Spring 2001

Commonthought Vol.III (2001)

Commonthought Staff

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/commonthought

Part of the Illustration Commons, Photography Commons, and the Poetry Commons

Recommended Citation

https://digitalcommons.lesley.edu/commonthought/18

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Lesley University Student Publications at DigitalCommons@Lesley. It has been accepted for inclusion in Commonthought by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Lesley. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@lesley.edu.
Commonthought
2001
Commentbough 2001

The magazine of the arts at
Lesley University
Volume III, Spring 2001

Editorial Board

Heather Boston
Celeste Coté
Meta Ann Cushing
Laura Farnsworth
Korey Goldenberg
Amanda Hoag
Maija Meadows
Sarah Metelman
Rachael Perkins
Stephanie Petrolito
Sara Randall
Caitlin Shea
Shaylaya Smoot
Meisha Snoddy
Chantel Wyllie

Faculty Advisor

Dr. Anne Eleizabeth Pluto

Graphic Design

Caitlin Shea
Carolyn Popejoy
Gentle Reader:

After several weeks of intense searching for the ideal magazine we would like to thank all those who contributed time, work, and effort to the Spring 2001 edition of Commonthought. Beginning with only our submissions, over the past six weeks we eventually came to sift through over sixty poems, short stories and artwork. Selecting pieces for publication was very trying because there were so many submissions that we wanted to include. We hope that our editing has come up with an excellent array of common thoughts.

During the time spent reviewing the submissions, we as a board found ourselves intrigued and emotionally touched through the power of the Lesley community’s pen. We reveled in the time spent and truly hope that you will find as much pleasure in reading this collection as we found by working on it.

The editorial board would like to thank all the individuals who sent us their work. Our gratitude to Dr. Christine Evans, program director for Humanities, Dean Gail Carney of the Women’s College, and our teacher and advisor, Dr. Anne E. Pluto, who started this magazine 14 years ago.

We close by sharing our thought that it is essential that as individuals we continue to share our stories with each other and the world.

Sincerely,

The Editorial Board
## Contents

### Poetry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Writer's Block</td>
<td>Alicia Gregoire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Breathe</td>
<td>Celeste Coté</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>June Afternoon</td>
<td>Yella Boucher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>God's Women</td>
<td>Riccardo Gemelli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Human Vow</td>
<td>Riccardo Gemelli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rain</td>
<td>Erin Mahoney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Reason Why</td>
<td>Ericka Berard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sulma Mujo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Prozac High</td>
<td>Aurora Joseph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sometimes...</td>
<td>Tara Skurtu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Remembrances</td>
<td>Rachael Perkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>for Linda</td>
<td>Anne Elizabeth Pluto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The last echo</td>
<td>Khadeja Mousa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Out Let</td>
<td>Danny Waps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Lover's Fight</td>
<td>Valkore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Voodoo Spell 24</td>
<td>Meia Snoddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Roller Coaster</td>
<td>Sarah Mehlman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Alona Liebowitz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Courage</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>My Best Friends</td>
<td>Chantel Nicole Wyllie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>What Could Have Been</td>
<td>Ericka Berard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>GPJ</td>
<td>Dana Tunick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Moon over Cuba</td>
<td>Meta Ann Cushing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>The Sky</td>
<td>Nora Menzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Star</td>
<td>Stephanie Petrolito</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
39 Chrysalis
   Amanda J. Hoag
40 Deeper into Oblivion
   Heather Boston
49 A Feeling of Lonliness and Emptiness
   Laura Farnsworth
50 Untitled
   Reasha Rieves
51 Trapped
   Ali Fishman
55 Barbie
   Maija Meadows
56 Transcend
   Caitlin Shea

16 Fairview
   Shaylaya Smoot
27 Embracing the Snake
   Jeanne Gilchrist
41 The Breakup
   Sara Faith Randall
52 Untitled
   Laura "Deetle" Nelson
56 Her Search
   Anonymous

Cover Photo
   Rachael Perkins
Inside Covers
   Stephanie Petrolito
Writer's Block

Not knowing what to write
Not knowing what to say
This happens to me nearly every goddamned day!
Frustration level increases
As the minutes drip past
The blank space on the page
Is a pain in my ass!
The pressure is on to be witty and gay
But how can that be when I got nothing to say?
Images come out in a tangled clump
Now I know what it means when one is stumped
All that comes out is juvenile rhyme
And I feel like I'm on Dr. Seuss' time.
I want the insanity to stop
But how can that be
When I'm trying to race the clock.

- Alicia Gregoire
Hearing everything-
and all the chaos of machines working
    people talking, people thinking,
and I am thinking
    about the decline of,
    well hell, I don’t even know.
I’m just thinking of how
I could get
away
and play along with the dried leaves
in the big wood.
    Yes, maybe it’s possible
that the ignorant will learn,
    the selfish will give,
    the wise will teach,
    the rich will help the poor,
and I will not think that the sun goes
down at 4:30.
    The wind is cold today.
I find that it’s hard to get out of bed.
I want to scamper
and not be in some city
breathing in the pollution of the
    unforgiving population,
the never ending traffic that crowds
    this fast paced,
    empty hearted,
    urban light.
To dissipate into the sky-
a breath out of my female mouth
ending up somewhere that
has not been touched.
Like iridescent flakes on the ground
    or crystal sands that
kiss the water and continue
    endlessly to another shore.

-Celeste Coté
i am the june afternoon. i spread my dazzling light across 1000 generations like the sun. i am the june afternoon that embraces you like a mother hugs her 2 year old child, the daughter with the sticky hands and tear-stained cheeks. i envelop the populace in a dance of soft, gentle wind that dances on foreheads, lingers on arms, barely brushes legs. i am the june afternoon, where the monarch butterflies take flight to celebrate all that is right with the world. i am patient like the willow tree; she waits her whole life to become strong and tall and finally achieves her goal. i am the remaining glistening morning dew. i am a daisy yawning hello. i am a burst of promise, like freshly cut grass. i am the june afternoon.

- Yella Boucher
God’s Women

Teller by time
Was said to be
Second
And second she was
To He
She of he came of a rib
Him of her in a Womb
Know it the Man
Is both He and She
Yet
Women of the Earth
With manly intent on all
Falls
Mother is the Law of
Her Labor

The Human Vow

The intolerant is housed in fear
The tolerant is housed
In the kingdom of
The All Mighty
He created us
Out of love
We can all create
Evil
Not withstanding beauty
Is more rewarding

Amen, Amen

- Riccardo Gevelli
Rain

And they pounded on my body like it was some rhythmic instrument that this temple of spirits will produce the music they thrive on.
The music I’ve played so many years for the pleasure of my soul.
For the pleasure of the lives that exist within me.
I’ve moved my body with the flowing of my blood.
They come down one by one, in-groups, in herds playing their sounds on my face,
dripping down,
across my eyes
I see the lyrics of their song.
Their music as crisp as this air I breath in.
Their rhythm drumming away onto the ground
Like this rhythm in my body,
the percussion of my walk,
the passion in my blood,
the heat in my voice.
Swaying my hips to the sound of freedom.
The type of freedom where lightening strikes the ground, disrupting the reality that exists.
The percussion of my steps as they strike this ground like the lightening from my hands.
Disrupting the reality my mind once knew.
The percussion of gravity taking control and drumming against the earth.
The center where objects are pulled into a circle of music.
Like this rhythm in my body,
drumming to this pounding of my heart,
producing the music my soul thrives on.
Dancing with gravity’s game of pulling.
Pulled into a dance where you can’t break free because this rhythm got a beat that you can’t ignore.
This rhythm got a beat not to be reckon with.
This rhythm got a beat with my body’s name on it,
and the swaying of my hips are its drums.

- Erin Mahoney
The Reason Why

I'm no alcoholic
But maybe a chocoholic
I never drank because it stank
It's not my style because I'm not wild
It is my tradition that has become an ambition
My older cousins have been an example
Not to stumble and take that gamble
They taught because they only bought
Soda with us in thought
There was no leverage with the beverage
There was no thinking
Because there was no drinking
The message was clear
Because the bottle was not near
Punks that are drunks
End up with their own trunks
Dead or alive
It doesn't quite matter
Because their lives are just shattered

- Ericka Berard
Sulava Muyo
Prozac High

This new high excites you,
Elevates you until your head
is in the clouds.
You feel awakened,
Like you've stepped into the sunlight
after a long journey through a dark night.

Stumbling, giddy, you laugh out loud.
Anxious to explore these new happy feelings,
you start down the well beaten path
Only briefly glancing back over your shoulder
At the tears and the pain,
before rushing forward,
away from the lonesome darkness
and into the numb simplicity of the crowd.

- Aurora Joseph
Sometimes...

noisy wind drifts. purple sweaters. silent hugs. forward letters. sending hearts. mailing secrets. just. empathy. blooming. sandscraped. washed in. downing tea. invisible poems. writing books in my head. heartfelt right here. drift. waif. loom. brighteye smile. interruption. insideout. become park doodles. trying. too. hard. never. helped. feel. more. pounding. in patterns. insane sanity. inktrail. backwoods 4 am peanutbutter sandwich. drymouthing. never saying enough but feeling more than can ever be comprehended. doublesight. analyze. mother father sister brother genre. bad skin. good heart. too open. never closing. chipped polish. dusty. what’s a turn pike? what’s it feel like? me. you. watered. enough. to. drown. in. our. own. puddles. saltdance. moonphase, eating cake. key jingle as i walk. feeling the hear of footsteps. bored with him. liking her. loving her. feeling both.

picnic playing with grass. stomp it. stop it. lips. stick. to everything. bathe away frost. sweep away film. notebook savior. afraid sometimes. thinking too much sometimes. sunprints. on my head make it hot in here sometimes. raindancing streetlight spotlights to cool off in here sometimes. cracks in the sidewalk. concretely spliced open. bits. bedsheets. all night bloodshot gazing for sleep. only to find awake. living enough to forgot about death. trance. physical. veins. hands. pulp. wandering. that space between eyes. spent. water-brimmed in the alley tonight. candy rockets. heal myself. girls. bellies with enough stars to force life through a hole the size of thoughts. swell. baby. wait. work. feel it. nine months into existence. it feels like i’ve been here before.

- Tara Skurtu
Remembrances

Your photograph, a reflection of time,
A time we spent wrapped up in each other.
Our relationship consisting of dreams and whispered promises,
I found myself thriving in the warmth of your love.
But now I am alone, left behind,
Our prospects dancing and drooping in the wind like dead flowers.
As I run my fingertips over the glossy picture of your face,
I remember that your smile once encouraged my heart.
Your eyelids were like rose petals to the touch,
And your lips tasting of passion fruit,
Bear no resemblance to this plastic, restricted portrait.
I've tried to occupy my thoughts with other daydreams,
Hiding your embrace in the cracks of my heart.
I'm realizing now that I've forgotten the exact sound of our voice,
Because you are no longer speaking to me of our future.

- Rachael Perkins
for Linda

blood chases me
wakes me up at night
in between hope and sleep
it is not mine, but yours
that travels riverwise bearing
your death in small pieces
first your ovaries
then your womb
and now your bones
lengthen towards me.

I am not afraid.

You are stronger
than I imagine.
Motherhood the key,
the reason to hold on
to reinvent and resurrect
each morning when your body
is compelled to begin the journey
of forgetting, of giving up and leaving.

Your soul holds on even
as your bones embrace the cancer
that has silently invaded and takes
what tasted good.
Your body pulls away
and you are strong.
You will not die easily.

- Anne Elizabeth Pluto
The last echo

valves - Open Close
pump
pump
pump
small body slowly shifts.
POLLUTION APPROACHES
Thud
Thud
Thud
innocence INTRUDED
Suck
Suck
Suck
panic
silent scream
pum---p
the last echo of life.

- Khadeja Mousa
Fairview

Entering I see the tarnished black bars of the gate, that will change my perspective of life. I enter as painful sap running down the tree. I smell of pine, I dreadfully walk a slow, dreadful tortoise walk. I am the tortoise in the race with the hare; I always lose. A loud crackling crunching sound comes simultaneously. A brown and withered hand of fate reaches for my foot, but I step on it. I look at all the other lovely marble blocks, and try to smell the bravery, but the scent of it always goes above my head. I reach out to try to grab strength to continue walking. Dark black clouds hang over head, I hear voices; one of them was a thumping sound that had my heart racing, the other was a lovely, languid voice trying to steer me toward the right path. I continue to move my feet, but found myself dragging my toes against the black tar, toes that started to burn and bleed. I can taste the cold in the air that was stinging my face, slapping me around. I throw my hands out and wait to be taken, an offering then unknown hand touched me. They sit there and look at me before. I hear the others singing and cheering me on. I am getting very close; I can taste my closeness, smell the destination, hear the voices, and touch the chirping, all within a sane mind. I am at Monique’s tombstone for the first time since September 7, 1999. I was scared then but am no longer. I wept. I could smell her perfume as I turned my back on the tarnished black bars of the cemetery gate. She was so beautiful.

Monique was brutally shot on August 26, 1999. She died six days later. She was my best friend ever since middle school. Now, she is a beautiful butterfly, caged in color, dreamt with depth, exceptional and exquisite.

- Shaylayn Somor
Out Let

In the window
I stand strong
To hush and protect,
The nights are long
Can words express or will they fall to
Soon, too late
Or not at all
I need to see
Consumed by glass
Whose shine is smudged
By cigarette ash
What went on the nights I left,
Whispers or sighs,
Or secrets kept
The lights go out,
And I must leave
My heart falls in,
Before you breathe
Reveal to me your inner safe
Prepare for dreams before erased.

- Danny Waps
"Lover's Fight"

Language like a spark
Dancing off my tongue.
I hope it will
I hope it will
Catch.
Immeasurable forest of brown
Eyes analyzing my words
My words
The spark flickering
So many ways
So many attempts
I want to say
I want you to say
Do you?
"I love you."
My spark now
A flame
Burns your forest
Eyes
Glass over
Whispers sizzled
Truth
Becomes us.

-Valkore-
Voodoo Spell 24

Tonight’s the night
we focus on our mellow groove.
I can’t wait for our next move.
The stars so bright
as I hold you tight.
Arms around your waist
I just want a taste.
Smell of your hair
as your energy fills the air.
Being me for me is all our love could be.
Letting me be you for you would make the process through.
The moon keeps us in tune
with each other’s mood
for love.

Spell 24:
come through my door.
When you’re gone
all I’m good for
is begging for more.

Come back to me
I don’t want you to leave.
Another day will pass,
clouds and time too,
but I don’t want them to pass without you
there to share each moment by my side.
I’m lonely, looking for your midnight cast
to make my night last
through love’s up and down
and desperate, desolate sound
of you missing from my life.

Spell 24:
I want some more
of our voodoo amore.
Tonight, come back through my door.
Save my falling soul
for your good love.
Put your heart next to mine
make it whole.
I want to feel your hand.
I want to be your man
when no one calls,
I'll see to it that you don't fall.
I'll be your oak
strong and tall.
I'll be your all and all.
I need you can't you tell?
I need you- your taste, your smell,
your smile, hang around for a while.
Your time, please be mine.
I can keep you
safe and secure.
I'm so sure
you're the one for me
for us to be
so glad together.
So happy and free
to love you,
my Spell 24.
Walk back through my door, please.
Come back and ease
this thing on my heart,
this freeze.
I want you back
take me back.
Love me please
I'm yours to do whatever you need.
I need you
all that you do
to me.

Spell 24:
come back through my door
I need you to love me once more.
I need you to do your love's work.

Spell 24:
without you, I'm no more.

- Meia Noddy
Roller Coaster

7 Stages of Life

Still and quiet
Yet filled with curiosity

Tomboyish games
In forts and camouflage

On the road to tournaments
That trigger an injury for life

Confused and alone,
My friends have left me

Self-conscious and confused
While I search for companion

Growth into success
With a life full of colors

Unsure and confused
What path should I follow

-Sarah Mehlovan-
Anna

Young innocence
Taken away by her father’s hand
Confusion, fear
Afraid to share
Afraid to open up

Anna,
Please!
Open up
Let me in
I want to understand
I want to help.

Anna, I love you
And I care.
I hope that one day
You will look back
And know
I was there.

-Alona Leibowitz-
Courage

Courage. It is the bold rush to our hearts
When in fear or trouble.
It is a profound voice that speaks up for itself.
"A voice that speaks your mind by telling your heart."\(^1\)
Plant your feet on the ground and stand for what you believe in.

While being badly injured, I can live once again,
For my heart tells me so, and I can feel it in my blood.
Following my instinct I can be brave,
Resilient to any opposition, as long as I believe in me.
Courage. It is in everyone.

-Anonymous-

(Rogers, 1993, p.272) Annie G. Rogers' article\(^1\)
My Best Friends

The reasons I love you
This is not to a dude
It’s to the ones who support me, not just with money and food.
As you have had to admit having a daughter is fun
Can you believe before me that you wanted a son?
But your son or your sons were never really missed
We always had Jared, Brandon, Kevin and Chris.

Your uniform green with a matching Hyundai Sonata
You’re a daddy and husband not just my mother’s baby’s father.
You attempt to stay awake and willing to hear my stories
And in church the way you tilt your head and sing of God’s good glories.
For the “emergency money” you leave in the jar
And me and mommy’s gifts you hide under the bar.
For your strength, devotion, generosity and pride
And the love shone through your tears during Father of the Bride.

And me and mommy’s gifts you hide under the bar.
For your strength, devotion, generosity and pride
And the love shone through your tears during Father of the Bride.
Lamberts or Capitol now the card sets your choice
And when you’re frustrated you call everyone Nick and/or Joyce.
Physically, you didn’t bring me to church, but taught me why I should go

As a mother you taught me respect and not to act like a 90210, so
With my friends and the Celts you taught me loyalty
At the game in 96 you were willing to brawl with security;
All so I can get a picture of Shaq and possibly a kiss
As I snapped the camera you proudly announced, “We’ve been put out of better places than this.”
It’s great I’m your color so I do resemble you
In addition it gets on haters nerves cause I act just like you too.
Your honesty, confidence, humor and style
Your unlimited energy even makes my daddy smile.
At my best I am you and I’m not trying to boast
But it is like you’re my girl and I love you the most.

Thanks for the concerts, the Cape and Disney World
And fighting over if I was mommy or daddy’s little girl.
If you question anything you’ve done for me please have no regrets,
Here’s what you both have been waiting for publicly
I’d like to thank my best friends, my parents.

- Chanel Nicole Wyllie
Embracing the Snake

It’s hard to tell what he’s feeling these days by looking into his face. The illness has taken away much of his expression. I try look into his eyes - beyond the frozen mask - to see if this is going to be ok. Josh sits very still; his head rigid, black-brown eyes unblinking. At 22, he’s only a few years younger than our guides, Corey and Travis. They sit at the front of the bus. Full of life. Larger than life.

I’m always reminded of how much Joshua has changed when I see him next to other men. The way they hold their bodies - the ease with which they move, the amount of movement they allow, even when sitting and joking or quietly talking. Joshua was this way at 16 - his energy electric. His face lit with a 1000-watt smile. Their bodies hum with life while Joshua’s body, bloated from antipsychotic medication, remains frozen.

As the old army bus rattles its way to our destination, I notice the corners of Joshua’s mouth begin to curve upward, an almost imperceptible change. I’m chattering away but he appreciates the bus driver’s banter - part Disney, part gallows humor, with a dash of Wild West. We call out our hometowns and in some cases, countries. Albany! Philly! Holland! Boston! Atlanta! San Francisco! Amazingly, the bus driver has something droll to say about every location, and is especially witty when ragging on Boston’s Big Dig. As we make our way up and down the canyon road, the wildflowers and aspens frame glimpses of the river we will ride. In some spots the Snake winds its way through the glacier-topped Grand Tetons as peaceful as an infant’s bath. But near Jackson Hole, the Snake narrows into an eight-mile stretch of rippling whitewater, rushing with fury where it has cut deep canyons over thousands of years. The water here churns and boils.
We all needed this vacation, I tell myself, growing more excited as we near the Snake. We needed to do something that makes us feel alive. Something that brings us together, away from hard decisions, and shocks us out of the daily grind of counting multicolored meds, monitoring side-effects, blood tests, and day treatment. Away from Joshua’s suicidal slides and an illness with an unspeakable name - schizophrenia. Sometimes I feel that I’ll lose Josh and Don both - Don, as he retreats further into his disappointment and Josh, as the illness takes more away of what used to be a full life. How much longer can I hold their heads above water?

Our paved road ends abruptly. Without slowing the bus rumbles on toward “West Table,” our put-in at the Snake’s edge. We arrive. Josh looks frightened under his frozen mask. I sense it more than see anything register. But I can’t tell if he’s more frightened for himself or for us. He is utterly dependent and hates it but we all try not to peer too far into the future days. We can barely move, but we lumber out of the bus, loaded down with layers of uncustomary clothing: neoprene wet suits, booties, and royal blue wind jackets. My disposable camera is zipped into the top of my wet suit - I’m convinced I’ll be able to capture this trip with relative ease.

We’re handed our dazzling yellow life vests now and matching paddles. Josh, who typically has a great deal of trouble with concentration, is listening very carefully to all the instructions. My heart pounding. My feet dancing. Don checks our vests and gives each buckle and tab an extra couple of tugs. “Hold still, will you?” he chides. But his eyes are also dancing. Josh stays very close.

The raft, an overgrown inner tube with a trampoline bottom, is much smaller than I expected. It looks much like a misshapen seal. Sleek - too sleek - and black. We’re to straddle the inflated side, one leg in the water, and grip the raft with
our thighs. I shiver a bit, thinking this trip may be more difficult than I had anticipated. My imagination allowed for more protection - belted seats, perhaps, and something to grip. But with alacrity my mind grasps that belts would hold me under water if the boat flips and this vision vaults my imagination into high gear. I wonder what Josh is thinking at this point. I don’t even dare to look at Don anymore - he won’t want me to see his fear.

The slippery raft holds ten intrepid paddlers. We climb up and over, clumsily making our way over its springy base to a spot on port side. I want to take the bow but the look on Joshua’s face makes me head for the port beam. Josh settles in behind me and Don behind Josh. This is hard - I can’t watch their faces but I need the break. I need to enjoy this without worrying about them. I practice my thigh clenching as we wait for the others to flop and roll their way on board.

West Table is a Class II rapid but even here, the water is rippling and the current fast. The winter’s snow pack was deep and Wyoming has had a wet spring. The runoff from glacier-fed mountains streams makes the Snake deeper and faster than usual for this time of year. The high water will be easier to navigate at some spots and more difficult at others. Travis shouts his paddling and safety instructions so we will hear over the Snake’s roar.

“We’re going to have a very fast run”, he shouts quickly. “If you want to stay in the boat, you must paddle when I say PADDLE and stop when I yell STOP. When I say pull hard, you must pull hard, you must pull very hard. Like this.” He demonstrates the technique with flair. “I GUARANTEE one or more of you will become swimmers today!” It doesn’t take much imagination to realize what he means. My left leg is already lost to the numbingly cold river - I try to imagine the shock of the icy water’s full embrace. “If you find yourself out of the boat, keep
your feet together in front of you, visible on the surface and facing downstream. Stay near the boat if you can." He insists that he will snatch us back into the boat or throw us a line. I guess he’s serious about this “swimming” business. Our yellow vests will make us easy to spot in the white and blue-gray foam. Amazingly, I don’t feel frightened or apprehensive. Strange how nothing scares me anymore.

We push off the river’s edge and the Snake welcomes us with the lateral that swamps the boat with its arctic chill. Corey sits aft of his unaware crew. His long oars steer us out of the serious whirls, away from the rock gardens, and through the swift chutes. The river and raft are seriously conspiring to throw us off now. This doesn’t resemble canoeing - I can’t settle into a rhythm. I dip my paddle into the water and pull hard and suddenly, the water vanishes, yards away from the end of my paddle. We land with a thump and the air becomes spray and foam.

The raft starts to buck as we enter wilder water. At times the raft molds itself over the contours of the larger waves. Sometimes, when we hit a boil or stopper, it twists with so much torque the family from Holland, who ended up on either side of the bow, look as though they’re in a different boat. I realize I chose a poor position on the raft. It tends to double up at the beam - the widest point - as it dips into the basins, lunges through a curler, and gets snagged by a reversal. I may become one of the first swimmers.

We make our way through the Class III Kahuni rapid - a grueling wave train. Now we have an opportunity to rest. The Snake stretches languidly before us and we bob along, gently pulled by the current. I marvel at osprey and bald eagles soaring above. We shake our shoulders out and loosen the death grip on our paddles. I look fore and see calm water but I know we have more whitewater ahead. I grim idiotically as I recognize the metaphor of our lives. The past seven years have been a journey filled with unexpected
twists, turns, and whitewater that started with Joshua's slow and steady decline. Our crises appear as hairy rapids that leave us bruised, disoriented, and even energized. At different times, one of us has been ready to leave the river, so others paddle while the exhausted one rests. We're learning that as difficult as the next rapid can be, we can survive it. We're learning to appreciate the still moments and to accept the grace and beauty that all of it brings. When we embrace and surrender to this illness it's not as frightening to live with.

The last set of rapids leave me very tired. My thighs have turned to Jello-O. My shoulders ache, my legs are freezing and I just want to collapse in a heap at the bottom of the boat. I hope for a longer stretch of flat water but it's not meant to be. We enter the Lunch Counter and are challenged immediately with a lateral wave then a series of reversals. Cory shouts to paddle around a particularly hazardous boulder fan. We use the eddies to maneuver upstream, around, and downstream. The raft moving under me changes shape so many times I don't know what my thighs are gripping anymore. My body slides, is thrown, really, one way then the other. "We have a swimmer!" Travis shouts and before the dad from Holland's shoulders hit the water, Corey hoists him back into the boat as if he weighed no more than a ten-year-old child.

There's little time to be impressed. The boiling water ahead is fierce. Lunch Counter, a class IV rapid, is an unrelenting series of hydraulics and hair. A raft ahead of us is caught in a hole - the entire craft spinning around. We are trying to make our way through the chute. The water moves fast here. Unexpectedly a haystack - an impossibly huge standing wave - materializes before us. The raft heaves as we hit. This is it - I'm going over. I feel the seat of my pants lift off of the raft just as the raft lurches right. OK. Now, I'm frightened.
And yes, I feel alive. Charged. Just as my body becomes airborne, a powerful hand grips the strap on the back of my vest. I silently give thanks to Corey as I fall nose first into the bottom of the raft. Someone else is with me, I think it’s Josh, and now someone lands on my back. We are a tangle of arms, legs, and paddles. The raft spins along the eddy line then comes to rest in a quite pool. Don reaches for our paddles and pulls us back to our spaces. I realize that the haystack took a few swimmers and I see Corey and Travis plucking them from the water now that we’ve reached the pool. But how did Corey grab me? I look over my shoulder at Josh - he’s smiling broadly now - that 16-year old’s 1000-watt smile. “What happened?” I ask. “You were going over so I pulled you back in,” Josh coolly explains with a shrug. He is sitting a little taller now.

- Jeanne Gilchrist
What Could Have Been

I should have fallen through the cracks,
I should have been a drug addict, prostitute
or even worse.
All because of this thing that is called "the
curse."
But life is not that simple you see,
At least not for me.
They all saw someone who should fail,
No reason to succeed.
And few and far between were those,
Who believed in me.
They did not realize the more they doubted
me,
The more determined I became.
And yes, I had helping hands along the way,
And gracious I am to those.
But now I’ve made it through the storm
With scrapes and bruises
Yes, of course
The darkness has evaporated.
And here I stand today in disbelief,
Could that courageous person have been
me?

- Ericka Berard
I’m sorry I didn’t get a chance
To wish you a Happy Birthday,
To say one last goodbye.
I miss you.
I miss all of your parts;
The parts that tricked me
Into turning my head
So you could steal
Friend Fries off my plate,
The part that walked out of a restaurant
With a basket filled with
Goldfish Crackers,
The part that gave horsy rides,
But most of all, I’ll miss
The part that took the last
Cabbage Patch Kid
In Toys-R-Us
From someone else’s
Shopping cart so you
Could make my Chanukah happy.
Always the jokester,
I remember when I first did one of your jokes
Back to you and you accused me of
Stealing your stolen material.
Your humor will always live on in me,
As well as your stubbornness and
Your tenacity in fighting health problems.
I’ll miss your spirit,
But most of all,
I’ll miss you

-Dana Timock-
Cuban Sketches

Moon over Cuba
A full moon hangs over Cuba tonight.
A pair of grandmothers dance in the courtyard
The balcony bends to meet the music.
The night sighs,
Unwilling to release the last note
A full moon hangs over Cuba.

- Meta Ann Cushing
The Sky

You are oh so cruel you big vast sky,
As you hover above me, oh so high.

You mock me and tempt me from my tepid room,
To come out and see you oh so soon,

You call out to me lies, telling me it is warm,
But when I emerge you make me squirm,

As I freeze in my T’s, you laugh far above.
I can never trust you because you just don’t love.

I worship you in the cold winter days,
When I wish for your warmth to melt frigid glaze.

In the mid-summer months, you hurt me so,
By inflicting sunburns from my head to toe.

Some days it is like you just want to play,

By going and hiding, far away.

When will you learn just to play fair?
Or at least know that with rain, I don’t care.

Why do you leave each day and every night?
Only to promise for next dawn’s light.

You lie so frequently about the weather,
Even in Spring with your Violets, Tulips, and Heather.
Why don’t I learn to listen to the news?

Before I go out, I do get to choose.

Why do you pretend, you cosmic azul,
Instead of warmth, being so cool.

On the days I want your heat near by,
You leave me on the street to cry.

I should someday learn, the truth about us,
But until then, I won’t make a fuss.

I will come out today to worship this weather,
But do you think I should bring a sweater?

- Nora Menzi
Beautiful, yet dangerous,
Swirling into the eye of the storm.
Look but do not touch.
Fiery rays keep you distant,
Keep me whole.
I am light pitted with darkness,
A mixture of liquid, solid, and gas.
I am immense,
I am dwarfed.
You cannot control me,
You do not want to.
I contain your secrets,
Your hopes.
"I wish I may, I wish I might."
Power not yet unleashed,
Hypnotized as you gaze at my greatness.
I am the myriad of diamonds that speckle the sky.
I am the distant,
The unexplained.
I am the daughter of the majestic moon.
Darkness is my maker.
The nightlight of creation.

- Stephane Petrolio-
Chrysalis

The curve of her eyebrows match the curve of her hips – frail.  
Wine-stained throw poured over her body, full to her neck.  
Long cocoon. Maideness dreamer.  
At peace with herself in the moments that she lets go.  
Where the conscious becomes unconscious, the aliveness adrift.  
Peaceful slumber – open wonder.  
Thick milkshake sleep.  
Her lips, dry as the air passing over them, separate, waiting.  
Her eyelids, two coffee licked thumbprints, spring open  
Only to fall heavy again across the two eyes that she views her world with.  
Peering out, while her secrets swim within.

- Amanda J. Hoag
I kissed her in my concealed presence
Then I ran to hide like a child
She watched how the crimson panic and asphyxiated dreams
left paths in the creases of my palms

She was blinded from the inflamed intensity
and the pools of salty despair
The unforgiving taste still lingered on my lips
when the oceans of hatred
sent tidal waves in my direction
I descended beneath the currents of confusion
Spiraled thoughts whirled and crashed
wandering hands searched
and I struggled for a single breath of fresh air

Wrapped in silence, I remain unharmed
drifting in and out
covered by a cloak of obscurity
The truth remained locked up inside
hidden behind
a closet of burden and anxiety

The sun teased the ocean with its last glimpse of light
She watched me succumb deeper into oblivion
The sleek surface of the water
was left unbroken

- Heather Boston-
The Breakup

When he told me what he had stayed up all night thinking about, I knew it already. I knew it instantly when I couldn't place the tone of his voice. I knew it when his language was short and quick and memorized and I wasn't sure what he'd stayed up all night thinking about, ditching me or the best line to use. And for a few sentences I wasn't sure what was going on, what he was really saying, what he really meant. He was talking to an audience that didn't include me. I didn't feel anything. I expected to feel something. The nothingness lasted for a long silence after he finished his tailored lines. He was looking at me so proud of himself for breaking it to me so gently, so glad he was a caring man, he had taken my feelings into consideration after all. And he was so sure I would be heartbroken.

"What?" I yell, long and drawn out like. He is a sensible, sedate man, a man that hated feet stomping and object throwing. He wasn't prepared for what I could do to him. The whirlwind of tears and screaming and broken furniture that I could unleash on him. The craziness of a white trash American girl who has known nothing but craziness and chaos her whole life, a girl who loves his rationality, his everything in its place, his reasons for everything and his questioning of the validity of emotions. It wasn't enough to say "I have issues". He didn't accept that and didn't understand that. And so I stopped that. So what if I threw some stuff at him? Didn't he understand that I could do so much more? Didn't he
"Just give me this. I usually some to my senses."

"Do you?" in that condescending, pacifying way. That's what he says when he thinks I've made a humorous declarative statement. "You're so silly" he'll tell me. I like amusing him. I try to figure out why he's chosen me, what have I given him? I ask him if he just keeps me around for the jokes and he just laughs.

I must give him something. An extremely brilliant man, he places high value on people's intellectual capabilities. I used to think I was at least as smart as him. Now I know that's not true, that when I'm with him I'm incapable of making coherent sentences. "But you're so clever," he'll say, when I think I can't do it anymore, that my faults are too apparent and I believe him.

"Come on, go get ready." He's beginning to get worried. Maybe breaking up with me in person wasn't the best idea when I have to get on a plane in a few hours. I can see him thinking of ways to get me ready without appearing insensitive.

For an engineer he is surprising in tune with my basic emotions, he could tell when I was mad before I would even start to yell. Innocent in his affect, he would ask me what was wrong and then wrap his arms around me. When standing I only came up to his mid stomach; I could easily hide in his lanky body. "I don't have any feelings." I knew better, so I would smile and say, "Of course you do, you just can't connect with them." He laughs when I ask him what his feelings are and claims he can't remem-
The Breakup

When he told me what he had stayed up all night thinking about, I knew it already. I knew it instantly when I couldn’t place the tone of his voice. I knew it when his language was short and quick and memorized and I wasn’t sure what he’d stayed up all night thinking about, ditching me or the best line to use. And for a few sentences I wasn’t sure what was going on, what he was really saying, what he really meant. He was talking to an audience that didn’t include me. I didn’t feel anything. I expected to feel something. The nothingness lasted for a long silence after he finished his tailored lines. He was looking at me so proud of himself for breaking it to me so gently, so glad he was a caring man, he had taken my feelings into consideration after all. And he was so sure I would be heartbroken.

"Whaat?" I yell, long and drawn out like. He is a sensible, sedate man, a man that hated feet stomping and object throwing. He wasn’t prepared for what I could do to him. The whirlwind of tears and screaming and broken furniture that I could unleash on him. The craziness of a white trash American girl who has known nothing but craziness and chaos her whole life, a girl who loves his rationality, his everything in its place, his reasons for everything and his questioning of the validity of emotions. It wasn’t enough to say “I have issues”. He didn’t accept that and didn’t understand that. And so I stopped that. So what if I threw some stuff at him? Didn’t he understand that I could do so much more? Didn’t he
"Just give me this. I usually some to my senses."

"Do you?" in that condescending, pacifying way. That's what he says when he thinks I've made a humorous declarative statement. "You're so silly" he'll tell me. I like amusing him. I try to figure out why he's chosen me, what have I given him? I ask him if he just keeps me around for the jokes and he just laughs.

I must give him something. An extremely brilliant man, he places high value on people's intellectual capabilities. I used to think I was at least as smart as him. Now I know that's not true, that when I'm with him I'm incapable of making coherent sentences. "But you're so clever," he'll say, when I think I can't do it anymore, that my faults are too apparent and I believe him.

"Come on, go get ready." He's beginning to get worried. Maybe breaking up with me in person wasn't the best idea when I have to get on a plane in a few hours. I can see him thinking of ways to get me ready without appearing insensitive.

For an engineer he is surprising in tune with my basic emotions, he could tell when I was mad before I would even start to yell. Innocent in his affect, he would ask me what was wrong and then wrap his arms around me. When standing I only came up to his mid stomach; I could easily hide in his lanky body. "I don't have any feelings." I knew better, so I would smile and say, "Of course you do, you just can't connect with them." He laughs when I ask him what his feelings are and claims he can't remem-
"Please don’t do this to me."

"All right, I’ll think about it if you just get ready." Now he’s bribing me, I know it but I need to grab onto something, I need him to soothe me somehow. It’s exactly what I want to hear and it’s the only thing that will get me moving and he knows it.

But maybe he is rethinking it. He watches me walk away, trying to decide if it’s the last time he’ll see me like this. I know he’s confused, this was supposed to be cut and dry — just dump me and send off. Things are complicated and distasteful.

He used to teach University back in Australia and I can see how he must have been the most wonderful professor. He knows everything and has a clear, patient way of explaining it all. He tells me why things are the way they are and then it makes so much sense and is so simple. He can explain deregulation or the process used to change oil into gas or why there will never be able a truly efficient solar power car.

"Oh" I say. I love asking him questions because I know that he will tell me the truth.

"I just want you to be able to validate your arguments," he’ll say. My arguments are nonsensical to him, a bunch of thoughts and passions expressed in a circular, jumbled argument. When I manage to make sense he easily makes more sense. He has an answer for everything, memorized facts that aren’t even memorized anymore they’re just ingrained in his consciousness. Numbers, facts, figures, the periodic table, he knows it all.
"We could work it out. We could." He's packed up my stuff and is carting it out to the car. I follow him meekly, still protesting.

"But I don't love you." He's told me this before. He told me this when I first told him I loved him. He told me this again when I repeated myself the next morning. I asked him when he thought he would love me? "You'll find my definition of love in A Tale of Two Cities." I hate Charles Dickens. "Just tell me what that means!" He says that true love means sacrificing yourself to the guillotine so your beloved can live happily ever after with another lover.

"I wouldn't go to the guillotine for you either."

I ask him who he loves and he only names his parents.

"What do you love?"

"My computers of course." His house is cluttered with evidence of his love: machines and equipment are the main furnishings of his house. Bikes, tools, field hockey equipment, skis, tennis stuff, computers. He actually owns four computers, not counting the ones at work he is paid to play with. Two are partially dismantled, waiting for him to finish building then into something better.

What does that say about a person whose warmest affections lie with cold, hard, lifeless object? Everyday he goes to work and painstakingly goes through computer code, trying to find the code line
Kissing him was safe and sweet, but also mechanical and uninspired. His lips never seemed to consume me and I wanted to be devoured. The way he touched me, while pleasing, seemed too thought out and unimaginative.

There's a picture on my desk of us as Disneyland, going down Splash Mountain. We're sitting in the exact middle of the boat and the picture was taken right as we started our steep descent down the mountain. Everyone in the picture has their mouths open to scream, faces crinkled up in an expression of exhilaration and surprise, as the bottom drops our from under us. Except for my lover, who is sitting sedately behind me with one arm around my tummy, his mouth closed, one corner turned up in the slightest hint of a smile. He is virtually expressionless, seemingly passionless.

"You're very idealistic," he would tell me.

"You could save the world, you're so smart. You really could" I wanted him to use his superior intelligence to save the world from ecological disater.

"Ahh, wouldn't pay enough" he said dismissively.

"But what have I done to you?" I say to break the silence. On any other day we would be touching at least, now we're barely talking. We're travelling to the airport now, and the half hour ride is going by too quick. I feel like I need to say something, anything to get him to change his mind.
"You make me mad." It's hard to know when he's mad. When he's mad he seems calm. Nothing I can do will elicit a reaction. He will sit there calmly while I am throwing things at him and act like nothing is happening, making me angrier. He is unlike every other mad person I have known. How was it possible that I could make this gentle man mad? There seems to be no end to his sweeping patience and the freedom it allowed me. In retrospect, I realize that I threw one too many temper tantrums, insulted his friends a couple times too many, and listened to Snoop Dogg a bit too loud.

Now we're getting close to the airport and I'm afraid. I'm afraid he's going to just drop me off at the gate instead of going inside with me. I need more time with him, I want to convince him he is wrong, I am going to beg him to stay with me. He has never just dropped me off at the gate.

The most generous man I have ever encountered, there seems no limit to giving. He particularly liked to take me shopping and delighted in giving me things that I had never had before.

"If you like it you can get it," he encouraged me. I flew to California whenever school allowed. He took me wherever I wanted to go, even driving me down to LA so I could go to Disneyland. He took me to the beaches in Monterey and Santa Cruz, wineries in Napa Valley, skiing in Tahoe, gambling in Reno, to his friends beach houses, their winter houses, and their weekend houses. All this money floating around me and I was in a different world, inhabited by different people. Older,
more refined people, smart and successful, all foreign and all rich.

"Don't do this to me." I plead. He has driven up to the gate and is depositing my luggage on the curb. He's just going to leave me and I'm a mess and have to sit through a long plane ride in this condition.

"Please stop," he implores. He'll do anything to make me stop crying, stop causing a scene. It is a scene now, a very dramatic curbside drop off. I stand there pleading with him and he's visibly agitated. He's unsure of what to do next, his computers never taught him about this. He just wants to extradite himself from the situation as soon as possible. This was his whole reason for not going in with me: an easier, cleaner get away. I realize he's not infallible and he's scared of the my emotions and the emotions I bring out in him.

He hugs me and sends me on my way, not even waiting for me to walk inside.

"Are you ok Miss?" a man asks.

Not answering him, I brush past him into the airport. Tears still streaming down my face, I realize that he's afraid of a lot of things too. He's scared of the recession. He's afraid that he won't be able to afford me anymore. I need too much. I require too much emotion and attention. For all my cajoling and wailing I knew. I knew that when a man like this makes up his mind it's impossible to persuade him otherwise. No matter how much cry I know it's ultimately useless. All the things that he gave me, the money, the gifts, the expensive restaurants, the trips, the consideration, the
protection, are now gone. It was beginning to get too
comfortable. While he is somewhat settled in the routine
of his life, I am just starting to figure out what to do with
mine. Maybe this bit of cruelty is the kindest thing he
could have done for me. He has shown me all things life
has to offer, all the glorious possibilities; he encouraged
me to expand, to try new things. A part of me knew this
when he told me, a small creeping sense that maybe he
wasn’t what I needed. I was searching else and I needed
an impetus that would force me to get my act together and
find the nerve to move forward. To make me realize that
the time is now, not later, to achieve all that he has shown
me and all that he hasn’t.

- Sara Faith Randall
A Feeling of Loneliness and Emptiness

Sitting in my room
I remember,
The touch of your skin with a three day stubble,
The curve of your cheekbones,
The softness of your lips as I outline them with my finger-tips,
And the look in your eyes that see into my soul.

Sitting in my room,
Your familiar scent is on the hand me down sweater you gave me,
Creating a feeling of you,
It creates a memory of you that lingers forever.

Sitting in my room,
Your voice echoing in my mind.
Your words so soft and so comforting when whispering "I love you."

Sitting in my room,
Feeling the warmth of your touch,
As you caress my body,
Making it tremble and lose control.

Sitting in my room,
A hunger overcomes me,
A hunger for love,
A hunger for you.
But while I am sitting in my room,
I am alone and empty,
I am without you.

- Laura Farnsworth
Only slanted eyes can see my hurt
But listening ears can help.
My latest problem has almost consumed me,
and kept me from myself.
If only my world could start over,
And remove all the hurt you caused.
If only I could get away.
If only the togetherness was lost.
Why do you try to be so tough, so hard?
Won’t you even listen to my tears?
Don’t you realize I’m scared?
That I have within me harsh fears?
No, because you only think of you.
It’s never about what I want, it’s just about “mike.”
Never about what I want to happen,
It only matters what you like.
Why do I even bother, when you treat me like shit?
You know I’m sick of it!
No longer will I deal with your lies,
nor your stupid excuses!
No more of my tries!
But how can I say this?
I know I’ll continue to withstand your emotional bruises.

- Reasha Rieves
Trapped
in a universal parallel
the days pass me by
dreams flow away like a river
tears lost in sighs
terror suffocates me
lust eludes me
hours slowly creeping
a minute
for all of eternity
blood drips from a thorned cobweb
the air closes in tight
euphoric domains lie so far ahead
troubled torment a part of everyday life
spiders gliding through elephant veins
and rats in the sea
guarded by the monsters that lie within
darkness kills the light
and then it starts again

- Ali Fishman
Two hours 'til the bomb goes off. Two hours to figure myself out. One hour, fifty-nine minutes before I'm blown away. Okay who the heck am I; this is so hard 1 hour 58 minutes ah where do I start where do I end. I was born or rather thrown into this world. I had an average childhood I knew how to tie my shoe when I was five. During first grade I stopped spelling my first name in all capitals. At the end of first grade I learned how to spell my last name. One hour 50 minutes. At age seven I ask my mom what sex was, age seven I still don't know what sex was, age seven I still don't know what sex is my mom says it's something a married man and woman share. For three years I think sex is some kind of food or something. One hour 42 minutes 'til the bomb goes off. Am I normal? One hour 38 minutes. I started the viola at age 10. The last time I played it was my high school graduation. One hour 35 minutes and my past comes flooding in to my mind. My sixth grade teacher told me that I had to write in cursive because they would send me back to elementary school if I didn't write in cursive. I haven't written in cursive since age 12. One hour 30 minutes 'til the end of my life. In 8th grade I was suicidal. In 8th grade I got straight A's. In 8th grade at age 13 I started wearing chains. One hour 25 minutes left the time is ticking and my heart is beating faster. Ninth grade I became addicted to duct tape not
much has changed since then. Age sixteen I try to open both doors to my closet, but they are both locked from the outside. One hour 20 minutes and I'm still not sure what love is. What is love? I have tried to figure out love for a long time here's what I have found thus far. Love is the rose petals that sit on the back stairs until the cat comes by and eats them. Love is a frozen piece of cake from my grandparents' 50th wedding anniversary. Love is the two geese that swim together in the pond behind my house. Love is the two women holding hands in Boston the time I was looking at potential colleges. Love is the puppy-dog that brushes up against your leg at the dinner table. One hour 10 minutes 'til the end. Life seems so short so frustrating yet tolerant. Life is the torn up scratch lottery tickets under a park bench in Central Square. Life is moving on getting away staying free. Sixty-nine minutes 'til oblivion. Sex and love aren't the same thing. One hour of the rest of my life. To be quite honest I'd rather stay up all night talking to someone than to have sex. Sex seems so empty compared with other things. 50 minutes left. What is the meaning of life? According to my dog the meaning of life is getting your belly rubbed and eating food from a small round dish. 42 minutes left 42 is the answer to all questions. 40 minutes left why am I here? Some people say they see a spark in my eyes. Some say it's a
spark of intelligence other say it's the look of an observer. And still others think the glare in my eyes means I'm up to no good. Half an hour left. One more sitcom I could be watching. I sit alone in the dark looking at my reflection in an antique mirror. My blue eyes deep in trance. Voices swirl around in the background. 25 minutes left. My heart is about to pound right out of my chest. My palms sweat and my mouth is dry. What do I find romantic? 20 minutes left. The things I find romantic are things that neither person has control over. Like the sunrise after talking to someone all night long or that one song that comes randomly on the radio. 15 minutes left and my eyes close quietly shut. I see myself laughing at age five, I see myself crying at 13, I see myself falling off my bike, I see myself asking my mom what sex is, “Mom what is sex,” my small child voice asks. 10 minutes left. small child voice asks. 10 minutes left. Ten is not divisible by three. My heart slows down and beats softly. 5 minutes left five is my lucky number. 4... it's New Year's Eve. 3... three is my unlucky number. 2 minutes left and I am completely calm. I good-bye cruel world. Zero... it didn't go off... Note to self: never buy a bomb out of the back of some guy's truck.

Oh well, I guess the only important thing I need to know right now is: what's for dinner?

Laura “Deetle” Nelson
Barbie

I had a Barbie
Did you ever have a Barbie?
I had Whitney, one of Barbie's friends,
A precursor to Teresa.
Whitney had hair down to her knees,
My sister cut it into a bob.

I got to be Barbie.
The funny thing is I'm not 5'8"
I don't have blonde hair, I'm not even white,
But I got to be Barbie.
I got to wear a long, pink gown,
And a big Barbie sash.
My hair was brushed and fluffed
I wore white shoes purchased at Payless minutes before.
My managers were having the hardest time covering
my tattoos,
But I got to BE Barbie.
I wore pink blush, silver sparkly eyeshadow.

A whole crowd of girls awaited, milling about with their parents.
Little babies and little girls lined up to get a preprinted autographed Picture of Barbie and her friends.
One mother was mad because I am not white,
But I got to be Barbie!

-Maija Meadows-
Her Search

Waking up early that warm spring morning, the mirror of truth positioned the spotlight on her who has managed to gain 400 lbs. overnight. She looks back, pondering her vision, standing in every possible direction; she searches for her skinny side in fear. Her brown, slightly longer than shoulder length hair, whisks in her spin as she dashes for the shower desperately to erase her mistake of eating too much the night before. Why could she not have any self control? Why did she have to eat that piece of hard candy she found in her bag on her train ride home? My God, she does not have to look like this if hole in her stomach that she considered to be power. Scrubbing intently in the steamy shower with her bar of Oil of Olay soap, she realized that there is not much time before that annoying morning meeting that she will inevitably be late for.

Unable to even consider her current thoughts about her job, she speeds out of the shower drying herself on her walk to her dresser. Scrambling through the top drawer, hunting to find a set of matching bra and panties, she glimpses out of the corner of her eye and faces the reality of her reflection in the mirror, the truth she had been trying to deny the moment her eyelids lifted earlier that morning.
Despite how hard she scrubbed or how hot the water was her weight remained. The clock continued to count as she sat wrapped in her wet green towel on her bed contemplating the next 15 minutes of her life. Should she skip that annoying meeting to workout for the next six hours? Another day at the gym. Pulling out her favorite pair of pants and a top to match it she glances at the clock one more time and realizes that she only has four minutes before the meeting starts.

Faster than even she can realize, she is dressed with her hair and makeup done, ready to face the world and its acceptance. Grabbing her bag and a bottle of water she stops one more time and gazes in the mirror smiling as she whispers, Yeah, I still got it. Standing tall and slim wearing a beige long sleeve collared blouse, with matching fitted pants and rustic brown boots, she heads for the door. Taking one more look around the room making sure she has everything; her hand glides swiftly across the air for the gold doorknob and opens the bedroom door. Running down the hall and out to the porch, the sunlight dances across her face as she takes a deep breath hustling down the street ready to begin her day.

Who is this girl who torments herself in search of something early that spring morning? She is I; I am the one who goes through this task every morning in search of desire that is actually unobtainable.
As the questions steer, who am I?

Well, I am you. I am what you think you like, and I am what you see in the mirror everyday. I am also the diet plan, and the hours of sweat produced on the treadmill, and the unconfidant stare that looks back at you in a reflection. This is your story of the impossible measures you go up through to make the world happy.

-Anonymous
Transcend

I want to sleep underneath a pine tree...
Submerged in the skies of the desert
A tall pine with long awkward branches
Providing shelter without water or complaint
I want to dig down into the earth
With my naked hands and
Place my soul on the surface
I want to write a poem that makes you smile
Like a pine tree in the middle of the desert

- Caitlin Shea
Contributors' Notes

Ericka Berard is from North Kingston, Rhode Island. She is 18 years old and plans to major in Education.

Heather Boston is a freshman in the Women's College majoring in Art Therapy.

Yella Boucher is an avid soccer player. She enjoys constantly expanding her horizons, most recently into the world of Irish Punk (Dropkick Murphys). She is a sophomore majoring in Art Therapy. She wished to thank Alan Holt who introduced her to the fae and for being her touchstone.

Celeste Coté is a transfer student that moved back to the East Coast from Seattle, Washington. She is currently studying environmental education. She loves to write and travel. This piece is dedicated to those that nature has found.

Mera Ann Cushing a native Bostonian traveled to Cuba in January 2001 with Lesley University and Art Institute of Boston. Currently she is a junior pursuing an Art and find creative ways to share her impressions.

Laura Farnsworth is a freshman who is studying to earn a Masters degree in Special Education. She has a passion for music and hopes to incorporate her music into her teaching. She is enjoying the college experience and the "growing" experiences that go hand in hand with the college life.
Riccardo Genelli born in Newton, moved to Billerica, MA at age 9. He is a Sculptor/Fine Artist at AIB. His poetry consists of religious and social content. A dreamer who dreams with passion is a dreamer of what has yet to come.

Jeanne Gilchrist is a graduate student in the Counseling Psychology Division of GSAS of Lesley University.

Alicia Gregoire is a current employee at the School of Management. She graduated from the Women’s College in May 2000. She enjoys writing and hopes to continue to do so for a long time.

Amanda Hoag moved here from Shaftsbury, Vermont. She is a freshman here at Lesley University currently working for a degree in either English or Global Studies. She loves meeting new people and traveling.

Aurora Joseph is a sophomore at Lesley University and is thoroughly enjoying incorporating writing into her college experience. Poetry is a new form of creative expression for her and very exciting.

Alona Liebowitz is a junior in the Women’s College, majoring in Special Education.

Erin Mahoney is a sophomore in the Women’s College at Lesley University. She intends to major in Middle School Education and English.
Maija Meadows is a sophomore in the Women's College. She transferred from the University of Kansas.

Sarah Mehlman is a freshman at Lesley University.

Nora Menza is a sophomore at Lesley University. After viewing a particular beautiful sunset, she wrote this poem.

Khadeja Mousa is a sophomore at Lesley University.

Sulma Mijio is a 19 year old freshman from Chelsea, Mass. As a freshman here at Lesley her major is education.

Laura "Deetle" Nelson If your aim is to figure our Deetle, turn back now before you get lost. Deetle is a Duct tape wiz, a poet, a Minnesotan (it's really cold there) and an English major. Deetle makes social norms go poof in a cloud of logic. Some people get weird as they grow older, but Deetle stays constantly weird while continuing to meet people to spread what she calls "Deetle Logic." A favorite quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson, "I hate quotations, tell me what you know."

Rachael Perkins is a freshman at the Women's College. She enjoys reading, snowboarding, and creative writing, and looks forward to traveling someday.

Stephanie Petrolito is a senior in the Women's College, managing in Human Services.
Carolyn Popejoy is a graduating senior at Lesley’s Women’s College majoring in Business. She has a background working with Computer Technology, so she was happy to help collaborate to put together the Commonthought Magazine.

Anne Elezabeth Pluto founded Commonthought Magazine 14 years ago when she first came to teach at Lesley University.

Sara Faith Randall is a graduating senior from South Freeport Maine. She is ready to leave Boston and experience life and hopes her time at Lesley University will prove to have been time well spent.

Reasha Rieves is a freshman at Lesley University. Poetry helps calm her down when she is upset. It’s her release.

Carolin Shea has been writing poetry for several years. She is grateful to be at Lesley University because of the support of creative endeavors, such as Commonthought Magazine.

Tara Skurtu is a first year student in the Women’s College from Ft. Pierce, Florida. She wants to study Art Therapy and hopes someday to be a midwife. She has writing in self-published zines.

Shaylaya Savoor is a sophomore who is working towards individualism by way of living life and seeing what life as an explorer has to offer. She enjoys reading, writing, and dancing.
Meia Snoddy is a freshman from Houston, Texas. After much success in high school debate she went on to write her own works. She currently has a poetry book that is waiting to be published.

Dana Tunick is the teaching assistant for CDRAM 2050: Play Production: Shakespeare. Aside from living in the theatre, Dana is currently a first semester senior majoring in Humanities with a minor in Education. She would like to work in Children’s Television after graduation.

Valkore is a sophomore at Lesley University. Valkore enjoys little bits of sunshine and brownie sundaes. Valkore also believes in the power of cheese, and was delighted to work on this project.

Danny Waps is a first year student at AIB. He has written the poems that warm the hearts of families all over the world. He also enjoys playing tiddlywinks with his ever so inspiring optometrist Dr. Feechol. That’s all he is about.

Chanel Nicole Wyllie is a Boston, MA native from the Codman Square region of Dorchester. Now in her senior year at Lesley, she plans on teaching middle school Language Arts. Ms. Wyllie shares her creative writing talents with her cousins.
Commonthought 2001 was designed and produced by Carolyn Popejoy and Caitlin Shea using Pagemaker 6.5. The fonts used include Mistral, Palatino, Oxford, Times, Rockwell, Humanist Regular, A Garamond, A Garamond Italic, Bookman, Modern No. 20, Lucida Sans, Times New Roman, Sand, and Rockwell. The book was printed by Kinko's Inc. and published by the Humanities Division of the Women's College of Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.