

A grainy, black and white photograph of a person standing in a field. In the foreground, there is a fence made of wooden posts and wire. The person is standing in the middle ground, facing away from the camera. The background is a hazy, open landscape under a bright sky.

BYWAYS

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Byways

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Patricia Lynn Garcia

Road to Hollywood



Patricia Lynn Garcia

Sweet Dreams



Patricia Lynn Garcia

A Poem

Sometimes a poem can be short and sweet,
Like the smell of a fresh red rose in the cool spring breeze.
As words run warm with compassion and heart,
One can smell the beautiful scent of Mother Nature's art.
The words and smells could last for seconds or hours.
Poems are so much like flowers.

Sometimes a poem can be long and boring,
Like the many minutes the sun takes to rise in the morning.
As words walk with relaxed pace,
One could watch the bright colors and morning they embrace.
The lengthy and boring embrace could be full of might.
Poems are so much like newborn sunlight.

Sometimes a poem can be dark and scary,
Like the creepy feelings you get when in a room black and eerie.
Sneaky words creep silently toward your unsuspecting mind,
Almost like the sounds of an unseen bat that makes you want to hide.
The fear of a good story is sometimes so welcomed,
Poems are so much like fear... Overwhelming...

A poem is a poem for sure and whenever.
They are like the hopes and dreams of a soul; they last forever.
Nobody ever so bold could fail to behold,
The power of many words in a well thought out row.
A poem is a poem... A poem is fun...
A poem can only be judged when the reader is done.

Patricia Lynn Garcia

Soldiers

A new war? An old war?
They're all the same to me.
Death and destruction...
Chaos and catastrophe...
It's something many people have seen.
War is like living in a nightmare.
It raises the hair on your back.
When and where is the next attack?
Yet, soldiers stride into it with a sort of grace.
They hold their heads high and wipe fear from their face.
They lay their lives down for the country...
The land of freedom that we embrace.
They fight for our frights, our freedoms, our lives...
Against those who are so ready to take them away...
We never realize the full impact of war.
We always believe that our men and women will come home.
The fact is that not all of them will.
So, this poem is for you written here.
All soldiers... All men and women of war.
Your country stands tall and proud.
Thank you.

Patricia Lynn Garcia

A Sense of War

I have seen planes crash,
Fast from the bright day time sky.
Into buildings tall...

I have felt anger.
The most I have ever had.
It consumes us all.

I have heard bombs too,
Falling from the dark night sky.
Screaming with terror...

I have smelled the smoke.
Flames from a tank's brake system...
Smoke billows sky high.

I have tasted PRIDE.
Sweet with all the nation's kind...
We will overcome.

Robbie Hall

Lonely Heart Breaker

You and me
want to be
but now I see
it's only me
I tend to think of you
during the night
but in the day
it's out of sight
you act like you don't want me
i guess it's cause you're lonely
you didn't say it in words
you didn't write it on paper
your face gave it away
just like a vapor
If your heart is broken once again
I will wait and be a friend
The time will come
for us to see
if it was meant
for you and me

Krysta McKelvy

Chances

You took a chance
And expressed the way
You felt about me.
That was courage.

You took a chance
And stood your ground
Against the world for me.
That was bravery.

You took a chance
And left all you knew
And loved for me.
That was loyalty.

You took a chance
And poured your emotions
Out for me to see.
That was heart.

You took a chance
And stayed just to
Get to know me better.
That was kind.

You took a chance
And showed me that
You could hand me the world.
That was priceless.

You took a chance
And showed me you
Wanted to listen to me.
That was concern.

Krysta McKelvy

Chances (cont.)

You took a chance
And let me have
A place in your heart.
That was happiness.

You took a chance
And told me that you
Refused to let me go.
That was desperation

You took a chance
And showed me the meanings
Of expressing yourself with emotion.
That was sensitivity.

You took a chance
In showing me many things
That can be summed up in one word.
That is love.

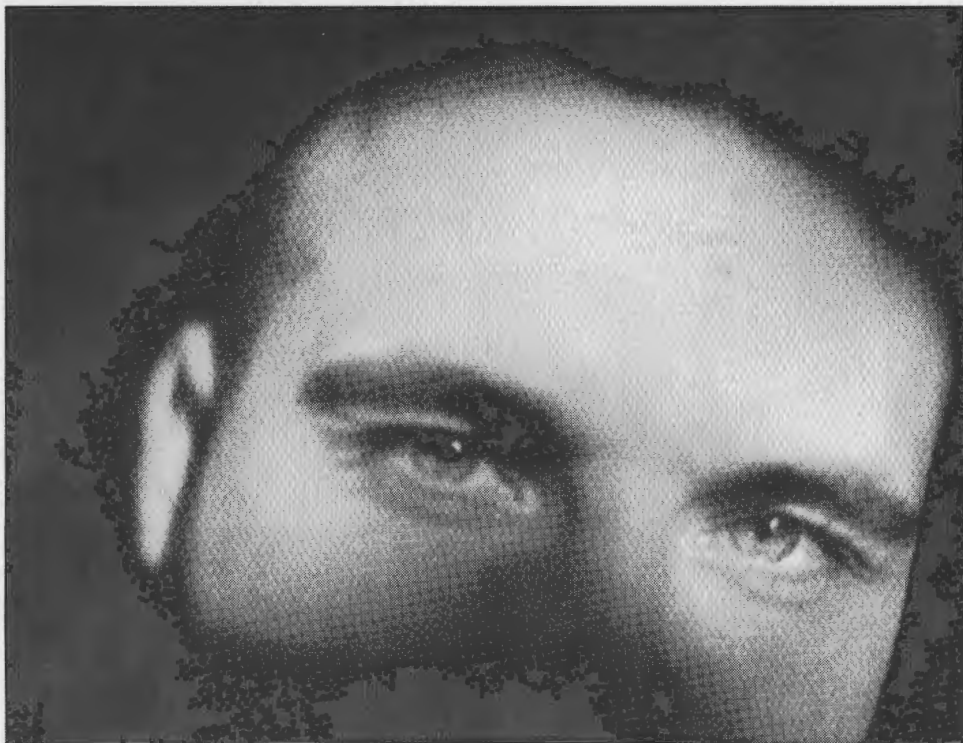
Jeff Belding

Double Image



Melissa Ledgerwood

The Eyes



Rachelle Woodall

A Memory of Sight

Watching and waiting,
glancing patiently,
 'first to the left,
 then to the right,
anxious and excited,
flickers of hope,
filled with surprise.

The colors swirl endlessly,
And the moment passes by,
locked forever in your memory,
 what you witnessed,
 with your eyes.

Rachelle Woodall

Solitary Sea

The full moon
illuminates the
rickety boardwalk leading
to the sugary sands
Wind swayed the palm tree fronds and
gentle waves lapped the land
hypnotically pulling a
solitary girl towards
the peaceful sea
The salty air blew her hair
as the icy water swirled at her feet.

The full moon
shone down upon
the sugar sands and
inky black waters
basking them in its
cold clean white light
shimmering off the
gentle waves and
washing away the night
a last trace of solitary
footprints disappears into
the ever calming sea.

Jack Coulston

I Still Sit Alone

Dawn approaches,
The sun will show,
A flower blooms,
Wind begins to blow.

I sit alone,
To myself I say,
Perhaps there will be someone,
Who I can sit by today.

The wind fades,
A flower dies,
The sun has set,
Dusk fills the sky.
Changes occur,
In every tone,
All but one,
I still sit alone...

Jack Coulston

Fate Has No Power

Fate has no power,
My soul is free,
Stronger than its grasp,
Fate cannot hold me.
Whatever fate has in store,
For the years ahead,
I can destroy in an instant,
Decisions are useless when dead.
I can drain my life,
Cease my breath,
Ruin Fate's decisions,
A process labeled death.
Though easy and quick,
Courage leaves me,
Still alive and realize,
Fate indeed holds me.

Jack Coulston

Midnight Scavengers



James C. Tucker

Celtic Indian Legend



Veronica Coburn

Sacrifice

Shadows enshroud,
Black as the lacy
Death veil.
Suddenly -
Reaching and dipping low
Grasping a last breath.
Silently -
Hiding pain with
Sweet smiles of bloom.
Quietly -
Shining light
With oil-slicked hues of
Rose, Violet, Crimson.
A short-lived blush of
Temporal beauty.
Standing straight.
Now wilting.
Noiselessly dying.
To be replaced
With a new bouquet.
Beauty -
Cut
Down
In
Its
Prime.

Veronica Coburn

Prelude to Significance

Silver strands frame
Her face - mark her;
Tell of time's
Savage stroll.

Unwanted wrinkles,
Looming liver
Spots; recent reminders
Of done days.

Where did they go, those
Fleeting flowers? Were they
Truly graced with
Grand importance?

Still there is time
To remedy - to
Finally appreciate
Her life.

Veronica Coburn

Hue

Breathtaking purpled bluebonnets
Lavendar crepe myrtles
Sweet smells of springtime.

Vertical slabs
Of deep violet
Topped with light
And delicacy.

Hot purple lights
Overpowering the darkness -
The velvety blackness.

Blues and pinks
Grace the morning sky
Intermingling. Forming a brilliant
New hue.

Veronica Coburn

Waking

Light through still
Closed lids.
Remnants of dream worlds
Flittering beyond grasp like
Butterflies.

Suddenly cognizant of
Twitter, warble, chirp.
The serenade of volunteer
Music makers
Songs sung for my
Satisfaction,
Heard through open windows.

Stretch, turn, roll.
Moments more of peaceful
Slumber before leaving
My snug coccoon of covers.

Now embarking on a new
Gift from God.

Yumin Oh

Pampass Wind



Connie Koski

Branching Out



Yanitza Larroy

A Tear

I sat here in my room after all the bombing
and the falling of the buildings, wondering
what has happened to the world.
The world that we thought was a safe place.
A place that we called home, a place of
comfort, warmth and love.
Taken short under one breath.
So many tears have fallen
from those of innocent people,
of those who shouldn't have died.
Innocent.
The word that eats at you, cries out to you.
That is what you call it.
Innocence.
It's all over the news, lives that have been lost,
a city that has been broken, a life
that was quiet, was no longer there.
Those words keep repeating in my head
like a drum against the tomb.
How can anyone do such a horrible thing?
I felt something hot, warm upon my cheek.
It's a tear.
A tear for every soul that is beneath all that rubble.
A tear that could have been saved,
a tear for all the pain.

Vicki Johnson

Who Believes in Love?

Good morning Mr. Hero
Who has the drug today?
And who's gonna teach the children
That there is a better way
Than looking for simple pleasures
Found in superficial ways
One night stands and cheap demands
Who believes in love anymore?

Like the earth beneath your feet
Where is the strength in man?
And who cares to listen
That nature has a better plan
We've got to wake up
And understand the truth
The power is beyond our control to sell our very soul
Who believes in love anymore?

John Webster

A Late Night Haiku #2

You have just begun
Now is the dawn of your life
Soon it will be dusk

The Squash Poem

I see that boy
I see that boy by the side of the road
Along the Highway of Life
He, selling his squash out of an old shopping cart
“Little boy,” I ask the waif, “where are your parents?”
The little boy smiles
He extends his hand, a dirty squash inside
Ah! Now I see
I see that you have taken my soul
Alas! Why did I not see beyond that impish grin
Why did I not see the evil you hold within your hand!
Have at you fiend!
Surrender my soul!
I have power over you,
I now know your name!
Baalzeebub!
Baalzeebub!
Baalzeebub!
I charge you by all that is
The Universal Order
Surrender that soul which I know so well!
Squash, ten cents each.

John Webster

The Hero in My Head

Stand up and fight!
Said the Hero in my head
Raise your sword in challenge
To the foes before you

An army of giants
As countless as the stars
Pressing from all sides
There can be no escape

So will you charge into the melee
Raging free like a fire
Shouting defiance with your last breath
And truly live?

Or will you lay down on your belly
Becoming a slave
Breathing for a little while longer
But being dead within?

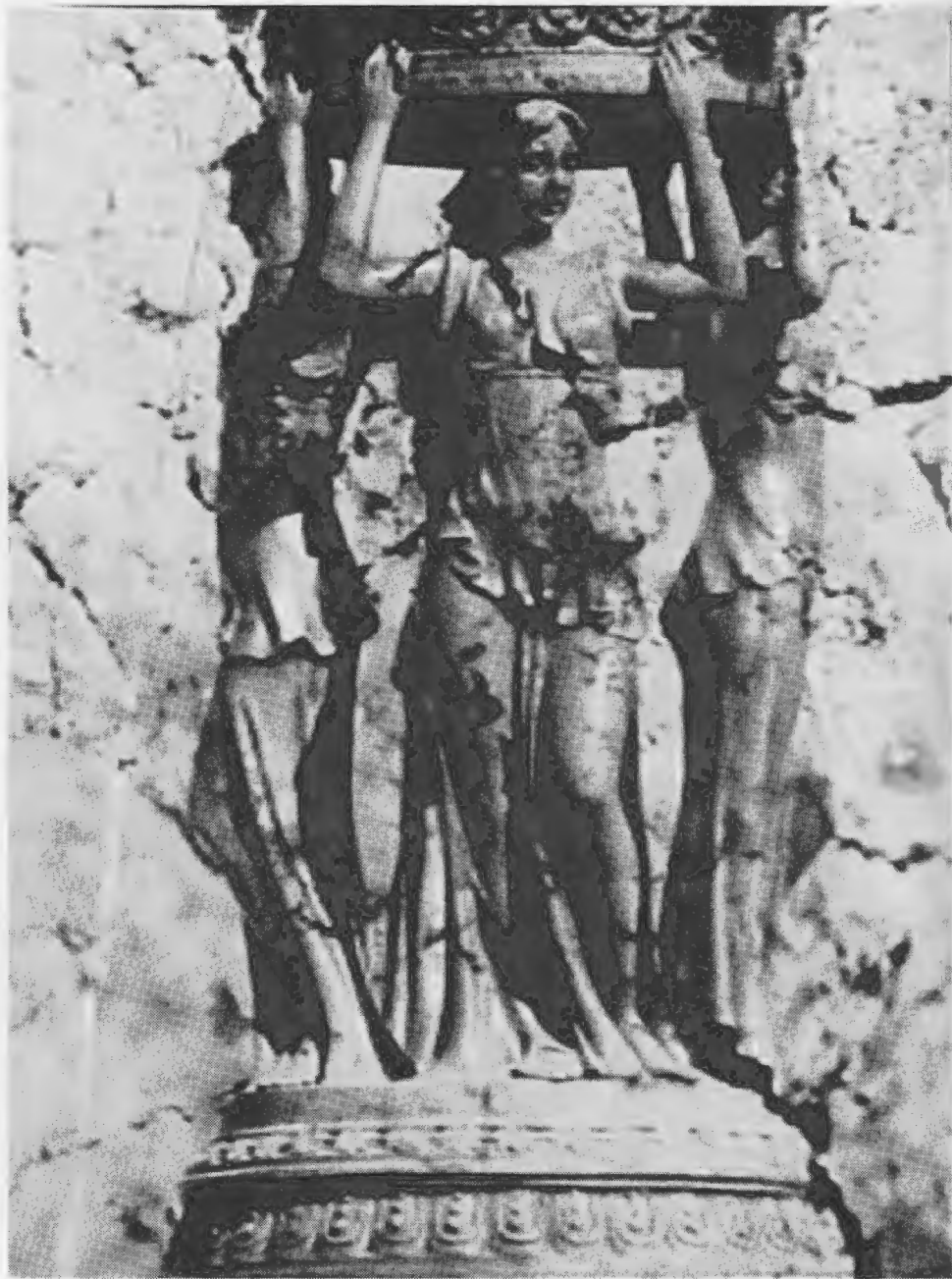
Mark A. Davis

Corpus Nights



Connie Koski

Thirst for Life



Adrian Jackson

Who I Am

Three events occurred in my life that charted the course I would take and defined who I am and how I came to be this person. These events changed my interpretation of people, my interacting with people and I believe, the direction my life would have taken had none of the three occurred. Each event has given me something, good and bad, and shaped my personality in a profound way, making me a contradiction of myself.

My mother, though not a main character in my life, is the central figure in each of these extraordinary events. The first event occurred when my step-father left, leaving my mother to raise four girls on her own. She was a good mother despite the fact that statistics were not in her favor--she was young, black and single. At the age of ten, my sisters (ages 13, 11, and 5) and I, watched my mother walk out and join the Army, leaving us at the home of strangers, who were both alcoholics. I saw her three times in the following decade and though she was aggressive in sustaining some sort of relationship, I grew up a motherless child. The last event happened during my freshman year at college. My mother offered me a summer in Germany and I accepted, excited about the opportunity to travel.

My mother was young, active, intelligent, and she could do anything. Shortly after she broke up with my sister's father, she quit her job, amid criticism, and went to college. We were poor, but only in hindsight, as at the time, it was not evident to me. My mother made walking a game of scavenger hunt, when in truth she had no money for the bus. Her idea of fun was to take us to free plays, festivals, and museums, and challenge us to read her college books. When our television knob broke and we were forced to watch PBS for two years, she was overjoyed. Two decades later, when I followed my mother's path and gave up my job to return to school, it was her example that gave me strength. As a young, black single parent, I could have become a statistic, but she'd raised me differently. Conversely, I watched my mother do so much that I grew up with a feminist ideal that women can do everything, which has had a negative impact in my career and my relationships. This "superwoman" persona I saw in her is in direct conflict with my belief that women's roles are clearly defined by God. I am left in contradiction with my womanhood.

We were happy girls and like most kids in similar situations, we were completely oblivious to what would happen next, so when my mother left, I was devastated. My secure world was shattered. As if her leaving

Adrian Jackson

Who I Am (cont.)

wasn't painful enough, I was left in a house of chaos, where my grandfather and his girlfriend were drunk and thoroughly ill-prepared for child-rearing. The results were disastrous. Each sister dealt differently with our ordeal, according to her personality, age and familial position. In essence, I raised myself and my younger sister, since no one else seemed equipped for or interested in the job. For my hard work, I was awarded fierce independence, strong will and unshakable self-confidence. I was also awarded the absolute inability to trust anyone, especially family, and a self-preserving protectiveness that prevents me from openly sharing my thoughts and feelings. At work, I can quiet a storm and bring order to chaos, yet repetitive noises like clicking pens and tapping feet drive me under a desk with my hands over my ears. I am left in contradiction with my abilities.

When I arrived in Germany, my mother, with her "go get 'em" attitude, asked if my sister and I wanted to go to Paris. Not a week later, she loaded us on a bus and waved from the terminal. We were on our own. My mother's invitation to Europe was her gift to me. She gave me a world bigger than the one I grew up in. I fell in love with Germany and *in* Germany. Being in Europe taught me the value of differences in people. I learned that even though there are screens--I am young, I am woman, I am black, I am American--this is not all there is to see. I am not defined by my roles. Neither am I defined by people's expectations of me; people looking through screens. On the other hand, I am so driven. The desire to prove myself is strong and frequently uncontrollable. I have to affirm to everyone--my co-workers, friends and family--that I am worthy of love and respect. I am left in contradiction with my appearance.

So, this is who I am. I am a feminist, with traditional ideals. I stand still amid confusion, yet cower at a little disturbance. I am undefinable, yet can never measure up. I doubt that I would be who I am had I remained in my mother's house having never experienced loss, hopelessness and adventure. Three remarkable events, engineered by my mother, have made me who I am. I am a contradiction.

Narshonna Townes

My Sunshine

God is so good. For I know this is true.
He blessed me the day he introduced me to you.
I remember before then he would listen to me complain,
Moreover, watch me do nothing but let things stay the same.
I would say, "How unhappy and mistreated I am!
This load is too much for one woman to stand."
Feeling unlike the beloved I desired to be,
Instead, once free, now in captivity.
Becoming jaded enough to voice my pain out loud,
By then, my sun was completely covered by clouds.
Sunshine I didn't know, nor did I expect to gain.
Just the umbrella I held over me in case of painful rain.
Then suddenly, a ray of sunshine unexpectedly peaked through.
Looking at the sky, I thought to myself, "Hhmm... This is new."
Not recognizing what it was, I tried to block it with my hand,
Then I noticed the warmth of the light every place on me it had landed.
It was you! You were magnificent! You treated me like a queen.
You brightened my everything and you were like nothing I'd ever seen.
I bathed in all of your warmth.
Made love to your many rays.
Who'd ever thought by the fall of night you would go away?
Once again I am alone and above are only clouds.
Though I can't see the sun, things are a little different now.
I'll just let tomorrow bring sun or clouds or whatever it may.
Nevertheless, I need no umbrella; you'll be back again some day.
I thank God for blessing with the ray of light he let shine through.
For that was the irreplaceable day he introduced me to you.

Narshonna Townes

Oxymoron

Holy War? Now how is that possible? Well, maybe somebody's reverend could probably explain this contradicting truth to me. Now that America has a sense of newfound religion, maybe Mr. or Mrs. Reverend can lighten the dark.

Military Intelligence? Since when? How intelligent is childish adults making important decisions? Maybe one of my prejudice friends can open my mind since their decision-making is usually based on factual assumption as well.

Freed slave? Now how could that be? Maybe I should close my eyes and look towards the silent voice of my great-great-great-grandmother, who was an idiot savant and a freed slave. Maybe then I would be able to hear her lively ghost sharing the wisdom to life's mysterious answers. What's that Big Mama? "I said, Baby, we were never really free."

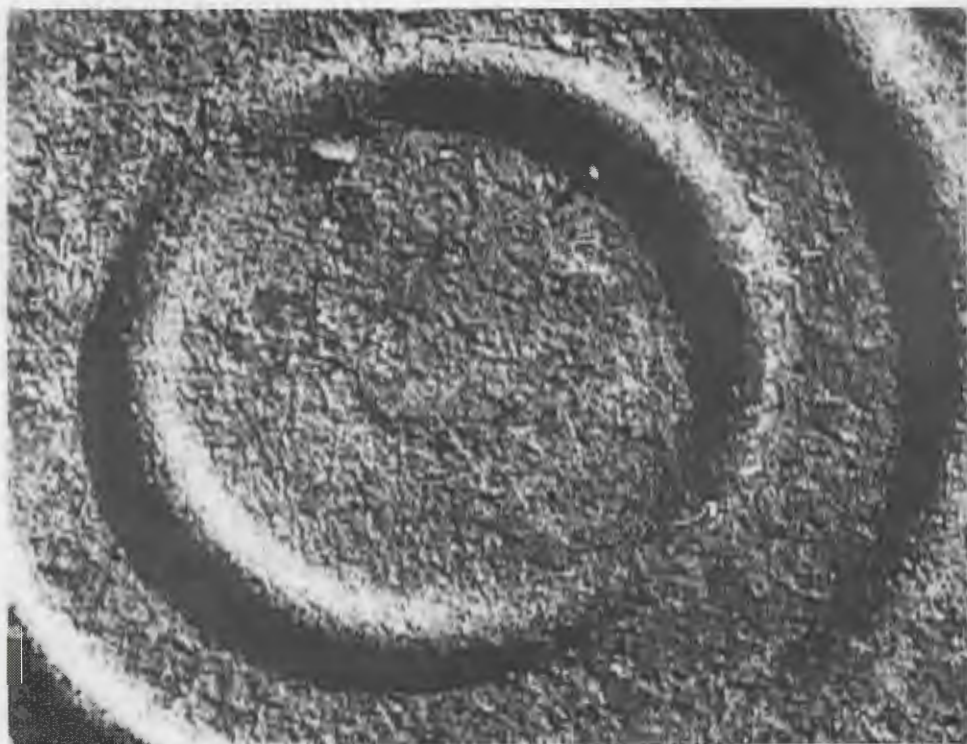
Emmanuel Vomvas

Her Future



Emmanuel Vomvas

Metal Swirl



D.H. Moore

Wind

I am envious of the freedom of the wind.
Of the liberty it has to chase rolling waves along the beach
And the time it has to wallow in the warmth of the sunshine.

I respect the strength of the wind.
How it performs as a mighty conductor during torrential black storms,
Pounding the soft earth, whittling away at life and structure,
Building tension, tearing through woods, leaving hearts wounded.

I admire the gentleness of the wind.
It breathes kisses on my neck, caresses my face with puffs of sweet air.
Just as it can take life, it also spreads seeds of beautiful blossoms
To undiscovered territories for rebirth and the continuation of life.
I am like the wind, because I too, have the freedom of choice.

D.H. Moore

What Have You Done to Make a Difference?

Have you heard the news of the latest scare,
airplanes crashing, and terrorists everywhere?
People can't find loved ones and pleas for help on missing posters
are filled with so much despair.

Ask yourself what have you done to make a difference,
how did you show you care?

Yes, it happened on the other side of the country,
but it could've been us, you'd better beware.

Did you give blood; send gloves, socks or water
to help those who searched?

Did you light a candle, say a prayer, send money, or even go to church?
What have you done to make a difference, besides sit high on your perch?

Yes, it happened on the other side of the country,
but how I cried when the mighty Towers lurched.

They hate our way of life and all we stand for:
freedom, democracy, and human rights.

They maim, torture, and pilfer, stealing innocent souls away in the night.

Ask yourself what have you done to make a difference,
how can we help to ease their plight?

Yes, it happened on the other side of the country,
but as a nation we will show them our might.

Do what you can to help your fellow man,
because our nation must go to war.

Loved ones will deploy to defend our freedoms,
of which some will give their lives for.

What have you done to make a difference--
say you stood up for America and you plan to do more.

Yes, it happened on the other side of the country,
but we stood together, hand in hand, shore to shore.

D.H. Moore

Weeping Women

Weeping woman, why do you weep?
For the weight of the world has descended upon me
Joblessness, homelessness are troubles too much to bear
My Lord, I pray-- as I look forward to the dawning of a new day

Tearful mother, why do you cry?
For my lost child that will never be born
And the fatherless children, motherless child, all alone in the world
My Lord, I pray-- as I look forward to the dawning of a new day

Aching sister, why does your heart break?
Because chaos has engulfed creation and evil has consumed the soul
My heart crumbles into a million broken pieces, unable to mend
My Lord, I pray-- as I look forward to the dawning of a new day

Agonizing daughter, what has caused your pain?
My lover has left me for the tender kisses of another
Years of building hopes and dreams are now all washed away
My Lord, I pray-- as I look forward to the dawning of a new day

Weeping women, why you cry no more?
Just as the mighty willow weeps, but stands firm against the elements
Lord, we are rooted in faith powerful enough to guard against the rain
My Lord, we prayed and You answered with a sunrise,
which after all-- is another day.

Zakiyyah Danquah

C.B. Love

I want to tell him how I feel.
To keep our friendship, I will conceal.
Little by little I try to show it,
Hoping that he'll like me a little bit.

The pressure is high.
To cover his tracks he tells me a lie.
It hurts to know that C.B. Love isn't real.
I must keep looking for a better deal.

Represent

Do I represent South Side?
And tell them that I have lied.
They always say follow the North Star,
but will it lead to a cell surrounded by the bar.
It's hard to know where I belong,
but staying with the West Side is wrong.
The side I traveled to was east.
The transaction was what I liked the least.

Zakiyyah Danquah

Hand



Angela Romero

Baby In Blue



Art Connor

Life

A time to give birth, A time to die. Ecclesiastes 3:2

With joy a child is born, In pain women give birth
Caresses beget smiles, a giggle, With hunger it cries out
A birthday, first step, first work, Defiance, NO.
Laughter, play, bike, skates, Bumps, bruises, skinned knees
ABC's, 1 2 3's, first grade, Tears of an insult
Great athlete, policeman, soldier, Only dreams only games.

A time to love and a time to hate. Ecclesiastes 3:8

Coming of age, first romantic kiss, Pimples
New freedoms, experimentation, Peer pressures
Teen years, social years, Uncontrollable hormones
Clubs, clicks, groups, Rejection, outcast loser
License, first car, freedom, Wrecks
Graduation, adulthood, future, Responsibility.

A time to keep and a time to throw away. Ecclesiastes 3:6

First job, first raise, Taxes
Home, family, spouse, Payments
Children, pets, traditions, Chaos
New job, bigger house, Accountability
Braces, bikes, portraits, Expenses
Proms, college, weddings, Growing old.

A time to weep a time to laugh. Ecclesiastes 3:4

First grandbaby, silver hair, AARP card
Leisure, travel, golf, Ensure
Reading the obituaries, Parents funerals
Social Security checks, Broken hip
Walls filled with pictures, lost siblings
Sharing memories, quiet moments, Sleep.

A time to give birth, A time to die. Ecclesiastes 3:2

Art Connor

The Gift

For if by the transgressions of the one, the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the Man, Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:15.

All men, dying from the moment of birth.
Growing learning how to acquire,
struggling, working, lying to obtain.
Lives spent pursuing lustful pleasures,
Always drawing ever closer to death.
Gathering all possible things before they expire.

A child born of elicit pleasures,
or conceived in hopes to obtain,
their days numbered from birth.
Laboring through life to acquire,
never knowing when time will expire.
A moment lived, a moment closer to death.

Death the conclusion all obtain.
Now what value are fleeting pleasures,
as descendants argue to acquire
those possessions gathered from birth.
Wealth and fame desired, all someday to expire.
Judgment awaits all in death.

Of what value, the things we acquire,
are joys found in past pleasures
from the grave. We, from our birth
struggle to possess. All things obtained
left behind, lost at our death.
With death our greeds expire.

Men live on, beyond death,
few with joy, receiving great pleasures.
Most anguished, torture, pain the reward obtained,
eternity spent praying the torment to expire.
A gift offered in life, many failed to acquire
Salvation available to all through his birth.

Art Connor

The Gift (cont.)

A gift refused life governs who will obtain
paradise or who prays for eternity to expire.
For wealth and fame they sought to acquire,
now form within hells fire, cursing their birth,
remembering a life spent pursuing pleasures.
A present, The Son born to be given in death.

For his pleasure a gift He gave, with the death
of a Son. A new birth for all to acquire but if we fail in
life to obtain with our death, like us, the offer will expire.

*For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world,
and forfeit his soul? Mark 8:36*

Kim Rowan

Evasive Soul

They hold you in high regard and think wonderful things of you.
You know it, and you feel enthusiastic.

They praise you for your suave words and your striking appearance.
You know it, and you feel secure.

They say you're an inspiration when you're up there speaking
Knowledge.
You know it, and you feel relaxed.

They think you're intelligent. You must have read your way to the top.
You know it, and you feel enlightened.

But when you're alone, do you believe it?

Are you as grand when no one's looking?

Do you cast away events that define your cruel sense of humanity?

Are you afraid of the verity of what lies underneath?

Does it hinder your soul?

It must inconvenience you to change.
So you live for what accommodates you for now.

That façade becomes who you are.
You know it, and you feel defeated.

Mary Harris

Cu Cullen (The Last One)



Jerry Don Osborne

Bertram Tower



DeAnne Franklin

The Dance

The lights are low.
Musicians play softly.
He bows and she curtsies,
as everyone watches.

He slides his arm around her waist
and moves her to the music.
She feels safe wrapped in his touch,
and willingly follows his lead.

Her gown twirls in motion
as they glide across the floor.
This way, then that way,
keeping time with the music.

Their eyes smile with excitement
as they embark on this new journey.
Together their hearts beat as one
and the music plays

A lifetime of love to
share with each other,
one step at a time
with the music playing.

Knowing one day,
the music will fade.
Then they will stop
and move to the music

no more.

DeAnne Franklin

Life

Upon waking from a long
night's sleep,
I take a deep breath.

I open my sleepy eyes
and gaze
at everything in the room.

I feel the soft, fuzzy covers
keeping me warm,
and wish I had five more minutes.

The aroma of coffee brewing
makes me smile,
as I sit up in bed,

and am thankful that
I have
another day to live.

Kat Cotter

Dream

Will I wake up from this horrid dream?
Or have I landed in a really bad scene?
Some transcendental acid trip
where real or imagined
my heart is ripped

My fingers betrayed me!!!
It certainly wasn't my eyes.
Damn my fingers!!!
Oozing from their tips, that thick green/black poison,
Jealousy!!!!

If they have betrayed me they will suffer their punishment
Never to touch you
To caress your face
Never will each digit entwine as I capture you in my arms
Pulling you closer towards my heart

My eyes would never betray me.
If you could witness the sight of my eyes
Filled with love and admiration
for the honorable man
Because of you they shine and smile.

So wake me with a gentle kiss
and tell me my nightmare has been remiss
and that my fears have all been lies
But My Dear Sweet One
Don't tell me Goodbye

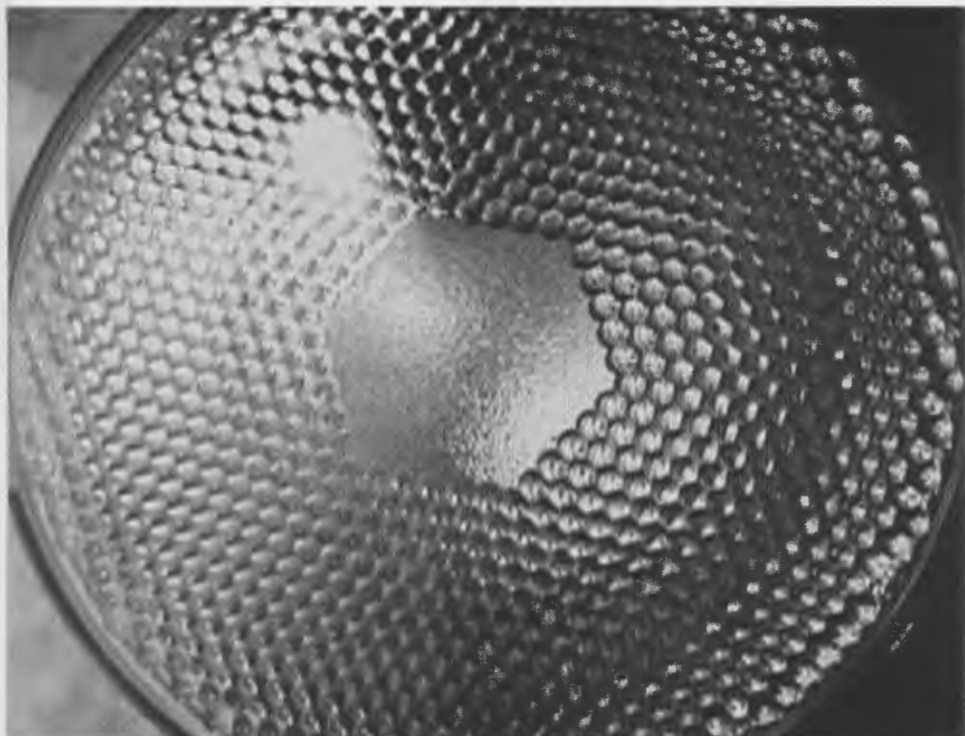
Lamar McGuire III

Lost Sister

I live in a silly world where
people feel they have to do
meaningless tasks because of
God given smoke they inhale
in their lungs;
I speak in such disgust of this
world because it has overtaken
one of my loved ones,
A naive girl who wanted a piece
of the real world before she
was supposed to experience it.
Now she lives a life of regret and
loneliness which she does not
like to admit.
So she runs to the first open
arms that welcome her,
hoping she can escape the
internal scars that narcotic
driven men hath put on her.
My only sorrow is I couldn't
be that voice in her ear that
angel on her shoulder.
Begging her to keep that glass
from her lips and that chip off
her shoulder.
What I have is a rare treasure
box one unseen in any dimension,
but all of its treasure was stolen
by a hormone driven thief
without her permission.
Her future was so bright,
paved from the shining of her face,
but the light has dimmed and
now her path is leading to a darker place.

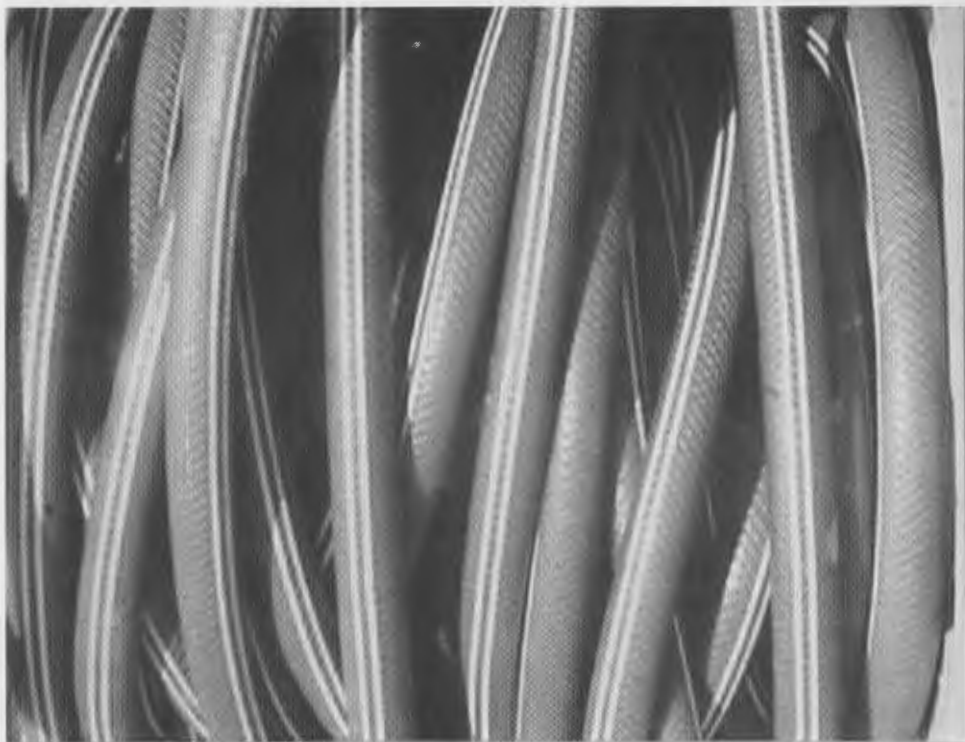
Jeff Belding

Reflections of Myself



Angela Romero

Hosepipe



Cat High

Dyslexia

Dyslexia,

The state of total perplexia.

Misunderstood people ignore or tease you,
Now way to show them what you really go through.

Reading and writing like a little kid,

Feeling like you are terminally stupid.

Always in a state of constant frustration,

All aspects of life full of complication.

Knowing you have an intelligent brain,

Never able to express or even explain.

Spending your life in defeat,

It's like Halloween without the treat.

No apparent symptoms to show you are sick,

This is what it is like to be Dyslexic.

Cat High

Barbie Syndrome

I am not a walking talking doll,
My goal in life is not to look pretty and go to the mall.
You look at me and see "Barbie" picture perfect,
Do you think brains are a birth defect?
I am intelligent under all this blonde hair,
I have other qualities for you to compare.
I like computer science and philosophy,
but the only subject you want to discuss is my biology.
I have dreams of college and a career.
All you think about is how good I look from the rear.
When I want to talk about the future and our marriage plans,
Yawning you say "Fetch some Bud Light babe, bottles not cans"
When I get angry and start to complain and nag,
You respond "Do you have P.M.S.? I thought you finished your rag."

Cat High

Casualty of Men

Confusion runs through my mind,
Images of past lovers and relationships where I was blind.
Over and over those men I have forgiven
For countless occasions and indiscretion.
After being lied to and used by those I thought were my best friends,
How am I going to learn to trust anyone again.
Tenderness and devotion are some hearts greatest needs,
but more often than not love stabs and the heart bleeds.
I'm tired of being just another number in a little black book,
And I try to go on keeping a positive outlook.
At first they say they like me and treat me like a queen,
Until they find someone else and I become "Miss In-between"
I am the one they settle for,
Second choice makes me feel like a whore.
No one wants a lasting relationship with me,
They just want someone there for when they get lonely.
Countless times the men in my life I have forgiven,
For numerous occasions or indiscretion.
Then when he gets tired of me,
He can sugar coat it and say, "It wasn't meant to be."

Cat High

Child's Dream

Shimmering, glimmering, glints of light,
Dancing across the water in the eve's twilight.
As giggling maidens misbehave,
Tiny ripples move along every wave.
Splashing and playing in the water tonight,
Her company darts through the pale moonlight.
Carefree frolicking throughout the evening,
I want to stay, can't think of leaving.
Merriment building throughout the night,
As dolphins and mermaids join this sight.
It is hard to believe that here I can never grow old,
But these are the rules that Peter has bestowed.

James C. Tucker

Shimmering Reflections



Yasmin Nieves

Cowboy



Crystal Bradford

I See a Cowboy

Every time I think of a cowboy,

I close my eyes

and see the black silhouette of a man, backed by the
radiant glow of a summer sunset

The beautiful pinks, purples, oranges, and reds, add a most romantic
quality to the hard shadow of an even harder man.

You can see no face,

sometimes he leans, exhausted, against an old truck
sometimes he is atop a trusty steed.

Always he takes in the view.

There is no knowledge of what his day has held.

Branding cattle, Trading horses, Mending fence, or Working in
town and returning back home.

The life of every cowboy is as varied as the multi-colored sky that now
wraps around him like one of Grandmother's patch-work quilts.

Crystal Bradford

The Best Things in Life

I've got a decent sense of humor
And I've got friends that really care
And I've got a lover that smiles back at me--
Lord the best things in life are still free.

I don't have a whole lot of money
And I don't have a house on the hill
And I don't rub elbows with the people on the TV
But none of that's botherin' me.

Lord the best things in life
Are a husband and a wife
And little children
And warm summer nights.
And the best thing for me is bein' wild as I can be--
Oh, the best things in life are still free.

I've got an old dog that likes me
And I've got a spot in the shade
And when I got bed, and lay down my head, the one I
love most is right there beside me--
Lord the best things in life are still free.

Crystal Bradford

My Dream

My dream seems so simple...
but by no means is it small
My dream is not only to bring myself joy...
but joy for all.

My dream is to take care of my family and not give them a house
but a home
to smother them with love...
but at the same time, give them the freedom to roam.

My dream is to be a star not to the world...
but in the eyes of my friends
and to live in a world where grown-ups are still free...
to pretend.

My dream is for civilization to get back to nature...
but not for nature to become civilized
I wish to know almost all...
but still be able to be surprised.

My dream is to grow old gracefully...
but forever be in my prime
My dream is to make all of my dreams come true...
but realize that I can only handle one dream at a time.

Acknowledgements

This is the second annual edition of *Byways*, the Central Texas College Journal of Art & Letters. Last year's first edition demonstrated the passion of CTC students to share their voices and their artistic eyes with the college community and beyond. The student body enthusiastically sought copies of the journal, encouraging us to double our production in 2001-2002. This year, once again, the students of Central Texas College have demonstrated that they are literary, artistic, and dedicated. A group of students worked with me as an editorial board to help select the written works published here, and we had a lot of interest in publication. In April, many of the students will present their work in a reading at the Oveta Culp Hobby Library in honor of National Poetry Month. We encourage all CTC students, faculty, and staff, and members of the community, to attend this event.

Warm thanks goes out to a number of people who made the journal possible. Thanks to Anna Holston, Communications Department Chair, and Don Mikles, Dean of Central Campus, for their support of this endeavor. Thanks to Dr. Alexander and her staff in the Fine Arts Department for coordinating the art submissions and preparing them in digital format for publication. Thanks to Peg Jennings, Dean of Library Services, and Dana Watson, Assistant Director of Library Services, for their support of student artists. Finally, thanks to Ellen Dunn and Jane Gibson for making the cover art possible.

Submission Information 2002-2003

Byways is an annual publication. Submissions are collected in the fall and the journal is published in the spring. Students interested in submitting written work must be currently enrolled at CTC. All written submissions will be accepted electronically in Fall 2002. Email written submissions to CTCByways@yahoo.com. All submissions must be accompanied by your name, phone number, and email address, or else they will be returned. For art submissions, contact the Fine Arts Department at 526-1572.

Questions? Call the Communications Department at 526-1239.

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