

THE LITERARY & ART MAGAZINE  
OF EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

# REBEL

1991



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cover art:  
Kiyomi Talaulicar  
**It's Just a Matter of Skin**  
mixed media



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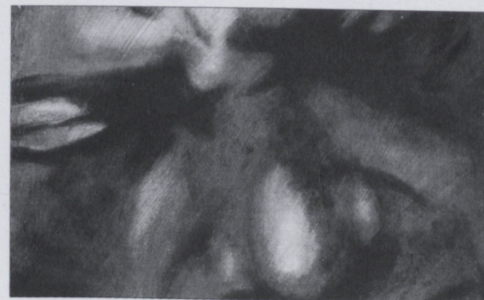
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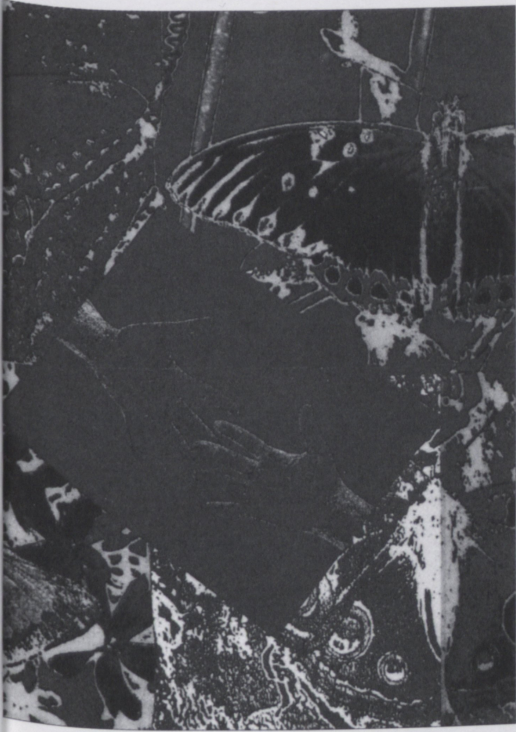
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Lauren Schiller  
1669 E. 9th Street  
intaglio



## Pura Vida

Standing in the middle of rain  
like hard white lines drilling earth,  
we mourn the death of our bus,  
and stand stranded on a hill  
somewhere in Central America.

At least there is diversion—  
*Salon El Descanso*, the sleepy bar.  
Inside a tico pleads for love  
with a shot of RonRico on the side.  
His Spanish is chopped and searching  
like an exchange student's,  
but his old buzz penetrates  
deeper than we have known.

Later, chickens  
cluttered with mud  
strut and heckle us,  
the gringos performing a meager merengue  
under the influence  
of rum and boredom,  
under the breezing clouds,  
under the weather.

Behind us, dogs chase  
in ever-widening circles,  
a distant scream travels the humid air.

We see, for the first time,  
how the road plunges  
into the enigma of fog.  
And I listen,  
in the cloud's low drift  
for the sound of a smile,

that slight smackle of lips  
which tells me of your small,  
perverse joy.

Doug Smith

## Coming Out After Two Weeks Illness

I make it to the end of the gravel drive  
then slowly cross the dirt road where  
the mailbox grows up from the ground.  
As I lean on the pasture fence  
horses snort into the mid-afternoon sun  
leaving shadows  
where their heads weave in and out  
of the overgrown grass,  
and our white house is hidden by the hilly lawn.

Until they sing,  
I'm unaware that the birds have come,  
settling in the red maple at the edge of the yard.  
They startle me, their voices ringing,  
the breeze lifting my dress,  
dust clinging to my bare feet.  
The mailbox opens under pale hands to find  
a postcard from Australia.

On the front a brown beach glistens with rows  
of busty girls in tiny rainbow bikinis.  
White hotels rise in the back. And scrawled amidst  
the postmarks  
Hi Deb, Smile. Life is good, Kate.

Deborah Price Griggs

## Guys and Dolls

When I was five, I pitted  
Girdled protection against bridled possession,  
Sided less often with cigaretted  
Rings circling air with choked  
Smoke. By six, I learned by rote what Pink  
And Blue stood for. Still, brot-

Hers tangled in the floor, brought  
Frustrations to stage: we pitted  
G.I. Joe against Ken over the pink-  
Less triangled slope we'd kill to possess.  
Barbie just sat there while we choked  
Each other, used cigarettes

For swords we lacked. Even then cigarettes  
Were phallic, even though Dad brought  
Symbols to us much later. We choked  
On our laughter, thought it was pitiful  
We didn't possess  
Knowledge of things pink,

Freudian or virginal. After all, we'd prick  
Barbie's *unsex* with those cigarettes,  
Then lie back as we positioned  
Her on top, cheap whore in a brot-  
Hel. In the imagined moistness of her *unpit*  
Joe always smoked, never choked.

But Ken, the pansy-man, would choke  
At the slightest quiver of Barbie's *unpink*.  
With our very-young eyes, all Blue, we'd pret-  
End that she liked those cigarettes  
Crushed against her plastic pelvis: it brought  
Her to her knees, a new position.

After all was done & done, the position  
We held was this: Ken would always choke  
Due to our flat-footed realities. But brought  
from deep within moist, pink  
Layers of imagination, I knew *my* cigarettes  
Would stand firm against her fancied pit.

And if I did choke, it was *her* fault, *her* pit  
That wasn't positioned correctly. Not *my* cigarette  
Failing to bring her fleshy color to bright pink.

Joseph P. Campbell

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Scott Eagle  
**Fish Boy**  
Intaglio



# SECOND STORY

By Susan Ambert

“Problem?” I had to speak loudly over the noise of the traffic. He turned his head with a surprised look.

“What?”

“I asked if you had a problem — is there something I can help you with?”

He inched along the ledge toward me out of politeness, and looked down at the street below.

“Thanks . . . I think I’ve got it covered from here.”

“Well, O.K.,” I said and turned back to the television. The commercials had ended and my soap opera came back on. That day was a Wednesday so the whole thing was pretty boring — they always keep the good stuff for Fridays so you’ll be in suspense all weekend. I kept waiting for my favorite character, Court McNeil, to appear. He and Cynthia were being held prisoner in some fictional Central American country that week, and I was kind of hoping Cynthia would be executed or something. She’s such a whiner and doesn’t deserve a guy like Court.

The soap was really bad, and I was just beginning to look forward to the commercials when I realized I hadn't eaten anything all day. I grabbed a box of pop-tarts off the shelf and went back to my window seat. That window is my favorite thing about the whole apartment. The frame is really big and the bottom of it, which is only about eight inches off the floor, extends into a sill big enough for me to stretch out on and still leave room for my house plant. I love to leave the window open as far as I can to let in fresh air. It would all be very picturesque except opening it also lets in the noise — police sirens and awful music from radios in the park across the street — and from where I sat that day I could see a man on the ledge.

Noticing his lightweight dress clothes, I called to him.

"Don't you need a sweater? It's a little cold out there."

"I didn't plan to be out here for long, and if it's so cold why are you sitting at an open window?"

Good question, I thought. I didn't know what to say to that so instead I just sat there. I didn't care if he wanted to be alone. In my opinion, if you're standing on a ledge then you're asking for an audience — and this was lots more interesting than the soap opera. Finally, I thought of something to say.

"Pop-tart?"

He must have stared at me for a full ten seconds. I waved the box.

"I'm not going to eat this other one."

"What kind is it?"

"Um — blueberry."

"Sure." He scooted over to my window, and I handed him the other pop-tart. He nibbled contemplatively at it for a minute and then offered me his hand.

"Name's Michael Adams."

"Hi," I said. "I'm Jane Elliot."

"Nice to meet you, Jane Elliot," he said, a touch sardonically. "And you're right, I should be wearing a sweater, it's just I figured that with my brains spattered all over the sidewalk I wouldn't be a pretty sight anyway."

"Gross," I said, looking at the sidewalk down below. "Considering that this is only the second story, I don't think your brains would spatter though . . . unless you did a swan dive, maybe."

He looked embarrassed.

"Right again. Guess I should have researched this art more thoroughly."

"You can try again tomorrow from higher up. In the meantime, why don't you go back to your apartment — you're the one who just moved next door, aren't you? — get a sweater and then come back over here the normal way so we can be properly introduced."

I don't normally invite over total strangers, but I was just in a weird mood that day. The whole of the morning (before my soap opera) and most of the previous night had been spent on my newest piece which I call "Portrait of the Artist's Daughter." The fact that I am childless is not a hindrance — in fact, I find it reassuring. Nobody can ever say it doesn't look like her. I felt bad watching Michael creep back on the ledge to his window, but I didn't want to just invite him to hop in my window. You never know when a seemingly decent guy can turn out to be a weirdo.

By the time he arrived at my door, freshly scrubbed and clad in his same outfit only with a sweater and tennis shoes, I had thrown my dirty clothes into the bedroom, turned off the television, and was working on a salad for lunch. He sat down at the kitchen counter and I handed him a tomato to cut.

"Suppose you tell me why you wanted to turn yourself inside out on St. Paul Street," I suggested.

"All right, but you won't believe me."

"Somehow, I think I will," I said and looked him straight in the eye to show that I was sincere. I already felt like I'd known him for years — he was one of those people that you could swear you'd met before.

"I had a job interview today."

Ick, I thought. A job story. Well, at least his girlfriend didn't dump him.

"But what really started it was last

night my girlfriend dumped me.”

I picked up the fork from where I'd dropped it and threw it back in the sink for a rewashing.

“Well, she wasn't really my girlfriend — just this person from work I've been seeing. Her name's Linda. Last night we went out to eat and right in the middle of everything she told me she couldn't see me anymore. Well, I thought she meant that the restaurant was too dark, so I jumped up to find the waiter to bring us another candle, but when I got back she had left. There was no sign of her left except a napkin with “My Place” written on it.”

“That doesn't sound too bad,” I said.

“That was the name of the restaurant. I didn't know what to do. I paid the check and went home to call her. When she finally answered, she told me that she can't go out with me because she doesn't respect me. Linda said that when she talks to me she gets the feeling that I'm not all there. She called me an . . . ‘Ozone Ranger.’ So of course I got mad and told her that at least I have some creativity and don't balance my checkbook for fun . . . .”

“Not smart,” I said. He ignored me and continued to chop the poor tomato into tiny little pieces.

“So she said that creativity wasn't much use if it never took the form of something tangible and that she could bet I didn't know the Pythagorean theorem.”

“And what did you say?”

“Nothing. I hung up.”

I stopped breaking spaghetti noodles and raised my eyebrow at him.

“I don't know the Pythagorean theorem. This is done.” He sprinkled the tomato bits into the salad bowl. “Mind if I play your piano?” He walked over and tried a few opening notes of “Moonlight Sonata” which was the piece that was sitting on the lid. I had been trying to play it for the entire week, but I don't read music very well.

“So what about the interview?”

“Oh, that was for a promotion and I didn't get it. I was doing really well until the last part. They asked me a word problem. ‘If Train A is moving due South at eighty miles per hour and Train B is going West

. . .’ — one of those.”

“No way!” I said.

“Way,” he countered. “I hate math.” He struck a few more ominous chords.

“If you'd jumped, you would have been one more statistic,” I said. “You would have become what you hate.”

Michael paused a moment and then looked up at me with a smile.

“Right again, Jane Elliot. I don't think I really would've done it.” He eyed the big dish of spaghetti I had made.

“You should find a better way to deal with your aggression. That's why I have a piano. Would you like to stay for lunch?”

“Thanks. I wish I'd known you were going to ask me before. I wouldn't have put all those tomatos in the salad.”

He grinned and struck a horrible discor “I hate tomatos!” he told the piano. **91**

Carol Torrell

**Cat Tails , Doughnuts and Cinnamon Rolls**

charcoal

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Eric Olsen  
**Untitled**  
charcoal

### Nightfall

The shy current of dusk  
Washes away the voice of the sun.  
Wind suspended like a feather searching  
Clouds catch their breath in slumber,  
Shadows climb in cool, slow strides  
Settling into the warm cleft of the meadow.

Through the dim veil of solace  
A lowly pigeon pauses  
Perched in silhouette  
Nestled against cold brick.  
A winged reminder that all life  
Must come  
And rest.

David C. Behrens

Karen Jones  
**My Shadow Flies**  
xerography



SPRING FALL

### The heat of the moment

When you killed your best friend today,  
I saw you.

Greedily you slipped behind him, pointed your tiny finger  
and emptied its chambers a dozen times into his heart-  
pakow pakow pakow pakow pakow pakow  
pakow pakow pakow pakow pakow pakow

He giggled as he spiraled dramatically to the ground,  
his brown and green finger-painted face contorted,  
his body wriggling in the cool, damp Bermuda grass.  
That night, I saw you two under the streetlight you had shot out  
with an air rifle, shuffling through the bits of splintered glass  
while the stars arched silently above.

And there I was,  
halfway around the world,  
looking up at the emptiness of a foreign sky, the stars dying  
in the glow of a smoldering village three clicks north in the jungle,  
smoke rolling skyward like a pitcher pouring water upside down.  
Fumes from the Napalm scorched my lungs  
the way the realization of it all burns my brain.  
He lay at my feet - no older than yourself,  
with a rifle in his hand - he lay there quiet, still, and cooling  
as the ground became soggy and red with his blood.  
It only took one shot.

Joey Jenkins

## Wooly Worms

On the phone with you, Mom,  
I realized that at this point  
in your life - I mean -  
when you were my age  
24 almost 25,  
you carried a girl on each hip,  
had a home in Connecticut  
and a husband at work.  
Me, on the other hand  
24 going on 25,  
I still have a bookbag,  
a 1 bedroom apartment  
and a dog.  
You said my sister  
told you the other day  
you were getting old.  
Do you still remember  
pocketfuls of wooly  
worms from the woods  
in the back yard?  
Spread out all over the kitchen  
table. All of them wrapped  
in warm winter jackets.  
And you explaining  
which ones would predict  
and survive  
the winter ahead.  
I wonder Mom -  
that is, I wanted  
to ask you,  
Mom  
Are you - I mean -  
are we  
Getting old.

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Karen E. Beardslee



*Burgundy  
Plum*

By Gillian Ashley

**E**mma's sixteenth birthday party struggled on even after she and I left the wine bar and relocated in the park. The night was cold, and the trees dripped with old rain. Leaves stuck to Emma's black wing-tips, which she dangled off the foot-bridge.

"Ems, please. Let's take a walk and you can tell me all about it first. All right?" I had to be careful with her. The vat of Grolsch she guzzled back at the bar had lubricated her temper and self-pity and made her dangerous.

"But I want to show him! It'd be bloody funny if he found me all mangled up under the bridge." She giggled and brushed the front of her floppy brown mohican out of her eyes with an argyle gloved hand. It was only a four-foot drop, but that wasn't the point.

Emma wasn't always drunk, or even frequently drunk. But it was only when she was drunk that she needed me. I watched her teetering there, slouching to see the ground between her knees. She was wrapped up in warm clothes of her own counter-fashion, and the image she achieved was intriguing. "Toby is a self-centered jerk," I said. "You knew that all along. So come on, let's go for a walk."

"Yeah, I suppose," she said, and

poured herself back onto the footpath. Emma the Outrageous and her sidekick Maggie walked into the dark wet park until the lights of the wine bar dwindled out of sight. But the path was an umbilical cord attached somehow to its candles and half-lit corners and smoky anonymity.

A yellow sequin of a streetlamp hovered before us. Emma tripped over things that weren't there. Once my eyes adjusted I could see the concentration in her face. Her small teeth were stained brown from the penicillin she'd had as a baby. Right now they were biting into her lower lip. "Do you think I did the right thing?" she asked.

"Well, that's up to you. What do I know? I just think Toby is a pig for making you feel so bad. If he's willing to let you run off all upset, then--"

"I'm not upset!"

The smell of beer on her breath and the odor of aging leaves were thickly sweet together. I could hear her stumbling beside me. Step, step, stagger, drunken giggle, step. . . . I took my hands out of my pockets so I could catch her when she fell.

"Bloody lovely sweet sixteen, isn't it," she said.

"Sorry," I said, and I really was sorry. "We'll celebrate at my house later. I wasn't going to tell you, but I baked you a cake. Happy birthday!"

"What sort?"

"Strawberry, your favorite." I smiled at myself for remembering that.

"But my favorite's chocolate chip, silly! . . . Thanks, though."

"Oh." I put my hands back in my pockets. (They were cold.) "You're welcome."

We reached the streetlamp. Emma drove a hand down her voluminous trenchcoat pocket and withdrew a cigarette case. It was antique-looking gold with a red oriental dragon enameled onto it. The dragon's eyes were green gems, and tiny pearls were embedded in the background for stars. She pressed a button in the side and the lid flipped open, exposing a line of Marlboros. Smoking was one of Emma's new affectations. With the case and her graceful, practiced motions with the

cigarette, I thought it rather suited her. She found a lighter and we were off again, with the disembodied end of the cigarette escorting us like a firefly.

I remembered my own sixteenth birthday party, four months before Emma's. A couple of friends and I split the fifty pound fee for Huntingfield Village Hall and the cost of a bald-headed disk jockey named Maurice. We invited a hundred and twelve people, so three hundred arrived. My father came along to help (he said). He tried hovering in the doorway, perching by the D.J., and leaning nonchalantly against walls, but he somehow didn't fit in the room. His red lumberjack shirt was a conspicuous blot against the pink and yellow flashing lights. The guests spent most of the night dancing, eating pretzels, intercepting calls from angry villagers, and playing volleyball (with what I later discovered was not a balloon), and taking rides on Emma's new motorbike. An impromptu bar was set up, despite my nervous, guilty attempts to prevent it. I worried about my father's disapproval (although I didn't have to. "It's all part of the experience," he'd say the next day, after we cleaned out the wretched bathroom) and I feared the destructive bents of my friends. Sometime after the party was underway I found that Dad had left for the pub down the road. I hid in the jungle of dancers and hoped everyone would behave.

As I jogged along to the music, which made my ribs vibrate, I realized that I wasn't a wholehearted participant. All this foolishness probably shouldn't have annoyed me the way it did. If I continued in this timid, wallpaperish way, I might miss those mystical "best years of my life" about which I'd heard so much.

But I looked around me and saw three hundred semi-soused teenagers flailing about in a throbbing village hall, air opaque with (presumably) cigarette smoke. With my arms pressed to my sides I squeezed through the choking swamp of people toward the open door at the end of the hall.

In the doorway at last, I gulped frozen air and felt the space stretch out around me. I closed my eyes. When I opened them, Jonathan Marshall's face filled my entire field of view. A thin-lipped smile bobbed under a lumpy, irregular nose (broken two years ago in rugby scrum). His eyes were huge, animated blue marbles. Goofy with alcohol and brave with seclusion, he said, "Happy birthday!" and kissed me.

Jonathan dematerialized and for a long time I didn't move. I stood in the doorway like an inflatable Weeble. "Happy birthday to you," I said.

Emma pounded her fist into my shoulder. "Where do you want to go now?" she asked, and I followed her toward the school. I was even colder now because I could feel the icy pavement through my thin shoes. Emma's teeth chattered. I looked across and remarked that the sides of her head were stubbly; she'd have to shave them again.

"Nahh, I think I'll grow them out now. But I'm dyeing it purple," she said, stooping to extinguish her cigarette in a puddle. "Sort of burgundy-plum, you know. Like this." She pulled a maroon (or rather, "burgundy-plum") man's necktie out of her coat and brandished it at me. Then she tried to flick her drowned cigarette into a trash can as we passed, but missed. It landed in the branches of a leafless bush.

I'd seen the tie before. "Nice choice," I grumbled. Still, she was having fun, which was more than I could say for myself that night. Emma leaned heavily on my shoulder and I supported her.

I had planned to do something unusual to my hair (Emma's word was "wacky") a month or two before, a streak of color, just a shade lighter than my own wheaty brown. I sat in the hairdresser's big vinyl throne and braced myself. After looking at color charts like I was picking out paint for a bathroom, I calmly, and with

**Goofy with alcohol  
and brave with seclusion,  
he said,  
"Happy birthday!"  
and kissed me.**

great dignity, changed my mind (Emma's word was "chickened-out"). I slid out of the chair with a trim and a sigh of relief. As I walked up School Road my hair kept my ears warm.

Emma asked, "How about stopping here?" and drunkenly dropped herself on the bench outside Edgar Sewter Primary School, which my little sister attended. It was a great Dickensian monster of a building, but Ellen liked it. Yellow streetlamp-light reflected off the Renault-Fours outside Chris Collins' Garage and glittered on the windshields. Stray raindrops fell close around us and disturbed the puddles in the road. Emma fidgeted with her glove.

"We're best mates, right? I mean ...we're best mates," she managed. She coughed and her gray breath formed a cloud in front of her.

"Of course. Are you okay?"

"No, I'm drunk as hell," (giggle)

"But never mind." Her face flipped from merry to sullen to lunatic to sick. Her mouth opened and closed like a guppy's. She stared at the streetlamp as though it were a night-light, and it revealed tears balanced on the ledges of her eyelids. She heaved a maudlin sigh and plunged in. "Remember Jaffa?"

"Who, James?"

"Yeah." She lost James to a redheaded drama student at a recent party (to which I had not been invited, thank God). After a complicated social tango, Emma found herself with Toby, who everyone knew was dangerous when it came to girls. She told me she didn't remember what happened the rest of the night. Watching Emma hug her shoulders close into her body and stare guiltily at her shoes, I could guess.

Slowly, I eased my arm around Emma's quivering shoulders. We sat still on the bench under the quickening rain. The only sound was Emma's sobbing, punctuated by the pop of raindrops on overcoats. My hand shook slightly on her shoulder. I had never seen her cry before.

I realized that Emma's shaved head looked . . . silly. I hadn't really spent much time wondering why she chose to dress like a jumble sale. Hers was a very

striking image in its own way, but not one I wanted to use as a pattern anymore.

The streetlamp went out. It was one o'clock. Funny thing -- I didn't notice the dull drone of the light until it stopped. The absence of that sound made space somehow wider and the air cleaner. Stars were vaguely visible in the openings between rainclouds.

The party would have disbanded hours ago at closing time. There was no reason to take the path back. Emma and I readjusted our scarves and gloves and set off toward my house for strawberry cake. "So, Ems," I said as our shoes slapped on the pavement. "how does it fell to be a yaer older and wiser?" **91**



Cathy Blackburn  
**Starting Gate**  
oil

Ray Puckett  
**Tool Study**  
mixed media







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Robert G. Wilson IV  
**Untitled**  
welded steel

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Patrick Dougherty  
**Looking for What's Sacred**  
oil





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Ben Bush  
**Night Wing is Coming**  
oil

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Kiyomi Talaulicar  
**Mr. Businessman**  
mixed media

Sarah Singh  
**L' auto portrait**  
watercolor



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David C Behrens  
**MC Hammerhead**  
mixed media



Michelle Scott  
**Silver Crescent**  
oil glaze



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Todd Houser  
**Art Mark Logo**  
stat, chromotec



Kevin Brown  
**album cover**  
pen and ink

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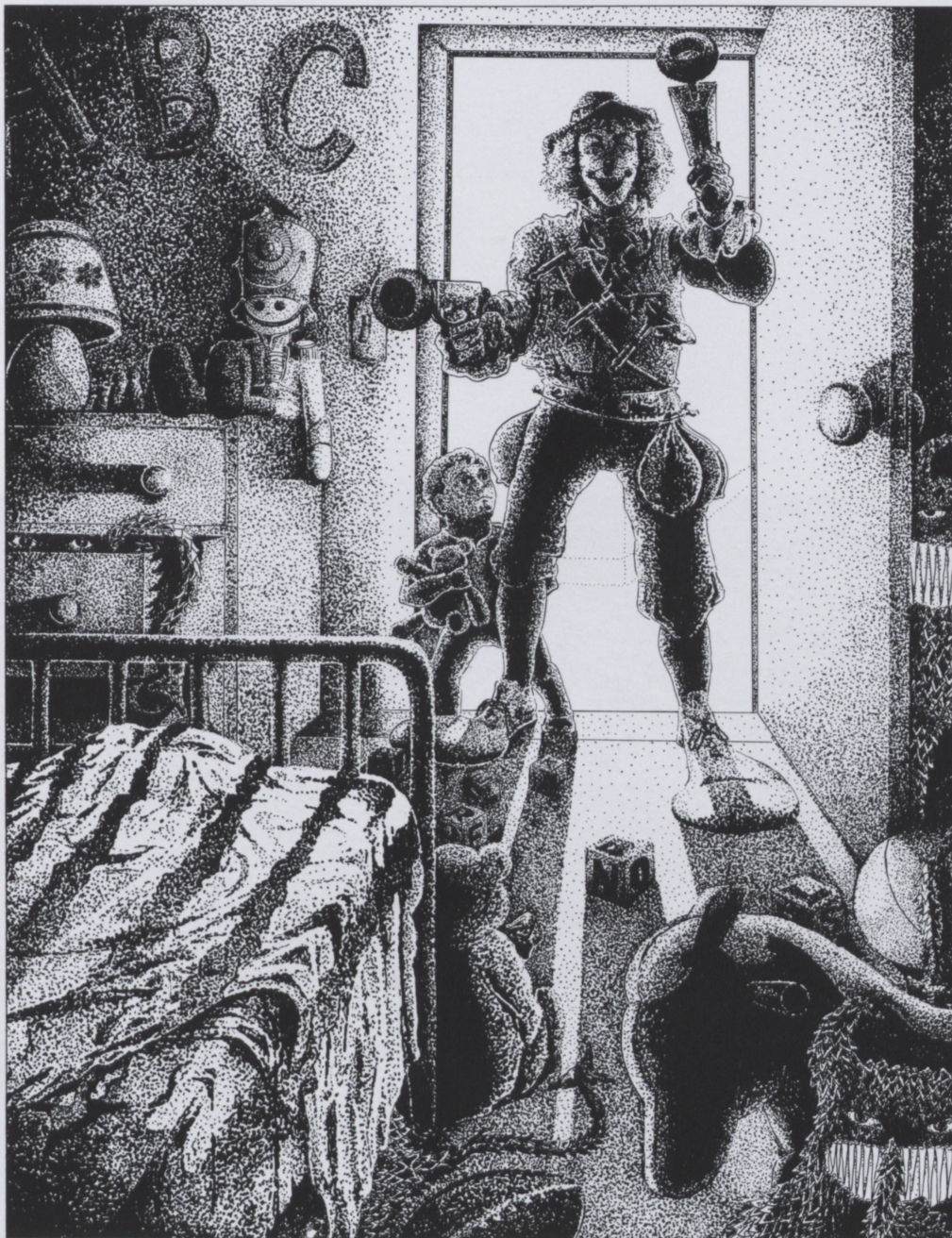
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color photo



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Andrea P. Fisk  
**Bliss Jacket I**  
discharged satin



Tina Bambauer  
silver



Ben Hill  
**Return to Hui Tsung**  
saltglaze stoneware

39



Jeff Mangum  
**No Escape**  
oil



David Yarbrough  
**Dirty Stories**  
woodcut

## Father's Day

The day I was signed up  
for Little League, Dad  
took me to J. C. Penney,  
bought a slick mitt  
for me to break-in.  
When he handed it over, I  
blanked, studied it as we  
would toe jam  
. . . or phlegm. . .  
under our Jr. Scientist Microscope  
(Next aisle over,  
\$4 cheaper).

Eleven days later,  
Dad dropped me  
off at the park.

*But*

*Dad, you never taught me  
how to catch, how to  
pitch, how to break  
in that shiny glove with  
the autograph of Idontknowwho.  
I couldn't go near them.*

So I wandered its periphery,  
trailed the creek encircling  
the diamond, batted dragonflies  
and mosquitoes, pitched a fit  
when I saw bigger  
boys with bigger girls  
get to second base  
on the creek's bank.  
I was beside myself.

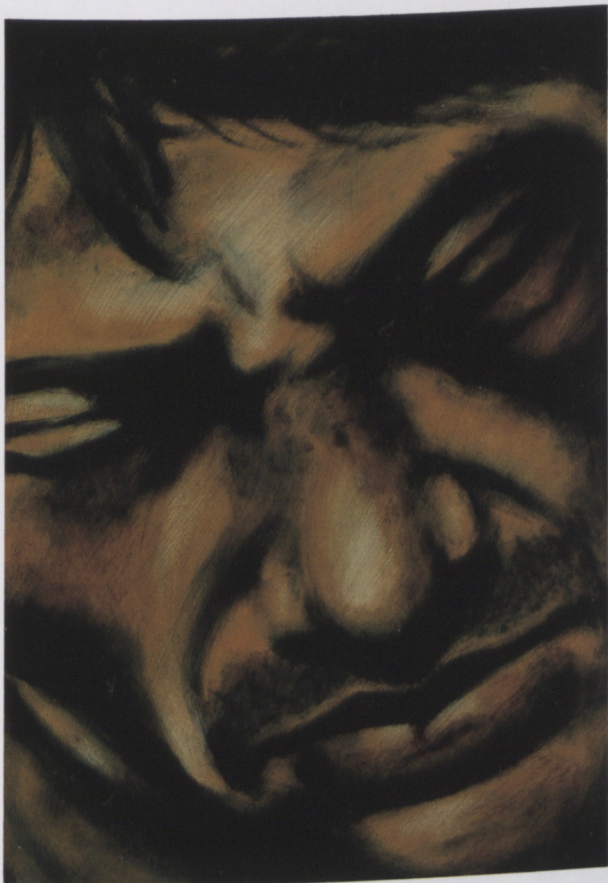
After try-outs  
When moms  
returned for  
thier little all-stars  
Dad wasn't there.  
He had started dinner,  
Lost track of time.

Joseph P. Campbell

42



CCE Walker  
**David #11**  
lithograph

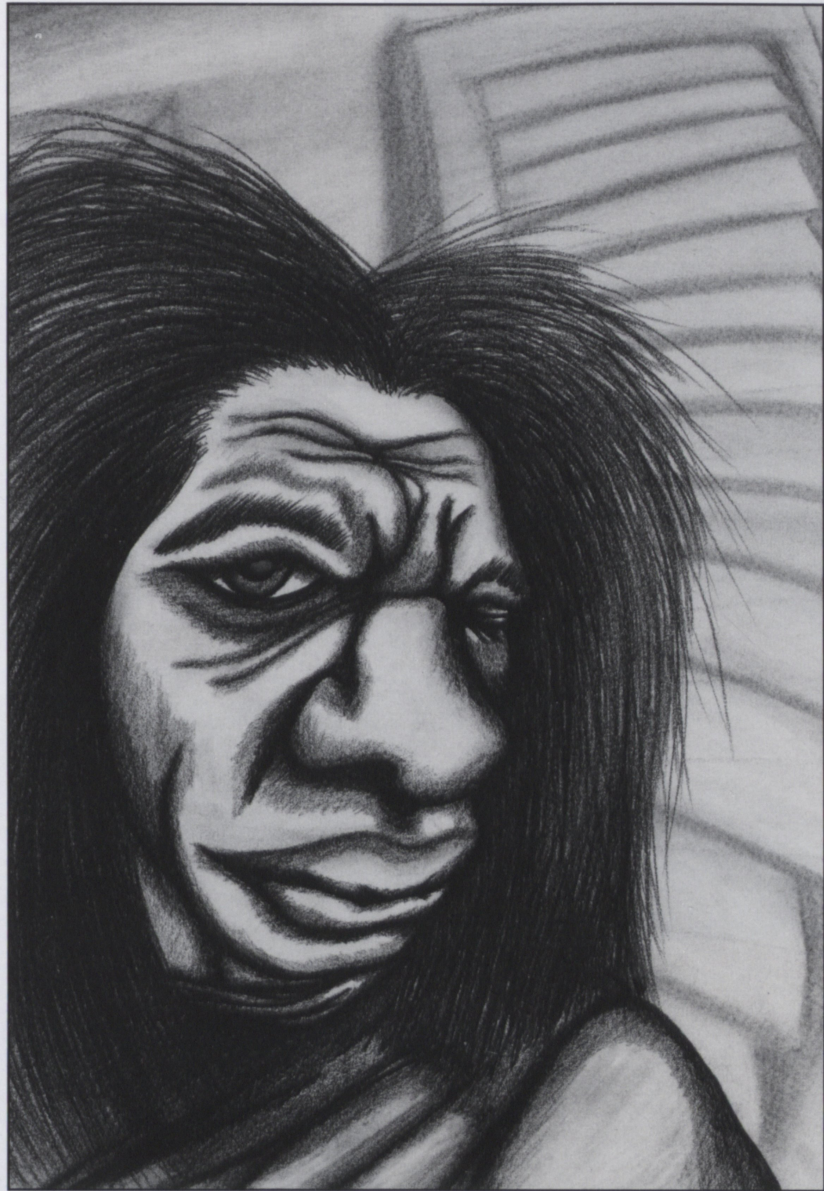


David Stanley  
**Prisoner of War**  
oil glaze

43



Richard Haselrig  
**Currency**  
pen and ink on color film



Charles L. Massey III  
**Untitled**  
china marker and charcoal

## Bleachers

On the back row, where ponytails hang  
like so many ropes of hair in front of us,  
we turn up aluminum cans of cheap pilsner  
and smoke cigarettes in our gloves  
when heads are turned.

At sixteen, where we sit,  
high above the hierarchy  
of letter jackets,  
pom-poms, preppie colors,  
and parental figures  
that breath future  
down onto the field  
the game goes on  
as if in another world

where points don't matter  
and God has an alma mater.

Like snipers, we shoot remarks  
through the wave of crowd,  
ripping into those too content.

Night winds into the stadium lights  
and we sit, chopped apart with laughter,  
dreaming of cheerleaders bloomerless  
leaping into the air, and wonder  
when this won't matter.

Doug Smith

46



Tony Nichols  
**Shaka Zulu**  
mixed media



Scott Eagle  
**Tornado Dream Series: No. 3**  
mixed media

47



Maia Sampson  
**Ascent**  
acrylic

# After Taps

by Stephen Schaubach

48

"Two feet of virgin snow, no night officer and our Senior year," he said staring at me, smoke whiffing from his mouth, "you thinking what I am thinking?" "Clayton, are you serious?" I asked. There was a pause and he said, "No, but we're going anyway."

The sun was slipping down the front lawn when call to quarters blew. It echoed down the halls of the dimly lit barracks and floated out across the training fields. The officer of the day read out the uniform blandly over the PA system. "Uniform for mess three will be," he paused as if he was actually thinking and said, "gray trousers, gray shirt, black tie, black sweater and dress hat." It was winter and uncannily cold for December. Reaching up I pulled the window down and paused. I leaned on my window sill

watching the sun sneak away. I stood there, looking up. The sky was gray, like us. Clouds blanketed the horizon and left nothing but the deafening din of silence.

Unconsciously I about faced and paused to contemplate the sharp snap my heels made. The floors were cement, cold, with a grayish dark tint to them. Gray light from outside made a path to the door, reminding me to hurry up. Formation was in fifteen minutes. Walking to my closet, I gingerly pulled out a neatly ironed gray shirt, my favorite

one; it was Friday. Carefully I spaced the remaining shirts two fingers apart. Smoothing out the wrinkles in my chest, I unfastened my belt buckle and set it on my desk. Checking my watch I thought about my parents. I wondered what they were doing now. Certainly they weren't shining their shoes and brass. I filled the tin of my shoe polish with warm water and sat down at my desk.

I remembered my freshman year here when my roommate, Holsinger, had taught me to shine shoes. I

smiled and then breathed heavily on the toe of my shoe. "Make tiny little circles using a little warm water, that's the secret, you'll learn." The following week we had gotten a check minus on room inspection because of a polish stain on my desk. I remember how he acted as though he hated having a freshman as a roommate. We became good friends and talked about our "other" lives. The next year he was put on Battalion staff as an executive officer. We were having our outside company inspection when he squared off with me. He checked my uniform. "Good shoes Mr. Slaven," he said and I smiled. "Something funny Mr. Slaven?" "No Sir!" I found it strange the distance the military put between us, yet it made me feel closer to him when we talked privately.

Formation call blew as I finished adjusting my buckle. Stiffly I walked out the door and walked to my platoon sergeant's room. "Sergeant Strickland," I said as he snapped to attention. I waited as he called his room to attention.

"Room ten-hut!"

"At ease," I said, "have you checked the ranks already or do you enjoy marching bull ring?"

"Sir, I have, sir," he said.

"Good, then let's get them down stairs."

"Yes sir," he said as

he scrambled for the hall, "Let's go first platoon, beat your feet on company street!"

Cadets rushed back and forth scurrying to get down stairs and form up. It was strange, almost surreal. Only officers could walk in the middle of the hall; the others had to use the sides. As an officer you had to walk cautiously down the middle of the hall. After making a final check of the barracks, I headed for company street. "One hundred and eighty eight steps," I thought.

It seems funny to be counting steps, but what was even more strange was that it seemed normal here. There wasn't much to do in the small town of Chatham. Only twelve hundred people lived here and four hundred cadets made up the rest. It didn't even seem like the United States, rather a small town in an unnamed country. Things here were old, really old. I remember seeing a sign that said, "Colored rest room." Strangely enough I hesitated and used the other "White rest room." Like I said, there wasn't much to Chatham. On Sundays we would get town leave and go wash our laundry. The scene was always the same, a bunch of cadets sitting around watching their laundry spin around in dryers, smoking cigarettes and looking nervously at everyone else doing the same. Tonight was probably the most exciting

day of the week. Tonight we got to watch a movie, maybe one in color.

I stopped briefly and looked down company street. The cadets were lined up in rows, looking straight ahead. Walking up to my platoon, I surveyed their shoes, brass and shirt tucks. As I walked down each rank of cadets, I saw a little bit of myself, in each of them. Who was I to teach them how to act, when to laugh or cry? Who was I anyway? What if they became exactly like me? Would we all be knocking heads at the water fountain? Better yet, what if we all became friends and every time we tried to call each other, the phone was busy? "Jeese, I have to stop thinking so much," I thought. Returning a salute to my platoon sergeant, I noticed a few flakes of snow starting to fall. It was cold, cold and gray and depressing. This would be the first real snow, if it lasted.

It was six thirty and like clock work we about faced and saluted the flag as it was lowered. I felt the eyes of twenty-six cadets on me as I held my hand steady to my temple. The winter wind whipped around my face as the bugle echoed down the front lawn, across the training fields and into the small town of Chatham. I often wondered if the town stopped what they were doing to

*continued next page*

listen. I knew the answer. Over eighty years ago, cadets stood where I stood and saluted the same flag pole. Eighty years from now cadets may stand here, right where I am standing, saluting this very same flag pole. There was something that felt like love running through me. Maybe it was the warmth of my sweater, the weather, or the bugle playing "To the Colors." Hell, I just felt proud.

It was after dinner, after the movie (color) and it was especially after Taps. Lieutenant Cochran, my roommate, became "Clayton" to me and I became "Matt" to him. We had just taken report of the barracks and all were accounted for. Normally we checked in with Lt. Cudd, the night officer. He had a big gun with rubber bullets and he used it. During Mess III (dinner) I had heard he had a heart attack and was in the hospital. Clayton and I had waited to give him the report sheets, but he never showed up. "He really must be in the hospital then," Clayton whispered.

We both looked at each other and smiled with our eyes. We opened up the window to take a look at the snow. "Damn, must be two feet at least," I said excitedly. Clayton nodded wide eyed as he took a long drag from his cigarette. "Two feet of virgin snow, no night officer

and our Senior year," he said staring at me, smoke whiffing from his mouth, "you thinking what I am thinking?" "Clayton, are you serious?" I asked. There was a pause and he said, "No, but we're going anyway."

A Christmas excitement filled the air as we put on our fatigues. "You really sure about this Clayton?" There was no answer from him. "Shush," I said, realizing we might be making too much noise. Cautiously we crept to the stair well. There we were, walking, shirking down the steps as if we were on a mission. Finally we reached the foyer. We both stopped to listen, nothing, silence. Slowly he opened the door and we crept out into the snow. Quietly we made our way to the far training field, one behind the other, and me, yes, me, leading. It was over two feet. Much more than we had both thought. It was quiet, the kind of silence only a snow storm can produce. Looking back I saw Clayton looking back and then I stopped. We were far from the campus, yet we still whispered. Clayton spoke.

"Hey man," he paused, "I always wanted to tell you this and don't get the wrong idea but," he paused again, "you're my best friend."

"Thanks man, that means a lot to me," I said frankly.

"Would you mind if I kissed you?" Clayton said and we both laughed; I kicked snow on him.

"Did I ever tell you the story about when I got caught shoplifting?" I knew the answer.

"Uh uh, tell me," he said.

"Well it was me and my brother Jamie, he's older. We were at a drug store, for the hell of it, checking out stuff. I saw him put something, I forget what, in his pocket. I kind of got scared, you know? Then he got some candy and put it in my back pocket and I got really nervous. I was sweating buckets when we started out the door. And this guy, this huge New Jersey guy, stopped us and asked us what we had in our pockets. He knew. He grabbed us both by the arm and took us to his office. You know how the offices are in those stores. Well, this one was different; it had a window. He left the office and locked it, off to get the manager I guess. My brother, who had been caught before, decided to bail. He opened the window and got out. He laughed and said 'Come on!' Well, I was scared, but I started out the window anyway. Just about the time I was almost out, I heard the door open. That big lumber jack looking guy started to pull my legs, just like I'm pulling yours."

For about an hour we sat there, in the middle of the field and exchanged stories. It was almost as if we weren't even there; we were free. I hadn't felt this free for months. It felt like school was out and we were alumni, looking at the school from a different angle. Then, we just lay there in the snow looking up and neither of us said a word for the longest time. Then he broke the silence and said, "This is great you know?"

"Yeah," I said, "but we better get back soon."

"Why do our teachers have to live here?" he asked.

"Really, everyone else gets school off at home but no, not us," I said.

We shook ourselves off and headed for the school, refreshed and careless. Both of us even spoke in normal tones of voice. When we reached the door, I decided to go first. We slipped in quietly and shut the door ever so slowly. With our backs up against the wall, we listened, trying to muffle our breathlessness. It was warm inside. Every time I moved I could feel a warm puff of air rising from my shirt, on my face. It was dead silent. The only thing you could hear was the heaters pinging. We both looked up as if we could see clear up to the hundredth and eighty-eighth step. I started to climb up when I heard foot steps. I stopped. They stopped. It's so damn

quiet. I didn't even want to turn my head to look at Clayton, because I might make noise. It was a stand off. Then the foot steps started again. We matched them with ours and started to climb up. I remember thinking, "Why are we going up, shouldn't we be going down?" We could hear the other person's footsteps; they were solid. They engulfed ours, but we still kept climbing. Finally he spoke. The feet had a voice.

"Who ever is down there, come up here," they said.

"It's Rev. Gregory," Clayton whispered.

"Captain Gregory," I said, "it's me, Lieutenant Slaven."

"Come here boy, now!" Capt. Gregory was an older man, very quiet.

We finally met and he shined a flashlight on us, blinding us. I didn't say anything, neither did Clayton. Capt. Gregory puffed as old men do and said, "Here, hold this Slaven." I slowly grabbed his flashlight and watched as he pulled out a cigarette and lit it.

"You boys find 'em?"

"Sir?" I said.

"Those boys that went outside, you find 'em?"

"Ah, no sir I think they snuck back in without us knowing," I said firmly.

"Then I guess you'll

be going to your rooms now," he said.

"Yes sir," I said.

"Mr. Slaven, why you smiling?"

"I like snow," I said.

"Me too," Capt. Gregory said, "so you boys have a good night."

"Yes sir, good night," I said.

I handed him his flashlight and started up the stairs slowly, Clayton behind me.

It wasn't until after I had gotten to the room that I realized what had just happened. We both took our fatigues off and put them in our dirty clothes bag. I washed my hands, thought about Macbeth and got in bed. It was silent again. I lay there in amazement, my hands still wet, clinching the covers. Clayton spoke. "I like snow too," he said. I smiled, closed my eyes, and fell asleep. 91

# NOTHING TO PRESERVE WITHOUT LIGHT

by Todd Lovett

from The Father and Son Y-Indian Guides

The Story of the Headband,  
the central theme

the feathered arrow designs which—  
extend right and left of,  
the central symbol.  
represent the useful, services of father  
and son.

52

The fact:  
that the father and son,  
achievements are. united,  
in  
the  
center of,  
the design is.  
interpreted, to mean  
that fathers  
and sons together under  
the eye of,  
the great spirit, are seeking.  
to help each  
other in: the services;  
they render.

To the right is the symbol.  
of the mother and home, a line  
connects  
the mother,  
symbol with the teepee or home symbol.

The fact:  
that, it is a home.  
symbol is shown by the fire. in the teepee  
on the left, are symbols.  
of father and son, their  
relationship again.  
is, shown by the line;  
that, joins the two symbols,  
these symbols.

add to the richness. of the central theme, for it,  
is in service to mother and home.  
that many of the more,  
significant achievements of,  
father and son  
will take, place.

"Well the truth is, the boys would go off down the road to the big pond and go fishing. Dawn and Jerry couldn't go, and they would fish down there at the creek." She laughs. "Course there wasn't any fish down there, and they'd set out their lines at night and expect..." She begins to smile, knods her head laughing, picks up with "...and so Pop came by the store up there and bought a fish about that long. Now honey he took a flashlight and went down there and hunted that fishing line, it was way up by the end of the field where the deep place was, and put that fish on that line." She chuckles. "They got up the next morning, when the boys went a fishing, there was another boy that went with them all the time, Billy Meeks, you may of heard us talk about him. And they got up and went fishing, and Pop and I were still tryin' to sleep; I was tryin', he's asleep cause he worked second shift. So I heard, oh they was yelling, they was coming across that field with that fish on that pole, you know, just waving it..." Her voice slips into a higher, soft and child-like cry, "...Oh we caught one, we caught one!"

△                      △                      △

I will write down everything I remember. The avocado-green pin-stripe pajamas are there. The bedspread is blue, some thick and heavy fiber. Cotten? The sheets are white, but the pillowcase, Pinochio in sharp red, blue, yellow, and wood. This was a gift from some friends: Stephen, who is half Korean, his father, American psychologist, and his mother who wears the sad, length-painted dresses from south of the DMZ, her home. On the wall is a Buffalo Bills pennant, and it is always Christmas when I see this— an Oakland Raiders fan finding a Bills pennant, winter solstice time, 1972 substitution till we can get the real thing— silver, black. In the corner big as an alter, an old TV, the reception gone forever from its glass, useless convex window. This doesn't matter though, I am seven, I get a television in my room. A GE record player, Hot Wheels by Mattel sticker (lane 1, car 60...) stuck to the sea-blue plastic; records on the floor that I still have now, Soultrain, Superfly, Ball of Fire on 45 and Backstabbers. Near, a fireplace rug, those huge fingersized strands woven in concentric ovals, lightening from brown to white, to gold-orange, and brown boarder. And in the child's twin bed, my back is to the ceiling, arms wrapped around Pinochio, tight lids, feet to the records and face turned left to the dark TV screen.

Some of this is real. That much, the polaroid verifies.

Some of it I dream from memory now, camera mind wide angled backwards.

The light is on— nothing to preserve without light— but in my dream, it is dark, and like the photograph I am sleeping on the edge of awareness. Rapid eyed hours have already come, diminished; time is late, midnight because that is far past a child's bedtime. It must be high in the night by now— Moon ascending— coming in my window through the shears, filtered shadow white, and violet. Short of a mile away, seventeen years for a child, I know the wind was moving in the Savanna marsh where the land, like the incoming sea, loses itself. Tide, nocturn animals, both rising in the reedy straw tangle of sinkholes, moccasins, the brackish dark: *You could drown; don't go near the marsh.*

Asleep, I am rousing, rolling my head on the pillow, and stretching myself in the way we only do when we feel alone. The door is open— I have always slept with it closed— and the bright hallway is just outside, blurry as I rub to see. My father is coming into the room. Seven years old, and still I think this odd; bedtime is sleep, without reason, they do not wake me. He hesitates, sees I am moving, cleaning away the drowze, and now I lean up on an elbow, stare blinking at his silhouette.

"What is it?"

*continued next page*

I mumble this, and my voice is trying to sound tired. Stretch again, this to look the part. I am growing uncomfortable. Does he know I have been waiting?

He comes in now awkward, leaves the door open. From the den, I can hear the television on still; in the kitchen, ceramic clinks, the dishes as mommy puts away the dinner mess.

I listen well and remember sounds at seven years. Months before in a theater, I sat with my father midway down the aisle watching a movie with animals for characters, narrated disneyesque and anonymous, an invisible hand on your shoulder, another pointing to: coyote, prairie dog, the desert hare.

We had come looking for bigfoot.

The advertisements were all sasquatch—learn about the legend, hear it, see it, track the footprints into Indian myth— a decoy though, fifteen minutes of added attraction tacked onto the wonderful world of.

“Can I go down front?”

“Will you be scared by yourself?”

I ran to the first row of the near empty theater, larger pictures, louder sound, like closing the door of the room you’ve just entered alone. On the screen appeared the only person to ever film bigfoot, mountain man Patterson and his 8mm. headlong running footage. There were Northwestern pines, broken trees and bramble from the previous Winter moving past your view as the tall, dark monster long stepped through a broad clearing. Black hair shining, arms swinging almost to the knee, it turned into the break, glancing back once, and receded into forrest, as I in my seat. Footprints plaster cast. Still photographs. FBI analysis of hair and dung. I sat nonchalant to push away the instinct flight.

The pictures pick up speed, dusky orange light on a forrest edge, sticks and limbs piled against a stream, the absence of sound, for moments counting, waiting for the sound that came: terrible moan calling, creshend,

fall, dying back into the miles of trees. And now I am running trying to walk. I am blind in the aisle. I overshoot my father.

• • •  
“I just wanted to tuck you in goodnight...”

“I already got tucked in.”

“I know.” I lie back down; my eyes squeak as I rub them.

He covers the few paces, wrinkled button-down hanging over his belt, still in polyester manager clothes; one hand swings at ease, the other, fist- clenched. The hall light shrinks. The dishes, clink again, and his big arms circle out, under and around me and the pillow. His breath is warm as he kisses my cheek.

“I love you. ‘Night’”

“I love you too.”

He squeezes me tight once to end the hug. I close my eyes and pretend; do not see him turn, shirt-rustling; do not see the shrinking frame, hall light. My heart is racing.

Do I sleep well?

For fifteen minutes, I listen to the drum in my chest. The sound comes from under water; I hear it in my ears, rolling inside a wave. When my eyes open finally, against my will, the house is silent. A single shaft of hall light strikes the hard tile floor, rug, and up the wall. The door is ajar. It takes all my years of gathering fears to put aside, to move the covers off, swing my feet to the floor. Slow, single action, stand, and walk like an indian on the balls of my feet— this is how to move unheard in the forest— the door. I turn the knob, closing centimeters at a time until without an audible click, the hall outside disappears.

I stand in the dark room listening a while before I turn on the light; freeze for long seconds before I run to my bed and pull back the pillow, and it has happened: quarters, dimes, nickels. Several dollars in change, more than I have ever gotten.

I fall asleep thinking of thread tied to door knobs, and teeth. The marsh is far away. 91

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HORIZONS  
OF

# COLOR

56

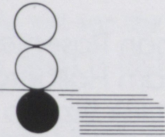
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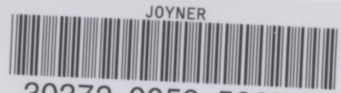
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