





north

Winter / Spring 2000







north

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Editors:
Keith Ebsary and Mark Sentesy

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Cover Design: Jen Regan

For more information contact: machtfrei@hotmail.com or marksentesy@hotmail.com

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editor's note

Art provides a solution to the problem of ugliness. Ugliness is not just a withered bunch of celery stumbled across at the grocery store or a two-day hangover beginning on a Monday. Ugliness is far more complex. It includes the neglecting of human beauty, the mechanization of the individual, the triumph of the practical over the aesthetic, the triumph of the finite over the infinite. Ugliness is antithetical to art since art can never be ugly. Even though an artist may wallow in what appears to be ugliness, his or her art rarely celebrates the ugly as an end in itself. Almost without exception, art strives to negate life's ugliness by criticizing, dissecting and explaining it. Art incorporates the ugly with a view to transcending it.

This is not to say that art serves merely as a pleasant facade concealing the true brutality of existence. Art cannot be the calming soporific which blinds one to the ominous hiss of death camps or the rattling of tumbrels. If one accepts that art has no other purpose than to portray saccharine worlds devoid of conflict or substance, then one must also accept that Hallmark jingles should be the standard by which one judges Shakespeare's poetry, and MacDonald's wall art the standard by which one judges Van Gogh's painting. A meal combo #4 which includes a free art treat opens up whole universes of hell which Lucifer himself could not have imagined.

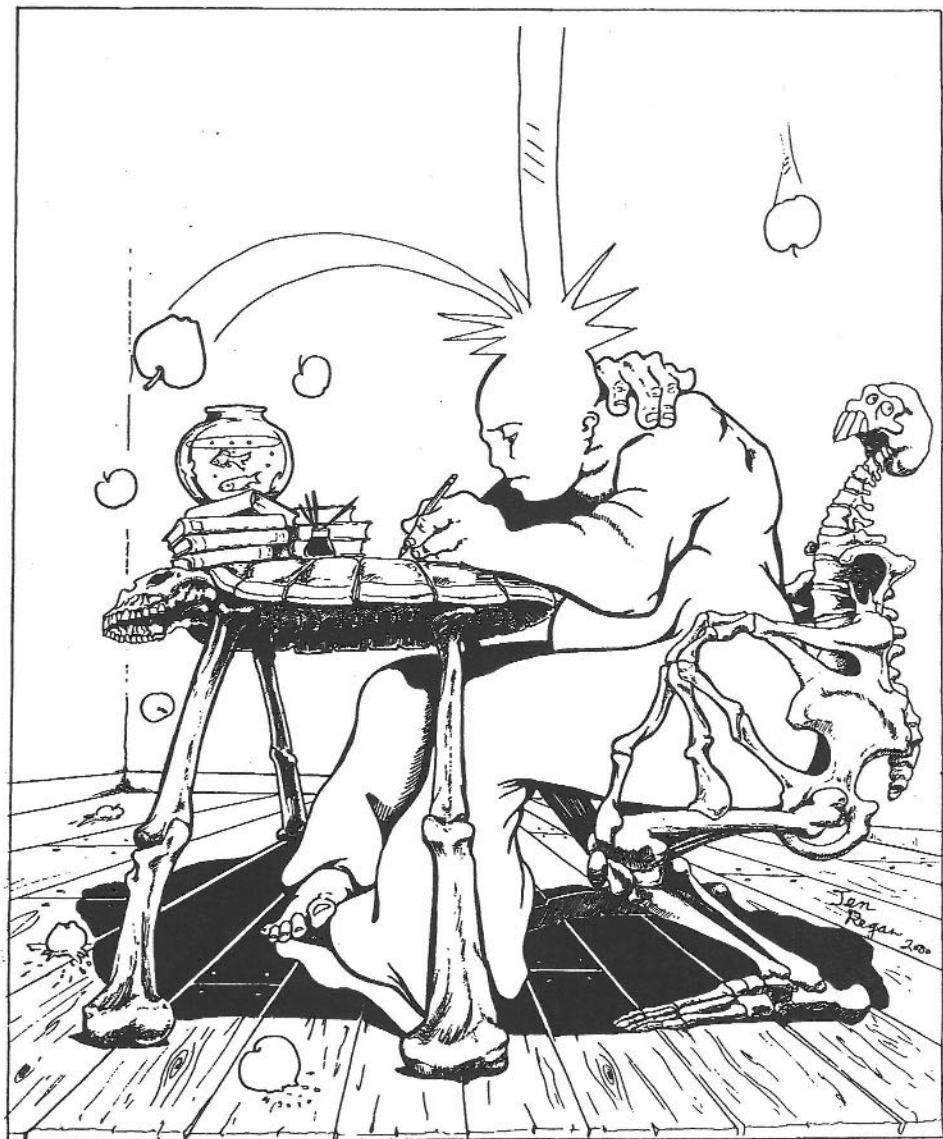
Within the pages of this journal, then, one finds an exuberant rejection of the superficial and an equally exuberant examination of a multi-faceted world. Whether it is Chelby Daigle's examination of urgency and violence, or Louis G. Turpin's call for arts students to contribute directly to society, *north* provides you with an antidote to ugliness which is both edifying and entertaining.

Absorb the talents of our students and do not be ugly.

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Ink drawing by Jen Regan



Tom Pokinko

See the Jazzman Play

See the jazzman play
and the people sway:
to and fro they go
on a dancefloor slow
like a daytime show
turned way down low then

stop.

Jazzman hops.

A blast to last and the horn bee-bops.

Rhythm pops
a sweatbead drops...

and CRASH the drum rum tumbling through
on the floor tom tumbling with a roll like you
just cast ten dice on the drumhead tumbling
then a CRASH! and now a CRASH! with the floor tom rumbling

and the bass picks up with a doom doom dop
bunnada dip dap diddly dap – the bassman's mop
is floppin' back and forth as his hands are gone and pumpin'
with plenty more to say he gets the crowd all up and jumpin'

The jazzman smiles, counts the ceiling tiles
brings his lip to the tip of his horn and beguiles
all of us steady in the crowd, anticipating
what's to come but when it comes
- when's it gonna? -

(we're not ready.)

With a swooped up whoop of the saxophone
he brings the house right down and the rhythm's gone
like a crazy thing as the bassman stoops
pumpin like he's sumpin' and the drums behind him thumpin with the
up down round
of a merry-go-round of sound
with the splash crash mash and the sax on top
no stop or seizing up – they keep it spinnin' like a top
Now the bassman's wild!
Like a naughty child
kicks his chair back square clear the floor and smiles.

There's a yell from the drummer
cos he's got that swing
and the bassman's up and jumpin'
like a crazy thing.
(And now I know they're misbehaving but I
feel like I could sing.)

Ba-diddly doo wop dop
t-tub THUB
ting ting!

(Ha!)

now jazzman's wailing tailing flailing, screamin something like he's ailing
he's assailing every note that in a hotel-room he wrote
and the energy he smote with the pen and now again
turned up wide and amplified
first inside
and now in stride
like a perfect suicide.

Throw tha dice and sa-cree-fice
note for note on the altar with no falter in the boppin' there's no stoppin'
blowin' clear through every ear in the place – watch his face!
Hear the angels sayin' YES!
Wotta mess we're blessed with YES!

Now regress...

to tenderness
like deep red wine of a vintage best
smooth and slow the rhythms go
with a gentle tug we follow
like the wind
at a sleeve
in the late fall evening breeze.

It's the residue of a blast the blew out but now has passed.

He's through; I lift my glass
and raise a toast across the club
stone silence –

before the flood
of wild applause.

Glenn Clifton

The News

Good afternoon. Here are the stories we've been following:

In international news, mercenaries continued increasing at a steady rate, finishing the day at ten cents a dozen, U.S.

The Christians complained some more, passing judgment quickly before the market closed. Several species became extinct in the forests, while Martha Stewart continued her oppressive control of her garden.

Several good children began writing on Pepsi notepaper: they are currently surviving, but in critical condition.

Kissing was up six percent from last week, market analysts crediting the change to an increase of loneliness with the approaching holidays.

If you have purchased life insurance recently, financial experts have some good news for you. Eventually, they now say, it is almost guaranteed that you will die.

A black man from an anonymous city was murdered in his home last night for possession of an escape. Police are suspecting themselves, but as of yet have no leads. The man was four years old in his mother's eyes.

A new survey says that if you are poor, you may just have to struggle along, day by day, and have hope that eventually, with a little luck, you will be rich. If you are already rich, the survey reports, you have absolutely nothing to hope for.

And that was the news. On television tonight, you can watch people.

Mother

As she stirs
the nutritious stew, she gets mad at the dog
for sniffing the meal, as if
that wasn't what dogs do.

Behind her the bored
restless faces
of hungry children.
As she sits down to dinner with
careful poise, she looks
around as if preparing to drive;
she eats while keeping a safe distance away.

These are Her children; she paid for this table.
In this way she keeps all the beauty filed under her ancient name;
The open-field smiles
of little blond boys
are volume to fill up the holes in her
charm. She wanders in them
like a tourist.

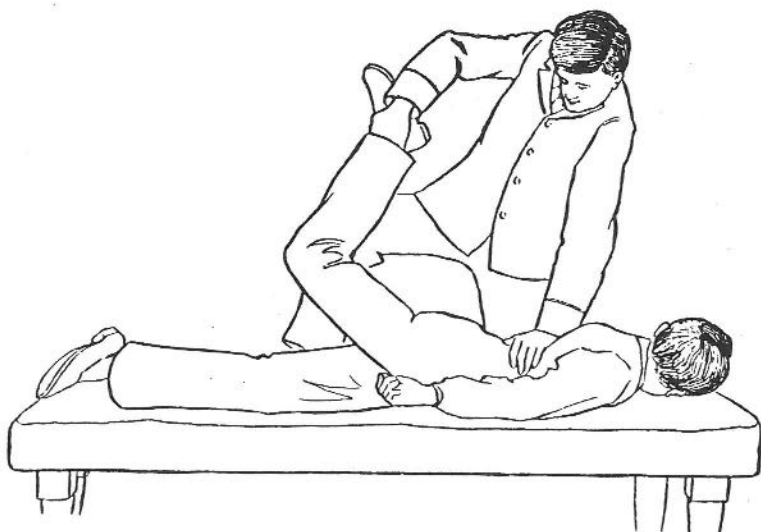
Jeremy Bell

On the Kindness and Humility of Women

as a mark of the great wisdom of Solomon:

Once, two young women came to Solomon, the wisest and greatest of all kings, with a small child. Each complained, angry with the other, saying that the child was her own. They asked Solomon, in all his glory, to decide whose it was, for he would know the truth of the young child. Solomon then, in all his wisdom and knowledge and ways, devised a simple but powerful plan. "The child," he said, "shall be cut in half, and each of you shall travel home, and thus you may share him." Now Solomon, of course was not foolish, and knew the child would die if split and sundered, but knew as well that the true mother, the one that loved him most, would let him free, relinquishing him unto the more selfish of the two. In this manner then, Solomon would bequeath the boy unto the true mother, and thus solve this simple but most pressing riddle.

and the two women, in all their kindness and all their humility
there, in front of the wisest and best of all kings
tore me in two



It's been three days now
since you left, with your armour
and your engraved cigarette case as a shield

that night

I turned off the Ella Fitzgerald record
put on the maniac with the gravel side-road voice
hit the lights
and with a glass of gin and water
I watched the candle burn low
thinking about what a fucked-up cliché I must be

the next night

when I couldn't sleep
I climbed out of my bed
over her naked body
put on some clothes
lit a new candle
and made a gin and tonic

last night I talked to you, lost
tried to make sense of your actions
mumbled strange justifications
and backwards evasions
and listened to that crazy winter storm howl outside

and tonight

with even more evasions
and maybe later with her, naked beside me
I write this

Edwin Ulak

For Diego

(Alegracia Nicaragua, December 1999)

I'm watching me
picking flowers
while cloud tongues lick
high passes
brown hands skimming plant tops.

Alegracia under the volcano,
Alegracia an island
shores I cannot breach
conception birthed it
a hard labour of liquid
rock flowing into water
whose echoes rumble and
burn the skies in torrents
of ash cascading black
rain tumbling down like
leaves from a fiery autumn tree.

Alegracia, Alegracia
roads ending in waves.
this is a hard mirror.

It is an eight hour walk
from Alegracia to the
crater of conception
a fiery opening descending
into a boiling womb
a day's work
mounting slopes climbing
absurd angles

through tunnels of green
breathing cloud
slipping over wet ashes
in slit holed black rubber
boots.

I watch the wind searing
my black hair
as I pick flowers
out of ashes and dust
for you
choosing colors and plucking hues
wading through currents
of scent
bathing in chosen rivers
bless your sweet distraction.

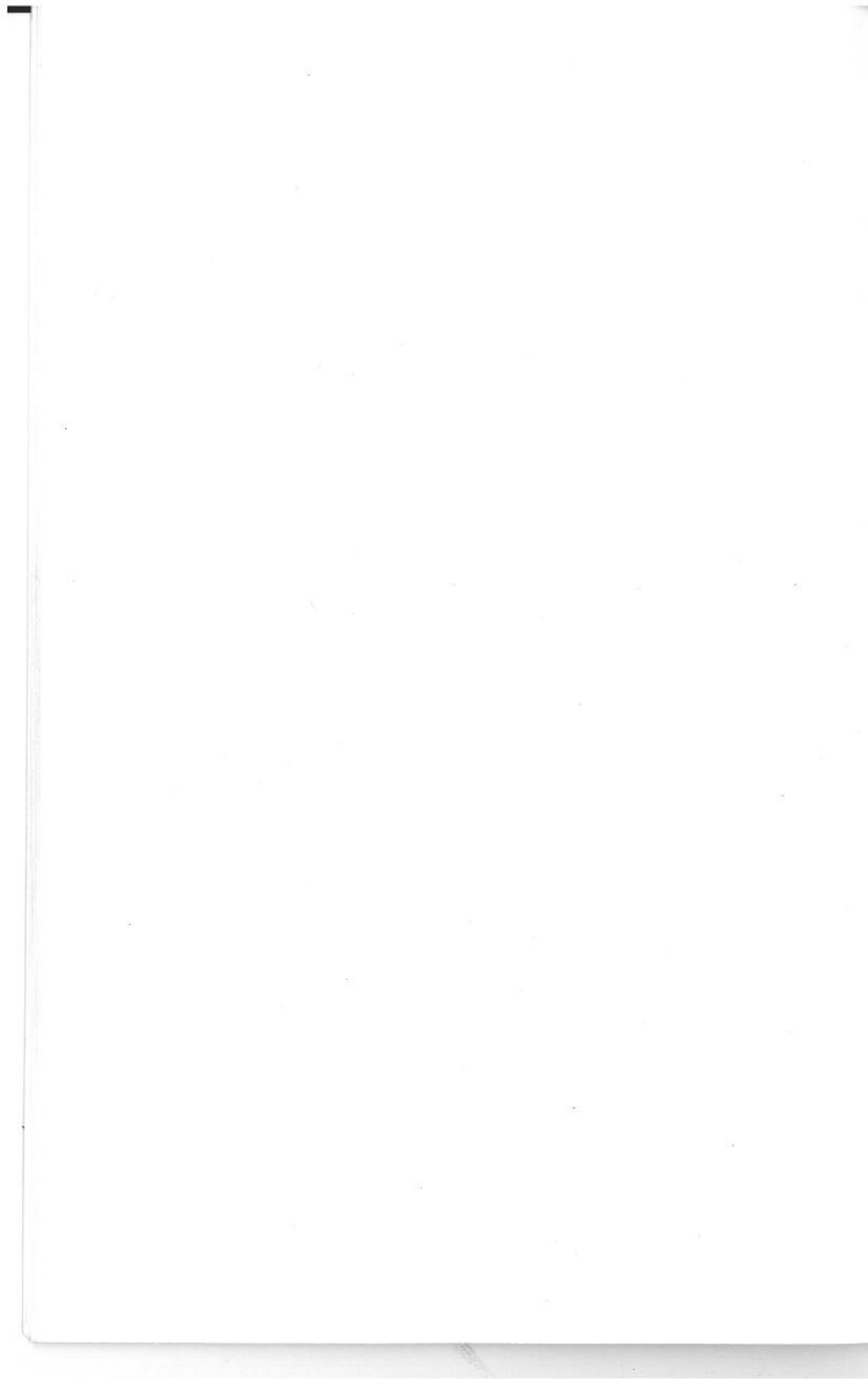
What a strange reflection
is standing here
on this mountain
what a strange reality this is
tomorrow, when I leave
my reflection behind
the image will disappear
when I pass by
this mirror
will remain as I move forward
will stay behind.

Best wishes Diego.

now i am here
martyring myself,
sculpturing my insides
in some torturous scratching
to accomplish
some kind of
wondrous
Organic softness.







Janet Gunn

rain wrenches you away
do not let sun dream
of wretched blue places

go above beauty
succumb to that cool drunk ache
think
cry
iron girl
be weak

rock smooth
impenetrable
move with me
through this essential void

i'll whisper to you
crimson lies
they will not break through
but enfold us in dullness

our once raw dream
white like winter
but now we lay blunted
tangled in grey flannel

our ragged edges worn down
by necessity
we find shelter in slumber

Paul Harvey

Winter Metaphor

listening to the winter darkness:
the frozen sounds of rigid stillness,
the snow-laden chord of floating air
beckoned by the harmony of silences
deeper into the urgent cold,
to emulate the dark moonlight's
embrace of the soft icy curves,
descending into the snow
with the settling radiance
of moonlit snow crystals,
and lying down watching the flakes
as they come and cover each limb
but, for fear of ending the enchantment
with sudden appreciative breath,
or the inevitable disfiguring scar
that even a slow, tentative footstep
would imprint in the white blanket,
this poor wretch coldly watches
and despairingly waits

Hannibal

eyes closed
I reach my tongue
towards the light
of a glowing eyeball
bouncing in the dark

Zorba

over my scarred ear,
a white sock,
another fitted
between my legs,
I dance naked in the snow

Menstruation Poem #1

It doesn't come in a blue trickle, you know.
I'm straddling the open-mouthed toilet bowl,
Clots of jelly seep scarlet through pristine panties. Shit.
And there's the scent - cloying, salty, pudding rich.
Blood red, the lipstick said. I'll show you blood red,
my finger tracing one ridge, tickling nestled hairs.
Now along the curve of my lips, careful, following the mouth's contours.
A dab on each cheek, then caress into the skin in a circular motion.
I'll show you makeup.

The warning signs of TSS include: a sudden high fever (usually 102°F, 38.8°C or higher), vomiting, diarrhea, a rash that looks like a sunburn, dizziness, muscle aches, or fainting or near fainting when standing up. TSS can rapidly progress from flu-like symptoms to a serious illness that can be fatal. If you have any of these signs and are using a tampon, remove it and contact your doctor for immediate treatment. Tell your doctor that you have been using tampons and think that you may have TSS. You should seek medical treatment before resuming the use of tampons if you have had TSS

warning signs in the past. To answer any questions you may have regarding TSS or tampon use, consult your doctor. The decision to use a tampon is, as it always has been, a personal decision. In order to make informed decisions about the use of tampons, you should be aware of the following:

1. TSS is a disease believed to be caused by toxin-producing strains of the bacterium *Staphylococcus aureus*. Approximately 70% of the cases reported

to the Federal Centers for Disease Control in the U.S. with onset in 1983-85 occurred in menstruating women who were using tampons, while the remaining 30% occurred in children, men and women who were not menstruating.

2. The incidence of TSS in the U.S. is estimated to be 1 to 17 cases per 100,000 menstruating girls and women per year. The risk of developing TSS is higher for teenage girls and women under 30 years of age than for older women.

3. You can reduce the risk of TSS by alternating your tampon use with feminine pads. You can also avoid the risk of tampon-associated TSS by not using tampons.

4. Use a tampon with the minimum absorbency needed to control your menstrual flow in order to reduce the risk of getting TSS. Leading epidemiological studies have found that the risk of TSS is related to tampon absorbency: the higher the absorbency, the greater the risk of TSS; the lower the absorbency, the lesser the risk. (See chart for selection of proper absorbency.)

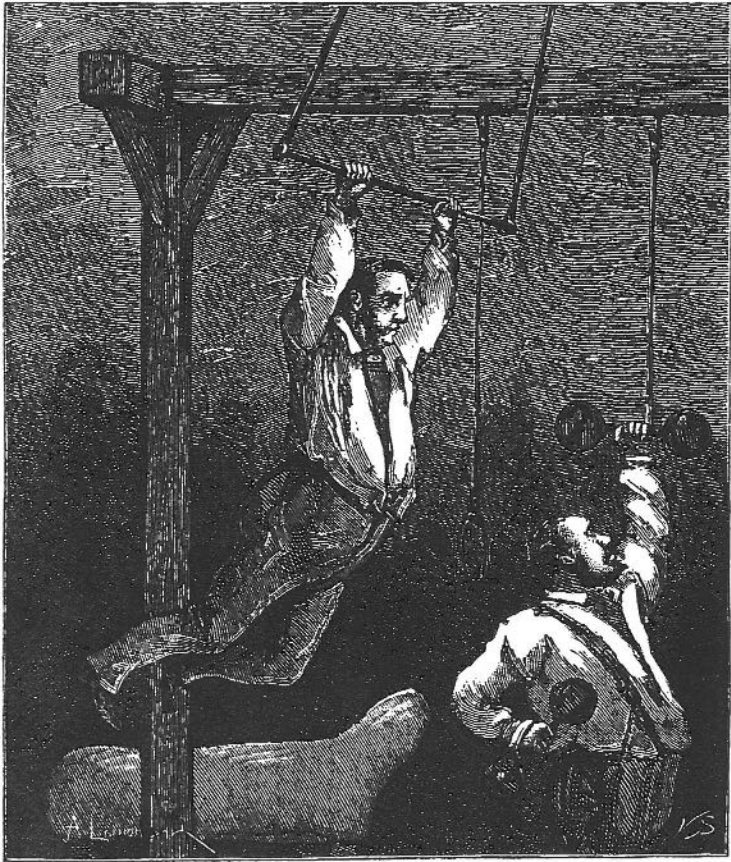
The Eldest Child

It's hardest being first, my brother explains. You have to cut the water, the next swimmer comes in your wake and it's less work for him. And he leaps. I wait ten seconds as he scouts round the corner for spies, wooden gun cocked. An impatient wave. I take two steps down the driveway. Goodbye, his arm lounging on the open car windowsill. [I watch the figures move in the backseat, hear their laughter and the car revv.] I stand, as he has never stood, behind.

Jamie Bradley

Pyromania; an insane desire to set things on fire. *n.*

Parliament; 1. The national law-making body of Canada: Parliament consists of the Senate and the House of Commons. 2. The national lawmaking body of the United Kingdom: Parliament consists of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. 3. The lawmaking body of a country or colony having the British system of government. *n.*





Smoke painting by Audrey Demarsico

Audrey is studying in her third year at the College, where she has come to love Shakespeare and Voltaire. She hopes to learn how to paint and act and maybe study anthropology and political science. She likes jazz and p-funk.



Keith Ebsary

Prime

The twins are at it again, shouting numbers back and forth, screeching miserable banshees in Osh Kosh and Gap for kids.

I listen and shake my head. Bloody numbers. Always the bloody numbers.

“359!” Parry shouts.

“683!” Perry responds.

I hear laughter, faint congratulations one to the other. They pass the time this way. I think it's sick. If one of my kids ever decided that prime numbers were a healthy part of human existence, I would strap him healthily and compose poems with the sound.

I hear something else. They are communicating in the pinched, castrated voices of little boys.

(whats that my little castrati?)

“That's a nice number.” Parry says.

“Yes, that is a nice number.” Perry agrees.

(why am i onkel to my sisters monsters?)

Suddenly

“Shut up you miserable bastards!” me screaming into the tv room where they sit plopped down buddha-like, one tow-headed bastard in front of the other, eyes locked blue on blue and oblivious to the killing sound of the world outside. There is violence in their eyes and I remember my aversion to reptiles.

“No more numbers! I've had it with your numbers!”

“But onkel, we just found a new prime!”

“I don't care. No primes. No numbers. No screaming. Verstehen Sie?”

“Yes, onkel. Wir verstehen.”

I walk into the kitchen and sit down on a chair. The chair is red and hard. I recall reading somewhere that if you placed someone in a red room for days on end, they would eventually go insane. That's what insanity is, then. Red and hard like my chair. My ass suddenly feels damaged.

I hear something in the other room.

"5741!"

"6379!"

"Noises?" I shout.

The Noises don't respond. They are probably still sitting there, karmically aligning their bloody psyches and plotting devious mathematical plots against their loving onkel. I feel afraid. What if math is basically evil? Can mathematics be used as a weapon? If there was a way to kill using math, the Noises would find it. Are they the devil? Am I Jesus?

I already have the scenario of my own breakdown:

I am watching television, Playboy channel or Favourite Polka Hits played by Austrian midgets in liederhosen. Twin 1 enters and grasps me by the shoulder firmly. I look into his eyes and see only numbers. There is no person; I stare into the blue world of calculations and feel myself to be utterly alone. I try to move. Twin 1 cites pi to 100 000 decimal points and I freeze in my chair, infinity unrolled before me. Twin 2 creeps up behind me and whispers a theorem into my ear. I have never heard the theorem before but it promises new things, strange worlds transcendent of human interference and influence. I tremble and fight back tears. I blubber a few words on art and beauty and they press my hand gently, comforting poor onkel who really is a charming man beneath his dreams...

oooh isn't onkel a sweet man and isn't onkel
so happy to have us

(no onkel isnt happy you fuckers)

but he says yes and blathers promises of ice cream, candies and other treats little children consume in perhaps a backout mechanism of the species trying to kill itself by slow sugar poisoning.

I snap back to reality and I have no candies, no booze, only the twin racking
up prime numbers on their bony abacus fingers.

wait i hear another one...

53 441!

jesus theyre getting bigger...

61 333!

my god im a saint all the children think im santa claus...

98 101!

i hear bunnies lawn bowling and old people munching carrots...

101 797!

dear jesus save one of your children im baptized i never hunted nuns...

104 701!

a persons only one cant be two like splitting an egg the chickens first...

104 729!

im coming round the moutain im a cowboy i speak cantonese with an
accent...

242206083 x 238880 +/- 1!.

goodbye voltaire im another candle newtons machine snuffed out.

rons funeral

for ron charlebois

everybody wore a suit or dress. ron wore a favourite sweater
baseball cap and jeans.

we looked at old photographs, smoked cigarettes and drank instant coffee,
switching to beer later on,

out of the discrete spaces provided by funeral homes, loosening our ties and
laughing

mad jokes you wouldnt tell a dog.

this was november 18th. maybe you saw the obituary.

two months now or is it three. rons ashes and there is always beer, ale and
reeking stout,
his homebrew still stashed behind the bar,

his voice on devins answering machine. i have yet to leave
a message.

hotel dieu

for lorraine martin

how could that be, you are brownskinned,
smiling, breathing,
the ocean scattered blue and dolphins breaking white
backs
of waves, falling into air and water, their fire yours,
their salty words.

make sounds your tongue forgot, know there are
words without soul, ones which stain
the lips,
gather eulogies and whisper obscene to invisible

children without their blooms, ghosts of the living
in heat
and red cement.

what else would you say in a hospital room, this white
parish
where we imitate mahler, leach sunlight from the television,
sanctify dying with music, the touch of our hands.

fingers curled over the warm palm, expresses love,
sorrow,
memories of sun, first sounds of the earth.

holding hands now, i say i have not left.

Some Religious Thoughts

Religious thinking is a constant tension between the mad ecstasy of despair and darkness and the calm ecstasy of triumphant light. At its highest pitch of subjectivity, it passes over into universality.

If a human being is to experience meaning, it must subordinate itself to some ideal. The moment it questions the meaning of its ideal, it no longer lives under it, but beside it, and an ideal has no meaning when viewed from the side. What should happen to the human being who realizes that God, who cannot subordinate Himself to anything, must have a meaningless existence? Side by side with God, it finds itself staring into the depths of a bottomless pit.

The hope of all hopes: that a clear apprehension of Being would bring joy automatically. And is not our experience of wonder proof that this is so? To be is to be joyful.

Just as for Feuerbach God was the result of humanity's projection of its best qualities onto something outside itself, so for the unhappy consciousness hell is the projection of the experience of consciousness away from itself. A weird cycle ensues: hell, having sprung from consciousness, intensifies consciousness, which in turn intensifies hell, and so on.

Beauty is always found in appearances. A thing is more beautiful insofar as it effects our senses, regardless of what its inner nature may be. *Everything* is beautiful to the extent that we are able to immerse ourselves in its perception and forget our subjectivity. Since all beings are beautiful, all beings are appearances. But appearances of what?

What is preferable? Eternal torment or nothingness? At least in hell one would have something: one's own suffering. Eternal rebellion is meaningful. But how maddening to rebel in the knowledge that even rebellion must be snuffed out!

The opposite of theism is not atheism, but loneliness.

What *might* be hell? Self-consciousness freed from time. Time, as it pushes the self along, thwarts any prolonged attempt at self-awareness. As soon as the

self is made object, it is known by the self as subject, which in turn becomes object, and so on. Imagine the self freed from time. It attempts to grasp itself as object— and succeeds. The self collapses into itself in the boundless present, without time to save it from becoming a simple awareness of its own being. Now...are you happy?

Mark Sentesy

drying in the wind,
by the grassland,
two trees grow together
like brothers embracing
cheek against cheek
hands reaching up
round the shoulders
of the strong bark
how the branches entwine
the roots together
drink the meagre water
and join.
the trunks thicken
and merge into one
like a man
leaping into a lake
of companions.

room

we're not afraid
of death the sudden cold
the dreamy exit into the air

like stepping up
into an uprushing waterfall,
a brief overload of the senses

and then the stillness and the dark.
running without feeling,
the wind on the face, the empty air.

we have enough room for the dead.
but afraid of birth
of the sudden shackles

of a new child,
all our love-play trickles down.
our lust wears to holding

each other in the dry bed.
when i touch your belly
suddenly i could be a father

not a lover.
while this little weight
waits for us to discover it.

my lover moves away

in the

afternoon

taking away

his clothes

and guests

he leaves the blank room

i crack

peanut shells

a cricket

joins me inside

in the early night





Steve Turpin

"As we drove along all I could think was if the plasticity of her character increased by even a fraction of its current amount, she could only survive as one of those little red sticks that people use to spread processed cheese on those four little crackers. And even though I knew she was destined to be the little red stick in the little clear package, I couldn't help but feel I was giving her far too much credit."



Paying Intellectual Taxes

In today's academic climate many students claim a right to a university education. From where does this right derive? Few would argue that it is a basic human right, one of those basic human rights people within and outside of Canada do not receive. Many would contest this apparent right to an education at the university level. The complaint of many arts students is that their education is not respected and will not lead to a job. The pursuit of knowledge is the driving force for their education, not any future economic considerations. What seems absent from this defense of a liberal arts education is a justification of the expensive burden which the government is beginning to bear less and less.

To argue that a university education is not becoming prohibitively expensive would be foolish. The retort that if people want something bad enough, an education for example, they will achieve it regardless of the costs already assumes a certain degree of privilege. Thus, the intent of this paper is to argue that university students may lament this paradigm, but they still must play within the rules of that paradigm. By outlining three general types of arts students, I hope to show how students have an unconsciously individualistic consumer ideology. It is from this model that students must be liberated if they are in fact to effect change in society.

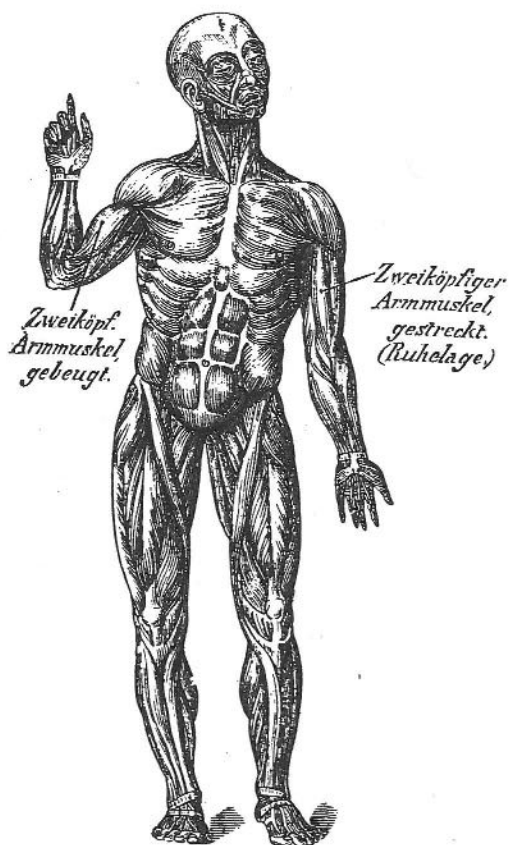
The first category of university student that I will identify is the consumer-student. This type of student is the person who attends university because they believe they are entitled to do so. They attend classes and learn in the same manner as a passive couch potato entertained before his or her television set. For this type of student, university is an experience of self-exploration and learning intended to satisfy the consumer-student's personal desires for enlightenment and understanding. Few of such students I have talked to realize that they are only taking from the university. In taking from the university, they are also taking from society in the form of government assistance to post-secondary education. This type of student believes that education is an inviolable right which everyone is entitled to. There is no idea of using the knowledge gained in their personal quest for satisfaction to benefit the society that made it possible. These people are the equivalent of Bay Street traders who believe it is their right as a citizen of the capitalist society to take as much as possible from everyone else. Such an analogy is not pleasant, but it is not that distant from the truth. Both the traders and the consumer-student believe that the satisfaction of personal desire is their inviolable right; it is only their respective desires that differ. The consumer-student only takes from the university without returning any benefit or product.

A slightly more tolerable student than the consumer-student is the university-serving student. This student works within the university setting to develop his or her own knowledge and then disseminate it through discourse with other students. He or she learns and disseminates the products of learning only within the confines of the university setting. Through education and discussion, such students produce a limited return on their subsidized education. This is blatantly evident in the various conferences and seminars whose audiences are limited, for various reasons, to other members of the university. These students recognize the need to voice their ideas and education to further the knowledge of others and to create educational discourse with their peers. As with the consumer-student, the university-serving student reaps the benefits offered him/her by society. Unlike the consumer-student, however, the university-serving student returns some of the benefits he/she has received by participating in the intellectual life of the university. The difference is the university-serving student reciprocates, but only within the university and not beyond its walls.

The tax-paying student attempts to benefit the society which allowed him/her to receive an education. The tax to which I am referring is not monetary; almost everyone knows that most university students are too impoverished to sustain a proper nutritional regime, let alone contribute anything significant to the GDP. I am referring to an intellectual tax which benefits society as a whole. This tax may take the form of raising people's awareness about important issues, or educating the future innovators of society. Support for technical education is rising as quickly as arts departments are crumbling. Society sees concrete benefit in raising funds for areas of study which offer immediate evidence of their social and economic benefit. The tax-paying student must therefore attempt to show the benefit of their education and prove to society that he/she can contribute as much or more than other academic disciplines. Hubris is not in short supply in arts students so the task is not at all that difficult. Though it is unreasonable for universities to produce students who have been educated only in a technical or practical sense, it is equally unreasonable for universities to produce students who have been educated only in a purely intellectual sense. Support for higher education in the arts is only obtained by proving exactly how an artistic or intellectual education benefits society. The development of intellectuals may be good in itself, but it is better to understand this endeavour in terms of the society that made it possible.

All students want the support of the government and the general public for their education. Students must realize that in this climate of fiscal restraint, the long-term benefit to society students with a liberal arts education offer is no longer seen as important. Students must prove to society the value of their education if they expect to continue to receive financial aid. This point is self-

evident. Given the hubris of many arts students, proving to society the usefulness and value of our education should not be difficult. Until we finally realize that education must include a serious consideration of its future practicality, we have no choice but to satisfy ourselves with the rantings of clever little student reactionaries who protest on Parliament Hill against government funding cuts to arts programs, but who in reality fail to understand that these same cuts are the direct result of their inability to demonstrate clearly the value of a liberal arts education.



The Fine Art of Being a Princess in a Modern World

I firmly believe in women. I believe in their equality, strength, and independence. I admire them, love them, and support them making a mark in the world. After all, I am one myself. Thus I find it somewhat difficult to reconcile my egalitarian convictions with my Princess longings. That's right, I said Princess. Not quite full-blown tulle gown and tiara-esque, but I have realized that secretly I am a Princess at heart and love it. Before images of Cinderella dance through your head, allow me to clarify. The number one rule of being a Princess, and from which everything else follows, is that one must love being a woman. And I mean LOVE being a woman, with all of its beauty, strength, silliness, and definite sex appeal. A Princess is not a snob, a wimp, or a tantrum-throwing diva. This last point must be underlined, since being a true modern Princess precludes throwing a tantrum, ever. No, to be a Princess in a modern world, one must give the illusion of calmness, grace, and playfulness, and all must be done without the least hint of pretension. This leads us to requirement number two.

Though an evening of chocolate timbits at the 24 hour Tim Horton's may be fine, being a true Princess usually requires an appreciation of the finer things in life. After all, are you really endeared when someone's idea of a romantic evening is to cash in on their 2 for 1 coupons at the local poutine shack? Picky? Discriminating? Damn right. Life is far too short to suffer bad wine and rancid coffee. This of course leads to the rather unfortunate situation of champagne tastes on a beer budget. On a personal note, this taste for luxury and quality is so well honed that any shoe I pick in a store is guaranteed to have an obscenc-looking collection of numbers on the price tag. This can lead to both moments of pure delight and pure guilt.

Hence comes rule number three, which is the Collaborator. To fully realize one's inner Princess, it usually helps to know someone who also recognizes and appreciates your Princess-like qualities. Your roommates and siblings will not be impressed by your new lingerie, and your requests for volunteers to get mango gelato on a cold miserable night will likely be greeted by compliments on your sense of humour. As such, it is usually through a love interest that you initially reach prime-Princess status. Who else will take as much delight as you do, (and convince your already weak morals) of the benefits of that exquisite skirt which makes you feel like Rita Hayworth? Who else will gleefully accompany you late at night for that bottle of wine and dessert, or whisk you

away by rickshaw after work to a secluded Victorian bed and breakfast, four-poster bed and all?

Arguments might be made, and justly so, that this is purely based on romantic adoration or materialism. Does a woman really need a man or lover to do all of these things, and does the lack of beautiful lingerie make her any less of a woman? To both of these questions, I answer no, but Princess-like aspirations must not be confused with the desire for a sugar daddy or a wardrobe that hides a lack of personality. On the contrary, to be treated like a Princess means taking a delight in life and in the beauty it can offer, it means treating not only yourself, but those you love to moments of irrational beauty and whimsy which cater to their fancy and makes them smile. It is a way of saying "I love you", to whomever you wish to say it to. This often is a lover, but for me that was only the beginning. Fully immersed in my Princess debauchery after a relationship in which I was treated like royalty, I find myself taking delight in creating moments of beauty and silliness not only for myself but for my family, friends, and yes, even my roommates. Scanty finances aside, yearnings for vintage port, rooms that smell of jasmine, dancing to Billie Holiday all dressed up with no intention of going out, tend to be rationalized away under the pretext of necessity, frugality, and restraint. This kind of expenditure and treating oneself to luxury is a profoundly un-Protestant, un-streamlined, and inefficient way to live one's life. That said, it is also the most enjoyable.

Our lives are becoming ever more streamlined and busy as we become more efficient and productive, more absorbed and agitated. We all too easily forget to stop for a moment and appreciate the incredible delights that are hidden around us. And if someone will remind us of the beauty and sensuality of a woman in lingerie, the tingle of fine wine on the tongue, the child-like joy of searching the city for a certain kind of ice-cream to satisfy a craving, is it really so wrong to admit that one loves it too? Perhaps it is childish longings and delight that underlie my realization that I am a modern Princess. Perhaps so, but it colours my world with a beauty, joy, and playfulness that makes me appreciate not only what I have, but what I wish to become.

Becoming the Apocalypse

12:01.

Becca Friedman was diligently copying down Mrs. Blake's Calculus notes and wondering...

Why do I work so hard? Nobody cares. I'm always ready to write my tests. I always hand in my assignments on time. Nobody cares. Mrs. Blake just lets everyone get a free ride. They don't have to write tests if they are "under stress". I'm under stress everyday but you don't see me complaining. Life is stress. People are so pathetic. I work so hard and nobody cares. Look at Hanna Balsam! She hasn't written one single test in the past month. All she does in class is come in and plop her head down on her desk. She's probably just sleeping. It's ridiculous. Why should she get a break? I suppose the poor baby's "under stress". If anyone is under stress in this class it's me. I have to work twenty hours a week and still pull a full course load at school and I do all this without complaining. I get really good grades too, well, except in Calculus. I only got an 89 on the last test. Complete crap. I was so angry with myself. Mrs. Blake said the mark was fine but that was bullshit. The mark was crap. I work so hard and I end up with nothing while someone like Maxwell Kaulback gets 98 on every test and he doesn't even do his homework. Look at him now, chewing away at his pencil, not even listening. It's not fair. I work so hard and nobody cares.

12:03.

Maxwell Kaulback was chewing away at his pencil and thinking about...

The Atomic Bomb. Why did we make it? We possess something that can destroy us all. How is that possible? How can we become our own apocalypse? I often think about the movie "Dr. Strangelove or How I Learned To Love the Bomb." I think about the guy who went down with the bomb. How much was his body blown to bits? No, not bits, particles. He would have been blown into minute particles of energy. How is it that we are all just made up of minute particles of energy? How can anyone take another person's life if each life is truly a miracle? Not a miracle in the biblical sense because I don't believe in God but a miracle in the true sense of the word-something that is not likely to occur, something that was never meant to be. How can anyone kill anyone?

Somehow, though, I can't imagine that the people around me are little miracles. Actually, I think the majority of them are complete assholes. There's Howie Huynh, Mr. Cellphone. There's Becca Friedman, Ms. Over-achieving Reptile. There's Alex McPhie, Mr. Dark Rebel without a Clue. There's Hanna. Yes, Hanna really is a little miracle. As I watch her with her head lying peacefully on her desk, I wonder how she ever came to be. How is it that I ever came to know her? How is it that I ever came to love her?

12:05.

Hanna Balsam was lying her head peacefully on her desk and thanking...

Mrs. Blake for all her kindness. What would I have done without her? I didn't expect anyone to understand, let alone a teacher. My friends don't even really understand. They don't know why I wanted to die. It's hard to explain. I can't explain it. In the end, I couldn't do it. I thought about it a lot, though. I wasted so many hours devising ways I could pull it off successfully. Slit my wrists then go into the freezer. No, that wouldn't work because the cold would stop the blood from flowing. Run in front of a speeding ambulance. No, the driver and the patient would probably get injured trying to avoid me and I really wouldn't want to hurt anyone else. Swallow a bottle full of Aspirin. That's what I did and I ended up ruining my mother's carpet because I threw up on it and it was stained an awful pink. When I came back to school, I was really unhappy because I wanted to be dead. Even worse, I had not done any work in class because I thought I wouldn't be around to face my failing grades. I didn't want to tell any of my teachers what I had done. When I walked into Ms. Dundee's English class the first day back, she asked me where I had been.

"In the hospital."

"Where's your note?"

"I don't have one." Actually, I did have one but it was covered in my mother's tear stains and related in very incoherent terms how I had failed to kill myself and had to remain in the hospital under observation for two weeks.

"Where's your hospital bracelet then?"

With this question, I realized that I was not ready to return to Ms. Dundee's class. The world was too crazy. Nothing made any sense. I walked straight out of Ms. Dundee's room, not very sure where I was going. That's when I ran into Mrs. Blake. She seemed genuinely concerned about where I had been so I told her everything. I told her about the suicide attempt and the side effects I was experiencing due to the crazy anti-depressants the doctors had me on. She understood. She said that I wouldn't have to write any tests for a month or until

I was feeling better. She even offered to speak to my other teachers for me. Now, everyday I come into class and listen to the notes put on the board so that I can focus on them. Later, I photocopy them from someone else and read them over again. Sometimes, I try the homework; sometimes, I don't. I'm surviving and that's all that matters. Now, I can see funny Howie Huynh staring off into space thinking about porno or wrestling or something else mundane and I can feel really happy. I am really happy. Thank you Mrs. Blake.

12:07.

Howie Huynh was staring off into space remembering...

The Peanut Butter Incident. Ya, I'll call it the peanut butter incident, me and Stu was cruisin' down the street lookin' all dope and shit and the bitches was like "Hey Baby" all down the block and we was like "You want a piece of this?" ya, and the bass was pumpin' and we looked all cool and well dressed 'cause we was goin' to a party at Mel's place, Mel, man is he one sorry bitch but he got the G so he can have as many parties as he want and at Mel's parties there's always plenty of easy bitches and they're all like "Hey Baby" and we're like "You want a piece of this?" ya, but you see like we was cruisin' and Stu, right, he was eatin' all this old Halloween candy that he stole from his little brother, man is that kid ugly, he looks like a piece of turd or somethin' and I ain't sayin' that just 'cause he's black, no, even if he was white I'd say man what a white piece of turd, well, anyway like I was sayin' Stu, he was eatin' all this Halloween candy and we was like cruisin' but Stu, he wasn't payin' no attention to what he was eatin' 'cause all the bitches were lined up on the block and they was like "Hey Baby" and we was like "You want a piece of this?" so like my man Stu, he wasn't payin' no attention to what he put in his mouth and he ended up eatin' a Reese's Pieces Peanut Butter Cup, ya, this is really the peanut butter cup incident, so I was sayin' we was cruisin' and he like ate this peanut butter cup but he forgot he was like really allergic to peanut butter so he started to turn all red which is real hard for a nigger so like I was like "Oh Shit man" and he was like "I'm gonna die" and he started to swell all up like a balloon so I sped up and ran all the red lights trying to get to the hospital on time but like the bass was still pumpin' and this really cool song came on and Stu was like "turn it up, turn it up" which was really hard to say 'cause his throat was all swole up and shit so like I turned it up 'cause it's like a dying man's last wish and we started singin' to it 'cause it's such a great song

"Hi, My Name is.."

My Name is..
My Name is..
Slim Shady”

and when we got to the hospital Stu was like “wait a minute I want to hear the end of the song” and I was like “Okay” so we waited ‘til the end of the song and then I brought Stu in and the doctors were totally whacked and Stu said they had to like cut open his throat and stick a tube down it so he could breathe and I thought, man, my man Stu coulda died that night and if you think like that what’s the point of going to school or any of that shit ‘cause someday you’re gonna be dead. Look at that sorry bitch! What’s her name, Isidora or something? She’s like writing away in that notebook of hers like there’s no tomorrow. That’s my point. Maybe there won’t be.

12:09.

Isidora Pavel was furiously writing in her notebook, repeating the words...

I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself.
I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself.
I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself.
I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself.
I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself. I hate myself.
Nobody loves me. Nobody loves me. Nobody loves me. Nobody loves me.
Nobody sees me. Nobody sees me. Nobody sees me. Nobody sees me.
Not even Mrs. Blake.

12:11.

Mrs. Blake was writing her notes up on the blackboard, looking back at the class every once in a while and seeing...

Maxwell Kaulback not paying attention as usual. What goes on in that boy’s mind, I wonder? Poor Becca. She reminds me of myself sometimes, back in high school when I thought that my grades were the justification of my existence. There’s Sofia Pavel or is it Isidora, oh I never remember her name because she never speaks in class and she never puts anything up on the board. The truth is I only notice the students who stand and demand to be counted. If the students just hide in the background, I won’t see them. How many students have I had? Hundreds. My God! I’d like to say I love all of my students but that would not

be honest. I love the ones that challenge me; the ones that make me test my strength as a teacher. When I say this I don't just mean the little geniuses like Maxwell who demand that I explain some complicated proof. I mean interesting cases, like Hanna Balsam, for instance. Poor little Hanna. I see her now, her head lying on her desk. I hope she is all right this morning. I'll never forget the day when she came back from the hospital and told me what she had done. I'll never forget the sound she made when she cried. She sounded like something had broken inside her. She seemed like a baby doll whose gears had been jammed and now all it could do was cry and cry, uncontrollably, endlessly. Broken. I fear that Hanna may never be fixed. I don't fear Hanna, though. There are students that I fear, students like Alex McPhie. He doesn't talk. He doesn't laugh when I make jokes. He never smiles. He's failing the class. When I talk to him, he never looks me in the eye. Now, he is searching in his bag for something. He is completely detached from the rest of the class. I fear students like Alex.

12:13.

Alex McPhie was searching in his bag for the gun knowing that ...

When I become the apocalypse everything will change. At that moment, the world will know the enormity of my wrath. It will feel my vengeance. No one will ever be the same. They will all wish that today had never come. They will try to understand why I did it. They will make up excuses. They will try to deny the truth. The apocalypse will be the truth. The truth is the event. It is the total annihilation of these people. All these people must die. They are all, all of them, unworthy to live. I am the chosen one. I am the only one who can see the truth. I will bring the truth to this school, to the eyes of these people's families, to the entire world. I am the apocalypse. If I had died before, no one would have noticed; no one would have cared. Now that I am the apocalypse everyone must notice; everyone must care. In two minutes, just before the bell rings, I will unmask my instrument of vengeance. I will show it to them all. They will see the apocalypse for themselves. They will see the truth and consider themselves blessed. In two minutes, I will become the apocalypse. In two minutes, the world will never be the same.

12:15.

Sasha Boczkowski

Poem 2

Today the sun
brewing
the shards of ice in the sky into

a pale blue tisane
three crows diffuse

like Chinese tea leaves
the angles of their wings poured out
in the wind, applauding
is a language.

I have bent myself
again and again with you
into the strange angles of bodies
called loving always watching
your face as though it were
a gift unwrapping

as though somewhere
between
the thin dreams
stretched over your skull
like a canopy of wet photographs
that twitch behind your pupils
always shadows, around a corner
trailing
there is a flower unfolding.

When I reach for it
I am
the stuffed bear I once watched
in the schoolyard
by the fence
its fur blushed with gravel
a black button for an eye
strung out on a white thread
dangling
its four paws spread up and out
trying to wrestle with heaven...

I have traced the borders
of a small island
with my feet in the sand
where the rocks are crowned with clam shells
at dusk
like the back of a stegosaurus
I am a fly on its spine, whose
form a distance, motion
perfect fluid
just a dribble of sweat down a forehead
trying for the sun
that blood clot slugging
across the horizon
to make a language

the same one
I saw
a child's mind bend out towards
when
at the duck pond
she steals
some strange amphibian
from the mud, still wriggling
pokes it with a stick
moves arms and fins
a small supple machine
slimy and perfect.

Poem 1

My mother is the shadow of a plane on my back
too wide to notice even
just moves into me like a jellyfish moves
in big bang theory
in footsteps as much its sidewalks as its own

says: what good are backbones anyway
against cliffs
sharks that snap in two like twigs.

My mother making our house
with the scent of bread
while the soil makes spring
with what yawns and stretches out of it

she takes white flower and yeast
kneads it into small miracles
the ones worth dimes
like the dandelions that squeeze out of cracks
in the sidewalk

only hers grow up fast
and the don't taste like bike tires.

my brother at the television
which tells him the bombs
that melt people so well
even their shadows stick to walls
my mother never tells us things

she does the dishes
and the touch of her palms on wet plates is
smoother than sleep
could only hold laundry the way
wind holding sand before it's folded back to beach

the way she teaches us is like this
like a mime

bends her body into language
housewife dialect.

My brother tells her 'get a job so
we can have Nintendo' she
sags, knows she lives
in the bank across the street where
what counts
is not what's counted

she changes the bed sheets,
moves into me the way sugar into coffee.



Muskrat

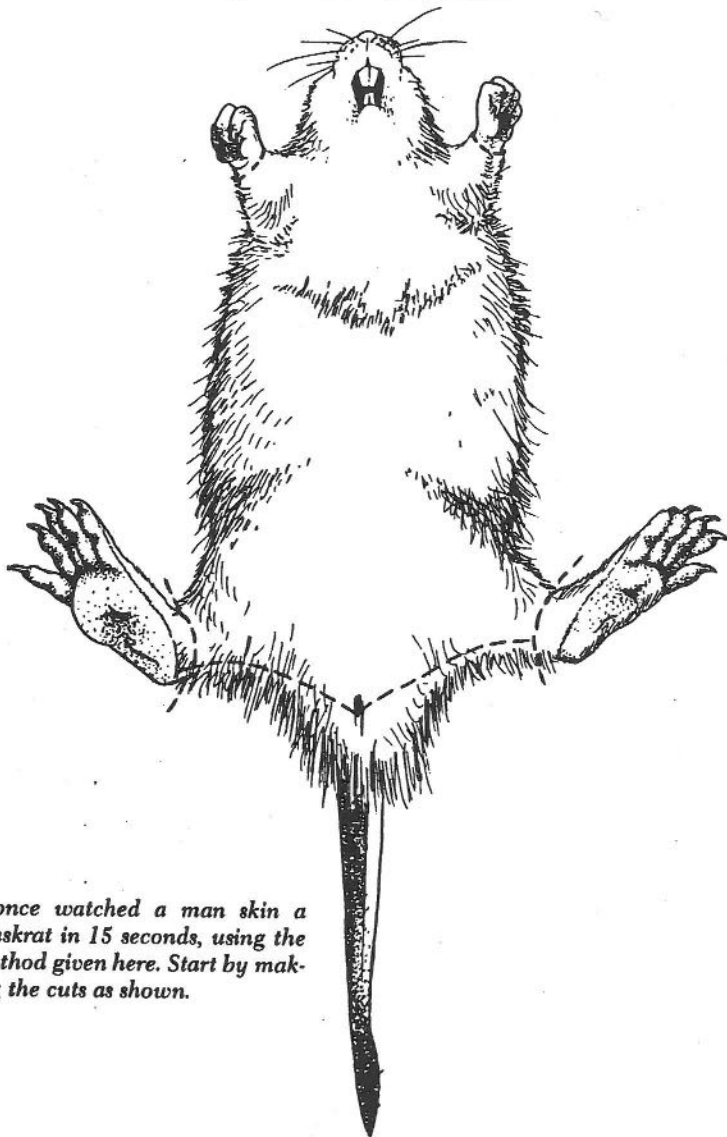
Good pelts and a tasty supper—these are what muskrats provide.

Case skinning. Clean and dry the muskrat's fur.

Make the initial case-skinning cuts across the hind legs and cut

around each hind leg at the hock.

With experience, you can skip this circle cut and pull the skin loose from the feet by hand. Work the skin loose from the hind legs with your fingers.



I once watched a man skin a muskrat in 15 seconds, using the method given here. Start by making the cuts as shown.

Contributors

When Angela Loder is not studying philosophy, smooching the kitten downstairs, or indulging her taste for luxury and delight, Angel Luscious (her current nickname) dances in modern and ballet, takes black and white photographs, and plots her next long trip overseas. She exhibits her photos regularly in Ottawa and will appear in a modern dance performance at the beginning of May.

Janet Gunn is 28 and lives in Ottawa, though her heart is in Iqaluit. This is the first publication of her work.

Mark Sentesy's poetry has been rejected by most literary journals. "my lover moves away" however, won the Lillian Found award. He takes photographs of strangers and travels unexpectedly.

Jeremy's interests lie in continental philosophy, French symbolist poetry, and anarchist politics and organizing. He is currently planning to move back to his home in Gilford, Ontario where he will restart his career assembling the hinges for car trunks in a factory so that he can further finance his university career.

Adrienne is in 4th year Humanities. Post-graduation she is heading to India. She enjoys cooking, cleaning and bake sales. She hopes no-one is offended.

Brian Redekopp is a farm-boy turned philosophy student from the Saskatchewan prairies. His interests include major league baseball, Soren Kierkegaard, Pearl Jam, history, and mountain biking.

Edwin is a first year student at the College in the philosophy concentration. He writes so that he doesn't forget that he is actually living in the world he enjoys reading about so much and would like to thank the editors of North for accepting his nonsense.

Kate is an English Chick who misses the rain. Kate doesn't often think about things backwards. She loves Dancing like wonder or heat and although

she tries, Xate can't define herself. (Sure thing, I'll become someone else for the day...)

Louis G. Turpin is a recovering asshole who has decided to reassess his worldview in light of the fact that everything he believed has been shown to be all fucked up.

Steve Turpin has somehow managed to present his confusion and misinformation as actual intelligence and plans to continue this scandalous presentation until death, despite his inability to understand why it keeps working. Also, he likes tacos and playing frisbee.

Paul is always discussing some philosophical issue with someone, but intends to express his ideas in the form of novels, rather than waste away as an academic or philosopher.

Jen Regan is not a student in the College. However, she is a lumberjack who still likes G.I. Joes. She fills sketchbooks with superhuman speed and is an accomplished artist.

Jamie is in first year. He is interested in theatre and English, and comes from Brockville.

Chelby Daigle is a first-year Humanities student in the Philosophy concentration. She has no real writing aspirations but thought this was a good story that had to be told.

Tom is a second year. He draws, writes, plays guitar, dances swing, discusses art, and has a good time. He spent some time in art school doodling and design school inhaling paint fumes before deciding on the Higher Way (at the College, doncha know!) He backpacked through Europe when he was 18 and remembers only fragments. He has no pets.

Keith Ebsary has published fiction and poetry in a few literary journals across Canada. He is currently constructing sound tunnels using hummingbird squeaks. He has also mastered the subtle art of echolocation.

Glenn Daniel Clifton comes from Mississauga, but makes no apologies. He grew up there with surprising supportive parents, a hamster (now dead) and a brother (still alive). He hopes you enjoy his writing.

Sasha

