writer’s block maybe, unable to draft her mood into a phrase that will fit on her medium sized t-shirt. On those days I try to imagine what her t-shirt would have said - what it would have told the rest of us about her mood, her imagination, her spirit - what it would have brought to our days.

On Saturday I saw her in the park. It was a clear hot day - one of those June days that make you feel damn happy, for no reason at all. The sun was bright and warm and the grass was green and sweet, and she was wearing a deep purple t-shirt. For a moment all I saw were words; jumbled, jumping and weaving themselves together. She was sitting quietly, with her back against a tall tree and her hands folded in her lap, watching the people in the park. I was struck by her calm, even as my eyes flew to follow the revelations her t-shirt shared. The sun flitted across the words as the leaves overhead waltzed in the June breeze. Then she turned to look at me. She smiled, and all the words were gone. I returned her smile, and then my name being called from a distance broke the spell and she turned away again.

I saw her once more that day in the park. The sun had dipped below the trees, and the grass was getting cool. I had the feeling that comes at the end of a perfect summer day. The slight sting of sunburn on my cheeks made me nostalgic instead of irritable; dogs barking and children quarrelling made me smile; and the thought of walking home didn’t seem so tedious. I walked across the empty expanse of the park, the setting sun at my back, and looking up I saw her walking toward me. Her t-shirt seemed a lighter colour than it had been earlier, and the gold-red of the sun was hard across the lone word that was written there in black print.

There was just one word where before I had seen dozens dancing across the folds of cotton - like notes in a symphony or butterflies across flowered fields. She was wearing her secret smile, and her eyes were golden in the fading light.

Elizabeth Henson
Standing at the Cliff

You could have everything that I ever possessed.
You could have my thoughts, my feelings, tears and smiles.
You could leave me with nothing, standing in the dark, invisible
like a shadow unseen without the light that I need to survive.
You could strip me naked, burning all of my clothes.
You could tear out my soul through my eyes that are motionless.
Please leave me... standing at the cliff,
don’t try and change the things that can’t be changed.
Don’t try to love me if you can’t.
Let me move on to another world.

Your fear scares me, it changes you, turns you inside out and
shows me everything - your heart, your soul, mind and blood.
I know everything about you, I can see things that you can’t...

And then you cry out to me... pleading, blaming.
Guilt runs like a river below me.
I see it, and know in my heart that I won’t really jump.
You can’t see this in me and you break down and cry.
Lying on the ground, grasping the earth in your hands as if to
beg for God to take all of your pain away.

The sky breaks open and tears from Heaven beat down upon us.
I reach down to hold you like a child, and lift you up.
Once more we stand together, like pillars holding up a temple.
I raise my voice, turn away and as the sun comes up over the
mountains my dream fades into light.

Megan Carter

The Coast.

Latin is the language of the coasts,
And we do not speak it very well,
The help received from ancient ghosts,
Is impossible to tell.

The winds roll over this barren land,
And mists turn everything to grey,
Here, it’s hard to see God’s hand,
In the twilight of the day.

No! It is all impossible to define,
The sense of darkness over me,
Being so in awe of this strange coastline,
And the persistence of the sea.

Let us make our way like the helpless blind,
Feel for the coast like an unknown face,
Create an image in each one’s mind,
The map of the human race.

Frank Wildig
Tears... And All I Ask Is Why, No Answer, Simply Why?

dedicated to Glyndora A. Taylor,
do you remember all...?

Young yet not so innocent, looking that which is Heaven sent.
So beautiful and pure, quite the moulin rouge yet so demure.
We were both playing the same game.
Saw each other as a picture in a frame.
You fell in love with perception and mystery,
Until you saw the darker side of me.
I guess my shine wore off as time wore on.

Now I am to be forgotten, like a broke toy
Left lying on a shelf.
Do you think that happiness can be boughten,
I never twas any Vermeer of Delf.
Can you see past my painted smile?
Can’t you see the pain in my eyes?
Or is it just a game, tainted and beguiled.
The Devil has no fears now for he is laughing at his own lies.
I was never young, never just a little boy.

Just like another bullet in the chamber.
Sharp shooter to the mark yet you don’t remember.
Every word you spoke, they’re all playing in my head.
Every stained glass you broke, I’m the unforgiven.
Given up for dead.
No matter how hard I try, you’ll never understand.
Even when you told me goodbye, I still tried to act a man.
You never saw how hard I cried, and I never held your hand.
Forever before - you are the one thing I yearned.
Forever more - you never did see me burn.
Is it too late for me?
I, the Angel of Mercy, left in misery...

Michael R. McCormick
Shatter
Sometimes I wish that I could look deep into your eyes and tell you how I feel.
What would you do?
How would you react?

Do I dare open up my heart and my soul, hoping to find the love, attention, security that I seek?
Or will I be destined for the pain, hurt and loneliness of unreturned love.

Sometimes I wish that I was the kind of girl I know you like:
Beautiful, blond, dumb.
But I can’t. I’m me.

Do I dare tell you my secrets, my dreams, and hope you have the same ones?
Or sit and let my dreams grow into obsessions which will slowly devour my soul.

Sometimes I wish that I could read your thoughts, know what you think, what you feel, how you truly are.

Do I dare let you read my thoughts, let you invade my mind, discover my secrets.
Would you turn my dream into a reality or would you crush my very existence?

Sometimes I wish that my heart was not so delicate, that it was not cracked in so many places.
One blow and it could shatter.

Do I dare open it up once more.
Hoping, praying, longing for it to be mended?
Is it a risk I can take? I’m not sure.
It’s very delicate. I don’t think I could live without a heart.

Sometimes I wish that I knew your secrets, if you cared.
Do I dare tell you my feelings or will you shatter my heart.

Heather Coutts
The end of rhyme

Numb
Stiff
Cold
My blood froze

Dead
Stale
Void
And my soul, it died

It died of immortality
O’d on morality
Lost all fertility
Can happy times
Call upon the end of rhyme?

I wrote on every wall
And my words became so small
To no avail after all
I’d love to say I didn’t love you
But I’m afraid it’d never be true.

Olivier Bouffard

Salt-Stained

The tears taste good,
taste like pain
swallowed whole,
as I let them trickle
onto my lips before
I wipe them away.
The liquid remnants
crystallize like
thoughts and stain
my freckled cheek
as a cruel reminder.
I only hope today
I can keep them at bay.

Caroline Cunningham
(out face) To Keep No Truth is Wrong

In the whispering sweetness
before memory's shadow's grey,
words filter meaning,
through an image of yesterday.
Beneath the surface scarred and pale
love lifts the taint from mystery's veil,
revealing no cruel weakness there,
exposed - acceptance gently goes,
and recognition heals the throes,
where doubt played out its bitter roles,
and made the kindest heart grow cold,
concealing wisdom's welcome fold -
from true beauty's grace untold.
innocence lost, for a time was sown
the heart alone has grieved unknown;
until anger's bitter tears of rage
cracked the chains of sorrow's cage
to keep the words from the empty page,
and let some light come through again.
no reason keeps true courage cold
when vision enters there to hold,
and evil sees itself grow weak.
the gift, direction, from there may seek.
and build a home on solid rock
above the ticking of the clock
an act to please - considerate touch.
tomorrow's child does need this much.
their voice compelling true and strong.
love's courage knows for what they love,
and the journey's fair day
to them belongs.

Greg Stirling

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Burning (re-write)

In their soul a small fire smoulders
seeking strength as it sits
fueled by ignorance it bursts into flame
deep, deep inside.

Drenched with reason, this flame survives,
refusing to die,
still stronger and stronger and stronger it grows
deeper and deeper inside.

It possesses no boundary and knows no limits,
making it difficult for them to escape.
escape its flame, a toxic flame that burns
deeper and deeper inside.

Insatiable, this flame leaps outwards
and still continues to burn.
Now this fire burns cruciform
as a battle flag of ignorance and hate.

A hellish hatred that wages war,
a war in which there is no winner
constantly causing bloodshed
as we senselessly kill one another.

This flame has left the depths of their souls,
but still its emblem remains.
Now I am forced to battle this flame
both inside and out as it burns.

Duane R. Liverpool
Play it Mean, Keep Him Keen

They say play it mean and keep him keen so
He calls, I pretend I’m not there
I call and don’t leave a message.
He’s affectionate but I play it cool
I restrain myself from running to his arms.
He begs for attention, says I’m not fair
Finally, I turn to him, but he’s not there

Lara St. Onge

Minted Minds

It absorbs the heat from the sun
The earth so strong an attraction
Life blooms from it, the wind cleans
In time we will realize the ignorance.

It gives us so much, all we do is take
Put back in and the grass will grow
With it, humanity will withdraw
And the wild flowers will bloom again.

Soon earth and sun will end all
No longer will rivers flow freely
We will all be taken by it, life
The two will work together to end their misery

In the past they were gods, envied
Now our Gods are minted
Nothing stands in the way of the green
Other than the sun and earth.

Kent Mercer
A tribute forgotten on a hill of rain (J.H. Rails)

The sun is peeking through the stars attempting to see the raindrops sliding down the petals of wild blonde flowers. A beautiful sight, a wonderful thought - perhaps now the fruits of roots are ready to be broken open with all their beauty for you to see.

A wolf howling in the background, a silhouette touching my shoulder. As i look back, i could see the virgin flame discovering the pale darkness of the night. With a jet of movement i turned to notice the sound of silence overpowering the cowardliness of my surroundings. I guess the roots of freedom are hidden too deep in the soft dirt; never to be dug by the lazy bones of ignorance.

For beauty is innocence, for silence is knowledge... so on and so forth. I scream: “Let yourself flow in the questions of the night!” there will you discover a cranium filled with flowers willing to be held upright.

A stream slipping through the grasp of burning rocks quickly let itself down by rope to a hidden cave. Roaming from tree to tree, from leaf to leaf, the hairy beast bearing a child buried the water beneath the heated dirt. Saved from death, attempting to find the crossroads of beauty, the liquid is losing time, losing itself in the draining worms of hate.

I remember being born in a bath of innocence. When years added themselves, one atop the other, i had the luck to find a great deal of knowledge. Until the day came when the beast told me about the roads of ultimate, infinite flowers - there i found that everything i learned was wrong and today i know...

nothing.

And today i come to a conclusion wrapped with questions.

Karl C. Dancause

Burial Gown

All flourished flowers
Vivid water colour,
Doomed to eternal sadness.

Sinister glazing eyes
Endless madness,
Killer thought. I felt.

Nuptial burial
Of the white, faded Charlotte,
Blue angelic features.

Slim painted waist
Dancing slowly in the room
The waltz of the insane scarecrow.

Pure silk skin
Falling life of a broken leaf
On the sacred marble floor.

The sarcastic smile
Of the disturbed sister.
The Underlying Alice in Chains.

Dreadful thought
Of the North Witch.
 Burning tears drop of a newborn.

Fire in the heart
Ice in the eyes
Snowflakes growing on walls.

Vada
Soon I'll Leave Forever

Within a roomy world,
I've confined myself in one.
Inside of which I've swirled,
Inside of which I'd run.

The trials come in time,
To pass judgement strong.
In side a hurricane forms,
Inside the winds belong.

The walls they fade away,
A tempest strives to storm.
Outside I will create,
Outside I will reform.

Until foundations are uprooted,
And a fortress returned to sand.
Outside a force will charge,
Outside I will command.

When the calm arrives,
A fate does guide me home.
Inside the solid walls,
Inside the room I roam.

J.C. Raymond
The first thing I do when I show up - I mean after unlocking the doors, counting the cash and sucking down a Tahiti Treat as fast as I can. The first thing that I do is lay out the lottery tickets. Takes ten minutes if you do it carefully. Wednesdays... the stock is alright... we always have a lot of Bingoes, Lucky Charms on Wednesday. Thursday is a big scratch and win day. BIG. One time, I swear to god I handed out a thousand dollars in winnings from my till. A thousand dollars! Small winnings... five bucks here... A hundred bucks there. But everytime there was that same look on people’s faces. Doesn’t matter how much money. No! These people were lookin’ at me like I had given them cash from Heaven. And the funny thing is... they’d tip me. Wasn’t like I was scratchin’ the tickets? But I don’t know... Thursdays. Count on it - it was magic. But if Thursday was magic then Friday was, like, crazy. I usually drank two Tahiti Treats that morning because that was the day two things happened. Number One - and this is the most important one because without it number two wouldn’t have never ever happened. Number One - New tickets came in. Package gets delivered sometime in the middle of the night. Like thrown from a fast moving government car or something, and that morning I pick it up and see the new scratch and wins. Number two - Mr Paul Wragg. Fattest man in town. So fat he can’t get up the stairs - he’s gotta walk up this plank we got for the deliveries, right? Anyways, good ol’ Mr Paul Wragg shows up. BOOM BOOM - to see the new lottery tickets - of course after he’s eaten his fill of Hot
Lips and Fuzzy Peaches - fifty or sixty of 'em. So he walks up to the counter - leans on it. And I'm standing behind listening to it and his guts rollin' out on top and everyone else in the store is kinda lookin over because the damn guys breathin' so heavy and he says - annoying voice too - he says. "What's the new ticket Jimmy?" Know what else? Jimmy's not my name. That was the last guy who worked here. But he says, "What's the new ticket?" And so I kind of brush my hand across. I'm feeling pretty good. Feelin' suspenseful. And I say... SHOOTING STARS. Now I don't hate much in life, but I hate - I DESPISE the way this guy - lottery freak Mr. Paul Wragg - starts panting when he hears about new tickets. "SHOOTING STARS - SHOOTING STARS" he says kinda rockin' the counter with his gut. And so I take out the tickets - but slow like I'm working at Sterling Jewellers and this is a diamond ring. And he's poppin' those Hot Lip candies in his mouth and he says - and I hate this part too. He says... count me out every third SHOOTING STAR. Every third one! Like three is sacred. Like somehow the Holy Trinity is gonna help the fattest man in Lantzville win the lottery. But I shut my mouth. And I kind of dance my fingers across and pluck out every third shooting star stacking them carefully - elegantly - until there's about 30 bucks worth. And at that point - Mr. Paul Wragg - pushes himself away from the counter - and Jesus, I've seen Space Shuttles leave the atmosphere with less force. And he cinches up his pants - I hate those pants - and he sticks out his fat hand. And I wait. Like I'm cursing the tickets. And then... I hand them over. And smile. I always smile. But secretly I'm sucking all the luck out of those shooting stars. And after he's waddles away, down the plank and into his mini van - that's got barbells in the back to weigh it down. After he's gone, I drink another Tahiti Treat - you know, in celebration - cause I know that Mr. Paul Wragg - the fattest man I know - will never win the lottery. Not as long as I work here.

Craig Taylor