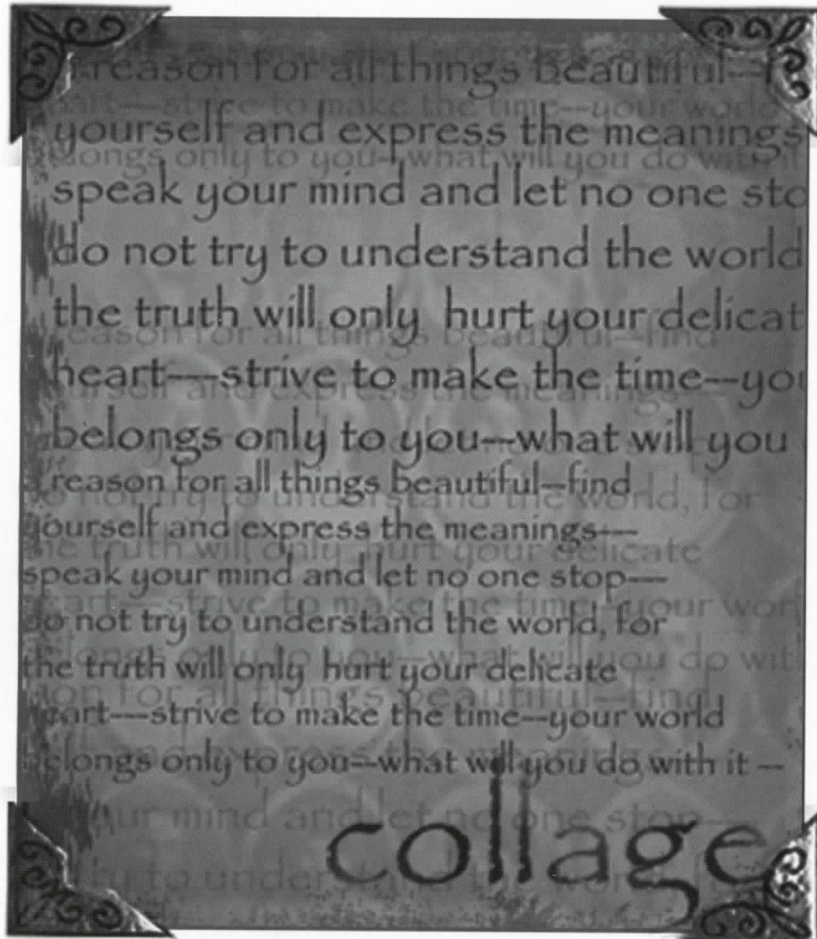


reason for all things beautiful--find
yourself and express the meanings---
speak your mind and let no one stop---
do not try to understand the world, for
the truth will only hurt your delicate
heart---strive to make the time--your
world belongs only to you--what will you do
with it --


collage

collage



ISSUE 1

2002/2003



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collage is the student-produced biannual magazine of middle tennessee state university. a student editorial staff reviews and selects submissions. collage reserves the right to make technical corrections. the views expressed in collage belong to the authors and artists, and do not necessarily reflect the views of collage., student publications, the mtsu student body, faculty, staff or administrators.

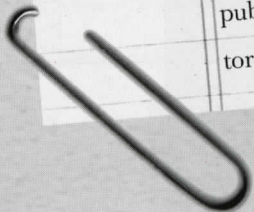


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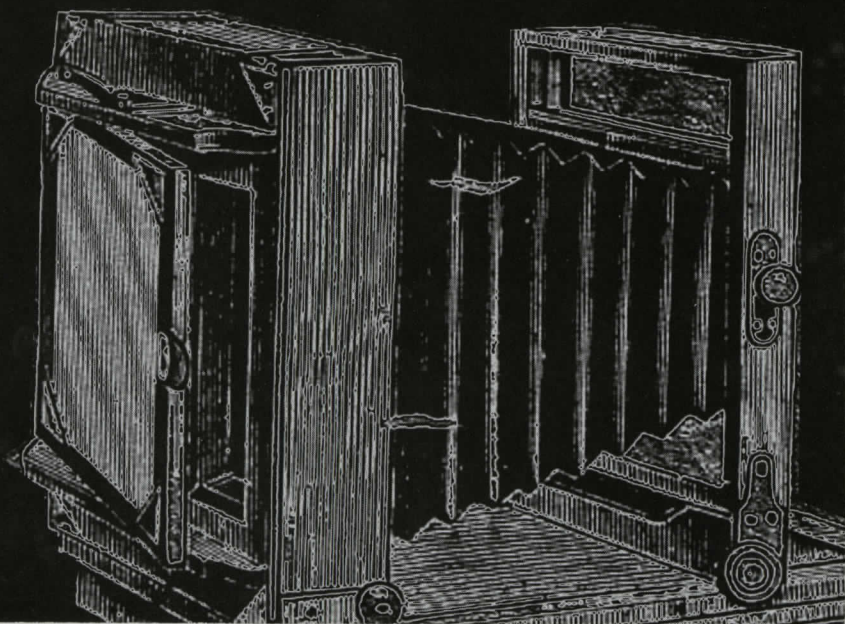
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photography
poetry
art



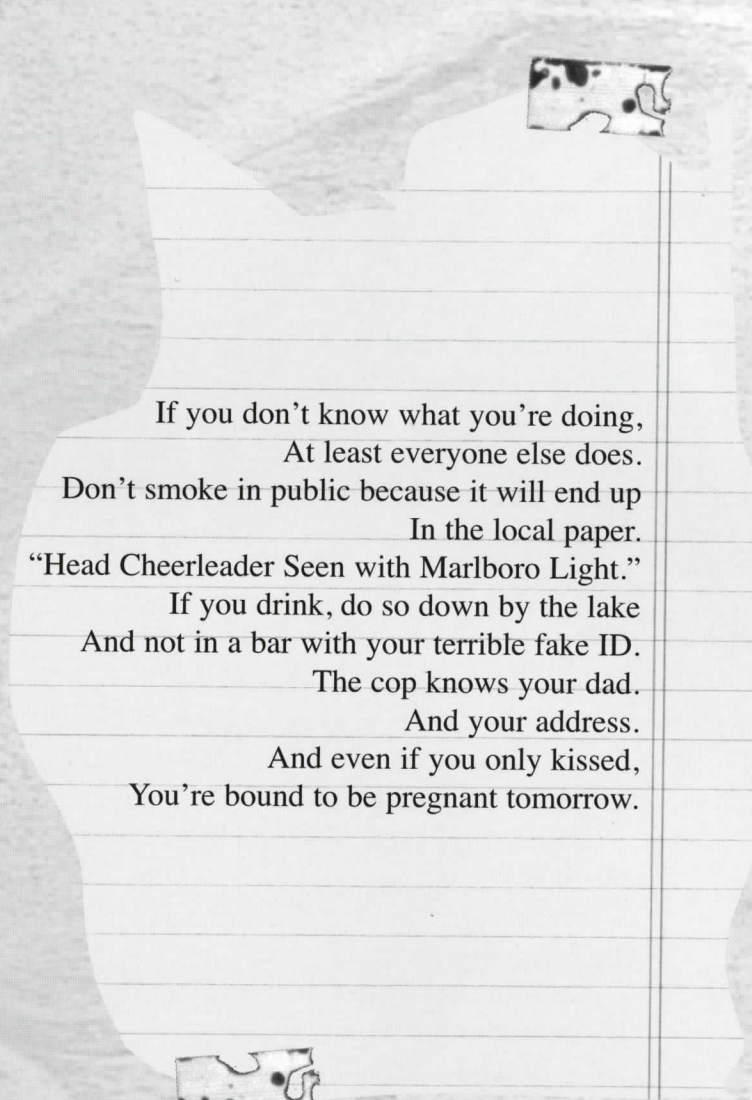
Jonathan Trundle

closing time on a saturday afternoon at willies auto parts



Small Town

Carrie S. O'Neal

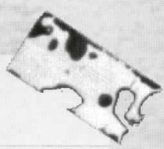


If you don't know what you're doing,
At least everyone else does.
Don't smoke in public because it will end up
In the local paper.
"Head Cheerleader Seen with Marlboro Light."
If you drink, do so down by the lake
And not in a bar with your terrible fake ID.
The cop knows your dad.
And your address.
And even if you only kissed,
You're bound to be pregnant tomorrow.

collage

Blackwater River

I.M. Stone



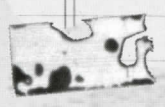
We sighted a pale mass
Across the water
Seeming to hide beneath
A canopy of roots.

A huge turtle with gray skin.
I looked to Christopher, his flesh
Pink with life,
Mine dripping sweat.

Her size made her more grotesque.
She was the length of a human leg.

We paddled the canoe closer to the scene.
Her massive shell was soft to the touch,
Flexible

Her rotten body bloated,
Neck stretched long from being pulled
By the current of the river.
Strangled with a cord,
Murdered and left to rot.



collage




B. Huffman Nov 2

Rodney Huffman

the old man down by the river





Another one sneaks up from the corner,
A surprise attack.
This one's cocky. I can tell
By the way he holds his Bud Light,
Gripping the neck of the bottle.
"So where you from?" Mr. Originality asks.
And so it begins, and
Women's intuition tells me
This guy doesn't know shit about women.

The answer never matters.
I could chirp "Venus" and you would still grin
That goofy frat boy grin and not get the joke.

"Are you tired? You've been running through my mind..."
Yeah, yeah. You can just see yourself
In my pants, that's all.
Must be the mirror I keep there
For just that purpose.

Scrambled. I like my eggs scrambled,
Not fertilized, not like you'll be cooking
Them for me in the morning anyway.

Hey buddy. You wanna get laid? Ask me
What I think about Nietzsche. Ask me
To share a bottle of Merlot on a merry-go-round
At three o'clock in the morning. Tell me
How you backpacked across Europe and fell in love
With an Italian girl you only spent hours with.

Don't look at my breasts, look in my eyes!
Buy me a dirty martini and tell me
Every guy in this bar is jealous,
Just 'cause you're talking to me.
Is that so hard?
Think you can manage?

Maybe then you'll convince me that
My clothes would look better
In a pile on your floor.

The Pick-Up Artist

Carrie S. O'Neal

Jonathan Trundle

jr's foodland



JR'S FOODLAND
Super Market
333 EAST MAIN STREET
MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

BINGHAM'S COUNTRY HAM
99¢
LB.

TENNESSEE PRIDE COUNTRY SAUSAGE
\$1.59
LB.

BRYAN SLICED BACON
\$1.39
LB.

LONDON BROIL STEAK
\$1.99
LB.

...your mind and let no one
...try to understand the wo
...with will only hurt your delica
...strive to make the time--
...things only to you--what will yo
...for all things beautiful--find
...and express the meanings--
...your mind and let no one stop--
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...only to you--what will you do with
...and let no one stop--
collage

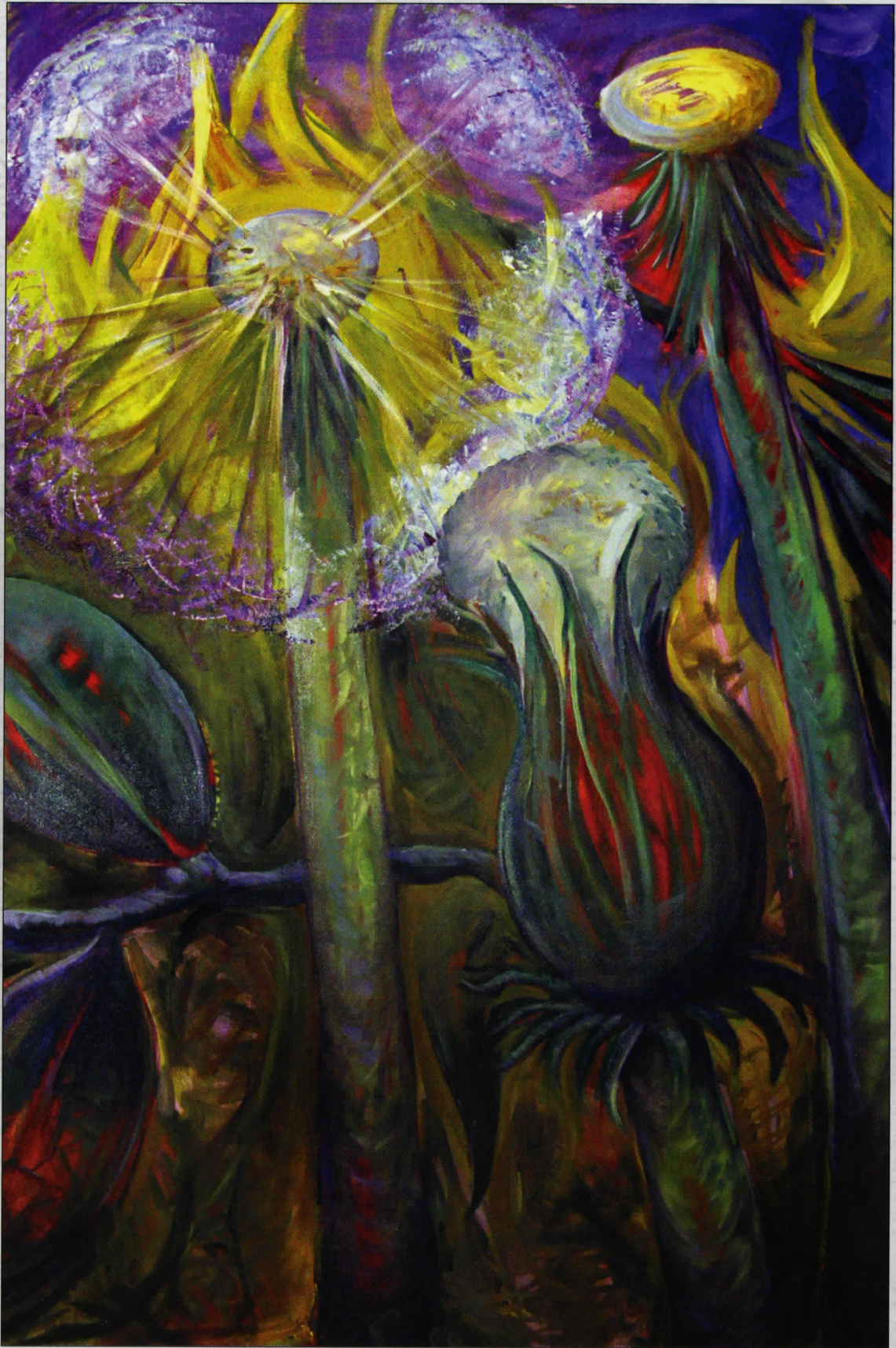
Jeremy Munday

bannana tree



Speak your mind and let no one stop you
Do not try to understand the world, for
the truth will only hurt your delicate
heart—strive to make the time—your world
belongs only to you—what will you do with
it—reason for all things beautiful—find
yourself and express the meanings—
speak your mind and let no one stop
you—do not try to understand the world, for
the truth will only hurt your delicate
heart—strive to make the time—your world
belongs only to you—what will you do with
it—

collage



joshua m. smith
untitled





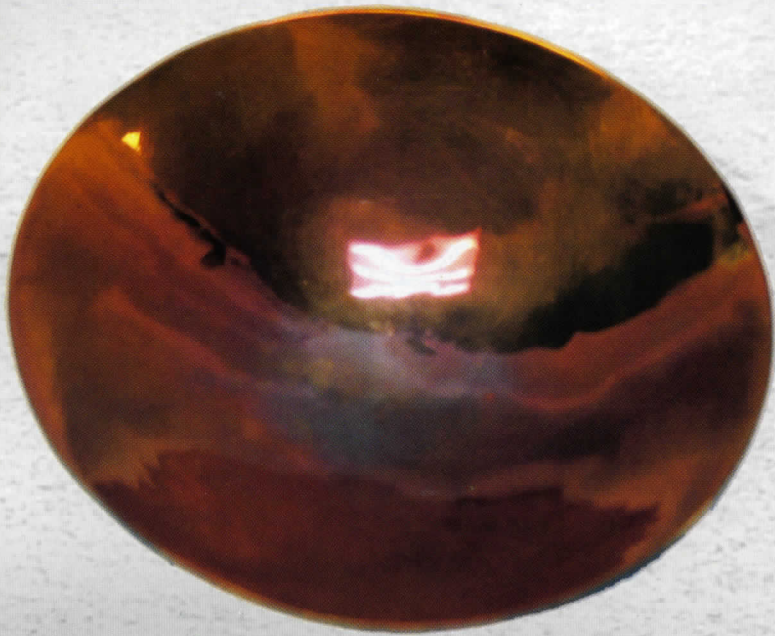
Jeremy Munday
el moto





Jeremy Munday
the study

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your mind and let no one stop--
try to understand the world, for
th will only hurt your delicate
strive to make the time--your world
only to you--what will you do with i
and let no one stop
collage



shallow bowl

deep bowl

Linda Feagans

follow your dreams



our...
peak your mind and feel never...
o not try to understand the...
ne truth will only hurt your delicate...
heart--strive to make the time--...
elongs only to you--what will you do with...
ason for all things beautiful--find...
yourself and express the meanings--...
peak your mind and let no one stop--...
not try to understand the world, for...
truth will only hurt your delicate...
art--strive to make the time--your work...
ongs only to you--what will you do with...
collage



Linda Feagans
destruction came in the morning



Brian Matthews
the self



In this house where we live, the incomprehensible
Has happened. The sun always streams in here,
Through blinds or panes, imprisoning, releasing,
Making things clear. Trees in the yard
Stand their distinct ground. Distant mountains
Are majestic. I mean there is life, that it's everywhere.
We try to notice. It's harder now, more difficult
Since he died, to pay attention to the simplest
Truths: Brush your teeth after coffee,
Layer yourself in cold weather,
Hold onto your wife, hold onto your husband,
As hard as you can. With a small blue pistol
We keep in the nightstand,
Our four-year-old son shot himself to death.
After our son is gone, after we each drop a rose
Onto his coffin, my wife stares at MTV for a month,
Unwashed in her bathrobe, on the couch, her hands
Used for little but placing potato chips onto her tongue,
One by one, throughout the day. After a month,
I stop beating the refrigerator, the mantles,
The smooth, varnished tables. My wife rises up
Off the sofa, declares herself sane. She showers,
Goes back to work, comes home with a dog and cat.
"I stole the cat," she says, "from a dumpster."
The dog's from Animal Welfare.
I pet the dog, let the cat rub against my bare leg.
I push through the garage door, shut it behind me,
Look around. Plug in the blue-handled jigsaw,
Change to a sharper blade. Test the blade
On a square of vinyl siding. Sit with the saw
On a set of makeshift metal stairs. I begin, carefully,
To saw off thin layers of my flesh, thin jagged filets
Sliced from forearm, triceps, thigh.
With snaps of my wrist, I fling sticky pieces from the blade.
Blood sprays onto the metal steps, the concrete floor,
The display of tools arranged on hooks.
Our son does not appear, not even as a mirage.
He does not stick his head around a corner, smiling,
Or pee in his bathwater, or fall asleep in the hallway
In little pajamas, on his way to bed. "He's disappeared,"
I say to my wife as I stand in the kitchen,
Skinned and bloody, saw in hand. "He's not coming back."
My wife drives me to the hospital, where the doctors
Stitch up and bandage what they can. They tell me I'll heal,
They explain scarring. The don't know
What they're talking about.

Scarring
Pablo Tanguay

collage

Reborn

Lindsey Palmer

As the world explodes into metal and ash, she dreams of being born. She dreams of sky and earth and sun, a pinwheel of living color. She smells her mother and remembers how she used to smile, as she watered her flowers in the windowsill. She feels her mother's peace. She remembers that she always loved flowers, because they made her mother smile.

The sound of falling bombs shatters her tranquility. Something whistles overhead, the hissing of death and decay as it slices through the air.

Cradled in the bowels of a makeshift trench, she tries to sit up, but the force of the constant explosion knocks her flat against the earth. As the smoke clears for a moment, she can vaguely make out the silhouettes of the men and women scaling the steep trench walls, only to be shot down by the opposition's fire.

She strains with all her might to rise and locate her friend- her last friend.

"Jonathan," she hoarsely whispers. "Where did you go?"

She sees him in her mind, his dark eyes full of conviction. His words echo in her ears.

"The world is dying," she hears him tell her, his voice riddled with exhaustion. "There are no more peace-makers." She sees him sadly shake his head. "The war to end all wars will end us too."

She remembers hurting. She remembers how the defeat in his words burned into her heart. She remembers him telling her that he is going to the battleground. That he is wearing white, and walking unarmed between the lines. He will cry out for peace, she remembers him telling her, and they will not hear him.

She remembers crying. She tells him she will go with him. She remembers that he smiles at her and fills her heart with the simple peace that the two of them have always shared.

"You are all that is left of the good in this world," she remembers him whispering. "You are the heart of what this was supposed to be."

Another missile screeches by, and somehow she pulls herself to her knees. Have I been sleeping? She asks herself. I came here with a purpose. She is disoriented, confused.

The heat of the fire blasts against her skin, and she covers her face with her hands. She feels the moisture on her fingers. Dazedly, she gazes down at her hands and sees that they are covered with blood.

But whose blood is this? A thin thread of fear cuts through the numbness that has enveloped her. She inspects herself stupidly, seeing no open wounds. The voice of war is distant to her, though it is all around her. She has not been here. She has not been knowing.

Through the fog in her mind, she sees a pinpoint of reality, and it rushes towards her now, bringing with it a pain she tries to ward off, a pain she can hardly bear. She whirls around, realizing before seeing that Jonathan's body is crumpled beneath her. She sees him again in her mind, running through the tall grass, white robe flying out behind him, sweat pouring down his brow.

He never made it to the front lines. One of his own shot him down before he ever made it to the middle ground where he had hoped to make his final statement of peace.

She sees him falling in her mind, down the side of a ditch. His arm is gone. His brother who had done this to him, spits on his head, then laughs angrily and turns back to the battle at hand. She sees herself, scrambling down into the ditch, grabbing him, holding him. She is screaming now at his dead body, knowing she has been cradling him for hours, knowing she will never see him smile again.

She holds his face in her hands and screams and screams until she is too tired to hurt anymore. And then she kneels prostrate in the growing darkness.

She hears his voice speaking in a part of her that is almost dead. "We are the last of the peace-makers." And as she trembles, and chokes on smoke and blood and fire, she thinks again of trees and rain and flowers. She thinks of loving, and she holds this thought until it becomes bigger than she is and swallows her up.

"I love Jonathan," she rasps between teeth clenched in defiance of the darkness here. "I love my mother." She stands, legs shaking beneath her. "I love the ones who were my friends." She stumbles over to Jonathan's body. "I love the ones who hurt us." She undresses in the angry blackness. "I love the ones who did not understand us." She puts on the robe and tries

collage

Jonathan Trundle

patrons of the
georgetown
drive-in



to smile at her dead lover. "I love the ones who were, who are, and the ones who will never have the chance to be."

She turns, and with her last reserve of strength, claws her way up the side of the ditch.

A hellish wasteland greets her eyes. Tattered bodies lay on top of crumbling machinery and blackened earth. The remaining troops are small and weak, fighting to the very last. No one is winning. In the distance she sees them loading the final weapon, the last resort. She sees that they are giving up on themselves as well as on the enemy. There is little time.

A deep sadness fills her. "I forgive you," she whispers to her dying world. "You have lost your way."

She is shaking with the love she feels, a love that burns her from the inside out. Lifting up her arms, she charges with all her might into the mouth of destruction. She runs.

In the distance, the final weapon thunders to life, casting forth a moving wall of fire and radiation.

Tears streaming down her face, she keeps running, her mouth open in a wild, frenzied song.

"Peace," she sings, as the bullets hit her, as the fire burns her. "Peace." As Jonathan would have done.

She sings for the earth and sky, and the sky envelops her as the world begins to disappear in a scorching blast. The sky fills her up and glows through her eyes, turning them a shining crystal blue. And suddenly she is standing on a timeless mountain, watching the world fall away. She is young and fresh, and speaks with the voice of a child. She speaks to the one she has always somehow known. She has been speaking to him for years.

"And I think now is the time to start again," she tells him, as the world trembles beneath her. "Have we passed the test? Even if there is only one..." She laughs triumphantly. "I love." She watches the world flicker out. "Let us try again. I love. I love. I love!" She laughs and laughs, and she cannot help it. She cannot stop laughing.



She's alone, with tattooed holsters on her hips.
My sons pick the space behind her
To lay towels, cooler, lotion, books.
There is too much ocean,
Too much foam, for me to see
Anything but the hips, the holsters—
Gunless, painted green and black
On brown skin.

I am not a good mother, particularly.
I sometimes want to drown my children.
Abandon them in parking lots, advise
Them to taste a stranger's candy.
My friends laugh, vote me
Mother-of-the-year. But still.

She swivels, looks over us toward
The sandy parking lot, toward Santa Barbara.
I try to arrange our things—
Straighten towels, put stuff in order,
Lotion the kids. But I can't stare.
Why did my sons pick this spot
To lay us down?

She swings back to face the ocean.
I relax a little, examine her
Without hair in my eyes. I order
The kids to the water, give the instruction:
Don't drown, your father will kill us.

She's tall, standing on her toes, perfect
Brown behind flexing holsters, brown
Back arched. She might lift and fly
Away, use her hair as wings. But I
Know she won't. Not with that body,
With those holsters. She is not flying
Anywhere.

I check my children: The older, Nick,
Rubs seaweed on his brother's head.
I lift *Memoirs of a Geisha*, try to read.
She lowers herself onto her towel,
Sliding slowly down into the lotus position
So that her holsters rest just above
The sand. I put down my book.

I saw a woman once with strawberries
Tattooed on her white thighs.
Once, under red neon in a nightclub
Bathroom, I kissed the barbed wire
Figure-eighting a pair of pink nipples.

Nick and Omar run back, wet and panting,
Splitting off at the woman to arrive
From either side, marking an oval
Sandprint around her. They dry off,
Smack each other, eat. I shoo them back
To the water. Go ahead, I say,
Drown this time. They say Aw, mom,
Run their oval path down to the ocean,
Their trail-lines becoming more distinct,
Encircling the woman.

I think of old Westerns, of corrals
And dust, of facing off against the law
And its men under high-noon suns.
Flee, sail high out into blue expanses,
Or stand and fight. The woman's
Options, with her uncomplicated posture,
Her straight long hair—with her holsters—
Are not so limited, I know.

I want to ask about the holsters, about
Their emptiness. What that could possibly
Mean. Raise my voice and say,
Excuse me, I couldn't help but notice...

I won't do this, of course. I won't talk
To her as a friend, or as a woman,
Or as people sharing the sand of a beach.
I will leave her in her circle and stare.
Maybe one night, when the boys are gone
With their father, I will see her in a dark bar,
Her holsters hidden. I will sidle up
And whisper: I know what you have,
Who you are, underneath. Would you like
A drink?

But this too will never happen. She will never
Be in a dark bar. Those holsters will never
Be covered. I will never
Buy her a drink. She rises, lifting her
Towel from the sand, and walks out of her circle,
Stepping carefully over my children's border.

Holsters

Pablo Tanguay





protective/feeling royal

Linda Feagans

me, thee and our three

t no one
nd the wo
your delic
he time--
hat will ye

for all things beautiful--find
self and express the meanings--
your mind and let no one stop--
try to understand the world, for
it will only hurt your delicate
strive to make the time--your world
only to you--what will you do with it
and let no one stop
collage

Poetry is as dead as Elijah.

Read a poem.

Read a thousand.

Read them all and

Dig through a dumpster
To discover a diamond,
Or have your heels hard-nailed
To the pavement by a lightning bolt,
Or hit the Georgia Lotto.

Your odds are better.

To Hell with your openness

And hollow snippets that say

As little as a waltz
Through stereo buttons
Waiting for the light to change—
A piece of this, a lazy snatch of that—
It slides off me as easily

As interest rates or domestic policy.

God pity our paupered children;

They have no inheritance.

Look around.

We have traded truth

For shoddy images and shallow musings—
Given passion to platitude—
Soiled ourselves in prattle
And shirk the question.

Posterity will crucify us

For what we are—children,
Hating ourselves too little.

Throw dirt on me

And let me rest;
It will feel good


Because I gave

One good Goddamn.

Antipoem

Stan Williams





to all who submitted work, the staff of collage thanks you. to all others who would like to submit for issue 2, we hope you will.

collage is an outlet for students to have work published and be recognized for the effort. please submit work to collage for publication and your portfolio.

work on issue 2, coming out in spring 2003, has begun so submit now. this is your chance to be published and have something to show for it. again, thanks to everyone for their help.

