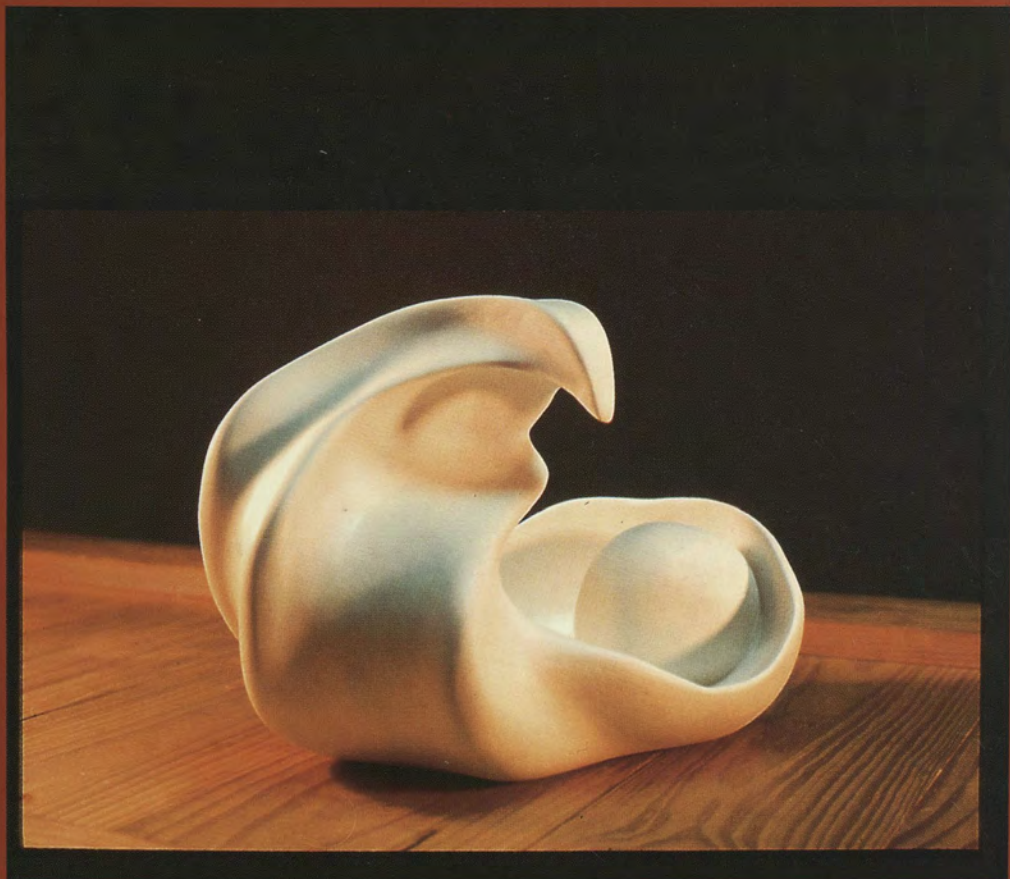


genesis

fall 2003

volume xxxv



genesis: the origin or coming into being of anything;
development into being especially by growth or evolution;
the process or mode of origin.

<the ~ of a book> <the ~ of a poem>

Letter from the Editors

genesis, volume xxxv, fall 2003

Greetings:

Welcome to the thirty-fifth edition of *genesis*, IUPUI's literary magazine. The fall 2003 volume represents a celebration of inspiration and the creative process in all its many forms.

Inside, readers will find an entertaining yet thoughtful display of the human condition from birth to death and all the questions and experiences that arise in between.

So please, join us on this journey and simply enjoy.

And as always, thanks to everyone,

The Editors,

Pat Harvey

Kimberly McClish

Dave Borschel

genesis

Established 1972

Indiana University – Purdue University at Indianapolis
English Department
Cavanaugh Hall, Room 502-L
425 University Boulevard
Indianapolis Indiana 46202

senior editors

Pat Harvey

Kimberly McClish

associate editor

Dave Borschel

production editor

Pat Harvey

faculty advisor

Robert Rebein

Special thanks to:

Pamela Hacker, Herron School of Art

Cynthia Goodnight, Student Life and Diversity,

University College

English Department of the School of Liberal Arts, IUPUI

Western Newspaper Publishing Company, Indianapolis

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Student Parking

Catherin Gioscio

Difficulties facing the student population utilizing the available parking at IUPUI are on the rise. In the last several years, classroom and lab space at the downtown facilities have steadily increased. However, during this time, little additional parking has been added to compensate for the increased student population.

To combat this ever-increasing problem of student parking, the following proposals are being put forth for consideration:

Park and Ride: A system that has been picked up in many urban areas around the United States, Park and Ride would provide the students at IUPUI with an easily accessible means of mass transportation which would greatly reduce the parking difficulties faced by students. Students would be able to park at convenient sites throughout the greater Indianapolis area and shuttle to various campus locations. Unfortunately, due to current budget constraints created by the continued economic decline only three buses may be procured for this endeavor. Therefore, to ensure the timeliness of departures and arrivals, an open sided bus will be outfitted with ropes, enabling passengers to leap onboard as the bus drives by. Limited testing has shown that slowing the bus to 25 miles per hour may ensure most passengers in average to above average physical condition should, with proper timing, be able to swing from the suspended ropes to the open sides of the bus without excessive injury. Passengers disembarking from the bus in a timely manor must also be given due consideration and an appropriate system created to keep the buses punctual. For those persons wishing to depart from the bus prior to its scheduled closing time at 9:45 PM, a simple touch key system can be incorporated. This system will allow passengers to notify the driver of their desire to disembark.

When a passenger touches the exit request key, the driver will again slow to 25 miles per hour and the passenger or passengers will be catapulted from the bus by a jump-plate located in the floorboard. Please note: for insurance purposes, a *Hold Harmless Indemnification* must be clearly posted onboard the bus to insure no undo liability on the part of IUPUI for the injury or death of students that choose to utilize this mode of transportation.

Stacked Parking: Stacked parking is a novel approach to the old, outdated idea of parking structures. Rather than spending the requisite four million dollars required to build a new parking garage, simply install a large 35-ton hydraulic Kobelco crane with a magnetic boom. At just \$250,000 the crane would represent a significant savings to the school. Starting with an existing lot, the crane can easily be installed in the center within reach of all current parking slots. When students drive in to park their vehicles, the operator will lower the magnetic boom to each car and neatly stack them in rows. Theoretically, vehicles should balance up to 5 or 6 high without danger of tipping when stacked directly on top of each other. This simple technique would increase the existing parking space dramatically. Increasing the student's current parking charge to a mere \$50.00 per semester can offset the nominal expense for the purchase of the crane. Of course IUPUI would not be held liable for any loss or damage to personal property that may occur on the lots.

Online Capabilities: In these modern times, great emphasis has been put on the importance of insuring that all students are online. Therefore, new cables can be installed to tether each student to the appropriate IUPUI campus location, allowing the students to be reeled into their buildings in time for class. A computerized system could be created to monitor student and class schedules for this new online system. In addition to removing the need for parking areas, this system would greatly

increase classroom attendance and remove any possibility of tardiness. Skid pads and headgear would be made available to students at an appropriate additional charge.

PDA Services: Pigeon Delivery of America, the latest in courier services offers giant flocks of trained homing pigeons to pick up and deposit individuals at their destination. With this system, students would wait at the agreed upon pickup location, surrounded by a circle of crackers and/or birdseed, while wearing the proper safety equipment. (Cracker/birdseed pigeon enticement would be made available to students for an additional charge). A flock of homing pigeons would dive down with a large hook suspended from their collective bodies. The hook would then be fastened to the lifting ring located on the breastplate of the students harness, thus allowing the pigeons to lift the student to his/her destination. Weight limitations will apply; students must give their actual weight including clothing, shoes, and misc. packages (including books) prior to signing up for this method of transportation.

This is one of the most conservatively priced of all the options (these pigeons will work for birdseed); however, the natural byproduct of that payment (pigeon defecation) may keep some from voting in favor of this choice.

Terminal Broadcasting: One of the most underutilized methods of distance learning, the terminal broadcasting option simply requires student to sit in front of his/her television. The broadcasts will be scheduled at regular intervals as any other planned television series. Students will seat themselves before a television, pressing their foreheads firmly to the screen, whereby repeated bursts of high-resolution radioactive isotopes will penetrate the students' brain, imparting encoded text directly into their subconscious. Repeated exposure to this form of radioactivity may of course cause permanent brain damage and/

or death. Therefore, though this proposal shows the lowest initial financial output, this option does not come highly recommended. The 100% mortality rate from terminal broadcasting could lead to a sharp decline in student population; the resultant loss in revenue may become an inconvenience until a suitable source of alternate funding is obtained. In addition to the issue of funding, the nuisance of finding replacement students must be considered.

These proposals are being presented to the board of directors at IUPUI for their review as a possible resolution to the ever-growing problem of student parking at the downtown facility. IUPUI, its officers, directors, employees and agents cannot be held responsible for any losses, damages, liabilities, injuries or death claiming to have resulted, directly or indirectly, from or in connection with any and all aforementioned proposals.

Best of Issue: Poetry

Jason and Freddy

Brent Eskew

Jason is like King-Kong and Freddy is like Godzilla.
Jason doesn't want to hurt you, but knows no better.
Freddy can't wait to hurt you. He lives for it

Throw a brick at Jason or kick him in the crotch,
and he doubles over endearingly, like a picked on fat kid.
Throw a brick at Freddy and he eats the brick,
then says something patronizing like "nice throw kid."

At a party you could say,
"Hey, this is my friend Jason. We can't stay long
because he might kill you."
At a party Freddy would cut your head off
and spin it on his finger like a Globetrotter.
Even if you drove.

Like Godzilla, you can't take Freddy to the mall.
Before killing them, people would gawk at Freddy
because he's hideous.
Like King-Kong, Jason has an innocence about him,
like a puppy who's torn up a shoe. Except the shoe
is your boyfriend or girlfriend.

If Jason were a Beatle, he would be George,
quiet and mysterious.
If Freddy were a Beatle he would kill the other Beatles.
He would take off one of their arms and play it
like an air guitar. Singing off-key and mangling the lyrics.

Swimming Pool Number One

Erin Swanson



Guess Who's Coming for Dinner

James Luke Webb

The ghosts that occupy this house
slink from the paisley papered walls
at dusk to sit at the kitchen table
make small talk
sip cold/bitter coffee

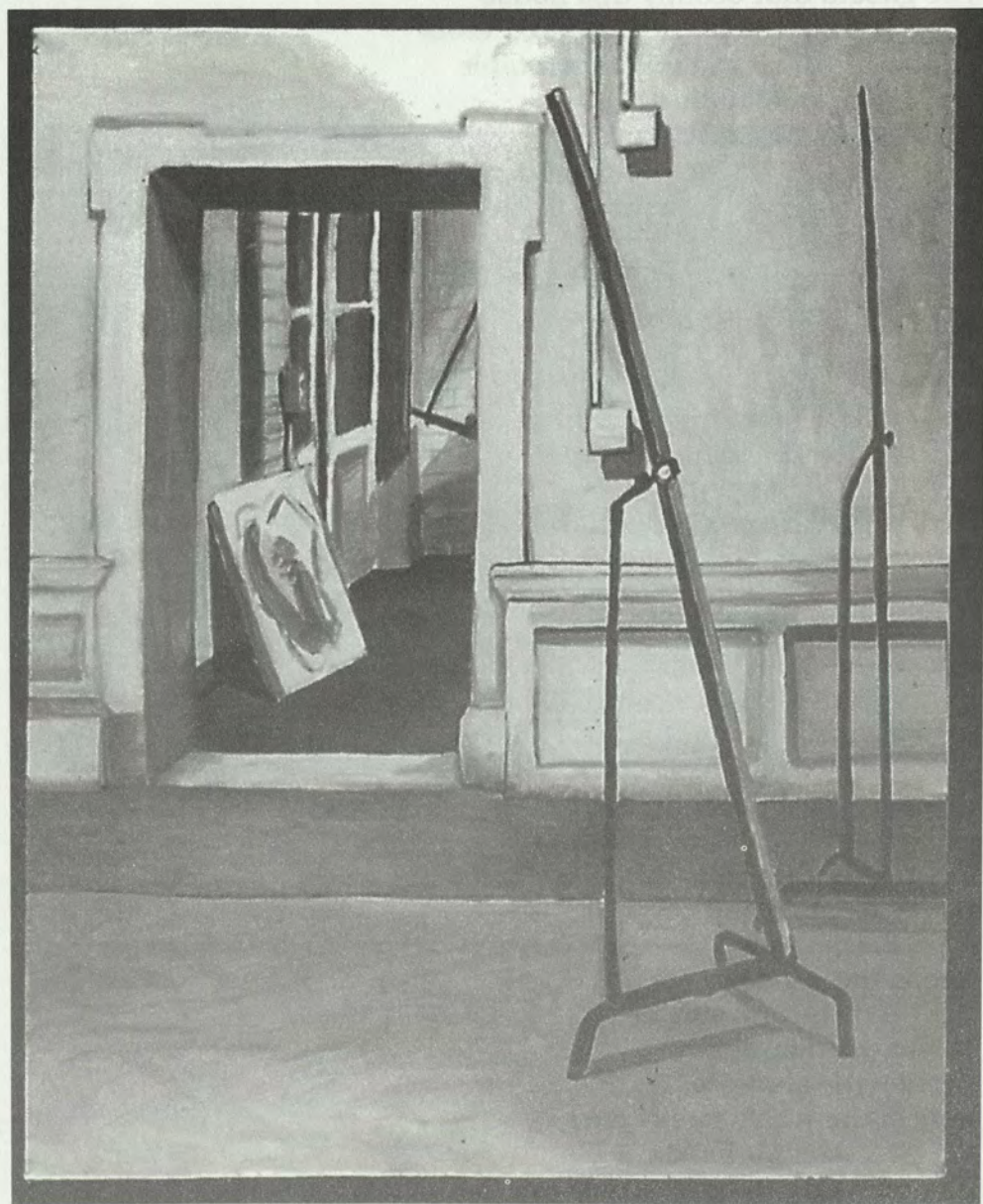
Try to remember the feeling of bones
Inside their translucent skin
The weight of flesh
and the rhythm of fresh blood
pumping/circulating within a
system no longer closed

The monster that hides in this bedroom closet
keeps his claws to himself
peeks out
only when no one's around to be
spooked by his flickering/fading
red eyes
is humble and polite to a fault
crams into such a tight space
but doesn't disturb a thing
not one outgrown shoe
or hand-me-down
button up shirt

The family that calls this place home
is free to come and go
Sleeps well
Keeps the windows open
but the curtains drawn
Dusts the mantles
Scrubs the showers
Invites the whole family over
for holidays
and manages to believe they live
here alone.

Untitled

Susan Anderson



Essence

Aleia Brackney

I have the urge to write but not the patience to do it with a pen. So many engulfing emotions...I think I read to try and block them out. Maybe if I focus on something else, or throw myself into a fictional world, I can forget what's in my head. But lately, it seems to have the opposite effect. It only makes things feel deeper, or perhaps they are the same emotions merely settled in a different shadow. I do not know exactly what the change is, but it brings an unsettling and morose ache to my chest. It seems that my quest to lose myself in another world only deepens my longing to be in a different place, and reinforces the reality of this one. It seems that whatever depression, despair, sadness, or emptiness I feel comes back to that, a longing for something more, deeper.

I feel the writing muse in me more now than I have in a long while, I feel this overwhelming urge to pour words forth for everyone to read, so that I may say I made my mark in this life. I have it there on paper, on parchment, on computer, on a cave wall-my thoughts, my words, my essence. I want to be connected in spirit to that soul reading my words and feeling the same stirring I felt when I wrote them. I want... I want... Funny how those words bring tears to my eyes. What do I want? There are the shallow obvious needs of food, money, comfort. But then there are the desperate, aching needs of love...not just any love. The love that I yearn for I am beginning to think is only possible in my mind. Maybe it is a writer's passion that I burn for the undying, illogical, pyre of passion that I call love. I have felt the warmth from it's blaze and know that it's there...but perhaps every inferno must eventually be reduced to glowing embers in a hearth. I can't seem to quench that fire in me. How is it that my flame doesn't ignite the one I bestow it on with the same force?

I heard once that no artist can ever be truly happy, or else they'd have no more reason to make art. Bittersweet. That is the

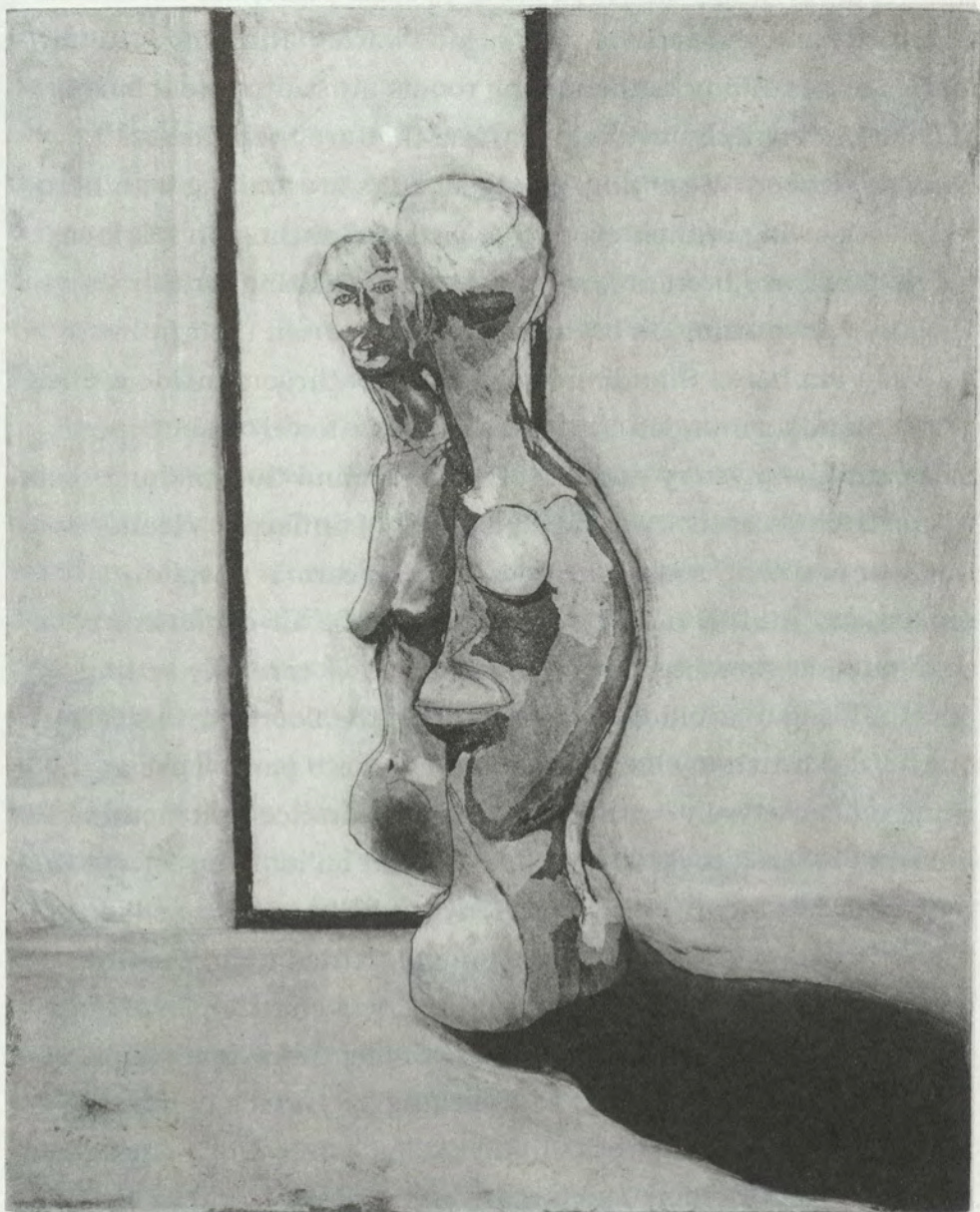
life of an artist, bittersweet. You see, experience, and feel things with a fire and passion that millions of people will never get an inkling of. But as penance, you must suffer the most acute heartache and depth of darkness in your soul that those same people will never feel the chill of. And the only hint of it they see, ironically, is through art. Maybe that's why one of the more common adjectives used in describing art is "disturbing." The depth of a tortured artist must truly look like the worst concepts of religious damnation. Dante, Milton...they felt it too. That constant ache we feel, is it our inadequacies? Or is it the lack of grace from the divine? Are we oracles or demons? Are we blessed to see what we see, or are we banished from some holy light to wander in these shadows?

I am a writer...I feel it now so clearly, how could I have ever doubted it? Is it even my fingers now that type? Or is it something in me that has been struggling to get out since the day I was born? Yet, I feel some fear hiding in the corners of this epiphany. What if all these revelations, all this possessed writing really means nothing? What if this moment of truth and perfection is scattered to the winds when no one, in fact, wants to hear what I have to say? What will I do when again I am denied and thrust down to the bottom of the chasm?

I know what I shall do. No more beating my head with a rock, no more tearing at my flesh to make it into something else. I will take my words and carve them into a rock in some distant and forgotten place. I will chisel my words into stone and bury them in some dense jungle, so I will know that my words are here. The very essence of my spirit exists, and will continue to exist, until such time as one who is meant to read it does. I cannot believe that this fire is in vain. Maybe there is just one other soul who is meant to feel the warmth from my words, if that is the case, so be it. But I will leave my words, in one form or another until that time and that person arrives.

Peeking Around

Jonah Hodgson



Graduation Dressing Room

Aleia Brackney

Graduation day. A milestone in any American teenager's life. Getting dressed up, dinner at some upscale place, the emotional ceremony, and the endless parties afterwards. Right now, all my friends are standing in their living rooms submitting to a barrage of flash photography by the paparazzi that are their family.

Family members are crying, young siblings are smiling with hero-worship glowing in their eyes. The girls are putting on heirloom pearls that have been preserved in a chest, waiting for this day. The guys are putting on brand new watches from their fathers.

And I am here. Standing in a cell of a bathroom inside a Shell gas station, surrounded by the usual paper towel/toilet paper mess and the mystery puddles of water around the sink and toilet. It smells like somebody dumped a bottle of antiseptic cleaner on the floor and then sealed the door for ten years: a hospital mustiness. Still I'd rather be in here with the air-conditioning than outside sweating in the July heat. After carefully setting down my bag to avoid the small lakes on the floor, I try and figure out how to brush my teeth and maneuver into panty hose at the same time. Actually caring about my appearance is something I haven't bothered to do in a while. As I put on makeup for the first time in over a month, I wonder if anyone will notice the shadows under my eyes. Sleeping is hard enough curled up in the front seat of a '92 Mercury Sable surrounded by a chaotic pile of bags that are the result of seventeen years of life; throw in a couple of rent-a-cops chasing you out of a parking lot and it's damn near impossible. And, after accidentally falling asleep while sitting in a Starbucks, I've become much more aware of the fact that Indiana cops have absolutely nothing to do with their time. Maybe tonight I can find a party to go to and crash on someone's couch. While I ponder this, I am not ignorant of the irony that a seventeen year

old getting drunk and passing out on a couch is much more socially acceptable than a seventeen year old falling asleep on a couch because she has nowhere else to go.

Pantyhose finally on and lipstick applied, I check my work in the grimy, cracked mirror, trying to see through the big smear down the middle from somebody's failed attempt at cleaning. My black dress is miraculously unwrinkled, but it also seems fairly baggy. I must have lost more weight than I thought. Although for a young American female slimming down is usually cause for a shopping spree, I can't suppress a tremor of fear. I don't even recognize myself. It's not possible to lose that much weight in four weeks.

As I turn to leave, I realize I can't really remember the last time I had an actual meal. Walking by the cartoon bright colors of candy wrappers and instant sugar shock pastries, my mind wanders back to an old Sunday School lesson. We were trying to decide if stealing is really a sin if the thief is hungry. Does that really count as stealing? Somehow I doubt the judge would listen to my Sunday school cite if I were found with a bag full of Ho-Ho's and Mini Muffins. I try and steer my thoughts away from food, but I already know I'm doomed. When your stomach is empty, you can't really think of anything else. Maybe my parents will want to take me out to dinner after all. Or maybe I can tag along with a friend's family to their celebration dinner. *Food, food, food.* Then I hear a little voice in the back of my head whisper, "*Well there is always...*" *No!* I shake the thought quickly from my mind. I've lasted a month so far without charity or having to crawl into some shelter, and I won't start now. I might wander into random churches on Sunday mornings to fill my pockets with donuts, but that's all. Just my way of striking back at organized religion- not charity, not begging. I'm not that kind of homeless person. I still have my car and the occasional friend's couch, so I'm not that bad

off. *How much longer though?* Gas tank is low, stomach is empty, and the temperature is going to start dropping. How close am I to sleeping on a cot and drinking out of a paper bag? What kind of homeless person am I exactly?

It seemed so harshly glamorous at first. Doing the right thing, standing up for what I believe, ready to go into the world and live on my principles. I didn't back down and I paid the price. What did I care about having no place to go, no money to eat with, and no job? I was a martyr. The gauntlet had been thrown down; either I live under my parent's roof and obey the religion of that roof, or I sacrifice the comforts of home and ignorance of youth to strike out on my own. So here is my reward; a home gone, college lost, a London internship destroyed, and a whole future obliterated. And I reviled in it; I felt righteous, sacrificing a future in the name of Truth- my religion, my faith, my god.

Unfortunately my god isn't a fatherly deity bestowing things upon the faithful. My faith doesn't pay for food or give me a place to live. So this is where I landed, bribing hotel clerks with twenty dollars just to have a place to shower and brushing my teeth in a dingy gas station.

The first half of my senior year was spent devising glorious plans for the years to come. I was going to spend three months in London studying nothing but Shakespeare. I was going to sit at smoky little bars talking about art, literature, philosophy, and life. Now the farthest ahead I think is where to sleep that night. The only Shakespeare I have is my dog-eared copy of Mac Beth in the passenger side seat. And the smoky little bars are only places to go and use the bathroom. So much for being a glorious martyr. Sighing, I light my last cigarette and pull out of the parking lot. Well, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

Aries

Susan Anderson



Kinswomen

Gaylie R. Cotton

My family album boasts
page upon page
of stout black women;
hands holstered
on flower printed hips,
bellies pregnant
with their sins.
Women with babies feeding
from breasts
too heavy with milk,
weighted down with years.

They stand in front of church
clutching bibles like life,
merchants come to market
looking for fine pearls
from the remnant of men.
They stand jilted but determined,
their faith set apart for Sundays.

Monday through Fridays
trouble their shoulders
like heavy clouds
of dark memories
of taking up with bright eyed
men who lay them like heifers.
Gold tongues promising
them the world
just for a taste
of that universe,
that onyx star,
that black abyss deep
between their legs.
Black men,
the stretch of their necks
like Lebanon cedars,
the height of their stance
proud as the tallest fir

Men with thick
cunning mouths
who flavor their breath
with Solomon's songs,
whose words like perfume
light between
the women's breasts,
mouths churning out promises
their hearts cannot keep.
Men who remain absent
from my family album.

These self-made matriarchs
are strong, resilient,
knowing the weeks
to come promise
new lovers
and more hungry men.
But there's always one
woman with dove eyes
fixed towards heaven,
children hugging
her knees,
a cry jailed in her throat.
Look like she's wondering
if he gone ever find
his way back home.

High School Reunion 2001

Jack Ryan Greenwood

The old high school appeared to be smaller than Ron remembered. As he jiggled the keys in the ignition, he peered through tinted windows at the strange mosaic of the old school grounds pressed against the magenta night sky. It'd been some time since he was on this very spot, and he barely remembered those nights upon graduation when he and the guys would cruise through the empty parking lot with bottles of whiskey grasped in tentative fists. Only Melvin Glaspey could've convinced him to show up, Melvin being the strange breed who could convince anybody to do anything, if only to concoct a tenuous and temporary social experiment. Waiting for Melvin's arrival, Ron sat and pondered his decision to show up to his ten-year high school reunion.

Ron thought it strange that he still felt some semblance of ownership over these grounds. After all, he'd given up his parking pass over a decade earlier, and left town altogether a year later. Upon hearing the news of the death of an old nemesis, Tuck Woodall, Ron estimated that everyone would share a sense of obligation to attend.

Many things were churning through Ron's head when Melvin finally arrived in an old mud-brown Cadillac. Ditched the powder blue Lincoln for a Caddy, Ron thought. In the distance of the parking lot, there was a group of guys in leather jackets, blue jeans, and, probably, cowboy boots, gathered around a shiny motorcycle. Quite the place to show off one's expensive new toys, Ron assumed. As Melvin strutted up to Ron's black Mustang, Ron climbed out to greet his old friend. Some familiar music emitted from the school gymnasium nearby.

"Ron Stackhouse," Melvin began. "Where the hell have you been?"

"I've been right here. Just waiting for you, brother."

"Still got the 'Stang, I see. Nice, nice."

The two performed a clumsy sort of manly, brotherly hug, and each pulled a cigarette out of his jacket pocket. Melvin, as always, flipped open a Zippo to light up his friend. Their smoke mixed with the cool autumn air and there was a scent of past rain and future perspiration.

“Maybe this wasn’t a good idea, what do you think?” Ron posed.

“Nah, c’mon, this’ll be fun,” Melvin affirmed.

“I thought I’d never come back.”

“I know, you told me. I have my words for breakfast nowadays,” Melvin joked. His laugh was still the same, the laugh of a donkey.

Inside the double doors of the gymnasium, sixty or seventy people resumed old conversations with awkward first lines.

“Hey, Ron Stackhouse. What’cha been up to?” began Rusty Sims, who was close with Ron’s bunch back in elementary school, but found his calling as a redneck sometime between then and ninth grade.

“Not much. Rusty, right?”

“As a nail. Did you hear about Tuck?” Rusty turned serious.

“Yeah, that’s too bad. Did you go to the funeral?” Ron asked delicately.

There was a memorial to Tuck near the entrance of the gymnasium. Flowers were arranged around a blown-up picture of his round, fuzzy face. The entire senior class, in fact, was eulogized with blow-ups of senior pictures, arranged in a circle around the old checkered court. Everyone’s, that is, but that of Duley Finch.

“I knew you’d make it,” Duley shouted across a huddle of ex-athletes debating their homecoming triumph. Duley once idolized Ron the way the football players once idolized themselves. A short, nerdy character with messy red hair and an obscene birthmark under his left eye, little had changed with Duley in ten

years. Except that he was a man now.

“Hey, Duley, glad to see ya,” Ron greeted.

“Man, I bet you’re successful these days. You probably got a house and a nice car and a girlfriend and everything, don’t ‘cha?”

“I’m not doing bad, but I don’t think I’m doing *that* good, Duley,” Ron asserted.

“I’m doing so bad, apparently, so bad they didn’t think it was a good idea to put my picture up with the rest.” Duley assured, “It’s okay though, I like it better that way.” Ron could hardly respond.

Duley Finch followed Ron around for a while, and when they had to separate, he checked up on his old idol as often as he could. Ron skirted around the crowds consumed in nostalgia and peered at the senior pictures on display. There his was, in the corner by the other set of double doors. Its cardboard platform was wobbling as a suggestive breeze flew in. Ron gazed at the photo from a safe distance, comparing the sarcasm in the young man’s face with that he passed by in the mirror that morning.

Melvin passed by with an empty cup in his palm, remarking that the punch was now spiked. Ron took his exit. To Ron’s surprise, there was at least a half-dozen people outside, huddling around a fictitious fire and smoking like chimneys. The gymnasium setting for this class’s reunion—decided by a class president who turned from party animal to preacher—happened to give folks a hard time exhibiting the bad habits they might’ve assimilated in the past decade.

“I’m trying to quit,” Ron overheard as he slipped out a cigarette.

“I’ll never quit. I tried already,” Ron gloated.

“Ron, what are you doing with that in your mouth?” wondered Laurie Hayes, a do-gooder in high school who was still trying to pull off the act.

“Just taking a break,” Ron replied.

“Ron Stackhouse, a smoker,” Gloria Ketchum, with that same under-the-breath, I-can’t-believe-it way of speaking, proclaimed, “I never would’ve thought.”

“Just coping with stress,” Ron joked. He was being a lot cooler than he thought he might be, saying what he decided were exactly the right things.

“So, have you talked to Clarissa yet?” Gloria asked.

Ron’s smoke was sweet going down but streamed from his mouth along with his soul. Attempting to keep part of himself intact, he closed his mouth mid-exhale and choked.

“Hey, hey,” interjected Melvin, once again to the rescue as swiftly as he hindered. “Go easy on the guy. It’s been a while.”

“Sorry, went down the wrong pipe,” Ron explained.

“I’d say, wrong pipe,” Gloria retorted.

“Ron doesn’t know that she’s in town,” Melvin enlightened the group.

“I thought she was in California,” Laurie said.

“She’s here,” Melvin stated. “Well, no, she’s not here, so far. But she’s in town, at her parents, so I heard.”

Ron stared into the gentle wind, his eyes glazing over.

“Tell you the truth, I haven’t heard anything of her in a long time,” Ron said.

“Well, you better get on that, then, shouldn’t ya,” Gloria declared.

Ron could hardly move. The kind of paralysis you get when you’ve been found out to be a fraud about something, that’s what Ron had at the moment.

“She’s single, you know,” Gloria continued.

“Ah, that’s too bad,” Laurie spoke tenderly. “I guess she must’ve never found Mr. Right. That’s so sad.”

“Nope. You know, she had a really bad relationship in college. Traumatic situation. Well, she never got over him.”

As Melvin encouraged the group to venture on to new subjects, Ron excused himself. He was back in the gymnasium, enveloped in a crowd of people he hardly recognized. But they were good company at the moment.

“Somebody put a turd in the punchbowl, Ron,” Duley Finch fanatically claimed from across a pool of people.

He was right, perhaps. There, in the bottom of the punchbowl, was a small cylindrical brown object.

“I knew this evening would turn to shit in a hurry,” Jeremy White said as he brushed past. “What you been up to, Ron? Is it Dr. Ron?”

“No. I’m not quite sure right now,” Ron hesitated.

“Yeah. We never knew we’d have to grow up and start making decisions like this, did we?”

Jeremy was a tall and handsome young man in school, but not much of a ladies’ man. Didn’t play sports, wasn’t too smart, but he had the kind of personality that made him seem heterosexual yet a little ambiguous. He was popular.

“Meet my wife, Ron. You know her, Jenny Cass. Jenny White, that is.”

Jenny hugged Ron, as she tended to do to someone if they’d been apart for a night’s sleep. Her embrace almost gave the night a human touch.

“It’s so nice to see you, Jenny.” Ron was dumbfounded, thanks in part to the news of their blessed union.

“Do you know if Clarissa’s going to show up?” Jenny innocently speculated.

“You know ... I have no idea,” Ron responded, holding himself back from this question. Jeremy gave Ron an understanding look of disapproval at his wife’s question. Ron now believed they were in fact married, but it made him very suspicious of his small town home.

How is it that these two people would end up spending the rest of their lives together, Ron pondered hard. It wasn’t that Jeremy and Jenny never associated with one another in high school; they did. But back then there was no talk of romantic interest for the future spouse, absolutely no hints at fate conceiving its plan. Jenny was even something of a catch in high school, yet Jeremy

was always on the outside of the game, and not even looking in with any vested interest.

Ron had never seen such a showcase of compromised lives, in all their varied forms. Just then, Amanda Graves walked up, beaming with the joy she absorbed from the occasion, and full to an embarrassing degree with child.

“Ron,” she emoted to a point near tears, “you’re one of the people I wanted to see here.”

Ron failed to get in a response to his former partner in those crazed experiments during chemistry.

“God, it’s so good. It’s so good to see you,” she professed.

“Yes, yes. I would ask you what you’ve been up to, but ...”

“Yeah, I’ve been busy,” she teased, with the self-deprecating gaucherie that made her popular in high school but didn’t work as attractively in the real world.

“Guess how many this makes,” she proposed.

Ron was diplomatically solemn, saying nothing.

“This makes three,” she volunteered.

“Guys, we’re going to do a moment of silence for Tucker,” the class president, the Rev. Todd Combs, announced in his booming, now pious, voice.

Ron felt disoriented, out of step with those moving towards center court. The soft murmur of spring rain began to fall upon the rooftop; everyone took note.

The indistinguishable herd of boisterous chatter suddenly became decipherable, as comments like “Honey, will you roll up my windows?” began to rise to the rafters. Up there, large, dusty speakers were pouring out the music they’d all listened to in their parents’ sedans and Chevy pickups years earlier—the generic popular music that reaches a small town in southwestern Indiana’s rolling hills and flat pastures.

With one authoritative broadcast from the president of the class, the evening lost its essence, its mystery. Potential

confrontations across the checkered floor now seemed anticlimactic. As one of his classmates reminded him of the prayer for Tucker, Ron made his way out the double doors and into the gentle mist.

Nearing ten o'clock, the streets of Quincy were nearly vacant and the houses and businesses were closed tight. As he turned down Park Street, he searched the house numbers as he crept along. Four twenty five was the house he was looking for, like a reasonably crazed ex-boyfriend, a stalker with a tasteful curiosity, he reasoned. Just one look is all I'll allow myself, he vowed.

There it was, a common two-story white house with a light on inside, where the living room once was. His foot pressed the gas down without much protest from the rest of his body as he rounded the corner and planned to continue on. But he rounded another corner, then another, and another, and he was back to her street again.

As he slowly approached the house, he surged with a peculiar sensation of *guilt*. Memories rushed in wearing pink nightgowns and fuzzy slippers. Words became faintly audible—words that were not so kind, and not so distant. The springtime drizzle gathered the momentum of a flooding brigade. As he was forced to turn up the wipers, Ron could see only brief glimpses of the house between swipes. In one especially quick glance, the downstairs light was extinguished.

Ron pulled the car forward with a crawl, pulling into a gravel patch across the street, two houses away. Surely, she won't see me, if she's home, that is, Ron thought. The rain began to slow suddenly, and Ron was now able to see a light upstairs. This light was Clarissa's, the light in Clarissa's bedroom, he knew. This is it, he realized. This is the place where Clarissa lives. This is where she is, where she's always been.

This is where I first undressed in front of a girl, he remembered. This is where someone saw the hairs on my body, what I looked like standing naked in the center of a room. This is

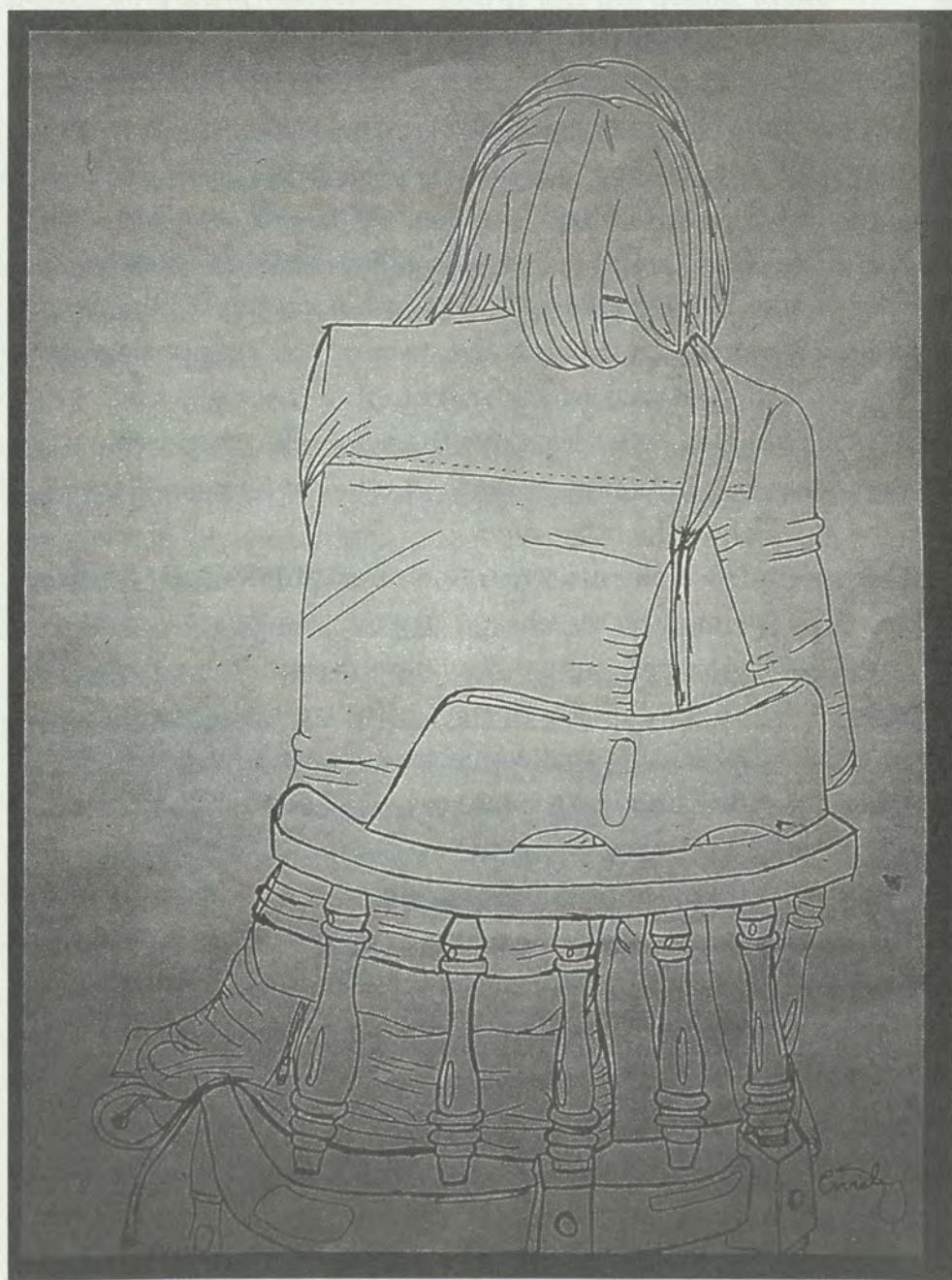
where a girl lied flat on a bed, looking up at a naked, moist male body—mine—hovering over her and easing in closely for a kiss, a touch. This is where I first knew what it was like to be inside another person, to stay there for a while, and to go back. This is where I found a strange, hidden part of myself that I had never known existed. This is where I found a whole new universe, where I saw what it was that made *them* what they are.

This is where a girl named Clarissa told me who she was and what she really wanted. We lied in that bed up there, comparing the size of our feet, and told each other what we wanted to do with our lives. We looked at the next ten, twenty years of our lives and we saw clearly. And we saw each other. And it seemed real. It seemed like religion, what we did with each other when her parents were on vacation or at work. It must've been an eternity ago, but it was just the other day.

There were few moments when Ron didn't think about Clarissa during their few months together. After they separated and she went to California, there were few moments when Ron didn't attempt to define what had happened between them, and to justify the words he'd uttered to make sure they couldn't keep their promises. As the rain picked back up on the night of their ten-year high school reunion, Ron's car overheated and his engine burned up. He climbed out of the car and ran back towards town in the pouring rain. He sought refuge in an old phone booth, and as he dialed the number of his old friend Melvin's cell phone, he shivered and steamed up the glass with his hot breath.

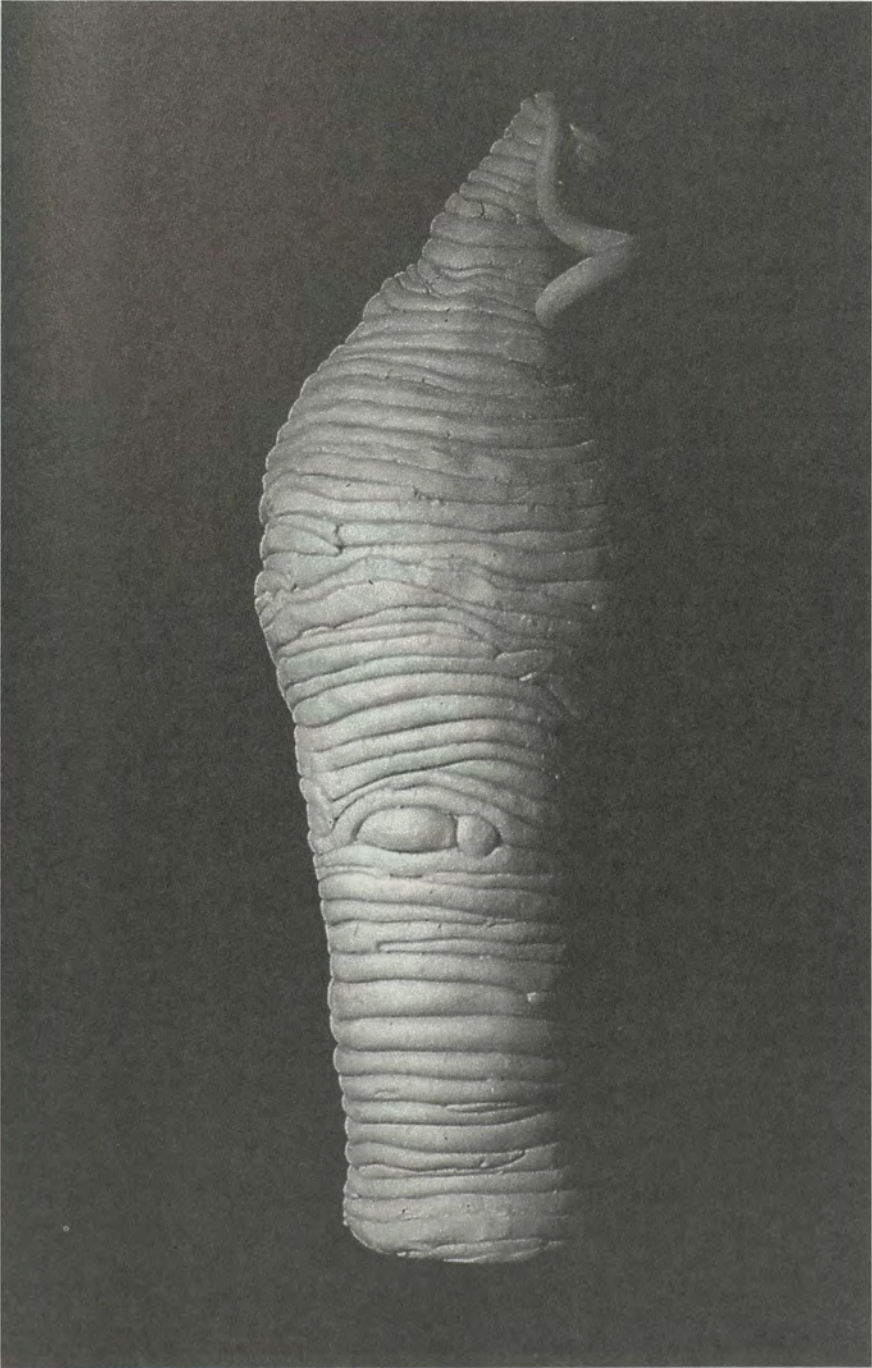
Girl Sitting

Cindy Hinant



Unraveled

Cindy Hinant



The silver steel slams with a metallic echo
Ben's crooked grin greets me with a Buddha-belly snuggle.
Theresa, raised by dogs, streaks
by hissing, her excrement and doll parts cover
the ground. Barry's a puppeteer wiggling his fingers
humming harmonies to a symphony he only knows.
Kurt, up for three days, thwacks my head
with a ghastly ghoulish giggle, I muscle him down
to the floor and whisper in his ear
ignoring the howls.

The walls are splattered with blood, the drapes are made of urine,
the couches drip vomit, and the rugs resemble dung.
Disney depravity blasts from the chained box in the corner,
as angel-eyed A.J. seeks my attention, spits in my face,
and drops to the floor in self-restraint.
Damon poses in front of the mirror with "oohs" and "ahs"
hit by a schizophrenic fit, he screeches and snarls.
I hold him tight until the voices leave his head.
Little Richard drifts by shaking and stemming
playing autistic hopscotch on a floor with no lines.
David the daisy beats his face to a bloody mess,
pinched by Sean during the Cinderella marathon,
while Eston wanders naked in the 40 degree yard
scaly scars slither down his thick-skinned spine.

Salisbury steak and Tator Tots are gobbled in five bites,
Tommy picks the lock and makes a break down the hall.
I dive to clutch his foot and reel him back in
preventing him from seeing his sexual predator friend:
eleven year old Jason, smoking butts on his knees in 3B.
The call, 911, crackles over the intercom
I dash the white halls to the “Bad Mothers” unit.
Jack flip-flops like a fish sucking for air
be leery of him, “he’ll fuck you up.”
I escort him out with four other staff
and put him in the padded room with no means of escape.

We line them up naked, shivering and quaking,
scrub them and brush them on wet concrete floors.
The nurse sneaks in to dispense morphine-laced
grape gumdrops and valium sour balls.
A.J. sits on my lap singing Sesame Street songs
David tugs my hand to caress his
seeping sore scalp while Theresa curls like a ball
and purrs at my feet. I carry them to bed
and tuck them in with a peck, at eleven o’clock the shift ends
with Jack naked in time-out smearing his feces
and new staff arriving with burning red faces.
I pick up the hazardous trash left on the curb
and take it to the landfill far downwind
and know that glass slippers will never fit.

Station Identification

Brent Eskew

Our news is better.

We get there first.

We'll give you the complete story
and spare you no details.

We've got the exclusive
theirs is elusive.

Our girls are hot
just like our weather
short skirts in leather

we read ALL your letters.

We listen.

We care.

You need us on the air.

Toss that radio through the pane
light evening papers into flames.

We're in your face

you're in the know

conventional living has got to go.

Don't get up it never ends

stay tuned Frazier and then more Friends.

We'll never leave

or give reprieve

we'll keep you safe while you're asleep.

Be new and improved with the same great taste

low in fat

knee deep in waste.

We could go on

and so we will

about your carpet and red wine spills.

Thirty percent off so don't delay

we're practically giving this shit away!

It's crazy

It's wild

It's taco sauce in hot or mild.

Cowboy Bob is somewhere shaggin'

with Janie who's off the wagon.

And something else to throw in after

the teleprompter and can-fed laughter.

A special report from Jennings in New York:

The revolution will be televised

and I'm sure I'll check it out.

Untitled

Adam Keck



What's Going On?

(an Urbane Monologue)

Gaylie R. Cotton

“SINGER, MARVIN GAYE, SHOT TO DEATH!”

blared from the Oldie-but-Goodie FM radio station.

What, in this world, was going on?

Auntie Boot said it probably was some junkie dealer
or jealous woman who put an end to his life.

I believed her, because Auntie Boot was always right.

Had all the answers except those concerning her own death.

A trickster of all trades. I remember the time she convinced
the patrol cop not to arrest her for possession of marijuana.

Told him the weed was for medicinal purposes; used to treat
the stroke she had in her eye. The fool believed her too.

She could make a dog laugh but she could not trick her way
out of sickle-cell. And she could sing too.

I can still hear her now on that Sunday afternoon,
while we awaited more news from the Oldie channel.

Her singing took us way back. Mom and her reminiscing
about the good old days.

And how when they got into trouble, granddaddy would whip
them with a switch. My daddy used to tell us that we could
act up and wind up in jail if we wanted to, that it would be a cold
day in hell before he bond us out.

“If you ever caught stealing, I’ll cut your fingers off
and drive you to the jailhouse my damned self!”

I don’t even want to remember the name or face
of the German guy, who owned ABC supermarket
and caught me stealing a Twinkie.

Money was tight and my cravings were large.

By daddy’s account, I should have nubs for hands.

I never stole anything else though that I am willing to admit.

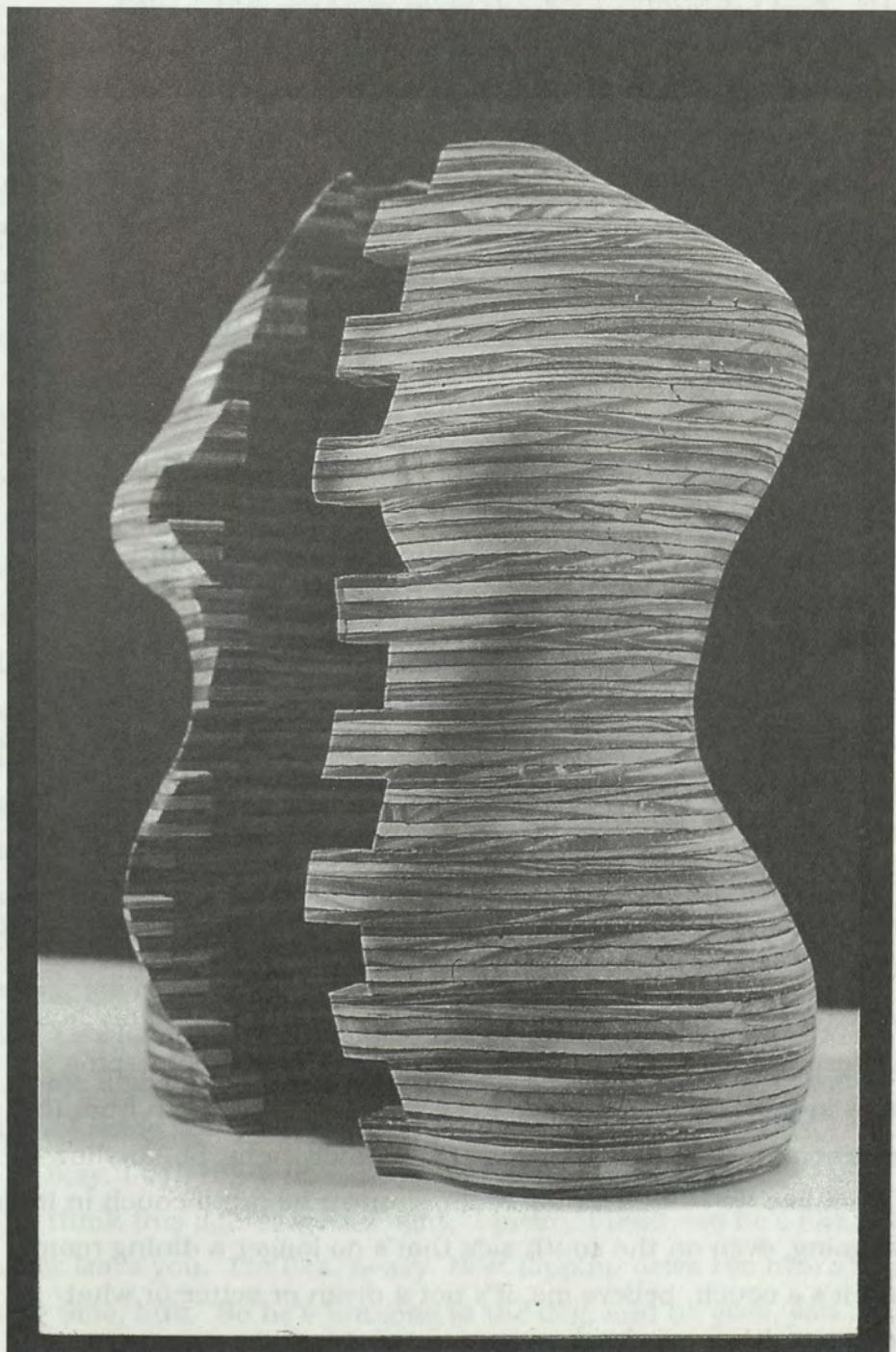
And I know that I am suppose to tithe a tenth of my increase
every Sunday, but sometimes a girl’s gotta have that emerald silk
shirt with matching tear-drop earrings.

I never intentionally set out to steal
from God and He knows my confession.

Confession is good for the soul on Sundays
and on that Sunday, the radio announcer said that Marvin Gaye
was shot dead by his own father. For once, Auntie Boot was wrong.

Open Woman

Carrie Rebecca Armellino



Susan Stiles

I don't know if it's the cold or the Crown, but I'm knocking butts this way and that. They're piled there, desecrating the smooth marble of what's-his-name's bench-thing, resisting me stacking them up decent. Speaking of desecration, I really have to pee. I mean what is the etiquette of, well, anything. Worse to show my big, lily-white ass or to water some dead dude. Isn't there some urban legend about not peeing on the dead, like they rise up and drag you back down to their now wet netherworld. All the piss in the world won't put out the flames of Hell. Anyhow—shit—marble's harder than you'd think. Half of its limestone or something.

Okay, I thought—okay I'll go out with the hubby, maybe salvage something. I mean, I'm looking at him going uh-uh, no way. He's some damn booby prize or something. So here I sit among the dead, and I gotta piss. How can I tell him to get out when I can't even figure out the eti-rules of graveyard pissery. Pissing. Whatever. It's been ten years. Ten. Years. I'm at the end of my rope, wishing he was at the end of his—literally. If he'd drop dead—man. If he'd drop dead, it'd solve everything.

It's like this: I'm going why don't we just move to, I don't know—Missouri or Kentucky—get a dirt farm. And he's like, you'd make me rake the dirt. Okay-okay, he didn't say that, but everything's too much effort. I mean, the f-word around my house is effort. Look, I say, everybody else doesn't have great gaping holes in their ceilings. I mean I can see the dining room from the bathroom; they're right on top of each other, right. So, anyhow—it's not like we have a dining room. I mean he put a couch in it; so I'm going, even on the south side that's no longer a dining room. And it's a couch, believe me, it's not a divan or settee or what-have-you; it's a couch.

And every time we do go out, he bitches. Like bitching at the waiter is going to turn me on. This is the man who said foreplay is a waste of time, like my lying there thinking of England isn't. I'd rather sit here toasting the dead than go out with him. I was going to say—hey, let's go out. This morning, before we left for work, right. I was going to say let's go do something tonight. And he comes in with the dog. Okay, I hate the damn dog. I didn't want a dog. I kept saying—no, don't get a damn dog. I mean, he can't take care of himself—I've yet to see the man use the washer. I'm always truly amazed when he zips his own pants. And believe me, I want that zipper kept up. I kept saying no dog because I wasn't about to become the permanent puppy-poop patrol. I mean, I could just guess who was going to take care of the dog.

And he still hasn't trained mutt-boy, and its always chewing shit up. It ate a couch cushion. Yeah—a whole entire couch cushion. You'd think it would kill it or something. You ever—it's like this: you ever kick a dog in the head? Yeah, yeah, I meant by accident. But if you kick the dog in the head, it just keeps panting. Doesn't even freaking blink. Kind of like him. I keep saying go away, and he just keeps panting. And that sucks. You know what else sucks, when he's like, I love you, and I'm like, whatever. So he says, you have to say it back. And he flipping starts over: I love you. I go, that's your problem. He's always telling me I'm a bitch. So I'm like, leave then; see if I give a shit. And he's like, but I'm happy with you, honey. And I'm like, don't call me honey. So, anyhow, he's bringing the damn dog in and—man, I really got to—you know, maybe a tree.

Okay. I can think now. Anyhow, he's like I love you. I'm like—you think this lighter would light. I mean, I paid—so he's like, I'll never leave you. I'm like, heavy. Best flipping news I've heard in a long time, bub. So he's bringing in the dog, and he goes, you know what playing possum means? And I'm like, I'm not stupid.

So he goes, well, it means you're acting dead. Guess what the dog caught? And I'm like, how do you act when you're dead? So he's got this hat thing on, this knit hat, and it's like poufed up on his head. Standing up. And he's all excited. It's like this: the dog kills something and he gets excited. So I'm like, why don't we just move to Kentucky and get it over with.

Anyhow. He's got on this sleeveless t-shirt and the damn hat. And I'm not going to ask if he wants to go out, right. So he's telling me about how the dog caught this possum. And he's like, he was right on him, whomp. And you'd think hubby'd caught the possum the way he's acting. And he's like the possum didn't even know what hit it. And I'm, like, the possum. I feel the sudden weight and teeth. It's like suffocating, man, the weight. The possum is eating or whatever and here comes this damn dog. Didn't know what fucking hit it. He tells me—he tells me he pulled the dog off the possum. And he still has his damn hat on. He goes, the possum got away. And I'm like, lucky possum.

Worst Communion

Brent Eskew

After mass a photo was taken.
I was in the middle, relieved and blank.
At home there was a cake,
and relatives bored on a Sunday.

Hours earlier I sat on my bed
balling hysterically about the loafers.
Clutching my blue-canvas wonders
I pleaded through salty tears
like innocence at the gallows.
I walked reluctantly to the car,
out of breath,
wearing those awful Buster Browns.

After I ate the bread I pretended to pray.
Embarrassed and defeated about the day
and the way I handled my fear of God
and what the host would taste like.
And like a shot in the arm,
it was nothing.

AND ON THE SEVENTH DAY

Ray Koleski

God's last act on the sixth day
Was to create chocolate bon bons.
On the seventh day
She rested,
Tasted Her exquisite delicacies,
And rolled each
Around Her taste buds
To sample the smoothness
And savor the sweet-bitter blend.
"And God saw that it was good."

Susan Anderson: I am a senior at Herron School of Art with a concentration in illustration.

Carrie Rebecca Armellino: Carrie is a fine arts major at Herron School of Art, IUPUI. She enjoys photography, drawing, sculpture, and anything else her teachers throw at her. She was once told that “Nobody care what a little girl from Valparaiso, Indiana has to say.” Carrie vows to prove them wrong.

Aleia Brackney: I am a twenty year old freshman, just starting here at IUPUI. I am an English major, and hope to someday teach Shakespeare or classical literature at the collegiate level. However, being a writer has been a long-time dream of mine. My work mostly consists of prose or what I call “purging.” I believe writing can be a way to cleanse the soul and see things in a different light.

Gaylie R. Cotton: I am an English major with a minor in creative writing. I like to incorporate history, lore, and spirituality into my writings and hope to convey through the poems the charge I feel when writing them. I hope to someday gather enough confidence to read some of my poems at the student readings. I absolutely adore the Liberal Arts English instructors.

Jack Ryan Greenwood: I have known myself as a writer for as long as I can remember. It is simply a defining element of my identity; the task now is to create a lifestyle where writing continues to fuel my passionate inquiry into life’s many mysteries, and finds greater prevalence and power in expressing my core values.

Brent Eskew: is a senior and Philosophy major.

Chad Frye: I have returned to school full-time this fall after working 10 years in the Human Service field. I am a junior in General Studies.

Catherin Gioscio: is a sophomore and Business major.

Cindy Hinant: Cindy lives in a tree house on the far end of Blueberry.

Jonah Hogson: I am a senior majoring in English and painting. That is all there is to know about me. Life dedicated to the finest of all arts. I am also a comedian.

Adam Keck: is a freshman at IUPUI studying Liberal Arts. There is nothing else to know.

Ray Koleski: Ray and his biography can be seen chasing each other around the fountain next to the Library.

Susan Stiles: I enjoy writing short fiction as it matches my attention span. My life-long dream is to discover that I am the love child of Lorrie Moore and Ernest Hemingway.

Erin Swanson: is a senior and Art Education major at Herron.

James Luke Webb: On the writer: Junior in English at IUPUI. Born June 4, 1981 in Springfield, Illinois.

Editor's Note: some biographies were edited for space.

An Invitation to IUPUI Writers and Artists

General Guidelines

You may submit up to a total of ten works of art, poetry, or prose. Include a cover sheet listing the title(s) of your submissions(s) and the word count for all prose, along with your name, address, phone number, email address, and a **brief** biographical statement. Do not place your name on the manuscripts; *genesis* editors judge each piece anonymously.

Emailed submissions will **not** be accepted.
Upon publication, copyright reverts to the author.

Please mail or deliver your submissions to:

genesis
C/O Department of English
Cavanaugh Hall, Room 502-L
425 University Boulevard
Indianapolis IN 46202

If you have any questions or comments, please email the editors at: genesis1@iupui.edu

Disclaimer

By submitting your work to *genesis* Literary Magazine, you affirm that you have read and agree to all our submission guidelines. *genesis* reserves the right to discard without notice those submissions that do not follow our guidelines.

Writer's Guidelines

All genres must be typewritten and printed in 12 point Times New Roman font. Fiction and nonfiction submissions must be single-spaced and contain 2,500 words or fewer. All work must be submitted on both an IBM-compatible disk and hard copy.

Artists' Guidelines

Please clearly label your artwork with the title(s) of the pieces. All mediums will be accepted but slides are preferred. Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your submission(s) so that artwork may be returned.

University of Illinois Press, 508 South Dearborn Street, Urbana, IL 61824

For consideration, authors must submit three copies of the manuscript, including a cover sheet with the title of the article, author's name, address, and phone number. The cover sheet should also include a short biography of the author. Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper, with margins of at least one inch. Authors should also submit a separate sheet with the title and author's name for the production editor's use. All manuscripts must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the return of the author's copy. Manuscripts are accepted on the understanding that the author grants the publisher the right to publish the work in any form and in any medium, and to make any necessary changes to the work for publication purposes. The publisher assumes no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts.

Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editor, University of Illinois Press, 508 South Dearborn Street, Urbana, IL 61824. Manuscripts accepted for consideration will be handled by the Editor and the production editor. The production editor will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the journal, including the selection of articles for publication, the preparation of the table of contents, and the coordination of the production process. The production editor will also be responsible for the correspondence with authors regarding the status of their manuscripts. Manuscripts accepted for consideration will be handled by the Editor and the production editor. The production editor will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the journal, including the selection of articles for publication, the preparation of the table of contents, and the coordination of the production process. The production editor will also be responsible for the correspondence with authors regarding the status of their manuscripts.

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