

# DRIFTWOOD

Spring 2002 Edition



EXPRESSION



Max Ricardo 2001

# Driftwood

The Literary and Visual Arts Magazine of



This is the kind of place where,  
I would cry if I had to leave,  
I would die if I had to grieve.

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## *What is art?*

*When a work is merely emotional,  
it is sentimental  
When it is only intellectual,  
it is pedantic  
But when it appeals to both the intellect  
and the emotions,  
it is art*

*-Dr. Philip Shepardson*

## Foreword

"Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!" (John 4:35)

We are being consumed by unspeakable horrors and unforgettable deeds, haunted by guilty consciences and tormented souls, and frozen into a state of immobility by disbelief and hopelessness. In the age that we live in, some people wonder why things are the way they are. Others wonder what they can do to avoid it. Some, like those you will meet in the following pages, are not afraid to try and make a difference. These people, in transition as students of St. Thomas University, have taken the time and given their consent to have their material made public for the masses to see.

I present to you the Driftwood poets of 2001-2002. Some of them are old friends of mine from since 1999, others I have grown well acquainted with since the start of this school year. No matter the duration of time however, I can honestly say it has been a pleasure and a joy working with them, listening to them recite their poetry at the coffeehouse, and sharing some of their experiences with them. I think that the life we are living right now is history in the making, and I am honored to have shared this brief moment in time with these spectacular, talented writers.

Amazingly enough, this is my last year as Editor of Driftwood: the literary and visual arts magazine, and only the beginning of a legacy of expression and belief. It is said that if you don't believe in anything, you will fall for anything. How apt. What I have tried to present is a selection of poetry, prose, and short stories that not only reflect the mortality of human beings and the hopelessness of a secular humanism, but the sheer power of immortality that can be found in the words that are written, in the songs that are sung, and the tales that are told. Above all however, lies the undeniable fact that we are watched over by an unseen God who both inspires us and gives us hope that there is a purpose in life. I hope that as you take a meandering journey through the minds and souls of the Driftwood writers in the following pages that you take the time to think, reflect, and ponder on your life and your destiny. Allow the accumulated works in this edition of Driftwood be more than just dried ink on paper, but rather pebbles that will cause ripples in your pond, boulders that will rock your feet, and mountains that will give you pause to think and reflect. Enjoy, and I hope that you will have as much pleasure and pain as I had in putting it together.

Blessed.

Dwight E. Thompson  
Son of Salt, Child of Cane



# Driftwood Spring 2002

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# Dalliances

## Poems of a singular variety

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,  
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread - and Thou  
Beside me singing in the Wilderness -  
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!  
- Edward Fitzgerald

I walked beside the evening sea  
And dreamed a dream that could not be;  
The waves that plunged along the shore  
Said only: "Dreamer, dream no more!"  
-George William Curtis

**Mamôgne Onélien**

*I Am*

My mother's child,  
The first grandchild  
A girl, a woman, a precious jewel

My father's daughter  
Strong in character,  
Soft at heart

An older and a younger sister  
The child in the middle  
Surrounded with love

Citizen of the world  
Creation of many nations

USA my residence,  
Canada my birthplace  
Haiti source of heritage,  
Africa land of ancestors

England and France also rooted in me  
I carry the essence of waters  
Flowing from the rivers  
Of the "Pearl of the Antilles"

My spirit keeps the freedom  
Of the first independent Black nation  
The freedom of a butterfly in spring

My heart filled with joys of simple things  
They hold the greatest treasures.





**Nerry Louis***Untitled*

I sit alone at times  
and search within myself  
the gift that the Creator  
has given me.

I possess no melody like  
the birds,  
I possess not the strength  
to run freely like the  
gazelle  
through the fields of daf-  
fodils.

I am neither as sly as a fox  
nor cunning as a lion.  
What, then, has nature  
given me?

The longer I sit the more  
imperfections I find.  
I prefer curly hair to  
straight hair.  
I am vertically challenged  
and stout

I have crooked teeth  
and a chubby face.  
What, then, has nature  
done for me?

I see the beautiful images  
of my Creator all around.  
I envy those individuals  
who capture the essence  
of creation  
in several strokes  
of a pencil or paintbrush.

Then, it is clear that I  
posses  
not even the skill to draw  
a tree?  
I give up my search,  
and will look no further,

it is clear that nature  
has done nothing for me.

Then a voice deep within  
cries out to my ears  
and sends a sensation  
all over my body.

I am afraid that I have  
meditated  
to the realm of the spirits.  
The voice responds, "No  
my child,  
I dwell within your heart."

Then it is clear  
and my fear is erased.  
It is love,  
Love dwells within me  
and this, this is Nature's  
gift to thee!

**Sarah Ramsingh***Voices*

Clash!  
Bang!  
Red-hot fire flies!  
Hell looks at you and  
Curses straight in your eyes:

How foolish you are;  
Mourning for him!  
Was he not only a mortal?  
A mere man within?!  
He contained faults, errors, egregious maybe;  
How stupid you are to love he!

A white light begins to fade down;  
Soft green pastures lay a silent sound.  
From a mystical voice ;  
Heard only from the clouds above;  
The voice whispers down to those with love:

He was a man that you did adore.  
You loved him for his gentle confidence and amour.  
Do not fear this feeling again.  
It will come when is when.  
The pain will last from time to time;  
But learn to let go;  
And you will see;  
That I could never be so unkind to thee.



**Janette Zamora***Play the Game Right!*

Watching the time go by,  
 Seeing another pop-up fly,  
 I glance to my right  
 And out of nowhere,  
 A light so bright,  
 Hit me like a fly in the sky.  
 Noticing your features  
 I look away and face the  
 bleachers  
 Why did I have to look?  
 Why did I have the eyes to see?  
 Why couldn't the stadium lights  
 blind me?  
 I guess it was too late.  
 We finally reached home base  
 And this disgust and disgrace  
 Is written all over my face.  
 I could have bunted and run to first base,  
 But no! I took the chance  
 and took the sacrifice  
 Why was I so dumb and stupid,  
 I could have avoided this pitch,  
 But no, I swung and missed  
 With no one there to back  
 Me up.  
 I knew I was done and over.  
 Sit me on the bench,  
 Let me think of what I did.  
 I know what happened was not a  
 Good move.  
 It's for us too see, and no one to  
 Know  
 What happened here is between  
 You and me!

**Rozalyn James***The Twins-Nya and Kia*

Little did we know,  
 that you would have to go!  
 So many years we watched  
 you and your family grow.  
 With love and adoring eyes,  
 Sometimes it seemed as though  
 you both were hypnotized.  
 The choice you made was a wise one;  
 the love of your life would become your wife.  
 From this union the two  
 of you would create new life;  
 two we couldn't wait to view.  
 Oh, what beautiful boundless  
 of new life they were; no blue  
 for the new; oh no!  
 Pink is the only color that would do.  
 God called you home and  
 though you are gone, we'll do our best until they are  
 grown  
 All of us you can trust,  
 we'll add lots of love  
 and treat them like doves.  
 On this you can trust, it is only just.  
 We know that you are sleeping,  
 and that they are in your keeping.  
 One day, we'll all greet you and we'll  
 meet you in that Holy Land;  
 where we'll all march in that Christian Band.



## Marcella Moyano

### *Lejos y Cerca*

La brisa que entraba por el balcón,  
 acariciaba mi cuerpo hasta los tobillos.  
 Un frío intenso invadía lentamente mi alma  
 recordandome minuto a minuto tu ausencia.  
 La bobeda del cielo está encantada por el eco que viaja  
 desde el altar hasta las puertas de la iglesia .  
 Cada paso que doy por las calles de piedra  
 son un campanazo que hace latir fuertemente mi corazón.  
 Ya no existe ningún límite entre lo lejano y lo cercano  
 Por un minuto miro a lo lejos, la pradera que no tiene fin,  
 inundada de diferentes verdes y decorada por especies de  
 pájaros que cantan alegres en su vuelo.  
 Puedo ver tus ojos cristalinos  
 en la espera de un nuevo despertar.  
 Dichosos los días venideros en que pueda sentir  
 El ritmo de tu corazon y tu el del mío.

### *Far and Close (Translation of "Lejos y Cerca")*

The breeze that was coming in from the balcony  
 Touched my body to my ankles  
 An intense cold invade slowly my soul  
 Reminding me minute to minute your absence.  
 The burial place of heaven is enchanted by the echo that travels  
 from the altar to the doors of the church.  
 Each step I walk through these stone streets  
 Are a ring bell that makes my heart beat faster  
 There is not limit between the close and the far  
 For one minute I contemplate the green view that has not end  
 invaded of different tones and decorated by  
 different bird species that happily sing in their fly.  
 I can see your shiny eyes  
 In the waiting of a new waking up  
 Blessed be the days to come that I can feel  
 The beating of your heart and you mine.

## Bayo Omasaiye

### *Untitled*

Join me, take a journey through pain  
 I went from a garden plush with morning dew, feasting on ears of grain  
 To bitter desert heat and dusty weathered plains  
 I mourn by rubbing salt in my wounds while I flinch from standing in acid  
 rain

Christen me Israel, I wrestled with God to change my situation  
 Drank from where he sat by a well to find everlasting emancipation  
 You promised that if I drank from your well I will thirst no more  
 If I eat of this flesh I will hunger no more  
 But my soul is still at war with my mind and my spirit  
 I speak volumes within but no man can hear it

This is the last time I reach out to you Oh Lord  
 My arms are tired from reaching out to you Oh Lord  
 Fall fast to the ground exhausted from trying  
 Lust with the eye while my tongue is still lying  
 For every hour of sin, one moment of righteousness  
 And in hopelessness I might just rest,  
 Trying to put together the pieces of many a broken promise  
 And there so many pieces, a thousand and one pieces

You see I mean well when my lips birth an oath  
 But then the cock crows three times, remorse chokes the throat  
 I kissed your cheek turned and wounded your body  
 I am no better than those who quench thirst with vinegar  
 This little light of mine will die tonight  
 The flickering flame will no longer give sight in permanent night  
 To compound the confusion I still suffer when I do right  
 I confound the intrusion when I try to take flight

If you are truly the author and finisher of Faith  
 The same one who judges at these pearly gates  
 He who speaks the future determining many a fate  
 Then breathe new life into me, my soul is at stake  
 If you are quiet without answer even when the dawn comes,  
 let the beasts feast off my carcass  
 I am tired Father, I am done.



## Thulisile Mabhena

### *Who Am I?*

Everyday I wake up,  
 To live for the search to find myself,  
 To find out who I really am.  
 I live to define myself,  
 To let the whole world know  
 What I am made of.  
 Everyday, I search deep down in my soul  
 To ask the question "Who am I?"  
 So that when I find the answer,  
 I will show myself to the world.  
 But as I go to sleep tonight,  
 A tender voice from God whispers to me.  
 It tells me that God knows who I am,  
 And that if I want to know who I am,  
 I should ask Him.  
 God tells me that if I search deep  
 Down in my heart  
 I will find  
 That I am His child  
 And because of that,  
 I am beautiful.

## Pauline Shloss-Esberry

### *I AM FREE*

Today I am free.  
 Free to dance  
 Free to sing  
 Free to cry  
 Free to love  
 Free to sleep  
 Free to eat  
 Free to hug my child  
 Free to love my man  
 Free to choose whom to lie with.

Yes, today I am free to dream of my motherland  
 To speak my native tongue.  
 To dance to the beat of the drums of my motherland  
 To enjoy the taste of my native food.

Yes, I am free and I know that it had a price.  
 It's a gift of life paid in full by the blood of our forefathers.

The spirit of old, held hands and dance all day  
 And night. Because today their spirits are truly free.  
 Their spirit spoke to mine telling me to sing  
 Songs of praises to the Father above.



**Isaac Robles***Pains in life*

There are pains in life so dreadful...  
that can open deep creases  
in the strongest souls,  
penetrating the walls of the heart  
in such a way  
that will make it bleed forever.

There are pains in life so dreadful...  
like the pain of an innocent child,  
feeling her young body burning  
under bladed pieces of metal,  
that penetrated her tender skin  
inside the residues of a crashed plane.

There are pains in life so dreadful...  
like the scream of mother,  
that knows that her unborn son  
is not going to meet his father,  
because he is already buried  
under the remainders of a terrorist act.

There are pains in life so dreadful...  
that will make a whole nation  
scream united for justice,  
because some false prophet  
in an act of hate and frustration,  
extinguished thousands of innocent lives  
merely for his own pride.

There are pains in life so dreadful...  
that not even God can understand  
and that man will bleed forever

**Jennifer Sanders***They are One*

Drying in the middle of nowhere  
Stacks of newspapers  
Bottles of "pure" water  
And sandwich wrappers on the ground.

You are living a fallacious dream  
Dark clouds of gas evaporating give you an illusion  
And dollar signs become your prize possession on your way to  
the gas station.

You stopped for a moment to feel the sun on your face.  
There, in that moment you felt near to the universe.  
There, you learned a reality that sprung salt water.  
And so it goes.

The fragility of man is uncovered when he is compared to the sun.  
He stands firm behind his computer, but frail in the arms of heat.  
Thin skin.  
They become one.  
And, Ashes to Ashes and Dust to Dust.

Sunburns and sneezes remind him of his proximity to the air  
and heat.  
Breathe them in, and then out.  
Breathe them in, and then out.  
They become one  
And, Ashes to Ashes and Dust to Dust



# Serendipity

Poetry with multiple destinations

Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

-Dylan Thomas

If I could take your troubles  
I would toss them into the sea,  
But all these things I'm finding  
Are impossible for me.  
I cannot build a mountain  
Or catch a rainbow fair,  
But let me be what I know best,  
A friend that is always there.  
-Kahlil Gibran "A True Friend"



## Stephany Pentsy

### *Voices at the Gates*

There are voices in the Wind,  
 Calling, Screaming,  
 Pulling at my hair, sending chills dancing up my spine.  
 Icy needles pass through my coat and touch my flesh.  
 Leaves dance on the trail caught in the same streams of Air.  
 The Earth herself rises up to the dance,  
 Tickling my eyes to tears.


The Wind carries whispers,  
 As tears fall from the heavens, mourning.  
 Ripples race across puddles,  
 Propelled by voices riding slipstreams.  
 Sunlight drifts down in unsteady rays  
 Through branches battered by the breeze.  
 Through the gates I see stones standing,  
 Pillars of strength to mark the passing.  
 The gates separate one world from the next,  
 Till a banshee-like cry pierces the song,  
 Silencing the voices at the gates.  
 Whispers and mumblings rise with yawns and sighs,  
 As the voices are called to rest.

### *Solitude*

All desires lost  
 Energy drained  
 Existing now, a heavy heart  
 Every beat an effort  
 In a dark abyss.  
 Tears fall searching for an end.  
 The lonely voice of a chill wind  
 Consumes me.  
 Joining in the cry of death  
 All falls silent,  
 Empty  
 Never again will sound be heard  
 No joys  
 No life  
 All diminishes below  
 Slipping into the nether world.

### *Fate's Weave*

The world is held secure by fine threads,  
 Cut one and the world tumbles off balance.  
 A thread of my life was torn away.  
 My world shook.  
 Quicker than possible  
 New threads began forming,  
 Grasping and steadying a new world.  
 As time passed, more threads formed.  
 Now a tug-of-war  
 Seeking to control my destiny,  
 Till one side snaps,  
 Leaving my existence hanging,  
 Unsteady,  
 Slowly spinning down.  
 I cling, hope, desire to explore these new links to my soul.  
 Peace crashes in the search.  
 My soul smashes on the core of truth,  
 And I will never have even begun.







**Charisse Sanders**
*Method to my madness*

There is a method to my madness  
 Black sky and quiet night  
 My heart is unsteady  
 Am I ready?

The beating of my heart is overwhelming at times  
 Black sky and quiet night  
 Thoughts sit in my head  
 Till I can no longer sing  
 My heart is unsteady  
 Am I ready?  
 What am I to do?  
 I dream, cry, and laugh  
 Sometimes expectations weigh me down  
 But I still believe I will wear the crown  
 As I sit and watch my surroundings  
 I find myself in a trance  
 Longing to fly  
 To see where the road leads  
 What am I to do?  
 In matters of love, integrity and Jesus?  
 I want to be a voice for the voiceless  
 For the misunderstood  
 For the forgotten  
 I am like a spectator  
 With eyes as open and as wide as the ocean  
 I am filled with compassion  
 For inside I contain such emotion  
 I dream, cry, and laugh  
 There is a method to my madness.  
 Black sky and quiet night  
 My heart is unsteady.  
 Am I ready?

*Can you hear it?*

Sometimes my heart wants to cry out  
 But it doesn't know what to say  
 It beats so loud  
 Whether I am alone or in a crowd  
 What it longs to say, I wonder if I will ever know  
 At times white walls are all I see  
 And inside I tremble  
 When I don't know what to do  
 His love has lifted me  
 His grace has calmed me  
 Yet, my heart cries out  
 And my mind shouts  
 Am I free?  
 What is freedom?  
 And who am I?  
 Why do I cry?  
 White walls stare back at me  
 Jesus, I need you  
 And only you  
 I cry to you, O Lord,  
 Please show me the way  
 Help me to fly  
 Grant me wisdom and understanding  
 Sometimes silence can be so loud  
 Why does my heart cry out?  
 And what does it long to say?  
 All I need is peace  
 Your peace that surpasses all understanding  
 To grow into the person that I'm meant to be  
 Help me Lord  
 For I stumble  
 Without You, I am weak  
 And my tears cloud the way  
 What does my heart want to say?  
 Confusion blocks my path





And then the tears are inevitable  
 At times feeling as if my heart will burst  
 As you mold and shape me Lord  
 What does my heart long to say?  
 Am I free?  
 My mind shouts  
 Take me somewhere!  
 Allow my wings to expand  
 Hold my hand  
 Listen to my heartbeat  
 And let my tears resemble crystal.

---

**Kera Stephens**

*If This World...*

What would happen if this world was full of hatred and no love?  
 Who would I turn to when I wanted a friendly hug?  
 There would be no one to tell a simple hi,  
 Because I would be too scared to talk to passers by.

If the world was as cursed as we make it seem.  
 There would be no smile coming from you or me.  
 Do you think that people would sing songs In a world like this?  
 When being happy is a risk.

I think that we as people should be thankful,  
 For the little in life that is kind,  
 We should all be grateful  
 Because it sure feels good to have life, and this  
 Is as precious as it gets.

What if the world was mine...

*Confused*

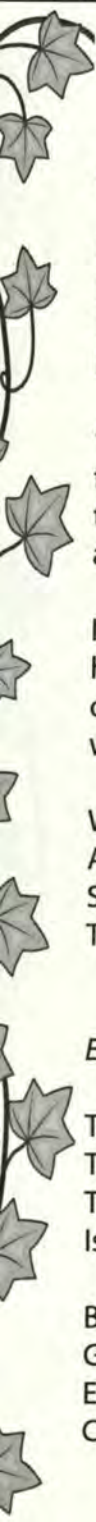
When we first met  
 you act as if u would never dare let  
 anything unacceptable happen to me  
 and your favorite girl I would always be.  
 Now I'm being abused  
 I've been treated wrongly and refused,  
 First you embarrass me around your friends,  
 and that was when the relationship should have ended.  
 Then u started hitting me

And that was when I truly wanted to see  
 That relationship was just wasn't for me.

2

To leave u I wouldn't dare,  
 Because after the beatings came words of care,  
 After the beatings u are the best man a girl could find.  
 But I guess u fooled me, and I was blinded  
 You abused me in so many different ways,  
 Each coming weeks later, sometimes two days.  
 I was a fool in love with you.  
 Each time I left I kept coming back,  
 A strong will and persistency were the things I lacked  
 But I do hope that you'll be a fool in love too,  
 And experience all the things you did to hurt me,  
 Because I wasn't strong enough to leave.  
 A fool in love I was and too scared to admit it.




**Dwight Thompson**
*Dusty Wings*

Besmirched by the likes of  
broken twigs and brown dirt  
No likeness to a dove  
had this bird on the earth.

'Tis indeed a rare sight  
for one with such spirit,  
to touch the earth in flight  
and choose to stay on it.

In sooth, no oracle  
had it been a visiting,  
or the unseen trouble  
would have touched another wing.

Where the white tip ended  
And the blue skies begun,  
So to were they mended  
To soar betwixt the sun.

*Empty Streets*

The dust hangs in the air  
Thin and dead-still  
The dry shuffle of feet  
Is all that you can hear

Bricks lie tossed among  
Girders of steel  
Empty corridors where  
Crowds once throng

There is a silent wind  
Tossing forgotten newspapers


Playing with the dust  
That covers everything

The hustle and the bustle is gone  
Replaced by peace  
Enforced of course  
Curfew brings the light of dawn

Empty streets cover the city  
Heavy with death  
Covered with a grim reality  
That the streets are empty

*Eleventh Tower: Part I*

So, you  
Want to flex muscle,  
Waggle a big stick,  
Live in the hustle and bustle,  
Burn like a candlewick  
And  
Dominate the globe,  
Run trade deals,  
Dressed in purple robes,  
Planting salt fields,  
While  
Sores fester slowly,  
And discontent brew,  
Deep in your inner city,  
And  
Freedom is for a few,  
Although you.  
Say in God we trust,





You separate the spirit,  
No prayer on the school bus,  
But bring an extra bullet,

Because,  
We are going to war,  
With children being drafted,  
Dim is the North star,  
The President got shafted,

Even if you,  
Want to flex muscle,  
Waggle a big stick,  
Live in the bustle and hustle,  
Burn like a candlewick  
And  
Dominate the globe,  
Run trade deals,  
Dressed in purple robes,  
Planting salt fields

*They call me sell-out!*

Everybody open up your mouth and shout out!  
Let me tell the whole world exactly what I'm all about  
And if you still insist on calling me a sell out, I will tell you why  
They call me sell out!  
It is all about  
People see me talking to the Spaniard and the drunkard  
People see me talking in the city and in the backyard  
Walking in the country, passing by my granny  
Pass by my best man living in the grocery  
Long time I know that, all those people do is talk  
Talking about my life and how I live the Christian walk  
Who have never seen me 'flex out' through DQ roundabout  
Have never seen me 'vexed out' with a hot mouth  
Whenever I come out, they pull me back in the sin  
Since then, it took a long while for the praises to begin  
Everybody is thinking that I want to be secular

Sipping on the gin and juice, with a bit of liquor  
The Bible say must never, disrespect another  
Sipping on a Caprisun, Kool-Aid is a regular  
Never in my life have I seen men try to play me  
In the church people still praying for me  
Everybody open up your mouth and shout out!  
Let me tell the whole world exactly what I'm all about  
And if you still insist on calling me a sell out, I will tell you why  
They call me sell out!

---

**Lunie Alexandre**

*K.E.D.*

Didn't like you at first  
Even though I didn't know your name  
Only to find out  
Nigga you cool as (blank)  
Keeping it real with me  
Every chance you get  
Mind I tell you I like to play hard to get/catch  
And we both think so much alike  
Normally getting what we want then we're out  
Usually known for being the center of attention  
Evaporated like smoke of the everyday tension  
Listening to hear what the world mentioned

*Depression Stage "2"*

It funny to know  
How our friendship arise  
Getting into an argument  
While the sun rays shined



Our sparks like fire  
That glowed as a moon  
Departing one another  
Seems a day so soon

The last few words  
Play all day long  
Little by little  
Becoming a good-bye song  
Thinking of what we have  
Can be hard to believe  
So Dear Best Friend  
Please don't LEAVE

*You*

I cry a tear  
Tear of joy  
Joy to my heart  
A heart that's full of pain  
Pain of which  
Which I hurt  
Hurt for love  
The love I known to trust  
Trust so deep  
Deep down in me  
I yearn for what I just can't reach  
Searching for that open door  
In a world full of mystery  
And when I sit  
I think of the things that could be  
For he walks in  
I look at him  
My world becomes so complete

**Sharanda Armbrister**

*Glass Cup*


Just give me a cup  
And I will fill you up  
And drink of you  
Come to me swiftly  
Hold me kiss me  
And I will drink of you  
Firm and tender I remember  
Your warmth on my lips  
Down the back of my mouth  
Come to me nightly  
Hold me tightly  
And I will drink of you  
'Til I can see clearly through you

*Back and forth*

How'd you get that scar  
I got it playing ball  
I fell and slid on the court  
That is all?  
That is all  
How'd you get that stain on your collar  
Oh, I can explain that  
I was on a hike and fell in a berry patch  
A berry patch?  
A berry patch  
I slipped in the wood and fell in a berry patch  
Why'd you get that gleam?  
What gleam?  
The gleam in your eye  
The look that drew me to you  
You used it when that girl went by  
A girl went by?  
A girl went by  
And with her took my last shred of dignity  
And your last chance to lie


**Grace Diaz**
*I Miss You*

I miss you in the distance, I love it when you're near  
 don't go away again, please; or I will break your gear.  
 You know I'm only joking about breaking your gear  
 but when you are so far away, there is a lot I fear.  
 I fear you may lose interest; I fear that you might stray  
 but every time I call you and you're not there, I pray.  
 I pray that you have not forgotten me either of our kids  
 I wish that you'd call me jus to blow me a kiss.  
 you say that you still love me, your love grows more each day,  
 how come then, when I call you answer with disdain?  
 I wish that when we talk you'd say sweet things to me  
 sweet nothings being whispered like when you and I were WE.  
 I miss the way we sleep in, your back touching my chest,  
 and when we turn around in sleep, your hand touches my  
 breasts.  
 I miss the way you tickle me when we just chat in bed  
 when we're under the covers, our own little love nest.


*Bellydancing*


I have a nice surprise for you, but you have to be here,  
 I cannot send it by email, Fed-Ex or ship, my dear.  
 If I remember well, you said you like the purple color  
 you said I do look good in it, it makes your hear jump double.  
 My head will hold a veil; my wrists filled up with bangles  
 the room filled with a scent that's coming from lit candles.  
 I hope you like the music that I will dance for you  
 too bad you don't speak English, the words could entice, too.  
 We'll turn the phone to mute, the nice mood it could ruin  
 let the answering machine pick up, we'll call back in the morning.  
 I will not do this show tonight or any other evening

you put the kids early to bed, and tell me that you need me.  
 That will for certain be my clue, and I will go get ready,  
 you go to bed and soon you'll see what I have for you, baby.  
 When I have finished you'll want to love me  
 you'll never want to leave my side, honey.

*Poem #3*

How much longer should I wait?  
 How long you think it will take  
 for you to realize  
 how much I hurt inside?  
 Each day that passes by  
 I try to visualize  
 imagine that you'll come  
 real soon you'll return home  
 and then it comes to mind  
 what you will not find  
 when you awake in the morning  
 I see that you're not coming  
 my hear sinks to the floor  
 and I go to the door  
 hoping that you'll surprise me.  
 But I just find myself  
 standing all alone  
 again.





## Bennie Hunter

### *The Tree*

I sit patiently staring at the tree  
 Little that I knew I was in store for true treat.  
 The tree appears to be dead, but it's not.  
 The tree looks ugly, however uniquely beautiful in a special way.  
 I glance at all the rest but all different in species yet all look the same.  
 But that tree...that lone tree, all alone separate from the others  
 Holds a beauty, a special truth, and difference that has yet been understood.

### *If you could see what I see*

That someone, that girl, beautiful in all ways.  
 Smart, intelligent, with noticeable pretty face.  
 A face with a perfect oval, her attire with a  
 fashion of class and elegance.  
 I find many things just from her eyes, those eyes  
 That glitter with a journey, a voyage with stories unspoken.  
 The more I see her, the more I speak to her, the more I look into  
 those eyes. I learn more and more of her...her unspoken story  
 is what I see.

### *The RA*

Look at him, he thinks he's really something. he thinks he's  
 so big. But if he only knew, knew the real truth...the real deal.  
 Maybe I should...should tell him...or maybe I'll keep quiet.  
 Or maybe I'll just someday become a RA.

### *Feelings trapped inside*

Pain...a feeling...a feeling I've felt time after time.  
 I'm searching...searching for a way...some way to  
 express...a way to release my pain.  
 Love indefinable yet a feeling in a way...a feeling I've  
 felt throughout my life. But at times much more...much  
 more intense than others. To be honest...I have lost a love  
 and now have put closure to that pain. Now I seek...seek other  
 experiences, seek other voyages but through it all feelings will  
 always...always be trapped inside.

### *What I need*

What I need joy, What I need love, What I! Need education.  
 Not even What I need GOD, What I need to be me a true person  
 Not only to myself to others. What I need...girl...girl to love me  
 For me My True...my appearance, her eyes, everything in her  
 eyes.  
 What I need to stay healthy. What I need to talk, to talk not to  
 this group  
 All groups no matter what the circumstances. What I need to  
 observe to Analyze. What I need to end...end this.

### *I see the World*

I look...I listen...I see people, students in the small world.  
 A world within it's own... neglecting the outside. I look into  
 A view...a view that frightens. A view that I wish I hadn't seen.  
 A world of people wanting to explore different places, meeting  
 New people, and trying different types of things.  
 It's almost like a game, a competition game I seeing and know-  
 ing. Who can be the best. I ask why? I try to explain, but no  
 one ever listens.  
 It seems as if there's only a few like you. But you don't know  
 where they are. You ask are they hiding, pretending, or are they  
 searching





## Vladimir Guiselitov

### *I Like It*

Life is a ....  
 Nobody gives.....  
 Fill in the blanks  
 And have some beers.

### *Choice or Fate?*

I chose to live,  
 I chose to give,  
 I chose to mourn,  
 Who asked me to be born?

### *Hell*

If life is hell  
 And we're in it,  
 What are we doing  
 Building it?

### *God*

God gave us minds,  
 God gave us souls,  
 God gave Himself up,  
 But still we want more.

### *Cure for All Pain*

When we are lonely and depressed,  
 And all the world has left us,  
 When we with grief become obsessed,  
 Life plays with our fate to test us.

We try to fight our woes with many things,  
 But all of it to no avail.

We try to find our refuge in human beings,  
 But still despite all this we fail.

But there exists one cure for all the pain.  
 It won't require money, gold, nor fame.  
 Just lift your head and look up in the sky.  
 It is your Friend's true love that will not ever die.

### *How Much?*

How much a blind man would pay to see,  
 And paralytic give to simply walk,  
 A lonely prisoner to be set free,  
 A mute to have a chance to hear waves talk?

Can one replace the loss of someone dear,  
 And fill the bitter void of broken heart?  
 Can one trust in humanity and cheer,  
 As hidden prejudice tears all apart.

So when the storms of life will come your way,  
 To steal your hope and shatter all your dreams,  
 Please do not lose your heart in disarray,  
 Because all storms will flow away like streams.


And when on life you feel you want to quit,  
 Just count your blessings and to God submit.

### *Storm*

When life unleashes storms your way  
 And catches you by quick surprise,  
 Do not lose heart in disarray  
 "I AM" will all the storms demise.

He is the God of earth and sky  
 And does not live on a human throne.  
 His love for you will never die,  
 His mighty presence will be known.

So when the storm seems all too great,  
 Just close your eyes and softly pray.  
 And know that he for you will wait,  
 And never turn your pray'r away.  
 All that He wants is your pure heart,  
 Nothing will draw his love apart





# Verbatim

## Prose on the duality of life

He had discovered a great law of human action, without knowing it—namely, in order to make a man or a boy covet a thing, it is only necessary to make the thing difficult to attain.

- Samuel Clemens

We can change. We can be different. We can defy history. Our past is but a memory dragged into the present moment. That moment is no more important or significant than the next. And in the next moment we can change it all. We do it by changing our point of view ... "

- Barry Neil Kaufman


**Tricia Stout**
*A Letter to God on the Dual Nature of Humans*

April 9, 2002

Dear God,

You gave us so many wonderful gifts, but it is what we do with those gifts that count. You gave us eyes, You gave us a mouth, You gave us ears, You gave us a brain, and you gave us a heart.

Our eyes see the wrong things, we are deceived and we turn away. We use our mouths to say the wrong things instead of praising you creation. Our ears are supposed to allow us to hear you more clearly, instead our ears hear the lies of Satan and we turn away. Our brain, You gave it to us so we could think "freely," but instead we rationalize You out of existence so we are "free" to do what we want. Lastly You gave us a heart of love. You probably thought that one was perfect; You probably thought to Yourself, "How could love ever hurt?" But it hurts.

The love You give us is unconditional, but we are in a world where conditions matter, everything is dependent on something else. People pick and choose whom they give their love to, and then they think they can take it away whenever they want. I am glad You are not like that. The world hurt You and You sent Your Son to save the world. You didn't place restrictions on who deserves Your love and You never will. You love us that much.

Truly Yours,

Tricia Stout,

**Akin Ola Akin**
*What does it profit a man to live and not let others live?*

When will I be satisfied?

When will enough be enough?

When will my best be my best?

When will the world let me live without such perilous standards?

When will the inabilities of my imaginations surmount the limits of my fears?

When will I walk out of my comfort zone, worry not, whilst I tarry yet trust all but myself?

When will I die, yet live in glory?


It is of great munificence to the human race that we all stand up for what we accept as the true meaning of brotherhood.

That my existence implies my willingness to do for all rather than self brought and inspired by a feeling of unity amongst us. What be my motive?

Can I really exist without the necessity to co-exist with my environment, be it immediate or extended?

What can hold me back from hurting my fellow man if not for morality and the norms of ethics?

My greatest apprehension would be that I might not surmount the desires that inhabit my inner core. For what does it profit a man to gain this immense and magnificent globe and lose it all? Yea though I try with all wit and might, alas vanity- it gave birth to. If it were not for the hands of faith howbeit that a commoner like moi should be privileged to stand before the human race and pour out my vexation on the statute of life?





# Imogishi

Letters and journals from a time before

All that is gold does not glitter,  
Not all those who wander are lost  
The old that is strong does not wither,  
Deep roots are not reached by frost.

-J. R. R. Tolkien

And with tears of blood he cleansed the hand,  
The hand that held the steel:  
For only blood can wipe out blood,  
And only tears can heal.

-Oscar Wilde



## Ana-Christina Gonzalez

A work of fiction

### *Steady Oak: The Voice of the Hangman's Tree*

I am St. Augustine. I am a part of its past, its present and future. My existence transcends time with my spirit being tied to this land. I shall forever be one with this earth. My spirit has entered many forms. I have been a bird, a butterfly, a bee, a man, and now the oak before you. It is as a man that I attained my name and a more comprehensible voice.

As a man, I was born to the Seloy people. They graced these shores long before white men even knew the world held more than just their shores. The trees and the sand were their hearth, and the ocean provided them with nourishment. They were the first inhabitants of this land, and they were one with the land. As a child, my parents and tribal elders named me Steady Oak. They said my limbs were as strong as oak branches and my spirit as stable and reliable. I earned my name.

When my body faded, my spirit was set free and forced to search for a new abode. Because man had named me Steady Oak, I was bound to the title. This is how I came to reside in this tree. I have resided within this trunk for centuries now. I have seen many things change, so many different types of men and epochs have graced me.

My roots first emerged in 1512. I took deliberate care in arranging each one of my branches, and over time I grew into a steady oak tree. When the white men came and settled among my past people, I was already a big tree with branches strong enough to hold even the largest of men. It was this purpose that I would come to serve these men. Around me, the white men cut down all my fellow tree brethren and crossed two paths before me. They named these paths Camino Real and Mission Rd. Over time more and more people passed by me, most of which never again traversed the road leading away from my earth. Shortly after these paths were formed,

one morning the town grew quiet. The white men I knew were running into the forest behind me, and I saw white men around me that I had never seen before. These men wore the vestments of warriors. Then I saw fire in the distance and these foreign men fleeing with the gold of my white men. When all sign of them was gone, my men emerged from within the trees. The blacksmith had managed to capture one of these foreign men, and he was the first one to lose his spirit upon my branches. He told me his story as he left his body. His name was John Pfeiffer. He was a soldier. He was English and a pirate. He had been to other ports in this new world. He had seen armed fortresses in faraway lands, with names like Cartagena, San Juan and Havana. He had burned some of these too. His spirit was destined to become wood.

The following years brought many more visitors to my branches. My land had also changed. In the distance I could see that the edifices the white men had built were now surrounded by walls, and a gigantic structure, unlike the other ones where the white men ate and slept, loomed high besides the water as a mother bear ready to protect its cubs from predators. The white men who lived here also changed. Many tongues were spoken different from the one of the first settlers, and these men brought with them the sword. Yes, my land had changed, and with this change came many more to breathe their last at my limbs. Some spirits professed the unfairness of their departure. Their beliefs were different from the norm, and they were sought out and hanged for this. They called themselves Huguenot, and they screamed their name into the winds until there was no more sound left within them. Others had partaken a little too much in the drink of the vine and had caused the exhaustion of another spirit.

Then one day, the first white men I knew took a road away from my earth. Their spirit was not as tied to this land as mine. They belonged to another, but the land must have beckoned them even from afar because mysteriously as they had left they one day returned. Their return would take a long time. Soon, new white men came. With them new times also



commenced. They even spoke a different tongue. The tongue of those who had come and set things ablaze years before. With them they brought another kind of man. These men were dark as night, and as tied to the land as I was by my roots. They were not free to come and go as the white men did, and when they fled their post, their last visit on this earth was to me. These dark men would come to mingle with the blood of my human brethren, the Indian race.

For continuity, to the new white men I served the same purpose as I had to the others. Perhaps they valued my experience in such matters. These new white settlers were very different from the first ones I had met. They used more land. They brought more people with them. They began to change the structures in which the people lived. They added a layer upon the buildings the others had left behind. Their houses were taller and richer.

The day the original white men returned I felt as if the wind had carried to me a long lost friend. I had been so accustomed to their ways and their tongue. I had remained the same over time, so I assumed they had too. This was not to be so.. The men that had left me as farmers and builders, returned more like warriors and pillagers. They were more similar to the foreign white men than to their ancestors. They used the land and the dark men, but they used me as they had before. The world of the white men had changed, and as seems to be the habit of this land, new men graced this earth. These men spoke the foreign tongue of the other white men, but they lived among the descendants of the first white masters. They would soon outnumber the old masters, and they would take the land upon themselves. They would use my branches to hang my Indian brethren. They would use me to eliminate my own.

Then they would journey into the center of the city, and they would celebrate their victories by hanging flowers from their balconies overlooking the street. They would buy fruits and vegetables from the marketplace to celebrate their triumphs and defeat, they would buy flowers to commemorate

the gravesites of the dead. The dark men helped my people. They helped my brethren remain as free as they had always been on this land because the dark men understood what it was like to be chained by man.

Under these men my land still remains, and men of different kinds have continued to come and go. Over time, man forgot about my function. They invented sticks of fire that were more effective in extinguishing life than I was. This new people let me be, and here I have remained. Over time, they surrounded me with edifices where people come in carts of fire for a short while. Most never return to my land. They are travelers. The night is no longer illuminated by the glow of the stars and the moon but rather by colored fires that men light once the sun has departed. Yes, these are different times filled with men of other lands, not at home, not at peace. They are temporary wanderers, but I am still here. I am what is left of St. Augustine.



**Farrah Jean***A work of fiction*

August 24, 1576

Dearest Brother,

I know that you have grown worried for Luis and me these last months for you have not had word from us for the past three months. It is, I assure you, from by no fault of ours.

We have not seen a supply ship in months prior to the arrival of Saint Elena today. As the French continue to raid the other Spanish settlements, including Saint Helen, we have a great number of refugees from the other missions arriving and sadly enough all we can share with them is hunger.

I have come to realize that among those of us that left for this new land you made the wisest decision... that of staying in Spain... I was foolish not to take your advice and stay in Spain also. America promised so much new beginnings, wealth, and yet nothing of that which was promised to us has yet to materialized. All my hopes and dreams for a better life for Luis and me are gone with wind of smoke that fills the air from the burning missions a few miles away.

As the raids continue, Luis was sent off to battle. I know you must be asking yourself when did he have a change of profession? Well, dear brother, the conditions of life over here render those who wish to live another day to be flexible and earn income in the best way we can. For the past month after a series of training drills, he has been staged at Castillo de San Marcos with the rest of his platoon. There, they load the cannons, perform weapon and battle practice drills in the event of an attack by the French via sea.

Castillo de San Marcos is beautiful and majestic as she overlooks the Matanzas Bay. The walls of the Castillo de San Marcos are 12 inches thick of solid coquina and rise on the shore of Matanzas Bay. She is our sole sturdy defense against a marine attack from the French or the English. We now have two common inland enemies the French and the Indians (for the Frenchmen have turned them against us).

Prior to becoming a soldier, Luis was, as you know, a farmer and he relentlessly tried to grow crops but the land is resistant and refuses to produce. Worst of all the officials do nothing to help us farmers. They provide no grain, no new farming tools nor any fertilizers. They do not care if we die of starvation as their bellies are always full and their thirst quenched, by fine wine prior to the Angelus. Luis, in his spare time, has managed to grow some corn and tomatoes, but they produce hardly enough for our day-to-day sustenance. I fear that if Luis dies in battle and the land continues to resist production, I will be reduced to begging for food...

I am anxious and scared; one minute from dying of hunger, the next from dying at the swords of the French. Although life has not been easy, we are not discouraged or stricken by hunger, Luis plays the guitar and I dance for him in remembrance of the good times you used to have together back home. These little joys are a great consolation during these difficult times.

Among all this sorrow, I also have some good news, that of the birth of your nephew José Luis Guerrera, and I also wish to inform you of my arrival in Spain. I shall be returning home to raise my son against Luis's wishes, off course. In the midst of all this death and hunger, he still believes that we can make it...he is so optimist that he has become blind to reality... he still dreams of a better tomorrow. Ah! Pobre!

Am I wrong for leaving him and his dreams behind in order to provide security for our son? We have lived in this new land for five years and yet nothing has changed in our way of life. We have become worse off then we were before. When a neighbor does not die from disease, he returns in a casket or not at all. The more we struggle, the more we go under. I want to give more than misery to my son, I owe him that much.

The next ship is scheduled to arrive on October 3rd I shall board it for Spain as Luis will be called to Castillo de San Marcos for his two weeks of duty.

Please receive José and me with open arms.

Your loving sister,  
Helena De Santiago



## Dwight E. Thompson

### *Piron of the Four Claws*

From the journal of Piron of the Four Claws, field commander of the Aztecan infantry, third in command of the forces of Free Cyrenia.

Men say of the Grinning Jaguar that he is not to be trusted; that if given a chance he would join the Quistan pirates and leave us to our fates. I say otherwise. The Jaguar promised us new devices that would help us retake Cyren, our beloved city, now overrun with Quistan, and hordes of Spanish tribesmen. I watched as they came to us, five huge machines, rolling on large wooden wheels that bumped and thundered on the rocky road. A grim group of the Jaguar's warriors accompanied them, along with engineers to work the machines on the battlefield.

Even packed, they towered above our tallest warrior by at least four hands; and their girth hid even the largest of our wagon oxen. Hemp ropes and large swathes of oilcloth covered their huge frames, though why they would be so covered in this blazing sun I do not know. Leave it to the Jaguar to devise something of this nature with his devious mind. Their construction amazed me, and I would have looked to have a closer inspection but just then a runner came with the news that another Quistan scout had been captured and killed.

The Quistan continually sent out these futile forays into our territory, for what purpose we have yet to fathom. It constantly keeps us on edge though, wondering where the next attack will come from. We have left the eastern borders unguarded, save for Tolan and his eagle warriors, who guard the coastline against any raids; which are a rarity. Our navy is positioned on the Tenok Sea, and easily commands the waters there. The Quistan galleys do not venture far into these waters now, lest they fall prey to our faster warships.

Across the causeway is a different matter entirely. The Western Sea teems with Quistan galleys and pirates. The gods

have not smiled kindly on our Sea King, though I know he sacrifices a young gulabird everyday in their name. I know that Volin has tried twice to establish a shipyard there, but the Quistan only swoop down like the vultures they are and burn it to the ground. I fear he will be doomed to fail, unless he finds some way to magically transport his ships across the causeway. Perhaps he should heed my warning after all and start transporting pieces of his ships across and assembling them on the other side.

The Grinning Jaguar and his pyramid are all that stands between my men, the Quistan raiders, and I. May the warrior-god Baedel give you his favor my brother.

The battle was fierce today, more than yesterday, and fiercer than the day before that. In all the weeks of fighting we have seen, today was one I wish I had slept through and passed on into the realm of the dead.

We swarmed across the Tenok Sea in our transport ships, as we are wont to do, escorted by a crew of the Sea King's warships. We reached the sweet shores of our beloved city just as the sun was rising above the rim of the waters. I was among the first to land and would have liked to stop and savor the sight of my birthplace, but just then the Quistan rode down on us like demons from Hell.

They always attacked with deadly precision and unnerving quietness. It was as if we marched against an army of the undead itself. They still die like we men do, and the blood that poured from their bodies that day was a red as my brothers who fell that day. Their thunder sticks cleaved a path in our ranks for their twice cursed pike men to sweep in, impaling warriors on their pikes. Our standard formation was useless against this strategy, which the Quistan had perfected, and vainly I had sought to find a way to change it. Each formation offered scant protection however, from the lightning that came from their thunder sticks.

We meant to stay though, as long as it took for the Grinning Jaguar's war machines to destroy the pyramid of Fisher's Island, where a few of the merchant huts still stand. The



machines were an amazing sight to behold, once they unfurled their huge, bent arms, and were leaded with the stone shot. The devices are of a very cunning design, built that they won't break from the stress of hurling stones that far, without increasing the weight so that transporting them becomes a problem. They are quite simple to operate, just requiring hands to lift the stone and someone to crank the lever, which in turn brings the arm into its cocked position. A simple handle then release it, and the stone is hurled into the sky to pound on the pyramid. Fully extended, it reaches far into the sky, like a huge arm from the Earth goddess. I hope that when our enemies see it they will trouble and fear our might.

I have always had a reverence for the gods of our people, but on this day I have sacrificed an entire flock of colored pheasant for Lanuk, the god of peace.

We lived, fought, and died on Cyren. We died in droves, but the Quistan died in hordes. They outnumber us, and their thunder sticks are in some ways better than our steel-tipped arrows and obsidian blades, but their spirit will never equal ours. We stayed as long as we could, until the grinning jaguars had destroyed the pyramid, and then began the retreat. I had planned for the retreat, but the Quistan are as devious as the noble Europeans can get.

The cadre of Lanukian priests with us suggested we form a defensive ring around them and the wounded as we retreated from the battlefield. We suffered heavy losses, but primarily among our Plumed Archers, who were attacked by a swift group of Quistan cavalry.

While our rearguard staved off a wave of attacks on the grinning jaguars, they circled around on the shore and had cut into the ranks of archers before we knew they were there. We lost Cirlon Green-feather in the initial assault, but his son rallied the archers, so our losses were not great. I had always fancied Cirlar to be a levelheaded young man and now to he is away from his father's shadow; we will see of what mettle he is.

We did what the priests suggested and formed a square around them, three ranks deep. The going was slow and

tedious at first and the pace allowed small packs of Quistan to harass our flanks. Although we made them pay for their attacks and they lost four men for every one of ours, our heavy losses early made our situation precarious indeed.

Perhaps one day, under the shade of a yucca-yucca tree, I will tell the son of my son what war was like, what defeating the enemy meant to us. Perhaps I'll just live long enough to see the sun go down on the battlefield and curl up with the corpses of my friends in grim defeat. Perhaps.

*A fictional account and a rewriting of the history of King Montezuma of the Aztecs Empire and Hernando Cortez of the Spanish conquistadors*



## Final Words

What matters Death, if Freedom be not dead?  
 No flags are fair, if Freedom's flag be furled.  
 Who fights for Freedom, goes with joyful tread  
 To meet the fires of Hell against him hurled.  
 -Joyce Kilmer "The Peacemaker"

And all shall be well  
 And all manner of things shall be well.  
 When the tongues of flame are in-folded  
 Into the crowned knot of fire,  
 And the fire and the rose are one.  
 -T. S. Eliot

Last words are for people who have not said enough in life.  
 -Karl Marx

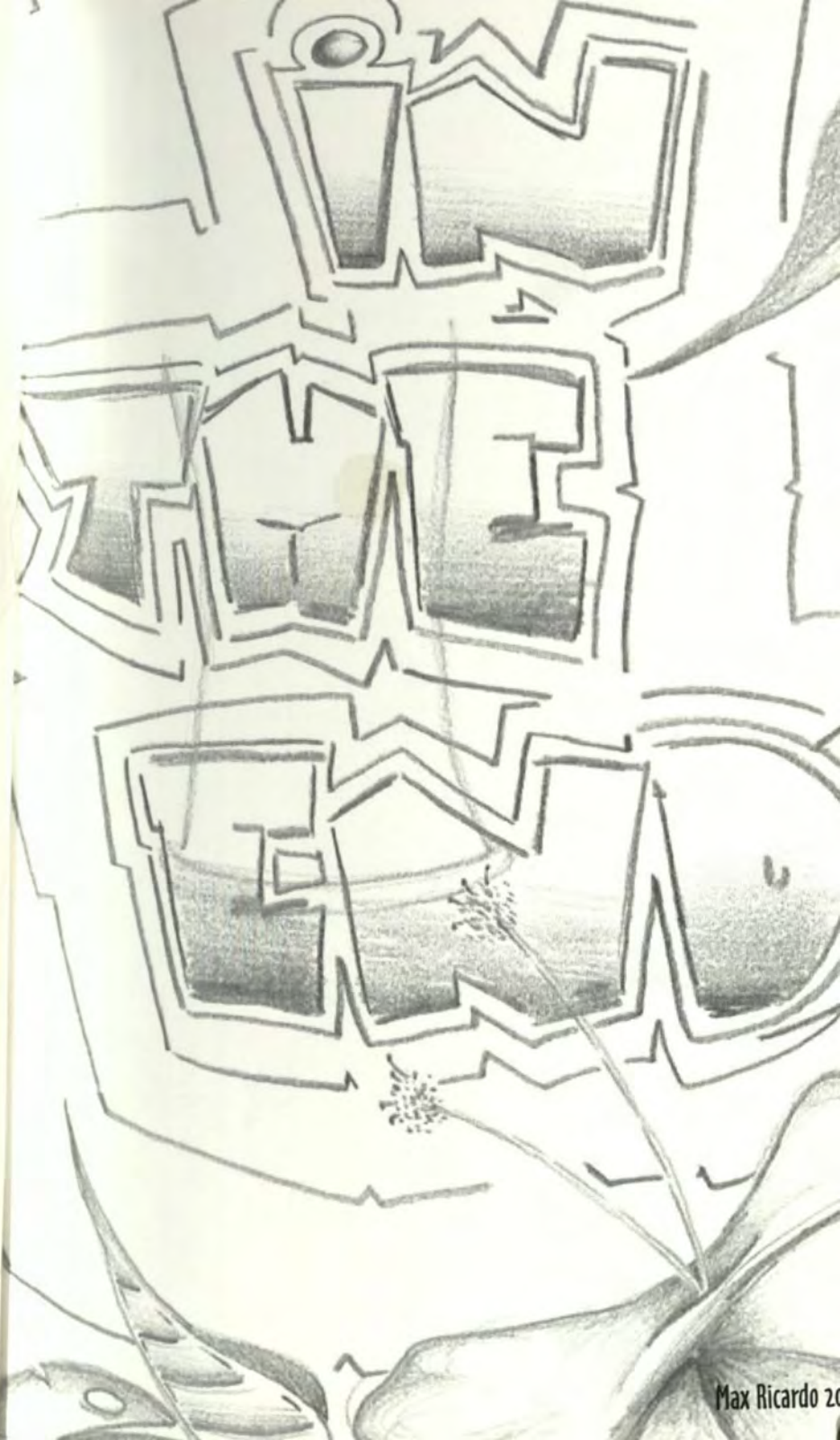
### Acknowledgment

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