gardy loo!
gardy loo!

jmu’s magazine of the arts

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jacob wascalus  editor
tim hartman  assistant editor
matthew ducker  prose
rachel kaplan  poetry
carrie edmonson  art
jen schero  photography
noelle jones  production girl
shane o’boyle  production boy
susan facknitz  advisor
elizabeth stein  advisor

our measly love to all of our staff

submission process:
all submissions are judged anonymously through a democratic process by the staff of gardy loo!

to submit:
send submissions to jmu box 8286,
include a cover page with name, phone number or e-mail,
and a list of works submitted.
do not put names on actual submissions.
submissions will not be returned unless otherwise noted.
questions? comments?
call:
jacob @ 434-8365 (wascaljj@jmu.edu)
or
tim @ 438-3036 (hartmatd@jmu.edu)
have a nice day.
# contents

## articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angela Stanley</td>
<td>Brianne Russell</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stitchface and Sock</td>
<td>Jacob Wascalus</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberley Hartman</td>
<td>Tim Hartman</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## photography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Cynthia Tinker</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Alex Vessels</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crucify</td>
<td>Jeanine Shiply</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leighton’s Chapel</td>
<td>Samantha P. Lentz</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris Tourse</td>
<td>Samantha P. Lentz</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untitled</td>
<td>Cynthia Tinker</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notre Dame Unleashed</td>
<td>Samantha P. Lentz</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## poetry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This Just In</td>
<td>Martha-Lynn Harrison</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face Painting</td>
<td>Chris Fleisher</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USEO</td>
<td>Kara La Fleur</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These Scary Things</td>
<td>J. Smith</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Day I Dumped Her For A Comic</td>
<td>J. Smith</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenadilla Wood or Rhapsody</td>
<td>Karen E. Place</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavored</td>
<td>Chris Fleisher</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Maya</td>
<td>Alexa Betch</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday and Feeling Small</td>
<td>Caroline Heath</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebelling</td>
<td>Jeanine Minge</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## prose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Untitled Love Story</td>
<td>Deborah Amusewicz</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs are Better</td>
<td>Lydia Contis</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Very Own Henry and June</td>
<td>Lively Miller</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Oct. 8, 1:17 am)</td>
<td>Dena Ghieth</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Editor’s Note**

Thanks for picking up gardy loo! We are pleased to present the latest installment of student work to the JMU community. Garly loo! has entered into its third year, a time often marked with trials of change and restructuring. After weighing the responses we received from our last issues, the editors of gardy loo! have decided it is necessary to address more issues and concerns surrounding the JMU artistic community. This means more coverage of student work and more focus on campus activities.

In this issue, we have taken measures by highlighting student artists as well as student artwork. Recognizing the talent and personal achievements of our peers is important because it creates a healthy environment in which students may pursue creative endeavors. With a healthy environment JMU may grow as an artistic community.

Garly loo! strives to be a diverse medium detailing the issues prevalent in the JMU artistic community. Perpetuating the arts is our utmost priority. The arts thrive on being inclusive, and gardy loo! wants to be the vehicle for that vision.

Being responsive to student needs is also a priority of gardy loo! We welcome comments, submissions, ridicule, and praise. Are we doing our job? Let us know by sending a letter to JMU box 8286. Thanks and please enjoy.

I love you,

Jacob Wascalus
“Ever since I was old enough to hold a crayon I’ve been into...art,” said Angela Stanley, JMU art graduate student. The bright colors of the autumn season contour the unique faces that peer anxiously, suspiciously, or happily out from the walls and into studio nine in JMU’s Zirkle House. The influence of Picasso and Matisse emanates from her representational art covering one wall, most of the self-portraits.

“I’m taking small sections of my representational pieces and blowing them up on these canvases,” she explained, motioning to another wall occupied with more abstract art pieces.

Angela’s latest endeavor focuses on simplification of the essential elements of earlier works, one interest she hopes to entertain by the time she leaves JMU. A first year graduate student, Angela graduated from Radford University in May with a Bachelor’s Degree in Fine Arts. Immediately after graduation, she took on an assistantship with one of her greatest mentors, Dr. Halidesalam, part of the tight-knit art department at Radford. Angela’s decision to further her study at JMU has turned into an exciting experience. Besides the six credits of studio art with Ms. Becky Humphrey, she finds Dr. Ana Dempsey’s modern art course revitalizing.

“It hits on what I’m doing now,” Angela said, “It’s changing the way I work.”

Angela finds JMU’s art community friendly and conducive to her progress. A native of Elk Creek in Southwestern Virginia, this is her first time venturing into a different area of the state.

“It’s different,” she smiled, “but in a good way. Student here are really involved in the artwork of others, there’s such an interest,” she says referring to the number of undergraduate and graduate students that make an effort to come out and see the student showcases at Zirkle House.

Angela’s plans following the completion of her M.F.A. include teaching studio courses at the college level. She also hopes to teach workshops for children so as to “plant seeds” in the minds of the young. When asked whether or not she aspires to have her own work showcased in a museum someday, Angela stressed rather the importance of the cohesion of the art community and the effect of it on society itself.

“Art is a historical record of our culture,” she explained. “I want people to be inspired by my work. If I can...
open up someone’s mind to art, that to me is a success in itself. There are far and few between who are rich. Everybody attempts avant-garde, not everyone makes it.”

Another of Angela’s influences, Kandinsky, represents what she considers “the art of the art.” She refers to the practice of conceptual art which places emphasis on the means and processes of producing art as well as the ideas conveyed, rather than on the production of art objects. Angela described her interest in allowing open interpretation of her work.

“I like to know what people think. I would just like them to be able to appreciate it, not necessarily like it,” she said. She used her mother, Kathy Sikes, as an example of someone who understands the importance of never discouraging the artist, but pushing for his or her strengths.

“She has an appreciation of the things I do,” she said expressing her thanks to her family for supporting her throughout her undergraduate schooling and for believing in her abilities.

Angela spoke of her annoyance with those that don’t consider art up-to-date with the ways of a modern, fast-paced world. She considers the art world an ever-changing atmosphere in which to participate. Deciding that she does not have a favorite piece of her own work, she explained that she will always be reaching for a higher level of improvement.

“Once you are satisfied with your work, you are inevitably putting a stop to your possibilities. It will be a long time until I can call myself an artist. That’s a strong title. I think I’m always learning, always evolving.”
“This Just In”
by martha-lynn harrison

Ladies and gentlemen, the President is dead.
Meanwhile, $150 worth of shrubbery is burned
down outside a local administrative building today.
Named after are bureaucrat William “Butch” Cassidy,
sources credit the site’s namesake with pivotal
advances in podiatrist’s rights--
Back after these messeges
Buy this detergent and you’ll get laid
Use deoderant, you social louse
We return with the story from the top of the hour
Benefactor of the massacred bushes,
Mrs. Bessie Haywood is in tears
that the boxwoods planted in
commemoration of her dog Elmer
have burned beyond repair...
“He was a clean dog,” Mrs. Haywood says.
The nation reels in the face of this tragedy
Children are questioning the existence of God
Fire stations nation wide brace themselves
for copycat arsonists
Innocent hedgerows!
Distraught philanthropist!
Concerned citizens are asked
to donate to Mo-Mo’s Klip ‘n Kurl.
And now onto sports with Bob...

Monrovia post office
FACE PAINTING by chris fleisher

Que quires
Y tu
Bien, bien. Y tu

On bronze unblemished cheek
I saw nothing.
Patiently waiting, awaiting
my paint to place upon him
the stamp of Mexico.
Dripping shallow into the red
not knowing where to go

where does it go, nino?
Red on top?

So white in the middle.
It looks about right
and I show him the mirror to
send him on his way but...

What?
Okay. Sorry.

Dip the black and
put it on him and
mix it in and
make him a Mexican

He returns to the fiesta.

“Selena”
“Selena”

I want the Mexican flag.

It's green- white- red

On the right.

Put some black in the middle

This is the Italian flag. Mexico has a thing in the middle

Thanks.
Disclaimer: The following article contains information obtained from a two hour conversation with the creators of *Stitchface and Sock*.

The creators of *Stitchface and Sock* have decided to unveil themselves. They’re taking off their disguises, coming out of hiding and letting the public hear their story. After four years of anonymity Bob and Marty Z. are prepared to face their enemies. Their comic has amassed its fair share of public disdain, has accumulated a wealth of ridicule, but Bob and Marty say they are ready to face the consequences of their actions. They ask for just one thing, though: your understanding. Although Bob and Marty admit that “they are probably guilty,” they maintain that they are mere “products of their environment.” Here’s the story:

**How Bob and Marty Met**

Bob and Marty spent most of their lives without knowing each other. When a mutual friend of theirs in high school independently recruited them for a band, the prospect of fortune and notoriety slammed to the forefront of their minds. Marty liked girls, Bob liked money. To them, their individual desires justified the creation of anything, but the idea of forming a band exceeded brilliance.

Marty owned a drumset and had been playing them for a few years; he quickly found himself the drummer. But Bob’s musical talents fell a little short. As an adolescent he never felt inclined to strum a guitar or bang a drum, and consequently playing instruments wasn’t included in his repertoire of talents. But he was fast—he was a nationally ranked high school sprinter—and he could certainly move, so his contribution to the band, he decided, would lie in self-exploitation: he was the dancer.

They called themselves the Disgusting Uncles. The sound they produced is unimportant to the story; rather, it was the accidental spill that Bob took during a show that led to their friendship.

“I was drumming and out of the corner of my eye saw Bob moving too fast,” Marty says. “I knew something bad was going to happen. He was just flailing his arms and jumping around in all sorts of directions. I had a drum fill and by the end of it Bob was on the ground writhing in pain.”

Bob had twisted his ankle. To everyone in the crowd this was a mere stage antic, a moment of humor, but to Bob it meant a visit to the emergency room and—ostensibly—the beginning of *Stitchface and Sock*.

“I crawled off the stage and sat holding my leg. It hurt. Everyone in the damn audience thought I was kidding. But I wasn’t,” Bob says. “Since I didn’t play an instrument the band kept on playing. Marty was still hitting his drums and the singer was still singing. But when I looked up this one time Marty was doing one of those neat drumstick-twirly things and somehow managed to give me a thumbs-
and Sock

Story by Jacob Wascalus
Art by Bob and MartyZ.

Disclaimer: The following article contains information obtained from a two hour conversation with the creators of Stitchface and Sock.

“My first Doug strip was three panels long. In it, Doug begins to think that his teacher is a chocolate bar. He’s hallucinating. When his hunger gets the best of him he gets up and tries to eat her,” Marty says.

Bob, meanwhile, had an absurd devotion to television. Previous to his 10th birthday, he regularly involved himself in the lives of his friends and family; he was active and social, and his guidance counselor found him normal and sane. But when his big double-digit day came his life was never the same. His parents had bought him a television set.

Bob set it up in his bedroom. There, he indulged himself in disgusting amounts of Nickelodeon, the Discovery Channel, the Sci-Fi Channel, Comedy Central, and any other station that happened to program something remotely interesting. He stopped playing after school and eventually lost most of his friends.

“I began to get pale,” Bob says. “My eyes started sinking deeper into my head, my mouth started hanging a bit, and drool would sometimes seep from my mouth and soak my shirt.”

Both his physical and social lives deteriorated. His parents once found him unconscious on the side of his bed after he had watched television for two consecutive days. Apparently, Bob vowed to watch every frame of every episode of a Scooby-Doo marathon but began “to feel weak” after consuming only Kit-Kats and Dr. Pepper’s for the entire 48 hours. Inadvertently, he missed two days of school, but for reasons he still doesn’t understand no one seemed to notice his absence.

“The only reason my parents found me was because of the odor they smelled coming from my room,” Bob says. “I mean, I was their only kid. How could they forget?”

This mishap led to what Bob refers to as “the most paradoxical punishment in the history of childrearing.” Instead of having to stay in his room, his parents forced him to play outside with his old friends to sharpen his dulled social skills and to regain the vitality in his wan appearance. It worked but nevertheless left a permanent indentation on his personality and wit.

up. How he did this I still don’t know, but that’s when we became friends.”

After the eventual demise of the Disgusting Uncles, they effortlessly maintained their friendship and began frequenting Asian cafes, roller-skate rinks, Marty’s attic and one of Bob’s places of employment, Chuck E. Cheese’s. These places, they say, were the forces responsible for the culmination of their present brand of humor.

Humor Background

In his adolescence when Marty had to wake for school, he often found himself sprawled on the ground after tripping over the stacks of National Lampoons and Mad magazines that littered his bedroom floor. He would flounder around and clumsily pick himself up, grabbing the issue closest to his hand to put in his backpack. At school, he would hide the magazine in an educational book and pretend to study; instead of being attentive, he would invariably alternate between daydreaming, doodling and reading.

The combination of these three activities propelled him to draw comic-like figures. The first complete comic strip that he designed was called Doug, a product that originated in his eighth grade math class to alleviate the pain he felt from multiplying fractions. Doug, Marty says, was about a large boy afflicted with an unnatural appetite and an uncontrollable mouth.
Currently, both Bob and Marty cite MTV’s Half-Hour Comedy Hour, Comedy Central’s Stand-up Stand-up and NBC’s Saturday Night Live as sources of inspiration.

“We stuck through SNL even during the dark ages,” Marty says. “From ’83 to ’87—they were tough years, but we were loyal.”

**Origin of Stitchface and Sock**

In the four years Bob and Marty have lived together they’ve seen a lot and experienced much. They’ve roamed the streets of Harrisonburg, spent precarious nights in Winchester brothels and escorted women to Staunton masquerade balls. They’ve slept under bridges, awoken next to train tracks and mopped in prison cells. They’ve frequented every diner and dive in Rockingham County yet are most intrigued by the enigmatic life of the one man responsible for their inspiration in drawing *Stitchface and Sock*: Ole Mista Grumble, a Harrisonburg elderly man from whom they often seek advice.

“Bob and I were walking downtown one afternoon and saw this guy sitting perfectly still way up high on this statue’s lap,” Marty says. “We couldn’t believe our eyes.”

“We went up to the guy and he didn’t even look at us. Just stared straight ahead and had this deadpan expression. So Bob asked him for the time. The guy didn’t even look at his watch, just went ‘Mphrghph’.”

Bob and Marty began visiting Ole Mista Grumble on a weekly basis to ask him questions, and each time they did they received the same response. At the same time, Bob had been taking a math class and had been doodling the first sketches of *Stitchface and Sock*. When he showed his drawings to Bob they decided to use their conversations with Ole Mista Grumble as the dialogue for a comic. They subsequently had their first panel of Stitchface and Sock printed in a September 1995 issue of the Breeze.

*Stitchface and Sock* became a success. That same year Bob and Marty received a Breeze “Pat” for “using unnecessary obscene language” in their cartoon. Also that year three other newspapers— Richmond’s Punchline, Budapest’s Breadline and Montreal’s J’ai Pete—began featuring *Stitchface and Sock*. To date, Bob and Marty have finished 154 episodes of the one panel comic.

Their most controversial *Stitchface and Sock*, “Pin the Tail on the Honkey”, received two reaction letters: one from the Office of Affirmative Action and another from someone whom Bob and Marty think didn’t attend JMU.

“When we opened this letter we got we couldn’t believe what we were reading. ‘I no that you thinke your funny, but your knot.’ Or something to that effect. We’re not exactly sure what this guy was upset about, but he did give us an idea for a comic.”

Comparisons, Allusions, Etc.

The following have been said of *Stitchface and Sock*:

* A literary comparison between Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men* and Bob and Marty’s *Stitchface and Sock* is referred to most often in defense of *Stitchface and Sock*’s literary merit. Stitchface parallels Lenny while Sock parallels George.
* Stitchface fears the world—he speaks in code—much like T.S. Eliot’s J. Alfred Prufrock (of his poem “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”). Both are the anti-hero.
* Bob and Marty feel their own deaths will shockingly parallel that of Edgar Allen Poe’s: ditch and alcohol.
* Bob and Marty have made two Stitchface and Socks using Thoreau’s theme of simplistic pleasure as the backbone of the strip’s plot. One discusses the enjoyment sock receives after he is worn by someone and walked on (taken from Thoreau’s Walking). The other discusses Stitchface’s origin as being carved from an apple tree (taken from Thoreau’s Apple Picking).
* Bob often wakes to find his hair resembling Robert Kennedy’s, while Marty blurs out “errrrahhh” when he speaks as a space filler, much like John Kennedy.
* F. Scott Fitzgerald sold many of his short stories to journals and magazines to accommodate his excessive lifestyle. The Breeze pays Bob and Marty five dollars per episode of Stitchface and Sock to accommodate theirs.
* Much like John Cheever’s common subject of suburban life, Stitchface and Sock is the result of suburban humor.

The following have been the most commonly mentioned references.

Bob and Marty would like gardy loo! to mention that they will no longer be producing Stitchface and Sock. Instead, Bob will pursue his own endeavor, a new comic called Ask Grampa, while Marty pursues pie and ice cream.

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**NOTICE**

gardy loo!'s Research and Fact Checking Team found an interesting historical fact worthy of notice. During the 1920s an Buddhist monk who immigrated to the United States as a missionary began a comic strip that reflected much of what he observed in America. Sockhead and his Stick, the comic’s title, had a main character living in New York City who sat on sidewalks and watched as people walked by. The resemblance between Stitchface and Sock and Sockhead and his Stick give gardy loo! reason to question the veracity and authenticity of Bob and Marty’s responses to our questions. Indeed, to their entire existences.

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4/27/1927

“Sockhead & His Stick”

circa: 1927

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HEY, STITCHFACE, WANNA GO SHOOT SOME HOOPS?
Mphgrphgh....
OH, YEAH, I FORGOT - WE HAVE NO BALLS.

- You heard it here! - HeRe

---

HEY, STITCHFACE, YOU KNOW HOW WELL I PERFORM SEXUALLY?
Rphrghsht...
WELL, I COULD TELL YOU OR YOU COULD JUST CALL YOUR MOTHER TO FIND OUT...

Hah, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha...

....... sorry.

- Mom, jokes hurt - Marty928
The above panel is *Ask Grampa*, Bob's latest comic endeavor.

"Hey, stitchface. I found a dollar. What should I do with it?"

"Grumph..."

"No, I'm not giving it to you..."

"Maybe..."

"Because, you'll waste it. Also because I hate you."

"I don't really hate you. I guess I'm just figuring you're greedy."

"Hey, Stitchface, this is my friend, lil pimp. He's the business man with the nice threads baby."

"I'm sure he can help you out, but remember, you play-you pay, tudokey."

-- He'll cut you. Don't make him cut you. --

"Hey, Stitchface. Have you ever gone to a university?"

"Meh..."

"Well, I have, but it didn't really work out. See, I thought college was when you paste together a bunch of pictures on one page."

-- Bob & Marty Zir. On the business of amusing your avoids act. --
USEO
by kara la fleur

there was no dressing room in this left-over
space—only vain dresser drawers
missing chairs
under some one else's
hidden
memories
braided lamp
cotton hankerccheifs
swinging beads

lingere' rack of
white frilly frocks

marionette
puppets
hung from
a few strings
cashiers counters jumbled with mothbeaten oddments

the little black three piece i wanted $45
the nonfitting green velveteen dress
(conforming) i bought $08
luscious black ankle length faux velvet $95
white trimmed black false fur $95
lemon yellow Doris Day fur wrap $30
navy lin'n calf length duster with perfect
pockets i bought $15/25
discount coat rack $8/10/50

mahogany with pearl
dresser knobs
little plates
nooked in

micellaneous items
so cramped
piled, the store
clerk must step onto
wool hats to obtain
any item over here

shelves of dusty boxes
square shaped objects
grey gloves books
mildewed programs of
former star's broadway
experiences with fame

dust caked window it is silver grey more than clear gloss

chiming door

larder loo!
Untitled
by Alex Vessels
If you've ever wondered what David Lynch's *Blue Velvet* was all about, Kimberley Hartman may be able to help you. A Senior English and Secondary Education major, Hartman's poetry reflects what she calls "the underbelly of society." Film Noire and 80's Brit music have shaped her poetic styles to reveal the sensual and the dark. "When you talk about the underbelly of society, the sensual is part of that," she says.

Her favorite color is purple. Her favorite foods are pasta oriented dishes. She wakes up at 7:30 am on weekdays and 9:30 on weekends. She's engaged. She's passionate about the fifties pop scene in Hollywood.

Currently, she is writing a biography on forgotten fifties icon, Sal Mineo. "He's an old, dead actor," said Hartman. Hartman is resurrecting his name by running a web page in his honor and constructing a coffee table book "with lots of pictures."

She reads a lot of James Ellroy.
She gives *L.A. Confidential* 4.5 stars out of 5.
You can find her monument to Mineo at:

/home.rica.net/furies/plato/salmineo.html

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**Paris Gets Dumped**

Bathed in the salt of inconsistency
and the scent of rosewater lies,
tender doubt, long time surfacing,
twists itself raw
in the ebb of smog-shielded mid-day.

He lays in a bedroom tied
to the smell of her on the sheets.
Backsliding into reality--
The act itself shredded behind his eyes.
Nothing drowns the Furies' voices
or the music next door
grinding in his head,
tempting him to wail
in tune to her elevated feet
clipping the city chaos
as she makes her way
west, it seems.
A Pathetic Fallacy

The late a.m. found him off
his pedestal of impurities,
neither dead nor a poet,
but merely Dave
without anything that thrilled
or rushed grey-hued mad
against his mind except dirty metallic
pools rippling in a spoon.
Spared further instruction,
his pulled-leather popped ridges
arching to a fevered point.
Slide in. Heat risen mercury gulped with
each drum and heartbeat hung on repeat.
He comes up with only vulgar smiles
and thumb-tacked marks crocheting
translucent sleeves of skin
into puckered mouths.
Gagged with a day’s neglect,
you can see the man under
the sheet of drowned blue
unimpressed-deafness
that goes along with being
a Scotch-taped Jesus
on some girl’s wall.

Anthropologie

Tainted by halogen vapors
and overhung humidity,
night burnt cobalt blue--
its inner edges blanched
with Southern spleen, well spent
among Rampant Street’s
nightlife courtesans.

Inez’s copper bracelet braids
a wrist as subtle as milk and coffee.
Cardinals and pop stars study
the way her hair Mary-Pickfords
about her back in curled ink.
She’s a sugar-jaded artisan,
a dull confection like rock candy
or gritty maple pralines.

The smell of Inez is like a tub
emptied of apple-hinted water.
Clove nipples press nimbly
against a tee-shirt like lost dots
to letter i’s. Two steps away
she grabs a late supper of wood sorrel
and smiles at warm Argentine beef,
chasing down each swallow with
tangerine kool-aid over ice.

Seeing Inez hunched under a
“Louise Brooks Ate Here” sign
makes me wonder why she hides the wind in her
purse like sad cats waiting to hit the river.
Kimberley Hartman

3:16 A.M.

Lentitude

Wrapped in porcelain
10 inches off the floor
upheld by
four milky
lions' claws,

she silently awaits.
Lounging in apparent
carelessness

entrenched
with a numbing heart.

Her tongue
swells

in the taste of blush

if

a

ing into her mouth
from feeble anniversary crystal.

Images of her mother
float in mind

As she is poised,

sculpted from the clay

pits of Elysian fields...

from the cavity
of paradise.

--Tasting shadows metallic in smiles
and tears sweet as open fruit
bursting on tongues like red wine
kissed in the mouth by lovers
Over leather, under velvet and
upon white cotton of the Egyptian brand,
searching skinny bones for difference;
trying to paint portraits upon backs
with brushes hidden by the sun.
Our days are spent in restless permutation.

With razors reaching knees and masks
lost behind eyes, ambient music quakes
threatening hands and closing atmosphere
in the fallen rubble at my feet.
Chips of steel grey polish
dance across the floor as
my toes walk the boards
and visualize altars in the rain
bleeding bubbles in my wake.

(The door is not that easy to open, but far more difficult to close.)

--A red lipped exit,
a gaping hole in the wall,
a virtual birth canal...
Eyes still search chamber passages.
Wing-tipped shoes, older than birthdays,
echo stinging brass in eclipse.
A man across the hall
sings Sinatra in his sleep.
The scene is set
but the act is cumbersome,
like a ladybug
crawling up my arm
in the Autumn garden.

continued
The Day I Dumped Her for a Comic
by j. smith

I’m Sorry I told her.

But the pages speak to me softer
than you ever will.
And they feel
almost
like skin if you try.
They don’t steal
my attention,
they don’t touch me
when I don’t want them.
They don’t tell me

I love you.

And who could give up
swinging from rooftops,
bending steel,
catching the grand criminal
moments before my city is ashes...
for watching you get fat
and fucking at midnight.

It’s not that I don’t love you,
but sometimes I don’t love
this superlife.

Grenadilla Wood
or
Rhapsody
by karen e. place

breathe a warm dark sound,
lips on the reed in a kiss,
fantasy of air.

gardy loo! 20
The doorbell rang while the glass door slammed, and Sandy came up the stairs to meet me. She was very skinny. Bony hips and shoulders. Short, bright orange hair cropped on the top of her head. Pale, pale skin with light freckles and pinkish cheeks. A very stale nose on her long face. Great eyebrows really plucked well, with huge eyes underneath them. Dark green with long, long lashes. They were real.

From the top of the dark stairwell, I watched her pound up the bare oak boards. So skinny and she really could pound her way up. I have always been a student of people going up stairs. I, being twice her size, very softly and quickly speed up them. And when I go down I just glide over the edges. But she was slow, and drummed upward as if she were squashing bugs. I really loved that about her.

When Jacob first brought her over (officially) to meet my crazy family, she was, in a way, a shock to my parents. She was wearing a ton of green eyeshadow and pink blush. She had crispy, huge, orange hair and a bad perm. She got a kick out of me, and I loved her loud Elkton drawl. I was twelve. We whispered jokes about our "unofficial" meeting to each other at the table. We laughed like crazy. My Mom and Dad shot looks to each other. She's got one of those incredibly wonderful laughs. Occasionally, she would stop for breath with a great, exaggerated scream. I had never figured on Jacob hooking up with an Elkton girl, but thank God he had. I liked her.

Our "unofficial" meeting was a night that Mom, Dad and I came home early from a trip to D.C. I went upstairs before anyone else and there was this big poof of red hair kissing Jacob beside my mom and dad's bed. It looked like he was getting ready to lower her onto it when I walked in. I just shouted "Ooh!" and walked back out of the dark room. We had given him the key to water our plants and take in our mail. It was really a shock for me to see Jacob with a girl. I was really embarrassed. They came out laughing hysterically. Jacob introduced us. We were all sort of screaming apologies and laughing. I was trying to think what to say to my parents but decided to let him handle it.

I have to admit that I was jealous to see her with Jacob. He never brought a girl over, and my brother had never known him to be interested in girls. I think my mom thought he was gay. I wondered myself. But pretended to think he was waiting for me to be old enough for him, that he had forsaken all others until he could have me. I dreamed he was watching me grow and "bloom into a woman," and waiting to profess his feelings on my eighteenth birthday. The ring on Sandy's finger was only for the time being.

And I would wait too. He was my idea of a truly graceful man with a small but perfectly proportioned frame with a small waist, and a housepainter's arms. He was the only Jewish man I knew, and I thought that Jesus must look like him, with dark, dark eyes, a firm jaw and a good forehead with short coal black hair.

His father was Jewish and from Memphis. His mother was Catholic and from Ireland. Between them they had smoked a billion packs of cigarettes. Each of them had wonderful accents. I loved to hear them say anything, even if it was, "Would you pass the butter, dear?" I suppose something about his parents made him an atheist. He was the only Irish-Jewish-Atheist I knew. And the fact that he was concerned with and would talk like an adult to a little girl impressed me. He called me Elijah (like the prophet). I never knew why. Mom always told me he was a genius "in the true sense of the word" and that it was "terrible" that he flunked high school. She would relate the story of when he had taken a test in school that could make him pass, and he threw it in the trashcan. Or how "odd" it was when Tim, my brother, would have a bunch of friends from the wrestling team over and Jacob would just, all of a sudden/walk out the door. He was Tim's friend from nursery school. They were best friends. But Jacob was small and intelligent and had a hard time dealing with Timmy's big beer-guzzling friends from the football and wrestling teams, I guess.

I believe my second so-called "sexual" experience was his walking into the house without knocking and finding me in the bathtub with the door open. He caught a glimpse of my pre-teen, mosquito-bite breasts. We both smiled and I slid down into the tub covering them modestly.

"Is Tim here?" he smirked.

"In the basement. Learn to knock!" I screamed after him as he ran to find my brother.

I thought about it for a long time. I was really embarrassed over my breasts or lack thereof. But going over and over it in my mind, changing the sequence of events to fit whatever I was in the mood for, I forgot the embarrassment part.

Sandy was twenty-seven as she stomped up my stairs to meet me. Not the twenty-three of our first meeting in my parents' darkened bedroom. We hugged at the top, went to my room and sat on my big red quilt where she has told me secrets. Secrets about Jacob. I have sat in the passenger seat while she looked for his truck at friends' houses after he hadn't showed for a couple of days. I have always listened with sympathy for both of them and tried to remain a friend to both. My wanting them to live...
happily ever after has been painful.

She spoke softly; her voice wavered.

"Sweety, will you help me get my stuff back at the cabin? I need you to be there with me. I'm going to go through and get what's mine. Maybe take a cat with me."

"Are you sure? Are you ready for divorce this time? If you still love him, you're gonna really hurt things by doing this."

"Penny said I could stay in her attic room for not much money. Jake almost killed me."

"Serious?" I managed.

"He had his hand around my throat and was really squeezing. He said, 'You do realize I could kill you right now, don't you?'"

I was remembering Mom telling about Tim and Jacob's bird hospital. They would look for birds that were sick or had broken wings and nurse them back to health.

"I thought he was so gentle," I whispered.

"He hasn't been to work in two days. He just stays home, cuts wood, and works on that bike he found on Route 42."

I got my shoes on and combed my hair in silence. We drove in her little red compact to their house in the woods. I was silent and wished that I had not been home when she came. I didn't want to see him. I hoped that he wasn't there. I almost couldn't bear the thought of him. I was mad at her for hurting him. This couldn't have happened out of the blue. I knew she had said something intensely cruel for him to have grabbed her. (She could be very sarcastic.) It was a familiar car ride. She cried and I consoled and joked in between the silences.

When we got there, our hearts sank as we caught sight of the navy blue Nissan truck that was Jacob's. We were hoping to find the cabin empty. I was surprised that there were lots of things in the yard—a disconnected porch swing, a motorcycle in pieces, and a spool of barbed wire—like a redneck shack. Not like three weeks before dinner. I still laughed at the "Welcome to K-Mart" mat on the front porch that Jacob had stolen in broad daylight. He just rolled it up while a man sat smoking his pipe on the bench outside. I could never help laughing when I passed over it.

Their landlady's ten million cats ran to meet Sandy. She screamed their names as she always did and cried while she petted them. We went inside. It was hot from the woodstove. I was shocked to see the dog's whining and whimpering and scratching the floor.

Sandy cautiously descended the stairs while Jacob and I spoke. He helped us carry some boxes down. I hugged him and said good-bye. He waved. Sandy and I climbed into the little, red car and turned around in the circle of gravel that made their driveway. Turning onto the smooth National Forest Road, we made arrangements to come back another day for her wedding china. The shot of a rifle sounded then the squeal of a dog. Sandy punched the break hard and our heads bounced off the windshield. She reversed the car a few feet, shifted, and we sped forward again. I vomited in my hand and wept for Maddie.

crucify
by jeanine shipley
my very own henry and june  by  lovely miller

He saw the money she was spending now when he looked in her direction his knees stretched out a mile from his thighs, bent there, and his ankles split the air on the floor above his feet which were in those leather shoes bought back in the eighties on a whim and although he needed them he needn't have spent so much or bought several pairs, he still had them though, and felt a certain justification in that; something moved a hair somewhere on the back of his lower neck between his shoulder blades and he turned away from her, bent his neck and reached with his hand to find the itch, it was hot and he noticed his back was sweating so from there he took off his jacket, he looked across to her again, said, "are you going to start - or will you allow me to?" his eyebrows shot up although he didn't notice, it was chivalry, he'd start, and had already formed his first sentence, she made a motion to speak, indignant, and then stopped, leaving nothing but the hand she used, extended, "in this conversation we need to tackle an objective," he said and blew smoke out of his nose, crossed over to the right with his left hand, flicked ash into the tray, "solve the problem and there will be no need to handle it again; we need to discuss two things," he held up his hand in front of his face, palm towards him two fingers extended, then dropped the hand just as quick, "one: (pause) why you've spent so much money (pause, drag, same flicking motion) and two (look up at her after flicking motion) (begin to roll up sleeves on white shirt while talking) how we're going to pay for it," the last sentence seemed funny to him, and he went with it, stressed the last three words, "pay for it" with eyebrows consciously shot up and his head cocked slightly to one side, he smiled, checked himself, because he knew he sounded like a bastard, and he knew she'd call it, he remembered where he itched his neck, thought of the sweat, finally unbuttoned his shirt and took it off, hung it on the back of his chair over the jacket. Without the shirt he visually appeared vulnerable, he was skinny and
a bit too long everywhere and if he'd looked in the mirror more often he would've probably noticed, he wouldn't have cared but probably noticed; he blew smoke out of his nose again, finished, and looked over at her again, so she raced and raked her brain for an explanation, something that would make her sound justified, some answer to put her on his level, something coherent, because she was on trial at her own kitchen table sitting amidst remains of a dinner she cooked for him, knew that it wasn't very good, and cared; her nose was going to bleed, that was the only thought holding in her head, a silent savior, a nosebleed, one she knew he wouldn't allow her to use, she knew she wouldn't leave her table; and so he saw she wasn't going to speak and felt a flicker of fire in between his eyes, the same irrational flicker he used to feel when he was a young boy and something didn't go his way, or later in his teenaged years while protesting something he really felt was an injustice; it was a well argued, completely thought out, satisfying rage that happened in a split second between his eyes, he would afford her no sympathy it she couldn't even speak this out with him, on his level, on his level, she was a newer model but she was his fucking wife and equal to him on all terms and he would not by any means compromise an equality in a relationship give in and say "spend all the fucking money you want I just married a fuck anyway and now I'm stuck because of the children and because of what I can remember I saw in you;" she took one of his, he lit it, "you make so much money" she smiled, there was gooey lipstick on the cigarette, something she had seen so many times, it seemed gross for a split second to put it back between her lips, but she did and she felt its wetness and its pinkness, then equated that with her nosebleed thought for a minute how the end could probably fit up her nose, and sufficiently stop the bleeding; she thought of the pink, sticky lipstick mixing with the blood how it might smell, and how it would saturate and then she wondered what he would do if she just shoved it up there she wondered if he'd let her leave; the phone rang, it was on the table beside her, the sound was shrill and yellow, she killed it, although the sound contrasted nicely somehow with the thick wetness moving down her nasal passage, her niece was sick on the other end and for a

paris touriée

by samantha p.lentz

moment she forgot her surroundings as she loved the little girl she called her baby and darling and sweetheart, charmed her, using the same language she did with her mother, a neighbor, her husband, but so warm, and so inherently honest, and the little girl loved her for it, trusted her for making her feel so good and the woman knew it too. hung up the phone, then wondered when it was she lost the upper hand, how far her nosebleed would go; they both decided she'd get a job and he was satisfied with her being a waitress again, it was the job she'd chosen and he felt closure to the situation, "if i got a job and left you, would you grant me a divorce, would you give me the house?" his eyes
my very own henry and june... continued.
dropped slightly to the buttons undone on her shirt and watched her breathing
for just a minute, loved her for saying that, felt a surge go through his body, he
squared his shoulders, sat erect in his seat, laughed, he laughed at her and then bent
his head while he was laughing
smoothing
down what was left
of the hair on top of
his head, chuckled,
laughed, looked up
again at the rise
beneath her shirt,
her yellow hair, her
large mouth, saw
her softness and
her roundness, saw
where he fit there,
and the next hour
or so was spent dis-
cussing a trial sepa-
ration (it was
declared against), he
felt the peculiar
ease of temporary
relief, smiled, and
then asked if his
presence in the
room was optional.
Rasberry gingerale
gingerale & rasberry in one
coffee with
\ almond
\ hazelnut
\ tarimisu (whatever that is)

or like beer lightened
soda water
or cranberry iambic
or that coffee & beer in one
or the dried chalk chips
\ ice cream
\ vanilla cream wafers
strawberry
blue rasberry
broccoli with butter inside
or everything topping pizza
tastes like
Kinda like

sorta like
lemon flavored
that's oh so good

that are really that tastes like the flavoring like almost as good as

with a prize in the dough
tuesday and feeling small
by caroline heath

we're a bus to class
thinking a smile open
I give her hello
her question what's up
my answer
her wall
another car sick attempt at
conversion
leaves me loose and shifting
crouching in rejection
by the only girl
who could hand a hello back
back in every moment
she leaves me
sucking my words down

Because you see no alternate path
when you offer up your body
on the alter of obligation.
Because you blame yourself for the men
visit your stone table
weilding knives.

Because you called me ignorant when I told you that
I think of your skin when I select a banana
ripe, yellow, and slightly bruised
from my counter.

That I think of your deep, liquid earth eyes
when I sip my coffee, strong and black as always.

That I wonder where you are and what you are doing
when I sit down to dinner and we are having corn.

And I wonder but will never ask if the extravagant interest
your parents harbor for Indian artifacts
came before or after yourself.

I can voice that maybe the termites you hear
eating away at the wooden beams of your home
are your parents inability to see you as anything more
than another peice of imported clay pottery on their shelves.

That maybe they cannot see the human behind the novelty.

You returned to what would have been your country
at the age of nine
And now tell me of the rugs made from flower petals
at a ceremony you witnessed.
And how sodas came in little pouches because bottles
were too expensive to manufacture.

You speak to me of the natives in their dark, rich colors.
Of the Guatemalan children playing barefoot in the warm mud
Of the women carrying baskets of bracelets and fruit to sell,
or laundry to wash in the river
Bearing the weight of their family's well-being
atop their short, brown bodies.

And the peasant who slashed your mother's purse
you’re thinking about the secret when he sees you and you weren’t looking at him at the first glance but there’s no way you could not know it when he sees you it’s like a concentrated high iron of terror searing through your veins and your heart goes insane in granite staccato
(vixen eyes)
an entirely nondescript face so exquisitely striking in its indolent potency
it almost pulls every hair on your body towards him
(but let’s not exaggerate now)
the truth is you’re scared.
but jesus you try to look away because you’re about to be incinerated and you remember a 3-d computer game you used to have (but the computer ate the disk) where if you did it wrong the laser gun didn’t exterminate the tin-can man but backfired instead leaving you a perfectly conical little ash pyramid with two stunned eyes balanced precariously at the top going blink blink oops yeah so anyway you should be looking away right about now and finally he sniffs at his styrofoam cup which probably holds lukewarm coffee since you’ve been staring at each other since forever and it must have gotten yucky-cold by now that stage where you drink it in big sips before you can taste it then smack your lips run your tongue over your teeth wrinkle your nose and think god that did not taste good.
so you’re looking at the sick orange plastic table in front of you and it’s not exactly a masterpiece of brunelleschian architecture is it no
it isn’t but hey it’s better than staring into that other realm where no book claiming to contain the secret (albeit the secret veiled) from ommmmmm-filled bookstores and humming gurus will keep you sane.
the secret goes something you’re never allowed to know
it’s nothing personal it’s like that one elusive answer remaining forever out of the entire species’ grasp - a glaringly obvious key to something that could even be as grossly platitudeous as exactly why aerodynamically the bumblebee is incapable of flying but it doesn’t know that so it does anyway.
upon realising this secret as we all inevitably do the very fundamental brace on which we stand shifts so drastically in our own personal stratosphere that to remain in this world any longer is entirely inconceivable and you are compelled to voluntarily move on to a new basis on which to concentrate your existence.
call it an inability to live once it clicks.
and so you conclude that the millions dying every millisecond are a few steps ahead of you or possibly NOT THAT FAR AT ALL just one teeny-weepy step in front and the line’s moving pretty fuckin’ fast baby probably sooner than you known but that voice didn’t come from that conjecture in fact it came from right across the table and jesus you honestly didn’t think hearts could leave tire tracks as such (then goosebumps)
those eyes of glacial flame that tell you death is smiling placidly at you
do i struggle like that or i will only want you more
oh i’m sorry i thought you were someone else
terribly sorry really to interrupt your reverie and he leaves before you’ve uttered a sound
slick
but not good enough because he knows exactly who you are and it’s just that he’s done with the preliminaries and the wallet left on the table could be but probably isn’t pure accident so you really don’t feel the familiar switch of guilt when you pick it up open it and pull out a single nearly folded scrap of spiraled notebook paper with the perforated edges lying inside.
it’s not the secret it’s going to take an overdose for that (which you don’t know and i wasn’t supposed to tell you)
it’s just a little nudge a lingering sunset hum....
‘it’s only wrong when you let them win’
gardy loo!
Rebelling

by jeanine minge

I.
barb my nextdoor neighbor
breasts no hips
wrapping fingers around her waist
as if it were her wrist
water was/is life
she hates the taste of food
waits for the smell of acid burning her throat

I am rebelling against the woman
full force against her obsessions
rebellng against the woman
she is waiting for wail: falling over from the wind
laughing when dizziness takes hold

II.
barbie my nextdoor neighbor
grabbed my waist-just a pinch
told me I should crunch fitness
late night struggles
with sleep or sit-ups

I LIKE MY POTATO CHIPS

PRODUCT PRICE PLAN PROMOTION
she markets my womankind
Product: my body
Price: my breath
Plan: at the gym or in the toilet hung over the toilet lost in lips
promotion: to become beautiful-diminish to power
become a helpless woman-strong because I have some control

I am rebelling against the woman
the image within the mirror
the empty swirl in her brain
as she refuses a stick of celery
says she has a headache

III.
Barbie my next door neighbor told me she was fat
as her spine shown through her skin
told me to come running
because I ate too much
then cooked me her favorite foods
she had a stomach ache

i am rebelling against the woman
the disappearing shadow
acts of desperation
"I'M FAT I'M LAZY"

taking strides to lose
pounds that are not there
muscles disintegrating
heart in the porcelain sink
sweat on the brow
marks on the mirror
razor blade to life

just one more inch

one more Newton of force
disappear...

IV.
Barbie my next door corpse
liked to stand naked
standing up to her body
ordering it to fall away
contests in her mind
confusing games with her breath
pills in hand game of solitaire to win life

I am rebelling against the woman
the strides that hit the pavement
no weight
no sound

I want to savor the taste of chocolate striking my tastebuds
Be warm in my skin
REVEL in my BEAUTY
Because I AM ROARING
Hey, Stitchface,
It's 4:20. You know what that means.

Nphrylish...?

Yup, it's forty minutes until five o'clock. Ah, ha ha ha ha ha...
Awwww, Yeah!

- Gimme some candy -

Hey, Stitchface,
I've travelled around the world and have had many adventures, but I've never had hardcore, deviant gay sex.

Mphrphphsh...?

Ah, ha ha ha ha!!! Oh, man, you're whack! Animals don't count.

- Animals never count -

Hey, Stitchface, let me tell you about this silly bastard. Geoff just had the best and worst night of his life.

It ain't apple juice, kids!

Hey, Stitchface, just because the holidays are coming up, that doesn't mean the red menace is any less real.

Kmnrph...

Hey, Stitchface.

"I want the gift of freedom, Mama. Shut up and eat your sand!"

Yes, communism.