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spring '80

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Invitation to Artists

The Fall 1980 edition of GENESIS will feature a section solely devoted to artwork. The length of this section will be determined by the number of accepted submissions. Any type of drawings may be submitted, although black-and-white ink sketches, such as the artwork in the current edition of GENESIS, are preferred. Photographs may also be submitted. All artwork will be reproduced in black-and-white. Artists whose work is not accepted will be notified by mail; those desiring the return of their work must enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Invitation to Authors

Manuscripts are invited from all persons who have been students at IUPUI at any time during the last eighteen months prior to submission. Manuscripts of essays, fiction, or poetry, on any topic, may be submitted at any time to GENESIS, Student Services Office, Cavanaugh Hall, 925 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46202. All manuscripts are considered by an editorial board elected by the English Club and the Philosophy Club. Authorship is not revealed to the board until a manuscript has been accepted.

All submissions must be accompanied by a separate title sheet containing the author's name, address, and telephone number. Essays and fiction should be typed on a sixty-space line and double spaced. Manuscripts of less than sixteen pages will be given first consideration. *Manuscripts must be submitted in duplicate.*

Authors whose material has been accepted will be notified prior to publication. Authors who wish to be notified of rejection prior to publication date—and all authors who wish their manuscripts to be returned—must include a self-addressed stamped envelope with their submissions. Any manuscript submitted too late for the current deadline will be considered for the next issue. Prizes of \$25 are awarded at the discretion of the editors for the outstanding entry in each of the categories of essay, fiction, art, and poetry.

An Introduction to Ethics

Lisa Fields

Lisa Ann Fields, 24, received a bachelor's degree in Public Health Administration from Indiana University and is currently a graduate student in Epidemiology at the University of Michigan. She is a member of three honor societies: Accolade, Alpha Lambda Delta, and Sigma Pi Alpha. She is the recipient of the *Genesis* award for Essay. This is her third literary award.

Philosophy is not a science. Philosophy, particularly existentialism, goes far beyond rationality or reason and tries to understand man in his total existence. The human dimension is considered, not merely science and common sense. The purpose of philosophy is not to answer all questions but to raise questions and to help man reach some level of self-understanding.

Ethics is very closely related to philosophy. The essence of ethics is to know oneself, in the true sense of the word. Ethics tries to get to the unity of truth, self-knowledge, and self-awareness. It is the philosophical dimension that brings into play the self.

Unfortunately, many of our institutions do not deal with this philosophical dimension. They introduce society's values and do not support self-awareness. As a result, the individual assimilates the values of his parents, church, school, and social groups and begins to think of them as his own. This, however, does not lead to individuality. Those values which he assimilates are not related to the full experience of his situation, so they are not fundamental values. Self-discovery (situational ethics) is the way to morality. In ethics, it is important to have a sense of responsibility, which includes the ability to discover things for oneself.

The essence of morality cannot be based merely on the objective side of reality, nor can it consist solely of the subjective desires. In this light, one comes to know that freedom is the essence of man.

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A prominent Russian writer, Leo Tolstoy, had a very profound interest in the subject of man's freedom, besides having a deep understanding of the concept itself. In the Second Epilogue of his great novel, *War and Peace*, Tolstoy expounds on many of his ideas concerning freedom and the will of man. First of all, it should be noted that ethics enables one to become conscious of his freedom.

This consciousness is a source of self-cognition quite apart from and independent of reason. Through his reason man observes himself, but only through consciousness does he know himself.

Apart from consciousness of self no observation or application of reason is conceivable.

. . . without this conception of freedom not only would he be unable to understand life, but he would be unable to live (in the full sense of the word) for a single moment.

A man having no freedom cannot be conceived of except as deprived of life.

If the conception of freedom appears to reason to be a senseless contradiction like the possibility of performing two actions at one and the same instant of time, or of an effect without a cause, that only proves that consciousness is not subject to reason.

Man's actions proceed from his innate character and the motives acting upon him. What is conscience and the perception of right and wrong in actions that follow from the consciousness of freedom? That is a question for ethics.¹

From the point of view of reason, man is subject to the law of necessity; namely, eating, sleeping, drinking, and finding shelter. In the study of ethics, though, one finds that there is much more to life than just surviving. It is important to keep a balance between freedom and necessities.

¹Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc., 1966), p. 1337-8.

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Freedom, the human spirit, is the basis of ethics, and it cannot be taught. The individual must develop it for himself in view of his own possibilities in the world. Only by recognizing his true self can the individual deal with the concept of morality. Morality cannot be based purely on rational thinking, nor can it be taught. Reflecting upon a moral problem/question, such as the legalization of abortions, one cannot definitively state whether it is right or wrong. Rules of morality alone do not constitute the essence of morality.

This again brings one back to the idea that ethics is not a science, because logic can only give the objective side of morality. Love, justice, and the experience of goodness cannot be based strictly on rational thinking, for feelings are involved, also. If morality dealt only with objectivity, it would tend toward legalism. In effect, ethics requires the existential thinking of the mind and, in turn, of the total Being. Logical thinking produces the moral law, but that does not make one good. Goodness must come from within. One must make a moral decision in the situation which he finds himself. Only by experiencing can he solve moral problems. Spirit is rooted in the human, but the mind being purely rational will not recognize spirit. Enlightenment cannot be the result of a scientific technique; it must be spontaneous.

The question of maturity relates to philosophy in that the different stages of human growth and development involve man's existence as a whole or his being-in-the-world. Ethics also can be tied in with the concept of maturity.

Maturity, according to Erich Fromm, is "the willingness to be born anew each day." It is spiritual growth, and growth itself is the basis for morality. It is at that moment when a person truly becomes aware of himself (self-actualizes his authentic existence) that he is said to be mature. This does not imply that he stops growing, for spiritual growth in an ongoing event, and maturity is the beginning of a long process of growing. The individual does not experience these moments all of the time, but he must keep in touch with them in order to be his true self. As the sayings go: "To thine own self be true" and "the truth shall set you free."

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There are basically four stages in the process of human development that characterize existential crises which the individual needs to overcome if he is to become a mature person. The process of maturity, of growth, can be related to the philosophical experience of finding oneself.

The beginning stage includes children during their first few years of life. This is the biological level where the pleasure principle predominates. In other words, the infant is only interested in getting his bodily and emotional needs satisfied. At this time he has no sense of self.

The age of negativism (2-5 years), the technical level, is next in the developmental process. The child develops some sense of self as he explores his world, the world of things, the objective world.

It can be said that the child (from infancy to preadolescence) is premoral, in the sense that his morality is not fully developed. By listening to objective authority, he does what is "right" without any understanding of why. Growth implies the process of self-discovery.

Discipline, in the form of reward and punishment, does not yield the essence of morality. The child needs more than discipline to become mature. He needs motivation. He needs to reject his past learning to some degree in order to learn for himself.

Regarding the period of adolescence (11-30), there are four phases. First, there is puberty (11-14). At this age, the child is starting to move away from the biological level and preparing to enter his teenage years. The development of the child up to this point is basically biological and rational, but these do not constitute the foundation of morality. Maturity goes beyond intellect and physical growth, and this is where the most important phase, the phase of adolescence, begins.

During the Negative Stage of Adolescence (14-16), the individual begins to ask questions pertaining to truth, love, justice, and freedom. He answers these questions negatively at first. He finds no meaning to life, whatsoever, and is existentially bored. At this time, he breaks off with his inauthentic self and is on the way to becoming an authentic human being.

Early Adolescence Proper (16-20) is the beginning of freedom when the individual experiences philosophical truth, love, wonder, transcendence, creativity, personal

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uniqueness, and the beautiful. The young person at this point is quite radical with an infinity of ideals, and he overemphasizes his possibilities in the world. If he becomes fixated at this point, he can become fanatical about love and freedom. In short, Being or self, manifests itself here, as well as fundamental philosophical and ethical questions. At this point, however, they have not yet been fully integrated into the individual.

Going into Late Adolescence (20-30), the individual begins to form commitments of life. Prior to this, he asked a multitude of questions. What he finds now starts to become integrated into himself. It is brought on by the quest for meaning and the awakening of consciousness of Being. He is able to reflect on his philosophical experiences, he makes fundamental decisions, and he forms values, deciding if he should accept or reject the ones he has been taught. He is also able to form an harmonious unity between spirit (freedom, authentic existence, essential truth, authentic values) and necessities (the objective world).

Late Adolescence can be called "the age of 'irrevocable' decisions" because the individual decides whether he wants to be an authentic person or if he would rather keep his roots in the objective world of "everyday existence." This is also a time when the person can become permanently fixated. For example, materialism is a fixation, not because it is bad, but because it is an obstacle to individual freedom and authenticity. Some typical existential fixations that can ensue during adolescence are the Mass Man, Technocrat, Negativist, Radical, Extremist, Fanatic, and the Sceptic.

Finally, there is the Crisis of the Limits (30-40). The individual has set goals for himself, and once he has reached those goals he asks what he has accomplished in life and what is next? He is ready to open up to the deeper meaning of life again, as he did in adolescence. As he seeks his own fulfillment, he looks *into* things and, thus, sees truth and reality. He opens up once again to the call of Being.

The adult realizes that there are limits to what he can do, but he does not stop growing philosophically because this is not the end to philosophical questioning. There is an awakening, and the person learns to open up to the deeper realizations of life while at the same time transcending the

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material world, in spite of limit situations. He decides that if he changes himself, if he finds himself, he will change the world, and the world will be a better place because his Being is a part of the world. This awareness of being happens through a very subtle growth process, and it takes time. Awareness is also the time when a person can overcome fixations.

There is a philosophical relevance to consider the contemporary situation for determining the meaning of ethics. First of all, a value crisis is taking place between the individual and society, because the structure of our modern culture does not promote values of the individual.

Each person has the responsibility of evaluating his life experiences and giving meaning to them. He must be involved in discovering his values, for they are not predetermined. Everyone has potentialities for faith, courage, love, truth, hope, self-awareness, self-realization, and freedom. It is during growth that these possibilities manifest themselves. Growth implies greater awareness, and awareness implies freedom and self-discovery. These form the basis of an ethical life.

Sometimes growth does not take place, and as a result the individual experiences existential anxiety, which is healthy, as opposed to neurotic anxiety which is the repression and fear of freedom. A person with existential anxiety experiences powerlessness, loss of meaning, impotence, and lack of consciousness. If nothing is done, the anxiety can lead to apathy and then to hostile alienation. The authentic person can creatively deal with his anxiety. It is at this time that he needs to open up to life experiences once more and rediscover his values. Anxiety may awaken truth, but truth cannot be realized without going through existential experiences.

As a part of freedom and responsibility, each person has the power to determine his own life by making it what he wants it to be and, also, to be creative and make decisions. Meaning cannot be given to anything apart from the experience of freedom.

Oftentimes, people experience existential anxiety when society represses their individuality or freedom. For example, the machine has taken over many human tasks, but nothing is or can be a substitute for freedom and what it means to be human. If the social order represses freedom

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it contains the seed for revolution. Negative laws, which prevent people from performing certain actions, do not foster growth. To be ethical, man must recover awareness, and as part of his philosophical experience he needs to question society's values. The more mature man becomes, acting according to conscience, the less will he need the law to prevent him from doing evil. Freedom can transcend the law, provided that the people are motivated by the truth. Moral rules and laws are good only so far as they help, not hinder, the self.

The tendency to conform totally to the everyday world leads to a loss of self, loss of meaning, and loss of values. The healthy nonconformist attitude of the adolescent is a result of self-awareness showing itself for the first time. It is important that some sense of individuality continue even after adolescence.

Two opposing worlds impose themselves on the individual during his lifetime. First, there is the philosophical world concerned with fundamental thinking, authentic existence, freedom, and maturity. On the other side is the external world which compels the individual to do things that are useful, socially acceptable, necessary, and lawful. If this latter world predominates, then love, truth, and other experiential values are illusions.

Everyday existence is not fundamental existence; the essence of humanity involves much more than that. Beauty, love, and freedom in the world must be actualized in man since the world is a structure of man. The basic structure of man's awareness is the basic structure of reality. If man fails to love, for example, he manifests that feeling into the world; if he does not experience himself, he views the world as hostile; if he does not realize his goodness, he sees evil in the world. In short, man makes the world what it is, and in order to realize the self-giving power and enrichment of life he must become aware of his unique potentialities as an authentic Being in the world.

Wonder is a philosophical experience and a personal awareness of the true realities in life. In other words, wonder is the actual manifestation of freedom, love, goodness, truth, and joy, which are all awakened in the mind and which help to form the basis of ethics.

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It is very important that the person be receptive to all life experiences, and in order to do this he must transcend his everyday existence. Freedom cannot be realized completely in man's physical surroundings of the home, school, church, culture, traditions, and friends, nor can it be manipulated by objectivity, scientific reason, or common sense. This does not mean that the individual should completely reject his external environment, but he should realize that there is another side to life full of goodness, truth, beauty, love, and freedom.

There is no technique for living. Man must follow his destiny and be open to reality by actively and creatively participating in life. To know love or truth or virtue or happiness or goodness or peace or even G-d, man must actually experience them and be receptive to their power. Through these experiences he will develop a sense of self, which in turn gives him freedom. If the individual truly opens himself up to the power of life, and if he understands, accepts, and finds meaning in his existential experiences, then nothing in the objective world will contradict him.

Ethics suggests that man's basic task is to exist, and to exist means to be involved. Man becomes a participant in the world insofar as he realizes himself and, thus, his potentialities for love, freedom, and communion. Communion means that individuals are bound together by a mutual concern for themselves, for to be indifferent or unfeeling is to be dehumanized.

The individual must realize his most fundamental relationship to the totality of history of which he is a part. Man is a structure of the world, and the world is a structure of man; they form a unity. The potentialities of various individuals combine to form the general potentialities of mankind.

In short, for a person to find himself in an authentic ethical existence he must realize his potentialities, recognize his self as a part of the totality of all that is, and be involved with others in the world. Of course, the first step is awareness.

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Philosophy distinguishes between scientific certitude (isolated facts) and existential certitude (life). There can be no objective certitude in ethics, morality, or religion. In the study of ethics, one can only be concerned with existential certitude which is interrelated to conscience and inner-reliability. Certitude implies that there is truth and man knows it, but it is not objective knowledge.

Conscience is a norm that lacks objective certitude because of its very nature. For example, a person can have faith in G-d, but he can never be certain that G-d actually exists. Ethical certitude, as part of the experience of wonder, is that which can be known but on a different level than that of reason. It can never be a technique. When man approaches the deeper aspects of life, he does not approach them with knowledge but with mystery, and he never stops asking questions. The mature person grows in relation to the truth and is willing to open up again and again, never settling for absolutes. Morality lacks absolutes because the individual cannot say, without question, whether something is right or wrong; he does what he *feels* is the right thing. He is unable to say he is mature or free because he cannot know that, but he can grow from knowing the truth.

Many times during the study of ethics, the question of love emerges. Love is the ability to transcend, while at the same time retain, individuality (union and diversity). Existential love is not just the relationship between two persons; it is actually the same thing as ethical life and authentic existence. The couple form a union between themselves, but insofar as they are co-Beings-in-the-world they create an "experiential oneness with all Being." Freedom is the basis of love, and love is the basis for freedom.

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Tolstoy, Leo. *War and Peace*. New York: W.W. Norton and company, Inc., 1966.

The philosophical views presented in this essay were conveyed to me by my learned instructor, Thomas Koenig.

Coming Home

I did not come from my parents, but from the sky,
Like a rain on the woods, appearing on the meadow
Like a new eye in the morning; and I walked through
The forest to the house where I would live
And quietly went to my room.

I sometimes go back to the meadow alone, to speak
To my father and mother, staring up into their faces,
Feeling their warm breath mix with mine: and once,
Standing there inside the summer afternoon among
The queen's lace and hickory trees, I asked the sky
To let me come back home.

As I spoke the sky darkened, the clouds broke
Into a deafening rain and, wet and afraid, I ran
Back through the shining trees toward the house.
When I got there I watched the storm from my window,
And for a while I felt so much alone
That the swallows in the shed all died,
And the oak tree in the lane turned into stone.

—Daniel Lucy

Daniel Lucy is a senior with a double major in English (Composition/Journalism) and Spanish. His poetry and short fiction have appeared previously in *Genesis*.

The Leaves Still Fall

The leaves still fall from the madhouse tree;
Some come to stops on the madhouse wall;
Their still forms lie on the madhouse lawn,
And fill the air with the madhouse fall.

The still still hangs in the madhouse night,
Like a storm's still eye or a far star's face;
The geese still fly through the still fall sky,
And the far sun falls while the geese still race.

And still I sit in the madhouse chair,
And fall asleep in my madhouse room;
And the light still falls on the square, square walls
And the threads of the rug from the madhouse loom.

The madhouse lawn fills up with leaves
From the madhouse trees, and I watch them fall;
Some come to stops on the dark, still ground.
Some come to stops on the madhouse wall.

—Daniel Lucy

Too Much In Between

Elaine A. Childs

Elaine A. Childs is a sophomore majoring in Religious Studies and Psychology. She returned to school, after doing secretarial work for 15 years, because she had run out of challenges. She has been writing poetry for 10 years and classifies what she writes as being a spontaneous, gut-level response to life, meant to be experienced rather than analyzed. The fiction is a first attempt and was written for Mrs. Hogan's W 131 class.

She was awakened by the sound of birds singing. Sunlight streamed through the window, unwelcome, uninvited, undesired. She stared at the stream of light. It caught particles of dust and held them suspended in the air. For a moment, she felt herself being drawn into that streaming ribbon of light, suspended, caught up in it, like one of the dust particles. She turned away. Automatically, she reached with her right hand in the direction of the nightstand and picked up her cigarettes. The ash tray was full of last night's butts, and she cursed as it nearly upset. She fluffed her pillows, propped them against the headboard of her bed, and settled against them, smoking and thinking about the decision she had made. This day would be different from all other days in her life; it was the day she had chosen to be her last.

She had arrived at her decision rationally and without emotion—the way she had been taught to make decisions. After years of searching, she had discovered one truth: Living was simply more trouble than it was worth. Life was boring; people were boring; her job was boring; and it was all meaningless. All around her, in every direction, there was nothing but a big, empty, gaping hole where life should have been.

She had tried to make some sense out of life and to give it some meaning. She had tried very hard. She thought perhaps that had been her mistake; maybe it was never meant to make sense.

She had taken a class in transactional analysis and learned to identify the "games people play." She had been to gestalt weekends, paying \$75 for the privilege of forming a sense of community with a small group of people, people who touched, reached out, embraced one another, were concerned for one another, who loved one another—for the weekend, and for only \$75. She had learned her lessons in self-awareness very well. She had never been so aware of herself as she was at this moment. She knew she was beautiful in many ways; she knew she was a good person. She knew herself so well, in fact, that her aura of self-assurance was most often intimidating to those who only knew how to form relationships which were based on filling gaps in another's deficient personality. She loved herself enough to want to die quickly; dying from boredom and loneliness was much too slow and much too painful.

Perhaps if she had been born just a little less intelligent, a little less curious, a little less perfectionistic, she would have been able to settle down, as so many of her friends had done, with a decent man who came home, put up his feet, and lulled his brain to sleep in front of the television set. Those were the lucky ones, she thought. They were satisfied and it made no difference to them that there should have been something else and there was not. They were anesthetized by television and Pabst Blue Ribbon.

Crushing out her cigarette, she considered the idea of leaving a note, and then dismissed it. What could she say? And what difference would it make anyway? She had very simply had enough. She wanted no more of meaningless jobs and empty dead-end people and of living with a sense of being strangely alien to the society into which she had been born. Nor did she wish to become a part of it. To pretend to be other than she was would be another, even worse, kind of death. Let them think whatever they chose to; they would anyway. No one had understood her in life, it was hardly likely that she would be understood in death.

Abruptly, she got out of bed and went into the bathroom. She emptied the last of the Mr. Bubble into the tub and began to run water for a bath. While it ran, she went back to her room and laid out a fresh nightgown and panties. She would not "meet her maker" (whatever that might mean) in dirty underwear.

Settling down into the warm water, she once again felt "suspended." She cleared her mind of all thoughts and simply experienced taking her last bath. She was aware of nothing but the feel of the water on her bare skin and the faint crackling sound of a million tiny soap bubbles as they burst, like so many of her dreams had done, one at a time. Feeling safe for the moment, submerged in the warm fluid, she leaned back and closed her eyes. Instantly, memories flooded her consciousness. She allowed them to come, one after another—in jig-saw fashion—like pieces of a faded patchwork quilt. She observed them objectively. There had been a few very good times, but not enough joy, not enough touching. There had also been some very bad times, and there had been far too much in between. The decision to abort her life remained firm.

She pulled the plug and watched the water drain away. She began to feel cold. Stepping from the tub, she picked up a towel and dried her body slowly and deliberately, then covered it with her best perfumed bath powder. Opening the medicine cabinet, she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror and observed that she already looked dead. She removed the bottle of capsules and swallowed all of them.

She went back into her room. Her favorite nightgown was waiting for her. She put it on, arranged the pillows once again, and got back into bed. She lit another cigarette and settled back to wait. Somewhere outside, birds were still singing. She felt herself once again being drawn into a streaming ribbon of light, suspended, floating, like a particle of dust. This time she would not come back.

The Soul Is Like Time

The soul is like Time,
 Silent - but Deep
 We forward it, so coolly
 It's blade shines! As we creep.

—Eric Bledsoe

Eric Bledsoe is a freshman majoring in Political Science and Sociology. He has lived in such places as Baltimore, Maryland and Bonn, West Germany. Later, he plans to attend graduate school at one of the Ivy League institutions.

Atlantic City Boardwalk

how i enjoy
once-upon-a-time castles
and moaning shells
sea slithering foaming
up the sand through my toes
in my thoughts

boardwalking splinters my feet

i grasp the pipe rail
and as a weathered captain
grown into his ship
i meet the brisk salt air
chin up

there starboard
i imagine those limbless
tail whipping creatures
swishing through grass
slipping by rocks

so beautiful in unawares

but salt tears soon wet my dreams
for as i turn
there a lad in a faceless ocean
wandering mommy mommy
where's my mommy

my hand reaches out but no
there's your mommy
angry half-step running
she pulls you away
from an obvious stranger
and you disappear in the current

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my eyes are drawn
to a not-so-distant backdrop
of lights pied piper flashing flashing
to calliope sounds
of up and down children
on stick horses
circling circling

i see those dopplered faces
amidst a crowd of pointing arms crying
the ring the ring
gold ring wins a free ride free ride

i feel the jostle even from where i stand
of mirror maze maneuverers and
haunted room screamers
sifting their way through
the endless giddy balloons
that hold hands

i see moths flitting about
the neon lights buzzing buzzing

off to one side
the excitement of the crowd elevates
as the bumper car switch is thrown
sparking big and little laughter
smashing bumper car against car
car against bumper
and crash your dead

in the foreground
a tilted head
tugging an enormous daddy leg
asks can't i can't i
please can't i

—Michael E. Pratt

Michael E. Pratt is a sophomore in the school of Medicine. His poetry has appeared in the Pegasus Anthology of College Poetry Review and in numerous small literary magazines. His favorite people include Dali, Nietzsche, Buckminster Fuller, and Ms. Piggy. He is the recipient of the *Genesis* poetry award.

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hard times

cactus weather breeds thorn
and tumbleweed foolery as the prairie sleeps
on the long wings of a burnt sienna sunset
on the long wind of a lone coyote

listen and hear
the mockery of a waving ocean
never closer

there are no lovebirds here just vultures
banking against the hot air rising
from adobe cliffs
and silence

hear the song of a melted jackrabbit

—Michael E. Pratt

my friend

1. blind man
on a rocking porch

i know how well
you read the play
of a summer sun
on the lollipop thrills
antics & shrills
of just-out-of-school children
galloping homeward
on a saddled zephyr

2. blind man
with your walking horse dreams

i wish for you
a pegasus-rising
above the stampede
of New York City sidewalks

—Michael E. Pratt

Portents

Phyllis Newton

Phyllis Newton, an English Education major with an Art minor, finds IUPUI wonderfully stimulating, after the satisfying career of being a "household coordinator," with its fringe benefits of churchwork, scouts, Red Cross, etc. She and her husband, Gene, have reared four children. She is the co-winner of the *Genesis* prize for fiction.

"Grandma!" The girl rapped sharply on the locked screen door and called again, "Grandma, are you all right? Please let me in quickly!" She hoped there was just the right note of urgency and caring in the call, as she breathed deeply and expelled the breath in a soundless snort, then listened intently. How ironic. It had worked. She heard the soft pad of the tiny woman's feet, followed by the interminable fumbling with lock and chain. After a small eternity the door was opened a crack and she was smiling down into the anxious brown eyes of this senile, shrivelled, humped-backed female person who was her grandmother. The fear which clouded those eyes subsided hesitantly as the girl asked softly, "Are you all right, Grandma?"

The old woman's fears ebbed as she accepted the girl as an ally against the unknown terror. Her claw-like hands clutched at the girl hungrily, drawing her into the dark, panelled living room. Pent-up emotion was expelled in a confused jumble of words, "Oh, I'm so glad you are here . . . There is someone at the back door . . . but I locked . . . She's a . . ." The old woman was suddenly at a loss. The cause of it escaped her, but that inordinate fear was still a tangibly felt force. The girl suddenly softened inside herself and hugged her grandmother, glad that her subterfuge had gained her entrance.

"You nut!" she thought, silently addressing herself. "Here you are in this unholy mess, and you're going to love this wrinkled old apple." Good thing, too," she mused

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inwardly. "In sixty-seven years this will be you and who will love you then if you can't love her now?" She shuddered at the thought.

The girl had arrived in this ancient household three days before, sent by her father, against her mother's will, to care for these aging grandparents—the eighty-three-year-old woman and the eighty-seven-year-old man. This had been the third time in as many days that her grandmother had locked her out of this strange, dark house, not knowing who she was or why she was here. It has been she at the back door who had struck such awful fear into her grandmother. "God forgive me," she thought ruefully of the lie she had just enacted. Such emphasis had been placed on truth in her rearing. But even deeper emphasis had been placed on survival in that hard Montana mountain country which had been her stern task master all her sixteen years. The eldest of the four children in her closely knit family, she had been tempered by the hard work, bleak climate, and the living with bare necessities. The close link with earth and elements, the grandeur of the mountains, and the natural rhythm of life had conspired with her quick mind and natural dexterity to hone her being to tough wholeness seldom found in one so young. Though she dimly perceived her holistic nature, she was deeply aware of her adequacy when it came to surmounting the normal difficulties. Work was the byword. All her life she had been led to believe that she could do anything if she set her mind to it and worked hard enough at it.

School had already commenced here in this rural southern Indiana community, so she enrolled late. It was a two-and-a-half mile walk to and from school in this September heat so foreign to her acclimatization. After school she had worked into the night, perspiring profusely, sweeping, mopping, scrubbing, eradicating the dust, divesting the corners of cobwebs and the closets of mustiness, but never quite divesting herself of the gnawing hunger to be home. She settled into the regimen of rising at five to start the coal fire in the cookstove, so dirty and messy compared to the clean, crackling tamarack wood of home. The strange new school proved to be the bright part of her day in this strange new life so far from family and

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home. She threw her energies into study and cooking and cleaning.

And praying. Suddenly prayer was important. It was no longer a rote ritual, but a link with that far-off family. It was a desperate pleading with the Power over life and death, "Don't let Grandma die in my care!" She knew her grandmother's death would be a good thing, as good as it was expected, even promised.

"Grandma can't live more than six months," they had told her. "At most you won't be in Indiana more than one school term." But now that she was here she knew she wasn't ready to face that death, even if it would free her to go home again. Let her do the cleaning and the cooking and the washing, and let Grandma die in someone else's care. But there was no one else.

Saturday she washed clothes on the back porch. She heated the water on the coal stove in the tarnished copper boiler, then carried it by bucketsful, pouring it steaming into the two tubs on the creaking washbench. She scrubbed them on a washboard with a bar of smelly yellow Fels Naptha soap. Her knuckles softened and cracked. What would they be like when cold weather set in? "Bloodier!" she assured herself ruefully. She hung a towel on the peg beside the tubs to dry her hands before she hung the clothes. Too bad the girls in this new school never wore the same dress twice in a row. She wouldn't either, but it would mean extra washing and ironing with that funny old iron. She made a mental note to change the ironing board cover before she used it. Wringing the last sheet, squeezing and coiling it round and round into the clothes basket, she straightened up. She winced at the stab of pain in her back, then promptly laughed aloud in disbelief. Generations of women had washed clothes on the board, and she was young and strong. How dared her back to ache?

She laughed idiotically at herself, at her untenable situation, at this musty old place; and finally she laughed because the wash was done. The incongruity of her laughter disturbed the serenity of the ancient oaks and maples. A bird flew out into the sunlight and the girl gasped. Never

had she seen such a bird, bright red, far more beautiful than its pictures, and as large as a mountain jay! No bird she had ever seen could rival its brilliance. The girl stood transfixed, allowing the wonder of it to seep into her being, assuaging her despair. The laughter had brought the little old woman to her side; and, bird-like in her movement, the woman touched the sleeve of the girl, breaking the spell, but in no way diminishing the joy of it.

"Ida? . . . Lill? . . .", the old woman was confused, trying to give the girl a name, but finding only the names of long-dead sisters. These didn't fit this tall, dark-eyed smiling stranger on her porch so the woman was at a loss again. She picked at her sleeve uncertainly, trying to comprehend, as the girl spoke softly.

"Did you see the cardinal, Grandma? Look, there in the crabapple tree." Together they peered up into the foliage, the girl's arm around the bony shoulders of the old woman, whose eyes seemed more alert as they followed the direction in which the girl pointed. They found the bird as it moved in the high branches, caught for an instant splendid red splash in the sun, then disappeared into the shimmering shadows.

The girl-woman's smile was reflected in the face of the ancient one. They returned to the kitchen together, blinking in the darkness after the brilliance of the out-of-doors. The screen door squeaked closed after them. "Honey Girl," tendered the old woman softly, then repeated the name, relishing its sound, "Honey Girl, what do you think we should serve for supper?"

It was not even ten-thirty in the morning, the girl mused absently; she wasn't even ready to think about lunch just yet. But aloud she said, "Let's go to the garden, Grandma. There should be some late tomatoes ripe." Maybe they could find a cabbage, too, and pull a few carrots for vegetable soup. They retraced their steps through the squeaking screen door and down the stone steps which were slightly askew with the ground-shiftings of many winters. She followed her grandmother up the path between the weather-beaten sheds, beside the fallen trellis

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of the grape arbor, and the asparagus patch, which had long ago gone to seed. They dodged the brambles of the blueberry bushes that had overrun the path at the edge of the woods, and came to the unkempt garden at the crest of the hill.

The girl gave only minimal attention to the gathering of the vegetables into the broken basket. Her straight hair fell limply around her face, partially obscuring her homely, angular features as she bent her gangly body to her task, deftly extracting the carrots from the brown earth. No one had ever addressed her with a term of endearment before. She had never missed it.

"Honey Girl," she rolled the name around in her mind, surveying it from every angle. "Honey Girl." It had a pleasant sound.

A smile
searches
tentatively
across the void
wistfully
wanting
to touch another
and return again
home.

Laughter
trips merrily
into waiting silence;
finding
companionship,
kindred hearts
answer
in breathless haste
to keep the moment
touched by love
and kindness.

—Phyllis Newton

Eve II

Phyllis Newton

She couldn't remember exactly when the idea had crystallized into the desire that had become, for all practical purposes, her motivating force. But this moment in her life was certainly proof positive that it had happened. It should have been a moment of supreme joy. Hadn't she worked toward it with every fiber of her being, with all the faculties at her command? And hadn't she manipulated until all the obstacles, which had seemed so insurmountable four years before, became like so many stepping stones leading to this moment? Why, then, was she so frightened? She had surprised even herself at the audacity with which she took on the entire system, and she had won. Or had she? No one else was aware that anything was different, her alter ego reminded her cynically, or that the system had been challenged.

She felt the surge of pain within her, astonished at its pervasive power. Nothing in life had prepared her for it, certainly not the dry words on the yellowed pages of that ancient book that had kindled her desire. And she had never before experienced pain of any sort, for human bodies had become so physically regulated that pain was almost nonexistent. When the dietary and physical regimen was not enough to prevent pain, self-hypnosis was employed. If pain persisted and the cause could not be eradicated, the nerves were put to sleep by proton ray, an outgrowth of the primitive acupuncture of twentieth century China. With the body-monitoring systems, pain, as a body indicator, had become obsolete.

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She absently checked the time, "old earth time", on the replica of the ancient clock, the kind that had become a fad in recent years. It was one of the few personal items she had brought with her to the asteroid, it and those precious pre-Chemocaust books, written in the barbaric days before most of the world's inhabitants had been destroyed. Had she not been so insignificant and her job so trivial to the system, they might have checked her baggage and decided she was too nonconformist, too unstable, to live by herself for such a length of time in the far reaches of space; and the plan would have come to naught. Without a doctor the books were to be a guide to behavior, instruction on the physical aspects of the experiment. Evalynn laughed. "Really", she thought, "Was there a doctor now living with any experience in this sort of thing? Not that she knew of; but she would have welcomed one, with or without experience, had she better understood the fact of pain.

It had all taken so much time. She had first started to prepare herself for the asteroidal monitoring job by enrolling in teleschool in the autumn of 2076. There were so few females in the laboratory that Adam had been loathe to release her, to allow her to take this monitoring position. Or at least she had assumed the scarcity of women was the reason for his reluctance. Only a few women were needed now for biological purposes. They had become emancipated from the reproductive processes. Biohumanoid reproduction had been perfected since those first crude experiments on invitro fertilization. Evalynn grimaced, thinking of the unbalance of the sexes. Men controlled the pre-selection process, and men preferred sons. Since women were neither as strong nor as aggressive as men, their numbers had drastically been reduced. The last recorded natural birth had been thirty-nine years ago.

Her thoughts returned to Adam, a powerful hunk of man. He had been more gentle than she had had any reason to suppose he would be. Sharp pain grabbed her attention again, and she was so alone. "Adam", her voice was pinched with loneliness, repeating his name.

Again she checked the time. She must monitor the neutrino-absorber indicators before allowing herself the

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luxury of giving her full attention to the gathering pain. . . Actually it was a perfunctory job. The machines did all the work. The small asteroid was presently of no commercial import to the System. Its metals weren't being mined, nor was it being used in the solar energy transmission system, although it was equipped with the huge convex mirror to provide solar energy for its own uses, maintaining the temperature for the atmosphere in the huge domed gardens and running the complex of equipment. Few on earth, even in the scientific monitoring community, were even vaguely aware of its existence among the commercially profitable asteroids which were held moonlike in orbit at lesser distances from the earth. Evalynn's asteroid was being used solely for scientific purposes. Shelved a century ago, experiments were now being conducted here, where indium-115 was in greater abundance, to learn more about conditions at the core of the sun by studying the entire neutrino spectrum. The indium-115 detector, in effect, "captured" the neutrinos, absorbing them by converting them into tin-115. By measuring the energy of the electrons hurled out of the indium-115 nuclei the energy of the incoming neutrinos could be determined. The detection of gamma rays and electrons, measuring their directions and energy levels, was quietly revolutionizing the knowledge of the universe. And Evalynn monitored these detectors. She was only the caretaker of the asteroid, completely unnecessary to the operation as long as everything went according to plan. "But if anything can go wrong, it will," she thought, remembering how the last caretaker had met his death.

Again the pain engulfed her and for the first time she regretted her decision. It has seemed such an intriguing idea when she conceived it. It had grown into "a pearl of great price." To realize it she had studied, grown proficient as a trouble-shooter, wangled this job on this remote asteroid, and just before leaving, completed her final act of seduction. Of course, there had been no one to meet her space shuttle after the sixty-five day trip; and it had been difficult to adjust to the solitary life. Gardening, which had been such a delight when she first arrived, had become impossible; and she had become too uncomfortable even to read.

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The excruciating pain overwhelmed her. She could feel her lips, dry and chapped, as she breathed deeply and noisily through her open mouth. Now there was no respite from the engulfing, all-suffusing again. Time was forgotten. There was no other reality, just the pain, interminable pain, and her body possessed it. She stood outside herself and laughed at her plight. "Are you sure you want to go through with this? Too late, girl! Keep working!" It required all her energy, all her endurance. "I'm splitting!" she gasped, "I'm splitting in two!" One last mighty push and it was mercifully over. She was suffused with indescribable joy. Sobbing, she reached for her newborn baby. And softly attuned with all creation, she laid its tiny self across her abdomen.

The Seamstress

She bites the day in half
with her teeth,
Threads her fantasies through the slim
needle-eye of time,
Mends her broken dreams with leftover strands
of gold and ruby red.

She holds the fabric of her life
up to the light -
It seems so sheer, so fragile!

Yet see the fine and steady stitches?
They make the fabric strong.

—Faith F. Vahle

Faith is an adult non-degree student. She states that besides her love for writing, her main interests are her family and Anthropology. She is enrolled in Dr. Rea's creative writing class.

The Nature of the Boa

Laura A. Burris

I don't remember deciding to acquire a pet, of any kind, but there it was, looking out my window and slowly turning around to look at the room and at me. My boa constrictor smiled.

"Why don't you let me wrap my coils around you?" At my surprise, he added, "I'll be gentle."

Gentle? He seemed gentle: he had a soothing voice and moved slowly and gracefully, undulating rhythmically as he moved across the floor. Though arched up, eye to eye with me, his head cocked and pleading, his tail was invisible outside the living room door. Twenty-two feet long they had told me. But I could not remember why I had been compelled to buy a boa constrictor. I had heard of people keeping little ones as pets, but this was a monster. How could I ever get rid of it? And why had I never heard that any kind of a snake could talk, even a boa?

When he got no positive response, he shrugged (as much as a shoulderless creature can) smiled again and slithered off, humming as he moved about the apartment closely examining everything. His attitude stayed calm and friendly a few minutes later when a couple of friends dropped by unexpectedly to visit. Chris and Terry talked to him as if they trusted him; they had occasionally heard of exotic snakes as pets, and they didn't seem to think it unusual that he could talk.

During the conversation, he asked neither of them if he could wrap his coils around them. They all talked for half an hour as if they were good friends, while I watched in a daze.

When Chris and the snake were engrossed in conversation I pulled Terry aside.

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"I wish I didn't have it, I don't know why I decided to get him—I don't even remember thinking about it. But I have the feeling that if I tried to take him back to where he came from, or even politely asked him to leave, he would be very offended and then I hate to think what he might do."

"C.J., he seems like a very nice boa to me. I can't imagine he would hurt you—look at him, it, whatever it is, he's so tame," Terry insisted and looked at me as if *I* must be suspect if I could accuse, even quietly behind his back, that nice boa constrictor of anything less than genteel behavior.

My voice was losing strength as I realized I wasn't being heard. "But he does have to get dinner somewhere, Terry, and boas kill their prey by squeezing them to death and he did ask me—I guess he was polite about it, I have to admit that—but he did ask if he could wrap his coils around me."

"C.J.! Have a little trust. He's *okay*," Terry emphatically reassured me.

I felt hopeless and dreaded being alone again with him. He created an atmosphere of doom or if he didn't create it, I certainly felt it. The air was thick and I found it hard to breath.

"Just talk to him a little—you might be surprised."

Why wouldn't he believe me? There was something sneaky and mean behind that complacent smile. I could see the boa stretched up to the window, looking peacefully outside, his head only a silhouette but his length stretching menacingly across the floor, on and on. I paced, taking deliberate deep breaths and wishing for a way to get that snake out. I kept thinking the others are fools for believing him. *I* heard him ask to wrap me in those thick, strong, scaly coils, but there was no way he would stop with just that. *I* saw those deep eyes gazing so sincerely into mine, asking. He'll tighten up, and smile that sweet lopsided smile and squeeze and squeeze and I won't be able to do anything against him—it would be useless—and he'll coil tighter and tighter. I was beginning to panic.

Then suddenly he was looking me in the eye. The other people were gone and he had watched them go and immediately turned to me. He moved his head slowly back

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and forth with a haughty yet still asking look in his eyes, brows raised waiting for an answer.

"I won't hurt you! Really I won't," he said as he locked his teeth suddenly onto my shirt at the neck, his eyes still boring into mine.

I tried to pull away but I was so afraid of making it angry. "I really don't want you to do this," I said with a hard swallow. The blood drained slowly from my face and head and a numbness shot through me; I was dreading what would follow.

He let go.

"Okay." That's all he said.

He was again silhouetted against the window in the semi-darkness and my head spun as I asked myself again and again how I ever got myself into such an impossible situation. I brought this upon myself; that I could not deny. And a boa constrictor cannot change—he may be calm, polite and tame right now but he is what he is and he will do what boas do. Why did I think for a moment, even long enough to bring this creature in here, that he would be—that he could be—any different? What was I thinking when I decided to do this? I stood staring, staring at the shadowy silhouette.

And then I woke up, immediately looked around the room, surprised that I woke up at all, but could not find the serpent. He was gone, or was he hiding? If he was hiding, why didn't he come out? As much as I dreaded seeing him, it was worse wondering where he was.

Then when I was fully awake, I realized it was only a dream, but as I lay there so relieved I also realized that there was a different kind of constrictor—the human kind—who was trying to choke me and squeeze the life out of me and though it was only the nature of that human and could not be changed I had to get that straight in my mind and accept that there would be no change. But would I be the same as I was with the snake—afraid? And will the human constrictor destroy me with my own fear in my attempt to break away? Will I be taunted and terrorized and hopeless?

Relaxed now, finally, I felt ready to face it and find out. From the other room I heard a noise, a shuffling; it was moving toward the kitchen and then I heard a soft, muffled hissing . . . could it be the water beginning to boil in the teakettle . . . ?

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Auschwitz

skin
tight clinging
to the million multitudes
of an expressionless earth

i am tears
that sizzle in the flame
of overturned altars
ripe with offering

Levitical ashes
on a Lenten forehead

—Michael E. Pratt

Alone

Exorcising
pain
pulling it out
pins from a cushion
scratching
ouch!!
finger-like memories
clutching and clawing
plucking my flesh
until it trickles
then pours
of my own blood
letting
cleansing
my soul
so hard to let go

—Shirley Coutts

Shirley is a junior at IUPUI majoring in Journalism. She is well known on campus for her work on the student newspaper *Sagamore*. She also is the sole contributor to our art section this issue.





“Those Who Know No Evil. . . .”

Peggy D. Smith

Peggy D. Smith is a frustrated romantic who ponders the question: “Which came first—the dream or the reality?”

Tom drove the car; he always did. His wife sat in the seat next to him. The radio was turned so low that it was hardly audible over the hiss of the air conditioner. Tom thought he heard a song he liked come on. He reached over to inch up the volume.

“Oh, for Pete’s sakes,” his wife, Shirley, yelled and snapped off the radio. “My head is about to burst and you go turning up that darned radio.” She looked over at him with thinly veiled disgust. “Inconsiderate old man,” she thought. “Any other husband would have asked first.”

Tom said nothing. The song had been one they’d listened to long ago — when they’d first met. Tom cast a cautious, side-long glance at the figure next to him as though he were in a crowded bus terminal, thinking, but not quite sure, that she was somehow familiar to him. His wife’s wide figure covered much of the seat, and between her fingers she held a smoking cigarette. Its smell sickened him.

“I don’t know why you couldn’t have gotten everything on the first trip,” Shirley began. “Mother only asks you to do this once a week, so you’d think that you could do it without any trouble.”

“Tom’s getting lazier each day,” she mused, ignoring the late summer scenery flashing by outside the car’s closed windows. The only time he ever seemed to have any energy was at night when she couldn’t fall asleep or at least feign sleep before he came to bed. He’d always been that way. She remembered suddenly how he used to read poetry to her. She could never understand it, and she knew what he really wanted.

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Tom could tell that he was in for a bad time. Her headache would last for days, and he would be to blame. Why did her mother have to have her lawn done every week? He wanted to play tennis with Ann and her boyfriend, Richard. Tom loved their company. The three of them could always find a willing fourth player for doubles. But, that would be impossible today. His mother-in-law would not rest until the grass was short and even and every flower stood in regimented straight lines. Sometimes, what she called a weed looked better than the flowers, so he was constantly pulling up the wrong plant. Tom knew he would have to dig up all the brave sprouts which had sprung up between the cracks in her smooth regular sidewalk. Then, as hot as it was, he would have to burn everything. If only he hadn't forgotten his grass shears! He could have been half finished by now.

"It's really too hot to do any lawn work today," he told his wife without taking his eyes off the road ahead.

"Really? I've seen you play tennis with Ann and Richard when it was much hotter than this." Shirley sent him her half-sneered smile.

"Of course it's not hot to you," Tom thought. "All you do is sit in that air conditioned kitchen and drink that syrupy iced tea from those stained Tupperware glasses." But, he said nothing as he turned into the wide concrete driveway which ran parallel to the house. He parked the big sedan behind the sports car belonging to his daughter's boyfriend.

"I told Ann that I didn't want him here when we're not around." Shirley began angrily raising up in her seat trying to see into the windows of the house.

"Oh, they're both nice kids, and besides, they've been going together for years. He'll probably be our son-in-law someday."

"Well, I know how men are. They never marry the girls who let them . . . you know. It's up to the woman to put them off, and. . . Don't turn off the car. I want to run the air conditioner."

Tom shook his head slightly as he got out of the car. The still, hot air washed over him and broke out a light sweat over his body. It felt good after the stale air conditioner air of the car. He wiped his forehead and ambled over to the garage. The forgotten grass shears were

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not there. Ann would know where they were. Tom shot a glance at the car and smiled at the thought of his daughter.

"Ann certainly wouldn't make her husband mow your damned lawn," he said to his unhearing wife. Tom opened the back door and stepped up into the kitchen. From the living room he heard laughter and walked toward it. Rounding the corner into the room, he took a quick silent look and ducked back behind the door. His daughter and Richard were there.

Reclining on the sofa, their naked bodies glowed with dark tans and firm muscles. The boy held the girl close to him, and her head rested on his chest. They looked like two healthy, young animals. Without chancing a second look, Tom slunk back into the kitchen and stood staring at a bowl of plastic fruit on the counter. He swallowed hard trying to muster the righteous anger he knew he should feel. It did not come. He felt embarrassed and sad, but he was not angry.

Tom blinked and tried to focus his eyes but the images of what he had seen swam before him like a long forgotten dream. He'd always hoped, but there had never been a time like that for him.

To Tom, Shirley had once seemed like a Medieval heroine from the books he loved to read. He wanted to make everything beautiful for them. He remembered looking at Shirley's placid face as she repeated the marriage vows and thinking that this was the beginning of his dream. Now, twenty years later, that day and the feeling were as distant as the toys of his boyhood. Leaning against the counter, Tom felt old and drained.

There had always been lukewarm indulgence from Shirley. Now, in later years, there was only indifference. At night, if he were persistent, she would yield to him, but afterward she would leap up from the bed and head to the bathroom where water would run for a long time. When she returned, she would fall into an open-mouthed sleep with her back to him, leaving Tom staring into the semidarkness. Now, he had even stopped feeling grateful.

Standing in the clean, well-equipped kitchen, Tom could neither go towards the living room where Richard and Ann lay, nor back outside to the stuffy, air conditioned car, and Shirley. He remained frozen, absently fingering the plastic fruit on the counter.

The sounds of confusion brought Tom back to himself. He followed the noise back into the living room. Shirley stood in the half opened door gaping at the two now only half-naked young people. Ann buried her eyes in her lover's shoulder. With one arm around her, Richard stared directly into Shirley's contorted face. She looked away and caught sight of Tom. The panic in her eyes irritated him and he felt himself recoil as she walked heavily towards him.

"Tom, oh my God. If you could have seen . . ."

Shirley saw only that the two had been disgustingly naked seconds before. She noted the wide, sparcely haired chest of the boy, and the ugly way her daughter's breasts hung under her lover's shirt. The young man started to speak. Shirley looked him up and down and, seeing that his belt hung loose and unbuckled, burst into loud, hysterical tears.

"I'd be ashamed, Ann. Ashamed. Oh, Tom . . ." Shirley cried into her husband's shirt.

"Ann, you'd better go upstairs," Tom said. She and Richard exchanged a deeply frightened look before the girl dashed upstairs in a flash of cotton gauze and flesh. In a moment, the shirt fluttered down the steps like a shot bird. Richard slipped it on and with shaking hands buttoned it crooked.

"I'm sorry. I do love her . . ." he began.

Shirley looked up. "You'd better be sorry. You don't know what love is. If you loved her, you should have waited." Shirley fell into crying again at the thought of her daughter — one of those girls she had snubbed and talked about in school. "What can I tell my friends?" she thought and sobbed even harder.

The woman leaning against him irritated Tom. Forcing himself to be gentle, he led her to a chair and deposited her. Shirley was fairly screaming as Tom took the young man's arm and guided him outside.

"I do love her. I do . . ."

"I know," Tom said. "Don't worry, but I think you'd better go for now."

The confusion and concern in the face of the young man touched Tom. He watched Richard pause at the door of his car and look back over his shoulder. Tom tried to smile reassuringly before he turned and strode back into the house, where Shirley had recovered from her tears.

"You should have beaten him to death. Oh, my poor little girl." She looked up the steps while running down in her mind a list of lies to explain the awful rumors which that boy was bound to spread about her daughter.

"What are we going to do . . ." she began.

Tom saw another fit of tears on the way. Then, his anger finally came. He grabbed his wife's arm. The look in his face first delighted Shirley, then frightened her.

"Why the hell didn't you stay in the car?" he yelled. This time he was not gentle; he pushed her aside and walked upstairs to his daughter.

A Scholar

A Scholar will listen, think, speak and tell.

From his memory he will draw out knowledge.

From his mind he will form his comely life

He need not be holy, but yet a man.

His mind will thrive to expel mad wind and tear,

And leap toward a more naked form of thought.

He is glad to expel the burdens that others so ardently prescribe.

For a scholar does not use his learned mind to feed swill to the duck.

Nor does he use his finger to point the lie of mankind

Nor does he use his foot to walk upon the sound of dead ages.

He will tousel the merited thoughts throughout all of creation.

He will listen while the fading volume of the past does stroke his ear.

As a walnut will leap down hill, he will cultivate the seed of the present for the future.

The pulp of him still, and until the end,

his mind, his depth, his breath and his soul

—Janet Hendrickson

Janet is currently enrolled in the University Division here at IUPUI. She enjoys writing and has hopes for continuing success in the literary field.

Pipe Dreams

Mark Springer

Mark Springer is a graduate student stalking a degree in Creative Writing. His fiction and memory pieces, he maintained, are written for himself; while poetry is constructed mostly for friends. He is the co-winner of the *Genesis* award for fiction.

Spring-cleaning on a rainy May morning is not my idea of relaxation, but, still, it was a chore that eventually had to be done—and this seemed as good a time as any. Grandmother had asked me to help her sort through the menagerie she had collected and stored over the years. She lived in a much smaller house now, but still clung to almost everything that once filled a home twice this large. But, she decided, it was time for parts of the past to go. She started down in the cellar, discarding fruits and vegetables that had been canned or pickled since before even she could remember. I made my way up to the attic.

All the “big” things were stored up here—furniture, assorted boxes of clothing-interspersed with mothballs, heaps of newspapers, and even a worn-out push plough that my grandfather use to maneuver across his fields. The attic’s musty smell reminded me of an old museum and, in a way, I guess it was. I was afraid to discard any of these relics. I was convinced that everything held special meaning for my grandmother. Every yellowed newspaper or faded dress probably conjured up images which would mean nothing to me. This, all of this, made up *her* life, not mine. Rather than tamper with things that really didn’t matter to me, I began taking inventory—intending to let her decide what should go.

Then I came upon something that mattered to me—a little desk, tucked away in a corner behind a mountain of boxes. I lifted this memory out of obscurity and brought it under the light. Still the same, sturdy except for a familiar tilt caused by a slightly shorter leg—an improvised replacement engineered by my grandfather. I remembered

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the thin knot of wood he used to slide under that leg whenever one of us grandkids wanted to use the desk for some of our "important" work. It was long gone by now, I was sure. A couple of the drawers were also missing, but I'd probably find them tucked away somewhere up here amidst the clutter.

The middle drawer remained, though. Slowly, I ran my fingers across the smooth grain and felt the coolness of the brass handle. My hands were larger now, calloused by some of the same work my grandfather used to do, but the sensations had not changed. I slid open the drawer. Full pleasant odors drifted out and rose to greet me. My grandfather's tobacco drawer: a mass of half-emptied pouches, pretzel-like pipe cleaners, and ashes absent-mindedly dropped everywhere—the whole drawer looked like a remnant of Vesuvius. A shrivelled brown smudge that, if I remembered one of my grandfather's habits correctly, was—or used to be—a fresh slice of apple, rested in a tin.

A couple of his pipes peeked out from under a wooden cigar box. The last time I ever tried one of these I was ten years old, and soon green-faced. I picked up his favorite and ground some tobacco into the bowl. Sucking deeply on the stem, the fire from my match began to draw downward. The tobacco, no longer moist, crackled and flamed up. The smoke smelled, and tasted, like an autumn fire. But I didn't mind that much. I continued puffing, blowing smoke rings that ghosted lightly away, listening to the rain smack against the shingles just a few feet above me, and gazing back through the mist.

I saw my grandfather as I always saw him—a composite of two representations: that which I remembered from childhood and my family's memories which extend my own. And yet, what I knew—or felt—at age ten was enough, really. I saw a soft-spoken farmer, a funny man, and a friend. I see him as he was—and I remember.

It hadn't really been my fault that day. After all, there was only so much one could do in the barn. We played hide-and-seek, we jumped into the hay, we scared the chickens, we got scared by the hornets. All possibilities exhausted, we exited the barn—my brother, the daring one of the family, by swinging down the pulley rope, in his best

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Tarzan style, from the hayloft, and I, the cautious one, by delicately jumping down into the hay and leaving by the cows' "entrance."

Grandpa only had two cows now, and he was just fattening them up for the winter. But they were my first "steeds." Grandpa had boosted my brother and me onto their bony backs yesterday. They were by no means chargers, or even comfortable for that matter, but they did move. A little. We weren't interested in riding today anyway. We were cattle herders. Granted, two we do not make up much of a herd, but you have to start somewhere, we reasoned.

The herd was a bit hard to handle, though. They seemed more intent on grazing than herding. Disregarding all pleas of "Git along there, little doggies!" the two cows amiably stepped "along" only as the grass became scarce in one spot. My brother and I agreed to report this behavior to Grandpa later and headed toward the back pasture.

Now explorers, we came up to the fence separating the two pastures. Grandpa had not allowed the cattle back here yet, so the grass was still full and green, just the opposite of what we were leaving behind. And we wouldn't have to watch where we stepped over here. True to form, my brother took a few steps back and leapfrogged the fence. I unlatched the gate and passed through.

A small, almost dry, creek meandered through this pasture. The water was too low for the cattle to get at anyway. They would've had to slide down the steep bank and then scale the wall in order to get back up top. Grandpa said they didn't have enough mountain goat in them to do that. He thought it was easier to just water them from the trough.

My brother and I had no trouble climbing up and down this bank, though. River explorers, mountaineers, monkeys—it made no difference; in whatever role we got just as dirty. Suddenly we realized it was time for dinner. We raced for the house, my brother leading the way, and both leapt the fence on our way.

Grandpa was sitting on the front porch. He saw us first and said, "You boys better skedaddle upstairs before your mother sees you."

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Too late. She was just coming out the front door to call us for dinner. We were marched upstairs to be made "presentable." Grandpa went into the kitchen to explain the delay.

After dinner we all adjourned to the front porch for checker-playin', fly swattin', and lemonade. My brother and I agreed to halt our ramblings long enough for some lemonade. The calm of this lazy July afternoon was interrupted by my cousin. "The cows are in the back pasture," he shouted. Then I remembered. Grandpa and Dad shot up from their seats and followed the trail of dust my cousin was leaving.

A while later they returned, explaining that the gate had somehow come unlatched and one of those fool cows managed to get herself down into that creek bed, but needed some help getting out. To get her back up the hill, Grandpa said they almost had to pull that cow "inside out." He seemed ready to forget the whole thing, but there was Mom — not checker-playin', fly swattin', or lemonade drinkin' — just looking straight at me.

"I wonder how that could've happened," she said, still eyeing me.

My brother pointed his finger at me. "He did it, Mom. He did it. I couldn't of 'cause I leapfrogged the fence, but he opened the gate 'cause he's scared of the barb wire and can't jump as good as me."

"You're crazy," came as my only defense. It did no good to argue. I was caught.

Mom pronounced my sentence. "Off to your room, young man. And I don't want you to leave there all afternoon. Do you understand?"

The severity of the sentence stunned me. My brother silently gloated while Mom repeated herself. "Did you hear what I said, young man?"

Two "young man's" in the same lecture was a sure signal that Mom meant business. I dusted off a little-used "Yes ma'am" as a small peace offering.

"Don't be too hard on him, Catherine," Grandpa interceded. "A boy should be outside on a day like this. Besides, the exercise did me good." No luck. Mom's judgment was irrevocable and my sentence was to begin immediately.

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Slowly I ascended the steps to "my" room—really just a guestroom. I tried to savor the last seconds of freedom. I liked the room, but alone, there was nothing to do there. The windows overlooked the porch roof, and voices, mostly laughter, drifted up through the curtains. I sat down at the little desk not far from the windows and gazed out. It was one of the best days I had ever seen—a deep blue sky, a gentle breeze, and lemonade and laughing down below. I began to draw, but my pencil couldn't copy any of the pictures I saw in my mind. My "Sunset Over the Barn" looked like an oval falling into a box. Even the two stick cows—one sporting a dunce cap—did not improve the drawing much. Crumpled, the entire scene became a basketball and, after a few tries, scored two points for me in the waste basket.

Then I thought about writing. Something funny would cheer me up, I thought. Maybe a funny play. And this is what I set out to do, but the flow of ideas—as well as my throat—began to dry. I heard the pound of heavy boots on the stairs; it was Grandpa with the remedy for both thirsts.

"What are you up to, son?" asked Grandpa, handing me a glass of lemonade and pulling up a chair.

"Nothing much," I answered, "just sittin' around. Uh, I'm sorry 'bout all the trouble I caused with the cow."

"Cow?" Grandpa said, as if he had forgotten the whole matter. "Oh yeah, the cow. Don't worry about her, she should've knowed better anyhow." Grandpa pointed at my half-filled sheet and changed the subject. "Looks like you been doin' some writin'."

"Yeah, I'm tryin' to write something funny, but it's not too good."

"Let's have a look at it," he said, reaching into the drawer for one of his pipes. Grandpa always liked to smoke on a pipe when he was studying on, or worrying over, something. Grandma said puffing gave him time to think things out proper.

He fired a match against his chair leg. "I use to do some writin' myself, you know," he said between puffs.

I didn't know. Grandpa had never told me anything about it before, but judging from the keen eye that was scanning my paper, I figured he would know what he was talking about.

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"It ain't that bad," Grandpa finally said, taking the pipe from his mouth for a moment. "Just keep at it."

"It's no use," I argued.

Grandpa turned toward me, putting his big brown hand on the back of my chair, and said, "Johnny, writin' is like anything in this life. If you don't work at it, you ain't never gonna get anywhere with it." His face brightened a bit and he moved his hand to my shoulders. "People are sometimes like that fool cow in the creek bed, sometimes they need a little pushin' to get 'em goin'." He added with a wink, "Of course if I have as much trouble with you as I did with that cow, I might, well as not, just leave you there." Grandpa then opened another drawer and dug out his checker board. "Now, how about a game or two to help pass the time?"

Grandpa won the game and I later finished my play. And time did pass quickly — too quickly — that day. I wanted Grandpa to be the first to read my accomplishment, but he never got the chance. My friend died that night in the room next to mine and left us all very empty inside.

Another family lives in Grandpa's house these days, but I have often found myself transported back to that spot by the windows where this little desk used to teeter — invading the new owners' privacy with my own jumbled thoughts — staring, as before, at that same half-filled sheet of paper — and remembering.

"How's things going up there?" Grandmother called to me from downstairs.

"Fine," I answered, drawing in deeply. But my fire had long since gone out. I didn't bother to light up again. Instead, I quietly tapped out the ashes into his drawer, placed his pipe in my pocket, and settled back to listen to the rain.

A Cry for Help

Linda J. Collins

Linda J. Collins is 24 and a junior in the School of Liberal Arts, majoring in Composition/Journalism. She has been published in three previous issues of *Genesis* and is employed as an editor at Rough Notes, Inc., a national insurance publishing company.

"Oh, well! Another day, another dollar. What more can I expect?" Harry sighed, kicking the trash blocking his way. He'd really worked to keep this job. He needed the money badly, but his boss had given him his notice earlier in the morning.

"Ahem! I'm very sorry, Mr. Gravits, but we won't be needing your services any more. We're interested in, ah, a maintenance man with a little more experience. I don't think you're quite suited for this job." Harry pleaded with him, hating himself for stooping so low. Was any job worth that embarrassment?

Things had always been the same. Through school the kids had called Harry "Stupid," snickering and poking fun at him because he didn't always learn his lessons as quickly as the rest. He worked hard but became easily confused. Dr. Samuels told Mr. and Mrs. Gravits that he was a slow-learner, but assured them that within his limitations Harry would be able to lead a relatively normal life.

High school had been a struggle, but Harry had made it through, graduating with the rest of his class. His pride in that accomplishment soon fell away as door after door slammed in his face. The job market was tight and Harry was at the bottom of every list. Employers today could afford to be choosy.

Harry shuffled down the sidewalk to his apartment, hands in pockets and head downcast. His parents would be disappointed in him again. At least the rent was low in this part of town. Indianapolis had always had its share of slums, and Harry had hunted around until he found this place.

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From the distance, Harry resembled one of those stick men often drawn by small children. His tall lean body was haphazardly proportioned; with neck, arms, and legs stretched long and gangly. His huge hands fluttered about in butterfly gestures when he spoke and he rambled through life like a puppet suspended from strings.

Wide eyes, brown as chocolate, sank deep into his thin, olive-colored face. Though they sparkled when he was happy, often they were drawn and clouded like dark wells. His curly brown hair hung in wispy locks touching his shoulders. A deep resonant voice broke off in stammers when he was nervous, as he had been this morning. He shrugged his shoulders as he walked along. Life was tough.

Nearing his apartment house, Harry could see a crowd of people in front of the building. Perched on the roof of the red-brick structure, his legs dangling over the edge, sat Max Sumner, Harry's neighbor and his best friend. He was head electrician at the plant where Harry's father had just retired. A few weeks ago his daughter Kim, a student at Purdue, was killed with her boyfriend in a motorcycle accident. Although his wife, Mildred, had left him two years before for another man she'd met at work, he and his daughter had remained close, and he mourned her death as if he'd lost his last reason for living. Harry knew that Max drank, and he'd been afraid that he would get scared and lonely and that something would happen to him.

Mr. Sumner had been kind to Harry since he'd moved to the apartment a year and a half ago. He'd fixed some of the things in Harry's apartment that the landlord had never gotten around to doing; and to pay him back, Harry watched his dog for him when Mr. Sumner went on vacation. They visited often and enjoyed each other's company, when many of the other tenants were still distant and unfriendly. He ran the rest of the way to the building, thinking of a way to help his friend.

The crowd parted slightly as Harry nudged his way through. A policeman tried to bar the door until Harry assured him that he was a resident. Then he begrudgingly let him in.

Seeing that he wasn't being watched, Harry quickly strode past his own door and hurried to the staircase at the end of the hall. He ran up the stairs two at a time until he reached the door to the roof. It was unlocked. Through a

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small window, Harry could see Max sitting on the thin ledge with his back to the door. A policeman standing on the other side of Max was urging him not to jump, but whenever he approached, Max moved forward on the ledge.

Carefully, Harry opened the door and stepped outside. The policeman spotted him and started to tell him to stand back, but Harry put his finger quickly to his lips and motioned for him to be still. The policeman shook his head, but knowing he wasn't getting anywhere with the man, he did as Harry asked. Harry edged around, keeping out of sight, until he was about ten feet from where Max was sitting. Then he slowly sat down, shaking perceptibly in the knees. Startled, Max turned and faced him.

"Harry! What are you doing up here?" he yelled.

"I was going to ask you the same thing, Max." The policeman gazed at the two in amazement, as Max and Harry talked.

"Harry, you've got no business being up here. Just go back down to your apartment, you hear me? A man's got to do what he has to do. Now, leave me alone." Tears formed in Max's eyes and he brushed them away angrily.

"Max, you don't have any business up here either. Why aren't you at work?" Harry asked.

"I can't go on with things anymore, Harry. I just lost my little girl. I lost my wife. I want to get away. I don't have anything left to live for." He dropped his eyes to avoid Harry's gaze. "Now, why don't you go on home?"

"I would, Max, but it's not that easy. You're my best friend. Everybody else thinks I'm stupid. They're always disappointed in me. You talk to me and listen when I tell you things. What would I do if you weren't around?"

"You'd be better off, son. I'm just an old drunk. You're young. You'll find some other friends. Leave me be, Harry." Max moved still closer to the edge, looking down.

"You're an electrician. People look up to you, Max. You can fix things because you know how they work." Harry faced him, crying. "Me, I can't even keep a simple job. People laugh at me. You're different. You treat me like I'm somebody. If you jump, I will too!" Harry peered over the edge of the building. The people below were tiny. He swallowed a big lump in his throat and looked back at Max.

"Please go downstairs, Harry. Don't do this to me," Max pleaded.

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"I'm staying, Max. You're my friend. Please come down!"

Max took a long look at Harry. The boy was shaking terribly, but his gaze was firm. He couldn't take the chance that he'd jump. No matter what Max felt, he couldn't hurt this boy. Sighing, he said, "Harry, if I get down from here, do you promise to always be my friend? You're all I have now."

"Always! I promise! Will you promise me something, too?"

"What's that, Harry?"

"That you'll never call me stupid, even if I make mistakes?"

Max smiled at Harry through new tears. "I'll never, never call you *stupid*, son! You just saved my life. That's more than anyone else could've ever done."

Slowly he edged back from where he was sitting and lifted himself. The policeman reached forward to give him some help, but Max shrugged him off. Instead, he walked carefully over to where Harry was still sitting. He helped the boy to his feet and flung his arm around his shoulder. Together, they walked toward the staircase.

Decisions

Alternatives balance in a sway
like wintering sparrows, barbwire fence,
and a gusting northerly. So much depends
on whim and mystery; the lives
we nearly lived.

A Hasidic wise man once taught
that God chooses how many times
the leaf will turn in the dust
before the wind blows it away.

I have decided nothing;
birds ballet on the rusted wire.

—David Glen Mick

I just graduated from IUPUI's Master's program in Health Administration. I also hold a M.A. in English from the University of Texas. I was co-winner of the *Genesis* prize for poetry in the fall, 1977 edition and winner of the *Genesis* fiction prize in the fall, 1978 edition. I have continued to publish poetry in other journals and magazines. I am currently the Director of Marketing and Communications at Lakeview Medical Center, Danville, Illinois.

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Miscarriage

oh, sweet, sweet nothing
i would have loved you had i known
i would have cried and
beat upon my husband's chest
i would have cursed my body for
its lack of strength

the softened purple doorway
was your mark of life, of death
how easily you slipped from me
without a breath, without a cry
a fetus hidden
in a dark pool of pain
and i only knew when it was
too late to grieve.

— Faith F. Vahle

Morning

Morning.
We walked in mist.
Like climbing through a cloud
We trudged on.
Soon,
Morning would burn away the haze,
Melting it down into little valley pockets
of fog.
Soon,
The mountain would come back to us.

We climb out from under the trees
And leave the mist behind.
A deep blue sky flashes overhead.
The sun desperately trying to burn through
the mountain peak.
Like us,
She climbs.
She rests a moment atop the peak
before continuing on.
We reach the top
but cannot follow.

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We watch with envy as she outdistances us,
Casting light on the hills,
Creating shadows among the trees.
Peaks reflect bright white,
Glowing cones dotting the landscape.

Hawks race to join her climb,
Drying their feathers
And sounding their call;
Long
 and deep
 and piercing.

We watch
We feel the warmth
And our eyes—
And our hearts—
Fill.

With morning comes birth,
With birth comes renewal.
A world bathed in light.
And we—
High atop looking down—
With opening eyes,
Acutely feel our place in it.

—Mark Springer

Tears

are like diamonds
that glisten in the moonlight
or a rushing stream
travelling over years
of tormented stones
or a silent void
of
loneliness
that appears
without warning
without circumstance
but never without feeling.

—David A. Heaton

The Light on Chestnut Street

Marilyn C. Bennett

Marilyn C. Bennett is a sophomore part-time student majoring in English. She is currently enrolled in Dr. Rea's creative writing class.

The long metal rod, looking like a giant shoebutton hook, pokes into the window as Elmer Grinkmeyer closes the curtains of his studio windows. For over fifty years, fifteen feet of sickly green satin have hung at these windows.

Inside the cavernous studio, he shuffles from desk to couch and back again, looking for his glasses. Finally discovering them on top of his head, he slumps over one of the files, and begins to reread his memoirs in a droning monotone, glasses in pince-nez position, magnifying glass held close beneath the craning of the goose-neck lamp.

Stacks of letters in mammoth piles, boxes of correspondence for the Smithsonian, and a desk covered with file folders lie outside the small circle of light. Laboring in this studio over desks and easels, he now finds it hard to believe that the material in those folders is the sum of his eighty-eight years. A studio in Florence, carefree days at the New York Art League, studies in Paris—reading his memoirs, he is reading about another man's life.

Even this studio had once been gay. During World War II, dozens of students trooped in and out, and the rafters had filled with voices. Sixteen cats had lived here too, popping in through their special door, dashing between the nude models. The new models always jumped the first time the cats came charging through for their noontime smelts and liver. How pleasant to work in the midst of such clamor. But those youngsters were middle-aged now, married with children and, perhaps, even with students of their own. He should have married—then someone could remind him of those days.

But the society of woman is not always so pleasant.

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He'd never met one who half-qualified his mother—in looks, or manners. She had been a school teacher when teachers still had dedication, a woman when women still had delicacy. His father hadn't realized how lucky he was, coming home to a hot dinner and a smiling face after driving the mules that pulled the streetcars. And, later, when his father worked in an icehouse, and Elmer himself had helped pull ice for a summer job, they had both disregarded the homemade rolls, the steaming dishes of fresh vegetables and the cheery voice.

Perhaps, if after he'd graduated from Manual High he had become an electrician instead of going to the New York Art Institute, he would have married. But no, he would not wish to have missed the artist's life—the beauties of Florence, the nightlife of Paris, or the madcap bustle of New York.

He was not completely alone now—he had his brother, even though Ephram had married that young feather-brain. He didn't see Ephram so much now that She was around, though they still rode together nightly from downtown to Golden Hills. Ephram hung about his men's club all day or shopped with his new wife, and Elmer worked his usual eight-hour day in the studio. At night Ephram would drop him off; their houses were both on Chestnut Street. They had never spoken much—probably not more than ten words during any one of the trips home together in the last ten years. But they had had an understanding—until now.

Looking at the clock, Elmer decides to eat before Ephram and Dora arrive. There would be nothing in the refrigerator at home.

Entering his little makeshift kitchen, he examines the refrigerator—nothing but cottage cheese and a few onions from his neighbor's window garden. It will have to do. He scoops it all into a chipped bowl, not bothering to clean or chop the onions, and eats in silence.

"If only I had met someone—someone like Mother."
Elmer tells the sugarbowl.

Br-rr-ng, br-ng, the brassy throated bell startles the chill darkness of the studio. Pulling on his old, dirty tweed coat, a little black shapeless beret perched on the back of his ruffled white hair, Elmer leaves the remainder of his cottage cheese and plods to the door.

Outside in the snow, a plump woman in a fake leopard

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coat inquires from under a nest of orange-pink hair. "All set to go?"

"Yeah, just finished my dinner—a little cottage cheese with onions. Smell em?" he huffs vulgarly in her face.

A sickly smile seeks to hide her embarrassment as she retreats quickly from the step and leads the way down the slushy sidewalk to the waiting brown Chevrolet.

"Got everything?" Ephram attempts cheerfulness from behind the steering wheel. A mournful groan escapes the car seat as Elmer plops down. Slamming the creaking door, he turns to the back seat to give Dora one final glower before Ephram methodically pulls the battered car out into traffic.

"Found out Dora likes that poetry stuff. You two ought to get together and talk that junk. I never could see much use for it, but I know you set store in it, Elmer."

"Oh, you like poetry, do you?" Elmer turns to challenge Dora, wondering if the interior of her head could be as disordered as the exterior. His eye runs over the orange-pink hair, the leopard fun fur, and the little squirrel's teeth moving up and down above the fat chin. The squirrel's teeth stop moving. Dora has asked him a question. Elmer looks to Ephram for assistance.

"Dora asked you who's your favorite poet," Ephram barks accusingly, his bifocals drooping on his beaky nose.

"Don't have one," Elmer snaps, turning back around in his seat.

Ephram's countenance darkens as he returns his eyes to the slushy road glimpsed through the snow-pelted windshield. All is silent in the car except the steady flip-flap of the wipers.

"This is nasty weather for driving," Ephram tries again at conversation.

"You always were oblivious to beauty," Elmer chides.

"S'pose if I read those poets, I'd get all dreamy-eyed too, but I've always lived a practical life—had to work for a living." Ephram pronounces "poets" as though it rhymed with "boats".

"Let's not hear about my living it up in Europe by merely drawing pictures." Elmer clears his throat. "Mighty boring."

"Well, it's true."

"Damned if it is."

"Well, anyway, anyone who thinks this snow is beautiful ought to drive in it himself." Ephram's mouth takes on the look of a draw-string bag.

Elmer ignores the remark, his mind now miles away. "I've been trying to remember how that goes—'All day the hoary meteor fell; and, when the second morning shone, we looked upon a world unknown.' You ever read Whittier out there at the shoe factory?"

"No, I like more manly stuff—'The Charge of the Light Brigade!'"

"Didn't you quote from that when you proposed to Dora?"

Ephram's shoulders stiffen as he looks into the rearview mirror at the silent figure in the back seat.

The car rumbles to a halt before the gravel drive of Elmer's modest suburban house.

"Well, thanks for the ride," Elmer calls over his shoulder, shoving open the rusted, sagging car door. Ephram drives slowly away with Dora still in the back seat. Elmer ambles up his drive toward the dark, still house.

The next evening, Elmer sits waiting in his downtown studio. Five o'clock has come and gone—the little, black, shapeless beret atop his head lies askew from much adjusting, the old brown coat gapes in a pouch about his lap.

"Fifteen minutes late and no sign of them. It's that feather-brain. Probably couldn't find the paintbox for her face. Women!" His contempt provokes a small coughing fit.

Br-rr-ng, br-ng. Catapulting out of his chair, Elmer hastens to the door.

"Well, it's about time. Where in hell have you been?" he growls, having wrenched the door open to a startled Dora.

"It's my fault, Elmer. I insisted that Ephram drive me to a bookstore where I could get a copy of *Snowbound* for you. I heard you quote a line from it yesterday. I thought you might like to have it. It's a favorite of mine too."

Elmer hangs his head a bit as he accepts the small package wrapped in blue paper. He had never listened to Dora's voice before. It had a rather musical quality - was a very handsome voice, really. It reminded him a bit of his mother's.

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doberman dreams

tossed to-and-fro
in an uneasy bed
imbroglio
the fury breaks

against
great fever words
raging
from a flushed hand
and face

if only you were there

to see the perspiration
bead
above the gnarl
of a heated thought—

above the flash
of sharpened enamel
bloodied
by the fabric
of a token heart—

above a drooling silence . . .

night sweats
are not always what they seem

—Michael E. Pratt

GENESIS

I

There are more than
One individual being
In this mind at the
Same time, but life
Is the sole occupant
 I seldom look at it
 That way . . . because
 I'm so wrapped in
 Her . . . who I am
 Portraying and
 Producing for
 The Same Time

Mega-Mini
Coming together
Making me decide a
Compromised definition,
Rationalized divinations
On truth — on again off again proof
 I guess that means
 Your head and boss
 Of The Company

Sometimes . . .

They tell me to
Split my person
But don't lose my Self
Playing solitary parts
 They tell me to become
 What I am . . . but don't
 Be crazy about it

(of truth and
Games of chance;
They might have been
Played on this grand stage before)

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II

Faith is to belief as
Will is to the
Operationally
Defined
Place
Self
Is
Naked to its truth in others

Pristine primitivity
And its archaic
Proposition

Especial
What is
Need
For
The deed it breeds
 Each in all must prove
 Its weight to the
 Balance of time's
 Rationale

Time's momentum is
The untamed rational
 With or against
 Its significance
 This the grand act

Now the future

To know is to hold
Or sacrifice
For the

Uncon-
Science

Of idealism

— J. A. Echerd

J. A. Echerd was a student of psychology, sociology, and social work at Ball State. He is now a 30 year old studying criminal justice and political science at I.U.P.U.I. This is his first published work.

Grandpa's Last Ride

Daniel Lee Davis

Deriving inspiration from family and nature, Daniel L. Davis, poet, author and sports writer, plans a career editing the New York Times sports pages or developing Indianapolis Star complaints, depending upon which Madison Avenue his career turns down.

As I sat squirming in my wooden pew, not actually hearing the words rolling off the tongue of the smooth talking minister, I looked up to the front of the tiny chapel, and I realized this would be the last time I would see the white-haired, old gentleman whom I had affectionately referred to as "Grandpa Davis" for seventeen years.

I wanted to cry; I could not. I had cried the night before on the cold, concrete porch of the funeral home. Indian summer had come and gone. As I sat on the cement railing around the red-bricked porch, a brisk November wind chilled my body and brought the realization that Papa was dead. I cried alone that night. The air was cold, and it was filled with a heavy dew; the woods surrounding Bloomfield caused it to smell of changing and dying leaves.

The gentle, yet forceful, nudge from my uncle startled me; the minister had finished speaking. I really had not heard his words, yet they rang through my mind. The elbow to my ribs signaled me to file past the light brown box with dark trimming. I saw Grandpa, his thick, white hair, and his Masonic ring for the last time.

My brothers, cousins, and I congregated in the small room to the left of the chapel. I was preparing for the much dreaded, yet much desired, task of being pallbearer for Grandpa.

The mortician led us out to the casket. My pudgy fingers stuck to the cold metal handle; air was sucked from my lungs, and I gasped for breath. As I walked out the door, onto the same porch where I had confined myself to solitude the night before, my mind wandered. A light mist was filling the Green County air with the fresh smells of falling rain and ripening persimmons, one of Grandpa's favorites. As we walked off the porch, I felt my foot slip-

ping on the wet and slick steps, and the casket was slipping with me, and I felt the body shift. The wind-propelled mist stung my face and awakened me. The slip was a nightmare, but the task at hand was not, although the living nightmare of carrying my dead grandfather was worse than any dream.

Road construction on Indiana 45 detoured Grandpa seven miles through the rolling Green County hills. It was on this seven-mile jaunt that I realized, learned, and remembered many things. I saw Bynum's pond, and I remembered the many times I fished there with Pop and Grandpa; I remembered his never-ending humor and wit. Thinking that I would never again be called "Little Chug," I realized how dear he was to me. I noticed the leaves were turning, the fields were harvested and brown, and the corn stalks were hollowed and brittle. Beautiful shades of reds and oranges, and uneven rusted strands of barbed-wire streaked past the window as our auto raced down the gravel road.

It was at this time I realized Grandpa knew the road was under construction; he wanted the seven-mile waylay. He wanted a last ride through Green County; I was hearing "Little Chug" again.

Wishing Upon the P-Burg Stars

As my old friend Jiminy used to say,
 "When you wish upon the stars," the gayest
 Things come true. Gazing at the Patricksburg
 Night, stars abundant and burning, I wish
 Upon the night time stars wishes and wants,
 Yearning for the time when Pop was still here,
 When Grandma's small garden was plowed and sowed,
 And of a time before Larry was lost
 To the pains of war and maturity,
 When the only battles he knew were those
 With us in the woods of Grandpa's hog lot,
 Acted out before the wienie roasts that
 Were followed by wishes upon the stars,
 Gay wishes never answered from afar.

— Daniel Lee Davis

Cadaver Lab

We keep each in a humidior
Like fine, forbidden, Cuban cigars —
Harvested and preserved,
Reserved for the elite.
(Or so says the sign on the door)

You know, of course, we name them,
Name them for what they became:
Artless, empty husks
Willed to us.
We unband, unroll, and personify:
Each name — summation and anthem.

Stained coats and stainless steel;
Intensity by rows.
We study only silence,
And Science.
(The aromatic air — phenol,
Not ash of rose.)

If only we could graft back the Art!
And watch
“Mr. Peabody” (when his liver lived)
Play taproom darts,
Guzzle in foam,
Or seduce a cigar with a match.

But we can't.
We probe, but no one's there.

(A hand in surgeon's glove
Spans this lesser Sistine
And brushes empty air)

—Valerie J. Berry

Valerie J. Berry is a
freshman in Medical
School trying to juggle
art and science.

GENESIS

Obscured in yellow fog,
by slippery ochre river's edge
we walk, forever,
soundless, but for sloshing feet
kicking soggy leaves
in compost clumps aside.
A path appears
to lead us far
from tear-smear'd grass
and broken bits of dreams
wrapped up in yellow clouds,
that still the river's
undulating breast—
but do we dare
to leave behind
the slime that binds us
to our slippery mire
in search
of some dim shining
unknown star?

—Elaine A. Childs

If Circumstance will not permit
This piece of earth I crave from it;
This soil I need to plant, to find
What seeds lie fallow in my mind,
Then I shall break its hold on me
And give my soul its liberty
To grow the rose or feel the thorn
Of what, as yet, remains unborn.

I shall yet have my quiet place
To meet my spirit face to face.
Yes, I shall answer my own need
To till the soil, to grow the seed,
To cradle life in my own hands,
Not bowing to its harsh demands;
But breathing life to what's inside,
This thing that will not be denied.

Yes, Circumstance, I'll break your locks,
For I can't grow roses in a window-box. —Elaine A. Childs

War and Death

War—the call of the Holy Slut will frighten us all.
Women will weep in their kitchens
preparing meals year after year
for men who will never return.

Death—The Bastard-child heeds the call
The Supernatural spectre stands at our
shoulders;
Holds the volumes of life, cutting out names
at the proper time.

We receive the law of nature
There is nowhere to hide.
War calls us to ancient glories
We have no choice, we must serve her
Lament for us, when we reach their tenement.
We shall not return.

—Jeffrey Brown

Jeff is a transfer student from Indiana Central University. He is presently enrolled as a first year Nursing student. He also works as an orthopedic technician at Community Hospital.

Winter

frozen, glistening barri
cades of life
wrapped beneath the (inner)
outer shell,
all is sl
eeping.
silence of f

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snow leaves me
be wilder(ness)ed
and desiring
more of this
(sole)mn season.

—David A. Heaton

Currently pursuing a B.A. degree in Liberal Arts with an English major, my future intention is to create a novel of social and political satire. An Indianapolis native, this is my first publication in *Genesis*. My previous publications include National Poetry Press and the University of Evansville literary magazine *Idris*.

The Question

The wind blew gently that cool summer evening.
The moon shone so brightly that I could see
the sheep on the hill and a lone duck
which slept at the edge of the pond.
There was no need to speak that evening —
only the need to walk.
Will it ever be the same?

Thoughts of that evening return so frequently now.
So often that I can't recall if that evening was
real or conjured
As I drift back to reality I realize I must
return to my work
The obscene nightmare of war continues on
relentlessly
The wind is blowing gently this evening
There is no desire to walk on —
only the mad desire to speak
My question has been answered.

—Karen L. Boehrer

Karen is a junior majoring in elementary education. She is primarily interested in working with children who have learning disabilities. She is married and has one child.

GENESIS

Who will cry for us,
We, who live in isolation,
We, whose anguish is silent,
 whose tears fall down
 the wrong side
 of our faces.

We, who are afraid to feel;
God, yes, we are afraid.
We, who deny our needs
till they no longer exist
 in consciousness.

We, who are hollow-eyed,
masked by superficial smiles
and polite small talk.
We, who when threatened by intimacy,
lock and bolt the inner door.

Who will cry for us,
We, who can no longer
cry for ourselves.

—Elaine A. Childs

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