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Excerpt from "Vicious"

Tony Chalk

I know he really wants to hit me. Maybe stick a fork in my hand again or hit me with another boot. I wish he'd just do it and get it over with. Two damned months and I'll be gone; can't we just wait two damned months? He's standing behind me at the counter, by the telephone. Glaring at the back of my head. All I do is slurp this stupid soup. The gash across my bottom lip hurts like holy hell. He loves it.

"You know the car's totaled. Do you hear me?"
"No I'm fucking deaf. I'm three feet away from you for Chrissake." Slow motion.
"Did your grades come?"
"Yeah."
"They came months ago didn't they? Why didn't you show them to us?"
"I threw them away. It was five Fs. Is that what you want to know? Five Fs. I quit going to school in April when I enlisted. I was out fucking off everyday smoking dope and pretending to go to school to make you happy. Are you happy?" Where are these tears coming from?

What's he doing? He can't even speak. Just glaring at me like some kinda' maniac. Oh shit, he's going for the drawer, the knives. He's lost it. I'm outta' here. Jeans and a tee shirt. Barefoot. Only a mile to Lisa's house. Slam! He's through the yard. Is he foaming at the mouth? Coming straight at me, with a fucking meat cleaver. Faster. He can't catch up.

Lisa and I have known each other since first grade and is the "nicest" girl I've ever known. Before I knew it wasn't a job, I thought she'd be the Virgin Mary when she grew up. Now when you talk to her, she tries to act all worldly, like every thing you say has some hidden dirty meaning. Waiting in her living room makes me wonder why we go out. We have absolutely nothing in common. We'll probably get married. She's been getting changed for a fuckin' hour now. She only lives about a mile away, so I made my great escape here to get a ride to my buddy Ted's house. Her Dad was sitting here when I walked in, about to have a coronary. He left the room to take a shit or something. He thinks I'm on dope. He thinks everybody under 50 is on dope. I'm a real charmer when it comes to parents.

"Can you make it to the Amway meeting with me tomorrow night." She says.
"Uh, sure I guess so." Like I can say no when she's giving me a ride.
"Good because Joe wants you to do a product demonstration with him. He thinks it'll help you sign some people. I think my Dad asked him."
"Okay, whatever. I'll probably be at Ted's for a while. You think you could pick up some clothes and stuff from my Mom?"
"Sure. I'll go after I drop you off."
Maybe she will be the Virgin Mary.
Staying with Ted is an experience. I ain't picky right now because I don't have many friends to begin with, let alone one with his own place. Be nice if he'd put out some air fresheners or vacuum the shit off the carpet every couple of months though. Smells like toe jam and stale bong water in here. Me, him and his brother Mike grew up together. I'm an only kid so those two are like my brothers, only we actually like each other. Anyway, Ted's a cook at one of the big hotels, and is completely fucking psycho. He goes about 275 and has this long stringy mop like Meatloaf. I call him that when I'm shit-faced. He fuckin' hates it.

Me, Ted and two other friends are drinking at Peter's Pub, a bar we hang out in downtown. Ted gets these nutty ideas sometimes and can let'em go. I told you he's psycho. So, tonight he gets this story going that I'm getting married in the morning and my buddies are taking me out for my bachelor party. He's always trying to get me laid because he thinks I ain't getting no pussy from Lisa. He's right.

"Can I have your attention? Can I have your attention? Hey! Shut the fuck up, I'm trying to talk here." It's Ted, drunk as a fuckin' monkey.

"A toast. My buddy's getting married in the morning to Miss Marry Anne Rotten-Crotch of the distinguished Rotten-Crotch brood of East Point. I wish the sorry bastard all the luck in the world . . . he'll need it."

His scheme works. So well, in fact, I'm getting about 10 rounds of free drinks from people in the bar. I got no shame.

We're playing with the story, getting stinkin' ass drunk, when Ted comes back to the table with this gorgeous hard-bodied, black haired babe. She walks straight up to me, doesn't say a word and rams her tongue half-way down my throat while grabbing two hand fulls of my ass. I got enough wood in my pants to build a fuckin' canoe.

"Can we sit?"

"You can do whatever you want." She's got to be a pro. Nope. Her friends are too ugly. Besides, I know hookers don't work in groups like that.

"What is the most flattering thing a man can say to a woman?"

"That she'd make a great president?"

"Yeah. Good answer."

"So how about you, what's the most flattering thing a woman can say to a man?"

"That she thinks about him when she masturbates."

Wow. All I can say is Wow. After 15 minutes, my eyeballs are bobbin' in my head and I get up to go take a piss. I come back and she walks out the door alone.

"What the fuck?" I ask Ted.

"What's the matter, don't you like her?"

"Hell yeah I like her. What's not to like?"

"She asked me if she can go home with you. She wanted to know why you didn't ask her."

"Jesus Christ, she told you that?"

"Yeah. That's why she left. She's waiting outside. If you're not there in 10 minutes she's taking off without you."

"See ya . . . Ted?"

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"Go on, I'll stay at Joey's tonight. Have fun you lucky bastard."

Luckily I catch her outside and we take a taxi to the apartment. Not two feet in the door she's trying to suck my tongue outta my mouth and unbuttoning my pants. I'm just going with the flow. She's taking rubbers out of her stockings and leading me to the bedroom. So hurried. I want to tell her to slow down, but I'm afraid she'll stop all together.

"What's your name?"
"Sid."
"I'm Angel. Last night was fun. You okay?"
"I think so."
"Shouldn't you be getting ready for a wedding?"
"Uh, yeah... Angel?"
"What?"
"I don't know what to say. I feel like a dick... The part about the wedding..."
"You mean the part about you made it all up?"
"You knew?"
"Fuck yes. That's an old one. You didn't look the type anyway."
"What d'you mean?"
"You look too pussy hungry. Anyway, I don't do mercy fucks. I fucked you because I felt like it."
"You did?"
"Yeah I did. Why? Does that surprise you?"
"Well, yeah."
"Because I wanted to fuck you or because I admitted it?"
"Both. I mean, I've never been with anyone like you. You're so...
"Don't be shallow. And what is 'been with?' Don't you mean fuck? Isn't that how you talk with your buddies?"
"Yeah, but... you're a girl."
"A girl? Anyway, don't act. Be yourself. If people can't take it, fuck em."
"I'm sorry about the girl crack. I didn't mean anything."
"Forget it. You're just young." 
"What I lack in experience I make up for in enthusiasm."
"So I noticed. Give me your number. Maybe I'll call."
Braddah

Phyllis Coochie Cayan

My braddah take me beach
Teach me how to fish
And throw net.

My braddah sit and look
Out to sea,
Talk about sovereignty.

My braddah told me
No change for anybody
Stay Hawaiian.

My braddah no stay.
They take him away,
All day rainy.

Contemplation
Diane Marshall

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The Throw Net

Phyllis Coochie Cayan

The fisherman shoulders his throw net,
Carefully picks his way on the mossy reef
To his spot at Makaha.

He squints at the morning sun,
Staring at moving water clouds,
Shadows of fish swimming.

He poses, ready for a toss.
The throw net opens in midair,
A circle of blue nylon diamonds.

The catch is plenty.
Silent thanks with a red ho'okupu,
The morning's work is done.

Ka Mahina O Oneali'i

(for Halenani)

Phyllis Coochie Cayan

Hua moon dips to the sea,
it's white shimmery path
leads to the water's edge.

The wind from Kamalo blows,
coconut trees sway to and fro,
a hula for Kulo.

Beneath the lei of stars,
a dark blue kihei
covers beautiful Hina.

Ha'ina mai ana ka puana,
ka mahina o Oneali'i
mai ponia 'ole.
The Gift

Brenda Harrington

Hello Beth, it's Dad. I was allowed to come here today to attend the service. I'm glad you made it because you are the true reason for my presence.

I am pleased you came to pay your respects to Father. I can see you are both more, and yet less, emotional than when you came to pay your respects to me seventeen years ago. It depends on whether I look at your so-composed face or listen to your tumultuous thoughts. You are thinking of us both. Only natural I suppose, they're lowering his body next to where they lowered mine so long ago.

You were distressed when you arrived because you discovered they've built a chicken farm next to the cemetery. You feel the odor and noise are disgraceful and disrespectful. I think it quite humorous myself.

I am enjoying my visit and I've been allowed to bring you a gift. This is not often permitted, but a decision was reached that you are in genuine need of some assistance. It has been left to me to decide what that assistance will consist of. I want what will be most beneficial to you, as I watch you and listen to your thoughts. I am pleased I have been allowed to come here because I have always desired to leave you with something of lasting value.

You keep the harmonica I gave you for your tenth birthday in a show box in your closet. You've forgotten how to play it for the most part now, but I notice you take it out of the shoe box occasionally, and try to remember the lessons I gave you. I'm pleased you have some fond memories of me, I only wish I could have left you with more.

You've grown quite beautiful, you know. When I was taken, you were at that unbeautiful, gawky stage of life, and so impressionable. I didn't like leaving you at that difficult stage of our life.

I'm afraid for you Beth, because you must remain here for awhile. You have important things to do and I'm here to help you get started. You've been too caught up in what you haven't achieved as yet, to achieve anything. Poor kid, you remind me of myself in many ways. I too wanted to save the world, or at least leave my mark upon its surface. If you only knew how really insignificant is that small period on earth (which you lament and torment yourself worrying over) your lamentations would cease. Unfortunately, you don't know this yet, and I can't tell you. You will find out for yourself one day, after the plan for you has been fulfilled. Goodby for now, my darling. Though I may not see you again, I will always be near.

Beth was driving home from the office the day after Grandfather's funeral. She was exhausted from both its ordeal and today's nearly eight hours of straight typing. As she adjusted her aching back in the bucket seat, she wondered for the hundredth time whether she would ever be able to do anything except secretarial work.

Reaching her apartment building, Beth wearily climbed the stairs, stopped on the way for the day's mail. There were four envelopes, three of which appeared to be the usual bills. But the fourth...it had a return address from the Nutri-Right Company! Beth's heart leaped, then quickly sank, as she realized it was probably yet another rejection of the numerous

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resumes she posted each month.

Entering her apartment, Beth tossed the three offending bills onto the table, and still clutching the fourth envelope, sank into the sofa. She quickly opened the envelope, unfolding the enclosed letter with nervous fingers. It couldn't be, and yet it was! It was a genuine appointment for a job interview for the position of administrative assistant!

Dropping the letter, Beth raced to the closet, flinging clothes in every direction in a desperate search for the appropriate attire for the interview. As she opened shoe boxes, dumping and arranging shoes in rows for inspection, she came to the box containing the harmonica. She tenderly unwrapped it, smoothing its shiny surface on her skirt with loving hands. She brought it to her lips, intending to play the few short notes she could remember of long forgotten songs. As she reached her usual stopping point, she found her hands and mouth continued to move, almost unwillingly. She could suddenly remember the entire length of "Oh Susannah" for the first time in many years! After "Oh Susannah" she found herself playing "I Had a Little Pony" and in rapid succession, two more songs, the titles of which she no longer remembered.

Removing the harmonica from her lips, Beth stared at it in wonder. All of her senses had reached a sharpness, an awareness, of a degree they had never before attained. She knew she could achieve anything now, the possibilities were endless. With a deep sense of peace, intermingled with determination, Beth knew she wouldn't remain a secretary much longer.

Grave Stone and Banyon
Rebecca Lee
Photograph

Sharolyn A. Oshiro

I stare at the bald baby and a bald man encased in teakwood and glass.

"That's the only picture of you and your grandfather."

Two pairs of pink gums in the photograph.

"Too bad he passed away when you were only three months old.

The emptiness seeps into my stomach. I turn away from the black and white photograph.

"You were the apple of his eye."

As a woman, I wonder. Would he still be proud of me if he knew about the lies I told my mother, and the beatings I gave my younger brother? Even from his grave he cradles me. His death enables him to know all of my secrets.

"Even after his heart attack, he still insisted on taking you walking in your stroller."

Loving a complete stranger is not difficult. The photograph gives me a face for the grandfather I can not remember. But the loneliness and fear stem from not knowing if he still loves me now.
Treasures

Patricia Martin

Star sapphire waves
caress tiger eye sand.
Salt plays
peek a boo
with the quiet wind.
Bleached white drift wood
and sea shells
paint mosaics along the shore.
Amber brown bodies
on fluorescent orange
boogie boards
aerial,
opal crested waves.
Big footprints
zig zag,
hop scotch,
and criss cross
a path
together,
in the sand.
Sea stars, sand castles,
smooth rainbow colored glass,
all treasures for a two year old.
Big hands hold little hands,
play tag with the diamond sea foam,
carry sea horses and a sea urchin child.
Sunset slumbers
with the little one;
only one set of footprints
on the crusty sand
walks
back to the belief
anchored deep
by the Hand of God
that Life
is a treasure to keep.
This Week's Strategy

Joey Vieira

Backpack slung over the shoulder and a nearly finished cigarette in the mouth, he moved toward an open stall, halfway across the whole lot and opposite the bar. Faded jeans, flannel shirt, and brown leather work boots combined with an unshaven face to give him the look of a construction worker. But he was no construction worker; no dirt, no grime, and no hardhat. He was some type of traveler. The city is full of them, halfway between here and there, and not exactly sure where and when it is going to change.

The row of men at the bar all saw him in the mirror, as they were accustomed to doing. A conversation between the bartender and a regular named Mike began.

"Hell Jim, look what the cat dragged in," muttered Mike as he turned halfway in his chair, as if to get a second look.

"Aw, don't let it bug ya, probably just stoppin' in for some coffee," replied Jim rather sympathetically. "Hell, you didn't look much better when your wife left you." They both chuckled. Not very loud, but loud enough...He heard them.

This evening's waitress, June, gave him a moment to get settled, then made her customary approach.

"What can I get ya?" she asked courteously.

"A job." The transient spoke with a soft smile.

"That's cute...now is there anything I can get you, that is, from the menu?"

"Can you tell me who is in charge?" he asked earnestly.

June sighed, she didn't exactly know why except that things were not going like they're supposed to. She then turned and started towards the bar. Jim had been watching the whole time. He lifted his chin in the air and squinted his eyes, as if he was an animal trying to pick up a scent.

"What's up with him?"

"He wants to see ya."

"Bout' what?"

"Didn't ask."

"Ah, why do I pay you anyway," he jokingly replied.

He began towards the table.

"Can I help you with somethin'," authoritatively spoke Jim.

The transient lifted his head, allowing for his eyes to meet those of Jim. "Got any work to be done for a meal," he questioned in a sincere voice.

"You kidding," barked Jim. "Buddy, this is the 90's. Ain't no barter system in action here." Jim spoke before he really knew what to say, and he hadn't answered the question.

"I don't mean to upset you sir, I just thought you might have some washin' or moppin' or somethin' like that." He was cut off.

"That what!" Jim was unsure why, but this whole trip was ticking him off. He had built a respectable place and here comes people like this looking for handouts.

"I don't want no handouts mister. I do anything. I just got to get through the week. Next week I got." He was cut off again.
"I don't want to hear it, everybody at that bar has got a story. I tell ya what, go grab the Pinesol from the locker next to the bathroom sink and grab the rubbish bins from behind the bar. You'll find a hose out the back door and a dumpster for the trash. But while you're in the bathroom, go ahead and clean it up."

"Thanks mister, I appreciate it."

"Don't thank me, I haven't given ya nothin' yet."

Jim returned to the bar, somewhat unnerved by the encounter. He wasn't used to being rude. And yet he felt it was the only way to play defense in those awkward situations. It still didn't mean that he liked it. It just couldn't get around on the street that he was handing out jobs.

He had been living at the level of sustenance till the plant announced its labor cut-backs. "Nothing personal," they said. His rent money ran thin, job opportunities were scarce, so he decided to head for the city. Well, a job finally came up, but not till the next week. With only $20 dollars left, it was going to be a long week. Strategy told him to find food and shelter...without paying for it.

After several people had been in to the toilets, the word had spread to the bar, and Jim didn't like the feedback he was getting. These guys were all one step away from the same predicament, yet they all felt so compelled to condone the transient and the stories of others like him.

He moved behind the bar and grabbed the two bins Jim pointed to. Meanwhile, some of the other customers eating their meals had also caught on to what was happening. Most of them had seen him come in, whether they cared to admit it. Some refused to look up from their meal, for fear of catching his eye, others out of indifference. And still others preferred to follow him with eyes like those of a cat, silent, observing; looking at his clothes, shoes, trying to form some theory about him, then checking the ones about themselves.

He placed the trash bins back in their place and met Jim's eyes again. "Is there anything else?"

"Naw, have a seat. I'll get you some grub."

"Much obliged sir," responded the transient. "I'm just going to go to the bathroom...get cleaned up."

The transient walked the length of the establishment. He could feel the eyes upon him, yet decided not to meet the stares and glances. He knew what they were thinking of him, and others like him. He found the sink and the mirror.

'These people...all so high and mighty. All with their respectable cubicles in society. All so damn respectable. Ha! They're no better than me. Or the vermin living in the wall space...stare like I had the plague. That's all they really have, individual wall space. Only going outside to join the damn rat-race. It's all survival, no difference. No matter how material, superficial or empty their lives get, it's all survival. Least I know where I stand...I ain't out to fool no one.

He returned to his stall and found Jim standing over a plate of food. "That there is an eight dollar dinner. Now you tell me where you can get work for eight dollars an hour whenever you feel like it."

"I'm much obliged sir," spoke the transient as he slid into the booth, eyes upon the food.

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"Haven't you got any pride, coming in here like this?"

The transient stopped looking at the food and once again lifted his head to look Jim in the eyes. "Sure I got pride mister. But your stomach gets so empty that it swallows it. And then it wants more. And then you ain't got nothin' to feed it. And that's when your goin' on something stronger than pride...it's called survival."

With those words he picked up his fork and began to eat.

The transient went back into the bathroom after he finished his meal and began washing up.

'Hmmm, where to sleep? Bus stop, train station, the park....no, not the park. There are shadows in the park. Just sleep in the open. Doesn't matter where, as long as the wind doesn't get ya. What if the cops hassle? Ah, get up and move on. Mornin' fore you know it.'

He went back to the bar and thanked Jim once again. He bummed a cigarette and went for the door. A multitude of eyes followed him. Some of their thoughts drifted out with him. They couldn't help it; imaginations run wild in the city.

It was only 9:30 and there were plenty of people on the street. But it didn't bother him, didn't even phase him in the least. For now he could stare back, for now he was one of them...for now.
Empty

Justin Shimizu


Westwinds 14
Poetry

Rachelle Fox

There is no form
in the relics of exhausted thoughts.
Language
never said anything
profound.
There is no beauty
sold this cheap.
There is no love
like poetry.

Richard's Passion

Rachelle Fox

If thy foot offendeth thee;
Richard took the hatchet
through his shin.
Hacked off his foot
a dirty shoe,
and threw his ankle on the ashes.
"Is my passion perfect, Lord?"
The doctor answered, "No,
maggots crawl in rotted flesh
to eat down to your soul."
If thy hand offendeth thee;
The healer hacked and sawed both legs off.
Richard's knees now
on the rubbish heap.
Stapled flesh to cover over chopped, raw,
open bone.
"The sharp cold chills like steel through
the hollow of my bones."
"Is my passion perfect, now?"
Puss oozed a silent yellow mud from
rusted staple holes.
Raw bone tore through the festered flesh.
"If thy heart offendeth thee"
Richard laid down what was left.
He made love to the tooth of a saw.

Identity Crisis

Rachelle Fox

She searches vacant mirrors,
a silver slash
like razor blades across her eyes.
The jagged glass reflected back
Richard's chopped off legs.
She will walk
on twisted paths, through broken glass
where some hearts wander by mistake
into the mess that scalpels make.
Wounded Apples

Jill Edwards

Red Ripe Apples, how did you come to be?

Why, grown on a tree in a field where
the animals roam free.

Why do you rest in buckets, in a row, like a team?

We fell to the ground and thought we were saved,
ready to be cleansed in the Wounded Knee stream.

My poor apples, you have sat here too long, beaten
by the winter sun. Your bruises are black and soft
to the touch. You ooze out pulp, and I dare not eat
you, nor take a gulp.

Nonsense! We are rare ripe apples you know nothing
about. All despise us from how we appear. Draw me
close you have nothing to fear!

I dare not. You're different from me. You're stuck in
a bucket with no chance to flee.

We are the apples you were once so curious about.
Little White Worm, surely you're free. Share
the peace and let us be.

You are waste, with no taste to share. Intruding on my
day and messing my land. I'll tip your bucket to and fro;
down, down, down the hill is where you'll go!

Why the crazed heart, Little White Worm?
We have done you no wrong on this long winter day.

No more, no more. You make me sick! I'll spit on you
and look away. Time to be tipped and placed in the gulch.
Bury you, bury you, bury, I will. Like red rotten bodies
heaped in a pile. I'll finish the job gladly, all with a smile.

Little White Worm, you have eaten your way to our
core, without even one bite. Damn you, White Worm!
How could you lie?

So, easy it was on this fine winter day, to watch you
Die! Now rest your head, and close that frozen eye.
Even on your deathbed, you are a pest and question thee.
A Fine Little White Worm, Harmless like me.

Westwinds 16
Class Acts

Brenda Harrington

It is Saturday afternoon at the Mt. Pleasant Country Club. Four ladies, each a monument to the ingenuity of designers and plastic surgeons, sit erect in their chairs at the bridge table. The total net worth at this table exceeds three hundred million, and the four women, Kitty Barnes, Maggie Winthrop, Peggy Knowles, and Suzy Kimball, secure in the knowledge of their power at Mt. Pleasant, are thoroughly autopsying a couple at the next table.

Kitty, possessor of the highest dollar figure at the table, leads the conversation. "I know we're desperate for new bridge players, but maintaining the standards of the club is paramount." She frowns at her cards and bids, "One club."

"Pass," Peggy answers and continues, "I saw them at the airport last week. Their luggage is definitely imitation Gucci and her furs look like they were sewn in Taiwan."

Maggie smirks and a small laugh escapes her lips. "I wouldn't appear in court to collect higher alimony in a fur sewn in Taiwan. One spade."

"They seem to dress well other than that," Suzy offers hopefully, "and he's wearing a genuine Rolex. Two hearts."

"Have you seen their daughter?" Kitty interjects. "They're giving her debut at the Starlight benefit and gala in May. She'll probably appear in a lovely shade of lilac with hair to match. Two spades."

"Pass," Peggy answers. "You're right, Kitty, I saw her at the tennis club recently. She'll have to learn to dance without roller skates and miniature headphones in her ears."

"Their clothes are strictly Calvin Klein and Liz Clairborne, Suzy," Maggie answers to the earlier comment, "and they drive a BMW." Her own silk Schiaparelli rustles and her fingers wink like tiny pink Christmas trees over her cards. "Four spades."

"Nevertheless," Suzy states, "we must make a decision on their admittance to the club. Our number of bridge players is seriously low and they do play a good game."

Kitty sighs, "They don't even have nicknames, we'll have to assign them some, of course. All in favor say 'aye.'"

Unanimous ayes chorus from all sides of the table. Suzy claps her hands delightedly, "Yuppies in our club, why I think it will be great fun."

"Two spades."
Back (1982)

Shuntaro Tanikawa
translated by
Kazumi Nishihara

Your eyes glisten.
Your mouth pours out words.
Your hand is on mine.
But
when you look away,
I see the back of your neck,
so vulnerable and quiet,
like something separate from you.

Deep in a forest
where no one goes,
pure water moistens dead leaves on the ground.

You can't see it,
and that
belongs to me.
Someday,
even if you turn your back
and refuse me,
I hope to hear your anguish
in that obstinate silence.

Like weeds in the dark praying for sunshine,
your back longs for tenderness.

Your silence bonds me to you
stronger than the vows
we will make tomorrow.

Revolution

Margarita Isabelle

Cauliflower clouds wrinkle daylight. Fuchsia stalks
a volcanic red sunset. Yesterday fuses with tomorrow.

Grey talons clutch the horizon. Dread
tiptoes up my spine.
I inch toward another night.

A dim flame whispers, "Stay."
Dusk cowers, and day plunges into indigo.

An icy white moon winks at Orion. Castor
dances with Pollux.
I see the way to dawn.
Sun sinking earthward
as waves rush to the shore to die, night chases day.

Kamaka, Are We Blessed?
Diane Marshall
Sisters
Laurence Skow

Sonya: What a terrible maid we have here. She never keeps our litter boxes clean!
Gwen: Well, I know I won't clean it! Too much work!
S: Oh, you! As long as you get your cat chow, you could care less about the rest!
G: Remember, there is always the tub if you have to go...
Ruby: Don't say that! The tub is for Mom to use, and to take showers!
S: Shut up nerd! We are in the middle of something here!
R: Why do you always call me names? You are so m...
S: Be quiet! I am the queen here, and nobody interrupts me!
R: I see she got up on the wrong side of the litter box again.
G: She is always that bitchy in the morning! I wonder why this time.
S: Well, if you have to know. The maid kept rolling on me all night. Usually, I wake her in the middle of the night because I know she hates that. But last night she kept waking me up.
R: You are so mean. Why would you want to be so mean to Mom?
S: Just because I feel like it!
G: You just like to show her what a brat you can be.
S: Look who is talking: the meat robber!
G: Well, you know I'll do anything for food!
S: Well then, I am not a brat. I am the queen, and don't you dare call me names again!
R: You need to go in the corner, and think about the mean things you do!
S: Well, well! You should shut up. All you can do is kiss up to the maid!
R: I don't do that! I just want Mom to know that I love her!
S: What do you call kneading on her lap, and licking her hands? I watch you, nerd!
G: Well, so much for conversation! I have to go get some chow. I hate to start the day with an empty stomach.
S: Yeah! Go chow down chubby! After stealing the pork roast last night, I thought you would never be able to walk again.
G: Don't kid yourself! That was just a snack!
S: You are a disgrace! Look at yourself! Your belly is so huge that it sweeps the floor!
R: Leave her alone! She is happy being fat. You should be glad to be living in this house. We are lucky to have a mom as kind and gentle as we do!
S: I have had enough of the two of you. I wish I were the only child in this family!
G: Chill out babe! We love you, even though you are a pain!
R: I need Mom. I am going to tell her all the mean things you do and say about her.
S: I think I am going to be sick! All this mushy stuff makes me nauseous!
G: Ciao, babes! I'll see you after my nap.
Yard Sale

Kim Walker

"O.K., kids, today's the day of our big adventure. Good! You're all dressed. Now don't get dirty. Brush those teeth really good. That cavity can't be helped, so it will be our little secret. Look at you two. What handsome little men. I won't have any problems at all! I've got the tables and chairs set up outside. We are ready for those early bargain hunters. Look! A car. Smile! Smile! Funny, I know they see our sign. They are still not stopping. Wait! Here comes a car and it's stopping. Smile, boys! He's rolling down the window; what is he saying? Why am I selling my kids? Because silly, they didn't come with a receipt. No receipt, no return."

King of my Heart

Brenda Harrington

I had been concerned for some time about the state of Jeffery's mental health. During our last trip to the mountains for a Sunday picnic, he had danced shirtless on garbage cans, a daisy placed strategically in his navel, while I laughed helplessly in spite of my embarrassment.

Later in the day, I had been forced to alert the forest rangers when he disappeared for an alarming length of time and my own search for him had proven fruitless. The rangers discovered him at the top of a hill in a serene, yoga-like position, holding a serious conversation with a deity or deities unknown.

However, it wasn't until he took me to the Guild to see the film "King of Hearts" that I became convinced he was psychotic. Crazies in circus garb danced ludicrously across the screen while Jeffery watched, fascinated. He had a peculiar insight into each of the characters portrayed in the film. Each one except the single sane character, Alan Bates, whom I came to identify with.

Jeffery's eyes shone with excitement and his voice throbbed with energy as we left the theater. "Will you marry me, Susan?" He asked, soulfully.

I stood naked and helpless, bird cage in hand, at the doorway to his fatal charm..."Yes, Jeffery," I replied. "I will."
Her Dance

Rachelle Fox

unravels in ease.
Spotlight eyes flash back in the dark.
She reveals herself, to tease
you seekers, in windows and mirrors
for tits, ass, and tits and moving hips.
Eyes like searchlights in rescue of drowned swimmers,
for bobbed up heads, some skin.
Blind seamen eyes
don't see me, she thinks, removing her top.
You sit and sigh and crane, anticipate
mother's nipples, pointed breasts,
or mountain scenes.
"Ah, oh, love to love you baby. Oh."
She turns it over for you to see.
You look for shore, land, some clouds that will still
your horizons, a frozen smile.
Her pubic bone floats up and up under your nose.
Nothing in your eyes, remind her
of the eyes, she lost.
She unwraps the rags that covers a scar,
exposing her empty heart.
Stripped down to the bone.
Strangers meet and pass invisible
to the dance.

Westwinds 22
ovaries

ccv

I should charge for the fucking peep show
their two heads peer into my cunt
ice picks stab my uterus
stop the bleeding
I feel pain when I fuck

they don't ask

when I come she's gone
he's tired
and we fight
I still don't think they're fucking
but I don't bitch

It's easier for him to jack off
that angry smile
he sits there
hiding in his fucking shell
his words like razor blades
poke holes in it

why die happy
watch me bleed to death
words flip from my tongue
fuck this
bitching again

I don't want to pet someone's dick
I want to heal this pain

define bitching

puke all these words
in the middle of another mistake
I trip over mundane marriage
I want out
rip the cellophane from my lungs
I don't know when I'm happy

black bugs eat my ovaries
my house
me, a cubby hole scattered with used condoms
bitch, a female dog in heat
fuck that

I want
I don't want
no means yes
I don't want to fuck
how does it feel to be happy
silence, self
I want to feel this pain

go wash my fleas

Westwinds 23
Ku Ka Nani 'O Waipi'o (1)

J. Maunakea-Kanehailua

Eia no makou e ku me ka mahalo
Ka pulapula 'o Papahanaumoku (2)
E ho'ike mai ia makou
I na mea huna no'eau
O keia 'aina komohana
Ku ka nani 'o Waipi'o.

We remain with respect
The seedlings of our Earth-bearing-mother
She reveals to us
The knowledge concealed
Of this land that enters the sea
Majestic is the beauty of Waipi'o.

Aia 'o Halaulani (3) i uka
Kau no me ka lei 'anuenue
Kahali 'alale (4)
Piliwale a Kumuhonua (5)
E ho'oku'ikahi
Ku ka nani 'o Waipi'o.

A Heavenly abode in the uplands
Adorned with a rainbow wreath
Stirs a remembrance of a loved one
That clings close to the source of life
Unified as one
Majestic is the beauty of Waipi'o.

I ka wa kapu 'ohi'a'ai
Nui ka na'auao o Papa (6)
He makana a Lono (7)
Ola no ka lahui Hawai'i
Amama, ua noa.
Ku ka nani 'o Waipi'o.

In the time of the mountain-apple taboo
The chief Papa was wise
Gifts to Lono
Gave life to the people
The taboo is lifted, peace.
Majestic is the beauty of Waipi'o.

(1) This oli inoa or name chant is written for this ahupua'a (land division usually extending from the uplands to the sea) of Waipi'o, of which West O'ahu is part of.
(2) Papahanaumoku is the originator of the 'aina and its people, according to Hawaiian tradition.
(3) Halaulani was the home of Waipi'o chiefs. The actual site is approximately 2 miles northeast of West O'ahu.
(4) Kahali'alale was renowned for his skill in spear-throwing, he came from Lihu'e, O'ahu and the chiefly line of Lo. Two places were named in honor of his skill, demonstrated in Waipi'o, and they are Kapahu (the thrust) and Hanapouli (making a darkness).
(5) Piliwale a Kumuhonua was the family line who was joined to Kahali'alale when he won a chiefess through a spear-throwing competition at Halaulani.
(6) Papa was a high chief of Waipi'o who enforced the Kapu 'ohi'a'ai during the time of famine. His people weren't allowed to eat their crops until an offering of food and prayers were made to Lono.
(7) Lono is the god of fertility, not only of agriculture but of procreation of man as well.
Waimanalo Sunset
Rebecca Lee
Between mother and men

ccv

dolphin bodies,
aqua blue fluorescent
dolphin bodies

on the bottom

I touch my brink
between mother & men

I taste her listening
"I can help you"

Tadpoles swim on my lips

Translucent tentacles
"tell me"

I suck on his cross

"I can tell you"

he melts
jelly fish harmony

"I can help you tell me."

White Rocks

Rachelle Fox

crackle,
cool blue flames lick up the sides.
A bowl of glass rocks back and back
gently cradles in his hand.
Oil drips like bitter tears
to swirl up and up in smoky lullaby.
He sucks it slow
to fill his hollow blistered lungs.
The smoke soothes over,
cracked and jagged nerves.
His eyes gone out,
black holes
cling like silent ghosts.
A human face,
severed from a soul.
I look for him
between the night
and window screen.
The moon appears
Suffering.
The Artist

Caryl Nishioka

He stands majestic on the big stage
In black leather pants, white frilled shirt,
His chest exposed to willing girls.
The frontman-so handsome, so alone.

The crowd gets wild as the lights dim,
He begins reciting his words of art,
On and on he chants with a hint of rage,
Gyrating his shyness in harmony with song.

He croons on about women, love, and flames,
While lust and desire erupt in the hall,
Lights shine down on his radiant presence
He is SEX- pure, untamed and raw.

All who have come are there to see him,
His antics are one of a lunatic-
Screaming and howling, he's fiery mad,
Yet as gentle as the rain at night.

The artist is lonely, he dreams of death
Sitting quietly, now, he's most destructive,
Loved by many, yet feels so unloved,
Crying out to no one, while no one hears.

Death or the end, his true friend
Sadness greets his fragile soul;
Where does truth lie and peace live?
He had so much more to give.

It was the sixties, it was his time,
When peace and love was peace of mind,
Remembered often as "Lizard King,"
Oh, what I'd give to have heard him sing-
To me...
Little Boy Big Tree

Jill Edwards

Young Deganawidah approached the beautiful elm tree in the thick of the forest. It had branches that sprouted out towards the moon, the sun, the earth below and the stars in the sky.

"Oh, Beautiful Elm Tree, last night I dreamt of the great buffalo and saw them stampeding the hills to the west," exclaimed Deganawidah. The elm tree replied with a rustling of his leaves. A few fell on Deganawidah's full head of velvet black hair.

"My people are running out of food. It would be a great honor to find the mighty buffalo herds for my people. I would be a hero and maybe even get my own pony." The young scout began dancing around the elm's enormous trunk, on his imaginary pony. The elm swayed back and forth, moving his long branches in a swooping motion, causing a flurry of leaves to flutter in the air.

"Oh, Beautiful Elm, I have come to you for help. I want to see if my dream was for real. If I were able to climb your beautiful branches, I would be able to see the rolling hills and find the great buffalo." The great elm had listened and in one big gentle motion the elm embraced the young scout in his branches and cradled him high into the sky, so high the clouds blinded Deganawidah.

The clouds rolled by and Deganawidah gasped for air. He could see the whole earth, he thought. Right before his very eyes were the rolling hills, covered with hundreds of black dots. Those dots were the mighty buffalo!

Deganawidah was so thrilled he threw up his arms in joy and gave a loud cheer. What he also did was lose his balance and start falling fast towards the forest floor, the branches tossing him around like a ball, and his little body slammed against the tree with such force. The great elm took one of his largest branches blanketed with leaves and caught Deganawidah.

The young scout swung from the branch and dropped to the forest floor. His deerskin moccasins were hanging from two different branches, but he paid no attention. He sprinted towards the camp, stunned by what had happened. He never thanked the great elm.

His little voice carried all throughout the camp, with cries that he had seen the great buffalo. "The buff, buffalo, I saw the buffalo. Quick get the horses we must go!"

Wandering Elk came out of his dwelling to see who was hollering. He was Deganawidah's grandfather, as well as one of the chiefs. He began to speak. "Young Deganawidah, what is this about the buffalo?"

"I saw them, Grandfather, on the hills. The great elm helped me," replied the young scout. A few of the older boys snickered at Deganawidah's claims, but stopped quickly. Wandering Elk ordered them to get ready for the great hunt. The boys scurried away to get the supplies ready.

Wandering Elk approached Deganawidah and praised him. "You have done a good thing for your people. I will allow you to ride along with the hunting party." Deganawidah ran to help the older boys, and his mother painted his face with colors that honored the hunting spirits.

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The young men and the horses were decorated with colors and their feathers of all kinds shifted in the breezy day. They made their way towards the mouth of the forest listening to the chants of the people thanking the creator for blanketing the land with the mighty buffalo.

The hunting party rode their horses further away, over the grassy hills towards the trees. "What has happened to the forest? All the trees have shed their leaves like tears. I do not understand," exclaimed one of the young men.

"Without their covering the buffalo will see us coming. Have their hearts been broken?" cried Mad Bear.

Deganawidah could not say anything. The lump in his throat was only getting bigger. He knew he had betrayed the great elm. "This is all my fault. I only wanted to help and I forgot to thank our friend, Beautiful Elm. I have failed all of you." Deganawidah hung his head low and rode his gray mare away into the sunset.

The young scout rode until he could only see a dim ray of light behind the hills. He began shivering and knew he needed to find shelter fast. He led the gray mare to a stream and found a grassy bed to rest on. He cried himself to sleep.

A voice whispered into Deganawidah's ear, "You are still young, Deganawidah, and you haven't realized that you hold a great power. My son, you are the prophet of the Iroquois. This is how you came to find the buffalo. You are the only one who can save the forest."

The young scout began speaking in a groggy voice. "But how? How?" He woke up startled and looked around but he could not see anything in the dark. He began to weep and cry out to the mother earth for help.

A breeze began to rustle the leaves and the soft voice echoed through the breeze. "Deganawidah, find your way back to the one you hurt and there you will find your answer."

The young scout replied, "I have hurt so many, but I know the great elm is the one I hurt the most." He mounted the gray mare and headed towards the hollow forest. He came to the lifeless great elm and pondered what to do next.

"Beautiful Elm, I came to you as a friend yesterday morning, and now I am an enemy. The Great Creator blanketed the earth with you and I betrayed nature. My heart hurts when I look at all the leaves on this ground. It is not their time to fall." He grabbed a handful of leaves and stared into the frosty dark. "If I toss the leaves up to you, will you promise to grab them with your great branches?" He tossed the leaves high into the air, but they did not even come near the towering elm.

The forest remained silent and Deganawidah felt terribly alone. He dragged himself over to the gray mare and rested his head on a piece of deerskin cloth in the middle of the horse's back. He looked up at the elm and noticed something very curious. A lone butterfly was weaving in and out of the branches. This gave him an idea. Deganawidah grabbed the deerskin cloth and tied the four corners together to make a sack.

He dropped to his knees and began shoving leaves into the sack until it could hold no more. He grasped the sack between his teeth and walked towards the great elm. He began inching his way up the tree. The sap from the tree clung to his clothes like honey and the skin on his bare belly burned from rubbing against the rough bark.

"Oh, my Beautiful Elm, I am your friend and will help you. Please embrace me with your branches." The great elm gave no reply. Deganawidah began to panic. "What would
happen if I fell? The great elm would not wake up to catch me."

Deganawidah took a look down. He could not believe his eyes. His gray mare looked no bigger than a dog. His mouth ached from holding the sack, but he knew if he dropped it, he would have to start all over again. He gripped even tighter with his teeth and headed for a long branch that stretched out way over the earth. "That will be a good place to rest." The young scout held on tight to the great elm and swung his leg over the branch. He pulled the rest of his body onto the branch with all his might. He released the sack from his mouth and took a moment to catch his breath.

"I am bringing you a present, Great Elm, but now I must rest. "Deganawidah leaned his head against the tree and put his arms around it, giving the tree a warm hug. His eyes slid shut like a window and his little body looked limp leaning against the tree. A bird flew by and startled the young scout. He slowly opened his eyes and felt aches all over. Deganawidah arched his back to smooth out the kinks. He knew any sudden move could prove dangerous. He carefully placed his feet on the big branch, not noticing that his foot had slipped into one of the sack holes. The young scout reached down to grab the sack and gave it a good tug. He slowly slipped his foot out, but the sack tipped to the side of the branch and slid off. Deganawidah lunged towards the sack. He was left with nothing but air between his fingers. He reached out for a nearby branch and clung to it like a caterpillar. He watched the leaves drift out of the sack but was so high up he could not see if they touched the ground.

"I am very scared, Great Elm, but sad as well, because now I have lost your gift!" Deganawidah said in a soft voice.

"You have spoken too soon my little friend!" A voice whisked in and out of the trees. Deganawidah could not believe his ears and eyes. The trees were covered with thick shimmering leaves. The village was not visible anymore from the great elm. Beautiful Elm extended his puffy branch out to the young scout and gently brought him down to the forest floor. Deganawidah found the empty sack and his gray mare nearby.

"Deganawidah, you are not the only one who has forgotten how important we are, and will not be the last."

---

Little Boy Big Tree
Jill Edwards

Westwinds 31
Wake Up Call

Tony Chalk

Two greed driven sons of millionaires, murder the parents for inheritance.

*Inner city children are routinely murdered for sneakers.*

60 people are killed in an attack on Sarajevo and the U.N. risks war to prevent further bloodshed.

*15,000 die from handgun violence annually in America.*

The early California 1994 earthquake killed 66 people and is said to be the worst natural disaster in American History.

*Violent crime is the leading cause of death among African-American youth.*

Nancy Kerrigan gets whacked on the knee at the U.S. National Figure Skating Championships, and the event turns the Winter Olympics into an international soap opera.

*AIDS is now the leading cause of death among young Caucasian males in America.*

Who decides what is news?

Why is there no sense of immediacy for the real problems in our country today?

Why are people still naive enough to say "I never thought it could happen to me" and why do they never care until it does?
Party

Bobbie Spencer

Musty dead flowers lay limp. Wine stained clothes, half-filled cans of beer, empty plates and cups. Ashtrays filled with mounds of burnt cigarettes. The incense of stale smoke . . . He scurries around the dimly lit room. There must be a drag or two left in one of the ashtrays.

The morning light, filled with golden yellow rays, is illuminating the glistening white sand. All along the coast, a mist of salt. Round small speckled white crabs race back and forth, tracing a silent pattern on the soft smooth virgin beach.

Beyond the reef, dark menacing clouds hang low over the powerful magnificent waves. As they climb to reach the sun, a reflection of translucent blue can be seen under the heavy white foam that pounds onto the jagged reef.

Cigarette hanging from his bottom lip, he calls. She walks out to the cold damp beach where he is standing. "Look," he yells. "The water deep and dark is being sucked out past the reef!" The thundering wave rose above the dark clouds. Beyond the reef, a dolphin jumped frantically.

Her stomach is doing a fast Mexican jumping hat dance. Every nerve in her body is short circuiting. Her eyes are in a hypnotic daze as she gasps. "Run!" she screams, "Tidal wave!"

As he turns to run, the cigarette falls from his mouth. Fright and fear race through his mind. Where to run? What was high enough to escape this wave?

The old concrete bunker! As a child he had played countless hours of pretend, in the safety of the old box that was built into the side of a mountain which stood across the street from his house.

He motions her to follow him as he scrambles along the rocky trail which leads to the bunker. Climbing higher up the mountain, sounds of cracking, smashing, ripping water fills the air. The old monkeypod tree that stood in the front yard is now in splinters. As they look down, splashing, choppy dirty water is everywhere. Black night covers them as they huddle on top of the old bunker.

Soon the sound of propeller blades hover above them. Dawn is breaking as the helicopter flies across the brightly jeweled horizon. Looking down from the helicopter the treacherous waves drift in dancing ripples.

Still trembling, they walk into the evacuation center, the delicious aroma of Portuguese sausage and eggs sizzling in the frying pan, fills the air. The clattering of cups and rain falling gently against the metal roof announces a message of peace and safety.
Food

Jimmy Becera

I'll break a bottle of wine on your skull,
and open your wounds with an oven fire.
I'd kill for some really good scalloped potatoes.
Control and give the Middle Finger to all other thoughts.
Don't velcro me out of the rugged floor.
Spicy, barbecued-rotisserie chickens are dead.
Why the long silence? They will not escape me.
A completely baked loaf of garlic bread is
as dear as a bowl of Picadillo soup.
I need all my vegetables cooked.
Words penetrate, but don't accept the words
"sleep disorder" together.
It's like putting the words "avoid" and "lasagna" together.
Dijon mustard-dipped croissanwiches and meatball submarines
tell me that all salad bars must be defecated in the toilets of Hell.
I sleep 4-to-500 hours.
I can still sleep for 17 or 27 hours straight.
The poetry of your habits erases my sentence.
You're askin' me if I'm clear with my sub-conscious sins?
The kitchen is in my mind.
Musical Chairs

Patricia Martin

She had a solid gold metronome for a heart. She measured every beat of her children's lives. She was the maestro. She controlled when the final aria of the opera be sung. The maestro set the stage, created the timber for the absolute music that was heard.

The age of the child was unimportant. Being on time, in tune, in sync with the drama of the musical score, was how their lives were conducted. Over and over they practiced until the thirty second note of perfect harmony was heard. The beat of their lives change to reverberate the maestro's dissonance mood. She drummed an octave and one into their minds and hands. Polished pieces, benches and faces were her forte. The children knew to keep in double time for the maestro.

The maestro stood poised with a thin, black, wire-wrapped baton. She could strike the leg of the podium with the precision of a staccato note. Dressed in their Easter best, ready to play in the pit, the children watched the maestro's every move. The children knew to keep in time for her. No one was given a program, or sheet of music to follow. Their lives were played by ear.

Soprano and bass echoed in the chambers of the children's hearts. Bodies shook and glass shattered as high notes were hit in the opera of their lives. The audience watched with blind adoration, the performance the maestro orchestrated, in the melodrama of her children's lives.

The children became so finely tuned that every note, song or melody was in perfect time to the beat of her metronome heart. The children became artisans in playing unfinished symphonies.

Then came the inspiration of all time, the greatest aria ever written, a standing ovation for the maestro's perfect performance, brought to climax with her postlude: She does her orchestrating to the song of Circe, on a harp, at the Gates of Hell.

And her children, always on time, now dance and play in complete harmony at pagan drumming rituals on the Island of Crete, being careful not to miss a beat.
Florida September

Joseph Maher

Through the proscenium nature
raises its curtain.
Panes tremble with the drubbing
of distant thunder,
While the ocean whirls into a
foamy, milky white.

Skies darken, turning a
dismal eerie gray.
Air once stagnant and humid
now howls with
Malicious, fearful laughter.

Palms crook painfully tormented,
near surrender they
Refuse submission, fighting on.

Exploding bright illuminations penetrate
through the hail
Inducing shadow in the
uninvited, premature darkness.

A single sea gull sails
suspended by the
Gust, he goes nowhere.

Motionless, I stand watching
nature's powerful exhibition.
Compelled by its virtue
I realize it is

A Beautiful Day!
The Tide

Caryl Nishioka

As I sit on the empty shore,
I look up and hear the lonely
Cry of a sea gull flying overhead.
"The wind is kind today," I say
To myself as I close my eyes.
In my thoughts I see the deep
Blue ocean with her waves slowly
Creeping towards my feet buried in sand.
Upon opening my eyes, my hand gently
Reaches up to the sky overhead
To feel breezes of the soft above.
The sun is out still, almost ready
To set on her body of blue.
I wait for the day to come
When I look up and see you.

Untitled

Robert Yokoyama

with charm
I crawl but an inch
with ability
I walk to one corner
with talent
I run for a short time
with effort
I soar above the earth
Am I an Existentialist?

Stephen Lortz

Am I an existentialist? Or should the question be, do I consider myself an existentialist? At this point I am still lost amidst the objectivity/subjectivity of the definition of an existentialist, so I will give my subjective answer while hoping that some of the notions I present appear objective, or at least somewhat understandable.

I am not a Kierkegaardian, or a Nietzschian, or a Sartian, but I would say that I am an existentialist, insofar as I believe one's existence does precede one's essence, that one is conscious of and responsible for the choices one makes, and that whatever lies beyond death cannot be answered with any certainty. Thus, looking at the surface of existentialism, I may say that I feel I am an existentialist; however once I begin to analyze each particular philosopher of existentialism, I find that I cannot wholly equate myself with any of them. In fact, by virtue of being an existentialist, wouldn't it be contradictory to say that I adhere strictly to Kierkegaard's or Nietzsche's personal brand of philosophy?

So I suppose I am an existentialist, but a "Lortzian" existentialist. I must admit it seems quite pretentious of me to place my name among those of the greatest existentialist thinkers of all time. But then again, what are they going to do about it? They're dead! (A little existentialist humor there.)

The Lortzian existentialist is defined as such: (1) my existence precedes my essence. Whatever I make of myself is exactly that--what "I" make of myself. I don't feel as though I've had a course in life laid out for me by some Divine being. There is no natural universal order which I must discover and follow. I agree with Heidegger's statement that "we are thrown into the world." Thus, existing under no "Grand Scheme," I have the power to do and be what I wish.

I realize there are certain aspects of my existence which I had no power to determine, such as my physical and emotional characteristics, and the family I was born into; but these particulars of my existence are merely coincidental. I realize further that these particulars have influenced my life and continue to do so. Some of these compelling forces may be stronger or weaker, and I may be more aware of some influences and less of others. For example, I was born an American, of German, Japanese, Okinawan, Irish and English racial ancestry, and I notice, or sometimes fail to notice, the influence of my racial background in my choices. It is here where I run into a slight problem if I am to objectively call myself an existentialist. How far should an existentialist be willing to go in questioning the authenticity of his choice? Must I chart out all of the possible influences surrounding a decision to make sure that the choice I make is entirely my own? Surely, I couldn't be called an existentialist if I was simply led by my influences. Or maybe I can call myself an existentialist as long as I "feel" like I'm making my own choices. But if that is the case, then everyone could say they are an existentialist, just as Kierkegaard pointed out that everybody can call themselves a Christian through the approximation of the doctrine. Can there be any objectivity to the definition of existentialism? It seems as though it is necessary for an existentialist to go against the norm to be considered an existentialist; otherwise, one appears to others as just another cow in the "herd."

Personally, I haven't made any terrific breaks from what I would consider the steady
path my life has progressed on. I come from a military family. My parents provided in me a
diversity of races, and as a result of my fragmentary racial background, I don't feel akin to
any racial culture. It doesn't bother me that I have no cultural identity. It makes me stronger
as an individual. I look at people who say they are proud to be Black, or White, or Oriental,
and I think they are ridiculous. What did they actually accomplish by being born Black, or
White, or Oriental? It's like saying, "I'm proud because I won the lottery!" At the most, one
can feel fortunate to have been born into a certain race, but certainly not proud of that
coincidence. Since I have this belief about race, and one can see that it runs complementary
to my upbringing, am I really making an existentialist choice? I may say to myself that I
chose to hold this belief of my own accord, but an outside observer might say I was being
ddictated by my lack of racial identity.

Once again, it's a matter of perspective as to whether I am an existentialist. The
problem here is that I'm trying to stick to an objective definition of existentialism, but the
objective definition consists of subjective requirements. Because of this objectivity/subjectivity
bind, I can't understand why Kierkegaard criticized Hegel's attempt to systematize philosophy.
If that was Hegel's subjective pursuit in life (even if it meant not recognizing himself within
his system), and truth is subjective, then Hegel lived up to his truths. If Kierkegaard was
saying that people shouldn't try to follow Hegel's systematizing line of thinking, then
Kierkegaard himself is trying to establish a kind of objective truth, which is precisely what he
is speaking against. It's as though objectivity and subjectivity are two sides of the same coin
of existentialism, spinning perpetually in the air—one can never call it heads or tails. I
suppose if I'm defining the Lortzian existentialist, I can make the tenets of this philosophy
whatever I want.

Clawing my way to the second defining point of the Lortzian existentialist, (2) I am
responsible for the choices I make. Since I feel that my life is not predestined, that I have the
freedom to make my own decisions, then I should be held accountable for those decisions. If
I am to make responsible choices, then I should be aware of all the factors involved. Like I
stated previously, sometimes I'm more conscious of what bears on a decision, and other times
I may be oblivious. Often, I won't stop and evaluate an entire situation and its possible
choices. I resort to my "default settings." Sometimes I may follow the herd if I am pressured,
or compromise to achieve a goal, or maybe I'll just go with what feels natural. I suppose
when it comes to matters of seeming importance, then I may force myself to know more
about the possible effects and reasons for a choice. Maybe it might be said that I am a
"moderate existentialist." I'm not one who constantly brews over every decision and my
reasons behind the choices I make. I do so on occasion, but there is no logical system
surrounding this. Regardless of whether or not I realize the underlying reasons regarding a
certain choice, if I make the choice, then I have to be responsible for and accept whatever
consequences it may bring, whether it be feelings of guilt, happiness, sadness, anger, or
whatever.

The last ingredient of the Lortzian existentialist is, (3) faith in the idea that whatever
may lie beyond death cannot be known with any reasonable amount of certainty.

I am an agnostic with a leaning towards atheism. I would call myself an atheist, but I
can't honestly say that I am absolutely sure there is no God. I have a "feeling" that there isn't
a God just as other people have a feeling there is. Kierkegaard was right in saying that the
existence of God cannot be objectively proven. This is why I view people who say that they know for a fact that God exists as liars or fools.

Although many people look down upon agnostics by labeling them as indecisive or as trying to play it safe, I see my uncertainty as being a choice in itself. I've made a commitment to non-commitment. When I die, if it turns out I was wrong, that there is a God that expected me to worship Him or that there is some other plan to my existence that I didn't correctly follow, then I will suffer the consequences.

Thus, the Lortzian existentialist is, as of the time of my writing this paper, defined as one who believes that existence precedes essence, that we are responsible for our choices, and that what lies beyond our current existence cannot be known for sure. Of course, all of these clauses are subject to change under the request of the owner. Kierkegaard stated, "subjectivity in the extreme leads to madness." Upon completion of this paper, I believe (humorously) that just thinking about subjectivity in the extreme can lead to madness! It was an unexpected task to try to define my existentialism while looking at some of the other existentialists for some sort of consensus, since the core of existentialism is almost diametrically opposed to it. Subjectivity throws it all to the wind.
Dark Presence

(a barroom ballad)

Margarita Isabelle

Ah, the buxom bartendress covets the singer
whose voice rings clear and pure.
Last call, bar doors close, but he lingers.
Her smile entices, her body excites, her eyes allure.
His wife, dear thing, is too demure,
and his life is a bit of a bore.
Bartendress, singer, leap high for my lure!
I crave your weakness. Give me more.

Ah, prim accountant, you point a finger
that has juggled the books for sure.
While the bartendress and singer
writhe brashly in passion and furor
you program the computer, black deeds to obscure.
By now you've cleared a grand, maybe more.
Accountant, heed my call, come to me; rest assured
I crave your weakness. Give me more.

Ah, the owners scream in the parking lot—a harbinger
of death to come, sickness too deep to cure.
Drug dealers scatter, doormen duck, the grenade bringer
pulls the pin and releases the pressure.
Cars explode, bodies fly, concrete fissures!
Owners, dealers, doormen, whores--
dance to my tune, keep my spirit secure.
I crave your weakness. Give me more.

Greed and lust, foul thoughts without censure--
feed my hunger, replenish my store.
I abide in these timbers and prey like a vulture.
I crave your weakness. Give me more!
Desolation Trail
Sandra Stoddard

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Conversation with a Dead Grandmother

Sharolyn A. Oshiro

Akemi: Eh, Gramma. I brought you some red anthuriums and yellow chrysanthemums. Hey...who brought you mochi? Looks new. Does your headstone act like an antenna to Heaven? Can you hear me talking to you Gramma? I hope you can. If you're able to hear me, then maybe I'll be able to hear you too. Shit, I really miss you - I wish you were right in front of me.

Grandmother: You shouldn't swear like that. It doesn't sound nice on pretty girls like you.

Akemi: If I close my eyes, I really can hear you. You're probably telling me to stop saying "shit."

Grandmother: You're such a nice girl Akemi. It doesn't look nice to hear all those pilau words. You really shouldn't talk like that.

Akemi: Yup, I can hear you all right.

Grandmother: Aren't you cold? You should wear a jacket.

Akemi: A jacket! Gramma, this is summertime. Who wears a jacket in the middle of a hot, hot afternoon?

Grandmother: But your top - so revealing.

Akemi: What! No it is not!

Grandmother: You should at least cover your shoulders. Does your mother know you dress like that?

Akemi: What are you talking about? My mom is the one who bought this top for me! And it is NOT revealing!

Grandmother: Somehow, I don't think your father would approve of you wearing that kind of clothes.

Akemi: Why not? My dad doesn't care what I wear. The only thing he tells me is not to let my tits hang out.

Grandmother: Shh! Don't talk like that. Shame you know, such a nice girl...

Akemi: What! What about nice girls? Such a nice girl like me that what?

Grandmother: You could get raped you know.

Akemi: Gramma, this is not a revealing top!

Grandmother: Don't shame your family now. Be a good girl.

Akemi: Gramma...

Grandmother: I remember when you were a little girl. So sassy and so cute. But you always listened to me. And now you're a young lady, now you don't listen.

Akemi: That's the whole point Gramma, I'm not a baby anymore but you treat me as if I am. And I do listen to you, I'm listening to you right now...and what if I'm a young lady? What does that mean?

Grandmother: That's why, don't get raped. You have to watch-out you know.

Akemi: I don't understand. I never could understand. You told me when I was 12 years old not to get raped and now, 10 years later, you're telling me again.

Grandmother: I tell you again 'cause you don't listen. You should wear a jacket.

Akemi: I already told you why I don't want to wear a jacket. It's hot. And do you really...
think that a jacket is going to stop some asshole who really wants to rape me?
Grandmother: Such pilau words.
Akemi: We are not talking about my swearing.
Grandmother: Nice girls don't talk like that.
Akemi: Ohhh yes they do. Gramma, you don't understand. Girls now-a-days are not the same as when you were growing up.
Grandmother: I know, that's why you have to watch out.
Akemi: Watch out for what? The girls or the rapists?
Grandmother: Both.
Akemi: I don't get it. First you talk to me about my swearing. Then you talk about rapists, and now you're talking about bad girls. I wish you would just tell me straight out what you want me to do.
Grandmother: Wear a jacket.
Akemi: You see what I mean! Now you're bringing up the jacket again.
Grandmother: Girls now days. They wear so much make-up, talk dirty words, and run around hadaka.
Akemi: I know there are girls like that. But what does it have to do with me? Me Gramma, not all those girls that you don't like, what does it have to do with me?
Grandmother: Those shame girls, they're so naughty. No wonder they get into so much trouble. That's why, you have to be careful not to bring shame to the family. Nothing like that ever happened to anybody in this family.
Akemi: Gramma, just because a girl dresses in a way that you don't like doesn't mean that she is asking to be raped. If I get raped, it's not going to be my fault and it will not shame our family! Do you understand Gramma? Society doesn't stay the same forever. It changes, and you have to change with it. You know what I mean?
Grandmother: (silence).
Akemi: Gramma? Are you listening to me? Don't give me the silent treatment. I know what I'm saying, and I know I'm right. I didn't want to argue with you. I just wanted you to...forget it. You may never understand. I just hope that you'll still love me even if one day I bring what you consider shame to the family...Enjoy your flowers and your mochi Gramma.
CONFUSION

Holly Hayashi

mAss cOnfUsIO n EvEry whErE
EvErythIng scrAmblEd tOO mUch tO cArE
OnE gOE s thIs wAy And AnOthEr thAt wAy
whErE dO I stAnd? I cAnnOt sAy
All Is mIxEd, my mInd’s nOt strAIght
All thIs cOnfUsIO n I cAnnOt tAkE
Brief Interlude

Brian Ellison

Drizzle smears the dusty windshield, forcing her to switch the wipers on. With a heavy sigh, he turns to look at her momentarily, then reclines the chair, closing his eyes. Suddenly, the rushing traffic slows to a standstill.

"Let's turn around," he says. "I don't feel like going. Besides, we're going to be late, with all this traffic. What the hell's the holdup?"

"Stop complaining," she says. "You're always so pessimistic. It looks like an accident."

The smell of scorched rubber fills their nostrils. Taillights stream through the gathering exhaust permeating the darkened air. Up ahead, bits of broken glass glitter in the light. He turns the stereo down.

"Oh shit, another accident. We're never going to make it there in time now. We wouldn't be stuck in this traffic if it wasn't for you. I told you to take the parkway."

"There you go again, blaming it all on me. Everything always turns out to be my fault. If you wouldn't wait to the last minute to floss your teeth or iron your clothes, we wouldn't be late."

The sound of approaching sirens ring louder in their ears. Drawn by the sight of flashing colors, she looks into the rearview mirror. He leans his arm against the panel of the door, focusing on the red flares sparkling alongside the road.

"You know I got off late. If I wasn't always busy working for money to buy the things you need, I would have plenty of time to be your personal entertainment director."

"Look, all I'm asking for is a little time alone with you, but lately, all we do is argue. We never go anywhere or do anything. You're always working late. You don't even touch me anymore."

He flinches, snapping his head toward her. Rain pelts the windshield. He experiences a momentary lapse in time as they pass the overturned vehicle in procession. An eerie feeling of impending danger beyond mortal control overcomes him, disclosing the nature of fear. He looks for his face in the wreckage. The covered bodies, oozing stains of blood, are loaded into the ambulances.

Picking up speed, she says, "Those poor souls, they had so much to live for."

"Listen, I should have told you earlier...she'll be there tonight.""

"I thought that was all behind us. What have I done to deserve this?"

"I don't know," he says, quietly.

"Damn you! Answer me!"

She steps on the gas, tightening her grip on the steering wheel. She maneuvers the car into the opposite lane, targeting an oncoming vehicle. He reaches with both hands, fighting for control.

"Slow down, let go of the wheel! We're going to hit them!"

"No, I don't care, I don't care anymore!"

As she swerves to miss them at the last second, she hits a slick surface in the curve of the road. Her car jerks, jumping the bend in a spinning motion.

Like oscillating back and forth in the harness of a parachute, he reaches in desperation

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to slow his descent. His stomach tightens at the thought of the impending impact, making his breathing irregular. His heart pounds, rocking his chest. He floats uncontrollably in midair, struggling for position. The painful landing always overshadows the temporary feelings of ecstasy. As his eyes fixate on the horizon, the muscles of his body stiffen.
For The Sake Of...

Stephen Lortz

A hunger, hunting for salvation,
Hears help from Him in our waning hours.
A yearning to turn from the Burning,
When our youthful health sours.
The bread of Heaven seems only to leaven,
Once the sins are finished.
A Divine peak seeking,
When our bones begin creaking,
Or do dying eyes see better the Skies?

How the truth can be ruthless,
So lies hide deep inside ourselves.
How when our time nears the line,
We embark from false marks,
To fare where real darkness dwells.

Feeding the pleading need,
We harness the forgotten Steed.
Following the creed in a last-minute crusade,
Hoping hollow efforts will help evade,
A failing grade.

When stood-up goodness harks back,
Are we hurried sorry or sorely worried?
Lent to repent but is it meant,
Or is it the fragrant lure of Heaven's scent?

Dispense the deplorable floral morals.
We realize the reason.
Souls are saved for the sake of the selves.

Divorce

Kazumi Nishihara

At midnight, in a dim kitchen,
my mother boils pork.
The blue flame licks
the black cauldron.
The steam hisses.
The lid clatters to a fast beat.
The smell of greasy pork seeps into my hair and clothing.
As I lift the lid,
the steam scalds my face,
burning my eyes and nose.
The rumbling water overflows,
and slaps my hand.
I jump back.
The hot splash blisters me
like my mother's stinging words.

You have the exact same eyes
as your sweet Papa.

Through the steam,
her glare burns into my heart.
The reflections of blue flame quiver in her eyes.
The Portrait

Brenda Harrington

He approaches, a normal face like any other, and smiles. I smile back; but then I see the body that accompanies this face; and I fight a bloody battle to keep the rising horror and pity from my own face. I must keep smiling.

He is bent, broken, twisted. Thin, mottled arms attached to claw-like hands support his body on two metal canes. His eyes plead for acceptance. He has a request.

Acceptance, I feel, is not enough. God has plagued and sentenced this poor man for a lifetime. I think quickly: a few Hail Marys won't cure him; no, not this affliction. Perhaps St. Jude? Oh, dear St. Jude, I'll light my candles; I'll pray and worship you. You must cure him, for I both love him and hate him; pity him and fear him; embrace him, yet shun him. He is the portrait in my attic, and he embodies all in life that I fear the most:...my own helplessness and rage.
All for Christ's Body

Anonymous, Jr.

Paul unwraps Christ's body
In my grandfather's
Barren back yard.

He anoints Christ's wounds
--On His back, side, feet, hands, and head--
With white mud and herbs.

I carry Christ's body
To the Buddhist church,
And lay it upon
A black marble table.

I carry His body
to the Christian church.
And lay it upon
A brown metal table.

In front of the church,
The crowd chants,
"Give us back the body of Christ!"

They kick me behind the knees.
I fall and kneel
In front of Christ's body.
They bind my hands with thin fishing
lines,
And shove my head to the ground.
They whip me with their rusty words.

"Sinner, repent!
Pray to God for forgiveness!"

I struggle free from the bindings,
Though my hands wail red legato.
I run down the back road,
Pass the banana tree,
And crash into the white rose bushes.

---

I'll just call you Christ

ccv

Blue waves
white lace
trick her into shadows.
She flies
on shoulders of tired dreams.
They wrap her ankles with empty sleep.
Memories fuck her silence.

"I love you; I want to teach you."

His hands
screech over her hot skin.
She masturbates.
Victim to his sacrifice.
His hands
teach her to forget.

---

Untitled

Stephen Lortz

Peaceful Sunday drive
Taking in the countryside
Crash! Oh great. I'm dead!
Color Wheel

ccv

A man spreads charbroiled flesh across her canvas.

  red pushes orange-bumps yellow

Clean slate color wheel in hand she paints.

  yellow nags orange-crawls into blue

A man dances from the bristles of her brush.

  green punches blue

The door of the living room is open.

  blue smacks red

He drags her to the bedroom.

  purple shouts shadows

Colors left to their own devices stroke her in his picture.

  water splats purples shadows

Hand in hand shadow and fear stumble on black rumbles.

  bruised rainbows

Untitled

Karen Yasuda

Ancient waves beat sand that returns to the ocean, Creating a new beach.

Love, timeless, ageless, Steadfast as the seasons flow; Unpredictable.

Extinct, endangered animals. Sign of our times; Same fate for man nears.

Untitled

Tom Conner

Machinery pounds its noise in my mind and my soul, A sparrow, flies south.
ADAM
Diane Marshall

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The Presence

Linda Roberts

We are awakened suddenly. It has been so very dark and still...now, with a quick jerk forward and a loud rumble, we are transported to the edge of a larger chamber whose blinding light illuminates our space. We feel a sudden thrashing about and the Presence, larger and more powerful than ourselves, is moving us from place to place in turbulent motions. We have been placed in pairs huddled together. We know this has been done for the Presence's convenience, but without him realizing it, it has become a great comfort to us. Even though we have all been brought here under similar circumstances, we are all very different. Some of us, having been here longer than others, are tired, worn, and out of shape now. Others have been here only a short while, and even though they are fairly new, they too are beginning to show signs of wear and tear.

Now, suddenly, as we grow accustomed to the light, we see that one of the pairs has been separated, one from the other, and one is missing. When did this happen? The Presence, knowing that something is terribly wrong, is very disturbed and begins to search frantically for the missing partner. We can hear his loud and upset voice calling to someone in the distance, asking for help with the search. We suddenly feel ourselves being pushed in a very abrupt and rough manner backward, and once again we are encompassed in total darkness. We can, however, hear the footsteps of the Presence withdrawing--and in the distance we can hear the search continuing. This inspection of all areas seems to go on forever, but to no avail. We know now that one of us has attempted an escape!! We listen quietly, hoping with all our hearts that someone has truly made it to freedom. We can barely let ourselves be hopeful because we know that in the past there have been other escape attempts, only to have the missing one, after a thorough search, returned to our midst. If there truly has been an escape, we are also extremely frightened for the mate left behind, knowing that it will be immediately disposed of. The Presence finds us useless in and of ourselves.

We hear giant footsteps. The Presence is coming closer to us again and our fate is in the hands of a force outside ourselves. All of a sudden, there is another swift jerk forward; the blinding light descends on us once again and our escaped comrade is tossed back in amongst us to be reunited with his mate. He has a harrowing tale to tell us about his ill-fated attempt at freedom. We listen to every detail, and we are very disappointed at the lack of success. He tells us, however, that we must have hope. He explains that there are still so many avenues to freedom. There are the dark and dank corners of the clothes hamper, the moist sides of the washing machine, or even the dark interior of a pant leg among the tangle of clothing among the tangle of clothing in the dryer.

No one ever promised us that life for a drawer full of socks would be easy! We look at each other and wonder which pair the Presence will choose today. IT IS THEY WHO WILL HAVE THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY FOR FREEDOM....
Haikus for Kaho'olawe at Makahiki

Phyllis Coochie Cayan

(for Hui Kako'o)

From the cloudless sky,
Fourteen miles stretch across her,
Little red Kohe.

The trail starts straight up,
Kiawe, gravel, old wire,
Remnants of the ranch.

Tales of sailing men,
Learning the way of Hoku
At Moa'ula.

Endless dusty road,
Shimmering blue sea awaits
To massage our souls.

Last mile curves to sea,
Twin beach of Hulupoe
Tearfully calls to me.

Wild ilima thrives
Among the rocky grass trail,
Tumbling to sea.

Lono faces ke kai.
Kealaikahiki,
Path to Tahiti.

Full moon lights my dreams.
Lana'i calls me back home
For a midnight swim.

Early morning sail,
Sighting whales and flying fish:
Malama 'aina
Just Asking?

Tony Chalk

Same-sex marriages. Gays in the military. Why do these things hurt you? You say because they are against your beliefs? Do you propose outlawing all practices against your beliefs? For exclusive religions, which require rigid observation of a singular dogma, all other religious practices are against their beliefs, true? So, following this trail of reasoning, if one is a Christian, believes in one God, and follows only The Bible as a doctrine of faith, then any religion which does not follow these practices is opposed to Christian beliefs, true? Or do Christians accept a pantheon of gods and goddesses, reincarnation and teachings of other religious texts? So why aren't these opposing views outlawed? Is it perhaps because our nation was founded by people in search of a society which considered tolerance a virtue? Perhaps we have a constitution that guarantees each person's right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Have you been divinely selected to judge our social morals or anyone else's freedom of expression? Isn't there something written somewhere that says, "Do not judge lest ye be judged?" Or should we only interpret this teaching for our own devices? I'm not judging here, I'm just asking. If you are offended by this commentary, maybe you should be?
One Trial in One Liddle Green Friendship

Anonymous, Jr.

Liddle Yellow, she so concrete, so tangible!
But dey say I no can hug her, play wit' her hair,
    slap her on da arm, stuff la'dat.
Dey say pay attention to God, our Daddy,
    but He so abstract, so awesome!

I, Liddle Blue, wen sob like one series of tsunamis
    in one hurricane.
Two beings of spirit wen even visit me
    'cause I wen feel so bad.
Fo' real, I woulda gone pupule or died fom suffahring.

I tell 'um I like stay one virgin, but nobody like heah dat.
I was da alien dey wen soil wit' deir cries of "sin!"
But nobody like admit dat.

Eh, but I one asexual transsexual!

Afternoon in Haleiwa
Roy Murch

Westwinds 56
I Warning You!

Carrie Takamatsu


Eh, I care about yo' looks, even if no boddah you! Even dough you tink it's inherited, you not need get - pardon me - cellulite, like ev'rybody you claim get 'um. How you going catch one boyfriend if you no care? I can see if you get some kids, den you can let yo'self go. But I no can see you do dat now. Sometimes you can be so stoopid!

Nouveau Nursery

Carrie Takamatsu

This child over here had a split chin and hare lip. She was one of our easier ones. We just laser-grafted the jaw, and then the palate and lip. We gave her a cleft chin. Now she looks pretty.

And this baby was born with a split skull. We laser-grafted the skull together, and now he looks like a spartan warrior. We drained his cranium of the extra fluid.

This one here was born microencephalic. We connected a cyberbionic frontal lobe to the rest of his brain. And we installed skull platelets to expand his skull. We grafted man-made skin to cover the new part of his skull. I think he now has genius potential.

Look at this one. She was missing all organs in her torso, except the heart, lungs, and female reproductive organs. We implanted cyberbionic organs, and had to give her a cyberbionic brain, because she was born brain-dead. I bet she'll be a genius now. Look at her. She's taking in observations at the speed of a turbo computer! She's almost like an android.

Forget Darwin! Survival of the fittest, hah! Almost anyone can survive birth now. We're the nouveau artists of the human body.
America's Vanishing Bridges
Bonnie Lisa Pestana

Westwinds 58
The Season

Jessica Mantzey

The rain pelted down through the darkness, thundering on the roof of the cab, as the truck rattled along the muddy road. Hutch searched between swiftly swaying windshield wipers for large ruts. His muscular body jolted with the rhythm of the truck. He glanced over at his son, slouched to one side, with his tawny hair flopping up and down in front of his young face. A big bump slammed the boy against the door, but he slept on.

Soon, the pastures, guarded by barbed wire fences, turned into old farm houses, and eventually, sleepy homes with well dressed lawns. Into the maze of fast food restaurants, discount stores, grocery markets, and 7-elevens, Hutch maneuvered, until he turned in at the driveway of Jerry's Motel.

"Levi." He gently shook the twelve year old shoulder. "Come on, boy. Wake up."

"Are we there yet?" Levi groggily asked, his eyelids barely open.

"No. son. We're in a town not far from there. We'll stay here for the night."

"OK. Dad." He scooted up in the vinyl bench seat and pulled the hood of his blue rain-jacket over his head. Smacking his lips, lazily, he tried to shake the sleep from his body, and brushed the hair from his dark brow.

"Ready?" Fingers poised on the door handles, they nodded to each other, and dashed through the rain to the lobby.

In the morning, the sun beamed rays of dusty light through the slits in the curtain. A variety of bird chirps, cheeps, and squeaks could be heard in the sparkling morning air. Hutch nudged Levi awake.

"Hey, boy. You keep sleeping like this and we'll never get any hunting done." Levi sprang out of bed and jumped into his clothes. His blue eyes flickered eagerly.

"That's my boy."

"Dad, you think we'll get anything?"

"Sure we will."

"I'll get to bag one myself, won't I, Dad?"

"That's why you're here. Right?"

Levi smiled and quickly combed his hair.

A few minutes later they were in a small cafe. Hutch sipped at a steaming cup of coffee, while Levi attacked a pile of pancakes.

"Slow down, son. You'll get a belly ache."

"I wanna get going," Levi slurred through a mouth of blueberry and maple syrup.

"There's plenty of time," Hutch grinned.

A round man, clad in wire rimmed glasses and a smile approached, armed with a pot of coffee.

"Would you like some more coffee?"

"Sure." Hutch pushed the white ceramic cup toward the edge of the imitation-marble-top table.

"How are you folks today?" The man inquired, pouring carefully.

"We're going hunting!" Levi perked up proudly.
"Terrific! You'll have fun. There was quite a population up there that needed thinning out."

"Has the hunting been good?" Hutch swirled a spoon in his coffee.

"Oh, they're a bit of a challenge," replied the man, as he rested the glass pot on the table. "But, if you're quick, I'll bet the boy here will even get one." Levi swelled with pride, barely able to gulp down his milk. "The other day, a fella came in here, told me he'd shot a prize one. Thought it was worth $500."

"Wow!" Hutch's spoon made an abrupt stop, "That is god."

"Yep. And there's been a few other fellas been braggin' good kills. The season hasn't been open for very long, so there ought to be some good ones left. It's pretty good territory to pick for a season. Do you follow the hunting circuit?"

"Oh, I usually just go hunting when the season opens up nearby." Hutch slid a glass ashtray from behind the sugar jar and lit a cigarette.

Levi's fork clanged the plate. "Let's go, Dad!"

"OK. OK." Hutch tossed his napkin onto the table. "Thank you for the information."

"My pleasure." The man smiled. "Good luck."

"We'll stop a little ways out of Hinton. We don't want to scare off anything that's up there." Hutch grinned at Levi, who anxiously clambered into the cab.

They parked near an abandoned barn. Their boots squished as they walked, forcing mud to the sides, each step leaving little valleys for the water to trickle back into. Through a couple fields, over some wire fences, and past an old farm house, they stalked. Hutch suddenly froze under an oak tree, jerking his finger to his lips. A twig snapped, and some bushes rustled. Levi's eyes darted about the landscape, but all he could see were knolls of weed, hung over lemon trees, bushes dotted with berries, and abandoned farm buildings. They waited, listening, watching motionless, except for the slow steady rise of the guns to their shoulders. Hutch's forefinger slid across the trigger guard and released the safety. Leaves whispered under a footstep, and a shaggy, hobo of a dog strolled out from behind a lemon tree. They both let out a sigh as their arms dropped to their sides.

"Ah, shucks!" Levi kicked the dirt.

"Oh, well. Just keep looking." Hutch patted his son's shoulder.

Swords of grass cut at the mud on the sides of their boots as they trudged through the fields. The sky was filtered by thin wisps of clouds. The air was quiet, but for leaves and branches waving to each other. Squeezing all the vision he could muster from his eager eyes, Levi searched.

"I thought the season was supposed to be so great around here." He whined.

"Be patient, boy. We'll get something. Let's head for those buildings over there." A sun-faded tack house accompanied a barn of empty horse stalls. As they approached the buildings, Hutch noticed a shadow in the browned grass at the end of the stalls. With an extended arm, he pushed Levi behind him, and pressed his back against the barn. Carefully, he leaned forward, just enough to peer around the corner. Levi felt eternity pass, holding his breath. He was sure the prey could hear the pounding in his chest, and hoped his father wouldn't be angry that his heart had scared it away. Hutch turned to the boy with his finger to his lips. He grabbed Levi's shoulder and pulled him into his place at the edge of the barn. Levi eased one eye around the corner, his small hands, sweaty on the rifle. He watched the

Westwinds 60
shadow grow longer, as he repositioned his fingers. Then it appeared in the daylight. He swallowed hard. It moved northward, away from them, not detecting their presence. Levi raised the rifle to his shoulder, pressed his soft cheek against the cold hard stock, and sighted the cross hairs of the scope over the heart. He pulled the trigger. Kabang! It his the ground with a thud.

"I got it! I got it!" Levi lunged around the corner. "Look, Dad!" He pointed to the heap on the ground and dashed over to the carcass.

"Great, Levi!" His father rolled it over. "A female! That'll bring more money."

The smile fell off Levi's face, as he gazed into the gaping hole in it's head. Suddenly, his belly turned from butterflies to dragons. A fog enveloped his thoughts.

"Fine bag, son. That's a great shot!"

Levi dropped his rifle, his small frame frozen, as he stared wide-eyed.

"What's the matter, boy? You got it! Your mother will be so proud of you." Hutch handed Levi his shot gun and knelt to arrange the body. "Let's take her back to the truck."

The boy stood fixed on the results of his skill. "Don't worry, son, your first kill always feels a little strange. But you'll get over it." Hutch flung the limp carcass over his shoulder.

"Hunting is a necessary part of life. Everybody has been doing it for ages. If they don't open up a season once in a while, then the place will get so overrun that there won't be enough food to sustain the population. You learned about population control in school didn't you?"

"Yeah. I know, Dad. I'm OK." Half a smile crawled across his face as he trudged beside his father.

"I'm sure they taught you about carrying capacity of a habitat. Right?"

"Yes." They trekked back through the meadows and steaming mud holes.

"Then you know that without proper management, the place would be overcrowded to the point that all would starve, and disease would also take over. You should be proud. You're not only helping with conservation, but you're also helping support your family. This ought to be worth plenty. That's a mighty fine job, mighty fine. I knew you could do it. Your Mamma thought, maybe, you were too young, but I told her you weren't. I knew you were ready."

Back at the truck, Hutch dumped the kill in the back and covered it with a tarp.

"You getting hungry, son? It's about lunch time."

"I guess so." The dragons were slowing their hot breath.

Levi relaxed in the shade, munching on potato chips and cooling his thirst with lemon-lime soda, while his father complimented him and suggested improvements on his hunting skills. The food slew the dragons, and his father's praise dissipated the fog.

So, once again, they journeyed through the fields. They spent the remainder of the afternoon following tracks in the mud and freshly snapped branches, freezing for stray cats and Levi's misconception of a fallen log. More cajoling and encouragement completed the bolstering of Levi's spirits. He marched along side his father, with a bit of a spring in his midst, ready to pounce on more glory, fame, and his father's pride. A few hours of frustration finally yielded a kill for Hutch. Sweat rolled down his temples and wandered through the stubble on his face, as he hugged the heavy male beck to the truck. They'd wrapped it in a tattered blanket Levi had scrounged up. Hutch had to keep a tight hold on it as it kept slipping, because the shotgun had nearly cut it in half.

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At the truck, Hutch tied down their prizes, while the boy unloaded the guns and hung them on the rack.
"We did pretty good."
"Does that mean I can go again next time?"
"Probably. We'll have to wit to see if a season opens near us."
Levi napped on the way back, with the smell of a wearied day floating in the air.
They parked in front of the same cafe. Their waiter friend greeted them at the door.
"How'd you do?"
"Excellent." Levi stood tall, head held high.
"Where's the station around here?" Hutch inquired, after a smiling glance at his son.
"It's about two blocks down." The kind waiter stepped out the door, and pointed in the appropriate direction.
"I think they're worth a good amount. The boy got a female."
"Wanna see? Can we show him Dad?" He looked up at his father with a pleading face.
"Would you like to see what we got?" Hutch asked the waiter.
"Sure." The man followed them to the rear of the truck, with Levi scurrying ahead.
"Sounds like you two helped take care of the population up there."
"You bet." Levi leaped to the tailgate.
"How much do you think they're worth?" Hutch yanked back the canvas. A young blond woman lay in a heap, dried blood stuck to what was left of her face and matted hair.
Next to her lay a husky man, mangled almost in two. Levi bounced on the bumper with pride.
"Oh, yes," admired the man, "they'll be worth plenty! A mighty fine season, mighty fine."
Scintillation of Frustration

Margarita Isabelle

Whore, nun, wife, mother
I could have been--more.
Ambassadress of Laputa
Priestess of Lemura.

I slice a sliver
hair's breadth glimmer
through murky, moonless night.
Twice light shines in.

Lust, pride, spite, lover
shroud the fields of Elysia
veil would have been
and God screams--Sinner!

I walk, crawl, totter
along the brink of mania,
shun could have, might have, would have been
and shout--God's a liar!
How Come You Don't Use Your Hawaiian Name?

Phyllis Coochie Cayan

How do I explain why,
when you grow up brown and hapa,
how people try to make you white.

I simply say,
my family likes nicknames,
this kupuna use to visit at Koele.

Yet, I remember being told:
No talk or think Hawaiian,
no dance hula,
be like the haole and make money.

Today I see the irony.
All the haole come here to stay,
and try be more Hawaiian than me.

1-17-93

Phyllis Coochie Cayan

We are marching now
Onwards, upwards,
 together
 Kanaka power...

Westwinds 64
Zoo Keepers

J. Class

Soldiers prance by,
twirling their cocks like batons.
Bayonets stick up their asses.

Mother's arms swallow us.
Her hands hang
like a clump of bananas.
We children peer out
with acorn eyes,
three monkeys in a cage,
pressed against her breath.
Hardly any space here.
Not enough wind to hold us.
The ground is wet.

You tear every vein from her body,
yank out clumps of her hair.
Flesh is your appetizer,
like a dog's belly.
Snake skin peels from her body.

I'm not interested.

We are her faces.
We do not multiply.

Sorrows drip like sweat
from her armpits.
Her elbow will not deflect.
Glass slices off corneas.
Our bodies huddle and twist
into the shape
of a holocaust.

Slut, Whore, Bitch, Cunt

Adrienne O'Donnell

She creeps into the mirror,
a slanted, squinted eye,
her head cocked.

She imagines her lips
cave into her
face. Like the tide
sucking under.

She's haunting herself.
Bleeds a mess.
"Why can't I bleed life?!!"

People say she's pretty.
Would she still be so
if she bled on her hair?
And slit their throats?

Take her to an institution!
Gag. this. bitch.
Smother her with a pillow.

She doesn't have to pray
to God,
because God
preys on her.

Westwinds 66
The Soft Velvet Petals

Holly Hayashi

The soft velvet petals, tender to the touch,
The sweet scent on the mind that always means so much,
A variety of colors, I create a rainbow of my own,
The safe protecting thorns, through the years the sharper they have grown.
Some flowers open wide gazing toward the moon,
Others begin to wilt and wait to be forgotten,
Memories start to fade, but death brings resurrection.
Each flower being different, not knowing whence they came,
Each sharing a separate past, yet all the one and the same,
   Touched by the rains, harmed by the storms,
   Warmed by the sunlight, but burned by its arms.
Roots that grow deep into the ground and stalks that reach so high,
The softness of the morning dew, the love of the night time sky,
   Wanting to be nurtured, needing to grow on my own,
Through all the tramples I have faced, my strength has always shown.
I'll continue to grow till I one day fade, though I know not when,
   What I am is what I choose - I am my own rose garden.

I describe myself as a rose garden rather than a single rose because I am not as simple
as a singular flower. I can be whatever flower or color I choose to pick. They are all different
resulting from the different types of nurturing they have received, but they are all a part of
me. Not each flower is strong and beautiful, but they are all from the same garden.

My thorns are my defenses, but they are not so thick that others can not get past them
or pluck them away. One can learn to easily pick my flowers. I can give myself to others and
bring them joy. Also, my defenses can harm myself as well as others, or cause others to stay
away. I need to learn to pick my own flowers as well. And through my years of experiences I
have gained better knowledge of myself and others, and am able to reshape my thorns -
sharpen my defenses.

Not all my flowers are blooming - I am all cycles of life. My open flowers are the
parts of me the world knows. My buds are my hidden self, but they wait to open up to myself
as well as others. And some of my flowers are dying. I suppose I can best describe this as
letting go of the past. I am in a state of constant growth. Some of my flowers are only for
certain people. Only they will see that part of my bud, blossom and die. But as the death
stage passes, though it feels forgotten, it is not. Only the fleeting emotions pass away - the
memories are always there. And these parts go back into me and into my nurturing, and help
me to become stronger.

"Touched by the rain, harmed by the storms; Warmed by the sunlight, but burned by
its arms." This is not only a saying that good things can be bad, but also that bad can be
good. This is me. Many of my good traits are my bad traits. But only because it becomes too
much. Yet, through it all, I have survived. Life is not all misty showers and sunshine. Life does not always shine a rainbow, but we all know that the rainbows exist. My roots are strong and anchor me. They have always been there. If my flower dies it can regrow because the roots are still there. My stalks reach toward the sky. Always reaching towards a dream. There are times when I can release my petals and let them fly in the wind.

"The softness of the morning dew, the love of the night time sky. "These are my favorite times of the day. These are moments I can feel most relaxed and thus most like myself. I love the fresh newness of the innocent morning, where faith and hope can be seen. I love the shadows of the night and the twinkling of the stars where dreams are born. These are moments I can best commune with myself as well...without the hustle and bustle of the day.

I did not just begin to exist, nor did I grow on my own. I was nurtured by loving people who took care of my garden and who tried to teach me how to care for it. I will always long for this nurturing and the security of having someone by my side who will know my garden as well as I do. But I know there are times I must grow on my own, for often it is the wild untended flower that grows the strongest.

Many times there have been those who came with their heavily clad feet, and these intruders tried their best to trample my garden. I have always been strong. I know that many more will come - some intentionally, others not - but I will survive.

I plan to go on learning and growing until the day I die. Though other people influence the way I live, ultimately the choices are my own. Other gardeners may try to prune me or cut me down and change my garden - but I will choose where I grow and which way my stalks will turn.

"I Am My Own Rose Garden."
A Sucker for the Moment

Audralynn Martin

A sucker for the moment
Jesus Christ
Reevaluate hell as she sits before you in her old oak rocking chair
I know that you are a part of me
My heart races with fear like two dogs in the night
Enough to fill the whole world like a tank full of gas
Acts of insanity, brother kills brother
Madness drives this stranger who lurks in the darkness
Never forgive or forget the tragedy
Slapping me again and again, my eyes roll back in pain
Mentally-disturbed young women
The horror, the guilt
Your cheating eyes are blinded
Wrath and hatred, entangled in a bad vine
The grapes are growing
Spit out like the bad seed
Bitter and rancid to the taste
The cycle of the chase
The rush of blood to my head
The sudden high
Stolen by a mysterious stranger
A heathen cast out
Bleed on the cold and wet cement
Tears run down an angel's face
Passion gets the best of her
She will not be silent
A cesspool of conniving eyes dance across a dark room
Intensity boils over
A horny bitch is put to sleep
Disgusting and distorted
She is sicker than the life I recognize
The fungus grows on the surface of disease
Scare the dead fast and prompt
Why must you mask yourself with these two faces
Bitterness and rage are lassoed in like cattle
Unloved and neglected, they are branded as sinners
Play on my mind the cast of many
Across my tender face dots these deadly sores
A cancer to society finally cut off from life
I am doomed to Hell without you
Beggar!

Westwinds 69
Their eyes hooked. Pieces of barbed wire in a rusty embrace.

Around them the room dripped with sorrow. The others, their backs rounded as ovaries, whimpered and moaned. Bobbed and jostled. Punched at their own eyeballs. Stuffed their fists into their throats.

The two of them stood silent as spines, dry-eyed, not speaking, not touching. Their eyes stitched the air between them.

Always looking, they did not sleep. Not sleeping, they did not remember. Not remembering they did not circle and mewl like the others—leaving viscous traces of desire on the earthen floor.

The two stared so hard soon they could see into each other. The muddy red aura of one’s liver. The olive-yellow of the other’s gallbladder.

They saw splinters of each other. Rats grinding at cranial filaments. Fibers dry and speckled like chicken feathers. The cruel scree of the heart’s wall.

They could see each polyp yawning along the colon. Each distinct, jealous cell, fighting for survival. Each tattooed chromosome.

Then they saw without looking. One looking at a wall could see the refraction of the other, the angles and curls of vertebrae. If one moved, the other, not looking, saw the jerk of muscles, the twist of sinews, tight and lean as barbed wire.

Above the hunched backs of the others, they wove a dry intertexture. An optical maze without desire. Without memory. With no wet moaning.

The air grew rigid and thick with their connection. Seeking more space, they slept.

They spun into each other’s dreams.

One saw a bayonet stuck through the plump belly of the other’s baby. A rounded mouth and a smoke ring in the shape of a scream.

The other saw the drooling eyes of dogs. A shaft of fire searing up an anal tract.

Moss palmed their soft bodies. They fell into a pulsing, burgundy lake.

They awoke sweating. They dared not look at each other. Their eyes, moist with fear, scurried about the room. Each glance refracted the maze of self. Each one was a broken mirror without a reflection.

Their eyesight weakened. The connection dimmed. Soon all one could see was grayness soft as a rat’s pelt. All the other could see was speckled chicken feathers flying thick in the isolating air.

They tore at the grid they had woven above their heads. And the netting fell over them, enmeshed and forever separated by the swaying, guttural throng.
Self Portrait
Rebecca Lee
Conversations With The General

Brenda Harrington

The gaunt figure in gray, slouch hat dripping and brown beard glistening, walked through my bedroom wall to stand at the side of my bed. He gently shook me awake with his right arm; the left was an empty sleeve.

"Reveille," he said in a voice loud enough to wake me when the alarm had not. I turned on my side and eyed him warily through sleep drugged eyes.

"Did you sleep outside again?" I grumbled. "I told you to at least sleep in the lanai when it's raining if you refuse to sleep on the couch. You're leaving a puddle on my floor." I crept slowly from the bed, just missing the puddle as my feet touched the floor.

His bright blue eyes observed me calmly. Then he frowned slightly. "I don't know why you wear those ridiculous bloomers and whatever that shirt is to bed. Whatever happened to nightgowns? That's what women used to sleep in."

"These are called jogging pants, General, and a sweatshirt. At least I'm warm and dry, which is more than I can say for you."

"I've explained to you before, Madame, I'm not comfortable unless I bivouac outdoors. I knew nothing else for too many years."

"Alright. I'll give up arguing with you about it if you stop criticizing my sleeping apparel. Get a towel and dry yourself off and I'll put the coffee on."

He emerged from the hall slightly drier and I placed two mugs on the table for us.

"Thanks for not walking through the wall again, General. It gives me the creeps."

"You're most welcome, Madame. This coffee is delicious. A little chicory in it perhaps?"

"It's Kona coffee, General. It comes from the coast here in Hawaii. I'm not sure you can get the kind with chicory in it that you were accustomed to these days."

"Have you time for the oat cereal shaped like small o's today? I find it infinitely preferable to the uh-instant-breakfast you fix sometimes: that noxious powder you mix with milk. I daren't ask for ham and eggs; you probably don't have any and I know you never have time to fix a hot breakfast."

"I guess I have time for the Cheerios, General," I said, pouring us each a bowl. "I don't feel very motivated today, anyway. I never did like getting up early."

"Motivation is simple, my dear," he replied. "Just pretend you have 62,000 Yankees on your flanks like I did after Front Royal. I got 'em later, though, after we had reached a more favorable position."

"I guess my motivation evaporates when I stay up too late studying the night before and I don't want to get dressed, get in the car, and start all over again the next day. The reading and writing is endless, General."

"That's exactly the way I felt at West Point my dear, but you must be persistent. Actually, looking back, I think I was a better student than I was a professor at Virginia Military Institute later. I never was much for writing, so I memorized my lectures the night before my classes."

"That's strange, General. I find the writing easier than the memorization, although I
love to read. As to motivation, the mere thought of a "D" or even a "C" on a grade report usually gets me going."

"Best not to tarry then, Madame. Gather your books and get ready for your classes. A good education is an essential factor for a successful life."

"General," I asked, as I stood ready at the door, "do you think I could call you Stonewall? That is, if you don't feel it offensive in any way."

"Of course you may, my dear. Do you know what they called my cousin William? Mudwall Jackson, can you believe it?" He laughed uproariously, slapping his one arm on first one leg and then the other, finally regaining his composure. "Better get going now. I'll see you when you get home. Oh, and I'll trade help with your studies for dinner. They're much better than your breakfasts."

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Thunderbirds
Diane Marshall
Poison

Robert Yokoyama

Turn the page and keep reading.
Do not stop until finished.
Believe in every word as truth.
No reason to believe otherwise.
Fill your head with another person's thoughts.
Feelings and judgements,
Without doubt or question,
This is poison.
Max rose from bed in a manner that would have fooled you into thinking it was anything but 3:30 in the morning. He gazed out onto the black street and checked to see if Joe had come early. He knew it was highly unlikely. It's just the kind of thing you do when you don't want to miss the train. No, there would be no screw-ups this morning, for it was the door to this day's adventure.

Max was going hunting...dove hunting. Good ol' California desert dove hunting--nose to the wind, primal, instinctual, a return to nature. And it was exciting. After all, at 21 years of age, the only thing Max had killed were a couple of cockroaches, a few insects and the accidental freeway frog or cat. This was different; this was killing for the sake of survival, or at least that is how Max tried to envision it. Sipping his hot coffee, Max was lost in his thoughts of the adventure ahead.

Stirred by the sound of Joe's truck horn, Max snapped out of his trance and quickly descended his apartment stairs.

"Think there will be many other hunters? How long does it take to get there? Are we going to stop for food?"

Joe told Max to relax, it was going to be a long drive. And of course, they would stop for food.

"Think there will be doves?" he inquired, starry eyed.

Laughter filled the cab and Max felt he was beaming with adrenaline. Joe, Max's senior by almost ten years, had made the drive many times. Laughs were welcome.

The darkness off to the sides of the truck disguised the huge mountains and plains. Max strained his eyes to view the countryside, but it was in vain. His squinting was almost painful as he longed for his first glimpse of the California desert. His life-long travels had been restricted to the Californian and Mexican coastlines. He often said he was like a fish whose gills would dry up if he didn't get in enough "salt-water time." Today, he would feel the massiveness of the land for the first time.

"Can I check-out the gun, I mean if it's not loaded and all?" pressed Max inquisitively.

Joe laughed at his glistening bug eyes. "Sure...in the bag."

Max unzipped the bag and pulled out the soft leather case containing the .38 revolver.

"Wow, it's pretty heavy."

"Naw, you should see a .44 magnum. That thing is just a pea shooter."

With shiny gun feeling custom-fit for his hand, Max was transformed into a rootin' tootin' little buckaroo playing Cowboys and Indians with his friends in Kindergarten. "Pow, pow, pow," exclaimed the cowboy, pointing the gun at passing road signs.

Joe had to laugh as he saw himself on his first trip, all over again. Joe knew Max's mentality of guns. All of those one liners about having the finger on the trigger and taking your best shot had made Hollywood his firearms educator. But this was not the movies. And before this day was over, well, Joe knew what he had to do.

"That's enough, put it away and I'll go over everything with you when we get there."
As the sun was cracking over the desert mountain range, Joe and Max pulled off of a dirt road and on to a large grassy plain. There were a few other hunters in trucks and jeeps off in the distance. The grass was almost shoulder height and rippled like the ocean when the wind caught it. Max began stretching out, almost out of ritual, as if he were about to go surfing.

"O.K. Max, listen and watch while I show you the finer points of loading and shooting a firearm."

Max watched all right, but he couldn't listen. He could only think about stalking his first prey and claiming his first kill. The place had a captivating quality that sent adrenaline pulsing through his brain. This was the good ol' country, the outback, the plains, and to Max it was larger than life.

"Got all that Max? Just watch my style of firing."

Max watched, awestruck, as Joe fired off a round at a log off in the distance. The bullet sent a piece of dried bark splintering off into the air. Max's mental VCR played back a clip from a Clint Eastwood classic.

"Here, now you try."

Max fired off a shot, his first shot, an errant shot.

The morning passed uneventful. There were no signs of doves. The trucks across the way had left.

"Damn, Joe, where's the birds?"

Joe didn't answer. He turned to the truck and grabbed a drink from the cooler. Max began to fire off practice shots. Joe smiled at himself, Max didn't have a clue about the patience of hunting.

Having emptied the round, Max began his Cowboy and Indian skit again.

"Pow, pow, pow."

"All right Wild Bill, bring the gun so I can re-load. We have to be ready for them doves."

"Doves?" thought a cynical Max, "What doves?"

Max continued his charade, unloading his imagination.

"C'mon, Max, give me the gun." Joe's voice deepened.

Max felt himself back in his Hollywood world. Gangsters and criminals came from every angle, but his aim was true and he continued to take them out.

"Damn it, Max, give me the gun!"

Max turned and looked cross at Joe. Here they were with no doves in sight and all he was trying to do was have a little fun. "What a selfish guy," thought Max.

"Here, have it," spat Max as he pivoted and stuck the barrel in Joe's gut.

A bullet ricocheted off the truck and sailed off into the distance. Joe stuffed his hand against his ski vest and slid down the side of the truck.

"My God, Max, you shot me," uttered Joe as the blood began pulsing from between his fingers.

Max stood paralyzed, the gun resonated to his hand. "What the hell? The gun was empty. Oh my God!" Max's brain fired out too many thoughts at once.. vertigo consumed him. His jacket became a hot iron blanket. Sweat began collecting on his brow. A deafening silence made him dizzy and disoriented. Paralyzed, gun in hand, he stood there.

Westwinds 76
Joe outstretched his hand to the motionless figure. "Help me." Every breath sent fire sweeping through his stomach. The bullet hole felt like a hot iron poker in his gut. Instinct had already told him to stick his finger in the hole, but he couldn't stop..."Help me..."

The drive out there had been almost entirely in the dark and Max hadn't planned on driving home. There was no time left to hesitate, the speedometer topped 85. Tears began streaming down his face. Blood was all over the seat and Joe was losing his color. If only there was a sign or a phone or someone to help. And then he saw them, a pack of four or five doves, flying aimlessly through the sky. They were the first doves he'd seen and he was dumbstruck at wanting to shoot something so beautiful. Max ripped off his jacket and threw it over Joe. The groans and shivers were weakening. Semi-unconscious, he uttered to Max "Get to the highway phone." Max suddenly remembered the blue phone boxes every 10 miles or so along the road. This was not the first time they were his target, nor was this the first time this vastness had him straining his eyes, looking for something that was not to be seen.
Reminders

Joseph Maher

Solitary I stroll the shore
where together we once wandered.
Reflections cloud my mind
as the splendor of luminous
moonlight shimmers off the
tranquil mirror-like sea.

My bare feet settle deep
within the wetness of
clammy water-logged sand.
Calm, but cool, the tide
like your early morning caress
causes an erotic quiver.

Your absence has created a
void within me whose emptiness
can only be filled by echoes.
Memories such as these
that now come all too often
remind me of how much I miss you.

Waimea Canyon

Tony Chalk

Twelve Menehune
ladle tangerines from a smoldering cauldron
into an azure horizon.
Water gouges the ribs
of these bloody walls.
A goat bitches
through the canyon. The chatter
of my teeth
rattles my skull. The wind
smacks my ears.
Wailua Falls

Tony Chalk

The first fragments of morning
jab the naked sky.
The heavens heave
an afterbirth of iron and granite.
Moss
creeps down the cliff face.
Trees, like raw broccoli,
ring the carved haven.
White froth erupts
from two jade tracts
in a chunk of chocolate hash.
Desperate fronds cling
to sway-back palms.
Rushing thunder.

Lost His Scent
Diane Marshall
Indigenous Woman
Diane Marshall

Westwinds 80
The Offering

Jill Edwards

Leigh hadn't been to the reservation in almost nine years. It was as if she had
forgotten about that side of her family, the Indian side. She closed her eyes and pictured her
grandma's house as she remembered it -- a Victorian style house with gray peeling paint and
loose shingles. That old house had endured some harsh winters. She remembered the porch
that surrounded half the house and the three wooden stairs leading up to it. She used to sit
with her grandpa and watch him curiously on those long humid days. He used to have a
bloody nose everyday and would ramble on in their native language. Leigh's grandpa had died
when she was eight. She inherited his bloody noses but not the language.

"Excuse me miss, could you put your seat upright? We're about to land in Syracuse."
The flight attendant startled Leigh, who fumbled to find the button for her chair. Her stomach
felt twisted in knots. She was about to reunite with the family she had almost dismissed.

The whole gang was there -- cousins, aunts, uncles and Leigh's grandma, "Ma" for
short. The faces were the same and a few of Leigh's younger cousins were pregnant. Nothing
had changed.

The drive to the res was a straight shot on Highway 15. The ride was a little crammed
in the "res bomber," a typical rusted-out car with enormous dents that backfired on cue. All
was held together by bailing wire and two-by-fours. Downtown looked gloomy as usual, with
brick buildings sprouting up everywhere, all surrounded by huge smoke stacks.

The family talked about old times, often exchanging glances that said, "Did you have
to bring that up?" Leigh was filled in on all the gossip, like who had had a baby, how the
lacrosse team was doing, who was up to no good and who was doing good.

"Oh, heck, I forgot to tell you. Andy Redeye was killed last Saturday night," one of
Leigh's cousins said. "He was boozin' it up at the dam and sped away up Hemlock road. No
one saw him for 'bout three hours. Then Lenny Powless saw Andy's car in a ditch. He was
sprawled out on the hood, all cut up. Real sickening, huh Leigh?" Leigh really didn't think it
was that gross, because it was a tragedy that had become all too common on the res. A
couple of her cousin's had died the same way. She only thought it was sickening because no
one learned a lesson.

Ma wanted to stop at Green Hills on the way home to pick up a few things for that
night's supper, a typical meal -- goulash, hot scoons and salt pork with kidney beans.

Leigh went into the store. Ma said she wanted to make sure everyone knew her
granddaughter was home. This would be no problem since the whole res shopped at Green
Hills and gossip around there spread fast.

A plump gray haired lady approached Leigh's grandma. "Hey Ma, how are you? I
missed you down at the Indian Club. We played a few good games of bingo."

"Oh, I had to pick up my granddaughter." She put her arm around Leigh's waist,
showing her off. "My goodness, Ma, is this Leroy's daughter? She's so tall. Oh, you look just
like your dad. You know, I used to watch your dad play lacrosse when he was a little boy.
He was one of the best."
The plump gray haired lady was soon joined by an old man whose face was dark and weathered. His eyes were black as night, and the bulk of the white part was bloodshot. He stared emphatically at Leigh and handed her a small piece of corn husk.

The ladies stopped talking and realized Samuel White Deer was hunched over next to them mumbling something. "Look who's here," the plump lady said. "It's Leroy's daughter visiting her grandma." He looked Leigh's way with a half-smile that revealed a few rotten teeth. "Well Ma I'll see you later. Bring Leigh up to the house Saturday. We're making some wild onion soup and hot scoons." The old couple walked away waving.

As Leigh and Ma walked up and down the isles, Leigh couldn't help but think about her dad. He had been killed when she was just a baby, and she cherished all the little stories about him.

"Leigh, Leigh, do you want anything special?" Ma asked, startling Leigh out of her reverie. "No, Ma." Ma patted her on the back and said, "Well, let's go."

Leigh was putting the groceries in the car when she realized she was still clutching the corn husk in her hand. She quickly put it in her pants pocket.

That night at dinner, Leigh asked her grandma if they could make a plate for her dad. Ma took her by the hand and helped her dish up the food and set it out to let him know he would never be forgotten. Then everyone but Leigh left for a clan meeting at the long house. Leigh looked forward to getting some rest. It had been a long day.

"Gram, is that you?" Leigh whispered into the dark room. The sound of shk, shk, shk echoed throughout the room. Leigh could not make out the noise and sat up to look around. She brought her hand up to clear her hair from her eyes, but when she pulled her hair to the side, pieces fell into her hands. Her heart sank. She closed her eyes so tightly they hurt, and she slid under the covers. She felt as if she was melting and wished desperately that her heart would stop beating so loud.

She pulled the covers down and held her breath. The blackness in the room blinded her. "Shk, shk, shk!" The sound rang in her ears and Leigh stared hard. Sweat beads rolled down over her eyelids. "Please go away. Please go away...!"

The smell of bacon filled the house and the sun was finally peaking out from behind the storm clouds. "Leigh, Leigh, want some breakfast?" Ma asked as she gently shook Leigh's shoulder. Leigh sprang up and looked over to the corner. All that was there was a stack of boxes with blankets tossed over them. "There's a pow-wow today up near the corn field. We can go later. Your aunt is setting up a booth to sell hot scoons and soda. For now let's go eat," Ma said.

Leigh got up and looked around the bed for strands of her hair. There were none. She convinced herself it was just a dream and headed for the bathroom, which was about the size of a broom closet. It had no running water and the toilet was just a bucket with a seat on top. "Ah, it's great to be on the res!" Leigh thought.

At breakfast one of Leigh's cousins came by to visit. "You know, Ma, the Wynkoop's are having an offering for Lester." Leigh thought her cousin was talking about someone who had died. "I guess he was up at the dam getting ready to go home, and he saw a shadow pass by the front of his car. So he rolled down the window and stuck his head out to see if it
might be a wild dog or something. When he sat back down, there was a single corn husk sitting on the passenger's seat."

Leigh was confused. Could this shadow have been what she had seen? She asked her cousin to explain more about the offering. "Well, there are two spirits. One represents straw and the other represents clay. At night they come to visit and will leave a corn husk or a piece of clay behind. You aren't supposed to ignore it because the spirits will turn on you. This is why you have an offering for them. You offer them some tobacco and food and once you've done that then you belong to them. Not everyone will be visited by the spirits. It just happens, I guess." Ma asked the cousin not to talk anymore about it. It wasn't right. Leigh thought about what had happened the night before but didn't think it could have been the same thing. She hadn't seen any corn husk or clay pieces that morning.

Hey, Leigh, why don't you go get ready? You can ride up with us to the pow-wow. Is that o.k., Ma?" Leigh's cousin asked. Ma agreed, and Leigh ran off to get ready. She went back to the pull-out bed she had slept on and began folding the blankets. She hollered to her grandma, asking where she should put the blankets. "Put them in the corner on top of those boxes, please." Ma said.

Leigh grabbed the stack of blankets and headed toward the corner. Just as she was about to set the blankets down she caught a glimpse of something white resting on top. She dropped the neat pile and grasped the white object. It was a single corn husk.

Lana'i Driftwood
Bonnie Lisa Pestana

Westwinds 83
Ghost Feelings

Adrienne O' Donnell

Sounds like directions to my house. Small hands play with dad's cum. It stretches. It glistens. She's bigger than the penis. He beats-off on her stomach. She spills Elmer's Glue on her doll. Gouges the eyes. Walks out to the living room to show Mom how the glue stretches on her doll.

Make me a tape. Ghosts in my ears. Slither lizards through my lips. Play me one more. Breathe ants on my toes. Take my dick. His tongue, the snail across her nipples.

He put parts of her body into his mouth. He could swallow her. It feels like falling. He reaches into her cunt to bleed on her liver. Mom is in another room. Always.

Prostitute spread out. Sheet on her face. Cold. She feels the thrusting dry noise. And men smoking.

She chokes on the blue dry ash.
A Fish Story

Buddy Vidal

Rick hurtles through the air.
freefall sucks me dry
The fragments of his reflection ripple the surface of the water.
cold burns me
His face slithers into a wall of pink moss.
needles prickle my brain
Two sea turtles weave between Rick's legs. His feet slip under a highway overpass.
concrete bottoming out now
Ivory vultures dive into his outstretched arms and emerge with minnows in their bloated beaks.
God's infinity clause sleep
Soon there is nothing left of Rick but a pair of solemn footprints listening to the currents beat time against eroded stone.

"Rick!"
"Miss, you're in our way!"
"Oh, God! This is Anne! Please answer me!"
"Get this man into emergency fast! And will someone get this woman out of here?"
---Here we go again Another one
"No! Rick don't leave me!"
-----Poor girl Sometimes life just goes and rips the soul right out of your body
"Rick!"

I swallow oxygen through the filters in my body and feel the liquid pour into my flesh. The surrounding echoes slide off my ears like syrup. Two surgeons watch me turn blue, but it's a mistake, the result of bad lighting. Their glass eyes warn me of trouble. Gleaming needles spring from their backs. They think I need help, but I know better. They want to help her.
Panic strangles me. I turn silver in a flash and make for the light. The water pours out of me and I gasp for breath, hoping to reach the surface in time. The break leaves me giddy. I do a flip in the air but something is dreadfully wrong. Can't feel my arms or legs. The water hits me face first. I suck in air and my gills do the rest. My dorsal stabilizes. The surgeons have balked the scene.

---A ring was missing from his left hand
-----Wife fools around, husband jumps off a bridge, loses his wedding ring
---She doesn't care

Westwinds 85
-----Every day she goes to the hospital Talks to him for hours, combs his hair, fixes up his bed
-----It will be over soon
-----Too bad he can't hear her

The Euphotic zone is a blast. Just last week, I was a fashion model for some glass bottom boat off Miller's Harbor. My friends and I drew ogles when we sun flashed colors for the audience. It was saline heaven until this big sucker of a shark crashed our party. We all threw the dig and swam to our cubby holes in the reef. Poor turtle. Got caught in traffic and the shark had him for lunch. Crowd got off on that, too.

Yesterday, we entertained some onshore bamboo fishermen by playing chase master around their lines. Had a good time until this punk kid tried to get smart with me and snagged one of my scales off. Wanting to get even, I nibbled on his bait every ten minutes for the next three hours. My pecks eventually got tired so I hung on to the bottom of his hook until he hoisted me out of the water. I waited until I saw the kid's ugly face. Ha! Poor fella practically curdled when I let go.

---Six months Something must be wrong
-----It's the wife Love causes such complications
-----Only guilt Marriages are fads now
-----Promiscuity can be forgiven
-----Commitments died when condoms were born
-----One of us should have had him by now

Instead of purgatory, I got shafted and sent to Poseidon's undersea Disneyland. I'm on the merry-go-round of terror. Every carnivore bigger than I am wants to use my fins for toothpicks after they have my eyes for appetizers. And those eels, always smiling at every little thing that passes by. You would think they always had a constant hard-on for food. No fair. I should have had some personality. Like a sperm whale. Yeah.

Wonder what Anne is up to. Life insurance don't last that long. Someone must have had it in for me after I took my final dive. I'll probably end up on Anne's dinner plate some day. What a thought. Husband gives wife a bad case of indigestion. It could be worse. I'd like that.

---One year Boss can't wait no more
-----Pity His soul may be trapped indefinitely
-----We need another coal worker
-----Good harpists are hard to come by
-----Suicide's a no-no The Fires for this one
-----That's up to Him

Westwinds 86
I stand on the edge of the bay. The sun trickles down and forms shadows beneath my body. I watch the foam race along the breakline like a horde of galloping horses. A fish suddenly interrupts my tranquillity. It stares at me with knowing eyes. Then it is gone. Rick. A vacuum grips me and the fish appears again. An object glistens on its tail fin. It's a ring. The fish does a flip in the air and the metal lands softly in my palm. I turn around and smile. The fish pierces the surface without a sound.

---The woman is placing a ring on his finger
-----Reconciliation?
-----Craziness
-----Love
-----I want another job

THE END
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