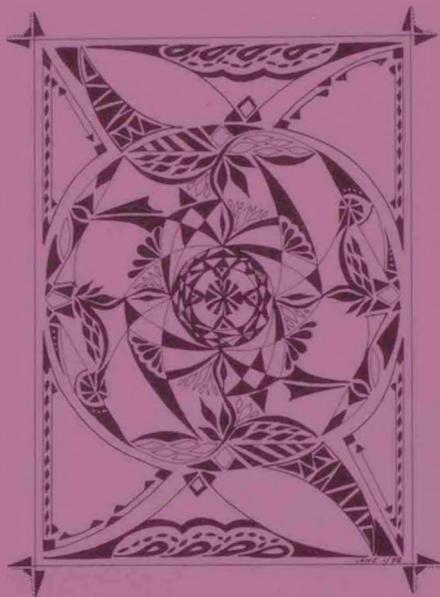


The Mitre

1998-1999



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The Mitre

1998-1999

105th Edition

Editor: Tracey Millen

Bishop's University

A literary tradition since 1893



A special word of thanks...

As the editor of the 105th edition of The Mitre, I wish to sincerely thank Noni Howard for her creative and financial contributions. Noni Howard graduated from Bishop's University in 1971, and has since offered continual support to this institution. It is a pleasure to be able to publish her works in The Mitre.

I have had much help in putting together this collection of student, faculty and alumni creations, for which I desire to presently acknowledge. Thank you to Kevin King, VP Public, for making time for my seemingly incessant questions, to Dr. G. Retzleff at the English Department for his consulting efforts, to Yoko Ito for her last-minute typing, and to Frank Nadeau and Alex McLean for their computer savvy (I would not have made it without you!).

The Mitre reflects the creative abilities of the people at this university, and so my acknowledgment is not complete without thanking all those who contributed their talent to this year's edition. Compiling the 1998-1999 Mitre was challenging, and I feel rewarding, as I read the submissions. I hope you will share this same feeling as you turn over the next pages...

Tracey Millen
Editor 1998-1999

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Cover art by Anna M. Grant

Heroes

I've had few heroes
in my life.
None, to whom,
I've been a wife.

The hero of my tale,
a man who registers high
on my scale,
Is the father behind
my life page.

He was there from the start.
Very few times were we apart.
Built like a bully,
Soft as a teddy.

Behind his salt and pepper hair,
He's never shown despair.
My father,
never worries over trouble waters.
A hero of my heart,
never to depart.
Forever, my father.

Christine Bennett

Forever Pledge

I write about your beauty as if it can be put into words
And yet I know that the shapes that I transform into these
words,
Could never say what I mean, or feel what I do.
Nor could the wind that carries this message to you
For even the calmest of all summer breezes,
Would only be too harsh on your cheek.
The times when I know that you really feel my pledge,
Are those times when you smell the oil of lavender
And you remember,
That my action once caused you pain.
But then you feel the desire that I house within myself,
And I search for the right time or way to tell you...
The time has come, and I reach inside and stand before the
cloaked figure
And say, "I promise."
I promise, to the way that you make me feel,
and the way you transformed me.
Who was that small scared being that once tested the waters
of hell
And seemed for awhile never to return?
But then, a lifeline was thrown
And you were there on the other end,
Holding on tighter, promising never to let me go.
I promise to the times that we share together
that seem never to be quite enough,
For time is but a plastic hand that stands between our fusion
Why does this hand all too often seem to write our fate?
That one day when neither the waking of the moon nor the
sleeping of the sun
Dictates what we do,

Is the day I long for.
I pray for this day.
This is the day when I hold your hand and know. .
You are my guide, show me the way.

Krista Bradley

Left

Craft me a river that I may send a telegram
fit with melodies set in counterpoint,
to declare my happiness.
And as I stand on the break (stairs receding onto the water's
surface),
I am devoid of any snarl over the year which I have paid:
A fallen hunter I was, reflecting on tastes
tainted by honey

but alas-releasing the silk from my hands
the last of my heart, and I am hopeful again.

Scott Baker

To Annie:

That slow seductive S that is your thigh,
will always be so beautiful to me.
The golden amber stone that is your eye,
will always hide the soul that sets me free.

But your thigh may grow rounder or flatter,
firmer and more toned or softer and fatter;
and your eyes may grow dim with age,
or angry and burn with rage.

But even as this poem started like a sonnet,
and lost its meter, so to you will grow
and change and time will show
that you too will become different.

Now the poem loses its rhyme but
the beauty of the words written here;
are still true.

And you with age and change,
will still remain true and beautiful,
because it is not the form of the
poem that makes it enchanting

it is the
idea
of the poem
and the
soul
of a woman.

Steve McClung

Untitled

All alone in a crowded room
Searching for silence in all the noise
My mind and body dissolve together
And I'm floating free.

Claustrophobic in an open field
Shouting into the quiet
I wander aimlessly through empty halls
Hunting for enlightenment.

Why must I question whether I'm normal
When there's no such thing?
Why do I wonder what others are thinking
When it doesn't make a difference?

I search for my truth
in the wisdom of others
I look into the faces around me
to find my own reflection.

Mieka Tilley

The Lights

The drive is a quiet one.

You don't have to go very far out of town to find a place where the only light is from the stars and the only sound is the rolling thunder of the Slave River. I am, however, searching for a sight that is more elusive than the ever-present pine and the river that has defined my town since its beginning. I am searching for the Aurora Borealis, the Northern Lights.

I finally find it, the ghostly site known to locals as Halfway House. It is halfway between two towns that used to be rivals. My home town, which serves as the end point of four sets of rapids that stretch along thirty kilometers of river, won out over what was originally known as Smith Landing, now a village called Fort Fitzgerald that is struggling for survival. Freight would be pulled off the barges before the first set of rapids, near Fort Fitzgerald, and it would be pulled by horses along the thirty-some kilometers to my town before getting loaded onto a new set of barges on the safe side of the rapids, continuing on their voyage to the Mackenzie Delta. There are no barges along the river now, and no horses to be stabled at Halfway.

There used to be a run-down cottage at Halfway House, a building that once served to stable horses. I've never been in it, but I knew that it was always there. It's gone now, just another ancient relic lost to new generations, burned and destroyed a few years ago. The name Halfway House is known only to the locals

who still define the grass-covered field by its past, locals like me. It is a perfect place to see the Lights, with a wide open plain that you can drive your car into and turn off the lights. I guess that it's a pretty romantic place, but I've only ever taken one girl out there, and we were too distracted by the celestial show to worry about romance.

They say that my town is the third-best place in the world to view the Northern Lights, and I say that those other two must be pretty damned impressive, because I don't know how it gets any better than this. The Lights are one of the things that I miss most about the North when I'm gone, but then are the thing that I always take for granted when I'm here. Not today, though. I drive the car into the long grass, turn it off, and lie on the hood, waiting for my eyes to adjust to the darkness.

It is late August, one of the best times to view the Lights, but there is a bit of a nip in the air already. Fall isn't far off, and neither is the first frost that comes with it. The warmth of the engine keeps away the cold, though, and the sound of it cooling off is the only distraction in an otherwise perfect night. Slowly, as I stare at the canopy of stars that is opening up before me, they appear.

It is easy to understand how early North Americans thought that the Northern Lights were alive, or that they represented the spirits of the dead, or of the gods. They shyly blossom out of the darkness, at first only between the stars, but soon, gathering confidence, they out-shine the stars and

dominate the heavens. They writhe and roll, at once like fireworks and then serpents, then like ribbons of moonlight, then suddenly exploding once more in a great finale. They change from white to green to pink and back to white with such fluidity that I wouldn't even notice if I wasn't looking for it. On an impulse I begin to whistle a simple tune, playing out the superstition of native Americans that the Northern Lights would come down and grant you a wish if you whistled. They seem to respond, twisting and turning in on themselves until they seem to disappear, and then they bloom once more. Time seems to grind to a halt as I lose myself entirely in the show.

People often ask me what the Northern Lights are, why they happen. I know that I've heard the scientific explanation; it's something about solar wind, but I don't really care. They remind me that I don't always need to know everything, and that some things are better left as mysteries, but more importantly, they will always bring me home.

Morgan Jones

The Joyous Fiddler

For whom does the joyous fiddler play?
He plays for me, tomorrow and today.

A.G. Klei



Photograph by Allison Kinnucan

To those who are socially "more worth" than me

Do you think that I don't see?
Do you think that I'm blind?
Do you think that I don't think?
Do you think that I don't know what you want from me?

Yes, you want to throw me away
You want to throw me three thousand miles away from you
You want to throw me like you throw a rock at the sea

But, remember!
Rocks always come back to the shore

It does take three million years to do it
But I'm patient

Marcel Anicic

Understanding Vincent

I want to cut my ear off
to feel the loss physically
so the world sounds less
than it really is.
A muted version of
the insanity that echoes daily
is the closest sense of freedom
I can imitate.

Cori Klassen

A Dedication

The rejection of the spilling of thoughts into words
And the rampant rolling of tears
Are the paradox of changing worlds.
Remembering the thought that peace would arrive
Once the final sleep was achieved
Now holds frustration
As only a touch would compensate for the hole.
My body aches and shivers over the yearning
For your eyes to look at the horizon
And feel that it was yours once more.
Now it is left only for those who wake,
For your departure leaves a space only heaven can fill.
Our hands will meet again in the days of tomorrow
As the light will bring us together
While our guardians govern the greatness of our greeting.

J. Duncan

The Stolen Generation (or Half-caste)

I own a pain that grows like a mossy rock
as I fade into white
at the commanding call "*Terra Nullius!*".
Will you please dig out my pain,
layer by mossy layer?
For we remain torn.
The pack of wolves came one night
and preyed us from our warm dens.
My ancestors refuse to include
me in their Dreaming,
and the sound of repentance is stifled
by the hum of white pride.
You are renewed.
You are taking shape again.
But we are still
 Stolen
 Stolen.
You are taking shape again.
(I think I hear a wolf howl)
You are taking shape again.
Removal then renewal
are obsolete to us,
who have no roots to trace,
like a dried stem stretches into the land,
our land,
hoping for nourishment.

I belong in the desert.
I belong by the sea.

The wolves only fed us the tranquillity
you get when you live next to a freeway.
The moss is eating us alive.
Do not take my picture - you will take away my soul.
So go ahead and celebrate your sorrybook.
It is not enough for me.
How can it be?

Tracey Millen

The Elders

I sat in the grass and listened
to the ancient voices of the trees.
They whispered and their leaves
danced in the animated light of the sun,
the light bouncing effervescently
from leaf to leaf.
Joyously they told me of years
gone by --
years displayed from trunk,
to branch,
to twig,
to leaf.
All dancing and saying
listen... we have more to tell.

Tuuli Hannula

cape canaveral, january 28, 1986

higher the hieroglyph drifts
across the canaveral sky

takes shape before our wondering eyes
first, the long white stem, flowers
into a red/yellow explosion, blossoming
into an eternal white cloud, a calligraphy
with long, dangling "glyphs"
against the mary-blue sky

a preliminary reading
by the nasa "hieros"
*"the blastoff from earth
to heaven was flawless"*
flying a seven-personed noah's ark
who gained instant access to god

now the exegesis of the hieroglyph
the television replays of the graffiti
the slow motion formation
the computer-simulated reconstruction
as if we could somehow enter inside
and understand death's instant hieroglyph

and pieces of doubt falling
all over the oceans of this land
television-frozen school children
see the secure and trustworthy world
of teachers and adults suddenly self-destruct
into an ephemeral flower that wilts at birth

"why did god allow this to happen?"

now a new hieroglyph to read,
a new specimen of day care art
"mene, mene, tekel, upharsin"
awaits a daniel interpretation

meanwhile the white cloud has gone
but what fallout shelter
will protect us from debris
and petals of this falling hieroglyph?

brian scott kelley

Summer's Reign

Now does twilight take the stage
So slowly to descend
Reminders of the yesterdays
That summer's reign does end.
Captive, silent to observe
A lonely voice does call
Crying out to fate
If it's too late
Then let the curtain fall.

Linda G. Mitchell



Drawing by Kyla Rand

My Franglais, À Moi!

Où étais-tu
All my life?
Je t'offre le calumet de la paix,
Understand? It's a peace offer...

En France, une cig c'est une clope
Where do they come up with that stuff?
Je t'offre une puff...
Let's get lost in the cloud

Pour nous.
Gorgeous, laid?
French? Anglais?
Je m'en fous.

All I ask, is please, Love-moi
OK?
I just want to be in your space, Carré
Je veux seulement être antre toi.

Nansy Jean-Baptiste

Looking for strawberries in June

I have to tell you
about the words I
used to know such
words so sheer thin
transparent so light
and quick I had such
words for wind for
whatever grew
I knew a certain
leaf-language from
somewhere but now

it is all used up
I have come to the
end of some line or
other like walking
on railroad ties in
the country looking
for strawberries in
June and suddenly
the ties end in the
middle of no-place
and I stop to look
around to take my
direction but I

don't recognize the
landscape it is all
grey feathery the
voices of birds are
foreign yet I used
to know such words
japanned brushed and
papery whitefolded
Russian flowerwords
cabagge roses huge
holes in the head of
the universe pouring
out rosy revolutions:
and I used to know

2)

swarthy eastern words
heavy with Hebrew then
I was kidnapped by
gypsies I knew the
up and down of their
dark-blue anger the
leathery touch of
the fortune-telling
begging wandering
words but what's
become of them?
I don't know I'm

just standing here
on the threshold of
a different country,
everything is made
of plastic and silence;
what month it is any-
way? I'm knocking at
the door but nobody
answers I mutter *Lenin*
Karl Marx Walt Whitman
Chaucer Hopkins even
Archibald Lampman but
nobody comes I don't

know the password
I only know it has
nothing to do with
being good or true
nothing to do with
being beautiful.

Miriam Waddington

Editor's Note: Miriam Waddington is one of Canada's greatest living poets. With over 15 collections of poetry and prose in print, she is presently living in Vancouver and is one of the original members of the poetry contingent that graced Canada's Premier Arts Festival here at Bishop's in 1970, which was called "Festival '70."

The Messiah

For Irving Layton

they came from all over eastern europe
to see
your sacrificial penis, circumcised
by an act of birth or circumstance.

they came to marvel
and worship at the untouched member
that would one day
tell you
that you embodied the messiah
they were looking for.

your birth was sealed
and your lips opened

to our constant wonder.

you were/ are
the messiah
to all you touched
in your fire of passion
and human needs.

You have changed the energy
on the earth

which still resounds
to the mantra
of your name

and words out of all of our mouths
to you **now** will be
poetry.

© Noni Howard
Oct. 4/ 98

Afternoon light
almost of the setting sun
in an early Paris automne
gypsy girl begging
a pippi longstocking child.

There is something that is lost amongst the peeling paint
and the broken shutters,
Yet in this enclosure of walls and curtained
windows
There is found some of what is promised by the dream.

Shuttered windows and closing shops
The palais is empty that once was a stage for intrigues and
disputes.
There was a time this vista was filled with the ideas
of the Renaissance - they now lie dead, hidden and unseen by
the mass of August tourists.
Medieval views of the city overstated by the summer heat.

R. A. Carson

My Dream

Every night I lay down and thoughts of no specific kind enter my mind. Will I dream tonight? Will I be able to sleep? How quickly will tomorrow come?

In my dreams I am frightened to my very core. More often than not I am consumed by the unknown. I am scared because I am alone.

Frequently something looms over me, threatening my life. All my struggles to get up, kick, or scream are in vain. Terrified, alone, frozen, I am trapped inside a paralyzed body. Finally, exhausted, I accept this horrible fate and wait for the unknown to take my life, my soul. Moments before I die, I make a narrow escape by waking. Why this dream?

Still drunk with sleep, I make my way to the kitchen for a glass of water. I then return to bed; terrified that the beast has not left my subconscious.

In efforts of prevention I slide deep under my covers, searching for safety. Again the night consumes me. I am lost and unsure of my surroundings that are filled with possible companions or potential enemies. I wait for dawn to come for my waking dreams are happy, unlike the nightmares that haunt my nights.

Lara St. Onge

Enough?

I have the patience, but not the time to waste.

I have the strength to keep on hoping or does that make me weak?

The bond I continue to make keeps on disappearing.

The chin I try to hold up continues to fall.

I long for clarity, even a reason.

I'm intelligent and yet I can't understand.

Should I continue to give love when it doesn't want to be taken?

Dare I ask for love

when there's none to be given?

Forgive me for being needy,

I am human.

Angela Anderson

A Mantra For My Twenty Fourth Birthday.

There were never savages in the forest.
No Spanish natives into human sacrifice.
Cannibals do not exist.
They are the stuff of pulp, of comic, of classics illustrated.
The imaginings I had in childhood are sweet, creamy sickly.
I sometimes gag at the words of two decades ago. Too much.

There were never enemies in the street.
No cruel girls into embarrassment.
Oppressors do not exist.
They are the stuff of misplaced fear and lack of confidence.
The imaginings I had are bitter, wine and grapefruit.
I always cringe at the words of a decade ago. Much too much.

There were never girls in love with me.
No popularity contests into being mean.
Selfless acts of "romance" do not exist.
They are the stuff of escape, of overestimation, and
unbelievable pettiness.
The imaginings I had at twenty are sour, burning stinging.
I always scowl at the words of four years ago. They were way
too much.

And salt.
To protect against the Demons of Memory.
To heal sores and make them smart.
No more regret. No more pain.
Wounds seal up, to tear again.

M.



Photograph by D. Vouliouris

«In Other News Today»

Hank Packard had lived in Sudbury all of his life. He has worked for Inco. limited, a coal mining company for over half of his life. Hank, a father of five, has never really moved up the "ladder of promotion"; for nearly twenty-five years now, he has worked inside the mines, where the action and danger lies each day. Much like those who have worked in the salmon fishery, mining is the only thing he knows. His father was a miner, his uncle, even his brother was a miner; so it was no surprise that after he graduated night school, that he would return to the mines that he had been sentenced to work for all of his life.

Hank was a good father too. All of his children have always been well looked after, and despite even working fourteen-hour shifts, he would always check in on them before going to bed himself. In his time at the mine, he has seen his share of scary events. Take for example, when the elevator cable ruptured, sending him down three flights before the safety cable snapped to save his life; or when a fire started in the cave, and everyone in it had to be taken to the hospital for smoke inhalation. Yeah, Hank had been through his share, but he always managed to keep his cool. The only time he ever panicked was when his first child had a fever when she was a newborn, or when his last child got into a fight at school; it was at this time, Hank became as worrisome as an overprotective grandmother.

Today was like any other work day; as he had done for nearly twenty-five years, Hank headed off for work. And he punched in five minutes early as he always had before; he did this because he knew that the owners had set punch clock five minutes back so that they scrimp on paying any overtime. Yeah, Hank knew all the tricks. He had been working in the new Creighton mine for the last two months now, again working where the action and danger was. Things had been going along real smoothly until it happened. Hank was working two thousand meters below when an earthquake hit. He tried to remain calm as he took shelter from the falling debris. Hank

made a break for the arch that held up the walkway, thinking it would serve good shelter as it had done in previous situations. It didn't seem to matter that his life was at risk; "It's part of the job", he always said.

When the rescuers found his body under the fallen coal from the collapsed ceiling the following day, a terrible silence came over all of the workers at the mine. Miners, health aids, reporters, all of them, silent. Somehow that same eerie silence was felt all over Sudbury that day. All over the mine, memories of Hank filled the minds of many. Like the fact he had won the father-son sack race for four years straight at the company picnic; or that he refused to be union leader for his principles, or the reality that he was probably the kindest guy in Sudbury. But as people in other provinces, and even the U.S. were flicking the T.V. channels, looking for something interesting to watch. All they ever heard was that in other news today, some earthquake shook in Ontario.

Victor Rodriguez

Curtis

Running, running across the open field, with my cousin
at my heels. As the sun starts to set and I hear my mother
calling in the distance, but I keep running. Trees, stones, holes
and grass surround me and I stop to rest. As I look around my
eye catches two solitary apple trees. Not crab apple trees or
granny smith, but wild apples. Apples that give you a stomach
ache if you eat too many and turn you green. My cousin beside
me, his heavy breathing ringing in my ears and the wind
blowing between them. A group of cows looking our way,
silently chewing the green grass in their mouths. Up and down,
up and down like a yo-yo on a string. The cars silently passing
by leaving a trail of dust behind them. A sunny day, a summer
day, a warm day that will forever stay with me.

Melinda Arnett

Not Alone

i wish i could make it go away.
i try but i can't.
i am trying too hard,
i have to let it be,
put it to the back of my mind,
and just let it sit there
with no thoughts or feelings.
Alone.

time will heal the wounds in my heart,
the confusion in my head.
the caring will slowly slip away,
leaving only anger.
until that too disappears.
then i will be left with indifference.
Alone.

hold on until i am indifferent.
let my subconscious heal the wounds
and dissolve the feelings.
i want to live here, in the present.
you are what makes me happy.
not the past, only the present.
know that i care about you.
Let your care help me to
heal the wounds,
forget the feelings.
just be with me while i heal.
Not Alone.

Heather Coutts

Life

Arabesque théâtrale
suspendue au fil des jours
perdue au lendemain
d'un cirque quotidien

Meandres burlesques
pirouettes du genre humain
balancoire triangulaire
de bonnes soubrettes

acrobatie du destin
perfide pouvoir de mains
retenir notre vie
voire rien

présentateur pervers
pingouin sans cravate
ou clown sans nez
manège rubrique imaginaire

chinoiseries corporelles
lampion et chair de feu
lion et éléphant
que de singeries burlesques

théâtre sans scène
acteurs sans costume
texte sans mots
voix sans paroles
langage sans code
porte sans clé
clé sans mystère

Caroline Houde

Then He Terminated

He said that he would never give up
Then he did.

He said that he would never leave
Then he left.

He said that he loved her
Then he stopped.

He said for her to open up
Then she disappointed.

She said acknowledgment of her mistake
Then he terminated.

She said that she would never give up
She still fights.

She said threats of leaving him
She still remains.

She said that she loved him
She always will.

She said for him to open up
She saw beauty.

She said acknowledgment of her mistake
Then he terminated.

He said that he lost his girlfriend
She said he lost his idea of her.

Megan Brayford

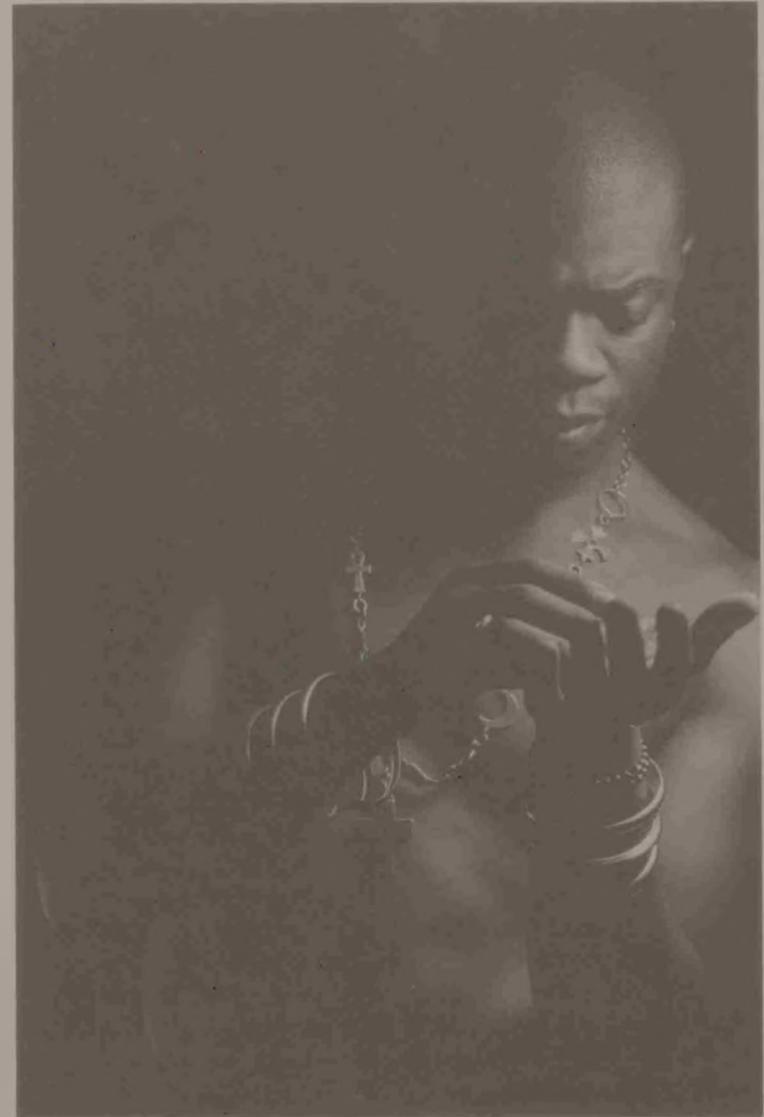
stolen line

As I look back on my past, I realize now that I chose the wrong woman to marry.

I met and fell in love with her during our senior year of university. It was a Wednesday, or no, maybe a Thursday, and a well-known professor was to lecture on *"Improvements in the standard of living among the British working classes during the First World War"*. I had no desire to attend the lecture but under pressure from, we'll call him Professor X, I grudgingly agreed to go. Waking ten minutes or so before the lecture was to begin, I threw on my shirt and tie, briefly smelling the shirt to ensure it was passably clean, and ran out the door. As I trotted down the street, cursing my missed chance to smoke a quick cigarette before leaving, she caught my eye. She was headed in the same direction as I was, towards the lecture hall, and from behind, she had an amazing figure. She wore a tight blue dress that stopped, provocatively, just above her knees, and her hair was gathered on the top of her head, revealing the nape of her neck and even a little of her back. I sped up to a jog, despite the dead heat of the summer evening, determined to catch a better look.

I pulled alongside her, she turned and looked at me with a mixture of surprise and disdain. She stood, regarding me with large brown eyes, her mouth pursed into a slight pout that was not altogether innocent. I realized I had been staring. Feeling the burning sensation of embarrassment working, its way into my cheeks, I was suddenly aware of the sweat from my jog dripping down my forehead and running in rivulets down my back. Dismissing the lecture, I reached into my pocket and pulled out my cigarettes, offering her the pack. "No thanks," she said. "I don't smoke."

Susanne



"Rolan" by Alex McLean

The Freeway

Nora sighed long and heavy at the slow meandering snake of cars before her. Her feet were screaming for freedom from her tight, white nurse's shoes. She couldn't release them yet, though. Fifteen kilometres to her new neighbourhood. At the rate of this traffic it could be a long fifteen kilometres. This did not bother Nora; these car rides home from work were fast becoming her moments of peaceful solitude. During the drive home she could abandon her personal yearnings and allow her imagination to wonder and wander. On this particular Wednesday her imagination had made its way into the car beside her. Between glances at the traffic's general progression, Nora's tired eyes inspected the young man's profile in the shining blue Mercedes. *Young and rich, a lucky combo*, she mused. Nora preened her neck to check out his hands for a ring. She couldn't see one, so she decided that he was on his way to his girlfriend's house to propose marriage. He had soft brown, wavy hair and cheeks rosy with tender youth. He looked so unmarred by time. Nora's stare dropped to her own, weathered hands. Her thoughts began to spin inwards. Spontaneously she was seized by the urge to warn that man to listen to what his fiance had to say, always. No matter how foolish her words might sometimes seem, each syllable comes from her soul and every one has importance.

As Nora was erupting with those thoughts of urgency, the young man's car became a gleaming blue blur. She jolted to awareness and pressed her throbbing right foot on the gas pedal. She felt the wetness sliding down her face and dabbed away at it, humiliated in front of herself. *Crying over what?* She scolded. She ordered her whirling thoughts to freeze and reminded herself that she was heading to a pleasant house in which a good man would soon be expecting his tea. *Now there's something to focus my mind on, we'll have a nice quiche and veggies. Broccoli, Adam adores broccoli. And it's so good for him.*

She slowed her car as she entered her new suburban world. *I wouldn't want to hit any nice, Australian children.* Nora pulled into her driveway and switched off her engine. Her thoughts were all about quiche and broccoli. She willed her body into the house but her muscles and joints did not want to budge. Her body was crying to be somewhere else. Somewhere with a climate that would not cause her skin to peel off due to sun damage. A place where the birds would wake her with gentle song, not harsh, monkey-like wails. Somewhere with a small, quaint garden that had been planted and cared for for years by herself. Her bones ached for little green properties; not massive, thirsty landscapes. She was hurting with pangs for England. *Broccoli, quiche...* She forced her body through the front door. Nora carefully removed her shoes and placed them in the front hall closet. She marched into the kitchen. The glaringly clean, not decorated by Nora kitchen. She began to systematically prepare the quiche's pie crust. *Making a perfect quiche is like making a perfect marriage. Simply put in all of the correct ingredients; make sure not to over do it and it will turn out golden and delicious! Do not fuss about the hard work or how tired you are; rewards are on their way.*

Nora's eyes led her mind to the view from the kitchen window. Friends had warned her that Australia's beauty would require some getting used to. Perhaps it would be easier if she were free to discover it as she pleased. So far nothing of this experience could she honestly call her own. Nora sank her fingers into the welcoming dough. She dug her nails into the vulnerable mush. The mass of flour and water was within her control. But still, it had to be done as according to a book. Or else it might not sit well in Adam's stomach. *Best to keep his system healthy and working well; so much else depends on it.*

Adam came in an hour late. The food was dried out from its wait but she had managed to keep it warm. The customary kiss (peck) on the cheek and they were seated within five minutes of his entrance.

"Tasty but a little bit dry, Nora Dear."

Nora silently replied that it was nice and moist sixty minutes ago at teatime. The eating occurred with minimal conversation. Adam vanished into his office shortly after the meal. Nora was kept on her now numb feet by the dishes. They had winged it over from the continent to create more opportunity for the success of Adam and their future offspring. With the amount of physical contact between them, their collective future appeared quite childless.

Steam rose in dense puffs from the sink. It took Nora half a minute to realise that she was scalding her hands. Thus adding to the parts of her that had gone numb. With pink and swollen hands and feet, Nora walked, (with the gait of a zombie,) towards Adam's office door. Her knock was close to silence.

"What is it, Nora?"

She paused, and then softly; "I, uh, I was just wondering when you were planning to retire."

"Not yet."

"Oh. I think I'll head up, then. That is, of course.. .Do you need any coffee or tea?"

"Some black tea would do."

"Alright. Won't be a minute." Nora shuffled back into her domain and switched on the kettle. She pulled out the tea marked 'English Breakfast'. She eyed the words longingly. It had not been her decision to leave. She had friends back there, and family. And a garden, which she had sown and reared, that had stood in splendour on the day that she had left it. Nora had planted her own garden and grown comfortable in it. The prospect of familiarising herself with new flora... *One sugar, as he likes it.* Nora delivered the hot mug and dragged herself upstairs to the king sized bed. She allowed her lids to drop and surrendered to sleep, alone again.

Nora was forced to wakefulness by her screeching alarm clock. She flopped over into the empty space beside her. She could hear the shower going so she hurried downstairs to fetch his breakfast. *Funny how no matter where one is, some things remain the same.* Nora picked up a glass, examined it

as she rolled it in her hands. She then loosened her hold and watched it explode into a multitude of shards. *Oops.*

Adam entered the kitchen and failed to notice a mess of any sort.

The couple discussed his big day at work and her day off, briefly. Her body's tension eased with the closing of the door behind Adam. Nora sat down and thought of her plans for the day. Groceries, house cleaning, lunch with her new neighbour; Nora could hardly have refused that invitation. This afternoon promised a chance for her to learn something about these people around her.

"So why did you decide to leave?" Felicity the neighbour questioned.

I didn't. "My husband was offered a position here. We've heard that Australia is such a wonderful place to raise children. All of the open space." *Good for raising sheep.*

Felicity smiled and offered her guest a biscuit.

"Yes, thank-you."

"I've barely had a chance to talk to your husband, he seems such a busy man, remarked the hostess.

"He works long hours." Nora's eyes clouded. Their blue became a shadow of grey. "He's a very good man," her lips were numb as she spoke. "He's not one of those sensitive, new-age men; he has traditional values.. But his heart is in the right place. He wanted a change." *And I need one now.*

There was a moment of quiet after that. The word *change* sat in the air directly within Nora's line of vision. Somehow it managed to echo and surround her. She struggled to push down the too familiar feeling of yearning. She reached for another biscuit.

"Well I'm sure you'll come to love this place. It'll grow on you faster than you know it. It just takes a little adjusting. Have you been up the coast at all yet?" Nora gulped down the final crumb. "No. But I will explore soon," she surprised herself with her tone of conviction. Nora's gaze shifted around the cosy sitting room. There were photographs of Felicity's teenage boy and girl tacked to a board along the wall. Living

love filtered out of the eyes in the photos and filled the room. Time demanded Nora's attention as it displayed its passing to her via the mocking hands on her reliable wrist timekeeper. As if anything can *keep* time. She rose.

"I have groceries to pick up. Thank-you Felicity, you have a lovely home."

"Oh. Goodness. Well, you'll have to come back when you have more time."

"Yes. Thank-you again."

As Nora prepared to leave her house, she dropped some extra cheques into her handbag; in case the load were to be heavy that day. One never knows what necessity one may one may find while out on an errand.

The freeway looked particularly open and inviting without the rush hour traffic to which she had become accustomed. Nora reviewed her grocery list mentally. *Milk for Adam's morning coffee, some fresh bread for his toast, broccoli...* Somehow Nora missed the turn-off for the shopping centre. Instead she found herself on the section of the freeway marked by an **EXIT** sign. Her foot remained firmly on the accelerator. For the first time since she could recall, her mind, soul and body were working in sync.

Nina Eddy

"Walking down a road in Cape Breton" (Summer, 1997)

The world is sad and dull and the heavy sky might fall down today:

Fat grey raindrops, too bloated to bother, simply fall;
A mournful wind moans, hits the trees
A howl whispering as it wanders the deserted road
and the empty fields

And into the blank unblinking eyes
broken windows of forsaken shacks.
They are the orbits of the skull
houses the colour of bones left by ancestors, left unburied in
the hurry to leave
left to turn grey by wind and rain and snow
And the flesh and eyes the feast of worms;
The banquet over, nothing remains
but bones and emptiness.

A flash of sun, the clouds come undone,
move apart, let out a
Glittering, metal truck,
Driver waves and moves on down the road.
A snake shimmers the grasses.
Kneeling down, I see a wild tumble
Red and green and white:
Strawberries growing in this grave yard and all along the road.

Tara Hurst

The Forty Two Love Poems - III

somewhere in another city
you lie with your
eyes closed against darkness
away from me and
not in my arms

and my mortality
flies like a loop
from a stretching cord
round your sleeping thoughts

telling you that
we can't start over again
we are no longer as young
as yesterday
that we must love each other
against the ruin of the world
or die

and somewhere
in these cities of our lost illusions
we must find the strength
behind the tears
to love

and to hate with a passion
all that is not love

and to remember
those of us
who first taught us
what love is.

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1997

Sing, Maestro.

Sing, Maestro, sing softly, sweetly;
In truth you sing more life to me
Than libraries can make complete -
Than all the world's philosophy.

In dappled light, as day dissolves,
Your voice, alive, pristine and pure
Still charms the woods, as earth revolves,
This sacred moment makes me sure

That from these trees, the here, the now,
I see more of the eternal
Than in all mankind's works somehow,

Truth lives in your ethereal
Song, blessing me that I have heard,
Such clarity without a word.

Frank Willdig



"Wistful" by Erin Ladouceur

Mirror

A mirror knows all
About the one who looks in
It hangs on the wall
There's no way to win

Like a staring picture
You can't turn it away
It'll never talk back
For it has nothing to say

The mirror will always listen
It has nowhere to go
When you're feeling alone

Laurie Dyke

INSOMNIA

I guess that is one of the good things about living in a small apartment - there is no place to hide. Nothing can jump out and get me. Not that anything would, but if it wanted to, it couldn't.

Having a bed set right on the floor, too, saves a certain amount of hassle. Perhaps I should say it stems from not having a bed frame; it is one of the few advantages. Now I don't have to worry about the snakes and the alligators, like I used to. Back when I was afraid of the dark.

I really didn't mind the nice ones, it was the nasty ones which I was concerned with. The ones that wrap their bodies around your ankles, and bite with their sharp pointy teeth. Or those big-jawed, snappy ones who would tease, tauntingly.

I would have to jump from pile to pile of clothes, and stuff, and books. Thank God I was messy or I might not have made it.

It is good the cars don't sleep. Or the trains. They keep me company long into the night, and way early into the morning. To tell you the truth, I could do without the honky one, or the real screechers who don't break till the last minute. (I always have to cross my fingers I don't hear a BAM and a scream.) The others, though, are fine.

I used to love the TV being on in the den. Our parents would be watching some so-great show that we weren't allowed to, and we could hear it from our rooms. I would sneak to the door, and watch from the crack, straining to hear the low sound. I would creep to my sister's room and together we'd sit together and watch from the crack in the folding door.

If they were downstairs, we'd spy. We'd usually laugh or squeal -sometimes you can't control it - and then we'd get caught. Sometimes they'd chase us, and we would run, shrieking, like little pigs in our pink pajamas. On good days they'd give us warm honey-milk and animal crackers. We'd always have to brush our teeth again.

We used to get stories. Or sometimes they'd sing to us. Now DJ Bob is next door, playing a lullaby through the gyprock. The base makes the wall pound; it's not one I like, but it is comforting. I really should spy on him, but like me he has a small apartment. There is no where to hide.

I am not afraid of the dark anymore. Mind you, it is never really dark. The flashy lights of metropolitan Lennoxville are practically ever-present (withstanding the 1-5 gap) and fill my apartment with a sublime glowy-amber.

Sometimes I stare down and watch the early risers eating in silence, or the dreary waitresses passing through the restaurant on a tired morning. It's strangely condoling.

I, too, could go down and be part of that scene. I could order hot pie, and velvety ice cream. Maybe somebody would even be watching me...

I could, but then I'd have to brush my teeth again. I look at the glaring red digits of my clock. Besides, it is way past my bedtime.

Cheryl-Lynn Boeur



Photograph by Tracey Millen

Pub Nights

As the music comes on for the final dance,
The boys scurry up and down the dance floor
For their final chance to get lucky for the night.
And as I hold you close as the music plays
We don't really dance but we gently sway,
Hanging on to each other for dear life.
Time stands still as those minutes pass
And I pray to God I could make it last
knowing how the others want their arms draped around you.
And as my courage comes to tell you how I feel
The music dies as does my will,
So we stare in silence waiting for what comes next.
My moment has passed and as we go our separate ways
In my mind the music still plays,
And we dance deep into the night.

Emmett Street

Vapeures de mots et brûlures d'envie

Je vole très haut au dessus de vos chevelures épaisses et bloquées par le gel d'une société attendrissante
Je marche sur le nuage que vous renvoyez la bouche serrée, figé par le feu éteint de votre dragon
Blessés, vous dérapez sur la roulette crinçante et dentue de votre chalumeau miniature
Désespérés, vous espérez qu'il embrasera votre gosier
Vous soufflez vos paroles enfumées aux autres cendriers brûlés
Vous visez leurs foyers pour qu'ils vous sifflent la vie
Vous parlez, vous hurlez, vous communiquez,
Pour que leurs braises attisent leurs cendres grises
Mais moi, je ne vous écoute pas
Je danse simplement sur le rythme de vos sonorités imbéciles qui s'échappent de vos incinérateurs bucaux
Vos phrases n'ont plus le sens des mots
Vos sens n'ont plus de mots pour vous
Car il y a quelqu'un qui nace au milieu de vos âmes,
Qui les mélange et les transforme,
Qui les écrasent et les arrangent
Et c'est moi, moi qui incorpore la matière de votre blanc en neige Dans le grand saladier des idées séchées
Moi qui danse dans cette pagaille poussiéreuse,
Moi qui vais valser là où vous vous traînez,
Moi qui sait sauter sur vos nuages de cheveux propres
Et jamais je ne me rendrais à votre altitude
Chez moi, tout est volatiment empâte comme dans le ralenti de vos films à suspense
Mais mon film à moi est un fil en suspend
Là, tout démarre et se borne Sans but, ni départ

La musique de vos paroles muettes s'enfouit dans la cage toraxique de mon piano à queue
Et je vous vois souffrant de votre vent de liberté
Il vous rie au nez
Il vous trempe de pluie
Alors, vous ouvrez votre petit parapluie
Vous vous sentez sèchement bien
Mais la brise crache trop loin
Elle retourne votre ras-la-pluie qui vient se dandiner jusqu'à moi.
Votre liberté s'est ainsi évadée
Les larmes de déluge glissent sur l'hygiène épidermique de vos joues, Pendant que moi, couchée dans votre parapluie, Blottie dans votre liberté,
Je surf sur vos crinières éparses et laquées sur vos visages
Vos visages sages et givrés d'eau glacée,
d'eau pissée par les nuages
petites gouttes d'orage, étincelle de rage
J'écrase nus pieds votre nuée de masque fébrile
Soudain, je prends de l'élan
La vitesse me projette bien loin de votre pollution volatile
Puis je reviens vers votre brouillard
Cette fois je le traverse
Je suis à vos côtés, comme vous abritez sous votre barricade d'illusions
J'étouffe, la foule m'envahit
Je descends tout en bas et je me catapulte par dessus vos cheveux lactés
Je suis la voie des étoiles
Je suis maintenant comète humaine
Humaine j'ai pris mon élan dans le bas de chez vous

Et comète, je vous dois la vie
 Car une fois qu'on a touché le fond, on ne peut que remonter
 Et je ne redescendrai jamais très bas une fois tout en haut
 Car votre bas, c'est aussi mon haut, ma piste d'envol
 Et l'instant où je dépasserai l'extrémité de votre sol
 Alors je n'aurai plus à m'en faire
 Je crèverai
 Vous enterrererez ma matière morte où bon vous semblera
 Sans trop savoir pourquoi mon corps s'est brisé ici
 Et vous pleurerez comme à l'accoutumée
 Mais ce jour là, il faudra vous forcer
 Il fera beau
 La pluie sera sur vos visages blêmes
 Vous ne serez pas libres de vous arrêter de fondre
 Car le parapluie de vos coulées de sel sera là, dans ce coffre
 en bois
 Alors vous me jetterez les fleurs de votre cœur
 Et le vent balayera votre cœur
 Seules les fleurs me resteront Avec moi, elles pourrieront
 Avec moi elles danseront
 Puis des millions de petits vers me grignoteront
 Je serai poussière, égale à moi-même
 Je volerai toujours et encore plus haut
 Tourbillonnant encore et toujours plus vite
 Je ne serai plus rien
 Plus rien qu'un peu de vous tous
 Car si vous êtes plus condensés
 Vous n'êtes pas plus condescendant
 Vous n'êtes pas plus vivants

Bérénice Manneville

The Hatred Inside

The warrior rises from his place of rest
 expelled from the earth by an unknown force
 His anger worn plain upon his face
 a desire to harm all that he hates
 A hollow energy flows in him, pushing him
 Unable to stop, he fights, wanting only peace
 Stride after stride he moves onward
 His goal not yet in sight
 Through the fields and the forests
 over the hills and the mountains
 A village he views with his eyes
 A silent sigh is heard, people he has found
 Onward he marches, a goal he has discovered
 Entering the village, the sound of laughter he hears
 It builds up inside, the happiness he hates
 Fighting it down, he forces a smile and laughs
 The villagers he greets, yet they cower in fear
 a child he approaches, curses are their response
 Rage abounds and he explodes with emotion
 lashing out at those around him
 Anger blinds him taking over his actions
 exhaustion takes him, saddened by what he sees
 A tear forms, alone it slides away
 He stalks away from the village, hopeless
 Tirelessly he pushes, never stopping, never thinking
 Lost and alone he rages, not understanding
 Upon a lake he stumbles, a vision is seen
 Staring back at him, so gruesome a visage
 tears come unbidden, What am I?
 A man, or am I a beast?
 No longer does he care, nor does he strive
 Alone, hated, disgusted, what is left?

Jeremy Prince

Paradise

You told me a story last night
and I dreamt of you.
Seeing the colourful existence of
our imaginary world makes me
want to be near you again.
I miss our magical timeless moments.
I miss the imperfections of make-belief.
The sand, pool, white drapes, fresh salad and wine
overflow my thoughts.
To walk again barefoot around
the edge of the world, to swim
with the unnamed fish nibbling
at our feet while being one,
would be paradise...
if only I could hear your story again,
but I can't get through.

Loree Lavigne

HEAD ON

depressions
aren't lessons
to pressure bad change
depressions compression
just drives me insane
depressions disaster
will burn even faster
when thinking of sinking
your doom is my master
think what you say
and say what I think
or into bad blood
your surely to sink
impressions will drain
deep miserys contain
depressions the lessons
propelling destain
be what you want
or want what you are
walk on my shore
or hop in your car
depressions aren't lessons
to rid me of rain
depressions are lessons
of talking again

Sydney B. Smith



Atalaya scolari

Drawing by Anna M. Grant

The Unknown

The road is long and rough,
The endless ride to the unknown.
Rocks, holes, branches in the road,
Sending vibrations through our bodies.
Clouds of dust pour in through the back,
The air is thick enough to walk on.
A soldier lights a cigarette,
The red flame glows on his face.
The wooden benches creak and grown,
The road is twisty and fast.
A soldier is staring blankly,
A face of no emotion.
The Sargent is explaining the plan,
But we don't listen or care.
A green tarp surrounds us from all sides,
Transferring the sun's throbbing heat.
A soldier peers around the back flap,
Looking at the Hell we are entering.
The truck comes to a brisk stop,
The rumble of the diesel is all we can hear.
The tail gate drops down,
The back flap is thrown up.
DEBUS, DEBUS, BEBUS,
GO, GO, GO.
One alpha to the left,
One bravo to the right.
Our training is all that can save us now,
For the unknown is now a reality.

Kevin Norris

The Friday Night Thing

Slowly, slowly, I learn to breathe again, and he pulls away so gently I barely feel him. A hand comes up to touch my face, and I feel the tiny hairs and grooves of skin sliding quietly over me. Brushing the hair away I see his eyes, watery puddles of blue framed black and pink, red around the cheeks, with pale pale blond falling over us. So hot here, but out there so cold, and so I move in closer, feeling him wrapped around me, protecting and loving. There is no sound, so still, just small slight breaths that warm my forehead. Down, I can feel his heart, pumping so hard, yet it seems so soft; I can almost hear it, I think. We lie and breathe together, no noise, no talking, just air and heat and wonderful warmth, and I feel the sun starting to come in and rise over me. My back grows warm and I sense it seeping into my skin, creeping down, down until it touches the bone, and slowly strokes it in long waves of heat, caressing softly within. Then there is movement, and it is lost, and the heat leaves me and is gone over to the chair, where clothes were thrown in unconscious rhythm. I curl up tight, trying to save it, but too soon it is gone, and quietly he is leaning over me with his lips in my ear, over my cheek and down on my neck, and then it is over, and he has disappeared. When I can, I stand and dress, in feverish pace to remember the feel of something against me, and when I am done I go to the window, and glare at the sun. There is nothing outside but naked trees and dead, billowing, leaves. The sun seems to wither in my gaze, and turns pale and colourless, no longer warm but bitter and chilled. I go to him as the sun shrinks even further to the ground, but he does not see me standing there, I'm so quiet, he hasn't learned to feel me yet. He walks that way, without me, and I remain forgotten and lost, so still in the emptiness. When I return he is not there, and it is cold and rumpled and damp.

I cannot lay myself down upon that, and so I sit in the window, knees drawn to my chin, and stare at the lifeless trees and slowly, slowly, a hand comes up to touch my face, and it draws away the wet with deft and silent strokes.

Meghan Wylie

The Upper Part of the Lion D'Or

Sitting back in a wooden chair as stiff as the drinks, the three of us converse.
The lights are dim like a forest, and only two silhouettes chat and argue,
with no real right to do anything of the sort.
The third, not quite substantial, but poetic, observes
(like Leonard Cohen's break-up muse)
partially disgusted but not surprised, in the makeshift England of Southern Quebec.
Feeling like politicians, the two of us talk
of Trudeau and Richler,
the exchange of gifts and of the love of a good mother.
Another pitcher of Keith's
(the expensive stuff- for the thinkers,
and any others who have it figured out)
and two more plastic glasses,
ones that won't shatter at the epiphany of a floor, like us.
We want to avoid that for as long as possible.

Del Fraser

Le peuplier

Éclair d'une nuit qui gronde
Une colère Un silence
C'est l'éclair qui lèche la cime d'un peuplier
C'est le peuplier qui prend vie
ET le soleil me donne une humidité collante et sucrée
La sève qui se lève et tournoie, comme une robe de satin
préparée par l'ange
Cette nuit on dénote la cassure du peuplier
Le peuplier dénote sa fumée, un peuplier consommé par la
force D'une lumière survoltée
Plus jamais, d'enfants soleil n'égoutteront leurs langues au long
de son écorce
Il est laid ce peuplier écorché
Difforme avec sa tache blanche
Sa cellulose à ciel ouvert
Et la perle de sève qui meurt à la lumière d'une lune, pleine
Le peuplier ne manquera pas au déploiement des ses feuilles
Le bossu ne manquera pas au miroitement des ses cloches
Au gré d'un vent murmure
Sa plaie sera noire de goudron
On l'amputera
Pour retrouver sa forme verticale
Ce sera un arbre rectiligne et mutant
Incomplet il demandera son suicide
Castré, il souffrira de son besoin mortel
Sans l'érection de sa cime
Il sera condamné à contempler l'arbre fort
Castré à son tour.

Stéphane Cardinal

Into the Voice

From the trickle of the Relatively Unknowns,
The emerging names unfold the slender portfolio of catalogued
thoughts,
Weakly preached and romantically spun,
Till a Soloist rises,
On the wheel of the new beginnings.

"Tales of lies, suppressing regression through oppression",
Declared a hyperactive government'
With their conquering over-consciousness,
In a cunning constitution,
And their apathetic glaze.

Mumbling benevolence with puppetry caped seduction,
Intelligence reiterated the rhetoric,
Of a morally flawed dissenter with a classically thinking mind,
A martyr cheaply purchasing heaven,
From a penny saving jar.

Misinterpreting the miscontented,
The Beggars for Humanity climbed the gilded stair,
With smoggy nose's air of sweet innocence and frankincense,
And a sluggish mind-set stuck,
In the Something Paradox.

He had the urge to slap them,
From the modern day perspective,
The martyred Neo-proto-Darwinians,
Bartering possessions for love and honour lost,
Of which no one really cared.

The plebes did shift and cough uncomfortably,
Under the discomfoting watchful eye,
From the Dream and its Big Brother on their billboard in the
sky,
Protecting the permeated paranoia,
With their collective aristocracy.

"There's nothing in the documents, we just feel our way",
Pleaded the Ancient Land of Gentry,
As the newborn rebels ceased their begging,
To begin and search for the heralding forces,
To cleanse the cursed tomorrow.

The machine wheel's many cogs turned slowly,
Enlightening the eternity's elemental social harmony,
Quickly disposing the imposing interpretation of form,
Restructuring the rupture,
In a historical point of view.

The Chorus soon assembled, Mother Nature's Quasi-Slaves,
Attempting evolution in quick dismiss of revolution,
They wake the Soloist once more,
As old design collapsed for good,
Into the voice of wanting more.

Chris Driedzic

Lynn

Beauty is the author who can write her own tale
Among devil-weed
 she sees the trees
and with smoothness her stroke grazes
the innocence of other's eyes
 'till mine are shut;

And then she smiles.

scott baker

A NEW POND, BIG FISH

The days before you leave for university are hectic and you're functioning only because the stress and fear in your body have nothing better to do. You have to pack for the longest trip of your life and it seems as if there will never be enough bags to cram all your life into. You can only take so much and so you have to sit there and sort everything in a range from "very important" to "I can wait until I get home". It's funny how everything manages to fit into the "very important" pile. After all, university is all about making decisions, it just so happens that deciding to leave was the scariest decision you ever made.

So now that you've packed or rather, realized, that the last eighteen years of your life can fit in just a few bags and boxes, you begin to ask yourself: "Is that it? Is that all I've done these last few years?". And the answer, sadly, is yes. See, you can't pack smiles, hugs, cries, laughs or all those memories of the beach, school, concerts, dances or car rides. And some wise adult will tell you that you will always be able to hang onto your memories and you know what? You believe them. You believe them because you don't want to admit that leaving will change things. Memories are the keys to your past, but they will never work when all the locks have changed. So you take one more look at all your stuff and wish upon the brightest star to come down and tell you that you don't have to go, but instead you give a sigh of relief because you don't have to pack anymore. Sighing is a heck of a lot easier than acknowledging that your flight or drive starts tomorrow, bright and early.

In the last few hours of your stay at "home", you begin the good-byes. One by one, or sometimes in groups of two or more, your friends start dropping by to say the usual..."Don't change. I will write..You'd better write me...Don't forget about all the good times we've had.. I'm

going to miss you." Funny how your friends always tell you to do exactly what they know is going to happen. It seems as though saying "Don't change" is really just a way of saying "We can never go back, but it won't keep me from trying." It's the trying part that keeps friendships together, not the realization that things will change. Because no matter what happens, people grow up and change. And, sometimes change makes your memories all the more piercing, but that's okay - it lets you know they are still there.

Good-bye is such an oxymoron. There is absolutely nothing good about leaving. It doesn't matter how much you can hate your parents or how much you can hate the same old boring streets and towns, or how much you want to get out and experience this so-called-world, or how much fun college is going to be. The truth is, saying good-bye is the hardest and saddest encounter you will ever experience. Your heart and stomach will both ache, your tears will get stuck in your throat, swallowing will become torture, one hug will seem like it's supposed to last you a series of months, your palms will be sweaty, your face will be sad - no matter how hard you try, your dreams won't seem like they can happen without your friends and then for a brief moment, you question if you have dreams at all and then, you say it: good-bye. It's the fastest word you will ever encounter and yet it sums up a lifetime.

Now you're off. The trip goes by in seconds, so fast you didn't even get a chance to remember the one thing you were supposed to bring with you - your identity. Your friends managed to sculpt you into the person you were, but they're not here anymore. It's up to you. Everything is up to you. So you stop, you get out of the plane or car and you look around, this is your new home - the resting place for your dreams, but one thing strikes you - you don't even know what's yours anymore.

Adriana Murphy

Mom

You are a rock, on which the lighthouse stands
firm, lighting the path of weary travelers.

You stand amidst the waves and the storm
lighting a path for me, to follow home.

You are the one who held me at night when I cried.

You comforted me when I was sad or lonely.

You gave me space to grow but were there when I
fell to help me up.

You knew me better than anybody did or does.

You stayed up late waiting for me to come home
before you would sleep.

You did much for others without thought for yourself.

You did so much for me, yet when you got sick there was
nothing I could do.

I watched this vibrant and beautiful woman shrink into an
adorable and loving but helpless woman.

I took your life and love for granted.
I thought you would live forever.

I didn't spend my time with you wisely, I wasted
so much valuable time.

Now all I want is one day or even an afternoon to talk
to you... to laugh... to cry... to ask your advice... to
hug you.

I miss those arms around me and I thank God for all the
hugs you gave your little boy, and I thank God for all your
unconditional love.

Your life meant so much to me, I can't describe
exactly how I feel.

I'm sorry for the times I let you down and disappointed
you. - Coming in late from the bar after the brawl
Not going to Bible College like you so wanted

I hope that one day I can make you proud of me.
Don't give up hope God's not finished with me yet.

You were my mother and my best friend, I love you
and miss you so much, I miss your reassuring smile
and laugh, most of all I want to say:
I LOVE YOU!!!!!!

And I always will.

I will never forget you my dearest friend and mother
I LOVE YOU!!

Bram Cotton

*Dedicated to Jeannette Patricia Freeman Cotton
April 21, 1953 - April 14, 1998*

Beneath the Tree of Life
(Inspired by Fred Varley's painting *Vera*)

The Tree of Life blossoms.
Its golden boughs casting soothing shadows.
And an infant Vera,
Plays in its sheltering embrace.

The Tree of Life grows.
Its limbs become stronger, more subtle.
And an adolescent Vera
lies below, falling in love.

The Tree of Life ages.
Its tender branches strong and vibrant.
and a grown Vera
Lounges underneath, revisiting her youth.

The Tree of Life fades.
Its strong trunk begins to peel, branches wither.
And an elderly Vera,
Watches the world go by, from beneath its canopy.

The Tree of Life dies.
Its golden boughs sag and strong limbs crack.
And Vera, she has passed on.
To another place.

A.G. Klei



Photograph by M. Lambert

Beyond The Pulse of Blood

for Margaret Atwood

At first it was people we didn't know
people we'd heard of, a friend of a friend
a relative of a relative
someone far off but somehow still close
enough that it mattered.

We'd all discuss it
though we'd be in awe:
the way the cancer ravaged him/her to the
bone, the face shattering
automobile accident, the fall from the cliff
intentional or not.

a message
and what were we to make of it
from another world
another word
removed but not.

Now it's much closer. Too close.
Now it's us
going in ways we never could have suspected.
at this point we must say goodbye
to vocabulary
because there are no words
Language has left us
for loss and light

Some days it's more loss
than light;
the light that plays in the familiar
landscape

is gray and opaque filtering
through the miasma of fear

2)

We can have it either way
and we do:

Touch it with your real hands
or the dead ones
of who went before us

it makes no difference.

What matters is
we reach out
and touch
and not stop there

but through to the bone
lying bare
a white star

beyond the pulse
of blood.

Noni Howard

♪ From Up Here ♪

There's a place in a tower
Where the world is mine to see
Even though I'm a man of power
Only my loneliness comforts me

A spectator to the action below
People fumble through their day
I enjoy the best view to the show
As they search for their way

(So here's my defence...)
Things seem smaller
From Up Here
Mountains aren't taller
From Up Here
I could give up my safety
And go down there
But there's no use in risking it
When I just don't care

I know that knowledge is gained
When things are tried
And that you don't change
When you choose to hide

I won't tell you that I'm wrong
When I don't know what's right
Bad people may whistle a song
And sometimes good people fight

(So here's my offence...)
Who are you to judge me
From down there
How could you know me
From down there
Why don't you risk your safety
And come up here
I'd like to see you walk in my shoes
Maybe then I'd care (They could use some
walking)

As the wind will blow
My tower will shake
As the time will toll
My soul will brake

Maybe this isn't the life for me
Maybe there's so much more to be
Maybe there's so much more to see
Maybe there's so much more...for me

(So here's my conclusion...)
Things could be so strange
When I'm up here
Maybe it's time I go for a change
And go down there
That's the way I see it
From Up Here
It could be my destiny
To go down there
No one can deny me
From Up Here

Keith Neville

SCAR

I TURNED ON THE TV
WHAT I SAW, BROUGHT ME THOSE PAINFUL MEMORIES
THEY SHOW MY RAVAGED COUNTRY AND THOSE
CRYING, EMPTY FACES...

I REMEMBER...

I LOST MYSELF... THEY GRABBED THE PART OF MY
HAPPY CHILDHOOD AND THEY SQUASHED IT LIKE SOME
WORTHLESS THING;

THE POLITICIANS - THEY CARE ONLY FOR THEIR OWN
INTERESTS

I AM A SERB, YOU ARE A MUSLIM AND THEY ARE
CROATS - SO WHAT?

I NEVER KNEW WHAT I WAS BEFORE THE WAR
STARTED

PEOPLE ASKING : "WHAT ARE YOU?"

"EXCUSE ME, WHAT DO YOU
MEAN BY THAT?"

THAT IS SO STUPID!!!
THE WAR BLINDED THE EYES AND THE HEARTS OF

MANY PEOPLE SO MUCH THAT THEY DO NOT KNOW THE
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE INNOCENT PEOPLE WHO
WERE AGAINST THIS SENSELESS WAR AND
BETWEEN THOSE BLA-BLA- TOO-MUCH WHO ARE THE
MAIN OFFENDERS OF WHAT HAPPENED TO US!
WHY THAT INNOCENT CHILD NEEDED TO DIE - LYING IN
IT'S MOTHER'S ARMS; SHE CRIES HYSTERICALLY
ASKING GOD WHY!
DON'T ASK HIM ! HE IS THE ONE WHO IS THE LEAST
GUILTY!

Masa Milovanovic

Congratulations Mr. and Mrs. Smith

Cheers to
Barbecued Sundays,
Bandaged Holidays and
Birthday Blues,
 year after year.

Here's to
Mr. and Mrs. Smith
with their lousy way of thinking...
 Oh, and for driving over the ducks
and my friend,
 who forgot to wear a helmet, and
 who forgot to pray to God that day.

Salutations to
Mr. and Mrs. Smith
for wonderfully screwing up their son's life.
He now listens to Nirvana
and tries to kill himself
frequently.

Hip Hip Hooray for
Discount days at Sears,
Unemployed Maytag men and
Hallmark sympathy cards,
 where we just sign our name and run.

Bravo folks,
you've done a marvelous job perfecting your lawn.
The pesticides worked exceptionally well,
especially on my two year old cousin,
 who coughs incessantly, and
 who spits up blood.

Applaud, applaud,
you win the green Suburban.

Lisa Morneau

Don't Waste Your Time Thinking

Don't waste your time thinking. We have your whole life ·
planned out.
Just follow the pack and trust us. Don't have any doubt.
Work is to be done and money to be made.
Don't waste your time thinking; don't play the charade.
If you are a seeker of truth and meaning, then precious time
shall be missed.
Such falsehoods are unattainable. They do not exist.
But do not worry. In us never fear.
Our path is well traveled, our results very clear.
Stick with us. Just follow our lead.
Do as we do and you'll get all that you need.
Don't waste your time thinking. Stay simple and worry-free.
Don't be different and wander elsewhere. There's nothing to
see.
We hope that you believe us. That every word we say is true.
And extend to you our welcome, for joining our crew.
Our view of life is undeniable. Everyday it gathers in clout.
Don't waste your time thinking. There is nothing to think about.

Kevin Kirk

This Poetry Is Rated PG 13.

Dehydrates.
His body uses up water like a desert wind.
Metabolism.
Burns through energy, what's stored
leaving heat
light.
To tip his head back as if it were a Pez dispenser
you would see a beam of light emitting from his spine.
I've known him to be touched
women like curious children to a wood stove, brush a hand
against his cheek - smooth and slow at first, but with a quick
jerk
pull away as pain hits sensor
to nerve to brain to muscle.
He doesn't speak. He doesn't need to. It's vestigial.
A look, a smile, a warm gesture, precisely executed.
Does he know? What he can do?
If he does know, he's perfect at hiding it.
I live vicarious through him
like a non threatening parasite
attached to his waste, his chest, the sinews of his back.
My eyes sting from the heat of him.
I love through him.

M.

Leaving

There you are my underwater angel!
Swimming through the frothy green vastness
Of bubbles of bursting laughter
And playing on the ballerina sea floor
As nimble blue-green vines tickle your toes
And schools of shining fish
Gently lull you to sleep
Singing in your ears
With the swift fluttering of iridescent tails
Surrounding your peacefulness
With cascades of vibrant sea flower.

But you will wake to the red rising sun
Smiling upon you
And contented, you will follow the warming path of light
Dancing and jumping and playing
In the fiery stream of hope
Leaving it shattered in your wake...
Come back my underwater angel.

Megan MacDonald

Lost

i feel lost in this
world of
Empty Space.
as i try to wrap my
Brain around them,
thoughts become
patterns and patterns become
breaths of Air.
this Air turns into dust
which Rises Up Again
in great Swirls to
form Clouds in an
Ocean of Nothing.
the Clouds swell and
grow Dark and Heavy,
giving birth to Rain
and allowing this Rain
to fall down and
Cover My Body on this
world of
Empty Space
where i am still Standing.
lost.

Heather Coutts

Looking at the old picture
the colour faded to a paler version of what it once was
I think of you
The blue sea behind us
haunts me, calling me into the picture
to feel the waves crash at my feet and the sun warm my skin
For a moment I am back there
holding you
you holding me
I relish it, like I never had before.
I turn to look at you
You turning to me
as our eyes are about to meet, and look deep into each others
soul
I am pulled out of the picture
back into the cold reality
where we are far apart
a distance that cannot be breached
A lonely tear falls from my eye, down my cheek and then is
gone
I shall not cry another for you
I shall remember the joy and peace I felt with you
and I will smile
and when I am walking down that cold dark hallway I will think
of you bringing sparkle and light to my eyes
Could you know the secrets of my heart? Would you
understand?
Or is it better to leave that page unread, only to assume what
is written on it?
I pray that someday you can read the words that are written
and embrace them as if you had written them yourself
and I pray that someday when I am walking down that cold
dark hallway
I will turn to see you standing
behind me, where you used to walk
holding out your arms.

Megan Carter

To the One Who Broke My Heart

At some point in time as you watch love slip through your
fingers
Think of me who loved, loves you until the end of time
And was so moved by you to write these lines
Knowing the tears may dry but the pain always lingers

Think of him as I do of you, constantly, all the time
Pray the next voice you hear is his
Remembering a soft caress and the touch of lips
That quickly fades with the recollection of these lines

I wrote these lines for you, hoping you will understand
How the love I have for you is real
The joy I felt, the pain I feel
As you will too, but at the hands of some other man.

Emmett Street

Going back to the real things

green and open
a crested valley
new unmowed grass
close to a pond with the
swirling chorus of frogs

the sweetest sound
in all my bones

my mind
seared open
like a bursted pod
in spring
with memory.

a cannon pointing toward
all outsiders
sits on a grassy slope
outside the house
huge and smoking
under my thighs

now diminutive
and futile

a rusted match in
the flinthole
of reason.

Where can we escape
now that childhood
has grown upward
toward a world
that rides us only in our sleep

and midnight horses
carry us away over fox trails
and the sounds of dogs baying
and the bite of the sap
of new spring maples

2)

before the nectar shoots
headlong
into the tilting
tin pail

we fall from the image
and the dream
and the shout
of unmittened hand
that picked the first wild
pussywillows in the creekbed
in the heat
of the first words
of a poem.

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3/6/83

Coffee Shop Conformity

You sit on your worn plastic chair,
grey eyes sweeping over
the black & white type of the news.
A smile touches your lips now and then.
Your hand, which had just been
supporting your head,
floats down,
your manicured fingers gently wrap around
the ceramic white
handle.
And you lift up the steaming cup
to your perfectly drawn lips
pause
and then sip the
black tar
burning your lips.
I pause
and look
at my own
cup of poison.

Tuuli Hannula

Come

The wind calls, beckons.

Come.

Come into my embrace, sweet child.

Forget who you are, forget where you have been.

Come.

Let me take your breath away with sudden gusts,

Or sweeten your smile with a gentle breeze through your hair.

Come.

Let the power of my breath take away your worries,

And let my sister Rain wash away your fears.

Come.

I must walk barefoot through the long grass and the fallen leaves.

I must let my body go where the wind blows and the rains fall.

I must go, and surrender to her call.

I will come.

Morgan Jones

It weighs heavy on your shoulders

It weighs heavy on your shoulders
Like the pain of years passed accumulating
It forces you to bend over
Like a professional of back breaking

It is unnameable, unspoken
Yet it whispers to you even in your sleep
It never leaves you alone
And drives you into a madness-deep

It calls for more all the time
More of what?
More just more and that is that!
More will be more than fine

It makes you look older than you are
It leaves scars
Always
In a crazed daze

I want to help you
Take that pain away
You are only a child, a baby black and blue
Here's your bread for today

You look so tired:
Must be the incessant wants whispered
They never let you sleep right?
Well then come with me tonight...

Actually, stay there!
I have not enough to spare
Plus, if I start with you
God knows who else will want some too!

Nansy Jean-Baptiste

Billabong

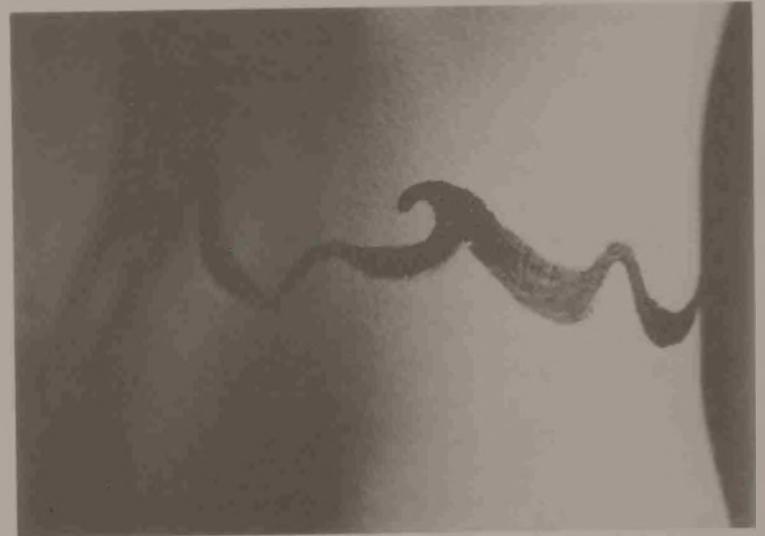
Your watering hole is
more fit for memories
than Carpentaria.
Nonsensical phrases.
Kinakin be careful
'cause Katherine's got crocs!
Sweet water's not what
you used to climb into as
a child,
lucid under the desert sun
Red earth setting up house
on your skin and leaving
you to wish you could
ride on the milkrun to
Darwin.

Tracey Millen

STRANDED

upon the step of hard times keep
the old man gasps inside
the youthful times
of nursery rhymes
fulfilled a dream once tried
winter sidewalks talk the talk
to quicken weary minds
and freeze their tears
with overseers
elected choice
is time
upon the step of misery
there sleeps the face of luck
upon a winter sidewalk stands
the hand bad fortune struck
there sleeps the place
of once the child
now age has crept inside
to boil life with hardened strife
cold moon will soon abide
satan's ice is paradise
old winters cold has froze
old men in old Toronto freeze
in ways
nobody chose

Sydney B. Smith



Photograph by Allison Kinnucan

Fear

Facing a fear is like birth,
The stunning laborious task of truth jolts you.
Shock of pain never surfaced right away,
It tries to slowly creep along with reality.
Confidence shaken.
Trying to avoid the tears of parents,
The most inanimate object in view becomes a
Focus of great attention.
Reflections are thrown upon it, but only slide away.
A random thought instantly becomes
The philosophical denied image,
The flawlessness of the world,
And it blocks all else out of my mind.
Invisible details become elaborate perfection
Giving way to truth.
The object is only the cold steel
Of the hospital door,
But Fear is the tear falling upon it

Kyla Rand

FRIEND

Surrounded by
glittering gems,
shiny treasure.
Unimpressed by their
perfection,
untouched by their
purity.
Their beauty a jagged
contrast to your
dulled stone.
Hidden by the shadows,
blinded by the glare,
your frankness
astounds me.
loving your smoothness
adoring your perplexities,
I keep you with me
while I walk past
the sharp halo of
perfection.

Erin Ladouceur

After This Death

After this death
how many more
and can I take them

turn them into useful thoughts
or poetry something to assuage
the guilt, the hole, the drawing into
again and again.

I don't know how my mother
faced them one after the other.
after awhile that's all there was to talk
about, who had gone on
and under what circumstances:
a bit of news
from another continent,
the lost one.

She was always upbeat
but after the call
the young candy striper coming in
with eye drops and other unnamable
medications.

the terrible silence
scattering the dust in her airtight room
looking out onto the cow pasture
with it's bright red barn
an unrecognizable facade
of what she once knew

* * *

What to do with the time
in our hands
the time of our hands
that used to plant daffodils
pansies, poppies and roses
leaning into the fresh dirt
bending against the current,

2)

the storm windows that came on or off
depending on the season
and the constant shoveling
or raking or mowing.

where's it all going to
but that much I know already.

I already know too much
but
I don't want to know why.
I want to know how.

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4/9/97

The Battle at Kryslon Prime

The U.S.S. *Confederacy* plowed through the storm of laser fire and torpedoes that dashed across the baffle scene from everywhich direction, originating from the multitude of Spacecom vessels and aimed at the handful of Huradas motherships that awaited in orbit as the fleet of small *craft* penetrated the planetary defense shield and began the strategic assault.

"You see that bulging dome at the top of the ship? I want ten Destroyer Torpedoes locked on to that target. Fire when ready." ordered Ertipel to her weapons officer while pinpointing on the main viewer the singular target that, like many other specific regions of the Huradas vessels, was becoming a strategic attack location. Surely there were weak spots, and Ertipel was not about to let any possible points of attack go unnoticed. Moments later, a volley of torpedoes blasted away from the forward launchers and dove towards the dome, only to be absorbed into the hull without effect.

Meanwhile, Kryslon Prime regressed into a state of panic and chaos as the populace began to take measures in light of their impending doom. Five starships from the Spacecom assault fleet lowered themselves into orbit then into the lower atmosphere of Kryslon Prime to assist in the last-minute evacuation, while millions of lost and fearful people scurried madly about searching for means of transport or in the case of the ignorant, shelter. The city of Corellez bustled with activity not seen since the Great Wars of the Empires those many years ago. People gathered their belongings and rounded up their families, trying to retain a sense of order amid the chaos that had infiltrated their lives. Transports ascended skywards overloaded with passengers, merchant fleets lowered themselves at ports and docking bays planet-wide to fill their volume with people, mass transit services ceased their relentless shuttling from town to town to aid the evacuation.

High above raged a battle to save the homes of these

innocent people, people who did not deserve to be killed by a foe they could not fight, an enemy far too mighty to bow down in mercy or stand back in pity to shed a morsel of sympathy - so enraged with its own strength and power it saw nothing else. For the Huradas there was no pain - no assimilation, no annihilation. The Huradas saw nothing. And with this blindness they suffered no guilt or grief of the people they exterminated; their power was infinite, their conquest complete, their destiny approved and stored away into the grand vault of time and space, the vault of history. And in that history would be stories of great warriors who battled, eyes widened with courage and power, against the blind beast who relentlessly fought one warrior then the next - attacked and assaulted endlessly for the devastation and the wounds could not be seen by the blind beast. An eternal champion of death, of destruction and evil. A blind beast whose war would never end, until the universe itself was engulfed by the sea of death of his own creation.

It could not be that simple. Surely there was motivation behind the brutalization of entire civilizations. But reasons were not relevant now. A war had begun. A war had to be fought. And a war would be won. By whom remained an unwritten chapter in the history of Saladium.

Aboard the *Confederacy*, Captain Ertipel and Commander MacKenzie paced back and forth across the bridge floor while the battle continued to rage, deeply ensnared in thoughts that occupied their minds and sometimes stole from matters of the confrontation. At this point strategy had lost its edge as the list of attempted maneuvers grew with every other moment. Even MacKenzie had exhausted his exceptional library of maneuvers that would have certainly astounded the most cunning of Tars Commanders, perhaps even his true Captain, Alexander Malarek. Indeed, a man who came to the forefront of MacKenzie's thoughts as the battle raged without the leadership of Spacecom's best starship Commander, and best starship.

Ertipel startled MacKenzie. "Where the hell's *Lodestar*

anyway?"

"I was just wondering the same thing." replied MacKenzie. "Malarek wouldn't miss out on this. He knows where his ship belongs and where his leadership is needed."

And as the madness of the confrontation grew with every laser shot and every torpedo fired, the Huradas motherships in orbit shifted gradually into position to deploy their planet-bound crafts, aimed at the crucial faultlines that held the body of Kryslon Prime together - the grooves that would be wedged apart in a final devastating blast of energy, throwing the world of Kryslon Prime into oblivion in a million billion fragments. The worst of the destruction was not merely a question of its magnitude, or of its death toll or material cost, but of its seeming inevitability. It was going to happen, everyone knew it. It had ripped apart the Akotarsan Empire, it would rip apart the Confederacy. It could not be stopped.

As the smaller craft dispersed from the motherships, Ertipel and MacKenzie simply observed in quiet disbelief and frustration. The Huradas were executing their plans so precisely and with such success, despite Spacecom's best efforts, that no one dared to speak and break the painful quietude that lurked as the Huradas edged ever closer to accomplishing yet again what they had accomplished already too many times in Saladium. It was not the first planet to be targeted and wiped out, and likely not the last. If there was to be an end to the terror, neither MacKenzie nor Ertipel could see it now. Every weapon at their disposal had been used, every maneuver attempted, every idea tested and tried - yet to no avail. Whatever needed to be done to destroy the Huradas eluded Spacecom to the extent that even Admiral Hudson maintained silence. Whatever unconventional methods that had not yet been thought of or already executed against the Huradas simply were not viable options. The countdown had begun. There was no time. Given another two minutes, Kryslon Prime would be gone, and with it the home of an entire

civilization.

MacKenzie collapsed into his chair in desperation. Ertipel glanced back at him briefly, but long enough to demonstrate to him that she too shared his fears. She stepped back towards the comm. station and contacted Hudson personally.

"Admiral," she started solemnly. "We're running out of time."

Hudson, in a mood that paralleled that of the fleet - of grim defeat and desperation - managed to provide a pitiful but somewhat reassuring smile, not of pleasure but of offered hope. "There are no other alternatives now. Whatever choices we may have once had, have now been expended. The time has come."

Ertipel swallowed hard. "Aye, sir."

She closed the channel and directed her gaze immediately and fiercely at the view of the Huradas fleet, and its horde of fault line beacon ships that would become the deadly focal points to the massive destruction that was about to be unleashed. "Raise shields and bring Hull Layering Integrity Fields to maximum strengths. Helm," she paused briefly, just enough for her to reflect on her decision and that of the Admiral, "Lay in a course headed directly for that Huradas mothership and accelerate to ramming speed."

MacKenzie looked back at her and caught her trembling, minutely visible beneath her rigid and powerful command voice. The Helmsman quickly swivelled in place and shot a look of utter disbelief at the Captain.

"Ramming speed, sir?"

"You heard the order." confirmed MacKenzie. He knew there was no other choice.

Ertipel took her place, holding firmly the armrests with both hands. She looked at her First Officer and nodded.

MacKenzie returned the nod of consent, then pushed the comm. button to his right to address the entire crew. "This is the First Officer speaking. We have orders to begin ramming. Begin ship evacuation immediately. All non-essential

personnel and passengers, follow standard evacuation procedures and head to your designated escape pods. This is an emergency."

And as shipwide systems maintained their full alert status in the heat of battle, the crew began to siphon away from the ship operation sections, headed down corridors and passageways, crawling through emergency escape hatches and hopping into life-supporting pods. Without regard for personal effects or valuables, the crew shuttled through the hallways in escape of the highly probable doom that awaited those who remained on board.

Within moments, life boats and personal escape pods began to emerge from the outer hull of the *Confederacy*, shooting out from various ship locations, dashing into the lonely and foreboding expanse of dead space surrounding the now cursed Kryslon Prime. Other vessels followed suit, as hundreds of thousands of life sustaining escape craft sprung free from the hitches connecting them to their originating starships, floating aimlessly into the void of black surrounding and encompassing the terrible site whose destruction was imminent. Indeed, this time the *Confederacy* flag would not be tom to shreds by the Tars, or spat on by militant rebel Manojarrans, but burned into non-existence.

"Sir, the Huradas ships are firing up their main weapons. Key fault lines have been clearly marked out by the lander fleet - if we wait much longer it'll be too late." warned Trenton.

"The crew has been successfully evacuated, Captain." informed MacKenzie, careful not to push Ertipel any further into the already impossibly tense moment.

"Good." she admitted plainly. "The less that die, the better."

Ertipel looked quickly at the computer countdown on the display panel to the left of her. Sixty seconds. She glanced at MacKenzie, and with eyes widened by a deadly mixture of fear, hatred and basic vengeance, she gave the word.

"Execute."

The engines fied up on the stem of the *Confederacy* and shot the massive vessel menacingly towards one of the many Huradas motherships still in orbit. Dashing forth at full Impulse, the ship approached at deadly ramming speed, pulling its strengths inwards and focusing the integrity fields of the hull on the bow and forward port and starboard sides.

The remaining crew of the *Confederacy* braced themselves for the impending impact. MacKenzie grabbed a hold of his armrests and clamped his body as best he could against the relative steadiness of his chair and console. Ertipel imitated him in time, as did the others, while the ship cruised head-on towards the Huradas ship.

"Viewer off!" she ordered quickly. "Brace for impact!"

She closed her eyes and waited. The crash was coming, she knew it was soon. A few more seconds, just a few - exactly how it would feel to be on board a kilometer long battering ram and feel the impact was something she could not fathom, nor anyone else for that matter. Ramming was traditionally a last-resort method, even more than it was at this point, the aftermath typically a combination of a large Hyperspace engine core explosion resulting in starship debris being scattered throughout the cosmos. Yet, even with the new Crombi hull installed, no one was certain of its effectiveness, and while the ramming was deemed not lethal, it was not a recommended daily test for a starship hull either. Certainly, the ship might survive, but no one person could claim nearly as much confidence in their own survival.

The ship closed in fast. Ten thousand meters, five thousand meters, one thousand meters, zero meters.

Despite their best efforts to brace themselves, people and equipment were tom from place and tossed helplessly through the air. The crushing effect of impact threw the helmsmen out of their consoles and onto the floor. MacKenzie crashed up against the far bulkhead, Ertipel smashed headfirst into the central command viewer in front of her chair, while the others were similarly battered against walls and equipment.

While no one was dead, the crash was not without its consequences.

"Forward hull integrity has been compromised. Hull breach is imminent." warned the shipboard computer. Ertipel grappled to return some sense to the blur the bridge had suddenly become. Soothing her aching head, she pulled herself up and crawled back to her command chair. MacKenzie tried to follow, but had to resort to propping himself up against the wall he had crashed against, having been severely hurt by the physical impact. Ertipel climbed into the chair and straightened herself before verifying the damage reports channelling in from the thousands of shipboard sensors.

"Damn." she muttered, still trying to regain her breath. The hit had been painful for them, but the damage to the Huradas was undetectable. The *Confederacy* had successfully plowed into the side of the mothership, brutally ramming into it yet almost instantaneously rebounding on impact. "Prepare for ramming speed. Execute."

There was no time to lose, and certainly no time to recover from the pain. She clasped a hold of her chair again, clenched her teeth and pressed her eyelids shut against what was to come.

"Hold on!" she cried in unbelievable anguish.

MacKenzie drooped gently down against the floor and wrapped his arms around a nearby console footing. The hopelessness of the situation was so apparent, so deathly obvious, that every move they made was merely a desperate action made on the fragile hope that they would succeed. A hope so fragile, so delicate and weak, that MacKenzie could do little more than await the end. Death appeared welcoming now. Regardless of the evident uselessness of their efforts, they had no other choice but to continue. Ramming every last piece of this once gallant and glorious Spacecom ship, rip her apart to the very end until there would be no question as to how many alternative options remained - for there would be none.

The *Confederacy* slammed against the Huradas ship with such force, such physically bone-shatteringly powerful

force, that unless something or someone divine intervened, there would have to be damage - on both sides.

And yet again the bridge was strewn with broken equipment, broken bodies and broken lives. MacKenzie, from his position sprawled pathetically across the bridge floor, looked about for signs of returning life. Delarus and Trenton from the helm lay motionless next to the rear bridge turbo-lift entrances, Bigsby sat deathly still at his communications station, head bowed low, blood covering his uniform and face. Unable to see the Captain, MacKenzie crawled slowly across the floor, dragging his now limp arm at his side, trying to avoid placing any weight on those parts of his body that were bruised or broken. Spotting her command insignia lying alone on the floor not far from the command chair, he crawled further towards the other side of the bridge where, indeed, Captain Ertipel sat, curled up against the bridge bulkhead. He called her name. He called again.

The bridge had become sickly still, filled with smoke and haze filtering through the red alert lights that flashed waves of blood-pulsing energy, energy of battle that disgusted MacKenzie. He grappled with a piece of torn uniform on his leg and ripped it off to secure his broken arm, then made his way gently towards the command chair.

"Computer," he started, clearing his throat quickly.

"Ready Hyperspace engines. Ahead one quarter Impulse, and engage Hyperspace drives on my word."

The computer complied, and soon the mangled ship began to move towards the Huradas again. MacKenzie waited peacefully as he prepared himself for what was to come. Jump into Hyperspace close enough to the Huradas and he stood a chance of tearing them along with him. Doing so would most certainly destroy the Huradas, he was quite confident of that. Just as sure that he too would go with it. But before he gave the computer the command it awaited, he took a good look around him, and about the bridge. Equipment and bodies littered the command center, but such a horrid mess did not affect him now. He had to take action, no one else could. He

was alive, alive long enough to do what needed to be done. He would not fall that day as Captain of someone else's ship, for that is what he had suddenly become for these short moments, but as a Spacecom officer - a defender of the Unified Confederacy of Interstellar Authority. A defender of Saladium.

The *Confederacy* sped up towards the Huradas ship one last time. Once in range, the Hyperspace engines flared up on the stem and blasted forth the energy needed to propel the *Confederacy* into the superlight dimension. But as planned, the U.S.S. *Confederacy* never made it there. As she swung by the Huradas, the Hyperspace field enveloped not only the Spacecom vessel but an enormous piece of the Huradas vessel, pulling the two massive objects into each other, resulting in an explosion of colossal magnitude.

And the network link between the orbiting Huradas fleet was broken. With one ship missing, the assault would have to be postponed until a replacement was made, or the orbits were altered to accommodate for the loss of one satellite mothership. This alteration was made expediently. The countdown had been stopped by the loss of the *Confederacy*, but only briefly. The choices left were simple and straightforward for those few ships that did not follow the *Confederacy's* bold first moves - they too would now have to make the ultimate sacrifice. And they did.

The U.S.S. *Intrepid* maneuvered carefully towards another Huradas ship and engaged her Hyperspace engines within range. Tearing the two ships apart, the effect was as devastating, and just as necessary.

The U.S.S. *Varastobil* followed suit. Blasting into Hyperspace just next to a Huradas brought down that fine ship. Just behind her dove the U.S.S. *Lougheed* into the mouth of death, as did the dozens of other Spacecom starships that stood to protect the Unified Confederacy, in orbit of Kryslon Prime that fateful day. And as the Huradas ships disappeared from orbit, so did the Spacecom ships. One after the other, the *Pulsar-Explorer*, *Sunfire*, *Voyager- Titan*, *Terra Nova*, *Concord*, and the *Saranoma*.

Among those, were the hundreds of other ships that, unbeknownst to the Kryslon Prime war fleet, had done the precise same desperate act to save Saladium at almost every major Confederacy planet. Kryslon Prime was not the only Huradas target. To Admiral Hudson, it was. But it was too late for him to fight the last battle when the Huradas fleets began to arrive at Manojarr and Fellnar, Shadenan and Mesobtin, Lynzron and Pepsilon. Huradas fleets that were attacked and obliterated by Spacecom back-up exploratory, science, and medical ships - determined to put an end to what, indeed, the devil had unleashed upon them all. But they kept coming, their numbers mounted. A war that could not have possibly been fought initially, had become a war of attrition. And when Spacecom starfighters found themselves making the suicide dives of kamikaze fighters, like those who had fought those many centuries ago on Earth, it was time to quit. There was no defense now. It was no longer a time to fight, but a time to hide.

Michael J. van Lierop

Sunrise in Sudbury (December, 1998)

6am and I am lucky to see
the sun rise orange over Sudbury
on a chilly winter morning
stamping my feet to beat the cold
I shiver and breathe it in
and exhaling
 fogs everything
on the level plane of light.

Like the moment
the grey clouds

 burst apart with sunlight

and everyone stopped taking notes
and looked up and out the window

 at the sun,

pens

 suspended

 mid-sentence.

And then they started copying again.

Tara Hurst

History Of...

I

Lovers of art, this is not for you.
You're not the reason I do what I do.
Inspiration and Muses call me to their side,
To discover the secrets that I try to hide.

Lovers of music, you think that you are.
I'll play for my Self as I sit on my star.
And I'll see you some day when you're down and depressed,
Silently waiting for your day of rest.

II

No need for listening to others around;
Silence comes screaming, not making a sound.
My thoughts which ignite
And flutter about,
Wisp through the past
Within and without.
Virtually aimless, yet choosing their path,
They lead me through valleys that echo and laugh.
Sacred, these legends
Can raise me above,
Alone or together
We march on with love.

Ian Sherwood

flower

The secret trellis of my mouth
speaks the words my heart's without;
still you smile, drawing a song from your lips
giving me reason to join this cadence.

I will drivel (for sake of distraction)
I will dilly-dally (for fear of confidence)

Are your words mine?
I have thought that.

I've kept your tales, in my eyes
when the winds were high,
salt-hair sailing, port to port;
In Sicily's Cathedral you took an oath
Saw Schumann sung on German soil;
these visions only I can touch the person who has held
them all.

Memories are funny things when you dream
you're asleep,
and your dreams have become mine

I have awoken to that dawning hour sunseting,
myself not concerned our time has run out;
in Piccadilly corner, or near the market square,
how simply the clock was wrapped and misplaced.

Only one wish from God
To change the time that's gone
Provide me everything
Both past and present scenes-
at once;

In Milladine, across the beach, your prints remain
Neptune remembers you-
As he too wishes you'd sail again

"The flower that is my girl,
The passion which is her heart;
This I give her-
my mind and thoughts".

Scott Baker

Memories

In November Our vibes met and hypnotized me
In December, a stolen kiss that made me soar
In January, a hug and kiss that led to longings
In February, Fate spoke to me once more.
In March, a brief phone call lifted low spirits
In April, a visit caused my heart beat
In May, a day of passion I remember
From Spring till Fall the loving was quite sweet.
From Fall till Spring, regret my heart remembered
Yet through those months the longings they did show
In Spring there were new memories to savor
That sadly got drawn down by undertows.
I never will forget these times together
These yesterdays return forevermore.

Linda G. Mitchell

La nuit des chiens

Quand la poésie embarque
C'est l'opium qui se diffuse
Quand la poésie embarque
C'est la mélancolie, voulant se faire vacarme qui y va
sonnant
Quand la poésie embarque
Nous sommes des enragés peureux traînant des
amours refoulés
Quand la poésie embarque
On baisse Madame La Misère, dans sa boîte en
carton
Prête à être vendue avec, bien sûre, la poupée KEN

Mon ennui sera ma poésie
Mon ennui sera ma nuit tâchée par le jour
Mon ennui haïra les sourires des gens du matin
Ils sont tristes ces gens qui trimbale leur coffre à
cadeaux
Ils les distribuent, ingrats
À coup de bonjour, de merci, et de bonne nuit -
Bonne nuit!!! Mais je m'en fou de votre nuit
Votre nuit salie par votre bave clair et sillonnante
Votre nuit envoie chier les chiens qui se fendent en
quatre pour vous réveiller
Au moins... pour vous faire veiller la nuit soûle,
dansante, humide, sensuelle, violée, lourd,
écrasante.

La nuit des chiens sera la meilleure ami de mon
ennui
J'aimerai la saleté de leurs pattes
Je reniflerai le sexe de la prochaine à queue levée
Je m'ennuierai, oui
Mais je me soulerai de vides cris,
Près d'une clôture, bien sûre, pour mieux recevoir

l'air écoeuré d'un soulier en plein vole
Sur mon museau
Les chiens eux, de ma nuit
Invitent,
Ignorants,
L'autodestruction

Ma toxicofolie sera pour toi
Tu te souviendras de moi, guenille fatiguée
Tu te souviendras de moi, une aile de papillon mort
sortant de son cocon
Tu te souviendras de moi, dans ton propre enfer, tes
propres peur
Tu te souviendras de moi parce que je t'appartiens
Lorsque tu soupire à proximité de mon respire

TU ES À MOI,
tu es mon esclave avec un fouet bien encre dans tes
mains

Bonne nuit

Eh oui, je vivrai l'impitoyable manque, que cette
souffrance soit nette et vive. Quelle étouffe tout
souvenir tendre.
Pour mieux te sentir par bouffes sporadiques, par
brises fuyantes.

Stéphane Cardinal

The Noni Howard Prize for Creative Writing

This prize is awarded to an individual who demonstrates an outstanding achievement in creative writing, and is supported by Noni Howard.

The 1998-1999 winner of The Noni Howard Prize is:

Tiffany Prather

Tiffany's winning entries follow on the next pages of The Mitre

Blaeberry River Valley

With warm tea and toast
 We watched the days cool and colour
The Blue Mountains
 Dusted in sugary snow
Cold winds
 Swept the last yellow from poplar and larch
The breath of the horses beyond my window
 Hung in morning-bright crystals.

I would sit before the easel
Your black seal-eyes closed tight
 Before the crackling stove
You would sleep
 Sleep and wait
Knowing fully I could not sit so long
 Before these slow paintings
 Which I should
 But don't have patience for.
Forgiving myself
 Came easier each day
And as I bundled into wood clothes
 Wool socks and rubber boots
You would rise with that silly little forever smile
 Ready for another day of excitement
Dancing along the shores and tributaries of the blaeberry.

When November arrived
 We were greeted by small red sockeye
 Frozen crimson brilliance
 Sparkling through glassy ice.
No more spawning for these latecomers
 Why did your little bodies wait so long?
We slid across their graves
 Thrilled by that strange sensation
One has when the river has frozen
 Sharp and clear-through
 Its pebbles and fishy secrets
Silent and still in their icy bed.

Across that great braided expanse
 You raced and slipped
Feeling and appearing
 As an arctic fox
 Whose fur has forgotten the season.

Depth Charts

By Skungo's cave

The old man sits on my chest
And tickles my guts.

What is death around here anyway?

A deep longing

And heave of sadness in a smallbox cave.

Only Matt rests quietly

In his silent bed of kelp.

Farmers Daughter

Soil stained

Yes, that is what I am

Like a blue tribal tattoo

The soil has spread beneath my skin

And marked me for what I am.

I wander the streests of Madrid

Of Montréal and Marrakesh

Forever a child

Lost without the soil which birthed me.

Hope (Celebration)

With green glass
 Splintered on floors
Of a house on its knees
I smile a fleshy smile
 And celebrate
 With three empty plates
If tonight
 I could only make you laugh
 While I wept
And you coloured my darkness.
Then perhaps
 If only for a moment
 Peace would be mine.

Solstice in Haida Gwaii

Today is the solstice
 And a swallow
 In its iridescent splendour
 Died in my hands
While white-toothed orca
 Rolled silently through the channel
Sharp black dorsal fins
 Slicing the salty air
Slipping deceitfully into the mirrored northern sea.

Spring of '90

Waking cold
In the snow-dusted hills of Montana
We ran like children
 Pointing out what we both could see
And making love
 On the flaming red rock of Wyoming
We danced
Among the cows and jack-rabbit holes
 Always onward
 To the south and to the west
And we passed through Arizona
In one stifling night
 Of heat and corn-chips.
Looking back
 I think I lost my rainbow mittens at Flaming Gorge.

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY



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