

RIS LIM ZIEGLER

LESSANDER FINO

VANTES PHILLIPS

MORTEN DUFF

ARROLL GARCIA

E INSCAPE 2002

HENY MANDELLA

SONGSTER SHONO

Have a part in producing next year's

INSCAPE

Enroll in
English 7:
Inscape Magazine Publication
or
Print 13 or 113:
Screen Printing

(See inside back cover
for additional information)

INSCAPE

2002

AN ANTHOLOGY

PASADENA CITY COLLEGE
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

P R E F A C E

INSCAPE 2002

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As a group, the staff of *Inscape* wanted this year's issue to feel different from all previous issues, dating back to *Pipes of Pan* in the early 1950s. We think we have accomplished that, not only in the way the magazine looks, but in the voices of the students whose work is included.

The process of evaluating work for inclusion in *Inscape* was entertaining and rewarding, but difficult. Our sole criterion when selecting work was, simply, quality. Working with no other biases, we gave every submission the same chance to impress the staff. Those that impressed us most are included here.

For help in promoting this year's issue, we would like to thank screen-printing students, under the direction of Kris Pilon, for producing wonderful promotional material (in addition to the cover and prints included herein); and, the Shatford Library for allowing us the use of their display case for our "Barbie in the great outdoors" display. We especially would like to thank the PCC students who submitted their work, all of it, we know, coming from the heart.

We hope you enjoy the magazine, and we encourage you to submit your work in the fall for possible inclusion in next year's *Inscape*. Or, better yet, enroll in English 7, Print 13, or Print 113, and take a part in putting together next year's *Inscape*.

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DEDICATION

This year's issue of *Inscape*
is dedicated to
Ron Koertge

Ronald Koertge was born in 1940, in Olney, Illinois. His parents worked for a large dairy farm until World War II, when his father left for the war. Upon his return, the family moved to Collinsville, Illinois, and opened an ice cream business. Koertge began writing poetry in high school. His love of writing led him to the University of Illinois, where he earned his bachelor's degree in 1962. In 1965, he completed his master's degree at the University of Arizona. That same year, Koertge moved to Pasadena and took a position as a professor of English at PCC. He hasn't moved since--until now.

This year, Ron Koertge retires from teaching at PCC, ending a 37-year run. The staff of *Inscape* would like to express their sincerest gratitude towards Professor Koertge, for his patience and wisdom both in and out of the classroom. Over half of this year's poems in *Inscape* came from current or former students of English 8, Koertge's Monday night poetry class, a Pasadena institution in itself.

"Titles are the tight pants of the party," Koertge is fond of saying, "because they stand out from the crowd." Whoever takes over Professor Koertge's classroom has some mighty tight pants to fill.



RON KOERTGE

RON KOERTGE

Summer, 1962

When I worked at the library, my favorite job was opening up in the morning. Strolling toward the big, wooden doors I felt like the manager in a store of ideas.

If it weren't for those long hours at the desk, I might still be there. But I not only watched the days pass, I marked each one with an indelible stamp.

When I told the head librarian, he was disappointed. "Should you change your mind," he said, "your job will be waiting."

He sounded like the vicar in a book about a plucky but misguided lad who goes off to the city. I pictured my job waiting for me at the crossroads or lying by the grave of the person I almost was, its face on its paws.

Kryptonite

Lois liked to see the bullets bounce off Superman's chest, and of course she was proud when he leaned into a locomotive and saved the crippled orphan who had fallen on the tracks.

Yet on those long nights when he was readjusting longitude or destroying a meteor headed right for some nun, Lois considered carrying just a smidgen of kryptonite in her purse or at least making a tincture to dab behind her ears.

She pictured his knees giving way, the color draining from his cheeks. He'd lie on the couch like a guy with the flu, too weak to paint the front porch or take out the garbage. She could peek down his tights or draw on his cheek with a ball point. She might even muss his hair and slap him around.

"Hey, what'd I do?" he'd croak just like a regular boyfriend. At last.

This Happened on Grand Avenue

When the Lexus hit that pigeon, he lay there beating his one good wing against the curb like he was trying to put out a fire.

My wife asked me to do something, so I turned his head clockwise until I heard a click. Then darkness poured out of the small safe of his body.

That is when I realized I used to merely love my wife.

Now I would kill for her.

POET OF THE YEAR

Inscape's Poet of the Year for 2002
is Los Angeles poet
Richard Garcia

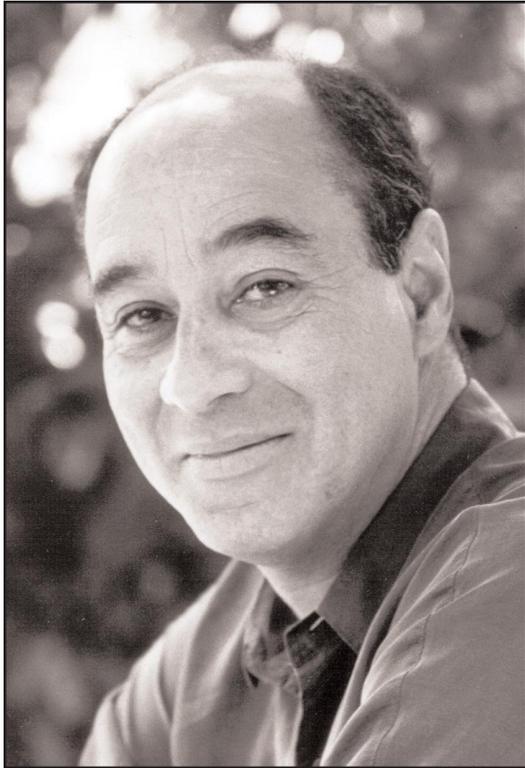


Photo by Dinah Berland

Richard Garcia was born in San Francisco in 1941. He is the author of *My Aunt Otilia's Spirits*, a bilingual children's book, and the poetry collections *The Flying Garcias* (1993) and *Rancho Notorious* (2001). In addition to receiving a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Pushcart Prize and the Cohen Award from *Ploughshares*, he has been Poet-in-Residence at Children's Hospital in Los Angeles, since 1991. Garcia lives in Los Angeles with his wife.

Why He Writes

I don't feel that I choose to write poetry. It chooses me. There is a difference in wanting to be a poet, and wanting to write poetry. If a student tells me he or she wants to be a poet, I think of careerism, of image. If a student says he or she wants to write poetry, I think of the need to write it. That is to say, if you need to write poetry you will do it in whatever circumstances you find yourself, you will do it because you want to and have to, you will do it whether you succeed or even get published, and sometimes, you will do it whatever the cost.

RICHARD GARCIA

Richard Garcia Steals a Poem

Sometimes you see a dog running across the freeway, perhaps he has fallen out of a truck, patches of his fur are scraped raw, his eyes are wild, saliva drips from his jaws but look closer. It is not a dog, it is Richard Garcia. Soggy particles dribble from his mouth. You think he has stolen someone's sandwich, but it is not a sandwich, it is another poet's poem and Richard Garcia has swallowed it. You think you see Richard Garcia strolling through the concourse at the airport, suitcase suspiciously light, but he is not there, he has slipped into the woman's bathroom where he runs alongside closed stalls, reaching over the tops of doors, removing purses that dangle innocently on the hooks. If the bathroom is empty, he will steal the toilet paper. It was Richard Garcia who once said to his students, Never fly downward in a dream, but that is just what you'll have to do to reach the Museum of Richard Garcia, experiencing a kind of gray-out as you pass through several floors and ceilings and then brown and black as you drift down observing the smashed wine glasses, broken plates, twisted picture frames and unreturned library books embedded in geographical layers of earth as you descend the well of Richard Garcia and arrive

at last in a dark hallway illuminated only by the dioramas of history and prehistory, each containing a version of Richard Garcia. There he is on a streetcar in the 50s a teenager, stealing the TAKE ONE box. There he is, at home among sabor-tooth tigers and woolly mammoths, squat, bowlegged, beetle-browed, dragging a huge club along the ground. But it is not a club, it is his college diploma. His eye is on the workman's stepladder opened beneath a painted cloud. He does not even know that he stole the painted cloud from one of his own poems. He'll steal the stepladder too. He will fold it up and tuck it under his arm not even noticing that it is not a stepladder but a primordial emblem of the letter A.

Dark Passage

The lines of the poem I am trying to write get longer and longer, until they become a train and I am left alone on the platform, catching a glimpse of the lights on the caboose just as they disappear into a tunnel.

Seeming to feel sorry for me, my computer says, Looks like you're writing a letter, would you like some help? Now someone in the house next door is playing show tunes on the piano. I think it is a man. He is small, portly, harmless looking, but actually he is here in San Miguel de Allende hiding out from gangsters whose money he stole.

I Only Have Eyes for You . . . September Song . . . The Way You Look Tonight.

Someone has come to the piano player's door. He hands a servant a note. The servant carries it to the piano player and the music stops. The note says, You have something that belongs to me.

And now my computer is angry. It says I have performed an illegal operation. Like a drunken plastic surgeon in a back alley in Tijuana, I have altered the piano player's appearance. He's hiding out at Tia Lucha's. Pianoless. His face wrapped in bandages. He's sitting in the dark remembering my face blurring above his, my breath smelling of tequila, my shaking hands.

Angel Face

Driving an ambulance, you see a lot. One night I retrieved a blonde's head from a culvert. But nothing got me ready fo Diane Tremayne. Not even all those other Dianes and Dianas in my life, so many I referred to them by number--Diane number one, number two, number three, even a Dina, and a Dinah. I see now they were practice, maybe warnings. Diane Tremayne. She slides toward you looking up so innocent in her bathrobe with the shoulder pads, her tiny waist cinched tight, and next thing you know you're bent over her while she's arched backward above her husband's semiconscious body in the back of your ambulance. You've turned off the radio, and she's got the keys anyway. You don't tell her that her face is doing this changing thing, changing from one face to another into the faces of all the other Dianes you've known, like a face is just something she puts on when she comes to see you--and looking into her eyes--like playing with matches in a gas-filled room. You'd just as well try making love to an angel, one of those dark ones that can pull you down through the sheets and you're falling through icy clouds.

A L E S S A N D E R

Spontaneous Combustion

All that was left
was her one scorching foot

A little above
Her jagged ankle

One tar-black
Filmy,
Barbequed

Foot
Next to a pile

Of

Ash

In an undisturbed
Apartment

She must have been

A poet.

The Rowdy Bus Bum Who Always Preaches
for Exactly 3 Stops

*"ie*ste mundo miserable, que no duerme en paz o despierta
a luz!"

everyone has heard about his daredevil antics
like when he roamed through the sterile, scorching, dusty
desert

without any food or supplies
or when he filtered the transvestite night-walker from
the pelting stones with his words
or that crazy stunt he pulled when he non-chalantly waded
across

the foaming, ravaging sea
and of course his gran finale which has yet to be topped
by any performer

what stuns me most is the people like the centurions
who raffled off his belongings,
or Pilate who rinsed his soul off clean with a cool water bowl
of reason

people, who looked upon him with annoyance or contempt
or even worse--

indifference
or maybe even the random stranger who must have
witnessed

a bizarre event, returning home late in the evening
while his wife demands "where are the fish and the cabbage
you were supposed to get?" and her husband replying, half
pondering

"some guy at the market just went berserk

Alessander

he started flipping over cash registers and throwing the merchants out--spouting something about 'wailing and gnashing of teeth.' So the market was closed down for the day until reparations were made upon further notice" and the wife shaking her head slowly, muttering:
"crazy people nowadays . . ."

Alessander

Nirvana:

†hat split-second when the static on the porn channel clears . . .

 A N D R E

Behold

BEHOLD, what's more obnoxious than a poem that begins
 with behold?
 What dictionary poet chooses this word when expressing his
 insignificance in the glow which he admires?
 Behold (that's Twice) sounds more like a wrestling move
 . . . The Bee- Hold (you know that move when you grab the
 arm and . . .)
 Rather than a declaration or imperative
 May god strike me down if in heaven among infected angels
 and restless souls I scream behold my lord.
 Unfortunately, I have never used the word in the same sense
 that proud men do
 In the wild exclamations of emotions
 Once in a period of episodic nightmares and sweaty-palmed
 panic attacks that I divorced pen and paper to
 venture out of my shattered landscape seeking
 reunification with the world
 I treasured but loathed those aliens of the outside
 Despising the Selfishness of emotion they share among
 themselves
 The secret conversations over exotic tea.
 I have tried to drink only once
 She was medium height with milk chocolate skin.
 Her eyes reflected the wisdom of adventure
 The ringlets of hair a shimmering formation of a crown of
 superiority, or crowned her the queen of . . . (fuck
 where the hell is my dictionary) . . . well anyway
 I saw her radiant

(Wanting desperately to put her in my Behold, and stinging
 her with . . . uh . . . love?
 She saw me . . . an obstacle
 Behold my invisibility
 Behold my forever-dry cup
 Minus the rough caress of my own hand I won't learn love, or
 the true use of words in the mouths of others
 So what's more obnoxious than a poem that begins with
 behold, one that ends with a pitiful man and his pitiful
 word . . . behold
 Which still sounds like a wrestling move.

BRUCE ARNOLD

Grave Walk

figure walked
strong steps
between the graves

past woven
like the sandal straps
about her calves

cigarette poised
in "WeeGee" white
while gloved hands passed
some glass stem halved
where veil's half-shaded eyes

mourn
loss of style

and wait
the next man's pass

RYANNE CARROLL

Ringbox

Found in the glove box of my first car
I palmed the hard velvet shape and remembered,
the first time it surprised me,
nestled on the blue pillow case of your double bed,

A clam, smooth, ordinary,
with its careful secret.
Like a deep-sea diver, prying open the iron seal
I found satiny-white flesh
A candy-wrapper treasure sized for my left hand.
A pearl

Hard,
years later, the black, egg-sized tumor.
A half round, half square,
mutated monster with golden jaws.
I feel myself fall into its gaping mouth.

California Dreaming

Five miles per hour, five feet behind the Honda on the west bound 10, at 5 p.m. It smells like L.A. in the summer. Shirt and thighs stuck to the Naugahide, the Beach Boys reminiscing with me. I sing along, my hand out the window making waves against the hot sluggish breeze. This is the hundredth time I've heard this on the west bound 10 at 5 p.m.

NICOLE DARLING

from *Firecrackers and Cigarettes*

1

He is dancing in my headlights, dancing in their headlights, dancing in our headlights. He is free from whatever he is running from, his penis is free. He is Japanese I can tell by his almond eyes, he is flying like a sprinkler on a windy day, he hits in all directions, his body small against the pavement, the worried onlookers wave their arms for him to come towards them, safe from the street, cooing him with "come hither" gestures like a new mother watching, hoping for her baby to take his first steps.

My windows are up I am coming home from work, I found it's easier to take Beverly all the way down to Vermont and hop on the 101 there rather than take Highland all the way to Sunset. On paper this seems like it wouldn't be faster, but in reality it is much faster. "Don't Let Me Down" is blaring loudly from my car. He moves like an Indian chief at a ceremonial bonfire, up down, up down. "You're looking good just like a snake in the grass, one of these days it's gonna bitecherass, don't let me down, no no no no noo ooh oh oh, I tell you once more before you get off the floor don't let me down." He is happy, I am like a deer in the headlights, I am staring straight at him, flying around like a wild sprinkler, and then he stops and looks right at me in all his naked glory, he tilts his head like a small bird and smiles, our eyes lock.

Then all at once the tape jumps and pops out snapping me back to the present, the silence is quickly replaced by the sound of a loud car horn. We seem to hear it at the same time, he looks away from me, fear flashes across his face as he sees the cars whizzing by and the local Latinos trying to beckon him

out of the road with their broken English, probably wondering how did this naked Asian wander into their East L.A. neighborhood.

A big man wearing a Coors beer baseball cap and with bear like arms comes up from behind and attempts to grab him, the young man screams but it is too late, he is caught, he kicks and screams but he is caught. The road is soaked and he is caught.

2

Vin's hands are dirty and gnarled, the nails black from days of filth. His large apartment is empty and unfurnished save for a big black leather couch, a big screen TV, a couple of sleeping bags and scattered skateboards next to big cardboard boxes of brand new clothing. It is a testament to young men who don't know how to fill their space.

I watch as he fiddles with the plastic blue wrapper, he looks up at me and gives me a playful menacing smile. He is wearing the same dirty orange shirt he's been wearing for two weeks. He has ripped it to look punk and written the sentence "fuck your mother" across the front in black Sharpie, underneath he has drawn two people fucking. He is a very good artist. His hair is dirty as are his denims which he hasn't changed in just as long, he sticks his hand in his pants grabs his crotch and readjusts himself. Empty beer cans litter the floor while used Kleenexes filled with different types of bodily fluids cover them like beautiful snowflakes before the storm. The smell of hot chemicals fills the room, pot is the pervading scent yet a sweet nauseous smell also fills the air, at the moment however its waftness has been put on hold until Vin can open the next blue wrapper. I touch my clean skin and its softness makes me think of home. I push myself up and stumble to his records look-

ing for some noise to fill the room, because even though Vin isn't speaking I can hear his anger and frustration as he wrestles with the blue problem.

The big screen TV is on mute and sits directly in front of Vin's record player, large images of him flying on his skateboard loom in front of me as I sift through his collection. I come across the Rolling Stones' *Hot Rocks* and put it on, Vin hoots and looks over at me and smiles. "Right, Right, girl," he says moving his head to the music. "Turn it up." I do turn it up and crawl back to the kitchen table on all fours and pull myself onto the chair. Vin has gotten the wrapper open and for the next half hour I watch as he smokes most of the entire thing. His hair is an unruly mess of spikes his leather studded cuff is torn and thrashed, old clippings of him litter the table. "Vin Gino signs major shoe deal with Vans" reads the cover of one, a photo of him doing an elaborate trick sits under the promising headline.

I glance out of the window and notice that on the bottom floor a small group of boys has collected outside the apartment door, they scratch their heads and look around as if trying to solve the fortress code, others simply drop their boards and sit on them hoping either Matt will come home or Vin will go out.

His dark brown eyes are glazed but beneath them he is beautiful, he is beautiful I am staring at him he is beautiful, his mouth is beautiful, his eyes look like two cups of dark earth, he is beautiful.

Then suddenly, seemingly out of nowhere his arm juts across the table and grabs my neck, holding tight. I panic but freeze, he squeezes tighter, I still make no sign of struggle except now tears are coming from my eyes. His hand feels like a leather glove closing in on my life. I think about how rough his hand is and concentrate on his blisters and calluses. *How*

many sidewalks has he smashed into? How many splinters has he gotten from grabbing his board? How many beers has he popped? How many punches has he thrown? How hard has he worked to get where he is at twenty three? Do his hands deserve his respect after god blessed him with balance when my mother struggles to pay her rent when my father never thinks of anything but himself when my life is so far ahead I can't even see it because this can't be it this can't be my life I'm still waiting for mine to come in the mail so I can unwrap it send it soon because I'm tired of waiting in this pastime, in this meantime while you wait and while you sleep and while you speak you see I'm still waiting while he is 23 and I am 21 and he is him and I am me a visitor to his world let in by his good graces because when I go back home on Beverly instead of Highland back to Figueroa and York to my brick apartment I am still me and he is still him how hard has he worked so he could be able to slip away?

He lets his arm drop and I wipe my eyes.

"I'm sorry," he says, "I thought you'd like it."

I touch my neck to make sure it's still there. "I didn't," I say back softly. There is a silence between us, I look at him and still say nothing, he looks down at the tinfoil and straw in his hands.

"Here," he says offering them to me. "You can have my last dragon."

3

Some people say that Vinny Gino is a junkie, but I know he's not, because a junkie wouldn't let go of his last dragon.

4

"Credit or debit?" I ask blankly, the well manicured

blonde on her cell phone covers the mouthpiece and mouths "Credit, thanks." I run the card and watch as she prattles on into her plastic conversation box, I listen for the familiar approval code I know so well. She looks like she would have been one of the main characters from that book *Less Than Zero* back when she was a kid in the 80s. *Less than Zero* was the only book I could finish in one sitting, the chapters were short and the print was fat.

I check her nostrils for suspicious looking blood vessels, dum, de, dum, dum, waiting for the approval code. The card goes through and as soon as I hear the receipt printing "dat dat dat" I cash out the register stuff the clothes in the bag and hand her the carbons. "Sign please," I say. She does, grabs her bag, mouths "Thank you," smiles and walks away. I can hear as she heads for the door with a precise clip, "Bobby, you wouldn't believe the crowd last night . . ." and she fades into the distance and down the street.

"Isn't this cute?" the chubby brunette asks handing over her Visa card, I nod "Credit or Debit?"

"Credit, I really love the little ribbing around the collar and slee--." Dat, Dat, Dat bing--cash out, the hum, the zip the rattle the ping. "Thank you," I say shoving the receipt into her hands. "Please sign."

She stops talking and looks at me a little caught off guard. "Huh?"

"Sign please," I say again sounding slightly irritated and turning on my retail bitch tone. "Oh yes," she says nervously and smiles up at me. I grab my copy from underneath her pen and a look of shock and embarrassment flashes across her face. She makes one more feeble attempt at small talk. "Really it's just so cute--" but I cut her off and shove the bag in her hand with a big smile. "Thank you," I say loudly and watch

as she leaves looking back sheepishly and then looking down at her receipt. I glance up at the clock; I still have half an hour until my break.

I don't smoke but I don't think that it's fair that the smokers get to go outside and smoke because it's like taking another break. "American Spirits take at least 10 minutes!" Drew once told me. I came to work a week later with a box and at 5:30 the same time Leah and Drew take their smoking breaks I asked Cally if I could take one too.

"Cally, can I have a cigarette break?" She doesn't look up from her box of merchandise grabs the pencil from behind her ear writes something on her note pad and acts as if I'm not standing right in front of her.

"Cally, can I go on a cigarette break?"

She looks up at me slightly perturbed and twists her face into a look of annoyance. "No you don't smoke."

When the fat brunette who bought the ugly sweater opens the door to leave I see Leah and Drew outside on the sidewalk smoking, I look up at the clock, 28 minutes until my break.

"Miss? Miss? I'm sorry is there something wrong? I've been standing waiting for--."

"I am so sorry," I say and grab the pants from her hand and ring them up. "16.28 is your total. Credit or debit?"

"Neither," she says shoving a twenty dollar bill in my hand angrily. "Cash."

Punch, punch, pop, pop, flip, flip, the weight of the metal money holders as they snap up. I grab her change and she snatches it from my hand and marches off. I slam the register and look up at the clock, 26 minutes until my break.

I am a compulsive liar, I have been my whole life. Sometimes I lie without even knowing that I'm lying. It makes you such a good talker, people like liars, they always have. They tell the most wonderful stories. And the thing is most people think I'm so honest. It's sorta funny. I've lied so many times to people that sometimes I forget that they're lies. Of course I never forget but sometimes I get caught up. I'm not a bad person and I don't do it to hurt people, in fact most of the time it doesn't really have a purpose, I never do it to benefit myself, it just spices up a conversation.

I've lied to my best friends, my mom, and dad, every-day and I don't feel guilty about it. And I'm so good at it. Sometimes people think that they catch me in a lie but I let them think they've caught me. I've never really been caught ever. Sometimes I obviously lie about something and people say, "You're lying," and I say, "No I'm not," and they say, "Yes you are, you're such a bad liar." And then they think you never lie, they think you can't!

For as long as I can remember I've been a compulsive liar and always a good one. If the people I loved the most knew I lied to them they would be very hurt. But it has nothing to do with them, it doesn't make me love them any less. . . . It has nothing to do with them it's me. In fact I think everything I have ever achieved that I am proud of has involved me lying on some level. It's a sickness, a sick silly little sickness that has opened more doors than any other charm I have ever possessed.

Gabriella dresses like Stevie Nicks and has long red hair the color of fire and tomatoes. We are sitting outside at Busters coffee shop having an iced tea like we have done almost

every other day for as far back as I can remember. She grabs a pack of Marlboro Lights IOOs from her purse.

"So I've been thinking about it and . . ."

She pauses and places a cigarette in her mouth cups her hand around her match to protect it from the warm Santa Anas that have started to roll in and lights up. She takes a long dramatic drag throws her hair behind her shoulder with a beautiful toss of her head exhales takes the cigarette from her lips stretches her arms above her head and relaxes into the chair.

She starts to trace her lips with the hand that's holding her cigarette. She's continued talking but I'm concentrating too much on her lips as she rubs the gloss around with her fingertip.

Gabriella is a smoker, every once in a while she quits but we've learned from experience not to take her seriously. One who's had such past dips in harsher vices must always keep smoking within arm's length. Otherwise they most certainly will be lost, this at least is what I've found. Not that she's dipped into any serious pots of trouble but enough that we all watch out for her.

The college kind that's what Gabriella is. Was. Will be. She is in college, the beacon of light we all follow down the dark and murky tunnel, she races ahead of us, us grabbing out for her ruffled skirts and flowy scarves. She runs backwards facing us, arms outstretched, we reach but cannot grab her, she turns around, her hair snapping like a hot firecracker, she laughs and gallops on towards the light, we trip adjusting ourselves to the changing climate, Gabriella is a horse. Strong, lean, classically beautiful, different, compassionate, sacrifice and trust. Erratic, temperamental, stubborn, hot, huffy.

In my freshman English class they taught us when writing descriptive paragraphs adjectives are used as crutches, let the

reader know what something is by its actions not by describing its qualities. But Gabriella is private and it's taken me four years to compile that little list, because when I met her she was a cat but then she grew wings and became a Pegasus but Gabriella knows what she wants no matter what she says. So I grounded her and now she is a horse.

"My life is so confusing," she says taking a long time rolling the smoke around in her mouth, she slowly exhales. "You're so lucky." She pauses to make a smoke circle, she puts her finger through it like it was a doughnut hole. "I wish I knew what I wanted."

I look at her and smile. "You'll figure it out."

So I pretended like I didn't know and just wrote through it, because I knew she didn't have wings.

* * * * *

8

When I was younger my mother sent me to the La Canada YMCA during the summers because there was no one at home to watch me while she was at work. Every Tuesday was field trip day, they would take us to the beach, the zoo, Raging Waters, Disneyland, and other amusement parks in the area.

The summer before 3rd grade on one Tuesday they took us to Magic Mountain. It was near the end of the summer when the days seemed shorter and you started to feel older even if it was only a few months' difference. It had been a horribly hot couple of months and everybody was starting to talk about fall with wet expectation on their lips, the summer fever hanging from their tongues. But we were excited about Magic Mountain and discussed how for once the heat would benefit the trip because of the water rides and roller coasters. Gliding

through the hot air with wet clothes and tangled hair while the scent of sunscreen filled your nostrils as you looked out across the empty Valencia desert, stretching forth in front of you like it was the end of the world and if you looked over it a little bit higher you would fall off completely get swallowed up and disappear into the browns and yellows of that vast emptiness. Beyond the small city as it reached out to the Grapevine that held together little coffee shops and rest stops, held them together with a history. A thin string bound by miners and explorers cowboys and Indians, this land beyond our civilization belonged now to the truckers and trailers, all that's left of the wild west, the last untouched ghosts of our golden state. Facing the other way riding Revolution you could make out for a split second through the smog, as your stomach jumped before you went down the last drop, the great city winking at you through its artificial veil, almost as if its inhabitants created its smog shield as a way to keep its vastness safe from outsiders because it was a great city a great big city filled with every candy and every jewel and you were a link between the two, your body a human thread and Magic Mountain was the blood pumping the connection, as you blew out of one to cast a glance at another. As you rose above the two.

MARINA DUFF

If My Tits Were Kids

They wouldn't be able to see
 over the kitchen counter top.
Or be tall enough
 to get on the rides at Magic Mountain.
They wouldn't be able
 to get into R-Rated movies.
Or be allowed to stay up
 past 8:00 on a school night.
And they wouldn't be able
 to ride a bike without training wheels.

GreatGrandmaJewels

Was a handful towards the end.
 She baked fresh pies but forgot to make the crust.
 Jack didn't mind much because he liked pumpkin.
 I just piled on the whipped cream.
 And she made Jell-o
 which we ended up drinking out of mugs.

When she wasn't in the kitchen,
 she sat slouched in her polyester chair,
 which was covered in dandelions the size of my head.
 Her dresses always matched her furniture.

Her carpet was so thick I remember getting lost in it.
 Finding my way out
 by searching for her seniorcitizenfeet
 next to which sat the oak night stand
 she got for her eleventh birthday.
 It always had a box of unscented tissue,
 rusty nail clippers, and a brush
 that was forever full of her crinkled gray curls.
 Hairs that once held pink plastic barrettes
 and teenage boys' fingers.

Before I could go outside to play,
 I would sit on her lap
 as she braided the knots in my hair.
 I never put all of my weight onto her
 because I knew she had muscles like grape jelly.

One day as I sat there, I remember thinking
 grandma is almost nine times my age,
 and even I know how to make Jell-o!

SYLVIA FINO

Girl Fight

I wish I could tell Mom how much I hate it here.
 The girls are whispering about me during class.
 Roberta wants me to meet her in the girls'
 bathroom after school.
 The bell rings and I go to the meeting place as ordered.
 It's a boxing match: Me against Laura and Becky.
 It's over me showing off during Art class.

Roberta rings the bell and the two lunge at me.
 I wiggle my bony body through their legs and run outside.
 They start chasing. It's beginning to snow again.
 All I'm wearing is last year's cardigan from
 All Saints School and a cheap cotton dress Mom got me
 at K-mart.
 My Easter shoes are two sizes too small.

I run my best, leaving the girls far behind.
 The icy wind is freezing my nose and legs.
 I can't breathe, but I keep running.
 I make it home, gasping.
 Grandma is still pissed about us staying here.
 Mom just stares out the window at the falling snow.

Women Don't Smile

I've been going to church here for over a decade.
What is it about you women?
Do you really think I want your husbands?
Maybe I just miss being around couples.
I miss my marriage.
It's hard raising kids alone.
I can't help the way I look.
I smile and say "hello,"
And you look away.
You sing worship with your hands lifted,
and close your eyes as though you are holy.
And yet you walk past me like I'm a leper.
Hypocrites!
I'll continue to smile though,
because your husbands always smile back.

An Empty Park Bench

Randall is the smaller one sitting on my lap.
He just turned one last month.
Matt is the five year old
with the blank stare,
and in desperate need of a haircut.
The same stupid outings every Sunday.
To close out the weekends where I stay
up looking out the window of our two-story apartment
until morning.
And Peter's so plastered
he doesn't remember the insults.
And that absolves him from apologizing.
So I sit at the empty bench,
not even bothering to look at the camera.
I stare at the etchings on the wood,
and run my fingertips over the worn letters
inside a heart that reads "Manny loves Eva."
And I wonder how I wound up
with this pathetic loser
who mocks me by telling me to smile.

THOM GARZONE

Lies, Lies, Lies

It was either a neurotic impulse
or a longing to feel self worth.
Staying home, abusing medication,
I imagined I was a mintworker or a gifted painter.
I believed I owned Northern Nevada, all of Washington,
that I irrigated and planted a farm, stretching
from Oregon to Missouri.
I told this to a newcomer at mass.

I'd say at a job interview that I had
an honorary doctorate in education from Columbia,
that my name was Stephen Babbit or
Stephen Delgrosso, that my mother's actual
maiden name was Barbara Pape.

Psychologists were baffled.
I told them I was half Commanche
and the other half Mohawk.
I claimed I fathered over two thousand children,
that my height was 7'5".
I convinced myself I had a disease
known as glaucoma of the bone marrow,
which was an excuse for getting stoned on pot.

I left the service having a notion that
I was the General of the Costa Rican Army,
the Emperor of South America, Jack Kerouac's little buddy.
I told friends I was a roadee for Pink Floyd,
drummed for The Who. I was under the impression

that I was an Olympic gold medalist and
was picked in the 3rd round by the Pittsburgh Steelers.

My doctors decided I would have to stay
after mentioning I had a medical degree
from Berkeley, explained I was a medical professor
and was wanted in class.

DINA HARDY

A Small Thing

I was born without one.
 And what would support it,
 I keep covered as often as I can.
 Only a few have seen it.
 My sister would laugh at it.
 I would hit her if she came close
 to telling her friends about it;
 hit her hard, so she'd shut up.
 Christine saw it and she almost fainted
 which I thought was a bit much,
 it being such a small thing.
 But then again, even at ten,
 she was melodramatic.
 Then she asked to see it again.
 So I showed her again.
 She couldn't think of anything to say,
 lost interest and then
 we drew pictures of horses.

Near the O-at-ka Creek

A warm and cloudless afternoon
 in spring. The creek
 explodes. Uncontrollable
 water drowns small rocks.

On the creek-bank, a family—
 two young children, laughing, skipping stones—
 rounds the bend. Discovers us.
 Embarrassed, they leave.

David, with lips firm and moist
 is kissing me. He is eighteen, will graduate
 before me--has already packed for college--
 has his hand down my shorts, fingers inside me.

And the whole creek, water high,
 roars as David whispers,
 "I leave in a month. But it could be a great month.
 Unless you don't want to. Do you want to?"

A warm and cloudless afternoon
 in spring. The creek
 explodes. Uncontrollable
 water drowns small rocks.

 PHILIP HARRIS

A Day in the Life of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

I hear my parents have sex and I become jealous. They have the kind of love that I crave. The kind I obsess over without any thought of doing so and yet with every thought becoming consumed by it. I want to be like them so badly that I have become a man without pride willing to do anything that would guarantee me a happy future with someone who, without want or need, will pour me a cup of coffee (and expect me to do the same for them in return) every morning. Until then . . .

I get up at ten o'clock and try to mentally stay one step ahead of the loneliness that I know is always at my back. I read the horoscope and, if I'm lucky, the one or two fashion articles that the *Los Angeles Times* throws my way every few weeks or so. Then I run four miles, if I feel up to it, and then take a half hour shower making sure to brush my teeth, shave, shampoo/wash my hair, and then jack off (in that order). After my shower I check my e-mail and by then it's already noon and I am ready for lunch. That is, if I'm going to even eat lunch. Whether or not I take lunch is dependent on whether or not I ran earlier. After lunch I sit and watch a rerun of *The Cosby Show* on channel fourteen (TBS) and then I take a nap or go online again until two o'clock when it is time to await the arrival (usually around two-twenty) of my younger brother who will soon be coming home from school.

My brother usually wants to do his homework but I force him into watching TV with me because I enjoy the company and need something to take my mind off the things that make me sad. He usually complies. He is a sixteen-year-old straight-A student who realizes his older brother is a little wacko. He'll sit and pretend he's interested in what is on TV just because he

knows it makes me happy. It's silly to think that he has to do something like that, but he does.

I sometimes wonder if he is judging me in the back of his mind, but then I just start watching whatever is on TV and the thoughts cease. That's what my therapist said would happen. Actually, what he said was that the best cure for this, what I have that is, is to keep busy.

Anyway, after my brother decides to finally do his homework, I watch a bit of Oprah or Rosie depending on which sparks my interest more. Usually Rosie. After that it's four o'clock and the day has officially ended and I have to start getting ready for school (or work). What's nice is that at four o'clock Judge Judy comes on and I am able to use her as a background while I do my other things: brush my teeth again, comb my hair, change my clothes, etc. It is like a double stacking of the deck in my favor so the thoughts of despair don't come into my mind and set up permanent camp. As I am leaving for school (or work) I usually say hello in passing to my mother who has just come home from her own job. She usually compliments me on what I'm wearing and wishes me a good evening knowing she'll be asleep by the time I come home. I never see my father. I don't think he likes me.

When I go to work or school I always make sure to dress well. To clarify though, I never dress poorly. I like to make an appearance of grace wherever I go but I find it difficult to do so these days because of the increasing thoughts in my head that tell me I'm fat and make me feel like I'm falling. Of course, when those thoughts come into mind the best thing to do is to keep busy.

MAGGIE HAYES

Smoke

hey, do you remember
how we used to
sneak out at night
to smoke cigarettes
in my backyard?

we'd talk for hours
 in whispers
watching the chemical blue smoke
float around the branches
of an avocado tree

I told you how
I never knew what to do
with my hands
 that they always seem
 foreign, too big,
 like they belong to someone else

you laughed
I got embarrassed
even I knew how stupid that sounds

The Landscape of Your Face

The brows are thick, sprawling desert clouds above a deep sky of blue, which borders the long transverse mountain range of a nose. The thin, yet fertile delta mouth lies due south. When you smile, a flash flood flows through the deep channels and you look twenty-seven again. A rough scrub forest covers the south-eastern/western portions of this strange continent. My hands have taken extended vacations there. They have traveled from its lush northern forest, along the edges of dark gorge ears, and all across the lovely, weathered, landscape of your face. They find it a nice place to visit, but they wouldn't want to live there.

 R A H I M A H H E R D

After School

It was all about getting
 Off and poking fun at our
 Ultra-sensitive mothers . . .

Flying saucers buried in our eyes:
 "Hurry in before the street lights come on!"
 Someone's matriarch yelled from an
 Open screen door.
 As the bullshit awaited and grew colder
 On the dinner table, little Johnny
 Vowed to marry me, buy a gun, and become
 Invisible:

"But not necessarily in that order," he clarified.

Pepsi soda can burned between
 His doughy hands. The love in his smirk
 Was premature yet genuine, its solitude grew
 Like buckwheat in desolate fields behind
 The filth of his braces.

Crickets gnawed and sang off key.
 Space crafts hovered above the Altadena Nursery
 And Tito's Beauty Salon. We walked hand
 In hand to an ice-cream truck, while the brass in our pockets
 Bounced up and down like cheerleader
 Jugs:

"Someday, I want to be happy and to not be poor
 And not be brown, maybe," he continued.

The nectarine sun faded past
 The horizon on our forgotten
 Arid street. Johnny's dirty face reflected in
 My only quarter, while I listened to him dream
 And unconsciously forgave him for being twelve
 Years old and ridiculous . . .

EMMA LEHENY

Doors and Windows

Around 1987, I had my wisdom teeth pulled. Cricket Bradford sat on my bed and flirted with me. I felt flushed and happy. We had just finished high school.

Around 1975, a girl named Dottie threw up on me during morning circle. Mrs. Timmerman took me into the storage closet and gave me lost-and-found clothes to wear.

Around 1986, my dad came after me. I ran outside and hid in the bushes. I watched him walk through the house, locking all the doors and windows.

Around 1992, my friend Mike got a bottle of Glenfiddich at Duty-Free. We pretended to brawl in an upscale coffee shop. We played Prince and Frank Sinatra. We peed in parking lots.

Around 1981, the *Hampshire Gazette* featured Jamie O'Connell as a model student who didn't watch TV. My best friend Peter and I stole his glasses and threatened to put them down a storm drain.

Around 1990, I rode the Greyhound cross-country for \$69. I helped the driver put chains on the tires. A woman from North Dakota recited movie plots. Tracy Chapman played on my Walkman, as the sun rose in Wisconsin.

Around 1994, my cat got stuck on a log. I waded into a pond to reach him. His black and white fur stood out against the fall colors.

GIANPIERO LEONE

Walking Pavlov's Dog

Waiting by the door
promptly seven p.m. every night,
panting in anticipation.

The hum of her car
into the driveway triggers my tail.
She enters and is smothered
with wet slobbery kisses.
A bite to eat and a long walk follows.

A nocturnal routine varying
only by the shade of her lipstick
and the expression behind it,
but as fresh to me as the new
season of my favorite TV show.

Another evening
but her car never pulls in,
the front door never creaks
the tail never wags.

On the icebox door, obstructed by the Golden
Noodle takeout menu, a letter from her
explains she won't be coming back.
I open the icebox and pop open my new companion.

There Goes the Neighborhood

Mom and pop have left town
driven out like the Okies of the dust bowl.
Their sons and daughters too,
heirs to the throne that never had a chance.

The maggots got the rest, knocking each other down
over the old ice cooler and soda sign for a buck or two
or a table and chair for the same price.
Resurfacing later at an estate sale for twice that amount.

Over the hills bulldozers are buzzing
and land owners are harvesting.
The parking meters are off the trucks
and are vertical now,
looking for a handout every fifty feet or so.

Can you hear them?
Here they come, over the landscape
in their SUVs, with their cell phones,
to worship that mermaid coffee goddess.
There goes the neighborhood.

MARIA LIM

King of Coins

Its intricate mighty eagle reminds you to spend it wisely
The quarter, the king of all coins--
When the stain on your button-down needs to be removed
When a kid begs to see a blue, red, yellow, green or white
Ball roll down the gumball machine
To view the magnificent Alcatraz from afar
To tell your worried parents where you are
The unbreakable king of coins is there

KRISTINA MANDIGO

Eating

Tulip
dream of
whipped cream
and peaches so
ripe and sweet they
drown out the bitterness
of the last time
I fell down.
I'll
just break
my fall with ice
cream pillowed on a
chocolate brownie and not
think about that slap on the face.
No, I'll slap on some more sweet icing
on this lemon cake to ice my
lumps and bruises
yes, sugar
lumps
in my tea and later
I'll dream of two lips
sore and cracked
where they met your
fist the last
time.

March 13 in OR 12 - Memorial Hospital

Needle pulled through your
skin,
Left side of
neck
Leaving a jagged seam
of puss-white
oozing tears
mopped up with
a starched hanky.
Piecing flesh together
bit by bit.
Pulling this side over to that
Cut, poke, pull, tie,
stitch by stitch,
Like the surgery
I did on teddy
when older brother
ripped his neck
open
but I used
red thread
to match imaginary
blood.
How many pints
did you sacrifice
to the
Medicine god
doctor
for your
Frankenstein scar?

NICK MORTEN

"Check for Mold,"

Mom used to say.
Every time we checked there was mold.

The way she kept bread I wondered if she was feeding us or pigeons.

"If you eat mold, you'll get sick," Mom snapped.

"Tear out the moldy parts. The rest is fine."

Then Sis got sick.

On the hospital phone I overheard Mom tell her first ex-husband

"The damn kid went and ate moldy bread. I taught her better."

I guess her and Mollisia were trying to get back together again.

Mom didn't know I saw Jewels pick out the mold.

The rest wasn't fine.

Kissing a Tornado

Is the only way to explain her.
like Dorothy, i'm not exactly sure how far we've gone
until she reaches in my pants and

i
realize
we're
on
my bed
with
our
shirts
off,
not
in
some
Midwestern
state.

we fall to the floor
and for the first time
i think i see the world in color.

i smile and think to myself:
"There's no place like home"
"There's no place like here"
"There's no place like her"

while we tongue our way through oz.

Chia Head

Another Saturday night with a muted "Texas Chainsaw
Massacre"
and emails scented like your perfume
raged on while ham and penicillin rotted in the background.
In today's email I've become a waste of time, and
chauvinistic pig,
not-so-much unlike our first letter where we still loved
passionately
using nouns like "eyes" and verbs like "suck."

Between "stupid fuck" and "i never cared" I read that you still
love me

Still, no one's ever described my genitalia that way.

My eyes unfocus and skim to the last paragraph,
the place where anyone else would sum up their ideas.
Not finding one I look up at my chia head
and wonder:

How could we have gone so horribly bad in-between one
haircut?

TOVA TAMIKI NASH

Homecoming

Your embrace
encompassing, smooth warm flesh
melting my chill
My gratitude
nuzzling, kissing,
clutching your brownness between my teeth
sucking sweet soul nectar.
The flight
holding on tight, and
soaring, spiraling breathlessly towards God
quickenning then erupting
under your reign
your honey smell on my sheets
lulling me to euphoria

ANITA PHILLIPS

Everything New Again

*I am floating in a sea of beginnings,
caught in a riptide of fragments
that have no middle,
that have no end.*

It has been a rainy spring. The air around the lake is humid and thick with bugs. Sharp mosquitoes erratically buzz, clouds of little gnats hover at the water's edge. If you don't close your mouth in time you undoubtedly end up with a bug in your throat, coughing, spitting and swallowing hard with both surprise and disgust. The water is unusually clear for this time of year. I can see all the way to the murky bottom. A broken radiator, used tires, abandoned shopping carts that sank, all covered in a mossy brown velvet that the fish dart through.

The ducks caught a glimpse of my bag of bread and are trailing me like a group of clever gypsies, quacking and signaling in secret code. But my bread is for the underdogs, the picked-on ducks that take shelter behind the boat dock. I feed them every day at three. They leap from the dock and paddle fervently toward the shore with bright hopeful eyes, their wings scrawny and bedraggled, their necks picked and scratched so often that red scars are now where soft down feathers should be. These are the lucky ones, the ducks that got away and found a small corner of peace in their tiny world.

The first time I witnessed a duck fight I stood paralyzed with horror while a fat white duck strangled the neck of a timid brown mallard, his crooked orange beak a brutal weapon. Flailing and splashing, the mallard was unable to escape as the mean duck wrestled her small head beneath the water, hold-

ing her under with such homicidal determination I thought she would surely drown. Ducks mate for life. My mind raced with images of a widowed duck swimming alone, frantically searching for his lost companion, calling her name in the night with only echoes in reply. I reached for a stick and hurled it in the direction of the struggling ducks. Startled, the bully lost his grasp long enough for the mallard to break away, escaping across the water into the air. Singing. Free.

Digging into my bag I pull out a fistful of bread and send it scattering to my eagerly awaiting duck friends. Mom is sitting on her favorite bench watching the ducks with droopy sad-dog eyes, pale blue eyes slightly bulging from their sockets as if frightened with a shock from which she never quite recovered. Her tree trunk torso is hidden beneath folds of weary flesh, smelling of sweet powder in the places she no longer remembers to wash each day. Painstakingly positioned atop her threads of white hair is the ragged straw garden hat Honey bought in Capistrano, a lukewarm yellow neither here nor there, the sallow color of abandoned promise. It is too large for her head. At Mom's side sits a small travel-worn suitcase filled with bobby pins and tissues, expired sweepstakes entries and scratched lottery tickets, a half-eaten orange beginning to mold, an emergency lipstick in case she runs into somebody she knows. Today will be her birthday. Just like yesterday and the day before.

"Who do you think is sexier, Frank Sinatra or Elvis?" Mom asks.

"They both have sex appeal in different ways," I reply.

"I think Frank Sinatra. Although Elvis sure knows how to swoon the ladies." Mom flashes a smile of wry naughtiness, lost in a wave of recollection. For a moment I imagine beyond her tired frame to the young woman she must have been. Tall,

beautiful, alive with dreams when life was all sugary and breezy.

"But then you have to consider Fabian if you are talking about heartthrobs. And what about Frankie Valli?" I ask.

"Bah! Fabian is an amateur. You mark my words, Fabian will be yesterday's news tomorrow. Nobody will remember his name next week. And Frankie is not my type," Mom giggles and gives me a wink like she knows more than she is going to let on. "But then again, if he invited me for a cocktail I'm not fool enough to turn him down."

I laugh and toss more bread to the ducks considering the small measure of time that confines my mother's memory, her mind stuck on instant replay in an era when squeaky clean was a sex symbol and women did housework in heels and pearls.

"Englebert Humperdink!" she blurts out so loudly the ducks turn their heads in alarm. "Now there's a man with real talent. But he's not much of a looker you know. . . ." Her voice trails off, she is distracted by a cormorant diving down to catch a fish, watching for the sinewy black bird to resurface with his lunch.

Beads of sweat are breaking on Mom's brow. Her eyes are rolling back in her head, the lids fluttering and twinging like an electrical current zapping a moth. With a violent shudder she slumps over, her mouth hanging open, her body limp, unmoving, jowls sagging. She begins to drool.

"Mom? Mom? Anna Maria? I'm here, it's okay," I tell her, taking my mother's hand in mine. I stroke the transparent paper skin that holds in her veins, her fragile network of bones. I am always surprised when I hold my mother's hands, so delicate now as if one day the life whooshed out and forgot to return. Hands that once held love enough to raise four daugh-

ters, to sew a thousand dresses, to patch all the rips and tears. Calloused fingers that always gave more than was ever required; fingers covered with scars marking the passing years of laundry, of payday and bus fare and trips to the market, of endless hours behind a steaming iron preparing clothes for someone else to wear. I stroke the thin white line where a wedding ring once claimed her as the wife of an absent man. Gold and tiny diamonds she eventually stopped wearing when her knuckles became too swollen with tired.

I wait for Mom to return to me, holding her hand, choking back tears, praying for a stick to chase away her demons, knowing there is nothing big enough within my grasp. A siren screeches in the distance with the urgent panic of crisis. I am reminded that affliction and sorrow do not uniquely belong to me.

"Cherries," she slurs, slowly perking up and looking around with a squinting disoriented face. "I smell cherry pie. Do you think Pearl is baking cherry pie? It is my birthday you know."

"Yes, I know."

Mom fidgets with her suitcase, opening and closing it, concentrating on the lock to ensure the protection of its contents.

"Plump with juicy cherries, red as an August pomegranate picked fresh from the garden, and a crust so flaky it melts on your tongue like the dust from an angel in Heaven. Makes my mouth pucker just thinking about it."

"Is that what you want for your birthday, pie instead of cake?"

"Of course. Pearl knows it's my favorite."

Tonight will be a cherry pie night. I will pull one from the freezer to bake for an hour, indulging the wish of this beloved

dimming soul, a wish so simple, so easy to grant. And as Mom inquires with groaning concern I will have to explain over coffee and ice cream and birthday pie that Pearl passed on years ago. After a moment the memories will rush back like a vengeful, unrelenting tide. It will dawn on my mother that she is caught in a vacuum of disjointed time, and she will flash me the pained expression of lucidity. Her baby sister died of pneumonia. Her husband walked away. By tomorrow she will have forgotten. It will be her birthday. Everything will be new again and life will go silently screaming on.

"I'm out of bread, Mom. The ducks are full and getting sassy." I help her up from the splintery bench and hand her the small suitcase of treasures. "Come on, let's go home."

I kiss my mother on the cheek and wrap my arm about her shoulder. We walk through the grass where our footsteps have worn a path and the rain has left pools of soggy earth. Honey picks three smiling purple flowers and tucks them in her pocket.

"Happy birthday to me," she says.

"Happy birthday, Mom," I whisper.

 RONALD SECOR

Elephants

I like elephants.

They are my favorite animals.

I like them because they are big.

They are not only big; they are the biggest of all land animals.

Somehow, as big as our world is, it is no longer big enough for all the elephants and all the people to share it, so the people have begun to kill the elephants.

They have many reasons to be doing this but they seem to me to be very bad reasons.

I think a man who kills an elephant is, at that moment, a bad man, or at the least, a man with a bad idea.

George Orwell, an English writer, wrote an essay, telling of the time that he killed an elephant. It made him feel bad to do it, but he did it anyway.

It was his duty.

The elephant was bothering the people.

When we read the story carefully it can show us how doing the wrong thing for the wrong reason does not make it right.

It can show us how bad ideas can lead to bad results.

I think that a man who kills an elephant should have his balls chewed off by a crocodile.

 JENNIFER SONGSTER

*The Vulture and the Baby and
Kevin Carter**

The vulture crouches in your
background
Kevin Carter
it sees you holding your Nikon
not the Sudanese baby starving in your
foreground
it's ignoring her
and fixing its black glittering eye
on you
Kevin Carter
it can smell the car exhaust in your lungs
before you do
and takes little loping steps
towards you
its feathers in slow motion float up
then down
in the choking dusty heat

Kevin Carter
it doesn't care about the girl
it's waiting for you

**South African photojournalist who won a Pulitzer
Prize for the photo "The Vulture and the Baby."
He committed suicide in 1994.*

Not Saturday Night

I don't want to make love with my wife anymore.
It's not that she's unclean
or picks her teeth
or is too fat or too thin.
And it's not that I don't love her.
It's simply that
now I think of her more
as a girl I'd take out Thursday night
but not Saturday.

She knows things changed, of course,
slowly, silently,
when she wasn't watching.
I see her searching sad eyes,
feel her lingering caresses.
But she never asks
and I never offer. Instead,

we just lie together
in our bed, naked,
holding hands.

 MERCEDES ZIEGLER

Blown Away

It was a warm and sunny morning in June when I first noticed a lone dandelion in my backyard. The little weed-like flower was standing erect, its long, thin stem topped off with a round feather-like ball. It looked soft and delicate. I became mesmerized by the dandelion's intricate design. As I sat there looking at it, a gentle breeze started to stir the leaves on the trees. I wondered if the dandelion anticipated the strong wind picking up the ball of seeds and scattering them in directions unknown. I wondered if the dandelion waited for a ride, like a floppy hatted bum waiting for a freight train. All of a sudden a gust of wind came down upon the "dandy" and ripped the feathery seeds from the stem. The seeds were lifted up high with little effort. They were flying in every different direction; their fate was left to the power of the wind. I watched as the stem stood bare, bending in submission to the wind. I knew the time had come for the dandelion stem to die.

This whole scenario reminded me of my family's own separation after the death of my mother. My mother was like the stem, and we were like the seedy flower. Once she was dead, we went our own ways. Most of my siblings seemed to ride the wind, choosing the right place to land. I was caught up in a summer tempest; the fierce storm blew me around. I had no idea of how to land on solid ground. When each one of us had landed it was far from where we had started.

My sister Margaret was the first to land on fertile soil. The wind that picked up her seed was an eastern one. Margaret found Pennsylvania to be the place that best suited her needs. She found a gentle, quiet man there and married him. They settled down to a simple life. After a few years they had two

children. They became the stems and their children the seedy flowers. In time the wind will cast their children on to make a life for themselves.

My brothers caught a strong wind that took them a thousand miles from home. They landed in Oregon. It was a hard journey for them both. A long time was spent recovering from their trip. My brother, Michael dug his own plot of land, finding just the right place to set his seed in. He married the girl next door. They became a dandelion together. My brother Anthony followed suit, and married shortly after Michael's stem took root. They both eventually became the stems of their own families. They are now strong dandelions.

Then there was my sister Marie. She touched ground, but it was never long enough to take root. She never felt comfortable in the places she landed. Marie traveled from one state to the next, taking different jobs, marrying different people. She had two children. It was as though she cast them into the wind before their time. They wander around behind her, trying to reattach themselves to the stem that discarded them. I don't believe they will become mature dandelions for a long time.

I was the one who took the wildest journey. I was caught up in a whirlwind where my feet couldn't find the ground. When my mother died, I felt abandoned. I was scared and insecure. I yearned for the comfort and security the stem, my mother, had given me. I tried men, money, and alcohol. Nothing worked to give me the peace I was so desperately seeking. It took years, but I finally hit ground. I am also a stem, a mother. I am like my siblings, I am strong, and I am growing, still.

There are still strong winds that blow through our lives. There are times of trouble, but we no longer break from the

force of gale upon our “stem.” Our past has become the fertilizer that makes us strong. We can survive the storm.

CONTRIBUTORS

BRUCE ARNOLD is a third generation retailer in Pasadena. A recent widower, he had come to poetry initially for solace but found joy in the expression of all of life's emotional wellings. He has published two chapbooks: *Heart's Platter* and *Dancing Sheets*. He reads at open mikes throughout the L.A. region.

MARISA BOOPACHEUN is currently working on her degree and hopes to transfer to Art Center College of Design one day. She has been enrolled in screen printing classes for three semesters and plans to get a Certificate of Achievement in the field.

EDWARD CERVANTES is in his first year at PCC, coming from South Pasadena HS. He loves all forms of lettering, graphics and graffiti, the more abstract the better. He enjoys all media and hopes to use his time at PCC to explore more techniques with which to express his art.

NICOLE DARLING is a writer.

MARINA DUFF is majoring in sociology, with a minor in creative writing. She will transfer next semester to get her bachelor's degree and will continue to write and publish her poetry. She had a blast being part of the *Inscape* staff and participating in PCC's poetry slams.

SYLVIA FINO is a part-time student at PCC. She has been writing since sixth grade, when she won a state essay contest in New Mexico. She works as a sales representative for a food distributor and hopes to continue publishing her poetry and short stories.

Contributors

JACK FORREST has been enrolled in screen printing classes on and off for several years. An artist and history buff, he lives in Inglewood with his wife and three children. An admirer of Hitchcock films and the painter Caravaggio, Jack hopes to publish a serial based on his original characters.

PHILIP JOHN HARRIS was born in Hollywood, California. He was raised in Glendale and graduated from Hoover High School in 1999. He is currently attending PCC pursuing a writing career while eternally fostering his passion for fashion.

MAGGIE HAYES's favorite cereal is Frosted Mini Wheat. Her endeavors for the future include, but aren't limited to, writing a better bio. She urges youth of today to take their vitamins, say their prayers, and brush their teeth before bed.

RAHIMAH HERD is a 21-year-old former student of PCC where she studied English. She has been writing poetry and short stories for eight years and hopes to pursue a career in literature and creative writing.

EMMA LEHENY has written, studied, and taught poetry for over ten years. Her writing also appears this spring in *RiverSedge*, a publication of the University of Texas. She is a labor lawyer in Pasadena.

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Contributors

MARIA LIM attended PCC from 1998 to 2001. She is currently a student at UC Riverside majoring in History/Law and Society, and she would someday like to work in foreign service. She thanks Ron Koertge's poetry class for her first publication credit.

NED MANDALA is a graduate of Rose City HS. He has been making art his whole life and intends to major in art and transfer to a four-year college. His print here is based on a photograph of himself and a friend walking in the L.A. River bed.

JOHN E. MINER was born in Montebello. He graduated from high school with no idea what he wanted to do with his life. One day, he started assembling his wild ideas into collage form. He transformed these into screen printed art editions and produced rock concert posters. Seven years and 73 poster later, he is still producing and showing his art, and the tiny bit of regional recognition he gets just keeps pulling him along.

NICK MORTEN is a student at PCC.

"Everything New Again" is ANITA PHILLIPS's first published work. She is currently pursuing a degree in English at UCLA after attending PCC for one year. She works as a research librarian for an architectural firm and lives in Echo Park with her husband and her grumpy old dachshund Milton.

RONALD SECOR is the world's leading auto dismantler/poet. His other interests include world travel, auto racing, and memorabilia collecting. He is a connoisseur of long naps. He currently lives in San Dimas with his wife of 44 years and his four grown children.

KEITH SHONO is an artist, musician and Renaissance man dedicated to the screen printing process. He has an extensive background in this area, going back to the Sixties and Seventies. Keith is about to complete his Certificate of Achievement in screen printing.

LAURA SUMPTER is an architecture major at PCC. She has lived in Pasadena for the past three years. She misses her sweet dog Amber (put to sleep one-and-a-half years ago) but has since developed a strange fetish for ant dwellings.

DARRYL WILLIAMS, a resident of Pasadena, was born in Los Angeles in 1952. An employee of Boeing Aircraft in Long Beach for 20 years, he is a returning student. His goals are to start a graphic design business, have a one-man art show and start his own clothing line.

Our apologies to those contributors who could not be reached to supply a biographical note.

POETS OF THE YEAR

Every year since 1975, *Inscape* has honored a Poet of the Year. Past winners are:

1975	Jean Burden
1976	Maxine Kumin
1977	Henri Coulette
1978	Philip Levine
1979	Thom Gunn
1980	<i>No Edition</i>
1981	J. V. Cunnigham
1982	Dennis Cooper
1983	Ron Koertge
1984	Mark Strand
1985	John Ashbery
1986	Linda Pastan
1987	Michael Harper
1988	Denise Levertov
1989	Wanda Coleman
1990	Paul Zimmer
1991	Kate Braverman
1992	Joy Harjo
1993	"la loca" - Pamala Karol
1994	Michael Stephans
1995	Seamus Heaney
1996	Eloise Klein Healy
1997	Sharon Olds
1998	Octavio Paz and Yevgeny Yevtushenko
1999	Gary Snyder
2000	Lawrence Ferlinghetti
2001	Cathy Song

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under the direction of

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under the direction of

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Take part in producing next year's

INSCAPE

Enroll in

English 7:

Inscape Magazine Publication

or

Print 13 or 113:

Screen Printing

(See next page for additional information.)

Creative Writing at PCC

ENG 5A CREATIVE WRITING

Prerequisite: *Eligibility for Engl 1B*

Creative Literary expression: short story, poetry and essay. Individual experimentation with various forms; students evaluate their work and work of classmates in light of contemporary writings.

Transfer Credit: CSU; UC

ENG 5B CREATIVE WRITING

Prerequisite: *Engl 5A, 6, 7 or 8*

Creative Literary expression such as: short story, poetry, dramatic form and essay. The focus is on in-depth criticism of student work and professional writers.

Maximum credit 6 units, 3 units each semester.

Transfer Credit: CSU; UC

ENG 6 SHORT STORY WRITING

Prerequisite: *Eligibility for Engl 1B*

Theory and practice in writing the short story.

Maximum credit 9 units, 3 units each semester.

Transfer Credit: CSU; UC

ENG 7 INSCAPE MAGAZINE PUBLICATION

Prerequisite: *English 1A*

Critical review and selection of creative material; design and layout of a literary magazine.

Maximum credit 6 units, 3 units each semester.

Transfer Credit: CSU

ENG 8 WRITING POETRY

Prerequisite: *Eligibility for Engl 1A*

Writing of poetry in all forms. Reading of traditional and current work.

Maximum credit 9 units, 3 units each semester.

Transfer Credit: CSU; UC

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