

# WATERSHED



# **WATERSHED**

Volume 24, Number 2

*Watershed*

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## in a mandarin world

in a mandarin world, i met you  
you said to not be afraid  
to entrust my tongue and its buds to you  
i did more than that, in a mandarin world

you kissed me      soon after your second piece  
the roof of your mouth d

r  
i  
p  
p  
i  
n  
g    vitamin c

in my world i never knew you  
here, you hold my hand as we pick the tree

eating an orange  
secretion on my lips      sweeter on yours  
in a mandarin world

in a mandarin world  
i do away with grapes  
no more poison apple exchanges  
no mentioning of berries  
no throwing of tomatoes...

they are all tasteless      all careless  
in comparison to you  
in a mandarin world

## Too Much, Tonight

I want to marry  
this melody.  
Let the sparkling,  
black notes  
fill everything—  
strengthen this  
wall around me.  
I want to lay forever  
beside this harmony.  
Let my head rest upon  
its perfect,  
smooth, shoulder.  
I want to...  
throw my arms  
above my head,  
slide through the  
tunnels of shadows,  
slippery, carefree—  
I will become dark  
and invisible,  
hanging onto  
the hat on the door,  
and eventually melting  
through the cracks  
in the floor.



## Arrival

As he stepped off the plane the heat was a physical entity, wrapping Dave in a massive, all-enveloping, wet bear-hug. Sweat burst from his pores as he walked up the worn black matting of the dank tunnel that connected the plane to the terminal. Overhead the fluorescent lights flickered whimsically; the plane's engines squealed behind him. At the end of the corridor a small crowd of people stood in his parents' way, jostling each other and peering down the corridor. His father pushed through and Dave followed, the strap of his carry-on cutting into his shoulder.

Dave walked behind his mother and father in the long and wide hallway. His parents held the hands of his two younger brothers. It was very hot and the moving walkways didn't work, but everyone walked on them anyway.

Air rose muggy and slow from the escalator holes at the end of the hallway. Dave and his family moved down slowly, jerkily. Under Dave's hand the rubber sliding rail shuddered like someone being electrocuted. He could feel the flesh of his arm vibrating.

The escalator spilled them off at the bottom into a crush of people seemingly trying to sort themselves into lines. The noise was constant, a fetid hum, like flies on a carcass, punctuated by occasional shouting. The room smelled of heat, strong, rife with unwashed bodies. Dave remembered the smell of heat at home. It smelled hot and dry—sand and oiled pavement. This heat was different, it crowded around him and suddenly he was all jittery inside. Sweat ran down his face and dripped in his eyes. He was thirsty.

"Dad?" he said.

"What is it, Dave?" his father said. Dave looked at his little brothers sitting on their carry-on bags. They were staring around them, not smiling, not talking, just waiting, their eyes waist level with the crowd, their blond hair hanging like wet newspaper on their foreheads.

"Never mind," Dave said.

The line lay thickly in front of them, like a huge slug that had dried up on the floor. The far end of the line was lost in the press of people. Dave joined his brothers, sitting on his bag, and settled into a drugged lethargy in the heat, where time spun away slowly in front of him, broken only by flickers of annoyance. Every few minutes the line shifted and he scooted his bag forward on the denture yellow tile and sat down again.

The lines terminated at a row of dingy green booths with white stripes on them. A sign hung from thin tangled chains over the booth at the end of their line. The sign was green and it hung at an angle, but it was dirty and Dave couldn't read it.

Inside the booth there was a heavy black woman wearing a green uniform. She glanced at Dave through the scratched murky Plexiglas and her hand reached through the slot and grabbed their passports from his father.

She ignored them, mumbling to herself and thumbing through their passports. She was sweating too. Dave lay his chin on the metal counter in front of the Plexiglas and watched her. She was short and she had huge breasts. She leaned forward and her breasts pushed up against the counter, bulging against the green cloth of her uniform.

She picked up the passports and stepped out of the booth. She didn't say anything, but walked across the room, out of sight. Dave went and stood with his brothers. When the woman with the huge breasts came back there was a black man with her.

The woman with the huge breasts told his father it was very hot. Dave thought this was a very stupid thing to say. Then the black man tapped their passports against his blue uniform and said they had not been paid this week. But he was a rich man, the woman with the huge breasts said, he would be sleeping in The Hotel tonight. Dave's father stared at them and said nothing.

The man in the blue uniform handed the passports back to the woman with the huge breasts. And the next person in line went forward. Dave and his family stood against the wall and waited. Dave sat on his bag again. After a while his brothers said they had to go to the bathroom. His mother took their hands and they went back toward the escalators. Dave sat with his father and watched the woman with the huge breasts stamping someone's passport. She was laughing and her breasts jumped as she hit the passport with the stamp.

Dave's mother came back with his brothers and one of his brothers said he had to pee.

"You just went," his father said.

"I didn't let him," his mother said. "He would be less hurt by a burst bladder than going near the filth in that bathroom," she said. Dave's father stared at her, then walked over to the booth. The woman with the huge breasts glowered at him as he gestured towards them. "Look like you're in pain," Dave's mother said to his brothers.

The woman with the huge breasts took the passports from his father and stamped them. His father returned and they walked by the booths quickly, not looking at anyone. Dave was waiting for someone to stop them, but no one did.

The stairs down to baggage claim were oddly spaced. Dave tried taking them two at a time, but it was too much for his short legs. But if he used each step, it felt like he was hardly moving.

Dave sat on a chair against the wall. Next to him an air conditioner excreted a ball of cool air to a distance of ten feet, where it fell onto the floor and died. His father and mother took his brothers by the hand and waded through the crowd towards the carousel.

They left the hand luggage at his feet. "Don't take your eyes off them," his father had said. Dave propped his feet up on the bags and looked around. There was a big glass wall on the other side of the carousel, over the crowd. He saw an airplane's lights flashing against concrete. It was very hot and he didn't feel well.

Dave watched the crowd; it moved as if stirred by a slow motion mixer, occasionally disgorging a battered piece of luggage. An airport tractor with a trailer pulled up on the other side of the big glass wall. A black man wearing a red and white shirt sat next to Dave. He didn't have any bags and his shirt was open at the top; he wore a gold-colored necklace and smelled of cologne.

"My friend, how are you?" he said, touching Dave's arm. "Now your first time in my country, yeah? I will help you, yeah?" he said. Dave didn't answer; he didn't look at him. Outside the glass, black men in dirty yellow jumpsuits stood on top of the trailer and threw luggage down. "Was your name?" the man said. "You from America? That's your papa, yeah? I know everybody here. I go help you, my friend. See my identification." The man held a card in front of Dave. "I no try to cheat you," he said. "I will help your papa." He had a strange accent. He didn't say "papa." He said pah-pah. He said I-denti-fi-K shim. "You stay this place," the man said. "I'm coming," he said, as he walked away into the crowd. One of the men in the dirty yellow jumpsuits crawled through a hole in the glass wall and rolled the luggage down onto the carousel.

Dave's father came back dragging a suitcase; Dave's brother's arm in his other hand. The man in the red and white shirt had another suitcase and was following him. His father put the two cases together on the floor and told his brother to sit on them.

"Keep him here," he said to Dave. He went back into the crowd with the man in the red and white shirt. Dave held his brother's wrist tightly.

His mother returned with a cart. His other brother was sitting on the cart and he smiled and waved as she wheeled it. The cart was gray and stained and had a broken wheel that left a black mark on the floor as she pushed it. They put the suitcases on the cart, then sat together and waited.

Across from them three men came out of the crowd carrying a box. It was a big box and it was tied with rope and crumpled. The bottom of the box broke and forks and knives and cans of Pepsi and a radio and Levis and bras and spoons and other things fell onto the floor. Dave watched the three men shouting and trying to put the things back into the broken box until his father returned with the last bag.

The man in the red and white shirt pushed the cart and shouted at people. He spoke very quickly to the men at customs and they let them through. It was hot outside too, but not quite so bad. Dave stood with his brothers as the man in the red and white shirt called for two taxis and he and his father began loading the luggage. Both of the taxis looked really old, with rusted paint and no hubcaps. Dave wanted to help load the bags, but knew he'd just get in the way.

When they were done his father thanked the man in the red and white shirt and handed him some money. The man looked at the money for a moment, then looked at Dave's father.

"Small money like this?" the man said. "I help you and you give me small money like this? You are stupid white man. Fuck you," he said, just like a man in a movie. Dave got into one of the taxis with his mother. "Yes. Go way," the man said, "We don't want you here." He shoved the money in his pocket and walked away from them, shouting something Dave didn't understand.

The taxi Dave and his mother rode in was small and smelled of very old plastic and urine. His mother sat next to him, quietly, holding her purse. Dave couldn't see where they were going. He looked behind them for the taxi carrying his father and his two brothers, but the headlights from the traffic were too bright. He turned around again and waited. He had to go to the bathroom, but he didn't say anything.

When he leaned against the window the driver reached back and locked the door. He was an old man and he didn't say anything, but he used his horn a lot.

It was dark outside now. There were only a few big lights, but they passed huts and buildings and shacks filled with small wavering orange lanterns. The taxi slowed and little boys ran beside them, carrying loaves of bread, combs, and watches. Dave wondered what they

were doing, then realized they were trying to sell these things. The light from the lanterns shone on their oily black skin and they pushed their trays in the driver's open window. As the driver bought a loaf of bread, a boy made faces at Dave outside his window and pulled on the door handle. "White man," the boy said. He made kissing motions with his lips and wiggled his eyebrows. "Yeah, yeah," he said. He ran beside the car for a few steps and Dave stared at him as they drove away.

They made a u-turn. "Where are we?" Dave asked his mother.

"I don't know," she said, watching over the front seat.

But they went over speed bumps and as the taxi creaked Dave saw a sign. "The Hotel," it read. The taxi stopped and Dave's father and brothers arrived behind them. Suddenly there were a lot of bright electric lights and someone took their bags. The air coming out the hotel's doors was air-conditioned and smelled like shampoo.

Inside, Dave went to the bathroom with his brothers. His mother waited outside and when they came out she told him to sit in a big fuzzy armchair with his brothers. She left them and went across the room to a big desk, under a sign that read "Reception." His father went and stood beside his mother at the desk. They looked odd; everyone else was wearing suits. Dave waited as the air conditioners hummed and no one shouted.

His brothers were tired and grumpy and he tried to keep them occupied. He showed them the palm trees in pots next to the chair and walked them to the glass doors and they looked at the pool. The water was a bright chemical-blue color and there were lights shining up from the bottom. They went back and sat in the chair and watched their parents.

His father stood with his mother for a few minutes, then came over and handed Dave some money. The bills were a light green or pink, with faces of black people on them. Dave had never seen anything like them before. He wondered how much they were worth. His father told him to go buy some drinks in the lounge.

It was dark in the lounge and slow music mixed together with murmuring voices. Dave spoke to the bartender and he gave him five Cokes and some peanuts. Dave gave him all the money and the bartender didn't give him any change. Dave wanted to ask, but he didn't know how much money he had given him.

His father took two of the Cokes and went to stand by his mother again. Dave squeezed into the armchair with his brothers and they sat drinking their Cokes and munching the peanuts.

When his parents were finished, a man from the desk brought them to the elevator and they went up to the fifth floor. In the elevator the man asked Dave his name and Dave told him. He asked if this was Dave's first time in his country. Dave didn't answer him, so his father did.

They had two rooms connected together. The man from the desk put their bags in his father and mother's room. Dave went into the bathroom until the man from the desk left, then sat on one of the beds while his brothers wandered around. Dave watched them playing with the sliding closet door and heard his father washing his face in the other bathroom.

"Let's go down and have a drink," his father said. His mother came and told him they would be back soon.

It was very, very quiet in the room after they left. His brothers' voices sounded too loud. Dave helped them take a bath and put them together in the bed nearest the bathroom. He wasn't tired, but he still didn't feel well. His brothers went to sleep and he locked the doors and took a shower. The water was warm and clean, but once it turned hot for a moment and nearly scalded him. He turned off the hot faucet and rinsed with the cold. The cold water made his skin feel cool and crinkly when he dried off with the fresh white towels.

His parents still weren't back when he came out. Dave sat on his bed, pulled up the sheets the man from the desk had turned down, and lay back. He felt cold now. He wondered if he were ill.

The bedcover was green and brown. The ceiling tiles were in a strange pattern. Dave followed the pattern with his eyes for a few minutes, working it out. He thought about the man in the red and white shirt shouting at his father. *You are stupid white man. Fuck you.* The man didn't say "fuck" right either. He made it sound like "folk."

Dave sat up. He found the TV remote glued to the bedside table and pressed a button. The TV made a pinging sound and came on. It was on a porno channel. A woman lay on her back with her eyes closed, making faces. Her mouth was open and wet and she was making noises too. Dave turned the volume down and watched for a minute, but all he could see was her breasts. They were big and shiny; they shifted and bounced as she moaned and grunted, the nipples shocking brown spots in the middle of all that white.

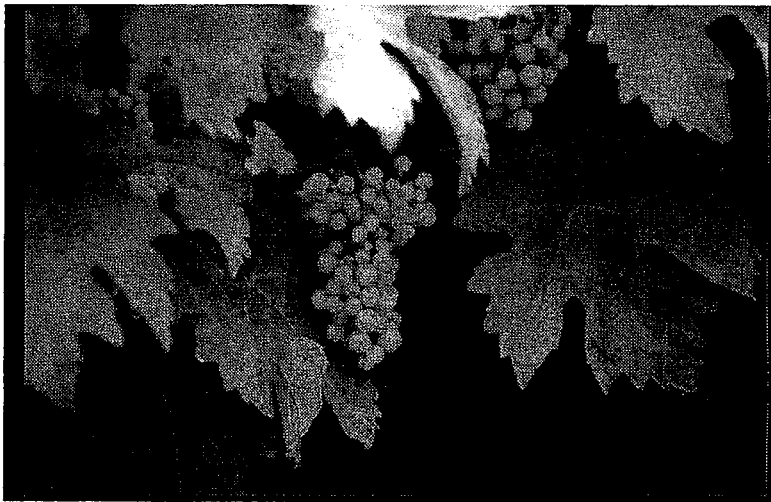
Dave remembered the black woman and her huge breasts pressed against the counter, how they bulged, straining the tight green cloth at the gold buttons, her black bra showing through the gaps. He turned the TV off and lay back again on the bed.

After a while his parents came back. They came and said goodnight and his mother hugged him. She smelled of wine. They checked the door he had already locked and closed the door to their room.

Dave heard giggling and thumping noises and got up. He didn't listen, but turned on the light and walked to the window and opened the blinds. The lamp behind him was a mellow dirty color and cast his reflection onto the big glass window. He turned off the light, then went and looked outside. The night was wide and dark, puckered in places with little infestations of light that were strung together.

Tomorrow they were going to drive to their new home. Dave remembered the taxi and the black boy making kissing faces at him through the glass and he felt sick.

Far below him the pool glowed through palm trees. He pulled the blinds and went to his brothers' bed and crawled in. Their bodies were small and hot on each side of him. Dave pulled the sheet over his head.



Renee Suzanne Muir  
*Spheres of Influence*



## Castle Berries Outfield You

“There was a child went forth every day,  
And the first object he look’d upon, that object he became...”

*Walt Whitman*

Lay your limbs into distant clusters  
of green flowering chamomile.

Roll the budding crown  
into dancing fire-flies,  
swirling spiral-galaxies.

You, the right fielder  
gliding though Nebulae,  
catching this silent star  
spinning-light escapes,  
in the blink of your eye.

Catch the secret insect dreams,  
gently hold this treasure trove.

Oh katydid, sing your song—  
cricket cricket by the water  
call us deep—camouflage  
folded-leaf, against a tree  
rubbed hind legs—is all you hear,  
katydid.

Let the child in you sing  
Little League dream songs.

Reach into pockets perception  
luring soft things—away  
from the dull drum—  
bottom innings—late afternoon,  
lying stretched in chamomile,  
This quiet space in the outfield.

## Tenderly

Someone left carnations  
at the Buddha's feet last night.  
I saw the pink petals  
during walking meditation, when concentration  
for a brief moment failed me,  
and I thought: What a tender act,  
tender as flickering candlelight  
upon the altar,  
tender as the bare feet  
of dharma brothers  
and sisters  
who walk and walk  
in silence,  
tender as your kiss  
when I dropped you off  
last night  
at the auto-body shop.  
As I drove away, I imagined you reclaiming  
your hammered, patched, and polished truck—  
driving it, tenderly, with new affection,  
because you had missed it.  
You have memories  
with it—  
sitting on its tailgate, somewhere in Utah,  
gazing at your harvest  
of pottery shards  
while eating tuna  
out of a can—  
just as you have memories  
with me: that nighttime walk  
to the rock cliff, that canoe ride  
past the petroglyphs.  
When you told me how you had brought  
your aging, white-muzzled dog  
into your bedroom  
offering him space  
upon your king-sized bed,

I knew: a sweet tenderness  
lies within you,  
even if sometimes  
I think I long to feel it.  
There was that time, on New Year's Eve,  
when you brought me  
the turkey and the ham  
on the paper plate  
as I suffered the choke-hold  
of hypoglycemia—those gifts  
were the flowers,  
the carnations left  
at the Buddha's feet.  
Or, were you the Buddha?  
And my suffering, the flower?

## Eating the Universe

Breathe, in and out slowly  
    and remember the taste  
of the moon. The taste  
    of cherry blossom air,  
deep and sweet,  
as you gather stars  
    and feast from galactic  
bowls of constellations. Deep, deep  
dishes of easy sleep—  
healing spoons of whispered prayer.

Savor the sticky sweet  
    of Polaris, the warm crust  
of Pleiades, butter-soft  
beneath your tempting tongue,  
    on your lips the honey  
wine of Pegasus. Drink  
    through the blue glass of heaven.

Live deep in shallow waters,  
    stealing the sapphire sky  
from the lake, and every salty star  
washed up on heaven's shore. Taste  
the flavor of the dew-drop  
sun, crystal cold, across  
    the hot breath of dreams.

And breathe as if  
the galaxy were there  
    in your bowl,  
    as you pour the milk  
at every dawn's new break.

Pour out  
your thoughts, your breath, the milk  
deeply, smoothly, freely—  
in and out slowly...Breathe...

## Seasoning

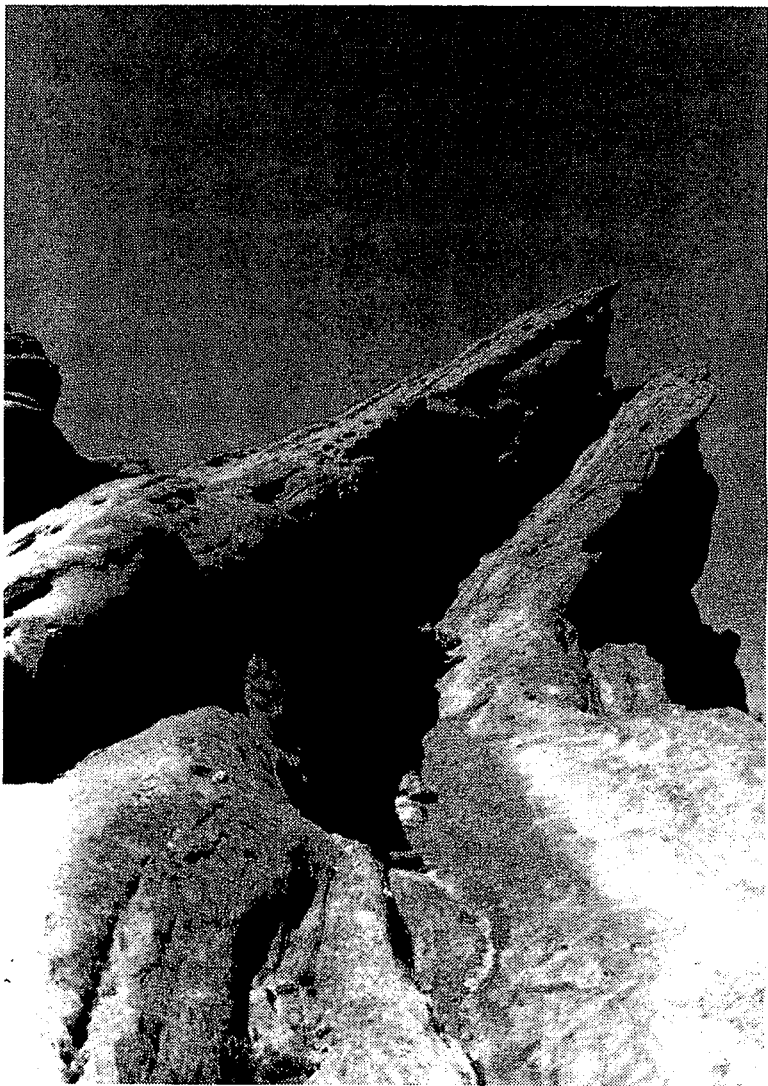
after a line by Adrienne Rich

*What is green in me, darkens.*

Two score and three have left me blazing  
I admit, I am proud. Risks taken, failures born. All mine.  
Rode a bicycle from Michigan to Alaska, for god's sake.  
Happy not to be so green anymore.

The leafy stalk, vivid grass, stripling  
Are not shamed by their neon newness,  
But woody vine, wagging prairie grass, brilliant maple  
Have a knowing.

When my branches grow knotted towards the sun,  
When my stalks gift brown seeds to the wind,  
When all my leafy pretense falls dead away,  
Thin green sprouts; push stiff up dirt—  
My life fully undertaken.



Greg Corralejo

## Hillside

Crouched against a high rock on the hillside  
I am alive through my senses;  
A red-shouldered hawk idles on the dying oak,  
His cry ringing in the field poisoned with thistles.  
Spring sweetens the pollen-filled breeze  
That against my face feels tropical;  
A change from the bitter winter season.

The emerald grass is alive again,  
Radiant with a trail of purple Brodiaea.  
Lupine and carpets of yellow  
Flowers light the path  
To an old miner's sluice box undisturbed  
By the run-off creek bed,  
Still moist from the week's showers.

The trail that hosted summer expeditions  
Is nearly lost—most of the weeds standing again.  
The family of deer kept it alive,  
Making trip after trip to the snaking canyon stream.  
Their journey from their den, buried in the dense brush  
Below the car graveyard ghosted  
By crazy people who cascaded over the cliff.

## The Color of

Prisoner  
inside the eggshell moon  
escapes every other twelve hours,  
sleeping everywhere you don't look.

Blanket for  
stalactites, stalagmites,  
stars,  
and blocks without street lights.

Inhaling like smoke,  
like childhood camp-outs in the backyard.

Sweetness  
as an embryonic fluid milkshake.

Hardness like fog and  
thick as snakeskin.

Destruction  
of its demonic conductresses with an  
angelic sickle.



## Winter Mourning

Cold winter mourning  
Snowflakes buried underneath  
Melting to be free

## Swords

I don't really love to argue so much  
it's just that my lead dulls down  
to a soft round edge  
and I long to leave a mark that's indelible.

Sparring with you  
is like sharpening a pencil  
to a fine glistening point  
whose marks cannot be easily erased.

I strike my truth  
in clear black tones  
and leave notice that I was here  
like Zorro's "Z" stuck with panache.

So much depends on a well-timed  
insult, appearing easily, leaving a nick  
as your quick laugh turns umbrage green  
and I am pink with delight.

On you I hone my wit  
like a pencil sharpening to a spiked tip.  
Your response, electric-quick,  
makes me wary of being  
eaten up, cut to size,  
like sharpening myself to a  
mere nib of wit.

You think it's tough  
being a pencil sharpener?  
Try being sharpened.  
It cuts to size.

## Paint

At 17, my oldest sister  
spent a Monday  
with a big  
fat paintbrush drenched in black paint

painting “Pink Floyd the Wall” on everything she owned.

four white bedroom wails  
vanity mirror  
wooden stool  
mo-ped helmet  
make-up kit  
radio  
and...

I turned the corner.

“Do you think the paint would stay on my bedspread or leak through to the mattress?”

I stood in the doorway.  
Globs of black paint dripped to the carpet like beetles,  
her artist arm cocked up,  
paint dribbling down wrist  
like she had caught a night jellyfish, its legs winding down to her elbow.

“Can I help? There is green in the garage.”

Silence and stares,  
crayon under my fingernails.

I turned on the shower,  
stuffed my toes into yellow thongs and peeled my one-piece off,  
it stayed around my ankles.

That summer there was nothing to do but swim  
and watch the black paint funnel down the drain.



Meredith Timpson  
*The New Millenium*

## Ten O'Clock

Time,  
My fickle mistress  
With her slender black arms

Waves me over at ten

And purrs a tick-tocking  
Sigh of approval

And cuts me off (a free spirit)

Before returning once again  
At noon

And extending her symmetrical,  
Black arms

For gaining my attention  
Once again

We spend a solitary hour

Of discomfort and jealous  
Insecurity  
For she is never really mine

Not to justify a frown  
When she has grasped my full attention  
And then shoos me back to the desk again  
And parades around,

Taunting

With a seductive motion  
Of her extended left Arm,  
Exhaustingly Slow (hours)

Sweeping from her head  
Down

To her curvaceous, six o'clock hips

## —four girls four walls—

*after the photograph "Women Dancing to Records, Ward 81, Oregon  
State Hospital, Salem, Oregon 1976"*

the clock reads one   the sun dials in   faintly  
confined   barefoot   smoking  
mouth and ears wide open  
she's listening   maybe singing   exhaling

two other girls dance in faceless embrace  
hidden   slightly   tapered   lonely  
like the plant in the corner  
reduced   too sad

she's incomplete   another girl bends backwards completely  
on the freezing linoleum floor  
she begs and binges a glare   incoming  
through the battered pane  
a cigarette smokes itself in her left hand

the clock reads one   for all   feeling forgotten failed and fragile  
her nest   and her nest   and her nest   and her nest  
unbalanced at best   still  
breathing   living   exhaling  
wanting   room brighter than this

## Remarks For the Good of the Order: An Idyll

ca. 1957

Unless he was using it, Gardner, a sophomore, allowed only four items on his desk. The first was a blotter, secure on a pad, corners tucked beneath leatherette triangles. The second was a letter opener, six inches to the blotter's left. The third was an oblong dish of paper clips, six inches to the blotter's right. The last was a small stand-up calendar, centered above the blotter. The blotter's sides ran parallel to the desk's; the opener and dish were parallel to the blotter.

At times, when Gardner was absent, his roommate Jenkins, a senior, would flick the blotter a centimeter askew. Entering, Gardner would stop abruptly. Short, thick-lipped, brooding, he would consider, then cross the room and silently make an adjustment.

One weekend when he had gone home, Jenkins shifted the blotter awry and drove nails slantwise beneath the leatherette corners.

★

Each evening the Alpha Omegas filed into the dining room and stood behind the high-backed chairs. Then they would sing.

*Tell me now, old pal of mine  
Before we have to part  
That you will ne 'er forget the ties  
That bind us heart to heart  
Fond mem 'ries of dear old A. O.  
In old days linger still.  
Sweethearts and friends may fail you  
Вииииииииии  
An A. O. never will!*

Someone invariably substituted "fart" for "part," in the second line, and at the meal's end, when it was time for announcements, or at the conclusion of Monday night meetings, at Remarks For The Good Of The Order, someone was sure to say:

"Hey, let's get the fart out of the Song, huh, guys? It really doesn't sound too cool."



Gardner loved classical music. He would put a record on the stereo and listen rapt and stony-eyed, letting the stuff wash over him in a great wave. Jenkins found classical music tedious but sometimes listened in spite of himself. Beethoven, he decided, was all swells and shards, and hearing a string quartet, he was mystified and faintly irritated when the elegant and melancholy swoons yielded to a Keystone Kops frenzy, as though a gang of maddened searchers were churning furiously around buildings and through a maze after some elusive quarry. Sometimes, though, in the early movements there was a solitary violin—a plaintive sliver of a voice, like the human soul lost in the cosmic night. Grudgingly, Jenkins conceded that Beethoven was mostly menace and fragile beauty, and the menace was beautiful too—in a different way.

One night “Morgue”—Tom Morgan—a senior like Jenkins, got in an argument with Gardner about music. “Oh hell!” Morgue snapped. “You can’t enjoy anything unless you’ve got ten thousand violins keeping the beat for you!”

Gardner never played another record.



Jenkins came to regret crucifying Gardner’s blotter. He had imagined his roommate arriving and trying at once to realign the thing and discovering in astonishment that it wouldn’t move. For a moment Gardner would stand there balked-frowning and blinking in his thick-lipped gloomy way. Then, investigating, he would find the nails. Probably that was what happened, but just as Gardner renounced music without a word, he accepted the prank without comment, prying up the nails and restoring order but foregoing whatever bleak pleasure he had taken in the now-violated desk’s resolute perfection.

If he suspected Jenkins, he didn’t let on, and it didn’t seem to matter. Gardner received disappointment and betrayal as inevitable and personal. Glowering, he would stand in the middle of the room, a little hunched, as though beneath the weight of mockery and defeat, staring blankly out the window and complaining.

“You know those goddamn Bears have never had a winning year since I came here? You know that?”

The Bears were the university football team, once formidable, now perversely inept. It was the same, Gardner pointed out, with the San Francisco Seals baseball team, triumphant in the past and presently hopeless. Wherever you placed your affections, they would be trampled,



and where you painfully created form, desecration would follow—such was the lesson, Gardner seemed to imply. It was a little like Beethoven, Jenkins decided.

★

Like most A.O.'s, Gardner wore button-down shirts in solid colors, khaki pants and loafers and affected a prickly crew cut, which despite frequent shearing thrust up in coffee-colored spikes and tufts like a badly trimmed hedge, giving him the air of a man perpetually startled. Jenkins dressed much the same but his hair had grown out, and he sometimes wore a limp corduroy jacket, like a graduate student or teaching assistant, somebody who spent too much time in the library.

Gardner's first name was Robin, and by coincidence Robin Gardner was the name of the Bears' All-Coast halfback, nicknamed "Rapid Robin" by the sportswriters. "So how's it going, Rapid Robin?" Jenkins would ask, amusing himself and pleasing Gardner, who smiled shyly and ventured cautious humor in return.

"So how's it going, Rapid Cliff?"

Depressed, Jenkins gave up.

★

To his surprise Jenkins found that he missed Gardner's music. Without trying or wanting to, the senior had learned to distinguish eras and even a few composers. Nineteenth Century was easy: everything slopped together. Eighteenth Century was articulated, but you could be fooled. What Jenkins once took as shameless romanticism turned out to be Haydn! Mozart, of course, was the perfect fusion of heartbreaking emotion and inexorable form, as though you could derive  $E = mc^2$  in a way that made you weep. (Looking ahead, Jenkins selected as his funeral music the andante movement of a certain piano concerto.)

★

It was hard to credit but Gardner as a freshman had majored in Pre-Med and been an excellent student. He seemed so obtuse, so bereft of any mental agility, but you didn't really know. He brooded deeply and sullenly, frowning, lips thickening in an unattractive pout, but it was clear that his brain was whirling. He had studied relentlessly, and by osmosis or telepathy or some quasi-autistic genius had achieved one B and the rest A's his first semester—and not just in the gift courses like compulsory ROTC but in calculus, biology, and organic chemistry. If he

hadn't looked so stupefied and uncomprehending, he would have risked being known as a "brain."

Forever disappointed in others, however, he had managed to disappoint and disillusion himself, and now rarely opened a book, courting failure as you might pursue a beloved, to which end he began to drink.

Practically everybody in Alpha Omega drank, but no one emulated Gardner. Alcohol released no anti-Robin or alter ego. He grew neither pugnacious, musical nor extroverted and failed to shine, snarl or turn comical. Rather, he anesthetized himself, standing against a wall and consuming beer or liquor until he slid to a sitting position at a perfect right angle, staring straight ahead, the thick lips slightly apart. If a corpse could drink, Jenkins guessed, this would be the result. The room might be empty and the comatose but open-eyed sophomore would give no sign.

Sometimes he passed out. Once at an A.O. party he lay supine and oblivious on the living room rug, and puckish sorority girls covered him with sofa cushions, then took off their shoes and walked on the cushions, until Jenkins could stand no more and lifting the sodden roommate, carried him upstairs to the sleeping porch and dumped him on a bunk.

## English 156A Haikus

Left-handed desks are  
Democratic but they hurt  
Right-handed learning

Stripper girls with fading  
looks need their minds to catch  
Them. Some stand, some fall.

Adoring fair minx  
Her blushing cheeks hint at more  
She will get an "A"

She tosses her hair  
And perpetuates inane  
Discussion, for him

Chaucer was prone to  
Fart jokes and other gaseous  
Expressions of love

Losing consciousness  
Literature is blending  
To lumped amalgam

Whips and chains and straps  
Of leather seem undertones  
Of British classics

A perfect  
steady  
line  
waiting,  
to cross  
parallels  
into one  
pure,  
and simple,  
thought.  
Levitating,  
beautifully transient,  
—yet everlong—  
Silence.  
Thin,  
white,  
icicle  
ready to be  
shattered.  
A barrier  
and a tie,  
between  
two people.  
Silence grants  
permission  
to scream  
and leave,  
a scar  
in the air.  
A towering tree,  
with every branch  
bearing a leaf  
to fall—  
releasing us,  
from perfection  
and offering,  
a cloud

of comfort.  
It shoots through,  
blaring surroundings  
and places  
you  
with yourself.  
Lingering,  
Golden,  
Silence.

## song of sorrow

*for Geraldine Santoro, after a photograph*

it was your body,  
naked and fetal on the floor:

arms spread defeated beside you  
one hand to the south, the other east,

like an airplane spotter  
with no commands left to give

mother's-milk breasts made flat  
against the stiff of homeless hotel-room carpet,

buttocks round and finger-painted  
with your blood and the fatherless blood

knitting-needle-death-sentence  
thrust hard inside

*today i knew the extraordinary pain  
of ordinary women,*

*of sisters without sisters.*

## Try Again

You're young. You can try again.  
You say without even a tear.  
But this baby's life has yet to begin.

I can't believe you said that just then—  
Those words I don't need to hear:  
You're young. You can try again.

Am I supposed to grin?  
Am I supposed to cheer?  
This baby's life has yet to begin.

Already you're measuring a coffin:  
Your words make that clear.  
You're young. You can try again.

I don't want your consolation,  
And your sympathy isn't welcome here  
For this baby's life will soon begin.

Did you expect me to say Amen?  
Your words will never disappear:  
You're young. You can try again.  
This baby's life has yet to begin.

## Galatea

I have none to share with my silence this evening.  
No apparition servant to carve this feast of insolubility.  
'Cept this darkened sugar, whom proceeds to rouse my mind  
with loud thoughtversation.

Like Pygmalion, I shape my piece which lies amiss.  
Lubricating projections of other bodily warmth.  
Centering my clone of pluralism.  
And perhaps, if I love this child's thing enough  
Some god may grant her life that we may feast together  
On my cluttered table

I create her to be fed my chocolate eyes  
That she could suck upon our embraced thoughts  
And roll their flavors over and over  
And under  
Her tongue  
Till they dissipate, and she be left with a blunt, unthreatening salivation,  
That when her mouth begins to parch, she will feed and be fed again.

I unlace and unrobe  
Offering that skin which lies closest  
To that citrus within me that pumps strawberry syrup throughout me.  
That she should lay her head upon that place  
And dip there her fingers and lick me off their tips.

And all I have wished shall be received, when  
She exhales against the lashes of my eyes.  
So, that when I close them, in eclipsed contentment, and open them again  
It will have all been a dream.  
My axis will have spun back  
To having none to share with my silence this evening.



## Mom's words

She said she would crawl through my crawl space to reach me.  
Supper with spiders  
and lick the mold from my fingertips to keep me clean.  
Because I always told her I hated to be dirty.

*After rolling in the rain and mud,  
What do you expect? She'd say*

She'd wash my bathroom towels with her shampoo  
to keep them smelling herbal.  
Wipe the suds from my soap and use Ajax on my toothbrush.

She would make my toothpaste from scratch.  
Pick rose petals and squash them into a fine lacquer for the recipe.  
My breath always had to smell like her garden so she'd feel more at home  
when she'd come over.

I told her if I could,  
I would fold her up into an origami square  
and put her in my jewelry box,  
with the silver and the gold.

October 7, 1999

*In Memory of Mironah Marie Schnoor,  
and Celebration of Isabella Sue Schnoor*

A grey afternoon in Autumn—  
Wind detaches leaf from limb,  
Rain begins in earnest.  
Golden leaves are a brightness.

Wind detaches leaf from limb—  
Avenue of giant, amber oaks.  
Comforting in the grayness,  
Brilliant color for the soul.

Avenue of giant, amber oaks.  
Sonnambrate my dance-swirling wet.  
Brilliant color for the soul.  
Showers of golden-red adorn my hair.

Sonnambrate my dance-swirling wet.  
Enraptured by the wetness.  
Showers of golden-red adorn my hair—  
A grey afternoon in Autumn.

Enraptured by the wetness,  
Smiling through my tears.  
A grey afternoon in Autumn.  
A spirit soared to heaven.

Smiling through my tears,  
Enveloped by life on earth,  
A spirit soared to heaven,  
Left behind an identical blessing.

Enveloped by life on earth,  
I hold your sister dear.  
Left behind an identical blessing,  
Healthy, strong, living here.

I hold your sister dear  
Tiny, angelic, perfect child,  
Healthy, strong, living here—  
    Thank you God.

Tiny, angelic, perfect child—  
Rain begins in earnest.  
    Thank you God—  
For this grey afternoon in Autumn.



Greg Corralejo

## Marie and Her Rivers

*to Marie at 96*

She sits stooping on  
Her easy chair, smiling  
Passing over, talks  
Of absent things—faces:

Grandfather  
Missionary in India  
Turbaned servants. Later,

Influenza black  
Hoboken ribbons  
On everyone's door.

Husband George, a preacher  
Gay son, John.  
Minister's wife, a life  
Hoary Nebraska cold  
Bent-tailed sweet dog, hers.

White Texas church  
Mexican Lutheran  
Corn and tomato offering.

Now her body, still as a pond  
Losing sight, most sounds, walking.  
Small silver head  
Cocked sidewise eyes stare  
Distant and down.

Present lives flow wordless  
From her living:  
Sons, their sons, daughters,  
Wives, husbands, neighbors.  
Friends. She navigates  
Their full course, source spring  
to sea—sparkling at her own approach.

## Listening to the Door

I have a talent,  
for balancing the ash  
at the end of my cigarette.  
The solid heavy hours  
waiting for you  
have given me good practice.

My arthritic hands  
amazingly cease pain  
when I clench them,  
squeezing each finger  
over and over...  
listening to the door.

I am visited  
by the ghosts  
of your footsteps.  
The light breeze  
of an open window  
teases me.  
Maybe you flew in—  
    I feel the light brush,  
    of your hair.  
You haunt me.

Time draws  
a broad black cape  
and cloaks the glimmer  
that kept me wading,  
through the current  
your absence sends.

The rain tapped  
as the wax melted  
the last flicker,  
as I let my breath out.  
You never came.

## The Radio Flyer Song at Dawn

You taught me to laugh  
at sweet molasses and simplicity

In dreams of playground times  
swinging the world upon a string

Imagining our red spacecraft  
in orbit beyond the horizon-line,

Creatures adding clever wonder.  
purple dazzled jumping men.

Navigating our next great quest.  
We saw the sun set, and the stars rise.

Never thought we'd have to depart,  
say good-bye and travel home,

Can I explore without my copilot  
the one that sees the stars at dawn?

## A black bean coffee

She turns the can over  
letting the grains fill  
the plastic lid.  
If they are black,  
they will work,  
and  
they will make it home.  
If they are lighter,  
chocolate or brown,  
they will stay on the shelf  
and wait  
for someone  
interested in flavor.  
She has  
forgotten  
hazelnut,  
french vanilla,  
the irish crème.

A black bean coffee  
allows  
Valentine cards to be sent,  
grandsons made giggle,  
gray hairs dyed dirty blonde,  
soap opera watched.

A whole  
black bean  
cracked and crumpled  
in the mouth,  
like a  
beer nut,  
stimulates  
punctuality,  
and  
ability to deal—  
patient's prescriptions



perfect  
and  
never  
one pill off.

Two hour drive home,  
sunset and radio news,  
she creates  
a blend of  
mother-in-law's  
authentic enchiladas  
in  
her  
American kitchen,  
with her  
American hands  
that  
hit the dinner table  
warm  
and steaming,  
sodas poured,  
and fizzing.



Dustin J. Schwindt

## tonight's setlist

high windows curtain  
the lowest part of the evening  
fame-gliding a confiding sky  
amplifying us to tune.

staged presence so alive it feeds back  
time, collapses in bloom, rocks elevation  
lapses fractions, i'm changed  
glimmering in the limelight, ripened.

my distance instantly brings you in, close  
i'm going out burning—stretching light  
to get your attention. when i do i mention to you  
baby, please don't you hate me

*for what*

it's said, so sad and then disappeared  
short—bright for a while white  
soon out, a drought of flashing light  
baby, please don't you think me

*for what*

failure emits when I go out.

the trade-off of dim to shine, dim  
never high-lighting, blue peninsula at night  
not climbing fading sliding in-through skyline.  
pure poor decisions, never able to decide  
if my diving sing-song presence  
is worthy of dividing your universe  
assuring you human, leaving you mid-sentence—

i'm telling you now, after coming down  
the glow in the end will be you instead;  
your thoughts in-form-wish me  
love, grant me longevity somewhere else.  
in-on-up-staged time, your favorite song is done  
baby, please don't you hate me

*for what*

failure emits when i go out.

## Shadows and Gold

*Place me like a seal over your heart; for love is as strong as death*  
-Solomon

### I

In this watery twilight your blanket of kisses  
falls on me like rain.  
Water lily lips smooth  
the ruffled skins of day.

Even the sun yearns tonight.

Your melon-drop tongue  
hungers me in drips  
that drizzle my throat.

You are a desert spring.

I thirst for the song of your liliated skin  
beading with dew-drops  
that glisten in honey-glow-moonlight.

I want to drown in your deep-river bottoms,  
to lap your ageless waters  
of shadows  
and gold.

### II

I will remember you as you were in the morning of our twilight—  
an acorn in my palm.

I held you to my ear and knew your song.

I tendered your body to the ground,  
couching you in earth-sleeve.

Plunging my fingers into knotty gravel,  
I dug between pebbles and rocks,  
beneath the stubborn of hardpan  
until my fingers bled.

Though I could not see you with my eyes,  
each night, I pressed my ear to the dirt,  
listening for the rustle of your roots.

I heard the earth shift as your body swelled  
and you, longing for the sun, shimmied up,  
leaving behind your yesterday-skin.

I will remember you.

### III

Your silence this moment is like an empty jar  
that ravens even my dreams—  
a doorway that howls the desert wind.

## I have no poetry for other women

Light falls gently  
from your  
pebble-filled hands

As dainty feet  
frosted with  
ocean dust  
rest gently upon my  
abdomen.

Let's,  
along myriad beeches  
climb forever.

## The Rise and Fall of Some Great Love

### *In Three Parts*

#### **Part One: Droll**

He shows me how to love  
With his eyes closed  
He swims below me in the pool  
Just inches from my naked flesh  
And he doesn't even look  
I'm not sure if he's amused by everything  
Or nothing  
I've waited so long to be inspired.  
When I lay close  
He doesn't recoil  
But when I stand back  
He stands an equal distance away  
The time we lay in my bed  
His arms fit secure around my form  
And did you know that I did not mind  
When my shirt fell just below my breasts  
Just seeing if he'd get inspired.  
He plays me Miles  
He made me a tape that doesn't quite flow  
He plays guitar in his backyard  
At nine in the morning  
our hours of sleep  
And I've become restless again  
I cannot deny that he makes beautiful music  
Curious if he'll ever strum on me  
He says maybe we are too much alike  
But the closer we get  
The more different we seem  
And I'm not sure I like what I'm hearing  
He loves me, he loves me not  
I can't do this anymore  
Why don't we just stay good friends  
But "I think we could be good together"  
What does it mean for him

To wake up by my side?  
He said he just wants to be inspired,  
He says he feels his life coming together  
Has my influence been of help?  
He claims he likes no one in town  
Then why does he always want me around?  
He tells me of the beautiful, untouchable women of his past  
He makes me feel so undesirable  
never wanted to be reduced to his "league"  
At least he seems to think highly of himself  
I read his pretentious poetry  
I smelled the liquor on his breath  
I searched his room for answers  
I let his music run through me  
I wanted to play him my song  
I studied his pictures  
I felt angry when he hung up  
I always liked it when he came around  
I've always been intrigued  
By his droll voice  
He doesn't know where this is going  
Anymore than I do  
Maybe that is what unites us  
I don't want to make any big decisions  
I just need to be touched  
I've waited so long to be inspired,

### **Part Two: Soul Brother**

We've come a long way,  
Soul brother  
From the days when we sat on my couch  
And bull-shitted  
Throwing out the stories of our lives  
With caution  
Do you remember how it felt when  
We were too afraid to touch  
So we connected through our words  
And our glances said it all  
Life was so simple then  
I was drawn to you from the start,  
Soul Brother  
Something in the way you spoke  
I could tell you were jaded



Or wanted to come across that way  
I had to get to the bottom of you  
Figure you inside and out  
And what don't I know now?  
We live our lives so much alike  
But with different purposes  
Similar worlds with our own unique pain  
You bring me joy,  
Soul Brother  
You don't always understand what I feel  
Yet you stay by my side  
With your presence,  
I am strong  
With your arms,  
I am warm  
With your words,  
I am at peace  
With your body  
I am whole  
We've come a long way.  
Soul brother  
Although much remains the same  
You still inspire me  
You still make me angry  
You still make me cry  
And you still show me love  
You said you knew it all along  
Love just grows over time  
Let us continue to shine on our own  
And celebrate the beauty of our union  
I love you with all my heart,  
My soul brother.

### **Part Three: The Unrelenting Muse**

There may be love around  
But it's Valentine's Day  
And he's broken my heart  
We bicker about nothing, just like we always do  
More now than we did when we were lovers  
So now we are best friends  
And he has a Valentine for me  
Because, "friends can give their friends Valentines, too,"  
But he won't give it to me until he signs it

Maybe write a friendly little message in it for me  
He's screwing someone else now  
Like I once was, when there was more going on  
And he used to be there, still  
He rang, he came by, he did everything in his power to see me  
It was like he could not exist without me  
It was like he needed me there, he needed my love  
And I understood, since I needed him, too  
He was my best friend  
The one who filled my voids  
That urged me on  
That complimented my strengths  
Who seemed to want to overlook my weaknesses  
He was the friend I was so proud to have  
My best friend  
He held my hand through the pain  
He held me close when I smiled  
And I was his unrelenting muse  
For the melodic masterpieces he would create  
Both triumphantly dark and hauntingly beautiful  
Because I broke his heart again and again  
And yet he still gave it back to me  
To use in my own curious ways  
Until the day he gave up  
Until his icy eyes froze over  
When he bothered to hold out my gaze  
He left the Valentine on my doorstep  
I had planned on tearing it up on arrival  
But I opened it instead, and was glad that I'd left it intact  
Because it was a picture of a grinning little dog  
Which I've come to realize does not symbolize his unconditional love for me  
And the happy thoughts he scribbled down inside  
Bared no reflection of my previous sobs  
Or proved his love for me no more than his bitterness  
Forgiveness for the past obviously does not come without a price  
Whether that is his choice or mine  
But, "like you always said, if it's meant to be it will happen,"  
Someday, maybe.

## Your Thoughts Float Like Colors

I shuffle home through soggy leaves  
laid like a blanket on cracked concrete.  
Your thoughts float by like colors,  
I smell you in amber breezes  
see your irises, blue as Valium  
feel your skin, warm as morphine.

Your silver-ringed fingers write poetry  
as you whisper songs you know like the stones  
you felt in your pockets,  
or the pills you keep  
in an amber bottle  
on your garage-sale nightstand  
next to your diary, *The Bell Jar*, *Orlando*  
and a soft-pack of Camel Lights.

I wander home, hands numb  
as cobalt light from broken glass.

## Fortune Cookies

---

You are a successful and honest person. Your life is an example to many even if you may not realize it—I know, you probably wanted one of those “naughty” fortunes—well, sorry to disappoint you.

---

---

The future holds many unknowns. Be sure to look closely at the next fork in the road, and stop getting so much use out of the fork on your plate.

---

---

You are a kind and sincere person—right?

---

---

Look behind you. Ha! Just kidding.

---

---

You have encountered many obstacles in the past and overcome them with flying colors. Please tip well.

---

---

Your mannerisms are quaint, yet quite unattractive. I suggest you flee the restaurant with incredible quickness.

---

---

This is the longest thing you’ve read in a long time, besides the menu.

---

---

The stars say you don’t appreciate my writing. Do you know how it feels to have to tell someone you write fortunes? For Fortune Cookies?! I don’t need this!

---

---

Imagine being incredibly rich. Ok, now come back to reality. If there's little or no difference in feeling—call me.

---

---

Not only do you have a mind-boggling intellect, you also possess a mind-boggling capacity for vagueness.

---

---

Take time to reflect on the fact that right now someone, somewhere is reading this exact fortune—and feeling just as stupid as you.

---

## Contributors' Notes

**Jake Allred** is a Chico native. He enjoys writing, working mostly with music and creative pieces. He has aspirations of being a rock star where he might expose the true diary of a madman, but in the meantime, plays volleyball at Chico State and enjoys life.

**Marie Altman** teaches visual arts at an elementary school in Chico, and sometimes incorporates poetry writing with art lessons. She is a new poet-teacher for California Poets In The Schools and appreciates the opportunity to share her love of the written and spoken work to students who may already have a rigid opinion of poetry.

**Jon Ballard** says that it 'twas in the hills, back in the East of the Dakota of the South, that a man, actually a boy who turned into a man, shared his name and life, then came to the western coastal state, the one everyone knows well (whether good or bad) to try and find something new in his life. Still searching, he is going to school, and meeting new and fascinating people, while trying desperately to find someone to listen to what he has to say.

**Brian Brophy** is a musician and freelance writer. He will be graduating from Chico State University in May 2001 with a degree in Journalism and a minor in Creative Writing.

**Clark Brown** has published a novel, *The Disciple*, and a book about Chico called *About Chico*, also fiction and non-fiction in journals, quarterlies and anthologies such as *The Pushcart Prize*, *Highway 99* and *California Childhood*. He has taught at U.C. Berkeley, Stanford and for numerous years at CSUC.

**Greg Corralejo** is a Chico State Student. He enjoys photography but is majoring in Psychology.

**Daniel Foster** is a twenty three year old brother of three exceedingly flawless sisters who pursue their lives with enviable motivation and deftness. Currently, he is maintaining the homestead in Chico. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Cornell University and presently seeks entrance into the teaching program at Chico State. He has just started the writing process. He enjoys it completely and hopes to develop the skills needed to move him beyond the beginning rut.

**Cid Galicia** is a junior majoring in English, minoring in Creative Writing and is forever at war.

**Nathan Hislop** is still attending Chico State, but his sentence has been commuted and he is free on his own recognizance this spring. He has become profoundly moved by Fritjaf Capra's *The Tao of Physics* and has been spending the entire semester trying to feel the subatomic interaction of Taylor Hall. He loves hockey, poetic self-flagellation and Bobo.

**Justin Jeffers** enjoys all sorts of activities and things having to do with the arts. He abstains from mathematical practices as much as possible. He spends his free time writing as a "page-number technician" for *The New Yorker*. Also, with his free time, he goes to class.

**Monica King** is currently in her fifth year of studies at Chico State, where she is an undeclared English major. She plans to graduate one day in the near future and teach others to appreciate reading and writing as much as she herself does, while she also lives out a few of her other dreams and goals.

**Finn Kraemer** has been involved in creative writing for three semesters at Chico State. He is a senior and an English major with a minor in Creative Writing. "Arrival" was written over the summer of 2000.

**Buffy Lauer** will receive her Bachelor's Degree in English with a Creative Writing minor from Chico State in Spring 2001. She plans to do her post-baccalaureate work in the Creative Writing Program at Chico State as well.

**Lauren Luk** is an undeclared freshman at CSUC and has a horse named Max.

**Jason J. Maguire** is a student in liberal studies who hasn't submitted any of his writing since the sixth grade. (That particular contest, he swept first, second, and third place, as he was the only entrant.) He hopes to draw out the most minuscule of emotion with his poetry, even a slight eyebrow raise or body shudder. Even if the reader shifts their weight in the smallest way, his mission will have been furthered.

**Renee Suzanne Muir** is a local freelance photographer.

**Denise Peterson** has come to realize that the concept of a “good” mother is society’s way to induce guilt.

**Alexandria Rocha** is graduating May 2001, after five years of traipsing around Chico. She will take a BA in Journalism and minor in Creative Writing to Thailand in the fall to teach English. She will miss the small-town atmosphere of Chico the most and wishes everyone a silly summer.

**Shannon Rooney** is a writer living in Chico with her son, Austin, and her two cats, Cecil and Zeusy.

**darren rael samakosky** wants to live by the beach, eat fish tacos and write.

**Dustin Schwindt** is a junior English student here at Chico State. He is 26 and has traveled extensively throughout the United States, mostly because of his summer job selling books and partly because of his service in the military. He is set to graduate in May of 2002 and although he doesn’t have any definite career plans, he dreams of making his living as either a writer, a photographer, a screenwriter, or all three.

**Meredith Timpson** is a writer and an artist from Michigan, now living in Paradise, Ca.

**Lee Marie Varner** is the mother of three daughters and the grandmother of two granddaughters: Isabella Schnoor and Dawn Elizabeth Mitchell. She received her BA in English from California State University of Chico in June of 2000 and has been working on her masters in English Literature, which she hopes to earn in June 2002. She has been writing poetry since the age of 15. She refuses to state the age she is now.

**Heidi Wallis** was born and mostly raised in British Columbia, Canada. She is an English major currently working toward her Bachelor’s degree, but eventually planning to have a master’s in Creative Writing. This is her first semester at Chico State and she will probably be here for a few more years. After school, she plans to travel for a bit and maybe join the Peace Corps. Her dream is to travel and write in the great tradition of Ernest Hemingway.

**Ryan Patrick Yurcich**, being a native of San Diego, loves the ocean and nature. He found a love of writing only recently, in his freshman composition class.



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