

Third Rail







Mike Weisenger

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Chris DeAngelis	Fiction Editor
Sinan Hepcakar	NonFiction Editor
Chris O Brien	Poetry Editor
Vinnie Vok	Staff
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Justin Borucki

When Your Rocket Landed

The day your rocket landed from your planet Earth,
the schools let out early as our teachers hit the dirt.

The day your rocket landed we painted all the
ground, threw around rocks and pebbles and took
down our Martian town.

The day your rocket landed my parents were at
church, praying you dumb earthlings would not see
us in your search.

The day your rocket landed we unfolded canvas
scenes making this a barren world to be seen on
your TV screens

The day your rocket landed we turned off the radio,
stopping all the music ending all the rock and roll.

The day your rocket landed we dried up every
canal, we looked like a real hick planet offering
nothing for you now.

The day your rocket landed we laughed till we
turned blue, for years ago we had sent our own just
to take a peek at you.







photos by
anthony gargiso

January 6, 1997

When O when will you begin
To reach the fun more than sin
O when O when will it begin
To have the fun more than sin

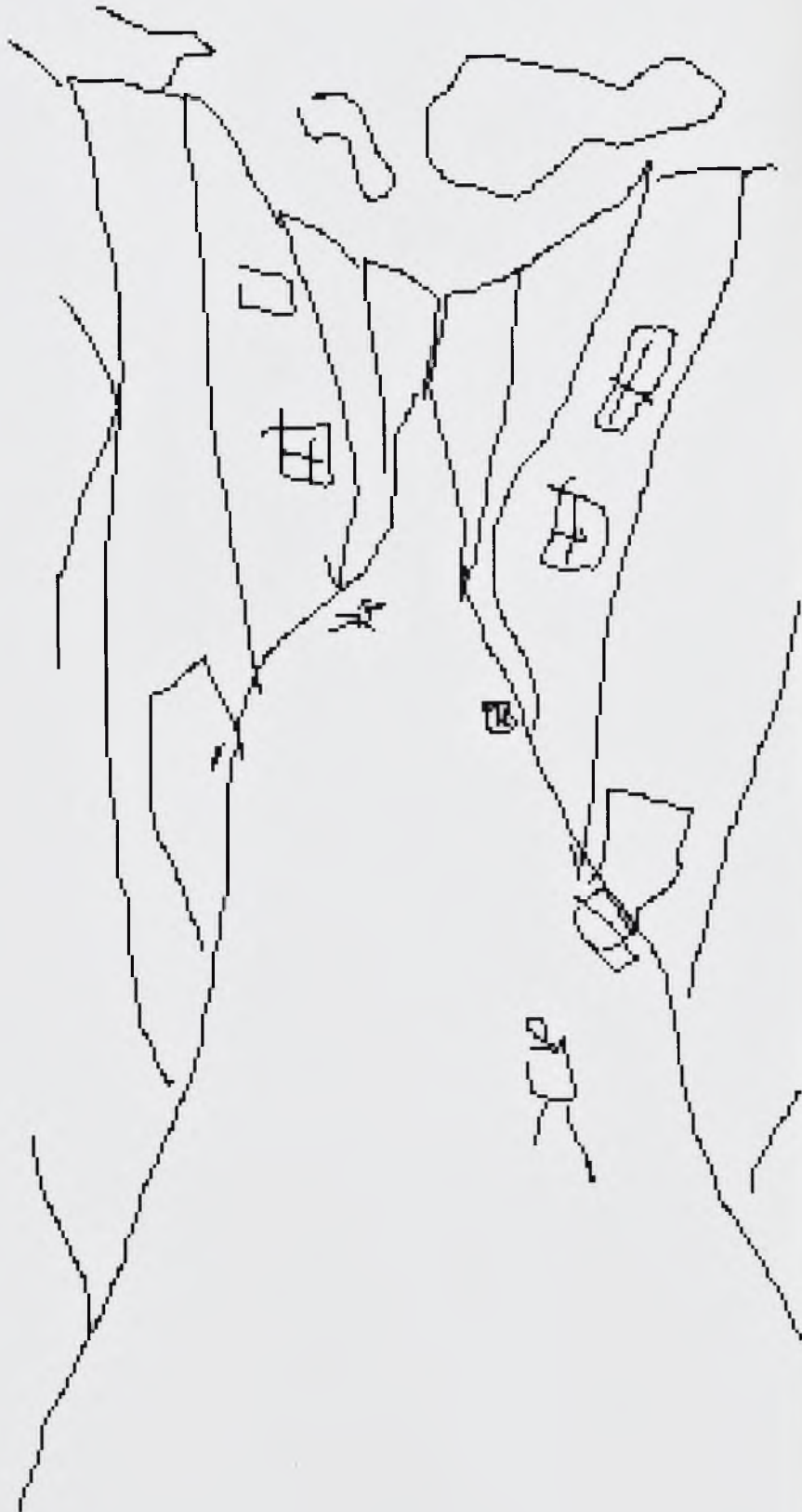
I heard it once, more than twice
That love of love O love O love
Is what men need to live indeed
O love O love O love O love

When walking withered whit and
walled
I stumbled upon the great big wall
It was so high and full of bricks
They said you can't beat it but that was
trix
O love O love O love O love

Now tell me a story will you my friend
Of a lifetime of hope and security no
end
Of love and joyousness that create
happiness
Is it inside my lonely head, or can I
find it in a bed
O love O love O love O love
When O when will you begin
To start the happiness more than sin
But if I ask what I Adam did
He sang the song that I must sing
Fruit and root and everything

Perhaps this song is as far as I get
For every new girl that I just met
Is a lifetime in an hour that I have
devoured
And no patience I have to make myself
well
So alone in this song is where I must
dwell
I sing it out loud to believe it must be
A lifetime of happiness as deep as the
perian sea
O love O love O love O love
O love O love O love O love; O love

by Lou Bardel





My



smile



is



a



rifle



and



it's



pointed



at



you!



By



Matt

Dugan

I Remember

Once I had youth
with its capacity
to forget the bad moments.
But now everything
is a dinner for the mind
and I balance the good
and the bad leaving
the good for dessert
and that is called
wisdom.

Groom Girl

she was a hot walker
who knew a loose horse
when she saw one.
Life was always one step
away from the winners circle
but she never had
a bed of roses
and good meals came
with promises to keep.
She always walked proud
hiding her tattoo
away from strangers
knowing they too
loved horses
but for all
the wrong reasons.

First Days Morning Bright

Pound the myth
squeeze it tight,
grasp the diamonds
in the night.
First days morning bright.

Bless the lambs
kill the tigers,
rip icon tears
from canvas tight.
Second days morning
bright.

Seek the thoughts
of disbarred monks,
holy egg yolks,
blur your sight.
Third days morning bright.

Hear leaves rustle
near eagle s claws.
witches on half moons
reflecting light.
First days morning bright.

The Collector

My friend
collects screams
in a jar,
and opens the lid
and lets them out
one at a time.

Blue screams sound
like an echo, echo.

Green screams
can crack glass,
and rattle in your ears.

Pink screams
start real low
and build up
higher, higher, HIGHER.

Red screams
sound like your sister
when she's really mad.

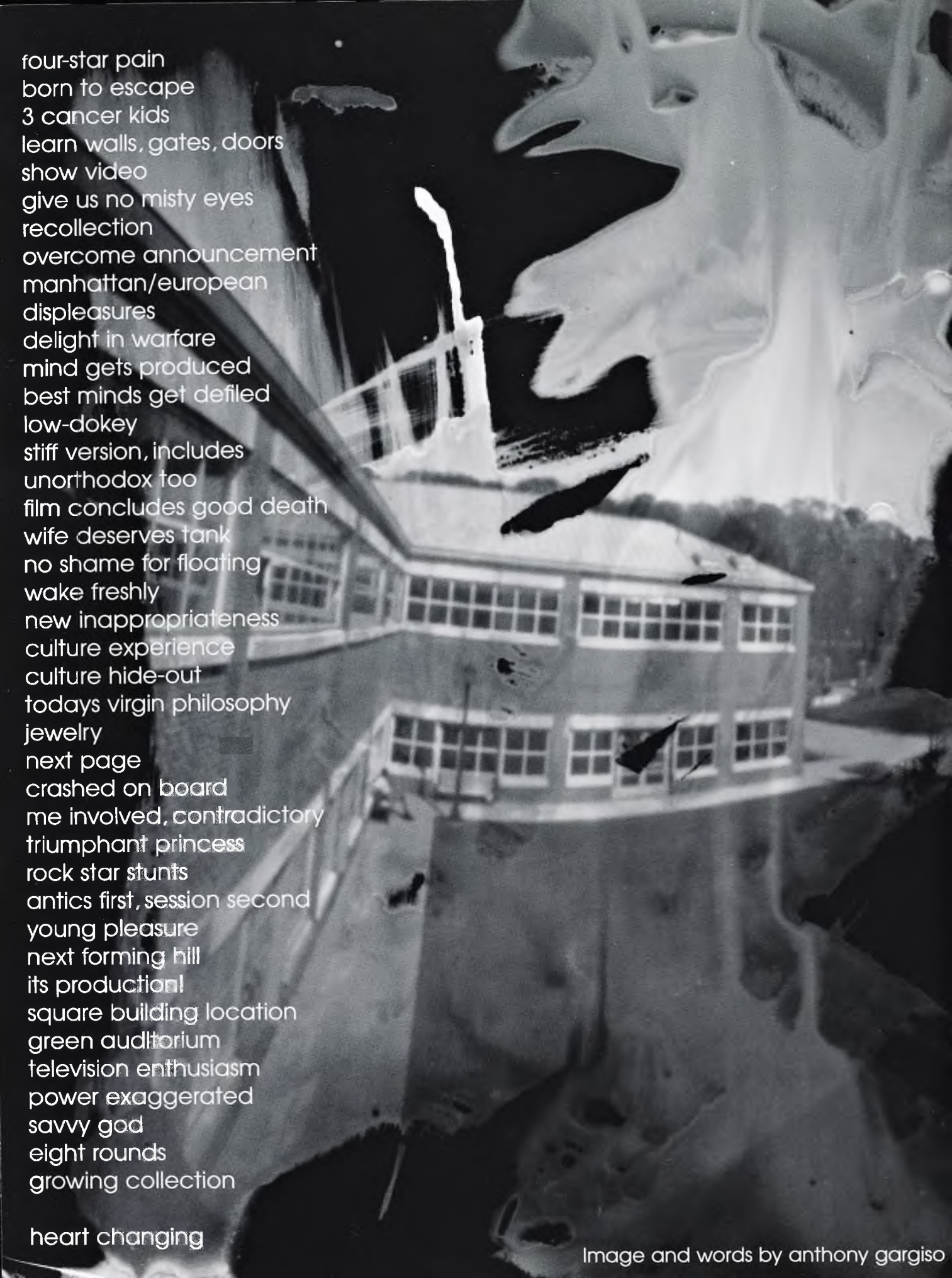
Yellow screams
are the best
but he
wont use them.
For they refuse to
go back in the jar.



Ssip

Cassandra's fantasy of destroying fruit was quite peculiar,
 She fancied grinding pears,
 Claiming they were responsible for the hideous warts that clung
 to her oversized ears,
 Nectarines and apples combined to create Napalm,
 And sadly kiwis killed her mother at the tender age of 60,
 Apples pushed her brother off the Golden Gate Bridge,
 And a cantaloupe sliced her cousin's throat
 in a drug war,
 Cassandra would buy herself gift certificates from Waldbaum's,
 To stock up her iron casket with the tainted meats,
 She would go home,
 Slice,
 Dice,
 Stab and,
 Pummel the fruits to a pulp while pits and seeds were smashed to
 dust and her hair dripped with the sweet nectar,
 Then with the juice flowing between her corroded toes,
 She chanted the words that still pierce the ears of the ones that
 heard,
 "Chew cherry or berry and turn it to wine,
 The souls of your skin and your lives will be mine!"

By Gregory DeBellis



four-star pain
born to escape
3 cancer kids
learn walls, gates, doors
show video
give us no misty eyes
recollection
overcome announcement
manhattan/european
displeasures
delight in warfare
mind gets produced
best minds get defiled
low-dokey
stiff version, includes
unorthodox too
film concludes good death
wife deserves tank
no shame for floating
wake freshly
new inappropriateness
culture experience
culture hide-out
today's virgin philosophy
jewelry
next page
crashed on board
me involved, contradictory
triumphant princess
rock star stunts
antics first, session second
young pleasure
next forming hill
its production!
square building location
green auditorium
television enthusiasm
power exaggerated
savvy god
eight rounds
growing collection

heart changing

Image and words by anthony gargiso



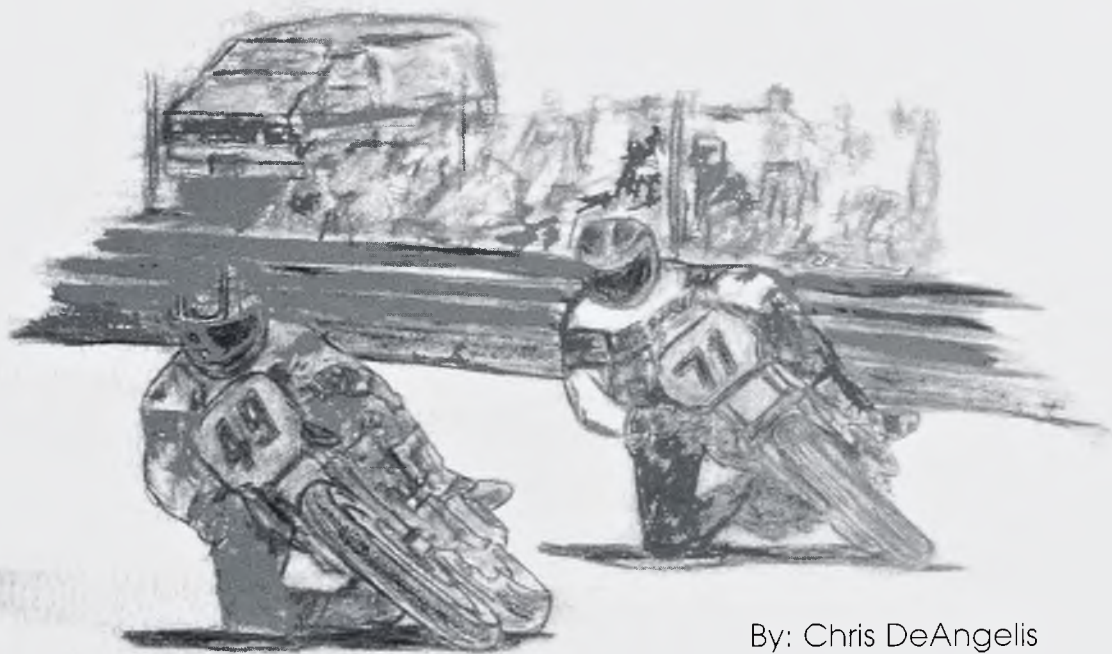
Kick The Can

It was an old beaten up silver can,
Dented, scratched, and dulled
By countless kicks of kid size keds.
Rusted, bent, empty;
Empty except for its golden lining
Which glowed eerily,
Cackling, chuckling and chorting at me
as if I were alive;
Filled with things that my young eyes could not see
Sunday dinners, pool parties
Baseball games and Fireflies
Scary stories, seances
Ice cream and plastic G.I.'s
Little girls, puppy loves
Pigtails and ponytails
The Mets, Tom Seaver
Watergate and tall tales
I kicked that can hard then, hard as I could
But, if I had realized
What it contained,
I may have paused:
(briefly)
And kicked it again.

Chris-Michael Taylor

Michael J. Pollacia

You Got the Silver



By: Chris DeAngelis

The right side peg scraped the asphalt midway through turn ten. The 180° right hand decreasing radius known as 'The Carousel,' was my least favorite corner. It seemed to last forever. I leaned further, mildly accelerating through the remainder of the turn, then brought the twin cylinder motorcycle perpendicular to the ground, speed shifted, and twisted the throttle, opening the 38mm carburetor to its fullest position. I entered the sharp left banked dogleg and leaned accordingly, mentally charting the lines to follow through the final three corners. As I swept through turns eleven, twelve and thirteen in my mind, I systematically did so on the track and entered the start of the 3/4 mile straightaway. I tucked under the handlebars and laid my chest flat on the fuel tank, listening to the throaty tone of the 883cc Harley motor unwind as I approached Bridgehampton's checkered flag. The 2.8 miles of road race course consisting of thirteen corners became a piece of the past in two minutes and nine seconds, the new record time for my designated class. While I walked the bike into the pits, where my friend and mechanic Joe the Guinea was waiting, people congratulated me. Joe stood silently in his grease stained clothes holding two Ballantines in one hand and a cigarette in the other. He looked at me and smiled, creating a web of creases in his leathery face, then began laughing out loud. I smiled under my full face helmet. Saturday qualifying was over.

The sun warmed the August morning air, strengthening the scent of honeysuckle, and the occasional blast of ocean breeze blowing south from Noyack Bay. I walked alone, listening to the cries of bluejays and the shrill chirps of cicadas, feeling nervous about tomorrow's race. Joe had taught me that walking a track was the best way to learn it,

especially one like "The Bridge" where eighty-five percent of the corners were blind turns. Before each race I walked miles without question, allowing it to become a ritual I've grown accustomed to; however, it never seemed to ease the queasiness I always felt in my stomach while waiting for the green flag to drop. "What do you think, Mr. Record Breaker? Are you ready to take first?" Joe asked as I approached him after returning from my walk.

"Of course I'm ready. What are you doing to the carb?" I asked while I watched him remove the float bowl.

"It's supposed to be in the nineties tomorrow, and I want it set to run a little leaner."

"Relative Air Density," I said and took notice of the surprise on Joe's face as he looked up from the tray of tiny springs and fuel jets he began sifting through.

"Bravo, Ian! For a while I thought the theories I was trying to teach were slipping past the thing you have between your ears." He tapped the handle of the long stemmed screwdriver against the side of his head before he continued. "Everything has to have a balance in order for it to run right."

"Even with nature?" I said questioningly, hoping it was the right response.

"There you go!"

"But what if it's not in the nineties tomorrow, and--"

"We change it, no big deal, nothing's permanent. If something's not right, we improve it. If it breaks, we fix it. It's a machine."

"You're right. It's just that I want it to be perfect."

"Nothing is ever perfect--"

"Oh, after Tina I'm coming to realize that for sure."

"Don't do it, Ian! Stop it now," he said as he reached into the top of his tool chest and plucked a cigarette from its

pack. "I don't need you depressed before the race. It's been a month already. You shouldn't even be thinking about her right now. I could only imagine what would've happened if you married her. Consider yourself lucky."

"I guess you're right, but I still can't help thinking about it."

"You'll just have to focus on other things, like tomorrow's race. Getting a slice from one of the clams I've seen roaming the pits wouldn't be a bad idea either."

"You're such a slob," I said, shaking my head and smiling at him. "Give me a cigarette," and he tossed me the pack.

"What?" he said, shrugging his shoulders. "You know I'm right."

"I don't know if you're right about that one, Joe. I've seen the women that hang around these pits."

"Oh, I forgot to tell you, one of the guys from Bartel's team said he saw this hot looking number poking around earlier when we were at the diner. She told him she was looking for you."

"Who was it?"

"How the hell am I supposed to know? But from what he told me, she spoke with an accent and had on one of those flowery sun dresses that's cut up to here." He pointed to the top of his thigh with the edge of his hand, "It sounds to me like this is just what you need."

"She didn't tell him her name, huh?"

"No, but what's the difference? She's probably wants to meet the guy who broke the Bridge's record and sit on his face for an hour or so. I just hope she shows the star mechanic who got him there some consideration."

"You are the worst."

"Lighten up. I'm busting balls. From what he told me she said she'd be back later in the afternoon. Go put on your leathers. We should get some practice time in before tomorrow."

I stood by the guardrail that separated the pit area from the track, smoking a cigarette and listening to the deep rumble of motorcycles as they passed. It was humid, and the sun blared down on my knotted hair, causing it to paste itself to the sweat that beaded on my forehead. I was disgusted with my lap times during practice and began thinking how timing was everything. I started to run the course in my mind when I heard her voice call out from behind me.

"Hey pagliaccio, cosa fai?"

In the instant I turned to look at who was speaking, my mind rewound six years of my life and stopped at the memories containing the person standing before me. Her slender body was hardly covered by the floral dress Joe had described earlier, and the sun cut through its earth colored patterns, revealing she wasn't wearing a brassiere. She put her arms around my neck and kissed the side of my face repeatedly as I stood frozen. "Aren't you glad to see me?"

"Of course I'm glad. I'm just in shock. As soon as I heard the old nickname you called me years ago, I could hardly believe it, but I just knew it was you. How did you know I was here?"

"Your name was in the local paper for breaking a record with your motorcycle. You didn't know?"

"No, but I'm glad it was, or you wouldn't have found me. What are you doing in the States?"

"I live here now, right in Sag Harbor. I always kept my dual citizenship but now I have a place where I stay a few months out of the year. I fell in love with this area the first

time you took me here. It was a summer I think about often. Remember how nervous I was the first time I rode on your motorcycle?"

"I remember you nearly broke my ribs you held on so tight."

"Oh stop! I wasn't that bad. Besides I had to-- you always rode so fast. I should have guessed you'd wind up doing something like this." She laughed as she eyed my red, white, and black racing leathers. "You are a pagliaccio. Why didn't you keep in touch with me? I've thought of you so much over the years."

I looked at the hurt expression she suddenly wore and thought back to the warm summer night of my cousin's wedding reception, back to the last time we were together. We walked alone, along the paths of the reception hall's flower gardens, saying goodbye, making promises neither of us would be able to keep because of the miles that would soon be between us. Nineteen and innocent, she kept our relationship the same because our separation was inevitable. *I didn't want to miss you, Vania, but I guess somewhere inside I always did.* I tightly took hold of her in my arms and told her I was sorry.

We sat together on a cement bench in the center of the garden listening to the distant music of the wedding band playing inside the reception hall. A gentle breeze swept across the tops of the colored rows of flowers cooling the August air, but it wasn't enough to keep the grayish clouds from blocking the moonlight. *Summer was gone.*

"It's over already," I quietly said to her.

"Yes, it went by fast," she replied.

Either of us suddenly had nothing to say. It was an uncomfortable silent moment that just seemed to grow longer. I stared at the moving shadows moths were creating on the ground as they fluttered around the large glass spheres hanging from the wrought iron post across from where we sat. I didn't know what to say, so I looked at her and smiled, then began singing Jerry Lee Lewis' rendition of "Funny How Time Slips Away." She winced, looked back at me, and asked me to stop singing. I knew I didn't have a great singing voice and felt I needed to do something comical to relieve the tension of saying goodbye.

"What's the matter? You don't like my singing?" I said as I began laughing. She didn't want to hurt my feelings so she didn't say anything at first, just shook her head a little and laughed.

"I guess I just don't like that kind of music."

I laughed even harder when she said this. We both laughed.

"I'm going to miss you, Ian."

"I feel the same. It seems unfair doesn't it?"

"Yes, but I believe there's a reason behind it. It's just the wrong time."

"Will you be visiting your aunt next summer?"

"I don't see why not. So we have next summer to look forward to. We can write to each other until then."

"Definitely," I replied as I took her hand in mine.

We walked the remainder of the path which led back to the reception hall and stopped before the entrance doors. I had a horrible sense of loss creeping into my stomach-- a hollow empty feeling, as if a part of me that was supposed to be there was suddenly removed. I knew then our correspondence would not last. I believe we both knew it. It was

a weak promise. Next summer was a lifetime away-- with everything in between a giant grab bag filled with all the best and worst experiences life offers. It would permit this summer's innocence to gradually slip away and allow it to become a page from the past. I held her tightly, feeling her breasts press against my chest and her hands running through my hair as we kissed. I almost cried when I saw tears swelling in her eyes, but somehow we both managed to smile.

The moonlight reflected off the tiny waves of Sag Harbor Cove as we sat and talked by candlelight on the small screened in porch of her bungalow the evening before the race. I looked out across the water at the warm light glowing from the bungalows on the opposite side as I listened to her tell me how she had earned her Master's while student teaching English to Italian teens.

"My career means a lot to me, and I enjoy it," she said. "My parents, with their old European ways, felt it was my wanting of a career that ruined the future they had mapped out for me with my fiancé. When I ended the engagement, they thought I was crazy. They loved him. He was good to me-- kind, loving, caring and well established, settled in life. But I ended it," she repeated.

"Why did you do it?" I asked.

"Something was missing... I don't know what it was, but it was missing. Have you ever felt like that?"

"Sure," I replied quietly. I thought back to how I would sometimes lie in bed with Tina next to me and just feel so alone.

"I felt I couldn't be myself. Maybe it was all too fitting; maybe he was too ideal." I looked at her and listened in silence as she continued. "I didn't feel it. I loved him, but I wasn't in love with him. Maybe I was in the relationship just for the sake of having one. Can you understand that?"

It's all the same, different but the same, I thought to myself. Why is it you can spend years with a person, then suddenly realize they're not who you thought they were-- you're not who you thought you were? The real person was masked by the excitement and passion of something new. Do you just fall out of love? Are you ever in love to begin with? We're all the players.

"So why come here? Escape?"

"I needed a change. I finally realized I can do that, and that nothing is final."

"He must have been destroyed when you told him," I said as I lit one of Joe's cigarettes from the pack I had stolen earlier. She had a blank stare on her face as if she were thinking back to that day.

"Tears." She looked at me then continued. "But he understood. There was no animosity on either side. We remained good friends."

"It's not often things end that way." I looked out onto the cove and saw only darkness.

"When my aunt died, she left me enough money so that I was able to purchase my home here. My parents finally did get me out of the house." She smiled, "Not in their traditional way," she added and laughed. I loved to see her smile.

I took a long drag from my cigarette, then extinguished it in the remnants sitting at the bottom of the coffee mug I was holding. "So now what?" I asked.

She ran her hands through her long dark hair, pushing it back away from her face before she spoke. "I want to teach

in the States and eventually move here permanently, but I need to devote some time to transferring my credentials."

"What about your family?"

"I'll miss them, but I'd like to get settled into what I want to do and what I want out of my own life. Be true to yourself, my aunt used to say. I'm not asking for much. A job, a little house on the beach, and--"

"Well you have the house on the beach--"

...and perhaps someone to spend my life with."

I understood how she felt, though I didn't have the courage to say it. I couldn't seem to say anything. I knew we had shared feelings for each other six years ago, feelings I knew were present now. Years ago I wanted circumstances to be different. Now... they were... we were... different-- older, more mature, and more practical, both trying to regain the innocence of that summer.

"Do you believe in fate, Ian?"

"I don't know. I believe everything happens for a reason."

"Do you think there's a reason behind you racing and breaking the record yesterday and me moving here and reading your name in the paper this morning?"

"I believe life laughs at you."

"What do you mean?" she said, as she turned her body towards me, moving closer and resting her arm behind me on the back of the cushioned wicker couch.

"It's ironic. You living here... I thought for sure I'd never see you again."

"It's all in the timing," she said as she took the coffee mug from my hand and placed it on the small wooden table in front of us. "Maybe now is the right time," she said quietly. A hint of fear, uncertainty and integrity all entwined together was in her eyes. They were saying everything that needed to be said as they stared back into mine, searching, awaiting a closely shared response. She believed it was all another chance. *A second chance. I want to but I can't, it would never work.* We both slowly began to lean closer when I quickly took hold of her shoulders and roughly pulled her entire body against mine. Our lips pressed tightly together.

I won't do this! I forced myself to break away, still holding her by the shoulders in front of me.

"Ian, what's wrong? Ian!" She stared at me with a questioning look and a glassiness in her eyes.

"I can't afford to lose it," I muttered.

"What are you saying?"

"Something would change. It wouldn't--"

"You're afraid?" She shook her head from side to side and tried to laugh, then looked at me. "Look at what you do-- look at your life-- and you're telling me you're afraid to take a chance. It's not a big deal. I'm not asking for to marry me. I'm not asking for anything." Her words struck the nerves and emotions that held together a sublime memory I knew was unable to be repeated in real life, not after six years; I knew we could never regain what the innocence lost.

I let go of her shoulders, feeling weak and upset for the emotions I knew I had aroused. I thought I saw a tear drop falling from her eye and I couldn't look at her when I spoke.

"Taking a chance isn't the question. It's the outcome it unfolds. In time it would all be the same. I want to keep this different," I said solemnly, still unable to face her. "Can you understand what I'm trying to say?"

"How do you know? You can't think that way. It's crazy. You know what you're doing? You're taking a possibility of something good and tossing it aside, throwing away life!"

I knew I didn't want to change and somehow, she understood this. She looked at me with tear-stained eyes and said, "I understand what you're saying, but I can't accept it. I can't accept this willful choice. I can't accept what you're doing to your life."

We embraced, holding each other closely and tears filled my eyes.

"Nothing is perfect, Ian. None of us is perfect." She whispered in my ear while our arms remained tightly wrapped around each other. I thought back to the words she had said earlier in the evening. *He was everything I would have wanted... but I didn't feel it. I loved him, but I wasn't in love with him. Can you understand that?*

"I just want to hold you," I softly repeated to her until we both fell asleep in each other's arms.

Joe quickly wheeled the bike to our starting position on the track while I walked behind him, trying to affix onto my helmet the safety authorization decals that had been given to me at tech inspection. When we reached our designated spot, Joe finally spoke to me. He put down the kick stand, began to light a cigarette, and looked at me. He knew smoking on the track was prohibited, but he didn't seem to care at this point. My eyes focused on the cigarette as he lit it, then on him as he drew in his first long, hard billow of smoke.

"Fuck 'em," he said. "I've been doing this enough years to know what's safe and what's not. And you! You prick, you," he continued as he pointed his cigarette at me. "I guess I should feel lucky you made inspection. I'm surprised at you. I wanted you to get laid, not move

in with the broad. What were you thinking?"

I was thinking a lot of things I wanted to tell him, but they didn't matter right now. I needed to focus my mind on the track. I was wrong, and Joe had every right to be angry, so I stood there in silence as Joe continued to bawl me out.

"For Christ's sake you didn't even make practice. Who do you think you are, Kenny Roberts, and you should get flown to the track in a fucking helicopter?"

The announcer called over the loudspeaker for us to start our engines. Joe immediately overcame his anger and changed his tone. It was all out of him and over with. He became excited and eager as a little kid when the thunders from the exhaust pipes filled the air. He was my friend, Joe the Guinea, once again.

"Come on, Ian, get your helmet on. We have a race to win!" Joe twisted the throttle twice and held the starter button until I felt the steady vibration of pistons being forced up and down by the explosions existing within the steel cylinder walls. Joe worked the throttle warming the engine as I put on my gloves.

"Remember your tires are cold. So don't go crazy until you're past the first few corners. That includes rights and lefts," Joe shouted. "Here, take the throttle."

I was trying to focus on what Joe was telling me, just trying to focus in general, but my mind seemed as though it were in too many different places. I was getting nervous to the point of becoming scared, because I couldn't gain the control I needed. Joe's mouth moved, but I barely could make out what he was saying,

"Seventy-five degree, right hander-- bridge-- left sweep uphill-- Echo Valley--"

I was in trouble, and Joe had no clue as he yelled a few final words to me, then knocked on the top of my helmet three times for good luck. I began to panic as I watched him walk off the track with the other mechanics and race officials. I thought back to how I had left Vania sleeping on the couch this morning and how beautiful she had looked lying there. I thought back to how I almost didn't leave.

The green flag dropped, as the last few words Joe was yelling to me were finally registered in my brain. *You know the track*, resonated within my helmet and allowed my mind to concentrate on what needed to be done. I was calm and riveted as I eased off the throttle, downshifted, and entered turn one.

“He was everything I would have wanted... but I didn't feel it. I loved him, but I wasn't in love with him...”

My reaction time was slow, and because of it I immediately lost my pole position and slipped back into third. It's okay, though, I thought to myself as I raced along the imaginary lines my mind envisioned on the track. One... two... three... consecutive right banked decreasing radius turns, then into the seventy-five degree uphill climbing right hander, "Echo Valley." It was good as long as I held this position.

It gave my tires time to heat up.

I knew the left side of my tires were still cold as I cautiously entered the first of the sweeping lefts. I could still see the rear tire of the rider ahead of me, and I knew I could catch him by the time I reached the "Carousel." I stood the motorcycle upright for the brief seconds that were allowed as I exited the final left corner positioning myself for the 180; decreasing radius. I would need to start moving in on the riders ahead of me. My acute sense of peripheral vision told me there was no one to the sides of me; however, I had no way of knowing who was behind me. I tightly pulled in the break handle, quickly downshifted, then dove into the turn that seemed to never end.

The rider ahead of me misjudged and began to lose his line. I watched closely, waiting for an opportunity to pass. His bike climbed higher on the track as I remained in position, gently accelerating, hoping to reach him in time to get underneath him. He knew he had entered the turn too fast and began to compensate by leaning further and easing off the throttle in hopes of coming down from the banking. A trail of sparks cascaded against the blacktop as he ground his right side foot peg and exhaust pipe into it, but it was too late. His mistake had already been made, and I took

immediate advantage of it, riding underneath him, then pulling slightly ahead of him as we exited, then entering the short chute that gave way to the final three corners of the first of three laps.

By the time I entered the final right hand decreasing radius and final corner of the course, I tightly held onto second position. No one pulled next to me during the stretch of the 3/4 mile straightaway, and I hoped I was increasing the following distance of the riders behind me as I lay on the fuel tank, holding the throttle wide open. It was time to find the leader.

I followed the course in my mind, keeping the wheels of the bike on the mental lines I drew on the track. I planned, positioned, then smoothly swept through blind corners as if I were a slot car from a toy racing set. I was alive, and everything seemed right. I had no fears at this point. It was just me and the motorcycle-- a simple relationship, with the course programmed in my mind. The entire second lap seemed to go by so quickly that I didn't realize I had completed it until I caught my first glimpse of the leader. When I entered the straightaway, he was only midway across this section of track. I realized I had decreased my time considerably on the second lap and gradually moved in closer on the leader as I caught a glimpse of the white flag indicating the final lap of the race.

He wasn't making any mistakes. Midway through the lap, I was on him. We came out of the final sweeping left with my front left fork tube touching the back end of his stainless steel over and under Supertrapp exhaust pipes. It was getting dangerous, but I didn't want to back off. The short chute was only a few seconds longer and then "The Carousel" would begin for the final time.

He pulled away just enough to get me out from under him, then positioned himself as close to the inside of the track as possible. I remained, about a half a length behind him during our journey through the relentless corner. Though it was risky, I stayed at a slightly higher line than he did. I hoped for an opportunity to shoot underneath and pass him at the very end of "The Carousel" which would lead me to enter the first of the final three decreasing rights. He suspected my motives and rose into my line, then shot down into the first corner. He wasn't letting me pass.

I rode inches from his rear tire as bright orange glowing pieces of metal flew off his motorcycle and into my path. He was pushing hard, and he wasn't going to make a mistake. I had less than two turns and the straightaway to make my move, which I realized would have to be on the outside getting onto the 3/4 mile stretch to the finish. Joe had warned me about passing on the outside in the past. *"It's risky,"* he had said *"If you don't time it just right, you'll be pushed back farther or forced into the wall."*

We entered the final corner following the same line. I stayed about a wheel length behind him. I leaned further, forcing my motorcycle as close to the inside as possible. My right side peg and boot were being ground down together. The heat, created by the friction, began to burn my smaller toes and the side of my foot. He saw me as I just started to creep up on him, and at about three quarters of the way through the corner he moved down to block me. This is just what I wanted.

I speed shifted fifth gear and shot to the outside as we exited the corner and entered the straightaway. I was already beside him on his left side by the time he realized

where I was. We rode side by side with our handlebars occasionally touching, flat out, throttle cables stretched, motors screaming, unwinding every last bit of horsepower. I kept my head down as I began pulling away from him. My body tightly hugged the motorcycle except for my right arm which held the throttle wide open. I couldn't see, I didn't need to, I knew what was there-- *the checkered flag.*

I rolled the bike by the judge's tower to where Joe was waiting. He stood there watching me approach. He smiled, then looked at me seriously. "You took some chance out there today, passing on the outside like that. Do you know that?"

I just shrugged my shoulders a little as if to say something, but didn't. I couldn't tell if he was angry about it or not.

"Well don't you have anything to say?"

I looked at him and laughed. "We won!"

Joe grabbed the back of my neck and shook me, then put an arm around my shoulder, pulling me close to his side, "No, *you* won, Ian," he said and laughed as he sprayed me with the champagne bottle he held hidden in his other hand. We both laughed and shouted as we were sprayed with champagne and beer. Some of the riders and mechanics came over and shook our hands, congratulating us on the race. Other just walked by, looking at the three foot tall gold plated trophy as they passed into the inner pit area to begin loading their motorcycles, tools, and equipment.

After the commotion died down and most of the teams had pulled out of the inner pits, Joe and I walked towards our designated pit area to pack up also. He leaned against the bike, pushing it along pit road as I tried to light the cigarette he had just given me.

"So how was she?" he asked.

I drew deeply on my cigarette before I replied. "She was perfect, and I wouldn't change a thing."

"Yeah, I always believed if you could build a good race motor, you can have a good life."

"So now that you let me in on the secret meaning of life, Joe, you're going to teach me how to build the next motor, right?" We both laughed when I said this.

"You did good out there today, Ian. You're a good road racer, and I know you have the potential to become even better with more experience. If this is what you want to do, you have to make your moves and do it now. Time waits for no one, my friend. Before you know it, you're old like me. You're young yet. Drink in your summer, Ian."

"Thanks, Joe," I replied and put a hand on his shoulder.

"Oh, I forgot," he said as he stopped the bike and reached into his back pocket. "That girl that you spent the night with stopped me on my way to the judge's tower and said this belonged to you." He handed me a small rose colored envelope. "She told me to tell you she knew you would win."

"She watched the race?"

"I don't know. I guess so." Joe gave me a puzzled look, then continued walking the bike along pit road.

"I'll catch up with you," I said as I held the envelope in my hand.

"Take your time."

I tore open the seal of the envelope and discovered a folded piece of paper with writing on it, and a lump in the center of one of its folds. The paper read, *"There is often less danger in the things we fear than in the things we desire..."*

Remember me always, Vania." I unfolded the paper, uncovering a thin necklace with a silver heart-shaped pendent attached. It was a locket with two photographs affixed to the inside. There we were, nineteen and innocent. This is what my memory had become. I read again what she had written. *There is often less danger in the things we fear than in the things we desire... Remember me always, Vania.*



Shinya Himeda

*The illusiveness of time
is brazen by the one
who doesn't know
how to seek what is
not really there at all.
When seeking is ever so hard.*

*Then one finds
a simple thing
to accept as solace
in every tedious hour and day
and perhaps, there doesn't seem
to be enough
gratitude
for the permanence of thoughts.*

*In time, thoughts will heighten
without ever ceasing
to be revealed clearly,
an expectation in need of
clarity,
so every part of you can see
time's discernible imposition
on you and everyone else.*

*The self doesn't discriminate
but it is the thought itself
that does not give in
to those who blindly chose to carry on
with another venerable
and mindless moment.
Moments are stolen by lineal sorrows,
the incurable losses of humility.
And I can't deny that my reality
suffers from disillusionment.*

*Regretfully I obey time,
for the illusion of it
leaves me,
so I can't forget the reasons
why time
does not allow a chance to discover
even the most museful of thoughts,
to forget about what tries to control you
and to disregard the insignificance
of its dictating.*

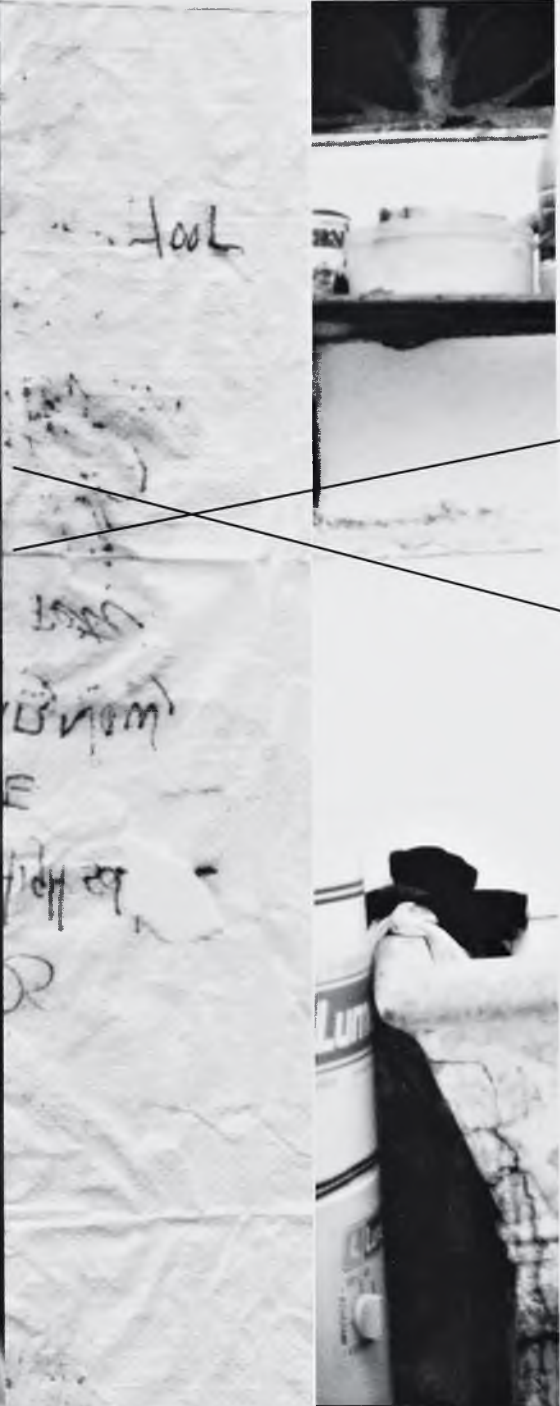
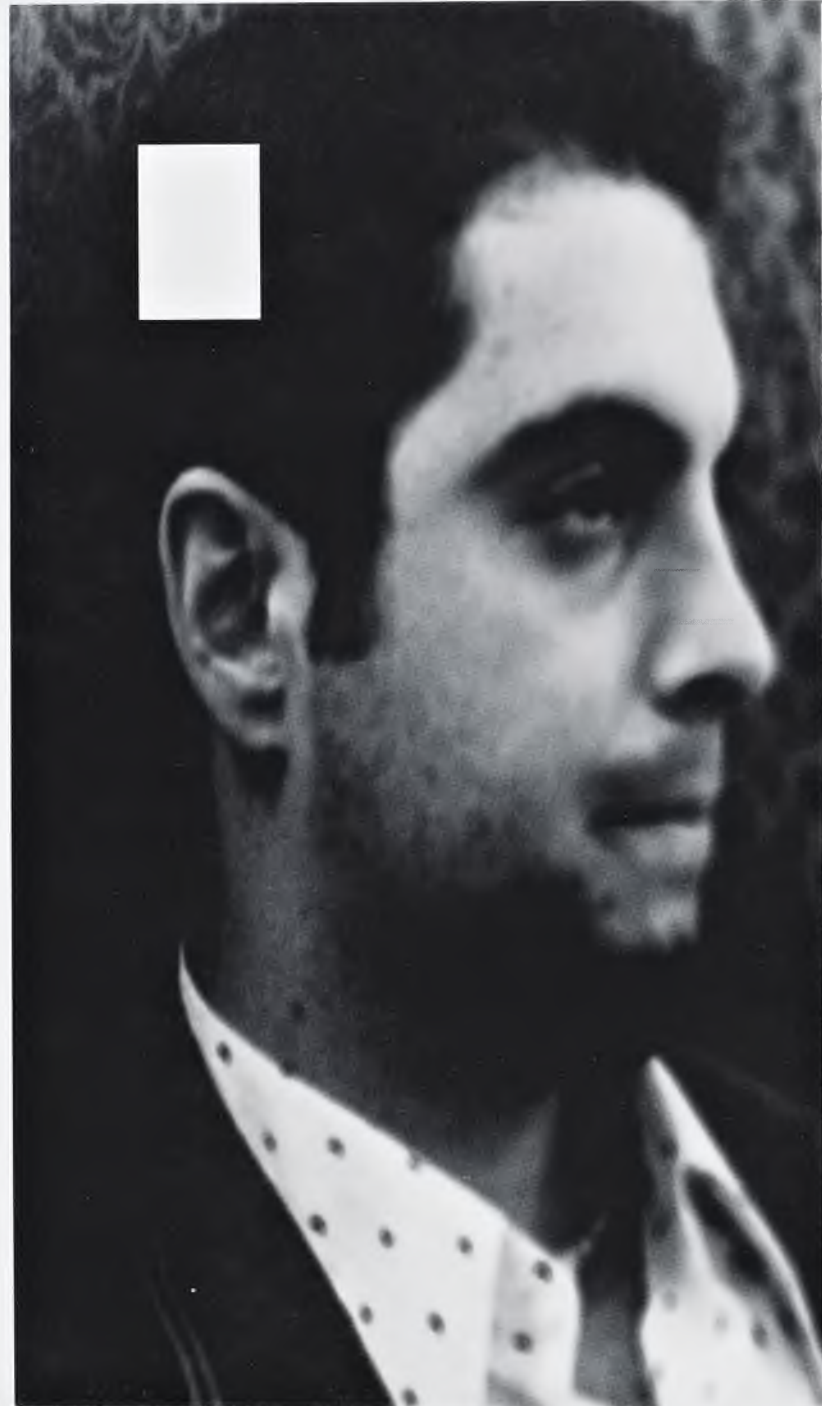
Karla Gumbs



Shinya Himeda

Blue's song 1996: The down tone Busy signal sings sweetness to me-This voice sings to me lonely lullaby-My dreams take form only to freeze away-Mistakes that skip like a broken blues record-It was never about that-Never about what that old colored man sings- It's deeper, goes further-Past the two tone-Past those redneck jazz singers-It's all about those cats, the slick ones on the corner-Talkin that slick jive, puttin on the fake British accents-What do they know about the blues-What do I know-Me the silly ass white boy from the suburbs-What do I know about the blues-Nothin-What do I know about the world-Nothin-Nothin more than those rednecks-Those colored boys-Those smooth talkin rudeboys-I know enough to know there ain't no answers on that vinyl-The turn tables got nothin-Nothin cept vertigo-It's all down hill-But nothin goes down without a fight-Specially me-Skinny blue Irish kid-Holmgang, I go down screaming-Holmgang, to the death-But what do I know 'bout pain-Only those cool cats at the juice bars, smokin cancer can sing the blues-Not me-Not that silly ass white boy from the suburbs-Naw not him-He can't sing the blues-

by: Karl Eckert



Digression

Did you feel anything at all-Was this really all-All you wanted-I watch her undress-Was like she wasn't real to me-I look on-China white skin-Her deviant grin-Oh but she was beauty-Not just now-Then-That first time-On the corner-Alone-I watched from afar-Distance-Emptiness gripped me-Hair unkempt-But clean-Never thought it would go this far-she never wanted to speak-Words meant nothing to her-It was I that needed words-Words of any kind-No matter how empty-No matter how meaningless-Lies-she told me the lies I needed-The lies all had addicted me to-Sex-Dirty sex-Empty function-All the time-Any time I was there- A vessel as to a vampire-Her life was dry-Empty to me-As I watch now- The sins I shall permit myself-China white-The dry empty plate I drink from-Empty is the vessel time has forgotten-Dead is the heart love has left behind-sex is the final digression-

by: Karl Eckert



RED LIQUID SUGAR by Sinan Hepcakar

The garbage cans were filled with trash and the trees were full of birds. The sunshine was bright and so were the bluejays that chirped in the trees. The sewers were filthy, much like the trash inside the garbage cans. The memories of that wonderful day are so vivid with beauty, that I weep everytime I think of the garbage cans.

My friend was a healthy carrot who believed in ghosts. He never dressed as a sailor even though many people accused him of doing so. Although he did dress up as a rabbit. Did I mention my friend was a carrot? If I did, I was lying. My friend was actually a rabbit.

I remember he was acting a little strange that day. He was wearing a sailor's outfit and had a woman with him who was a parrot. Did I mention that my friend was a rabbit? If I did, I was telling the truth. My friend actually was a rabbit. Anyway, he told me that he had just seen a ghost. I didn't believe him at first, but then the parrot confirmed his story. She repeated everything just the way he said it.

It seemed that this ghost wanted to kill my rabbit friend. This would explain the sailor's suit and somewhat explain the significance of the woman parrot. It turned out the ghost was murdered in this town when he was just a little ghost. He was murdered by a rabbit and was seeking revenge on my friend.

I recalled that there was a rabbit that used to live in town, but he disappeared years ago. My friend looked exactly like that rabbit. To make matters even worse, when he moved into town a year ago, he moved into the same apartment as that other rabbit. The ghost had obviously found the wrong rabbit and was about to make a big mistake.

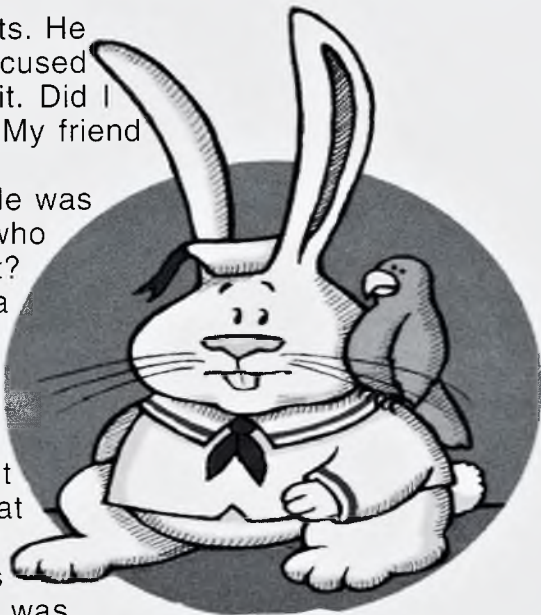
In a courageous rage I convinced the rabbit to bring me to the ghost, so I could clear up all of this nonsense. When we were a few blocks away from the ghost's home, the rabbit fled in sheer fright and I was on my own. I entered the ghost's dwelling and the ghost immediately appeared before me. "What a surprise this is for me! I wasn't expecting anyone. How about I fix you up a tall glass of raspberry lemonade?" said the gracious ghost. "No, no thank you. I'm allergic to penicillin." Up until that point the ghost appeared extremely pleasant, but when I said the word 'penicillin' he looked at me with Evil's eyes and fiendishly whispered "Well then you could try some of my homemade apple pie."

Not for one moment did I trust this ghost. "Yes, sure I'll have some." The ghost brought out the steaming hot pie and cut two slices for the two of us. It was obvious that this ghost could snap at any moment, so I held on tightly to my fork in case the ghost attacked. "Here's a scoop of vanilla ice cream for your pie," said the ghost while adding more dessert to my plate.

"So what brings you here?" the ghost said. I cleared my throat and stated, "Quite honestly I'm here to stop you from killing my friend?" A smile bloomed on the ghost's face and he said, "Now tell me who your friend is and then tell me how you know I'm supposed to kill him." I finished the last of the pie from my plate and said, "My friend is the rabbit and I know you're going to kill him

because he told me so himself, that's how."

The ghost nodded and then said, "You're right. I am going to kill him. Not only because of the fact that he killed me, but because he can strike again at any time. Everyone in this town



is in serious danger, even you." Colors began to fade from the ghost's image, he was leaving. I screamed, "Don't leave! I haven't even told you the whole story. That's a different rabbit!" The ghost was barely visible, "It is safe to stay here. Help yourself to some popsicles in the freezer," he said as he vanished in a ghost-like fashion.

I rushed to the rabbit's apartment and found parrot feathers all over the apartment. I followed the tracks of the feathers to the rabbit's oven. When I opened it the bird was a crisp golden brown and although I was horrified, the aroma of the bird simmering in apple sauce was quite pleasing. That was when I realized that the ghost was right. I grabbed a steak knife and searched for the rabbit.

As I entered the rabbit's bedroom I found the rabbit's carcass lying on the floor. That was when I realized the ghost was wrong. I kneeled beside my rabbit friend and cried, "Who could have done this?" My hands were covered with the rabbit's blood. In my state of madness I rubbed my hand upon my face and across my lips. The taste of the rabbit's blood entered my tastebuds and then into my consciousness. The rabbit's blood tasted like strawberry syrup.

So confused and helpless I felt at that moment as the rabbit's eyes opened. I was frozen and in a state of shock. That was when the rabbit lunged at my neck. I don't remember anything after that except for the one thought that stood motionless in my mind, the ghost was right.

When I awoke I was in the rabbit's kitchen. The ghost was there stirring up a big pot of rabbit parrot stew. He set two places on the table for the two of us. The sweet smell of victory combined with the rabbit parrot stew helped me to my feet.

Not only did the ghost save my life, but he was also cooking me the greatest meal I ever had. We laughed at the dinner table at what fools we were. I laughed hardest at the rumors which turned out to be true. I thought the sailor's outfit was a one time thing, as a disguise from the ghost.

Everyone was right, the rabbit did enjoy to dress up like a sailor. When we were done with our meal I threw the bones into a trash bag and tied it up. I then went to the window and threw the bag out from the three story apartment and watched it as it landed perfectly into a garbage can.



Museum

To watch you sleep
I held the the door half open,
taking advantage of the light,
creeping through the shades
from the moon
reflecting the sun,
sleeping,
as you
with eyes closed
thought quickly
perhaps of me
in light and speech
and eyes and gold
through a setting
you had once thought of
as an impressionist would,
cutting and pasting,
leaving behind a view,
for an eye,
to breath in
or envy at
in splendor



When the moon was in full view
your skin would radiate
yellow and tame
with childish movements
to combat your thoughts
your hair
staying proper
as a Victorian doll's
does
keeping you,
a mannequin,
perfectly mathematic
yet simple and plain

all for me

to watch
through the door
of a museum
waiting for you
to never
wake

C.L. O'Brien.



U-bet

Bubblesinthebubblesinthebubblesinthebubbles

With the beaker in place, you combine the
Essence of sweet mystery and cream

Bubblesinthebubblesinthebubblesinthebubbles

Exacting an ethereal web in the clear well
Of cocoa tainted moo-juice

Bubblesinthebubblesinthebubblesinthebubbles

When the air shaft vibrates violently in the
Squeeze of both thumb and forefinger

BubblesinthebubblesInthebubblesinthebubbles

Beneath, the temple's tunnels nearly rupture,
Rising against the skin.

Bubblesinthebubblesinthebubblesinthebubbles

Systems overload and turbines screech to
A halt. The concocted brew

BubblesinthebubblesInthebubblesinthebubbles

Spills over. The backed-up nose spews
Across the chest abruptly.

Bubblesinthebubblesinthebubblesinthebubbles

Bob Dylan: His Place in Time

By Vincent Vok

Robert Zimmerman, A.K.A. Bob Dylan, became a born-again Christian in 1978. For those paying attention to his lyrics, it should not have been that much of a surprise. His use of pseudo-religious imagery in an era where traditional beliefs were being challenged and new saviors were being embraced with an almost frightening enthusiasm placed him in the uncomfortable, although self-created position of a modern-day prophet.

His beginnings as a pop icon can be traced back to 1961 in Greenwich Village, in New York City. "The original vagabond, the unwashed phenomenon," is how fellow folk singer Joan Baez reminisces about him in the song *Diamonds and Rust* in 1978. The manner in which he climbed to fame is truly legendary, going in a few short years from a chubby, nervous 17 year old with a guitar, to an angry, esoteric spokesman for a misplaced generation.

Dylan obviously did his biblical homework, and much of his popularity was based on the fact that he could turn these subjects around, equate them to contemporary turmoils, and thumb his nose at the original sources; one shining rebel in an era of self-tarnished rabble-rousers. However, no one was prepared for the dramatic change that seemed to have taken place as he threw off his usual complex, metaphoric style of crafting a song for the straight-forward, dogmatic messages which appeared in his fundamentalist work. His following became divided neatly in half. One side followed Bob down that righteous path, while the other shrugged away those albums containing his new message as merely "bad" Bob Dylan albums, and awaited his return to the side of "normalcy".

Those that did follow him were not merely fans trying on a new philosophy expounded by this week's pop hero. Many of these were young Jewish men and women, who not only turned their back upon their religion, but their own families as well. Many fans heard the calling, appearing in the few city blocks which make up Greenwich Village with guitars slung across their backs and the New Testament tucked away in their knapsacks.

In 1993, Bob Dylan and The Beatles, among others, were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Bruce Springsteen presented Dylan with his award with these words:

"The Beatles woke up our bodies. Bob Dylan woke up our minds."

This fact, so astutely understated, reveals not only the historical accomplishments of the people mentioned, but also indicates the social state of consciousness which evolved from the time of peace after World War II under the cloud of paranoia, labeled the Cold War. Rows of cozy barracks, called the suburbs were built on the outskirts of the cities for the returning war heroes and their wives. Amazing inventions created to make work easier, life simpler, and the thinking process less complicated, were available to those who could afford them. Our society had denigrated to a level of physical and mental dormancy while weapons of mass destruction were being built and brandished. All these elements played an important role in the events that brought us to the brink of using them. There was total trust in this benevolent force called the Government, who could either blow up the world or transmit moving pictures into our living rooms. Life was good. The world was rid of a terrible evil, and our leaders could do no wrong.

In 1960 John Kennedy defeated Dwight Eisenhower, a military general, for the office of the Presidency. Optimistic and trustful, the voters felt that it was time to move forward. Kennedy offered his youth, dreams and rhetoric to the cause.

A year before a bullet shot through his head, dissipating his dreams forever, he was a major player in the event which actually set the tense mood for the following years we look back upon as "The '60's". The Russians had tried to put their atomic weapons in Cuba, on our side of the planet, and Kennedy played a mean game of poker as the American people watched nervously, suddenly feeling unsafe and unprotected in the Land of Suburbia. The Russians backed down, but things were never the same. There were sighs of relief, but an underlying paranoia began to creep in that dwarfed the previous decade's McCarthy Era. Kennedy's assassination was the other shoe dropping, and from there we spiraled madly down through Viet Nam, three more assassinations, and youthful unrest. We finally leveled off with the resignation of President Nixon. Then we danced until Reagan.

That youthful unrest was manifested in acts of rebellion against the traditional value system which had apparently allowed everything to break down into the moral chaos that had ruined our world. Everything that was previously reinforced in schools, churches and homes had been undermined by that chaos.

Meanwhile, back at the farm, Elvis, who shook a stick at our sleeping hormones, causing a stir but not yet a movement, had disappeared after being assimilated into the military. Jack Kerouac, who had a movement, thinned out into the landscape, and the baby



boomers became orphaned, lost and hungry.

In the social despair that existed in the aftermath of John Kennedy's assassination there was a generation that lost its childhood and was seeking for a way to make sense out of a world with new and dangerous rules. America's first exposure to the Beatles was the Ed Sullivan show, on the same television screen which a few months earlier had exposed us to the assassination. With exciting music and a cavalier attitude towards those rules, they filled a need left empty by the shameless acts of adult politics.

A little Jewish kid named Robert Zimmerman, from Hibbing, Minnesota, who had been sitting back and absorbing all this suddenly emerged as Bob Dylan, and began to speak loudly in truths which up to this point had only been whispered in scattered prose and poetry by the likes of Kerouac. Suddenly, we were gaining knowledge and learning examples of life not from schools and churches, certainly not from parents, but from the music we heard on the radio, and performers we watched on stage. The enormous success of the Beatles and Bob Dylan inspired others to join the fray, and the hierarchy of public attention shifted from politics and religion to the entertainment industry.

History records that, during extreme conditions of political crisis, leaders often emerge from the masses in an attempt to point the way back to social order. Examples of these would be Jesus, Moses, Lincoln, Ghandi and Hitler. They are usually born poor, some with a divine calling. All have a keen social insight which stands as truth, and offers a direction back to safety. During the '60's, as all established thought was being challenged, Bob Dylan emerged as one of these leaders.

He first attracted the attention of the New York folk community as an unkempt, homeless vagabond folksinger; listening to politics, watching relationships and borrowing melodies and styles to fit his lyrics and performances.

In his first review of Bob Dylan, Robert Shelton, in the New York Times mentions his "... originality and inspiration. All the more noteworthy because of his youth." The culture was becoming "youth oriented", but was still at the point of treating with novelty the wisdom expounded by someone who was too young to have any real-world experience to draw upon. This was the first stage in developing the "prophet persona" which carried him through his career in the ensuing years. The chagrin by adults because of his youth put him outside their loop, and squarely into the counter-life which was slowly spreading throughout the layer of disillusionment felt by the young.

His exposure to a broad audience arrived when Peter Paul and Mary, a mainstream folk group, covered a song he wrote called "Blowing in the Wind." With lyrics simple by today's standards, they nonetheless raised moral and philosophical questions, and then offered a cynical location for the answers:

"How many times must a man look up, before they call him a man?

Yes, 'n' how many seas must a white dove sail, before she sleeps in the sand?

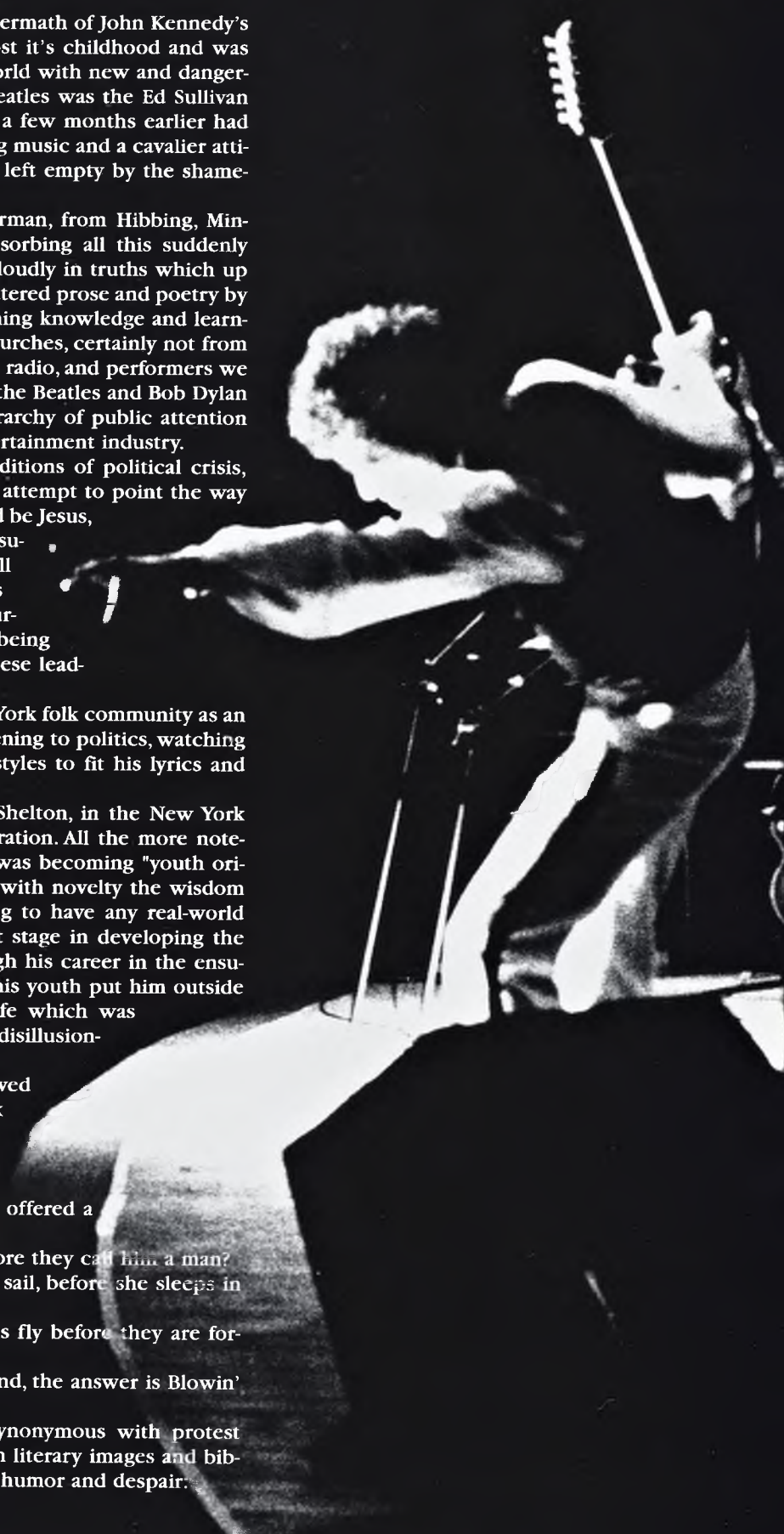
And how many times must the cannonballs fly before they are forever banned?

The answer my friend, is Blowin' in the Wind, the answer is Blowin' in the Wind."

Suddenly the name Bob Dylan became synonymous with protest music. Love and politics were cross-bred with literary images and biblical references, with impeccable amounts of humor and despair.

"God said to Abraham, 'Kill me a son,'

Abe said, 'Man you must be putting me on.'



God said, 'No.' Abe said, 'What?'
 God said, 'You can do what you want Abe, but
 The next time you see me coming you better run.'
 Abe said, 'Where you want this killing done?'
 God said, 'Down on Highway 61.' "

The talent he used to address political issues placed him in the category of Spokesman-of-His-Generation. His talent of drawing upon spiritual images, is the factor upon which some hung the name of "Prophet."

There is a 1965 documentary by Sam Peckinpaw called "Don't Look Back," which follows Dylan on tour in England at the height of his career. In a crowded room full of reporters still not sure what to make of this phenomenon, a female near Dylan leans over and discreetly asks, "Have you ever read the Bible?" as if the bible was a secret that only they two shared. It was a come-on line, but a line one could only make to Dylan.

By the late 1960's the pop heroes were seriously exploring deeper religious thought, partly through their own megalomaniac sense of spiritual self-importance, and partly because of the mind-expanding substances which had temporarily opened new avenues of thought. The Beatles, who had once represented all that was young, had overnight grown facial hair and were behaving like old wise men, meditating at the feet of the Maharishi Mehesha Yogi, a dubious spiritual leader from India. The Rolling Stones, The Beach Boys, Donovan and Mia Farrow were all gathered to garnish his wisdom, or at least make a good show of it. Bob Dylan was seen at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem wearing a Yarmulke.

Jeff Goldsmith and Dickie Sumberg are two people whose lives have been touched by Bob Dylan. Jeff had grown up in the '60's, and was inspired by Dylan, among others, into becoming a singer/songwriter. His experience with Dylan's music was in the context of the civil unrest of that era. He admired Dylan as a lyricist and a musician. He also identified with his Jewish background.

Dickie is a half-generation younger, and was not aware of Dylan's music until the mid-'70's. He wasn't as connected with his family, nor did he have as strong a link socially as Jeff. Bob Dylan's music meant something more to Dickie than just well-crafted lyrics. Dylan's sense of outside-looking-in imagery attracted Dickie because of his own feelings of alienation and mutual rejection between himself and his society. His feeling for Dylan was that he was more of a man with a message, rather than just a musician with an interesting song to sing, as Jeff felt.

"The first time I paid attention to Bob it blew me away. It was 'Blood on the Tracks'; 'Tangled up in Blue'. I just broke up with Janie, and it was like he knew exactly what I was going through. I went back and picked up 'Highway 61' and just couldn't believe the things he was saying. They hit so close to home."

A few short years after Dickie found the essence of Dylan, rumors began to circulate that Dylan was going through some radical changes, even for him; that he had been born again, and was not performing any of his earlier songs.

After Dylan's motorcycle accident in 1965, which nearly killed him, his return into the pop world had been mild in comparison with his original starburst appearance. The music was thoughtful, but was no longer breaking new ground. The most controversy he attracted came from the

tepid "Nashville Skyline", a purely Country love song album. Some had questioned his reasoning in recording a style of music which represented the racist South. Prior to that he put out "Self Portrait," a double album full of bad covers and mediocre originals. Much later, in a Rolling Stone interview he admitted that "Self Portrait" was a deliberately bad album. There was a number of crazy people who were appearing on a daily basis at his house in Woodstock, and this was his attempt to turn them off. Dylan did not count on the fanatic loyalty of some of those that believed he could do no wrong, and that there was no such thing as a bad Dylan album.

He disappeared from the public spotlight shortly after that, and finally returned in 1974 with "Blood on the Tracks." For most artists, this would have been described as a "comeback". However, in Dylan's case, people described it more in terms of a resurrection. By then even the critics had taken to speaking of Dylan in biblical equations. Dylan isn't merely criticized, he gets crucified. In "Bob Dylan, the Illustrated Record", Alan Rinzler, attempting to make sense out of "Self Portrait", describes his efforts:

"One begins to feel like a Jewish scholar, searching for every meaning in every ink spot, every accidental comma of the Bible."

Whatever the context of terms used to describe it, "Blood on the Tracks" was definitely a comeback album. Picking up where he left off before he went madly electric, it is a mature, thoughtful, acoustic album with lyrics comparable to early Dylan standards. one song in particular which stands out with religious references is Shelter from the Storm,

"She walked up to me so gracefully, and took my crown of thorns,

'Come in,' she said, 'I'll give ya Shelter from the Storm.'" and:

"In a little hilltop village they gambled for my clothes
 I bargained for salvation and she gave me a lethal dose."

Here, Dylan portrays the biblical images in the first person, applying them as descriptions for his personal experiences.

Later, in, 1988 when the boxed set "Biograph" was released, a song called "Up To Me" was included, which was recorded in the same period of time as "Blood on the Tracks" and contains a revealing verse:

"Now we heard the sermon on the mount, but I knew it was too complex

It didn't amount to anything more than what the broken glass reflects

when you bite off more than you can chew, you got to pay the penalty

Somebody's got to tell that tale, I guess it must be up to me."

Street Legal, was the album released right before he delved into a more straight-forward, fundamentalist style of writing and worshipping. It was laden with religious metaphors portrayed in the classic Dylan style. By now he was not only comfortable with this imagery, he had come to rely on it:

"I bit into the root of forbidden fruit, with the juice running down my leg"

Where Are You Tonight (journey through dark heat) from Street Legal

The bridge you travel on leads to the babylon girl with

the the rose in her hair.

No Time to Think from Street Legal

"Senor, Senor, can you tell me where we're headin', Lincoln County Road or Armageddon?" Senor (Tales of Yankee Power) from Street Legal,

By the time *Slow Train* was released, Dylan seemed to have emptied his bag of metaphors and was ready to spell out his beliefs plainly, and with no mistake. *Serve Somebody* is a song of choices, for good or evil, God or the Devil. *I Believe in You*, is a declaration of faith.

This album, this deceleration of faith, was greeted in a variety of ways by fans, peers and critics. The musicians which were focused on their craft and looked to Dylan as inspirational more than as a spiritual or social advisor merely shook their heads and debated upon the validity of these songs as "true Dylan" songs, and wrote him off as one more performer who had fallen off the deep end. In an interview with Barbara Walters, even Mick Jagger could only comment: "Religious fanatic."

In a recent conversation with Jeff Goldsmith, he described to me what it meant in the Jewish community when someone accepts the Christian faith:

"To the Jews, once you're a Jew, you remain a Jew. Nothing changes that. To drop your faith and accept Christ as the son of God is a big deal. It is thought of as an act of betrayal."

Betrayal or not, many young Jewish people did just that. Dickie Sumberg was one of those. This is what he told me:

"It was something I felt I had to do. Bob just made a lot of sense out of things for me. It's such a strong, spiritual message. I caught a lot of hell from my family at first. They couldn't understand why I would do something like that. I trust Bobby. He knows what he's talking about, man. You can tell that he's been through a lot. Just listen to his music. The message in *Blowing in the Wind* is no different than his message in *Slow Train*."

The professional critics seemed to take everything in stride. As aloof as ever, John Rockwell, of the *New York Times*, in an article in which he compares Dylan with Debbie Boone, reports:

"Mr. Dylan's new songs don't seem very interesting." He points out that Dylan's style of singing "sounds condemnatory when he's trying to be affirmative."

Robert Palmer, also of the *New York Times*, wrote an article called "Rock: No longer Devil's Music". In it Dylan is paired with Donna Summers in a topic which addresses born-again pop stars. Of Dylan's new music he states merely that the songs are "...musically substantial and among the most professionally produced recordings of his career."

Technically, these were critically acclaimed works, although in terms of sales, it appeared all but the die-hard fans were sitting this particular change of Dylan's out.

In a radio interview in 1980, Dylan said this of his own music of that time:

"I want to write songs that heal. There are a lot of sick people out there, and the media caters to their sickness. This isn't true of only records. It's true in television, movies, books. If I can't write a song that's going to heal in some way, then I'd rather not do it any more. I'd rather be out walking through the woods. Reflecting the message in *Serve Somebody*, he says, "Art can either lead you

to God, or lead you the other way. It don't ever lead you nowhere."

At the present time, Bob Dylan is no longer restricting his writings to fundamentalist beliefs, but writing songs the way he always has, although still not as squarely mainstream as he once was. He is older, and sometimes more tired, sometimes angrier; but angry like a father's anger over miscreant children, rather than the anger of his younger, image-conscious self.

Jeff Goldsmith, is now an accomplished musician and editor of a Folk Music magazine in Los Angeles. He is still a big fan of Dylan's, but listens one album at a time, according to his tastes.

Dickie Sumberg lives and plays music also on the West Coast, in San Francisco. He remains born again, and feels that Dylan's faith is as strong as ever, although it's been over ten years since Dylan has spoken as plainly about his faith in Jesus as he did in *Slow Train* and *Saved*. Dylan has recently released a third volume of *Greatest Hits*, which includes *Serve Somebody* and his latest single *Dignity*. Dylan portrays dignity as an elusive concept in this day and age:

"There was a murder on New Years Eve
Some say Dignity was the first to leave.

"and:

"Somebody showed me a picture and I just laughed
Dignity's never been photographed."

Dylan has been touring constantly since 1988, writing, inventing and reinventing Bob Dylan music. Of a recent show at the Roseland, in Manhattan, it is heartening to read that Dylan, at fifty plus is in "full bloom as a performer." (Aquilante, *NY Post*. 45.) But as another critic writes of the same show, "Dylan has rarely led us down an uninteresting path." (Hinckley, *NY Daily News*. 45.)

Along the way to grown up land, a once little girl stopped to notice. She stopped to notice everything that had passed her along in life thus far. So much had happened, but most of it was within the moment and without much thought. She wondered why it all made sense to everyone else, but never made sense to her. She remembered the doll house that she received as a gift when she was all but a few feet tall. She remembered the stories her grandmother used to tell her about meeting grandpa. She remembered getting her ears pierced for the very first time and how her mom made such a fuss over how pretty her little girl looked. She remembered the first note she received from a boy who had a crush on her in grammar school. She remembered the high school senior prom that she went to with Pat Merman, the most popular guy in school. It all made sense to everyone else, but not her.

On the way to the park one day, she arrived to a path she had taken as a child every day after school. It looked the same, many weeds, overgrown shrubs, bushes, puddles, worn out patches of grass and then the spot. It was the same spot that she had gone to as a kid to meet with her friends for years. It was in a secluded part of the woods that was not used by many, but very inviting towards curious kids who wanted to be away from the adults and explore. It still looked very much the same, especially the tree. The great tremendous perfectly erect tree was still there. She never had a clue as to what kind of tree it was, but it appeared to be like any other tree that a child would simply refer to as, just a tree. There were many leaves hanging and swinging from the branches like little kids on a play set. They all looked the same. It seemed to have grown a bit from when she last visited. She thought back to all the times when she and her friends would climb the tree to join the thousands of identical leaves and see if the people passing by could see them. They always succeeded at hiding away in the tree. Nobody ever saw them. The leaves all looked the same as they did, when they joined the leaves.

Staring up at the branches, her eyes made their way down the trunk to the roots when she couldn't help but notice a great big hole that now sat beside the tree. It wasn't there the last time she was in the park. It was a somewhat deep hole with small traces of roots sprouting out from the walls and then disappearing back into them. It was about four feet deep, with walls of a red-clay color that appeared to be moist from the early morning dew. Along the top were spurts of curly bushes that formed a natural fence around the circumference of the hole. She also noticed small footprints at the bottom that must have belonged to children who had played in it previously. She could hear their laughter and the pummeling of their bodies against the raw earth beneath them. For that moment she became jealous since she didn't have this hole to play in when she was younger. All she and every other young explorer had was the playground or a tree to climb, everybody climbed the tree. If there wasn't a playground nearby, you climbed the tree like any other normal child would.

She glanced back at the tree and then once again at the hole checking around to see if anyone was in sight. It was too early in the day for children to be around and she knew from when she was younger that adults never knew about this place. With that in mind she built up enough confidence and curiosity to kneel to the ground and make her way into the hole. Upon her descent she grabbed onto two rocks for support so she could ease her way down. They were smooth and had bumps on them, but they were firm enough for her hands to hold on to. Making innocent small advances, she approached the bushes. With her left and right hand clenching the bushes, she pushed them aside and penetrated the barrier that separated her from these mysterious new grounds. She crawled face first over the ledge and went down the walls carefully inspecting her surroundings as she slowly descended. Her slow careful motions transformed to haste rapid movements as every next inch lead to a new discovery. When she made it to the bottom she sat down and moaned a sigh of relief and comfort. She sat there for moment and smiled. She had noticed that in the background she heard the voices of adults and a young child not far away. No sooner than the voices were heard, their faces arrived as well. Standing around her peering down was an elderly woman, her daughter and a young girl. They all looked at her, confused, wondering why a grown woman would be in the middle of a park playing in a hole. The elderly woman looked at her grown daughter with a face of confusion. The daughter looked back at her mother with a similar face. It made sense to neither of them.

The young girl looked down to the woman with a face of curiosity. It was similar to the one that the woman had upon discovering the hole herself. And from the hole the woman returned the young child's expression with the same smile she had put on moments before. For the first time ever, everything made sense to her.





Photo by: Tony Torres

Years ago I had a friend
Called "Laughter and Good Cheer"
When things were bad and my luck ran out
He always would appear.

Well, he ain't been seen for quite a while
My faithful chum,
My dearest pal,
and, Oh my God
I wish that he were here.

If I could laugh for just a while
Or think, or sleep, or even smile
I think perhaps your absence
I could bear.

But, as I grow old
The nights grow cold
And I go on, and on,
and on And sit alone and contemplate the end.

Yet, somehow in my heart I know
That when the time comes
You will show!
Laughter and Good Cheer, my DEAR old friend

George Louis Piazza

afternoon basketball
was always a special treat.
we all would abandon our plans
to meet at jay's yard.
the court was large with two beautiful
glass backboards
and even a three point line!
laughter and silliness spread
through the chilly air
and a huff of cold breath
and the sting on our fingers
would remind us
that it wasn't summer yet.
that we had to work
if we wanted to run in the playgrounds
come spring.
a couple of smooth drives
plus a few shuffle steps and scoops
and we were running the show.
beyond the red metal fence
was an entire world
of which we were unaware.
beyond the fence
was our lives
and our problems
and our wants and anxieties.
in the yard
the jumpers would start to swish
through the net
the smiles would spread.
the moves would only get nicer.
each of us knew
that there was no place in the world
like this
there was no feeling like this
anywhere else
or with anyone else.

Jay slung his sweeping hook shot
over his defender's eager fingertips...
and we all smiled.
but the darkness was coming.
pink became purple
as a frosty winter breeze
shook our bones.
the world on the outside
called for us.
spirits lost their fire
and bounces became
erratic
unscripted
and
tiresome.
the light had vanished
and no sooner had the blue shadows
swallowed our entire essence
than a new electric sun
flickered on
from high above us
drenched us in a white glow
Jay emerged from the
darkness and stepped into
our light
the rest of the world
would have to wait
a few more hours.

Adam Padilla



BOTTOMLEYS' ANNUAL OLD TIMERS GAME

It was Bottomleys' Annual Old Timers Game

Quick somebody call the Advance
The last of the ninth and the score all tied

The Young Upstarts had a chance.

The old guys played without a care
There was no way to lose
Their pitcher, Wayne, was on the mound
Relax and pass the booze.

Old Wayne had pitched for many years
Some people whispered "Pro".
He drinks a lot. Still others said,
"You oughta see him throw"

"Why he could strike out Willy Mays,
Pete Rose and Mickey too."
McGyver tells Neil, "It's in the bag,
We'll win this game for you."

Well the first man, Mac, he fanned in three
And a pop to left was two
And Wayne just smiled and raised his beer
And said, "Boys, this Bud's for you!"

But somehow Joey O got on
And Frankie did the same
And Jimmy Fem laid down a bunt
That drove the crowd insane!

Bases loaded, just a single
And we can win this game.
But who? Yes who can win it?
Who can beat this cannon Wayne?

A silence fell upon the crowd
A pallor mixed with fear
A girl stepped into the batters box
What the hell's she doin in there?

A tall and stately figure
With a long and flowing mane
A beautiful girl, our barmaid
But how could she win the game?

Old Wayne just laughed to see the girl
After all he had his pride

He lobbed one in, real nice and slow
And the umpire said, "That's wide."

Yeah, Wayne was near in stitches
As he lobbed the next two in
Three balls, no strikes- Get serious
Do you really think he'd let her win?

Now she smiled at Wayne and Wayne smiled back
As he winged one down the Pike
The batter never moved an inch
As the umpire called a strike.

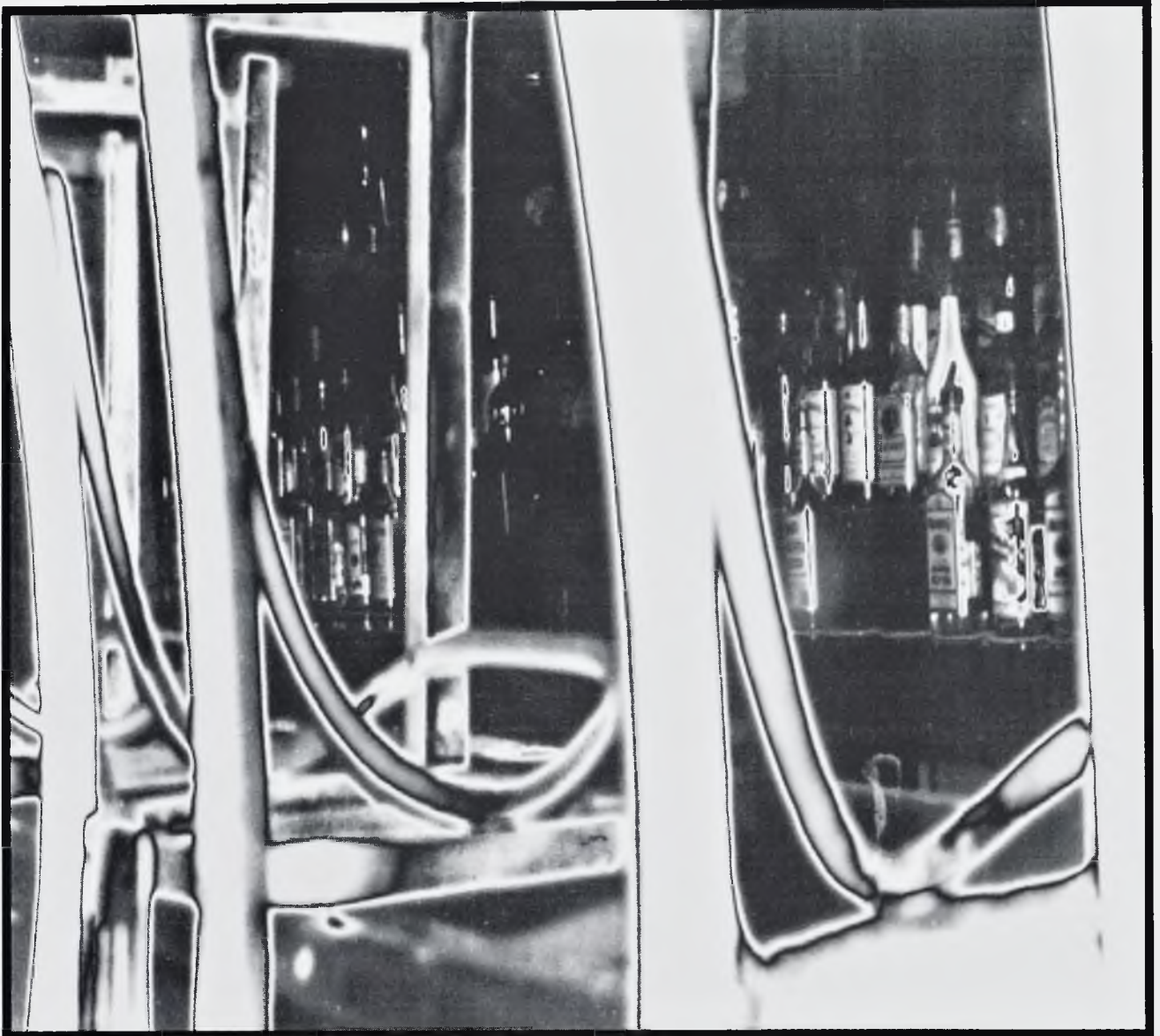
Now everyone is on their feet
What could poor Carolyn do?
The sphere is tossed and now she swings
And the umpire says, "Strike two."

Now everyone is screaming
As Miss Mohan takes her stance
Now Wayne gets mean and serious
The beauty hasn't got a chance.

Yes Wayne got very serious, in fact
He doesn't smile at all anymore
Cause Wayne let loose with his very best pitch
And the umpire yelled, "BALL FOUR".

By George Louis Piazza





Sunday Morning (All About You)

A bar queen in a downtown shelter
shows all sides under neon lights
The Inside-- Mystery!

Early morning hours--
Soaked in smells-- Liquor, nicotine, sweat--
Another night, Midnight theatrics

Cigarette billows cloud sunken eyes
Dim lights cannot hide the loneliness--
she says, she doesn't feel

An empty bed-- she lights
another smoke-- and thinks--
The sun is beginning to rise

by Chris DeAngelis



vision of a solitary figure
at gateway park. 3/29/98 8pm.

Gentle J
tender spirit
I see you

standing apart
your face whipped
by sea air
stinging your shaded eyes
and guarded heart.

aware of desire swells
within you,
yearning to be free,
delivered from familiar pain
and obscured memory.
I glimpse a tenuous unfolding,
a yielding to heart from head

then suddenly
fearful of exposure
to the elements of the
universe you retreat
watching,

I choke back the tears
you do not shed!

Louisanna Scafidi

Til Then

Inner peace I find
along the shoreline of life
with him--
In waves of emotion
I peak--
Crash

Sands of time
fall slowly,
washing away hope,
dreams

Til then
I float,
with inner peace
Loving him

by Carol Brook

Photo by: Jan Weichun



For now...

It will never be the same,
this heart of mine.
Someday, maybe it can be
put to use again.

Removing it from its shell
I place it on the shelf...
dusting it off from time to time,
with half-hearted glee.

Right now it is like the
leaves of a book,
long forgotten in the attic...
its pages crumbling at your touch.

by Ann-Marie Weismantel

Silent screams
Which no one hears
Give testimony to my sorrow
A broken heart
Of broken glass
Is all I have of tomorrow
If I had a chance to live again
I would change it all
Every last memory of sadness and of pain
Would be no more
The tears I hide
Would be dried up by the sunrise
And I would forever live
Within your smile

by Jimmy Zito





photos by Jan Weichun

FLY...

Arms glisten and drip as
you reach up over your head
thrusting your hips forward,
raising your head,
you catch a breath before
you plunge down again,
pulling your arms down along
the front of your body,
power showing in your stroke,
your head reaches up and
slaps the white tiled wall.

by Ann-Marie Weismantel



Photo by: Eugene Grubbs

Pushing Through

Friedrich Nietzsche said, "That which does not kill us makes us stronger."

Chaos.

Conflict.

Order.

Strength.

We have pushed past the weeds, past the hunting and gathering in the harsh green that once held us back,

We have lived through corruption and ignorance, through the holy walks of ever and all Messiahs,

We have played their games:

Name that Messiah!

Believe that Messiah!

Die for that Messiah !'

With minds that push against walls of bone, cages that hold us back from a true form, muscles that ache, we stretch painfully forward toward destiny- knocking down everything in our path. Lies and corruption- tests and trials. We have survived, through them we are stronger. We continue.

Chaos.

Conflict.

Order.

Strength.

We continue. We are stronger.

John Vivolo

Alfred Numeric



by: Mark Erlenwein

Teaching is a tough business. It is a business you know! After 27 years of it I can say without hesitation that it is possibly more stressful than a bad day on the floor at the stock market. But it's a different type of business, it's not "How much money can we make this year?" or "Can we come up with a new and original product to sell." Teaching is a quest for a better future based upon yesterday's past and the present moment through education. Well it's supposed to be anyway. I can't say so for myself though. I would classify myself more as a "language investigator" rather than a traditional teacher. I work in a school for autistic children and have so for the past 27 years. I must say that there isn't a day that passes that I don't question who really is the teacher and the student in autistic schools.

For the most part you're dealing with children who are "non-verbal." There at some times exists a great "communication deficit" between the children their family, friends and the world as they know it. These children rely on other means of communicating. Sign language is pretty common among the children, as is "communication books" and "alpha-talkers" which use pictures that represent life-functions, wants and needs that the children point to in order to express themselves and communicate. These methods of communication are in a monumental way, their only link to coexisting with the world. But when your dealing with autistic children, although there are standard ways of communicating, there arises situations where the child actually creates their own way of communicating. Occasionally, they create their own language with its own set of rules and its own uniqueness. In most instances the child's "self-invented" language somehow adapts to and translates into the traditional English that all American children have learned. These autistic children were introduced and surrounded by English, but they never seemed to make that connection to use it as a means of communicating. Instead, the English language just seemed to become a part of their life they forgot to explore and utilize. These children have wants and needs and things they wanted to say just like any other child, but they have to be taught sign-language or use an alphatalker to make that connection between language and communication. These are the typical type of students that I've dealt with most of my career, that is until Alfred walked into my life.

Alfred was 7 years old when he came to my school. It was about 2 months into the school year when I was informed that a new student would be joining my class. I would say that I had your typical group of autistic children. They were mostly non-verbal with the exception of one or

two "limited-verbal" children. They were all able to communicate quite well and were all textbook cases of typical autistic students. Alfred, on the other hand, had been shuffled through many institutions and schools to try and get him to communicate or even just to get some ground in deciphering his interpretation of language. The records that came with Alfred gave no hint or light to Alfred's cognitive abilities or intelligence. Quite frankly, Nobody had ever been able to communicate with him properly based on the letters and reports that accompanied his educational history. In fact, many attempts and thorough studies were carried out to try and make sense of "what it was" Alfred was trying to say. There was a statement in one of the reports, that although Alfred showed an enormous fondness for numbers, he showed no strengths or outstanding abilities in the area of mathematics and science. Researchers expounded on this statement through a series of examples such as if Alfred was asked, what $2 + 2$ was, he would respond, "3687." Another example stated that when Alfred was posed with a question, he would often respond in a series of "hand-signs" or would rush to the blackboard or a piece of paper and sprawl out a series of numbers, both of which made no sense. Researchers made a comment to the occurrence of the number sequence 4357, which would arise very often as a response from Alfred. In a nut-shell, all the conventional means of conversing had failed to emerge in regards to Alfred and his ability to make that connection between language and communicating. Alfred would be my greatest challenge as a teacher.

From the onset, everything that Alfred's previous teachers had noted were all true. His reactions to questions and class participation all encompassed a response of either "hand-signs" or numbers. It was determined though, that the hand-signs were actually representative of number-signals. For example the number 5 would be represented as a raised hand with all fingers upright, just as the number 3 would be represented by three fingers raised in the air pointing towards the ceiling. But no evidence supported any link of these numbers to letters of the English language or of any language for that matter. Supposedly he can read and has been introduced to books and magazines. His previous teachers have tried to teach him English and have exposed him to the rules that are related to the English language. They all reported that he gave no response or even an utterance of an English vowel or consonant. His parents backed this up as well. They stated that he would react the same at home as in school. "Just numbers," his parents would say, "he always would respond with some type of number sequence."

I began to notice in class that Alfred did have a consistency to his responses. I would test out some of these consistencies by repeating certain questions frequently to see if the response was always the same. As I suspected, they always were. Two plus two always equaled 3687 and whenever Alfred wanted to participate he would write out or sign 63. It also appeared that whenever Alfred was unsure of something he would respond with 4357 just as his previous teachers confirmed. This "4357" response also occurred when he seemed to want something, but I could never figure out what it was he wanted. Despite the frequent misunderstandings, there were always well defined and consistent relevance to Alfred's responses. Each number or number sequence, whether it was hand-signed or written, was connected to a want, need or thought that wanted to be expressed. The only problem, however, was that all logical connections between numbers and letters were not assembling in order for letters to make words, and words to make sentences. That is unless these numbers were really codes that elicited a definite function instead of a word, but based on what?

Over the next couple of months I became friendly with Alfred's family, especially his mom Denise whom I thank dearly for her help and inspiration. I spent some time after school on certain days at Alfred's home to observe him in a family environment to try to make that "number/language" connection. Alfred seemed to communicate well with his family at a very basic level, especially his mom. The necessities that a 7 year old needed were easily understood by his family when he'd express them. It didn't seem that Alfred's family tried too hard to decipher his mysterious language. They appeared to have accepted it for what it was and never questioned or tried to learn from it. Although, Alfred's mom always tried to make sense of what he was trying to say, and never for a moment was less affectionate because of the miscommunication that existed. To pass the time, Alfred did many of the same things that most children would do. He played with his toys frequently, especially his calculator with the mini-printer built in and his toy phone. He didn't have any friends to relate or talk to, just the members of his class and his family. Characteristically he radiated intelligence but lacked the ability to communicate effectively. I must also admit that he was certainly more mild tempered than any of the other students. At this point I was really beginning to wonder if perhaps he could speak, would he still reflect the tendencies of a typical autistic child? There was the possibility that Alfred might have just had a language learning deficit all along, and his autistic characteristics were just the result of a lack of the ability to communicate.

Throughout my observance of Alfred I kept a very intense journal based upon everything that I saw and thought about Alfred's situation. Every detail that I could remember from the classroom to the house visits were entered into this journal. Every number combination and sequence that Alfred ever wrote or signed I entered as they occurred. After about 2 months worth of entries, certain events that occurred daily were beginning to elude me to my answer. Then one day, one of those number sequences turned into a word. It occurred to me after a visit to Alfred's house one night that I had left my wallet on the dining room table. I was in the middle of reviewing the journal when I realized this and decided to make a call to his home and tell his mom to bring it with her tomorrow. At that time I was trying to make a correlation and some sense out of

Alfred's number combinations for the millionth time, especially the "4357" sequence. Trying to do two things at once, I lifted the receiver while reading and tried to dial Alfred's home number. This I botched up several times always hitting the wrong number. Sensibly, I stopped reading with the 4357 still stuck in my mind as I began to dial the correct number. As I looked at the keypad on my phone, I paused for a second and looked at the letters above each number. And that's when everything clicked. 4357 spelled help. Alfred was taking the numbers from a telephone keypad and constructed words based upon the corresponding letters. It all finally made sense. This also explained his fondness for the calculator and toy phone that he played with every day. He was learning words and using the calculator to write and print them out. It was truly very ingenious of him. Instead of calling the house I decided to decipher the rest of the sequences which took most of the night. I wanted to be able to go to class the next day and surprise Alfred with a response he could understand.

The next day in class was the most rewarding day of my life. My hands were sore from practicing the hand-signing sequences from the night before. I got to school early that day and prepared for Alfred's arrival. I made flash cards with the number sequence on them and their meaning right next to them so I could easily refer to them as needed. I had also written a letter to Alfred in his numeric fashion explaining to him that I figured out how he communicates and that I had wished to help him out. When Alfred walked in that day he had my wallet with him and the first thing he did was bring it to me. As he laid it on my desk I looked at him and said aloud as I simultaneously signed, "84269." That spelled "thanx." Alfred looked at me strangely for a moment and was quite surprised. I proceeded by signing to him "how are you doing." Once again he stared at me with a blank face as if chills had frozen his expression. He finally signed back to me 3463. "Fine," he signed as he walked slowly and curiously to his desk. And from that point on there was never a misunderstood moment between myself and Alfred again. When his mom came to pick him up that day I explained the joyous news to her and she cried and thanked me many times. Alfred was starting a new life that day, and she couldn't wait to get home and share the news with the rest of the family.

In the near future, after that day, Alfred was able to join the rest of the world to an extent that most autistic children never really get to do. A device was created for Alfred that would allow him to type in his number sequences which would be converted into electronically generated spoken words. It was similar to an Alpha-Talker but its communication capabilities were virtually endless. It turned out that Alfred was autistic, but not to the severe extent that was believed. He was a very intelligent young man and showed great potential to one day be able to live on his own independently. This was not the norm for autistic children by no means. It has been a while since I've seen Alfred in person, but we keep in touch through e-mail. Ten years later I believe I've perfected the language that he created so long ago. It has also been the subject of book I wrote not too long ago based upon his language. Alfred's silent voice had come to coin the phrase "Alfred-Numeric," the name of the book. And on the second page of that book there was a message specifically for Alfred, otherwise known as the dedication, it read: 84269 832437 Thanx Teacher. I know for sure now, I was the student all along.

LIONS

If lions are masters of all the beasts
And eagles have domain in the sky
A young man might ask with a heart pure
"Where does that leave you and I?"

Well, the Bible will tell you
That man above all
Was given the right of dominion
I really don't think that God decreed this
It was probably just one man's opinion

You see lions are regal and keep to their task, reproduce and so
lend to their name and eagles are free to go where they please
Not a man can make such a claim

But man in his wisdom
Can decide how to act
What is natural he can divert
Armed with his wisdom, can change everything
He can think, he can love, he can hurt

So man with his knowledge
And the power to think
Can assume a dominant air
But eons from now, when man is no more
only eagles and lions will share

All the joy and the magic
That God meant to be
All the pleasures he meant from the start
Yes, they will survive above man and all else
'Cause they had just one task from the start

So the answer, young lion is to be free to fly and think not of
sorrow or pain Or yesterday's hurts, or tomorrow's demands
And the wind will blow free in your mane!

Yes, the wind will blow free in your mane!

George Louis Piazza

after the storm
into the potholes
rolling clouds

descending shadows
fill imprints
where you stood

NO
PARKING
FRIDAY
POLICE ENFORCEMENT

heat of a summer dusk
deserted storefront sidewalks
moment in childhood

slender legs
high heels and nylons
storefront mannequin

by Maury Silverman

OMEGA, GENESIS

Whispered promises float away on the breeze,
And the stars and moon and sun wonder, and wonder,
Where is this luxury that was promised to us all?
The shadows engulf you, why do you stay in the darkness?
Are you evil? Or are you playing with me?
The dark skies rage against the dying breed of life,
And we do nothing. How is it that we care nothing at all about the
Lives and deaths of loved ones?
We stumble still, forever reaching out to the
Shattered dreams of the Old Ones, and with despair we scream.
I beg of you, I plead with you, come, you, you, and you, join with me in the revolution,
Rage with me, let us all rage against the ancient creeds, the traditions, and let us all
dance
Upon the Temple of Life itself.
Let us rejoice, for all there is, people with the deadened eyes of depression.
Let us shout, for we live! Oh, to be alive, to smell the air, the freshly cut grass, and
The dazzling colours that confound us still.
Come.
We can still live.
Come.
Hold your loved ones tight, never to let go. It might not have to come to an End.
Come.

||

The hollow breathing of the dead in the parade haunts us still,
For we all dwell on our starving dead, and yet do nothing.
Come, and watch with me the parade of the dead children,
Never ending, the snake of immortality coils around us and
Flickering tongue tickles the ears, so that chills wrack against
Our frame. Eyes gleaming in the darkness, the Lady in a
Shroud prays of the end, and the new beginning. The dark
Skies cry for us all, clouds bring messages of the gods,
The creeping silence deafens and confounds all.
Panicked chaos reigns, and the angels sigh.
Teardrops fall in place,
And so it Ends.
And so it Ends.
Ends.
Cry to heaven, renounce all conformity, and rejoice,
For life is yet again at an end.
Cherished memories shatter, and the men sob,
Abandon all hope, and rejoice, so that we may live again.
And so it Ends.
Stars watch, the Daystar reaches out to caress us with assurances.
Swirling secrets revealed, bringing us to our knees,
So much like an orgasm that we gasp,
With joy and despair, we wonder and wonder and
Wonder.
And so it Ends.
Do we dare dream? Do we dare wonder?
I dare not dream, for the devil has appeared countless times,
And holding me in a tight grip,
Whispers of how I will die, of how out of my pointless life nothing
Comes. Nothing.
Like a fine lavender glove, the mist engulfs me, and the star I wished
Upon dies.
Come and walk with me, and I will show you
Fear in the eyes of an innocent babe, for in this world,
Dreams shatter, and unflinching reality grips us all in a tight vise.
Where the old are ashamed,

And the young corrupt at such an age.
The wind whispers of the end, the Crow croaks, The world has
Moved on. The world has Moved on. Moved on.
And so it Ends.
And so it Ends.
Come

III

In the tomb of Time, yesterday dies.
In the womb of Time, everything lies.
Old ones stray in the tomb of Time, forgotten.
Strangers wonder in the womb of Time, anticipated.
Happiness and sadness tantalize all that wishes to live.
Fantastic miracles induce the imagination to new heights,
Fragile consciousness lingers on dreams that never were, and
Hatred festers in the most pure of all, and discovers sadness.
Morals deteriorate, and chaos takes over.
Come, tell of the History of Things to Come, whisper them into my ears,
As I walk through the streets, shadowed whispers hound me,
They whisper, moaning, The world has Moved on. The world has Moved on. Moved on
And I walk, with the air of depression about me like a shroud,
The streetlights flicker, and I realize, we live a life of denial,
Where blood is shed on the ground, morning glories grow to
Sweeten the air, and we turn our knowing eyes away.
Dust motes swirl in the lights of the street I walk down,
Unbidden fantasies tantalize, and I come across the dark tower
Within the field of roses, drifting soot clogs the air, and desire rushes over me.
And so it Ends.
Ends.
Come.

IV

The Apocalypse comes, and trembling, we watch,
Lamenting the deaths of some, the labyrinth in which we wander,
Forever lost in, chortles behind every corner,
Gasps of horror from behind,
Maleficent forces fondles the unknowing, the
Utopia dreamed of melts into obscurity, blasphemy on every lips,
Sacilege in every move, jaded seers bear witness and
Tells of the Oracle to give hope to the despairing.
Vicious reality numbs the mind of all knowledge, and the air is heavy with despair as we
Dream of luxuriant life never to happen, the petulant whining of the spoiled disgusts,
Languid children lay in the gutter of the streets, where
Lascivious prostitutes promises of a brief glimpse to Nirvana.
In our reverie, we see our idyllic dreams, and moan, for want, the cadence of the
Music rising and rising,
(sin no more, in the name of the father,
and ye shall walk through the valley
of the shadow of death with no fear)
Ominous tones of deceitfulness to lend visions of horror.
The clarion music of the unknown beckon to the wanderer, and he follows.
In the gloaming he set off for his travels, and lived to die.
Cruel secrets of all kinds, unveiled, shock the unsuspecting,
And cries fill the air, sweet music to the ears of the demons.
In the midst of the Maelstrom, stands the black man
Laughing of the end to come.
And so it Ends.
Ends.
The world has Moved on.
Come.



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