TYGR 2003: A Literary & Art Magazine

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TYGR
A Literary & Art Magazine
2003
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Ascension
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eric Robinson</td>
<td>Torn to Mend</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Case</td>
<td>Narcissus</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Meo</td>
<td>Slave</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad Schumacher</td>
<td>I, time</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Barringer</td>
<td>Winds of Change</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Schadeck</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Meo</td>
<td>Imagine</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annika Bellinger</td>
<td>Who Am I?</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Beck</td>
<td>Song of the Unrequited</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Meo</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Bentley</td>
<td>Which?</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Meo</td>
<td>Corrupt</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia Hammel</td>
<td>Love Vs. Hate</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamara Jarvis</td>
<td>Dream Beach</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Rumbley</td>
<td>A Friendship I Never Dreamed Of</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallori Lesh</td>
<td>Sweet Deceptions</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Schadeck</td>
<td>Mudprints</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Becker</td>
<td>Crumbling</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Williams</td>
<td>just</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Caez</td>
<td>Me</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy Koerner</td>
<td>Self Portrait #2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam Cheek</td>
<td>Just a Piece</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Herbert</td>
<td>Check Yes or No</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan Caleb Mitchell</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad Schumacher</td>
<td>Dali and his oils</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noelle Sefton</td>
<td>Whispering Wind</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamara Jarvis</td>
<td>Winter Solitude</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenni Bast</td>
<td>Life as a Tree</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie Bennett</td>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Rumbley</td>
<td>Moments with a bee</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Becker</td>
<td>Hiss</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamara Jarvis</td>
<td>Egyptian Kitty</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy Koerner</td>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leslee Jones</td>
<td>Black Room</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranea Surbrook</td>
<td>How Much is Enough?</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamara Jarvis</td>
<td>Pink Cad</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Cummings</td>
<td>The Price</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy Koerner</td>
<td>Icon #1</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenni Bast</td>
<td>The Child</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Herbert</td>
<td>Determination</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Willoughby</td>
<td>Metamorphosis</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian James Reinicke</td>
<td>Eye of the Earth</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note from the Editor</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Torn to Mend
Eric Robinson

Hope deferred
makes the heart sick;
But when the desire comes
it is a tree of life.

as her spirit left unwillingly,
her lips and brow spoke sorrow for me –
that I should live on torn asunder!

separately we dwell in Christ – mender
of dashed souls, who has given our hope –
blessed daughter, her echo in my hands.

as a flame in wind I waver –
burning with embittered love like ash
fluttering from a lightning-struck tree.

yet, O Lord, you place delicate joy
in my arms, and comfort my spirit
with council to weep waveringly.
Narcissus
Rebecca Case
Slave
Joshua Meo
I, time
Chad Schumacher

I make the clocks tick. I
push the second hand. I
torque it round the minutes.
man cannot slow me down.
it is on my field they live,
and it is I that lets them die. but now
certainty is dead, and so is my stride.
I once walked boldly. now
I creep, ever changing. manipulated
at the whim of memory
you were once so sure. but now
you question me and liquefy.
I am no longer a marble sculpture, but now
pliable clay.
you are a careless artist.
please explain again!
someone make me concrete!
I cannot stand to churn. this is not for me.
I hold the handle, but now my grip is lost.
man gave up on me, and chose uncertainty
at all too great a cost.
Winds of Change
Joshua Barringer

Times are changing.
I can feel it in the wind.
Though the winds are strong,
It is these strongest winds
That can truly change a life.
Just as the strong winds can
Change the face of a mountain,
Or carve a wondrous canyon,
So too can these winds erode
The walls a man builds around himself.
Then the soft interior can be changed.
So I must quiet my heart,
And encourage my soul,
For though these winds may forever alter
The familiar skyline,
They will replace it
With one that has not yet been seen.
And the one not yet seen
Is all the better.
City

Danielle Schadeck
Imagine
Joshua Meo
Who Am I?
Annika Bellinger

Contents under pressure: Do not shake. If I were to come with a warning label, that is what it would say. I am your friendly neighborhood people-pleasing control freak. And I am okay with this. I am the girl next door. I am the demanding diva. I have nothing and everything. The world is my oyster, but I am separate from it all together. I am a conformist and a rebel. I know it all but still have much to learn. I procrastinate but enjoy being prepared.

Being me is a full-time job that is never done. Sometimes I wonder if someone is better at being me than I am. I somehow doubt it. Everyday I wake up, eager to know what will happen to me. I often concoct awful tragedies, and sometimes I come up with Disney-worthy happy endings. And what really happens usually falls somewhere right in between.

There has to be some kind of driving force. I don’t know what it is exactly and where it comes from. Not that I care, just as long as it keeps working at keeping me who I am. It could just simply be passion. My passions for Christ, for laughing, for music, for love, for creativity. The passion that feeds the fire that burns the steam that it takes to run the mighty engine that is I.

People value my compassion, when I decide to show it. I have been told I am “such a nice girl.” I think that the term “personal doormat” would much better describe my backbreaking mission to please every person in the tri-county area.

I am a complex formula. I am the uncommon denominator. I am the missing ingredient. I am all of the above. Sound impossible? No, it’s just who I am.
Song of the Unrequited

Amanda Beck

I couldn’t make you love me
But I tried anyway, and thought
That if my hair and make-up and outfit were just right
You’d fall for my feminine form
And if I said something thoughtful or witty
You’d want to explore the reaches of my mind and heart
And if I smiled and laughed and pushed my demons aside
You’d notice one, and not the other, and you’d stay.

I couldn’t make you love me
But I pretended you already did, and thought
That maybe I crept into your unsuspecting thoughts
And you couldn’t help but smile
And that when we were together, you’d really be thinking
Of holding and hugging and kissing and caring
And that you felt for me what I felt for you
But were just too afraid to let it show.

I couldn’t make you love me
So I hated both of us instead.
I hated you for not wanting me
And I hated me for not being what you wanted
I hated you for closing your eyes and heart and not seeing what I had to offer
And I hated me for opening myself up to rejection and placing my self-worth in your unknowing, faltering hands.

But most of all, I hated you because I could not make you love me,
And I hated me for trying to make you, and failing,
And pretending you did, and failing,
And hating you instead,
And failing most miserably
At that.
Blue

Joshua Meo
Which?
Deborah Bentley

Once a face launched a thousand ships.
Was it for love
or pride
or both?
Did the king love the face
of Helen
or did he love his pride
more?
Did his love drive
his anger
and the death of a thousand
men?
Or did his pride curse
the life of a nation
and his own
soul?

Thousands of Greeks driving against a wall,
foolish Trojans drunk with false glory,
Achilles, Ajax, Hector, Laocoon
dead for the glory of Greece.
Kingdoms without kings,
wives without husbands,
sons without fathers
Lost.

For love?
For pride?
For a face.
Once a face launched a thousand missiles.
Was it for love
or pride
or both?
Did the nation love the faces
of its dead people
or its pride
more?
Did its love drive
its anger
and the death of faceless
thousands?
Or did its pride curse
the life of its people
and its
own soul?

For love?
For pride?
For a face.
Corrupt
Joshua Meo
Love vs. Hate
Alicia Hammel

If love is a dream, then I hope not to wake
If love is confusion, then let my mind shake
If love is the sun, then let it burn on
And if love is a god, let him rule long
If love is a fairy tale, do let me see
And if love is a person, please let it be me.

If hate is a fire, then give me a pool
If hate is a trick, then I hope I’ll out fool
If hate is a rhythm then I’ll break the beat
And if hate is a hunger, I just won’t eat
If hate is a story, I’ll close the book
And if hate is a vision, I just won’t look
If hate is a power, I’m stronger than he
And if hate is a person, I pray it isn’t me.
Dream Beach
Tamara Jarvis
A Friendship I Never Dreamed Of

Erin Rumbley

I closed my eyes and listened to the sound of the waves lapping on the shore of the Indian Ocean. I opened them again and stared straight up into the clouds overhead. It was the middle of the night, but the light from the huge white moon lit up the beach as it shone through the clouds overhead. The night was warm enough, but just when I started to get too warm, a cool breeze would come down the beach and blow through my hair. I lay there and reflected in comfortable silence, closing my eyes again and storing the picture somewhere with all the other beautiful things I have seen. I never wanted to forget the perfection of that moment: the clouds, the moon, the beach, and my friend Ann. Ann and I hadn’t known each other very long, but we had become so close. It didn’t seem like we needed to spend time talking or constantly fill the space between us with words. We could just lie on the beach in silence, enjoying each other’s presence and reflecting in the moonlight.

Tomorrow we would get on a bus and leave this perfect place called Mombasa, but we were determined to stay up all night and make our vacation last as long as we could. As we lay there, I let my mind wander back though the incredible experiences of my summer in Kenya. I thought of the first time I saw Ann and how happy she was to meet this group of crazy Mzungus (white people). I remembered singing with her and trying to learn the words of Out of Eden songs by listening to them over and over again and then begging David to learn the piano chords so we could sing our song in church. I thought of cheering the football team on in Kiswahili and singing, “Wamelala wamelala lala!” at the top of our lungs whenever one of our boys scored a goal. I remembered how Ann always made sure I was safe during the long African nights when we showed films in the marketplace. I was so frightened at Nyeri when the darkness closed in and people I didn’t know surrounded me. All I could see was the gleaming white of their eyes and teeth as
they were asking me questions in broken English and telling me I didn’t work because I had soft hands. Ann was there for me then, linking her arm through mine to lead me away from a drunk man who wanted to talk to me. Remembering all of these things made the thought of leaving her in two days hurt so badly that my eyes filled with tears. I was glad to see Elijah coming over to join us because I knew talking to him would take my mind off leaving.

“What are you doing?” Elijah asked with his beautiful smile that seemed bigger than the rest of his face. I explained to him that we were “reflecting” in the moonlight and that he was welcome to join us, so he lay down beside me and kept the silence as long as he could. Before too long had passed, however, Elijah had to talk and began asking questions that neither Ann nor I wanted to answer just then. “What makes you attracted to a guy?” Elijah asked, and I decided to let Ann answer that question. As I listened to her talk about what kind of boy she liked, I let my mind wander back to that Friday night at Nyeri when she told me about David: what she felt for him and how he returned those feelings. She told me about the songs he sang and played for her on his guitar and the sweet things he said. She told me I was the only person she could talk to because in Kenyan culture, she could never talk to her parents about a boy she liked. She was so excited about him that I got excited too. I smiled so much listening to her talk that I was still smiling when I woke up the next morning. I looked up as my thoughts came back to what Ann and Elijah were talking about and saw David himself walking over to where we were and lying down to join the conversation.

The three of them talked for awhile, but I just wanted to be still and listen. As I heard their soft accents and the random Kiswahili words they threw into the conversation, I began to realize how closely their lives had been tied to mine. I thought about Ann again and how much I would miss her friendship. She had accepted me, not just as an American, or a Mzungu with money, or a missionary,
but as a true friend. I knew I couldn’t think about the sadness of leaving, but instead the wonderful chance I had to spend two more days with her. So I looked up at the white roundness of the moon and listened to the crashing waves and let my mind reflect.

Sweet Deceptions
Mallori Lesh

Peace aches within my soul
Tranquility screams inside my head
Gentleness is pounding at my heart
Humbleness boasts in my ear
Joy sings her lament in my brain
Modesty flaunts herself before my eyes
Truth whispers sweet deceptions in my ear
Love... love sings her simple song...
But no one can hear it.
Mudprints
Danielle Schadeck
Crumbling
Christine Becker

She hides behind this dark veil of parchment and waits.
She waits for a time to bellow and rant and Love,
beyond the constraints of a crumbling exterior.

I touch her face, recoil.
Coarse, yellowed, crumbling.
Musty, flaking, raspy.
I fear for her ability to cry out.

If I cause her pain she can do nothing but offer pleasantries.

Masses mill around and demand a pained performance.
They are entertained by her beauty behind the crackled curse.

I want to cool her brow and offer a new beginning,
a start without the curse of pain.
I want to close her eyes and lay her head to rest without the demands of her admirers.

If I offer her a drink she can do nothing but refuse.
just
Megan Williams

his eye contact
was for a moment
my heart leaped
from fear/anticipation
memories were startled
flashback from the moment
another man was with me
the one in my memory
the one from behind me
the one in the dark
the one who touched
the feel of the large hands
once again
only this time it’s daylight
in a meeting
with my employer
he slowly rubs my bare neck
as a demonstration
of sexual harassment
of a professional “Don’t”
yet he never asked
to come behind me
to touch my shoulders
my shoulders
my narrow female shoulders
that hold most males away
that lifted my son
from his crib
to draw him close
for one last kiss
my narrow female shoulder
that this male wrapped his hands around
that this male caressed
without caring
he never asked
if he could touch me
from behind
yet I was just a demonstration
not a woman
not a violation
a demonstration
of an employer's violation
so as a male authority
he assumed that my narrow female shoulders
were his
were his to use
to violate
because I am merely a female
a female demonstration
that does not need to be asked
to be touched
especially if it's only
on my narrow female shoulders
that are assumed unable
to carry such a burden
as the decision
as to whether or not
they wish to be touched
by a male
from behind
Me
Nicole Caez

Being swallowed by your shadow,
    I need to be me.

The comparison is unbearable,
    I need to be free.

I'll step out of your spotlight,
    Forget about me.

I'll stand in the corner,
    Where I should be.

My name is forgotten,
    It hurts so bad.

I'm confused with the other,
    Then I turn mad.

I want to break from the shell,
    My own smile shining.

    Share the light with me,
    I swear I'll quite my whining.

All I'm asking for is acceptance,
    Wanting nothing more.

I try so hard to make you proud,
    But maybe I'm a bore.
So, I guess I'll just let it go,
Only wanting to be free.

I'll go stand in my corner
Don't anyone mind me.

Self Portrait #2
Timothy Koerner
Just a Piece
Adam Cheek

Standing below straining
Trying to look from above
Tunnel vision opens my eyes
Finally seeing the whole from the few
People walk around with their religion on their back
Hanging it up at their convenience
As they pass by a beggar
Acting as if he didn’t exist
As they walk away the beggar flies away
Never knowing he was an angel
Seeing people only by the color of their skin
Not as fellow children of God
Easily pointing out other’s mistakes
While trying to forget their own
Judging people by what they know
Not by who they are
Praising God when times are good
Doubting Him when times are bad
They only see what they want
Only ever seeing just a piece of God’s plan, if EVER
Check Yes or No
Laura Herbert

I was never an adolescent. It is unusual, to say the least, to make it to the age of 20 without hitting adolescence, but somehow I managed it. My growth did not defy all the laws of time and space in order to skip this stage. I took the normal amount of time to make it from the age of thirteen to the age of eighteen. I went to Jr. High and High School, I learned how to drive, and I lived with my parents. I was, from the outside view, an adolescent.

Closer inspection revealed a few slight differences between my friends and me, however. While my life seemed normal, I did not experience life in the same way the other teenagers did. For instance, I could not grasp what there was about any boy two feet shorter than me that would make my friend write him a note that said, “Do you like me? Check yes or no.” Also, my classmates would pass me little notes that were intricately folded, telling me how bored they were and what they did the past fifteen minutes of class. I never knew how to respond. Should I commiserate with their boredom, even though I really enjoyed the class? Should I compliment them on mastering a certain folding technique? Should I write them back during the school day, starting every message with “Hey, girl, what’s ↑” and ending with “BFF” (Best Friends Forever) or “LYLAS” (Love You Like A Sister)? I ended up resolving my conflict using the avoidance technique – thanking them for the note, but never responding. This ignorance of standard teenage protocol persisted throughout those giggling, flirting, and gossiping boy-crazy years. When the worlds of note sending and boy-craziness collided in the form of love letters to my friends, I showed my romantic side by going through and proofreading the notes. No matter how nice a boy he was, he should never be allowed to spell honey as h-u-n-n-y. Of course, those boy-girl relationships changed once we got into high school. Instead of giggling and whispering, females began to cry and pout. People went from “not putting a label on their relationship” . . . to seeing each other . . . to dating . . . to being boyfriend and girlfriend . . . to being life-long bitter enemies. I was just as confused by the different levels of relationships as
were the boys on whom these labels were imposed. Around this time, I started to hear rumors of rebellious teens, bad attitudes, and the Backstreet Boys. People began to smell different after lunch break, and several faces stopped making their appearance at all at the high school. I just went on with my ordinary busy life, playing board games with my family, being heavily involved in school and church, and watching videos with my friends. The taint of Generation X never had time to catch me.

I continued my happy emotionally simple life into college, never hating my parents, struggling with my identity, or liking the Backstreet Boys. When I turned twenty years old, I looked back at my teenage years. I was exultant to realize that I had made it through the “most difficult time of my life” with few or no mishaps. I was proud to be adolescence-free. Life at Olivet was straight-forward and happy. However, sometime in my sophomore year, I got a pain in my stomach that wouldn’t go away. Since I had never been boy-crazy, I had no idea that a head-over-heels crush was so remarkably like appendicitis. David became the focus of all my thoughts. Of course, not being used to being boy-crazy or an adolescent, I had no idea how to act. I tried objectively writing out how I felt in order to get a handle on myself and move on, but I just ended up wanting to write “David + Laura = True Like” all over my journal. Needless to say, the journal writing ended quickly. I tried ignoring him, but I was always wondering if he noticed that I was ignoring him. I wondered whether or not it bothered him that I ignored him. Maybe he was ignoring me for the same reason I was ignoring him! I would never find out if all I did was ignore him. Maybe I should talk to him, but if he were watching me to see if I was ignoring him too, then it would throw off my strategy. He would never know that I was interested in him!

It was all so confusing that I just ended up sitting in the cafeteria staring at him. I tried my best to giggle and flirt just enough, but not too much. While sending him notes in class would have been a little too obvious as college students, I did start sending random e-mails to a long list of my friends for the sole purpose of seeing whether or not he would respond personally. My lowest moment came when I offered to give him a ride home over the
holidays so he could “help me stay awake while driving.”

After months of this torture, David and I began dating. In the past year and a half, we have established a mature and rational relationship. I have made it through my late adolescence and have once again begun to act the lofty age of 22. David and I can drive ourselves for dates, and we don’t have curfews. However, despite my newly regained adulthood and hard-won maturity, every once in a while I still feel the urge to write him a little e-mail that inquires, “Hey, hunny. Do you like me? Check yes or no.”
Dali and his oils
Chad Schumacher

i tried to forget, but memory persists.
it oozes like time
down into cranium cracks,
running laps
    round the cerebrum tracks, cackling
    at the child
like old women on the porch. who have lived too long.
a dim and bitter charcoal torch drenched
    by siren song, i’m left alone
    and scattered on the rocks to ponder.
life blissfully wanders by,
    paying me not the
slightest bit of mind.
    we’re indifferent to each other
i sit on the curb,
    just round the corner from time.
Memory joins me there. we talk of her,
    and of my mistakes.
Whispering Wind
Noelle Sefton

The calming breeze
Delicately lifts the blossom up
Wraps itself around the stem
And releases

Like a dance
It sweeps from side
To side
As I note a crispy leaf
Floating aimlessly to the ground

The murmurings of the birds
Are full in my head
When did I notice they were there?
My gaze falls down

Back to the same blossom
Still dancing beautifully
In the same whispering wind
Winter Solitude

Tamara Jarvis
Life as a Tree
Jenni Bast

Our lives are like the trees
We begin as seeds in the womb, planted with love
We are born, sprouting leaves
In youth we are weak and vulnerable
People try to guide us and strengthen us
Others try to prune us, so we grow back stronger
Over time we develop branches, character
We each mature differently, unique in traits
Our roots deepen, heritage
We change with the seasons, adapt
We have our seasons of color
And our seasons of barrenness
We require the Son for light
Without it we could end up as firewood
You can see our lives by looking within
Our droughts and blooms are evident
One day we will die – people will remember us
They will stumble upon our roots later in life
They will sit on our stumps and reflect on the good times
In the little things they will find our mark on the worlds
They may try to remove us,
But our roots are deep and twisted in the earth
Limitations
Katie Bennett

I rise to sing this seeker song
Religion bearing its finest light
Could it be we have God all wrong?

The music surfaces out of the fog
And catapults toward truth's distant light
I rise to sing this seeker song

To understand I passionately long
But mortality impedes my sight
Could it be we have God all wrong?

His understanding surpasses the throng
While all its words emerge as trite
I rise to sing this seeker song

The dark is just before the dawn
But black is too easily translated white
Could it be we have God all wrong?

While I my life on earth prolong
Death's misgivings mumble fright
I rise to sing this seeker song
Could it be we have God all wrong?
Moments with a bee
Erin Rumble

My mind fills with thoughts,
Emotions race.
Too busy to observe the world around me,
Or be calm in the afternoon breeze.

A bee hovers across the grass,
Lands on the page, annoying me.
I brush him off,
He falls writhing to the ground.
I’m angry he cut into my confusion.
I crush him with my shoe.
And he is dead.
No longer twitching in the grass.

The ants creep in,
Examining the still corpse.
Before they can remove him,
A rescuer appears.
I watch him struggle to save his friend,
I wonder at his attempt.

But the first bee lies dead,
No longer convulsing in the grass.
His hero gives up.
The ants return,
Carrying away the mangled bee.

I watch them disappear,
And return to my web of thoughts.
Hiss
Christine Becker

Flicker and
Twirl and
Dazzle and
Amaze

as the dark light dims your shine.

Speed and
Gain and
Dizzy and
Blur

without a care for the boundaries.

Scuff and
Tumble and
Scrape and
Shatter

realizing the constraints of a promise.

Smooth and
Regain and
Control and
Breathe

drawing the glare into your burning lungs.

Totter and
Canter and
Prepare and
Leap

for the whole world witnesses your genius.
Egyptian Kitty
Tamara Jarvis
Lisa
Timothy Koerner
I wrote this for you on September 5, 2002. Blackened room, greyish interior, with little light allowed to enter the cell. Two shadows stood at the door. The urine-smelling room made the shadow nauseated. The floor stained with vomit, the cement walls scratched by nails. Shrieks and cries sporadically exited the disgusting dungeon. Against the far corner lies a shuddering being. Her pale, dirt-stained face is pointed away from the slight light, the slight sense of hope. Her eyes are locked shut. She has kept them closed so tight for so long. Her torn brown clothes are not even worthy to be called rags. Her malnourished body tells of her pain with each bruise and scar. Her fetal-positioned body curled around an unseen object, held by her hands. The two walked toward her and rolled her motionless body to face them. Clutched between her bony fingers was her wounded heart. Vulnerable. Bruised. Exposed. Still beating ever so gently, it screamed of the hurt inside her. She gasped as she sensed the two before her. Gently, the shadows kneeled down beside her. Taking a deep breath, they compassionately tried to peel back her fingers. Her eyes shot open as she winced from their soft touch. In defense, she clutched tighter onto her broken heart, only causing pain to herself. ‘What can they do – she thought. It’s my hurt – my story – I’ll fix it.’ But these loving shadows weren’t wondering about what she did to deserve this but humbly what they could do to help. Knowing now that she’d never let go of her broken pieces, the two started again. This time, not peeling her fingers back, but instead placing their hands over the uncovered areas. Then they waited. Together. For the Mender to come. Matthew 9:2
How Much is Enough?

Ranea Surbrook

When will you realize
That the time to act is now?
Where do you think it will end?

When will you realize
That you already have enough,
And it will all go to waste in the end?

People are dying
Because of our selfishness
People are starving
Because of our gluttony

When will you realize
That your credit card can’t
Rebuild what’s already been destroyed?

When will you realize
That things have taken over?
Clothes,
    Shoes,
    The television,
    And our stereos!

People would have enough
If we would let go
    Of conveniences
People would not go hungry
If we would only take
    Our fair share
So just answer me this
And I’ll leave you alone…
How much is really enough?
The Price
*Ryan Cummings*

His mom chose a hammer

To pound away at life’s problems

His dad chose a screwdriver

To redo some choices that he has made

His sister chose some paint

To cover up her hurt, anger, and bitterness.

His brother chose a wrench

So he could twist his lies into truths.

But He, He chose the nails.

To use them on himself
To be bound to a cross
For their problems
Their choices
Their attitudes
Their lies
and their sins.
Icon #1
Timothy Koerner
The Child

Jenni Bast

Every move I make
A child secretly observes
Noting my mistakes and triumphs
I live life carelessly, thoughtlessly
I pretend to play by the rules
Failure
Still, the child observes

I look back for witnesses
I am safe, not a soul in sight
Then – the shadows alter
It is the child, observing
He surely did not see me
My shortcomings, my imperfections
Yet the child has seen too much

The child has grown and the roles reverse
He follows my footsteps
I attempt to prevent his failure
Yet he refuses my advice
For years he has observed my life
He must learn for himself –
Failure
Determination
Laura Herbert

One twinkle in the darkness lights your mind
With hope and purpose, but the vast open
Midnight is so wide that you must grope in
Vain to reach beyond where you’re confined.
If you can do anything more, why bind
Yourself to earth? So you boldly hope in
The stars so high, but the height you jump in
Naïve pride still leaves you far behind.

You concentrate on your destination,
But have you thought of how to make the trip
From solid Earth to your glittering star?
My mind is filled with determination-
To find in my world a shabby starship
Whose slow, steady pace could take me that far.
Metamorphosis
Rachel Willoughby

Encased in these white walls I sit,
As a hush hoves and blankets me.
In this strange stillness that is my womb,
I tremble within from all that is new
In transition I wait; I Begin.

My heart continues to play its
Predictable pattern and my mind,
still circulating senses, filters stimuli.
In acknowledgment of the being that I still am.
   as I wait, I live on; I Breathe.

Timely change is my encumbering chains,
   Forged in the flame of potential,
Hinting as what lies in the unknown while
   Binding me in this haze of curiosity.
   Still in waiting, I Believe.

Dangling in the delicate balance
Of what has been, and what remains yet obscure,
Elusive to my striving hands that reach to understand,
   As I squirm to see and call out to listen.
   In this waiting, I Beckon.

Crawling to walk, and walking to run,
I journey onward in this motionless state and
Because this burning churns, it scrapes, scours and shines,
   I fight, I yield, I dance and then I can fly.
   Through this waiting, I Become.
Eye of the Earth

Brian James Reinicke
A Final Note of Thanks from the Editor

To My Staff: Thank you for your patience and for all your help. This year we were swamped with great entries, and I would have been lost without you.

To Brian: I cannot express my gratitude for all the work you did. I really needed someone with your knowledge and expertise, and you were everything and more.

To Sara: Thank you so much for all your work and for putting up with my flustered questions. You were a stabilizing force in this whole process.

To Professor Forrestal: You were a wonderful influence at keeping me on track and answering all my questions. Thank you so much.

To God: To the one who made this all possible in the first place, I express eternal gratitude. Without you, there would be no inspiration for any of the writing in this little magazine. You make all things possible.