Julia Silverman: "So I found myself on my rookers and knees trying
to get up and saying, 'Naughty naughty naughty.'"
- from A Clockwork Orange

Carol Zahn: "I'm sorry, but this is not my poem. No, really, you
must have me confused with someone else."

Laura Champion: "No motivation to get out of bed and carry on the
charade, caught in a dream that's gone astray."
- Eric Carmen

Elizabeth Armstrong: "Tie the heart of a bat with a red silk string
to your right arm and you will win every game
at which you play."
- from The People, Yes

Judith Shulevitz: "Before I sink/into the big sleep/I want to hear/
I want to hear/the scream/of the butterfly."
- Jim Morrison

Nick Thorndike: "...Most places/you can usually be free some of
the time/if you wake up before other people."
- William Stafford

Braden Clary: "...I have had experience-I know the world...and if
there is one who has not often cursed his life, one
who has not often said to himself that he was the most
unfortunate of men, throw me head first into the sea."
- from Voltaire's Candidate

Tex Hart: "The city is a disease that spreads to kill the ranches."

Dr. Nick Bozanic: "...let us pray that our eye may become single and
then our whole body shall be full of light."
- Van Gogh

Jane de Forest: "Do fish sweat?"
- Jane Huber

Nina Moore: Exit
CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES

Diana Yates: "We are what we imagine. Our very existence consists in our imagination of ourselves. Our best destiny is to imagine, at least, completely, who and what, and that we are. The greatest tragedy that can befall us is to go unimagined."
-N. Scott Momaday

Rachel Roberts: "There must be a pony."
-James Kirkwood

Elise M. Breen: "fiction writer, damn it, fiction writer!"
-Ming

Jay Frost: "Little fishie in de brook, Papa catch him on a hook, Mam fry him in de pan, Baby eats 'em like a man."

Tina Ament: "I feel that if someone can't communicate the least he can do is to shut up."
-Tom Lehrer

Lisa Shirley: "I like a bus...red buses, green buses."
-James Paul McCartney

Amanda Holmes: She liked to rough it and she is now in Georgia.

Jack Driscoll: "Strange events permit themselves the luxury of occurring."
-Charlie Chan

Sally Miller: "You should do something important with today, after all you're exchanging a day of your life for it."
-Lew Smith

Marty Wade: "Charlie Russell, that fairly good, not really good, sometimes good with yellow, often good with light, never good with totals, total man, forgot the world has garbage."
-Richard Hugo

"Hard is his herte that loveth nought in May."
Geoffery Chaucer (1340-1408)
Carol Zahn

The Unicorn

One who believes will see the moon-pale horn flicker in the starlight, hear silver hooves step through frosted grass. It is the unbeliever who misses the ivory eyes, the coat that glitters like the Milky Way.

But the unicorn is always there, high on chalk cliffs, watching the sea's white caps. Those who look will see a misty silhouette against the slowly rising sun.
Mary Anne Martinsek

Poem To You

I will be quiet. I will part
the streams of sound like
a black stone. When I walk, my feet
will strike softer than the flutter
of moth wings in my heart.

My skin will grey until I seem
only the shadow of a statue. You
will not see me sitting in the corner
here, even if you stare and stare.
If you listen for me, you will not
hear me tip-toeing behind you.

But this is not enough. My silence
will be so deep it draws all
the sounds around me into my quiet
I spread dark around the room
over windows, over lamps. Your lips
make no sound as you beg me
to stop. You know me now. You know
me by the way I clutch the world inside
me and swallow your thoughts.

Elise M. Breen

The Swingset

All summer Teddy sunbathed. He came out of the house at
10:30, put lemon juice in his hair, covered himself with coconut
oil, and eased into a lounge chair. He never slept or read, only
stared directly in front of him, his face expressionless. At
12:30 he went back into the house, got himself a sandwich, a coke
and some fritos, then came out and eased back into the lounge chair
to eat. At 4:30 he gathered up the coke, oil, and lemon juice
bottles, folded the lounge chair, and went into the house to stay.
If you're wondering why I know so much about him, it's because
I watched his yard.

There was a green chain-link fence up at the border between
our lawns, and every day that the sun was out I would take a book
over to the fence and lay in the flower beds that were planted on
our side. As the sun got warmer the flowers smelled better and
better, and if the book was a thick one, I would drowse off around
noon, and wake up to find Teddy munching fritos, and my mother
yelling for me to come in and practice the piano. Still, even
when I was reading, even when I was asleep or practicing the piano,
my eyes were always pointed with six-year-old determination toward
Teddy's yard.

If you're thinking I liked Teddy, you're right, but it was
what was in Teddy's yard that interested me most. The corner of
his yard that was farthest from our house had a pale blue and
white swingset anchored there. I would have killed to have a
swingset the year that I was six. Whenever I nagged my parents
about getting me a swingset they reminded me that we lived across
the street from a park, then changed the subject.

If Teddy hadn't been such a big kid, I probably would have
climbed over the fence and asked to use it, but he was as tall
as my father and his hands were twice the size of my face. I
knew I would have to wait until he noticed me or until he decided
to quit sunbathing before I could use the swingset.
In previous summers, Mr. Wilkes, Teddy's father, had let me use the swingset whenever I had wanted to, and I had always wondered why a man without any children would have a swingset in his yard. Now that Teddy was back, I could see that it was his swingset, and that I no longer had any right to use it. I stayed in the flower beds, watching the wind kick the empty swings.

One day in late June, I woke up and saw a deeply tanned foot beside my cheek. "What're you reading?" Teddy asked. I took hold of the fence for support, sat up, and rubbed my eyes.

"Ivanhoe."

"Isn't that book a little difficult for a girl your age?"

"Sir Walter Scott is one of my favorite writers," I said icily.

"Why don't you go play somewhere?"

"Where should I play?"

"Well, anywhere---there's a park across the street."

"I hate that park."

"Well, why don't you play in your own yard?"

"I don't have a swingset."

"Don't any of your friends have swingsets?"

"I don't have any friends. There aren't any kids my own age around here."

Teddy considered this for a moment, then said, "Well, if a swingset's all you need, you can play in my yard." He grabbed me by the wrists and swung me over the fence. Ivanhoe landed in the flower bed at the same time my feet landed in Teddy's yard. "Geez!" he said. "a kid your age ought to play. Why would you want to lie around reading all day?"

The other girl lifted her chin and said, "Jesus was very anxious to see you, Jeffy."

Jeffy shifted his stare from Cathleen to the other girl and again to Cathleen. He said, "You sure he didn't head over to the neighbor's house? Like Santa Claus?"

"No, we're not certain" Cathleen said. "He might have. I would say that Jesus only came down to speak with you for some reason."

"You should have woken me up. I wouldn't care. I wouldn't care at all, Cathleen," Jeffy said. He gazed up to the ceiling. "What did I do to make him come to our house?"

Cathleen slapped her thighs and said, "I don't know what is the matter. But Jesus kept whispering your name over and over again. It was scary feeling, Jeffy, but I was calm."

The chatter between Cathleen and her friend erupted into laughter but it was all indistinguishable to Jeffy. He was thinking of Jesus: enthralled and frightened by the event he had missed.

Jeffy moved away from the girls, not noticing their expressions of delight. He trudged down the hallway, entered his bedroom, and toppled onto the bed. Pressing his ears to the pillow, Jeffy listened for the sound of an intruder. He listened and listened into the night and finally did settle into another deep sleep. He slept then through breakfast and way beyond into his favorite television programs.
here while you were napping. He wanted very much to speak to you. I said that there was no reason to disturb you."

"Who was it?" Jeffy asked, sitting up.

Cathleen's lip quivered while she said "Jesus."

"Who?" Jeffy said.

"Jesus Christ," Cathleen said. "From church, don't you remember?"

"Yes, I remember. Our teacher told us about him in Sunday School. But I thought he was dead," Jeffy said.

Cathleen clasped her hands to her breasts. "He is dead," she said. "Only he came down from heaven for a second visit with some people. He chose our house first."

"Why our house?"

"I don't know. He didn't say why," Cathleen said. "I guess since we're the first house on the block he decided to start with us."

Jeffy touched his forehead with his finger. "Maybe he is going next door, too." he said.

"It doesn't matter where he is now," Cathleen said. "He was here, that's all." She winked at the other girl. "And Jesus wanted to see you most, Jeffy."

"What for? Was I bad?" Jeffy asked himself, rather than Cathleen.

She said, "He didn't say a word to why he was here. When I asked him, he smiled and turned away."

"Then what did he do?"

"He walked through that window and disappeared," Cathleen said, pointing her eyes toward the haze of the outdoor sun. "Back to heaven, I'm sure."

"I never remember you being here in the summers," I said, to change the subject.

"What do you mean? I was here."

"No you weren't. I can remember things clearly from when I was four till now, and you weren't ever here before."

"Well, I was here when you were two, and then I was gone."

"What, did you go to your grandmother's house or something?"

Teddy laughed, "No I was fighting in a war."

"Oh. Are you an adult?" I asked, somewhat surprised.

"Yes. Are you a kid?"

"Were you ever on T.V.?" I asked, ignoring his comment.

"What do you mean?"

"You know, they're always putting the war on T.V. Were you ever on it?"

"I don't think so."

"Well, you can't have been involved in anything very important, or you would have been on television."

"I was in lots of important stuff."

"Like what? Did you ever kill anybody? Did you ever blow up anybody's house? Did you ride around in trucks a lot?"

"Actually, I spent most of my time sleeping."

"You're like Paul Baumer."

"Who?"

"Paul Baumer-- you know-- the guy in All Quiet on the Western Front-- except, of course, that you're not dead. Did you play a lot of cards?"
"You read yourself All Quiet on the Western Front?"

"No, my dad read it to me."

"For a bedtime story, I suppose."

"How'd you know?"

"Oh, must about everyone's dad reads that book to his kid for a bedtime story," said Teddy, raising one eyebrow and winking comically at me.

"Really?"

"Oh, yeah, it's very popular."

"Are you sure you're not a kid?" I asked suspiciously.

"Sure I'm sure, why?"

"Well, why do you stay out sunbathing all day if you're not a kid? Adults work."

Teddy stared intently at one of the swingset posts and started picking paint off it with his fingernail. "I don't have a job now," he said.

"Why?"

"Because," he said, a big flake of blue paint falling from his fingers.

"Because why?" I asked.

"Because I'm resting."

I stopped to consider this for a moment then asked, "What are you resting from?"

"The war."

"TEDDY!" I heard Mrs. Wilkes call from the house.

Just a minute," Teddy called back. "She probably wants me to

Nick Thorndike

Sleeping Jesus

Jeffy felt the weight of the late afternoon sun staring into his bedroom window as he floated out from sleep. He had turned so many times while asleep the bed sheets were twisted around his legs. He pulled his legs out now, knocking his stuffed owl, Alger, onto the floor. He waited a minute, listening for noises in the family room. He held his breath and a trickle of voices filtered in. He recognized his sister, Cathleen's voice, and one of her girl friends; which one he was uncertain.

Still concentrating on their conversation, Jeffy lifted himself from the bed and sat upright. He assumed the girls were discussing the boys who went to their high school since Cathleen was using her high pitched voice to brag. Slowly, Jeffy opened his bedroom door and stumbled into the hallway that was connected to the family room. His sister was looking directly at him. Her lips moved with words Jeffy could only hear as a whisper. Cathleen straightened herself and made a taut face; Jeffy realized that she had been speaking to him.

"What did you say, Cathleen?" Jeffy asked. Her eyes focused on him as if she had been insulted.

"Yes," Jeffy nodded. "I slept some because I helped clean out the garage this morning and was tired."

Cathleen stopped staring at him and looked out the window. "Oh. I wondered where you were but then I figured that you were taking a nap."

The other girl, her back towards Jeffy, raised herself up from the chair and whispered to Cathleen. Jeffy moved to another chair, slumping between its arms. The girls shook their heads towards each other in a quick nod.

Leaning in Jeffy's direction, Cathleen cleared her throat to talk to him. "Uh-Jeffy, I'm sorry you missed our visitor. He was
take a nap," Teddy said, laughing as if he'd made a big joke. He started walking to the back porch, and I noticed that he moved very slowly, as if he were exhausted, and that he leaned heavily on a porch post as he talked to his mother.

"Teddy, is that little neighbor girl bothering you?"

"No, not at all."

"I don't want you to get overtired. It's our mistake-- we let her play on that swingset while you were away." Her voice dropped to a whisper at "away", and Teddy looked down at the ground. "We should have taken it down a long time ago. Do you want me to call her mother?"

"Mom, she's not bothering me."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm positive."

"Well, don't overexert yourself."

"How can I overexert myself?"

"I don't know, just be careful."

"Jesus Christ," said Teddy, walking away.

"Teddy!" his mother called warningly after him, "You be careful!"

"Your mother sounds just like mine," I said, "I bet you're a kid."

"I am not a kid!" Teddy said emphatically.

I looked at my watch. "It's 12:30. Aren't you going to go and make your lunch?"

"No, I thought I'd stay here and talk to you."
"You can't do that."

"Why not?"

"'Cause I have to go in and practice the piano and meditate soon."

"Meditate?"

"Um hmm. Every afternoon I meditate for an hour after I practice the piano."

"Sounds like a nap to me."

"I don't take naps," I said, getting off the swingset and stamping my foot, "I meditate. My mother taught me." I stalked over to the fence and began to climb it. "Can I use your swingset again tomorrow?"

"Anytime. Have a good nap," said Teddy, waving good-bye. I grabbed up Ivanhoe and ran to the house.

After that I played in Teddy's yard every day that it didn't rain.

At the end of July there was a whole week of rainy days, but when the rain stopped, and I went out in the morning, Teddy wasn't sunbathing. It was too muddy in the flower bed to lie there and read, so I watched out the window. It got warmer and warmer outside, but still Teddy wasn't there. Around 1:00 I had to go and practice the piano. I was in the middle of my tenth run of scales, when the doorbell rang. I bounced up, eager for a break, but my mother said in a menacing voice, "Don't you dare move. I'll get it."

"Is Amanda here?" I heard Teddy's voice ask. My hands slammed down on the piano keys in disharmonious joy. I ran to the door, but stopped and took a step backward, when I saw that Teddy was not wearing cut-offs and coconut oil, but a white flannel business suit complete with tie. His hair was brushed neatly into place and he had very recently shaved. "Oh," I said with contempt, "so you are an adult. Did you get a job?"

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Elise M. Breen

Snow Baby

The snow was my mother. I was hers alone at night, in a house that wasn't mine. I watched her leave kisses on the sill. I cried, I pressed my fingers at the panes that kept me from her arms. She sang to me, swirling beyond the glass. I closed my hands and pushed them through the panes. As she breathed into my room I stepped naked through the window. My heart slowing to beat with hers, I lay in her side, the moonlight on my fingertips growing blue.
My hand smashes the round rubber sends it slamming it attacks him.

I serve again striking four white walls, this time the ball won't stop. It grows teeth and hair eating his hand swallowing his shoes shaving off his beard.

I scream as his toes wave good-bye.

Turning to leave his head juts from the mouth

"You win," he says.

"No, I'm going away."

"Are you going back to the war?" I asked with some interest.

"No, I'm going to a hospital."

"What's the matter with you?"

"The war. Let me hug you before I go."

"Yucc," I said, sticking out my tongue, "Why?"

"Because you'll be different when I come back."

"No I won't."

"Yes you will." He put his arms around me, but I pulled away from him and ran to my crying place, the fifth stair on our staircase.

"Amanda?" I heard my mother call after me. I could just hear part of her conversation with Teddy over my sobs.

"I told you she would probably be upset...at this age...you can never tell exactly why...unpredictable..."

About a week after Teddy left, Mr. Wilkes came out of the house and began taking the swingset apart. He put all the blue parts to one side, and the white ones to the other, then bundled each group in a tarp and put them in his garage. It made me remember the last day I played in Teddy's yard.

"Why don't you ever play on this swingset?"

"I'm too big."

"No you aren't. Come on," I wheedled.

"I'd break it."

"No you won't."

"Well," Teddy considered, "O.K." He got on one of the swings and the whole set sank down, but it didn't break. His legs were
much too long to pump, but by pushing against the ground with his feet and then sticking his legs out in front of him he could move back and forth fairly rapidly. I pumped higher and higher.

"Hey," he said, "If you go any higher you'll be gone-- out into orbit somewhere."

"So what?"

"So what? It'd be terrible, I'd be here and you'd be out there somewhere. We'd never see each other. I'd be lonely."

Teddy's out there somewhere. We never see each other. I'm lonely.
Dr. Nick Bozanic

The Crane's Ascent

Standing at the edge of the warped dock, the thick scent of orange blossoms sticking in his throat, my grandfather sows corn on the water. The small bass rise like birds feeding from the open palm of a meadow. It is not yet dawn.

He eases himself down into the boat, breathing heavily in the heat; he bends to the motor, pulls hard on the rope. His heart pulses once and tightens. Like a waking animal something stirs behind his eyes...

The outboard catches, chokes and dies. Cradled in the slowly rocking boat, my grandfather cannot see the clouds of moss move in the trees or from the shallows the shadow of a crane lift itself on impossible wings above everything and the sun rising.

Laura Champion

Dusk

Madder than Hell's black cat I run down streets at dusk, scramble to the top of the highest tree and tear stars from their tapestry of black. I am ready to pounce upon the moon, shred it with teeth and claws unsheathed, scattering bits of brilliance, white, to the ground below.

Elizabeth Armstrong

Utah Tall Tales

It's so cold breath freezes in mid-air; it drops to the ground splinters into long needles of blue ice.

Late afternoon: bent old Cloud-Woman collects them, her gnarled fingers knitting the snow-strands into a soft afghan for her earthbound child.
"Don't!" her mother's voice stopped her. "Don't you ever leave me alone again." The voice was hard and sounded like the panic that showed in her eyes. "I hate to be alone, I hate winter; I hate cold."

"Mom," the girl pleaded from where she stood, "then let's go away."

"I can't go. I must stay. I've always stayed." Her eyes still stared, watching the wall and fire. "Please stay with me in this room till night."

The girl went up the stairs and returned from her room carrying a crudely made black rocking chair. She placed it in front of a window where it rocked firmly. All day she sat there and every day after for the following winters. Conversations were never more than a few words; her only interest lay in watching the snow.

One July morning I crossed the desert iron tracks and started up this trail. Coral dry bushes tore my legs. Sun made the air smell dry and us swallow hard like fish.

The idea of letting them go: I grabbed a thin piece of the rock and snapped it between my thumb and finger. Touching the sand on the tip of my tongue I imagined fish swimming to hide here, here where they were pressed down in layers like dry leaves in a book. I looked up to where I licked the landscape with my eyes.

The sun was high, baking me like dough in a stone oven, settling me like this dry oceans fingerprints. The caked and cracked earth is for the sand coated men who have lived here, not for visitors. It profiles them in rock as fit to swim between the spiral of stairs where the absent fish had stayed. My steps leave the trail still gasping for shade.
She takes a key from her pocket, and holding the lock in her reddened hands, turns the key. When it pops open she drops the biting metal on the ground, pushes it aside with the door as she pulls it open. The lamplight spreads into the room. The room is small and in the center sets a rocking chair. It faces her and she walks up to it, her eyes on the carved bird along the headrest sitting on an apple branch, framed by a carved oval. She follows the armrest's curve down to where hands had rested and worn away the finish, replacing it with body oils. She kneels and looks closely where each finger would have rested and touches where nails dug and scratched into the wood until it looked like a tack board. She still feels cold, but the seat of the chair feels warm it is so smooth. The lamp, beside the chair where she set it, warms her right leg. It sends light in strange patterns of lines as she rocks. The chair makes no noise as if it is a finely oiled machine. Even the wind seems to have stopped blowing, or at least stopped making sounds as it passes over and around the shed.

She closes her eyes and feels the rhythm of the rocking and sees herself watching the rhythm as she used to when the chair was in the house beside a windowless wall. She could never hear the chair rock then either, but she could feel it as her mother rocked back and forth. No matter what room of the house the girl was in that rhythm was with her. It had been etched into the floors and walls until it vibrated silently. She remembers, in winter her mother sat in this chair all day, leaving only to put wood in the fire or straighten the rug beneath her. Only in spring or summer would she ever walk out the door into the yard. She insisted her daughter stay with her in the house because she did not want to be alone. Yet they hardly spoke.

One day the girl had left the house early in the morning, before her mother was up, and went walking in the snow covered fields and along paths through the woods where others had walked. When she returned her mother was awake and already in the chair. Her eyes were opened widely and her head pressed hard against the carved bird. It was as if her body had expanded and covered the chair, as if it was ready to go inside the grains of wood.

The girl stood watching her and then tried to run toward the stairs that led to her room.

I reached the shale hill, parted pieces of splitting rock, and disobeyed when I slid them into plastic, then my pack, to take home. These frames, half smiling, opening one eye, left their home behind. And after the trail, I crossed the tracks again to bring these dry poems home. In six months they'd crumbled.
Judi Shulevitz

Continuation

a translation of Octavio Paz’s *Duración*

I
Black the sky
yellow the earth
The rooster breaks the night apart
The water wakes, asking the time
The wind rises, asking for you
A white horse passes

II
Like the forest on its litter of leaves
You sleep in your bed of rain
You sing in your bed of wind
You kiss in your bed of sparks

III
Several pervasive smells
Body of many hands
A single whiteness
Above an invisible stem

IV
Speak listen reply
What the thunder says
The forest understands

V
I enter through your eyes
You rise from my mouth
You sleep in my blood
I wake in your brow

Amanda Holmes

The Paling

This time it is dark when she walks from her house to the
shed, except for the lamp she left setting in the window over-
looking the yard. It is the chill of the air that frightens her
every time she walks out the door; the way her jeans turn cold
against her legs, and her skin cold against her blood. It reaches
her arms and stays until the hair pokes her like pins.

It is only thirty yards to the shed and each step she takes
punctures the snow. It has not snowed for three days and she
has not been outside on the path for a week. She goes to the
shed in winter no more than once a week for a change of scenery
from her salt-box house. It looks as if it belongs by the sea with
sand and rock instead of in the snow with trees and fields.

Every few steps she slips with the worn soles of her boots,
but lifts her arms to regain balance. Tonight she hurries away
from her house to get out of the cold that shakes her; that
has shaken her every winter since she was born.

At the door of the shed she slowly unties the thick rope
knot and lifts it hard against the metal latch inside until it
clicks and allows her to pull the door open. Once inside she
reaches for the lamp hanging by a nail above her and lights it
with a match from her breast pocket. Its yellow-orange light
lifts shadows from the center of the room as the flame is adjusted
and tucks them into corners and behind beams.

The shed is empty, baring its dirt floor and thick wood
walls blotted white in streaks from plaster filled cracks. She
carries the lamp, lifting it shakily to inspect corners for
apparently no more than dust. When she finishes her round of the
room she again walks across the floor to the opposite side, to a
door smaller than the one she entered. It has been painted
recently, a deep shade of green, and looks as if it has been
painted many times over the years. Each coat has peeled and has
not been scraped away before the new was added.
Walking Out

We skip both fifth and sixth hours to drift towards the river. Just being there below the dam we scare away a black man fishing.

Jacked-up cars come, kick the dust with fat tires. Music floats from their open windows.

Across the river, men work the mill's machines. Drinking beers and leaning against unmilled trees we carry on above the water.

VI

To you will I speak in a language of stone
(Answer with a single green word)
To you will I speak in a language of snow
(Answer with a fan of bees)
To you will I speak in a language of water
(Answer with a canoe of light)
To you will I speak in a language of blood
(Answer with an ascension of birds)

Voyage

The porthole of your eye covered by a thin, fringed curtain in the quiet cabin of your body, rises and falls in the wind of dreams. Shuddering through the rivers of your hair, your eye wanders into swamps of twisted trees and coquies calling across still shores and out again, your body turning like the last rounding of the banks as you head into open currents following the fix of your sextant under the shifting stars.
Diana Yates

CAROLYN

the last person to kiss her was some great uncle rotting in his tweed suit a loving, great uncle kiss. she died in October and left a house and car that wasn't paid for in money, at least. and a son who sent flowers from Washington.
Unassigned

I dip the cloth in the water
clean as spit
on an early summer day.

As I stand on my stool
cleaning the blackboard green
the water drips into my sleeves
into my armpits
it feels good
cool in the June breeze.

I wipe the arithmetic problems
after the school bell
has rung long ago
and the other children have gone.

I leave
listening to the grass sometimes
walking home alone.
Tina Ament

COMPANY

It finally happened, the event that I've been waiting for ever since I moved into this house. Someone's finally broken in. My daughter, who lives forty miles from here with her husband and kids always tells me that since I am "well off", as she puts it, that I should move to a safer neighborhood. Of course when I'm away or asleep I take steps to see to it that nothing goes wrong. The house has all the most modern locks and alarm systems, but when I am awake in the afternoon or evenings, I turn off the alarm. I believe maybe the security was one reason why it's taken so long for someone to come to my place; tonight though, that all changed.

I was sitting in the living room reading as I usually do at about nine. I heard footsteps coming up the walk. This time of night was too late for any friends to be dropping by; so I wondered if it might not be someone wanting to break in. I went into the hall closet as quietly as I could even though I was more than a little excited. From the closet, one step took me into the cubbyhole that I had installed for occasions like this. Inside there's a little window where I can see what's going on in the living room.

So I got myself all situated in there just as he tried the door. I heard him mutter something that sounded happy when he found that it wasn't locked. As he came through the entryway he said half aloud, "Some people make it easy." He spoke in a low voice that had a slight accent. I hoped he'd start with the living room so I could get a look at him but he turned into the dining room. I heard the cabinets open and the sound of glass clinking as he made a quick survey. Then there was the expected squeak as the drawer that I keep my silver in was forced open. I didn't keep it locked or anything like that; it was just one of those drawers that had a habit of sticking. His steps moved to the kitchen. My kitchen is pretty sparse though when it comes to valuables; so he moved toward the living room.

Nina Moore

COAT HANGERS

My Grandmother has an attic full of coat hangers. When she weeds the garden, she throws them like spears at retreating rabbits. Sometimes, in late evening, she mends the fence around her garden. And later, standing at the sink, she gores cantaloupes with the hooked hanger ends.

Strings of red peppers and onions dry on hangers in the sun. Each Thanksgiving, as she cleans out her turkey, she thinks of her best dress on a hook in her bedroom closet.

Sally Miller

HIDDEN FACES

While a man was walking across a bridge he stopped to watch his reflection ripple in the river. With each wave his face bent and swirled, drifting downstream dividing between two logs and settling to the bottom with other shattered images of those who before stood staring deep
Jack Driscoll

Diving Under The Ice

When you first enter through the dark hole pretend you are looking for home. If the rope around your waist should ever break or tear loose, do not come up clawing the roots of ice. You must sit there in darkness, listening to the cold wind in the clearing of your ear. There are shanties spread out across the lake and sometimes you can hear the slap of an axe in the ice. Underwater some men break out in a sweat and kick frantically following sounds carried miles inside the current. They are found in spring, their eyes still open behind their masks, air lodged deep in their throats. But if you simply drift across the quiet bottom you might see lights floating from a house built close to the lake. Crawl up shallow. A dog, hearing your bubbles rise, will circle and bark. And soon some old mother stooping with a flashlight will find you, black and naked, staring back through the clear ice.

"My word," was my first thought when I saw him. He's so short; I thought someone who'd break into my house would be taller. His face was dark, and he had on faded green slacks and a green workshirt that didn't quite match. As he took in the living room, he smiled. He must have been thinking that it was certainly more fruitful than the kitchen. He already had as much of my silver as he could carry in his arms, and this was set on the sofa. Like a cat my visitor walked toward the fireplace. His eyes were fixed on an ivory figurine on the mantel. His light brown hand rested on the hat of the Japanese farmer. I think this, my first burglar, was from an island country like Jamaica. "Do you like that little farmer?" I say from my hiding place as if we'd been talking for quite some time. "My husband brought that to me from Japan."

My first burglar jerked his hand away, almost knocking the farmer off the fireplace. He turned around and looked everywhere in the room. Then a little laugh escaped him. "I know, it's one of those recordings. Right?"

"Well," I said, "I may be a lot of things to a lot of people, but I've never in my life been called a recording before."

By this time he was very confused. He did just what I'd been afraid he'd do; he headed for the door. "Wait," I called, and he hesitated by the couch where he'd left all the silver. "You're the first person who's broken into my house, if you can call it breaking, and the least you could do is stay awhile. You haven't seen the jewelry yet; it's in the bedroom. If you really have to go, take those things you've picked out."

"I can't take them," he said a little sheepishly.

I decided to start this conversation off correctly. "What's your name?" I asked him.

"I can't tell you that." He sat down not knowing where to look when he talked to me.

"Well then, where do you live?"

He answered me slowly. "Across town. There's my mother, me, a brother and two sisters."
I scrutinized him carefully; he looked as if he could still be in school; so I asked if he was. He laughed at this and said that he was working.

"And this is the kind of job you have?" I questioned.

"I have an application in for a construction job," he said indignantly. "But we need the money today, not after I find out about that." He smiled, "I've had jobs like that before; we built a house like this across town. I like building houses a lot better than doing this."

"Construction would be a good job for you," I told him, "though I have enjoyed your company. Feel free to drop in again." My burglar blushed a little and fingered my silver teapot.

"What do you do during the day?" he asked me. He seemed to be trying hard to be polite.

"Clean the house and read mostly. Before my husband died, he told me that a person who lived alone shouldn't own a TV, so I got rid of ours. If I'd known you were coming you could have had it."

When I told him this, he squirmed a little. Edging toward the sofa, he said, "I should be going."

I protested, "Wait, you haven't even looked at the things in the bedroom yet."

"That's alright; I didn't really need anything," was his answer.

"Go ahead and at least take those silver things you have. You said before that you do need it." He glanced quickly in the direction of my voice, then picked up the silver and walked into the entry way. As he hurried to the door I said loudly, so that he could hear even if he were outside the living room, "Good luck on that job you want." I heard the door slam and knew that he was gone.

I emerged from the cubbyhole and listened to the house. It seemed so quiet now. I turned on the alarm system and locked the door because I felt ready for bed now. I suppose I'll have to call the insurance people tomorrow. I'll have to tell them about the missing silver. I'll tell them it was my fault, that I didn't lock the door or something like that. After all, a good conversation like that is worth a few pieces of silver.
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Tina Ament

COMPANY

It finally happened, the event that I've been waiting for ever since I moved into this house. Someone's finally broken in. My daughter, who lives forty miles from here with her husband and kids always tells me that since I am "well off", as she puts it, that I should move to a safer neighborhood. Of course when I'm away or asleep I take steps to see to it that nothing goes wrong. The house has all the most modern locks and alarm systems, but when I am awake in the afternoon or evenings, I turn off the alarm. I believe maybe the security was one reason why it's taken so long for someone to come to my place; tonight though, that all changed.

I was sitting in the living room reading as I usually do at about nine. I heard footsteps coming up the walk. This time of night was too late for any friends to be dropping by; so I wondered if it might not be someone wanting to break in. I went into the hall closet as quietly as I could even though I was more than a little excited. From the closet, one step took me into the cubbyhole that I had installed for occasions like this. Inside there's a little window where I can see what's going on in the living room.

So I got myself all situated in there just as he tried the door. I heard him mutter something that sounded happy when he found that it wasn't locked. As he came through the entryway he said half aloud, "Some people make it easy." He spoke in a low voice that had a slight accent. I hoped he'd start with the living room so I could get a look at him but he turned into the dining room. I heard the cabinets open and the sound of glass clinking as he made a quick survey. Then there was the expected squeak as the drawer that I keep my silver in was forced open. I didn't keep it locked or anything like that; it was just one of those drawers that had a habit of sticking. His steps moved to the kitchen. My kitchen is pretty sparse though when it comes to valuables; so he moved toward the living room.

Nina Moore

COAT HANGERS

My Grandmother has an attic full of coat hangers. When she weeds the garden, she throws them like spears at retreating rabbits. Sometimes, in late evening, she mends the fence around her garden. And later, standing at the sink, she gore cantalopes with the hooked hanger ends.

Strings of red peppers and onions dry on hangers in the sun. Each Thanksgiving, as she cleans out her turkey, she thinks of her best dress on a hook in her bedroom closet.

Sally Miller

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While a man was walking across a bridge, he stopped to watch his reflection ripple in the river. With each wave his face bent and swirled, drifting downstream dividing between two logs and settling to the bottom with other shattered images of those who before stood staring deep
Braden Clary

Untitled

I dip the cloth in the water
clean as spit
on an early summer day.

As I stand on my stool
cleaning the blackboard green
the water drips into my sleeves
into my armpits
it feels good
cool in the June breeze.

I wipe the arithmetic problems
after the school bell
has rung long ago
and the other children have gone.

I leave
listening to the grass sometimes
walking home alone.
Diana Yates

CAROLYN

the last person to kiss her
was some great uncle
rotting in his tweed suit
a loving, great
uncle kiss.
she died in October
and left a house and car
that wasn't paid for
in money, at least.
and a son who sent flowers
from Washington.
Lisa Tennyson

Walking Out

We skip both fifth and sixth
hours to drift towards the river.
Just being there below the dam we scare
away a black man fishing.

Jacked-up cars come,
kick the dust with fat tires.
Music floats from their open windows.

Across the river, men
work the mill's machines.
Drinking beers and leaning
against unmilled trees we carry on
above the water.

VI
To you will I speak
in a language of stone
(Answer with a single green word)
To you will I speak
in a language of snow
(Answer with a fan of bees)
To you will I speak
in a language of water
(Answer with a canoe of light)
To you will I speak
in a language of blood
(Answer with an ascension of birds)

Voyage

The porthole of your eye
covered by a thin, fringed curtain
in the quiet cabin
of your body, rises

and falls in the wind
of dreams. Shuddering
through the rivers of your hair,
your eye wanders

into swamps of twisted trees
and coquies calling
across still shores

and out again, your body
turning like the last
rounding of the banks
as you head into open currents

following the fix of your sextant
under the shifting stars.
Judi Shulevitz

Continuation

a translation of Octavio Paz’s *Duracion*

I
Black the sky
yellow the earth
The rooster breaks the night apart
The water wakes, asking the time
The wind rises, asking for you
A white horse passes

II
Like the forest on its litter of leaves
You sleep in your bed of rain
You sing in your bed of wind
You kiss in your bed of sparks

III
Several pervasive smells
Body of many hands
A single whiteness
Above an invisible stem

IV
Speak listen reply
What the thunder says
The forest understands

V
I enter through your eyes
You rise from my mouth
You sleep in my blood
I wake in your brow

Amanda Holmes

The Paling

This time it is dark when she walks from her house to the shed, except for the lamp she left setting in the window overlooking the yard. It is the chill of the air that frightens her every time she walks out the door; the way her jeans turn cold against her legs, and her skin cold against her blood. It reaches her arms and stays until the hair pokes her like pins.

It is only thirty yards to the shed and each step she takes punctures the snow. It has not snowed for three days and she has not been outside on the path for a week. She goes to the shed in winter no more than once a week for a change of scenery from her salt-box house. It looks as if it belongs by the sea with sand and rock instead of in the snow with trees and fields.

Every few steps she slips with the worn soles of her boots, but lifts her arms to regain balance. Tonight she hurries away from her house to get out of the cold that shakes her; that has shaken her every winter since she was born.

At the door of the shed she slowly unties the thick rope knot and lifts it hard against the metal latch inside until it clicks and allows her to pull the door open. Once inside she reaches for the lamp hanging by a nail above her and lights it with a match from her breast pocket. Its yellow-orange light lifts shadows from the center of the room as the flame is adjusted and tucks them into corners and behind beams.

The shed is empty, baring its dirt floor and thick wood walls blotched white in streaks from plaster filled cracks. She carries the lamp, lifting it shakily to inspect corners for apparently no more than dust. When she finishes her round of the room she again walks across the floor to the opposite side, to a door smaller than the one she entered. It has been painted recently, a deep shade of green, and looks as if it has been painted many times over the years. Each coat has peeled and has not been scraped away before the new was added.
She takes a key from her pocket, and holding the lock in her reddened hands, turns the key. When it pops open she drops the biting metal on the ground, pulls it open. The lamplight spreads into the room. The room is small and in the center sets a rocking chair. It faces her and she walks up to it, her eyes on the carved bird along the headrest sitting on an apple branch, framed by a carved oval. She follows the armrest's curve down to where hands had rested and worn away the finish, replacing it with body oils. She kneels and looks closely where each finger would have rested and touches where nails dug and scratched into the wood until it looked like a tack board.

She still feels cold, but the seat of the chair feels warm it is so smooth. The lamp, beside the chair where she set it, warms her right leg. It sends light in strange patterns of lines as she rocks. The chair makes no noise as if it is a finely oiled machine. Even the wind seems to have stopped blowing, or at least stopped making sounds as it passes over and around the shed.

She closes her eyes and feels the rhythm of the rocking and sees herself watching the rhythm as she used to when the chair was in the house beside a windowless wall. She could never hear the chair rock then either, but she could feel it as her mother rocked back and forth. No matter what room of the house the girl was in that rhythm was with her. It had been etched into the floors and walls until it vibrated silently. She remembers, in winter her mother sat in this chair all day, leaving only to put wood in the fire or straighten the rug beneath her. Only in spring or summer would she ever walk out the door into the yard. She insisted her daughter stay with her in the house because she did not want to be alone. Yet they hardly spoke.

One day the girl had left the house early in the morning, before her mother was up, and went walking in the snow covered fields and along paths through the woods where others had walked. When she returned her mother was awake and already in the chair. Her eyes were opened widely and her head pressed hard against the carved bird. It was as if her body had expanded and covered the chair, as if it was ready to go inside the grains of wood.

The girl stood watching her and then tried to run toward the stairs that led to her room.

I reached the shale hill, parted pieces of splitting rock, and disobeyed when I slid them into plastic, then my pack, to take home. These frames, half smiling, opening one eye, left their home behind. And after the trail, I crossed the tracks again to bring these dry poems home. In six months they'd crumbled.
"No!" she screams. "I won't!" and flees outside towards the paths in the woods.

"Mom," the girl pleaded from where she stood, "then let's go away.

"I can't go. I must stay. I always stayed." Her eyes still stared, watching the wall and fire. "Please stay with me in this room till night.

Her daughter watched her, crawling forwards slowly, until her mother stopped moving.

She leaps from the rocking chair and runs from the small room leaving the lamp swaying. The snow pulls at her legs as she hurries toward the house. The doorknob is cold on her hands and a faint shadow of light falls on the snow as the door is opened. She runs inside to where her black chair rocks beside the wall. She watches the chair until the rockers become streaks of light.

"Don't!" her mother's voice stopped her. "Don't you ever leave me alone again." The voice was hard and sounded like the panic that showed in her eyes. "I hate to be alone, I hate winter; I hate cold."

"Mom," the girl pleaded from where she stood, "then let's go away."

"I can't go. I must stay. I've always stayed." Her eyes still stared, watching the wall and fire. "Please stay with me in this room till night."

The girl went up the stairs and returned from her room carrying a crudely made black rocking chair. She placed it in front of a window where it rocked firmly. All day she sat there and every day after for the following winters. Conversations were never more than a few words; her only interest lay in watching the snow.

One day she looked and saw her mother was asleep. She slept more and more as the winters progressed. In what felt like a dream the girl felt herself stand up and walk out the door. She pushed herself through the snow, instinctively moving away from the house. She stopped when she heard a voice from the door behind her yelling, "Don't leave me!" The girl turned and saw her mother as she fell from the door into the snow. She was thrashing through the snow as one would try to keep from drowning, crying, "I hate it!"

Her daughter watched her, crawling forwards slowly, until her mother stopped moving.

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Dr. Nick Bozanic

The Crane's Ascent

Standing at the edge of the warped dock,
the thick scent of orange blossoms
sticking in his throat, my
grandfather sows corn on the water.
The small bass rise like birds
feeding from the open palm of a meadow.
It is not yet dawn.

He eases himself down
into the boat, breathing heavily in the heat;
he bends to the motor, pulls hard on the rope.
His heart pulses once and tightens.
Like a waking animal
something stirs behind his eyes...

The outboard catches, chokes and dies.
Cradled in the slowly rocking boat,
my grandfather cannot see the clouds of moss
move in the trees or from the shallows
the shadow of a crane
lift itself on impossible wings
above everything and the sun
rising.

Laura Champion

Dusk

Madder than Hell's black cat
I run down streets
at dusk,
scramble to the top
of the highest tree
and tear stars
from their tapestry
of black.
I am ready to pounce
upon the moon,
shred
it with teeth and
claws unsheathed, scattering
bits
of brilliance, white,
to the ground below.

Elizabeth Armstrong

Utah Tall Tales

It's so cold
breath freezes in mid-air;
it drops to the ground
splinters
into long needles of blue ice.

Late afternoon:
bent old Cloud-Woman
collects them, her gnarled fingers
knitting the snow-strands
into a soft afghan for her earthbound child.
much too long to pump, but by pushing against the ground with his feet and then sticking his legs out in front of him he could move back and forth fairly rapidly. I pumped higher and higher.

"Hey," he said, "If you go any higher you'll be gone-- out into orbit somewhere."

"So what?"

"So what? It'd be terrible, I'd be here and you'd be out there somewhere. We'd never see each other. I'd be lonely."

Teddy's out there somewhere. We never see each other. I'm lonely.

I stared out the window of my father's pick-up, the dry Texas air slapping against my face. Under Pecan trees the wide tires turn up caliche and send the fat cattle running among cactus. Across the field, by the pond, the cows' enormous tongues sweep across muddy water. I think of all the animals who go there during a single day:

the racoon who searches for goldfish, his paws lifted together as if to pray under a full moon. Even crows, at evening, bending from smooth rocks, tip back their heads and swallow before flying into the dark.

But here the ranch road widens to pavement, the yellow line like a scar on some old hide. There are stormclouds sliding in over a row of new houses where families from the city have not yet moved in.
My hand smashes the round rubber
sends it slamming
it attacks him.

I serve again
striking four white walls,
this time the ball won't stop.
It grows teeth and hair
eating his hand
swallowing his shoes
shaving off his beard.

I scream as his toes
wave good-bye.

Turning to leave
his head juts from the mouth
"You win," he says.

"No, I'm going away."

"Are you going back to the war?" I asked with some interest.

"No, I'm going to a hospital."

"What's the matter with you?"

"The war. Let me hug you before I go."

"Yucc," I said, sticking out my tongue, "Why?"

"Because you'll be different when I come back."

"No I won't."

"Yes you will." He put his arms around me, but I pulled away from him and ran to my crying place, the fifth stair on our staircase.

"Amanda?" I heard my mother call after me. I could just hear part of her conversation with Teddy over my sobs.

"I told you she would probably be upset...at this age...you can never tell exactly why...unpredictable...

About a week after Teddy left, Mr. Wilkes came out of the house and began taking the swingset apart. He put all the blue parts to one side, and the white ones to the other, then bundled each group in a tarp and put them in his garage. It made me remember the last day I played in Teddy's yard.

"Why don't you ever play on this swingset?"

"I'm too big."

"No you aren't. Come on," I wheedled.

"I'd break it."

"No you won't."

"Well," Teddy considered, "O.K." He got on one of the swings and the whole set sank down, but it didn't break. His legs were
"You can't do that."

"Why not?"

"'Cause I have to go in and practice the piano and meditate soon."

"Meditate?"

"Um hmm. Every afternoon I meditate for an hour after I practice the piano."

"Sounds like a nap to me."

"I don't take naps," I said, getting off the swingset and stamping my foot, "I meditate. My mother taught me." I stalked over to the fence and began to climb it. "Can I use your swingset again tomorrow?"

"Anytime. Have a good nap," said Teddy, waving good-bye. I grabbed up Ivanhoe and ran to the house.

After that I played in Teddy's yard every day that it didn't rain.

At the end of July there was a whole week of rainy days, but when the rain stopped, and I went out in the morning, Teddy wasn't sunbathing. It was too muddy in the flower bed to lie there and read, so I watched out the window. It got warmer and warmer outside, but still Teddy wasn't there. Around 1:00 I had to go and practice the piano. I was in the middle of my tenth run of scales, when the doorbell rang. I bounced up, eager for a break, but my mother said in a menacing voice, "Don't you dare move. I'll get it."

"Is Amanda here?" I heard Teddy's voice ask. My hands slammed down on the piano keys in disharmonious joy. I ran to the door, but stopped and took a step backward, when I saw that Teddy was not wearing cut-offs and coconut oil, but a white flannel business suit complete with tie. His hair was brushed neatly into place and he had very recently shaved. "Oh," I said with contempt, "so you are an adult. Did you get a job?"

Elise M. Breen

Snow Baby

The snow was my mother. I was hers alone at night, in a house that wasn't mine. I watched her leave kisses on the sill. I cried, I pressed my fingers at the panes that kept me from her arms. She sang to me, swirling beyond the glass. I closed my hands and pushed them through the panes. As she breathed into my room I stepped naked through the window. My heart slowing to beat with hers, I lay in her side, the moonlight on my fingertips growing blue.
take a nap," Teddy said, laughing as if he'd made a big joke. He started walking to the back porch, and I noticed that he moved very slowly, as if he were exhausted, and that he leaned heavily on a porch post as he talked to his mother.

"Teddy, is that little neighbor girl bothering you?"

"No, not at all."

"I don't want you to get overtired. It's our mistake-- we let her play on that swingset while you were away." Her voice dropped to a whisper at "away", and Teddy looked down at the ground. "We should have taken it down a long time ago. Do you want me to call her mother?"

"Mom, she's not bothering me."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm positive."

"Well, don't overexert yourself."

"How can I overexert myself?"

"I don't know, just be careful."

"Jesus Christ," said Teddy, walking away.

"Teddy!" his mother called warningly after him, "You be careful!"

"Your mother sounds just like mine," I said, "I bet you're a kid."

"I am not a kid!" Teddy said emphatically.

I looked at my watch. "It's 12:30. Aren't you going to go and make your lunch?"

"No, I thought I'd stay here and talk to you."
"You read yourself All Quiet on the Western Front?"

"No, my dad read it to me."

"For a bedtime story, I suppose."

"How'd you know?"

"Oh, must about everyone's dad reads that book to his kid for a bedtime story," said Teddy, raising one eyebrow and winking comically at me.

"Really?"

"Oh, yeah, it's very popular."

"Are you sure you're not a kid?" I asked suspiciously.

"Sure I'm sure, why?"

"Well, why do you stay out sunbathing all day if you're not a kid? Adults work."

Teddy stared intently at one of the swingset posts and started picking paint off it with his fingernail. "I don't have a job now," he said.

"Why?"

"Because," he said, a big flake of blue paint falling from his fingers.

"Because why?" I asked.

"Because I'm resting."

I stopped to consider this for a moment then asked, "What are you resting from?"

"The war."

"TEDDY!" I heard Mrs. Wilkes call from the house.

"Just a minute," Teddy called back. "She probably wants me to

Nick Thorndike

Sleeping Jesus

Jeffy felt the weight of the late afternoon sun staring into his bedroom window as he floated out from sleep. He had turned so many times while asleep the bed sheets were twisted around his legs. He pulled his legs out now, knocking his stuffed owl, Alger, onto the floor. He waited a minute, listening for noises in the family room. He held his breath and a trickle of voices filtered in. He recognized his sister, Cathleen's voice, and one of her girl friends; which one he was uncertain.

Still concentrating on their conversation, Jeffy lifted himself from the bed and sat upright. He assumed the girls were discussing the boys who went to their high school since Cathleen was using her high pitched voice to brag. Slowly, Jeffy opened his bedroom door and stumbled into the hallway that was connected to the family room. His sister was looking directly at him. Her lips moved with words Jeffy could only hear as a whisper. Cathleen straightened herself and made a taut face; Jeffy realized that she had been speaking to him.

"What did you say, Cathleen?" Jeffy asked. Her eyes focused on him as if she had been insulted.

She repeated, "Jeffy, you're finally up."

"Yes," Jeffy nodded. "I slept some because I helped clean out the garage this morning and was tired."

Cathleen stopped staring at him and looked out the window. "Oh. I wondered where you were but then I figured that you were taking a nap."

The other girl, her back towards Jeffy, raised herself up from the chair and whispered to Cathleen. Jeffy moved to another chair, slumping between its arms. The girls shook their heads towards each other in a quick nod.

Leaning in Jeffy's direction, Cathleen cleared her throat to talk to him. "Uh-Jeffy, I'm sorry you missed our visitor. He was
here while you were napping. He wanted very much to speak to you. I said that there was no reason to disturb you."

"Who was it?" Jeffy asked, sitting up.

Cathleen's lip quivered while she said "Jesus."

"Who?" Jeffy said.

"Jesus Christ," Cathleen said. "From church, don't you remember?"

"Yes, I remember. Our teacher told us about him in Sunday School. But I thought he was dead," Jeffy said.

Cathleen clasped her hands to her breasts. "He is dead," she said. "Only he came down from heaven for a second visit with some people. He chose our house first."

"Why our house?"

"I don't know. He didn't say why," Cathleen said. "I guess since we're the first house on the block he decided to start with us."

Jeffy touched his forehead with his finger. "Maybe he is going next door, too." he said.

"It doesn't matter where he is now," Cathleen said. "He was here, that's all." She winked at the other girl. "And Jesus wanted to see you most, Jeffy."

"What for? Was I bad?" Jeffy asked himself, rather than Cathleen.

She said, "He didn't say a word to why he was here. When I asked him, he smiled and turned away."

"Then what did he do?"

"He walked through that window and disappeared," Cathleen said, pointing her eyes toward the haze of the outdoor sun. "Back to heaven, I'm sure."

"I never remember you being here in the summers," I said, to change the subject.

"What do you mean? I was here."

"No you weren't. I can remember things clearly from when I was four till now, and you weren't ever here before."

"Well, I was here when you were two, and then I was gone."

"What, did you go to your grandmother's house or something?"

Teddy laughed, "No I was fighting in a war."

"Oh. Are you an adult?" I asked, somewhat surprised.

"Yes. Are you a kid?"

"Were you ever on T.V.?" I asked, ignoring his comment.

"What do you mean?"

"You know, they're always putting the war on T.V. Were you ever on it?"

"I don't think so."

"Well, you can't have been involved in anything very important, or you would have been on television."

"I was in lots of important stuff."

"Like what? Did you ever kill anybody? Did you ever blow up anybody's house? Did you ride around in trucks a lot?"

"Actually, I spent most of my time sleeping."

"You're like Paul Baumer."

"Who?"

"Paul Baumer-- you know-- the guy in All Quiet on the Western Front-- except, of course, that you're not dead. Did you play a lot of cards?"
In previous summers, Mr. Wilkes, Teddy's father, had let me use the swingset whenever I had wanted to, and I had always wondered why a man without any children would have a swingset in his yard. Now that Teddy was back, I could see that it was his swingset, and that I no longer had any right to use it. I stayed in the flower beds, watching the wind kick the empty swings.

One day in late June, I woke up and saw a deeply tanned foot beside my cheek. "What're you reading?" Teddy asked. I took hold of the fence for support, sat up, and rubbed my eyes.

"Ivanhoe."

"Isn't that book a little difficult for a girl your age?"

"Sir Walter Scott is one of my favorite writers," I said icily.

"Why don't you go play somewhere?"

"Where should I play?"

"Well, anywhere---there's a park across the street."

"I hate that park."

"Well, why don't you play in your own yard?"

"I don't have a swingset."

"Don't any of your friends have swingsets?"

"I don't have any friends. There aren't any kids my own age around here."

Teddy considered this for a moment, then said, "Well, if a swingset's all you need, you can play in my yard." He grabbed me by the wrists and swung me over the fence. Ivanhoe landed in the flower bed at the same time my feet landed in Teddy's yard. "Geez!" he said. "A kid your age ought to play. Why would you want to lie around reading all day?"

The other girl lifted her chin and said, "Jesus was very anxious to see you, Jeffy."

Jeffy shifted his stare from Cathleen to the other girl and again to Cathleen. He said, "You sure he didn't head over to the neighbor's house? Like Santa Claus?"

"No, we're not certain" Cathleen said. "He might have. I would say that Jesus only came down to speak with you for some reason."

"You should have woken me up. I wouldn't care. I wouldn't care at all, Cathleen," Jeffy said. He gazed up to the ceiling. "What did I do to make him come to our house?"

Cathleen slapped her thighs and said, "I don't know what is the matter. But Jesus kept whispering your name over and over again. It was scary feeling, Jeffy, but I was calm."

The chatter between Cathleen and her friend erupted into laughter but it was all indistinguishable to Jeffy. He was thinking of Jesus: enthralled and frightened by the event he had missed.

Jeffy moved away from the girls, not noticing their expressions of delight. He trudged down the hallway, entered his bedroom, and toppled onto the bed. Pressing his ears to the pillow, Jeffy listened for the sound of an intruder. He listened and listened into the night and finally did settle into another deep sleep. He slept then through breakfast and way beyond into his favorite television programs.
Mary Anne Martinsek

Poem To You

I will be quiet. I will part
the streams of sound like
a black stone. When I walk, my feet
will strike softer than the flutter
of moth wings in my heart.

My skin will grey until I seem
only the shadow of a statue. You
will not see me sitting in the corner
here, even if you stare and stare.
If you listen for me, you will not
hear me tip-toeing behind you.

But this is not enough. My silence
will be so deep it draws all
the sounds around me into my quiet
I spread dark around the room
over windows, over lamps. Your lips
make no sound as you beg me
to stop. You know me now. You know
me by the way I clutch the world inside
me and swallow your thoughts.

Elise M. Breen

The Swingset

All summer Teddy sunbathed. He came out of the house at
10:30, put lemon juice in his hair, covered himself with coconut
oil, and eased into a lounge chair. He never slept or read, only
stared directly in front of him, his face expressionless. At
12:30 he went back into the house, got himself a sandwich, a coke
and some fritos, then came out and eased back into the lounge chair
to eat. At 4:30 he gathered up the coke, oil, and lemon juice
bottles, folded the lounge chair, and went into the house to stay.
If you're wondering why I know so much about him, it's because
I watched his yard.

There was a green chain-link fence up at the border between
our lawns, and every day that the sun was out I would take a book
over to the fence and lay in the flower beds that were planted on
our side. As the sun got warmer the flowers smelled better and
better, and if the book was a thick one, I would drowse off around
noon, and wake up to find Teddy munching fritos, and my mother
yelling for me to come in and practice the piano. Still, even
when I was reading, even when I was asleep or practicing the piano,
my eyes were always pointed with six-year-old determination toward
Teddy's yard.

If you're thinking I liked Teddy, you're right, but it was
what was in Teddy's yard that interested me most. The corner of
his yard that was farthest from our house had a pale blue and
white swingset anchored there. I would have killed to have a
swingset the year that I was six. Whenever I nagged my parents
about getting me a swingset they reminded me that we lived across
the street from a park, then changed the subject.

If Teddy hadn't been such a big kid, I probably would have
climbed over the fence and asked to use it, but he was as tall
as my father and his hands were twice the size of my face. I
knew I would have to wait until he noticed me or until he decided
to quit sunbathing before I could use the swingset.
Carol Zahn

The Unicorn

One who believes
will see the moon-pale horn flicker
in the starlight, hear silver
hooves step through frosted
grass. It is the unbeliever
who misses the ivory eyes,
the coat that glitters
like the Milky Way.

But the unicorn is always there,
high on chalk cliffs, watching
the sea's white caps. Those who look
will see a misty silhouette
against the slowly rising sun.
Art Contributors

Cover: Jane de Forest
Photograph - inside cover - Rachel Roberts
Sketches - Julia Silverman pages 24, 38
Photograph - Sally Miller page 16

CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES

Diana Yates: "We are what we imagine. Our very existence consists in our imagination of ourselves. Our best destiny is to imagine, at least, completely, who and what, and that we are. The greatest tragedy that can befall us is to go unimagined."
-N. Scott Momaday

Rachel Roberts: "There must be a pony."
-James Kirkwood

Elise M. Breen: "fiction writer, damn it, fiction writer!"
-Ming

Jay Frost: "Little fishie in de brook,
Papa catch him on a hook,
Mam fry him in de pan,
Baby eats 'em like a man."

Tina Ament: "I feel that if someone can't communicate the least he can do is to shut up."
-Tom Lehrer

Lisa Shirley: "I like a bus...red buses, green buses."
-James Paul McCartney

Amanda Holmes: She liked to rough it and she is now in Georgia.

Jack Driscoll:

Lisa Tennyson: "Strange events permit themselves the luxury of occurring."-Charlie Chan

Sally Miller: "You should do something important with today, after all you're exchanging a day of your life for it."
-Lew Smith

Marty Wade: "Charlie Russell, that fairly good, not really good, sometimes good with yellow, often good with light, never good with totals, total man, forgot the world has garbage."
-Richard Hugo

"Hard is his herte that loveth nought in May."
Geoffery Chaucer (1340-1408)
Julia Silverman: "So I found myself on my rookers and knees trying to get up and saying, 'Naughty naughty naughty.' -from A Clockwork Orange

Carol Zahn: "I'm sorry, but this is not my poem. No, really, you must have me confused with someone else."

Laura Champion: "No motivation to get out of bed and carry on the charade, caught in a dream that's gone astray." -Eric Carmen

Elizabeth Armstrong: "Tie the heart of a bat with a red silk string to your right arm and you will win every game at which you play." -from The People, Yes

Judith Shulevitz: "Before I sink/into the big sleep/I want to hear/I want to hear/the scream/of the butterfly." -Jim Morrison

Nick Thorndike: "...Most places/you can usually be free some of the time/if you wake up before other people." -William Stafford

Braden Clary: "...I have had experience-I know the world...and if there is one who has not often cursed his life, one who has not often said to himself that he was the most unfortunate of men, throw me head first into the sea." -from Voltaire's Candidate

Tex Hart: "The city is a disease that spreads to kill the ranches."

Dr. Nick Bozanic: "...let us pray that our eye may become single and then our whole body shall be full of light." -Van Gogh

Jane de Forest: "Do fish sweat?"
- Jane Huber

Nina Moore: Exit