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Driftwood '88

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literary magazine  
of  
St. Thomas University

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"I think it can be dangerous for young writers to be modest when they're young. I've known a number of truly talented writers who did less than they could have because they weren't vain and unpleasant enough about their talent. You have to take it seriously."

—Norman Mailer

Dr. Philip Reckford, Moderator  
Sean Collins, Editor



## Jimmy

---

Jimmy's dad  
Won't let Jimmy smile  
let him  
smile  
Jimmy's dad  
laughs when he stripes Jimmy's back  
stripes  
his back  
Jimmy laughed  
Jimmy smiled  
when Jimmy  
him  
u  
n  
g  
him  
self  
laughing  
smiling

Morty Snore

## Tears

---

They roll down my face,  
Slowly but with much force,  
Rarely do they come from joy,  
Sadness makes these eyes water.

The throat tightens,  
The heart sinks,  
Sobs begin,  
Fingers wipe cheeks.

What an outpour,  
Of emotion and grief,  
The release is immense,  
The relief incredible.

Josie Valcarcel

## Forgiving

---

Only the strong,  
Have the will to say,  
I forgive the wrong,  
Let's start a new way.

However the weak,  
With their hurt and pride,  
Vow never again to speak,  
And turn the cheek the other side.

The strong will live,  
See love once more,  
They will again give,  
Not try to even the score.

**Josie Valcarcel**

## Old People

---

We don't listen to them,  
They know not what they speak,  
Their lives have now been fulfilled,  
Their bodies thin and weak.

Their time has passed now,  
Their stories no longer hold,  
The senility shows in their speech,  
They are just tired and old.

But there is this sense of history,  
Old people know much of life,  
They know of all the good times,  
And the bad times spent in strife.

So next time an old person speaks,  
Open your hearts and listen,  
For it will be a learning experience,  
That will make your souls glisten.

**Josie Valcarcel**



## Golden Love

---

Our love was like an ocean wave,  
Crashing on the shore,  
My heart was hurt and it you did save,  
But then I wanted more.

The feeling of intensity,  
Our short time together brought,  
A new world you made me see,  
One of realism, love and drought.

You gave me so much of your love,  
Your honesty always shined through,  
I thought you were brought to me  
From the heavens above,  
With a bit of earthliness too.

The love we shared I will never forget,  
Nor any of our moments will I regret.

**Josie Valcarcel**

## The Airport on Friday

---

Swarms of squirming, restless bodies  
Looking, moping, wandering, anxious and bored.  
Men boxed in dark-striped punched-out suits,  
Holding carefully to tired sagging cut images.

Multi-colored women, tightly sashed and tied  
Or draped and bloused but carefully coiffed.  
Identical twins, programmed in slim bodies,  
faces and walk . . . twenty years apart, saunter.

Other chiseled models of frozen thought,  
A delight for enthused Rodin admirers  
Spread intermittently like chosen plants,  
Dotting the peopled-square of waiting faces.

It is a staid, serious funereal gathering  
Or hyped sale, hopefully starting soon?  
Carping nasal announcers prick my ear drums,  
As hundreds of unfinished people wait to move on.

**Frank McGarry**



## I Wander This Winter

---

How do they explain it?  
Maybe they don't; it just is and was.  
Do they see drained energy and heavy sleep  
As merely small nicks chipped from their statue?

Some appear distracted and caught,  
Set in ritualistic coughing, smoking and squints.  
Others look in mirrors,  
Searching hard for last year's approval.  
They don't know they can't catch up.  
It is just an advertising myth.

I saw a tiny, quick brown sparrow,  
Sweeping and scraping a damp, snowed branch;  
Spunky and set, he seemed to know his wherefores.  
Yet spring was six weeks away,  
Before long, low, grey moistness  
Moved over to some blue-white calm.

Crowds slow drove to work.  
Pushing themselves behind lines of exhausting cars,  
Hoping their daily acts of loyalty  
Will key their beings to rainbow gold  
Or closeness instead? Is his joy in just doing?  
Is each robotizing in retirement,  
Or doing a more deliberate, moving dance?  
Do we hold the hands of those  
Ordained by passages and separations?

Do we know the light is really forever,  
And the journey must be thru each other?  
Maybe I need to think more about the sparrow.

**Frank McGarry**

## Stopping Off

---

Appearing fresh, vibrant and anticipating,  
Yet curious, attractive and wondering,  
The soft, powerful yellow-brown wings  
Closed comfortably around the peering guest.

Strong, brown branches sturdied themselves,  
Pleased with their new, wondering resident  
Who glanced quickly, carefully yet nervously.  
It was a bright female, new to these rooks.

Scanning both ground-space and blue, open air,  
"It's fresh," she mused, "and so inviting right now,  
I hope I can fly free and limitlessly.  
What beautiful skies, rivers and mountains!"

So she scanned, flew, settled and hovered,  
Her growing strength shortened the hills and trees.  
Now she could see far-away, shadowy outlines,  
And surrendered her security to challenge new skills.

**Frank McGarry**



## Three Simple Words . . .

---

You gave me love  
You gave me friendship  
You were there when everyone else abandoned me  
You held me when I was frightened and lonely  
You never let me down  
You knew how to make me laugh and smile  
You and I were as close as two can be  
You were my best friend  
But one day you went away  
You didn't leave a note  
You didn't even say goodbye  
You just walked out of my life  
You didn't give me a chance to tell you how much I loved you  
Maybe that's why you left  
You gave me so much and I couldn't even tell you those three simple words  
I was scared to show my true feelings  
I didn't want my love to be misunderstood for lust  
For you were my everything  
You were my today and my tomorrow  
I loved you with my whole heart and soul  
But how would you know? I never told you  
I guess I thought that you knew how I felt by the way I acted  
But now I know that actions aren't enough  
You deserved to know  
For if you had known maybe everything would have been different  
I'm running out of words to express how much I care  
Now, all I can really say is, I LOVE YOU.  
No matter where you are or who you're with, I LOVE YOU . . .

**Yvonne Castrenze**

## Tin Soldier

---

I have roamed the mighty battle fields of time.  
I — The Tin Soldier.  
He who rides the iron horse of Destiny.  
He who follows the path of Eternity.  
Armed with the sword of Impeccability.  
Dubbed Mr. Invincibility by the council of Immortality.  
But why?  
For as sure as the raindrops fall from the sky  
. . . . Death saturates my soul.

**Eric A. Fail**



## The Chess King

---

I am a chess King  
a great leader of men  
conqueror of many  
now weeping aboard a checkered  
platform at the loss of my beloved  
Queen  
forced to face the enemy unaided  
    scanning  
        planning  
            moving  
                maneuvering  
until finally  
backed up helplessly into a corner  
awed by an eerie silence  
until suddenly a voice rang out from  
above  
                checkmate!

Eric A. Fail

## A World Without A Poet

---

One day voices spoke softly luring  
me to sleep  
and while I slept  
I dreamed that I had entered the  
Orange World of Wisdom

Twas there I heard song birds  
sing a song of everlasting peace

The purple ocean hardened that I  
might walk across  
and thus enter the valley of wordless  
pages

It was there that Claude McKay  
welcomed me into his arms  
Paul Lawrence Dunbar sat me comfortably  
in his chair

and somehow Langston Hughes sensed  
that I was poet  
and gave me a pen with which  
to write

Eric A. Fail



## So I Goes

---

So I goes into dey back room  
and so I cries  
So I goes into dey back room  
and I promise little lies

Sometimes I says a little prayer  
den wipe my eyes and pretend  
they weren't there  
Den with my eyes all wiped and dry  
put my feelings away deep inside

Comes into dey front room wid  
my feelings away deep inside  
comes into dey front room  
wid my feelings unrevealed  
comes into dey front room still  
feeling the feeling I feel  
Some where and den a smile slips in  
and I'm no longer feeling the feeling I feel

Stay wid me and don't leave me  
now, don't let my eyes slip up and cry  
cause when I goes into dey front room  
I can't reveal these feelings I feels.

**Geraldine Shelton**

## Friends

---

We first met in our disease,  
I felt unsure, not at all at ease.  
I had my doubts and I was scared,  
I had to be here, I thought no one cared.

You broke the ice and welcomed me in.  
We laughed and cried, we became friends.  
We grouped and souped, we were as one.  
The end we thought would never come.

You were my strength, you shared my past.  
We had a love that would forever last.  
We washed the windows and scrubbed the floors.  
We bickered and complained about being bored.

Now our end has come too fast.  
We must depart, we had a blast.  
I leave you wih this solemn oath,  
This split will promote our ultimate growth.

And if it be the will of God.  
We will not find our leaving hard.  
For what we have will never die.  
True friends for life, you and I.

**Mary Mitchell**



## Missing You

---

I know we're really strangers  
That I can't deny  
But when I read the things you write  
It makes me wonder why.  
How can he be so special,  
In each and every way?  
How can we find so much to write,  
And still much more to say?  
Could it be a form of magic  
Or a touch of fate?  
When all I really want to do  
Is sit and wait and wait.  
Yes, waiting for the phone to ring  
Or a letter in my box  
While in the distance I can hear  
The ticking of my clock.  
Or could it be my heart beat  
Expounding all too clear  
The words that do not leave my lips,  
"I wish that you were here."

Mary Mitchell

## The Someone Inside Me

---

There's someone here inside of me  
That others do not care to see  
For at first glance acquaintance flee  
Because of this obesity.

I laugh, I cry, I love, I hate  
Even if I'm overweight  
But somehow things are not the same  
When heavy hips must play the game

Am I a pawn to be used at will?  
To scorn, to abuse and even more still?  
Can't they see there's only me.  
Here inside this obesity?

It's a different life for those like me  
That live inside of obesity  
The one assurance I can proclaim  
Fat or thin I am the same, Me.

Mary Mitchell



## Kate

---

Kate was a nice girl, just in her prime.  
She was once rich, now she hasn't a dime.  
She drank in excess but she never knew,  
The disease that she had struck millions too.

Now Kate was known all over her town.  
She hit every bar and sometimes the ground.  
She had no faith and her will was her own.  
She hated sobriety and she loved to be stoned.

Late one night Kate crawled to her room.  
In the darkness and silence she felt she was doomed.  
She looked in the mirror but she wasn't there.  
A stranger stared back in gloomy despair.

She cried, "Oh my God, what has happened to me,  
I was once so beautiful, this can not be."  
She remembered two letters someone told her one day.  
It stood for a group, the letters A.A.

She packed up some courage and dumped some of her shame.  
And she entered the place with the two-letter name.  
She listened and learned, she wept and she shared.  
For the first time in her life, someone cared.

Now Kate can stroll with her head in the air.  
She walks with a smile, with style and with flair.  
And when they call, "Hey Kate how you be?"  
She turns with a smile, "I'm sober and free."

## Mary Mitchell

## Krome Ave

---

Quiet is the pacing while all things  
continue to tire and perspire. The  
sun.

Streets  
and rock moss

beside yellow roses to bloom in late  
August or winter.

By flanks of purple and red. And I,  
and those vicarious moments,  
are all but the same  
and will be for a while.

As I persist in counting the corn  
the stalks stretched (and to the horizon.  
One misses one turn, and it all . . .  
The tension that a wheel carries  
off the center) and the road goes

goes.  
Still one feels  
whatever silt the years.  
Like dirt under your soles.

And smiles will  
be something to continue,  
a path of bromeliads  
with the beetles arriving  
and settling.

It brushes off simply, and the road  
turns sharply.  
But the air invents not like the wind.  
With all the leaves,  
weeds, and avocados.

## Elisabetta Maria Ferrero



## A book of stars

---

Tired, for ways to see,  
forgetting that the ease of a summer night  
defends itself against my persuasion

and even if a no defies my moods  
spirals of hoping  
will bring out the necessary  
words  
of fictitious chapters  
and underline our singleheartedness

as we circle around my latitude  
and wait for  
a change of heart -- somewhere  
because fortitude  
is but a propensity  
for the alchemy is  
beyond  
silver moon or not.

Dense seems to be the night  
and groping what is  
instead of if.

**Elisabetta Maria Ferrero**

## I said, you said they said:

---

I said, you said they said:  
"We should all be dead."  
And whence comes solace, friend?  
From religion's bend?  
Does mahatma lend?

Nay, I say, from none of these;  
Better from Nature than from your knees.  
In her domain lie warriors slain;  
And in your dreams of vast refrain,  
The hopes and dreams are crystal clear,  
The hand of god you do not fear.

And time plays games with sanity,  
In moral depraved immunity;  
Time is for disparity,  
In endeavors of futility;  
Verdant cloisters of humility,  
Serve only souls with impugny.

Whence comes solace -- You again?  
Still think thee from the great Amen?  
Do you think that this is sad?  
Then in religion you've been had!  
For Nature separates fact from fantasy,  
And shatters it with her reality.

**T. Moons**



## Softly now, we're almost there

---

Softly now, we're almost there  
Where pain and fear and teardrops  
near, the cracks upon the floor.  
Gently, sir, the feelings mind  
The silent parade to him –  
Charade – And what is it all for?  
Run to it, and don't look back  
The prizes and goals are there –  
Bland dreams, illusions and schemes.

T. Moons

## Aujourd Hui\*

---

I must spend some time alone,  
And go out to the sea,  
To hope and dream away from home,  
In silent harmony.

In soundings silent, sad luxury  
Awakens with a call,  
And seasons of eternity,  
For each of us enthrall.

\*Adagio

T. Moons



## All in Nature's Time

---

First I told my father, then I told my brother,  
Then I took the phone and gave it to my mother.  
But I have laundry to do.

I heard my mother crying:

"I prayed for God to take him . . ."

I heard her above the clothes that were drying.

"But I didn't think I'd feel this way . . ."

And I don't know if I should use one cup of detergent,

"I have to call my brother, sister, cousin . . ."

Or a half – hot water or cold.

I'll never understand the washer.

The clothes I want to wear are becoming:

Tossed and turned,

All mixed up,

Manipulated by the machine.

A part of the colour that used to be theirs,

Will never be the same.

". . . I have some bad news . . ."

I can't mix my whites with brights.

". . . I don't know how to tell you this . . ."

There's a puddle at my feet.

". . . but your . . ."

It's raining outside,

". . . grandfather . . ."

But it's dry inside.

". . . died . . ."

And the friggin' machine is making a noise

Like I've never heard before,

And the puddle at my feet

is spreading across the floor.

I wonder what would happen,

If I wore the same clothes twice?

Would people think it strange of me,

Or people think it nice?

My grandpa didn't have a machine

To clean his clothing quickly;

He gave them to my grandmother

Who put them on a line;

For nature has a way of doing things,

All in nature's time.

**T. Moons**

## The Way We Were

---

Your eyes are like daggers in my heart  
I cannot look at you without remembering  
the way we were . . . even though it wasn't good.

Your presence causes me both excitement  
and sadness all at once. We cannot be  
the way we were . . . and this is best.

You caused me much pain that will never go away  
I cannot trust you when I think of  
the way we were . . . each only for ourselves.

I long for something as beautiful and  
wonderful as the product of  
the way we were . . .

**Cindy Bushaw**



## Reflections from the Escorial

---

### I.

I sit on the seawall  
two fish washed upon the shore  
dog prints line the beach  
a calloused old fisherman  
attaches leaders to his newly-crafted hooks  
and dries his thick red and white socks  
upon the auburn-rusted lobster pots  
his green sweater and brown trousers  
worn as he from days upon the sea.

Silver-glared shimmering lull of crescents  
glide forth to land  
the reflected sun  
a blanket suspended between two oaks  
trounced by a passing breeze.

The yellow-red skiff is raised to vertigo  
and slides back into the amorphous universe  
called the sea.

### II.

The damp odor upon entering that of an Egyptian tomb  
boxspring plywood nailed together  
ceiling corner dirt speckled  
we collapse on the coffin-pall bedspread.

They hover over the torn lampshade  
planning their tactics  
we pool our resources  
to seek and destroy the enemy.

Towel death to the sappers of our blood.

### III.

Cobbles on trail over the clear stream  
auburn needles blanketing the trail  
pausing in an outcropping of granite  
viewing the once-ocean floor  
hills encircling  
the cousins of the one I rest upon  
a sea of drifting clouds  
the fresh mountain breeze:  
we leave the Moses staff we found

because it belongs to the mountain  
we take the foil that covered our meal  
because it belongs to the city.

### IV.

Small suggestions grand reflections:  
should they cut loose  
or should I pull in the reins  
on the horse of my drink?

### V.

The great faces of women:  
Adriana when she  
comes in from the cold  
or Debra  
the phone call from Miami  
to the Escorial  
waterfalls of emotion  
after she speaks to Jay  
puts on that high-pro glow  
and makes us all feel happier.

### VI.

I cry  
my tear upon the page  
calls to another page  
it was homework in third grade  
you made me do the problem  
till I understood  
I cried  
the page was moist:  
I love you mom.

### VII.

Don't mean to be a student by day  
and a swirling piranha  
chewing upon the kill by night  
I'm no heathen:  
all things are negotiable  
such as my behavior.



**VIII.**

Rich and Mike read their Hemingway  
perched on the ledge of the monastery garden  
the almond blossoming behind.

They can not reach me now  
I belong to myself  
and pass them by without a word.

**IX.**

We bogeyed the ninth at the Lakes  
swooned U. of M. ladies on Saturdays  
now diving under the foam  
splashing now alone  
we liquored and tanned  
Haulover Pier our afternoon playpen.

Manchester Lake it was  
you cracked your skull  
the way I cracked your Camaro  
full of life you were  
smiling and smoking  
blond and laughing.

**Michael F.X. Cassidy**

## **Hidden Thought**

---

I saw him in the hallway and something about him caught my eye.  
It must have been something special because he drives me wild.  
I remember all the times my friend and I visited him at his apartment by the sea.  
But nothing really happened because it was always us three.  
He went home for Christmas and I thought it was the end, but  
little did I know that he would come back and ask for me again.  
I'll remember that first night alone with him as long as I live.  
The time we spent together may have been brief but it seemed like years.  
I remember what was on T.V. and how we passed the time,  
but what seemed to last forever ended about half past nine.  
I saw him nine or ten times after but it ended in a flash.  
The summer came and the distance drove us apart at last.  
For weeks and then months I heard nothing and it broke my heart  
Then I got to thinking he is not worth my time and I got smart.  
Now that school has started again it seems we never met.  
I know it is over because he won't even say hi.  
It sometimes hurts to see how a guy can just walk by.  
I sometimes dream things were different and we could be friends  
but then I run into him and the feelings come back again.

**Anonymous**



## IF

---

If you could see  
what I see  
through my eyes,  
you would see differently.  
If you could think  
with my mind you  
would have different ideas.  
If you could let go,  
like I let go  
you could be considered a feeling person.  
If you could experience with my heart  
maybe you would not be so cold-hearted.  
You're out to change the world,  
I wish to bring it closer  
Maybe you could understand me if,  
but you like to stay away from if's,  
we remain strangers.

**Kimberly Magill**

## A Dream

---

A dream is something full of joy only from King God it's begun.  
He has given me dreams that set me free.  
He has given me dreams that noone else can see.  
To have the glories of God is good enough.  
I don't need noone else but God and myself.

**Jamila J. Smith**



## The Peace Maker

---

As the Peace Maker walks through the door every one is quiet.  
Except the poor people they are still crying.  
He lifts up His head with His gleaming white teeth  
and says I'm going to save you so you can eat eat eat!

**Jamila J. Smith**

## Only Once

---

Only once I'd like to be free  
and be able to touch the sky  
and swim the oceans.  
I'd like my hands to open up  
at the touch of a flower.  
This prison confines my soul;  
I feel my heart aching.  
If I could fly,  
I'd never return to this place.  
All this I'd do if I could be free,  
Touch the sky,  
Swim the oceans, and  
Fly away.

**Mayra Zilio**



## Graduation Day

---

Graduation day for the Class of 1988 had arrived! As Helen looked out from her bedroom window on this typically warm but beautiful South Florida day, she couldn't help but think how long she had waited for this day to come. Now that it was upon her, she felt sad. Today was the last day that she would be together with her classmates.

The four years of sharing growing pains, homework assignments, exams, lab experiments, and dating problems were over. The joy and happiness she felt brought tears to her eyes. "To be on my own . . ." she thought. She knew life held a different road for each one of her classmates, and she experienced fear at the thought of being separated from the world she knew so well.

For her, acceptance to the Pre-Med program at the University of Michigan had been a lifelong dream. Her dream had come true all right, but "Maybe I can start high school all over again," she said out loud feeling anxious at the thought of being alone in a strange city.

She walked out to the living room where the rest of the family was. They all seemed nervous. Her Mom and Dad snapped several pictures as she was greeted by Uncle Danny and Aunt Cathy. She hugged her older brother and said, "Robert, tell me it's not going to be that bad after all." Robert smiled and said, "You'll be fine. Don't worry about college, Helen. It'll be the best time of your life." Meanwhile, John, her fifteen-year-old brother, sat on Mr. Hamilton's reclining chair rolling his eyes every time a picture of Helen was taken. Henry, Helen's ten-year-old brother, sat next to John. He felt uncomfortable and wondered when the misery of wearing a suit would end.

As 1:00 p.m. was approaching, Mr. Hamilton stopped taking pictures and rounded up the gang. When Helen arrived at St. Mary's Cathedral for the Mass and graduation ceremony, she met a few more of her relatives and stood outside with her friends. More pictures were taken by some of the other parents, more hugs were shared, more congratulatory remarks exchanged, and at 2:00 p.m. the class was lining up to make their entrance into the church. Two lines formed as "We've Only Just Begun" began to play.

Helen kept wondering what their lives would be like after today. She knew Gloria would be happy at the University of Miami. She always wanted to be a psychologist. Daisy had been accepted at Columbia University in New York where she would study Law. Barbara was getting married in a few months and would attend Miami-Dade at night. Of course, there was Frank. No one could believe he had convinced his parents to send him to Europe for a year before he decided what to do with his life. There were so many others . . .

"Helen Marie Hamilton." She got up as her name was called. She was trembling. The palms of her hands were sweaty. She quickly and discreetly wiped them on the sides of her gown. She walked up gracefully to receive her diploma. As she returned to her seat tears blinded her eyes. She had finally graduated! The future was summed up in this piece of paper; so were the memories.

**Mayra Valdes Zilio**

ST. THOMAS  
UNIVERSITY

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St. Thomas of Villanova, 1487-1555

