

THE FIORETTI*
SOARS THROUGH
CRANIAL CLOUDS
IN HOPES OF CASTING
ALONG
BRAINSTORMS
INTERMITTENT
FLIGHT.
ITS



FIORETTI

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Cover design by Pat Paquin

I AM

by Bob Melevin

I run, but am afraid to walk.
I hear, but do not listen.
I touch, but am afraid to feel.
I comprehend knowledge, but cannot spread wisdom.
I recite prayers, but do not communicate with my god.
I see, but am blind to the living things.

I am what I am and cannot be changed.
Or am I afraid to change?
Am I afraid to walk, to listen, to feel, to communicate,
to see?
Do I live for myself or do I live for others?
I must look for my life.

I search but cannot find.
I've refrained from my past joy and cannot find the
so called joy of living.
Where are you self?
Where are you concealed?

I now relinquish my life.
I can no longer face life.
My search has failed; How can I live?
But in my desperation, I find joy.
I realize man is made for life, and not life for man.
I now accept my sufferings and pain.
I exist to remain in existence.

My knowledge begins to show wisdom.
My eyes are open through experience.
I grope for the natural world.
I listen to myself and not to others.
The trees, grass, and waters are my communication with
my god.
I no longer run in search of life; I walk in acceptance
of its existence.

I am what I am and can be changed.
I change not myself but myself changes me.
Life is my guide.



Flame against glass
Glint on the water
Glare on the windshield

Moses and the burning bush.
Shield me, my Father.

by Sister Francis Assisi

DEWDROP

I saw a diamond in the grass.
I looked again. It was not there.
How like the dew
Our dreams are.

IF I WERE A SUB...

by Rita Dziuk

If I were a
sub, I'd go very deep
To try and discover some mysterious power.
Into great books on life and its meaning, I'd peep:
Why's a rose red, or better yet.....why a flower?

plane, I'd always be high;
If I were a
Wining and dining are the pleasures I'd seek -
Never caring, never feeling, never wanting to know why,
The flesh is so willing, the spirit so weak.

If I were a train, neither high or low,
Close to God and nature and people all around,
I wouldn't need drugs or books just to know
I'm free and alive with both feet on the ground.
I was not made for the air or the sea,
So I'll just stay on earth and try to be me.

ON PARTING

as new wine mellows to sweetness,
good times as they're remembered
carry their better part to warmth
and take the chill from the present.
the best of good times remembered
was spent with others - not alone;
others whose remembrance is warmth
and we carry the warmth and are never alone.

by Gary Hall

CELESTIALS

by James Randall Jackson

Behold o're our heads those eternal lights
that pour their watery light into our eyes
that twinkle in the stillest nights
and still burn on the day that we die.

Is there a clue in their transmission
of life beyond our galactic home?
A life we ignore by blatant remission,
giving sterility our heavenly dome.

Is an overwhelming question not of Elliot's taste
Many hope is answered veritably NO!
To an assumption made in scientific haste
That life exists other than what we know.

And are those iridescent points in formation
The fearful delirium of man's own mind,
Or extraterrestrial probes seeking information
On the planet of life of homo-sapien kind.

Oh star bright, star light, first star seen tonight,
Send me a response so I may rest.
That of space, of planets, all the lights,
Is Earth among all the very best?



THE "UPPER HAND"

Grinding, churning away,
modern technology regurgitates
empirical wisdom.

Underneath the cold slither of steel -
man stands in awe of his superlative creation.

To thee, Homo sapien, I say -
despair not.....

Computers, though they analyze, predict,
and even matchmake
do not love.....

It is in this fourth dimension that
man outshines the IBM!

by Elaine Watson

MIGHTY HATE

by Denise Germonprez

And then the man took
All the hate that was
And he forced it into a bottle
And he sealed it, and man
Took with all his might,
The mightiest man of all,
The bottle and he threw it.
It fell only ten feet away.
For the bottle was much
Too heavy with hate.
And it burst and the
Great forces of hate,
Mighty hate, were set
Loose again. To man
This was the beginning
Of his end.

WHY IS IT SO HARD?

by Sandra Switzer

Why is it so hard to just reach out
To touch someone?
You're so close.....
Just across the room.
But I sense the presence
Of an invisible wall separating us.
Separating out thoughts, our ideas,
But most of all, our feelings.
And.....
This sense of separation awakens something
inside of me.
I feel as though
I could tear down the wall
With my own two hands.
Alone.
But as I start to work,
I don't seem to be able to make much headway.
I try harder, and try to work faster,
But the harder I try, the more it hurts.
No, it's not my hands that hurt.
I would keep working as long and hard
As need be.....But.....
Couldn't you give me a little help
From the other side?

There was a tree once.

A very beautiful tree
With fine leaves and shade for all.
And the birds came
and sang in its branches.
And the tree was happy.

But one day came
when the birds' songs quieted
and eventually came to a stop.
And they took up with the wind.
And the tree was alone
and became sad.

THERE WAS A TREE ONCE...

The tree's leaves began to fall.
And it felt ugly.
And unloved.

But it was really the same tree;
With the same branches reaching.
And the same trunk strong.
And the same heart warm.
The same tree beautiful.

And a squirrel came
and saw the sadness.
He said to the tree:

"The wind's blowing - and the birds had to go.
Because it was time.

And your leaves are gone now.
Does that scare you? - I hope not.
Because I'm glad to see you just as you are.

Your leaves will burst out again -
And the birds will come back -
Singing joyful wishes."

And then he climbed the tree.

And kissed it.

Because he loved it.

by Diane Stier

SUNDAY SUNDAY

by Donna Hyderkhan

The amber rays were gone at last as the sun settled beneath the horizon. Traces of darkness had silently crept in. Her lips muttered a prayer of thanksgiving, it was Sunday.

She took her watch near the window, like a sentry at his post anxiously waiting for a signal. Then she heard it, so clear and bright playing on the wind like tinkling bells, a tune being whistled off in the distance, coming nearer and nearer. It was a familiar melody she had heard before in little pubs everywhere.

She saw him and joy, quiet explicit joy swept her heart. It was the same fluttering sensation in the pit of her stomach like butterflies. She was aware of the feelings of excitement, anticipation, and fear that someday he would not come home. She wanted dearly to stop time and take him back to the days when she fondly held him in her arms, saying not a word between them, but reading his smiles and sweet innocent tears that spoke to her far more clearly than any language ever would.

Her eyes intently followed his every move. He was dancing upon the wet pavement, slipping and falling, half laughing to himself as he sung his song. He struck a handsome picture, with the wind blowing the hair from his brow, looking so young and virile. His muscles swelled beneath his white shirt, which glowed from the fluorescence of the street lamp. His tanned skin already saturated with sun by the many hours of work aboard deck was a rich dark hue. He looked like a Greek god from the days of antiquity. He was not extremely tall, but he was only seventeen.

To know this man's father, she thought to herself, was indeed to know his son. He was so much like him. His hand was thrust deep within the pockets of his jeans playing with the loose change. He held a brown paper parcel close to his body, protectively, like a little boy with his favorite toy. Her darling was coming home again.

It was Sunday, and like every Sunday of the month, it belonged to her. He always came back to her on the seventh day. She could count on that.

She moved from the window, over to the mirror to take a last assuring look at herself. Two copper braids hung neatly in place ready for his approving touch. Her fingers carressed the lacy ruffled collar at her neck. She longed to hold him again.

How much she looked like a school girl dressed for Sunday Mass! Youth had everything, how lucky they are, she thought, but she had not lost all of hers. She was still pretty, and he loved to see her looking so girlish. A light scent of lilac filled the air, a reminder of last year's Christmas gift from him. Tears of joy brought a shiny brightness to her eyes.

It was like a play, after opening night. Each moment was a recreation of the past. The actors were caught in their setting, playing the scene as a motionless sequence of a dream. Life was repeating itself. She felt reborn each time they were together. There was no monotony to their world, only the novelty of a lovely dream come true. There were jokes and tales to be laughed and cried over, people to hear about, adventures to speak of. An element of wonder existed in the love they shared between them. It was like no other.

She heard the pulling of the spring as the door opened. His tenor-pitched voice hit the last ascending note as he stepped out of the darkness.

"Is anyone home? I brought a little surprise."

She could scarcely stop herself from running to him and throwing her arms around him. She was ecstatic! He would have been embarrassed if she had squeezed him too close in one of her emotional outbreaks, men so often accuse women of having (and they do). Oh, but how could she hide her joy? She contented herself with a kiss on the cheek and an affectionate pat on the arm.

"Well dear, how are you?"

"Happy darling, and what else can I say except I feel great. I feel like I've been everywhere, met everyone, done everything there is to do. Yet, I know I haven't because I can think of a million other things that I haven't done, or even heard of, and I want them all. Ah, I've been rambling on. You look lovely as usual. Here, let's open our surprise!"

He broke the string and tore open the paper, revealing two manilla colored containers.

"What's this?"

"I got some peach ice cream, my favorite, and yours. I remember because we always bought it when I was little.

He remembered, he always remembered. They sat and talked about things old and new as they took delight in their cold delicious treat. They fell into fits of laughter when he bit hard into the sweet cream and split his wooden spoon in half. They laughed 'till their sides ached.

"You funny creature, don't be such a glutton." She smiled warmly as she fed him the rest of her dessert. She was playing a mama again, and she enjoyed it.

They listened to the old phonograph albums and settled back for a relaxing evening. The room was lit by a solitary oil lamp by her side. It was a whaling lantern she had kept from the days gone by. The shadows cast from it played upon the wall.

He handed her a worn leather volume of Yeats, and she read it to him. These same passages she had read countless times before. The words came smoothly from her lips, as images flashed before her eyes. Her soul was stirred and enlivened by the richness and beauty of the artist.

They were two people who were one. Their love ran deep. He, so young and she, so old, but time was no barrier, she kept telling herself. She wanted to be with him like this forever. He would always belong to her.

He sat unravelling the strands of her hair, brushing the locks to a glowing shimmer. His face was intent, and ponderous upon the lovely lyrics she spoke. He was a gentle man, yet strong in his ways, loving and so dear. No woman would ever look past this lovely youth. He would not care if they did. She was happy for that reason. No other woman could take him from her.

Yet, she knew there was a power to take him away. This is what she feared, the glory of the sea. A woman in many senses, not like any other who could use her charms.....to sweep men far away. She had the temperament of a witch and angel that could entice a man to forget all else. Her body surpassed all others. She was grace, full of endless movements and excitement that called out to a man. She had men, many men, but she was never content. She would take this young man too. What a cruel and wretched sea.

She listened to him as he spoke of his beautiful visions of the sea, and she knew his feelings had already grown too strong. She had lost him. His eyes lit up as he spoke, and they were filled with such emotion. He would take the sea as his mistress, she was sure of it now. No woman could fight her and win. She was man's dream of life filled with wonderment and awe.

Tonight, she would cry herself to sleep, and every night from now on she would spend praying he would return to her one day. She called herself a selfish fool. She had to live for now and be grateful. She would have to learn and content herself. She had lost one man to the sea and she suffered for it. She had loved too much and drove him away. Wasn't one mistake enough to teach you? she asked herself. She couldn't lose it all.

He was a man now and his interest lied elsewhere, not in the silly whims of an aging woman. She couldn't change or condemn human nature. She only hoped to guide him and love him.

When he goes away, she thought, and he will, he will not forget me. And perhaps when many years have passed, he will come this way again. He will know my arms are open to him, and my love will be his, for he will always be mine.

"I think I'll go to bed. Have to get up early and catch the freighter. I'll put the light out."

"No, no, go ahead darling. I'll be a while longer. I'm reading. Goodnight, dear."

"Goodnight, mama."

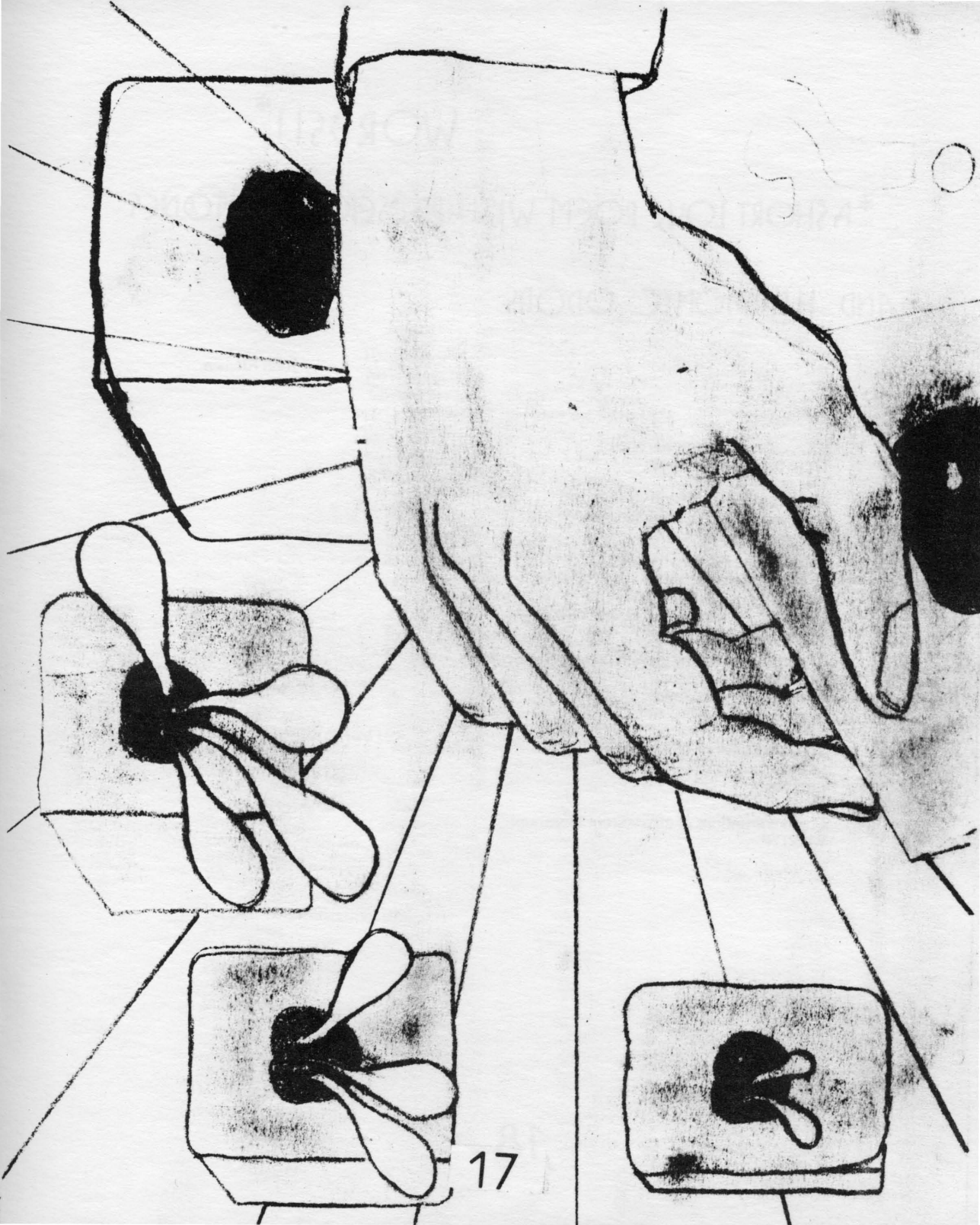
FOR THOSE

WHO PICKED THE FLOWERS

by Pat Paquin

Pockets full of ashes are all that's left for you
Burning money quenched your thirst, and now you're first
in line
For the old church ladies' prayers.

Maybe you'll be saved.
But maybe not.....
Or have you forgotten that bliss cannot be bought
By selling posies stolen from the neighbor's garden?



WORDS!!*

*A SHORT LOVE POEM WITH PROSEIC OVERTONES AND HARMONIC ODORS

by John Klemen

If.....(many poems start here)
There only weren't words;
You search -
Alas, they're too difficult to find, and
Once you do you're never satisfied
With the melisma.

Memories are sufficiently lucid
without coagulated
conglomerated
globules of cloudy verbosity!

WORDS!

And memories can be instantaneously transferred
Between two
By an infinitesimal touch;
Words can't.

Too, the exchange of love
In those memories
thru touch
Evokes
Copious eruptions of effervescent blissation!
WORDS!

COLLEGE BLUES

by Mel Arnold

Tired, Sleep!
No sleep at night
'Cause too much to study
working hard to see the light.

Sleep in the day
To make it all up,
Tired, 'cause you slept too much.

PESSIPOEMISTIC

by John Klemen

Elusiviciousness tacked to
Imaginality;
Tactical origination
for flavour. A
Lukewarmironical
Smile
For cohesiveness; An
Inferno inside.
Why?

People: personifications of
Pretentious
Polyethylene
Playing pieces,

In a cosmopolitan game.



BEFORE THE GUESTS ARRIVE

by Terri Daily

Micky Mouse had insisted that it was 4:30 p.m., so Michael had left the office. In the Georgetown rain, his 1975 Fiat was patiently waiting at the curb in front of his office building. Michael made a dash out the front entrance and down the sidewalk, dodging the raindrops and people. He jerked the car door handle and threw his portfolio into the blue vinyl interior. In one quick movement, his thin fingers slammed the door behind him, fiddled with his blond shag and turned the key in the ignition.

He pulled into the rush-hour traffic and flipped on the radio as he did every evening after work. But this evening was different. He had to hurry to his apartment on J Street and prepare for a dinner party..... Heavens! A Dinner party! How could he have allowed Leslie to talk him into this one? He knew little about planning parties and absolutely nothing about preparing dinners. The mere thought of entertaining strangers made him nervous and he bit his thumbnail, but automatically withdrew it when he remembered what Leslie had said about people who bite their nails being oversexed.

The rear view mirror represented his reflection - worried brown eyes fringed with thick black lashes. It dangled a silver-chained medallion that moved with the traffic and read, "Michael - Love, you are somebody, too. Leslie."

He meditated on Leslie as he did every day while driving to his apartment after work. It soothed his nerves. Dear .. sweet, seemingly frivolous Leslie! But could she be classified as whimsical? No, Leslie simply radiated a perpetual optimism which made her seem younger than her twenty-four years. An Individual? Yes, she was definitely unique, although he would not have thought so upon their first meeting.

The Fiat pulled to a halt in front of a red-brick building. The rain had stopped and a pink sunset filtered through the clouds. Michael ran up the outside steps of the three-story structure and up three more flights inside.

An electric sweeper roared as he opened the door to apartment 3-C. Z In full sight was a posterior view of Thelma, the cleaning lady. She turned, sensing his entrance, and flipped off the sweeper.

"Oh, you're home early, Mr. McKittrick!"

"Yes, I....."

"I bet you're here to get ready for the party, but don't you worry about that. Miss Carson and I have it all arranged!" She grinned toothlessly and produced a half pack of Marlboro's from the pocket of her dress.

"Want one?" she offered.

"No thank you, I don't smoke," Michael wished she wouldn't smoke in his apartment. The odor nauseated him. After she finished cleaning every Thursday afternoon and left the apartment, he would open all four of the double-hung windows in the front room and empty each ash tray. He watched her as she disgustingly nursed her cigarette. He didn't really need a cleaning lady. The only reason she was here was because Leslie had gone all through the trouble of finding her for him - and besides, he didn't want to start another argument .. Leslie had said it was scandalous for a busy bachelor to have to worry about all his housework.

Michael moved to the kitchen table and dropped his portfolio next to a piece of paper. He picked up the paper and read:

"5:00 - florist, pick up centerpiece (Dijon's)

5:30 - check with the caterer (Beef stroganoff okay?")

5:45 - shower and shave - (Your gray-yellow suit with wide lapel would look fantastic!)

6:15 - call me! I love you, Michael - Love."

"Oh yeah!" Thelma shouted from the front room, "Miss Carson left a note for 'ya on the kitchen table and told me to make sure you do everything it says. Of course, I don't know what it says because I don't stick my nose in other people's business."

Thelma was standing in the kitchen doorway patting on her coat - a hint that she was leaving and it was time to be paid.

"Speaking of business," she began, "how's the advertising coming along, Mr McKittrick?" This was their usual Thursday afternoon repertoire.

"Fine, just fine." Michael played along, reaching for his wallet. He knew what she wanted to hear next. "And how is the garbage business?" he inquired, trying to look interested. Her husband was a garbage collector.

"Well," Thelma beamed, "Zeb says business is picking up!" She let out a high pitched fit of giggles that never failed to make Michael gringe. He thanked her and handed her thirty-five dollars in the hope of hastening her departure.

"Oh my!" she exaggerated as she headed for the door, "thank you Mr. McKittrick!" Then, turning to him, she added, "You know, Mr. McKittrick, Miss Carson was wrong when she said you were a bit temperamental and difficult to work for, because you ain't in the least." With a look of contentment she hurried down the hall.

Michael had just stepped out of the shower when the telephone rang.

"Yes?" he answered, trying to sound debonair even though he was wearing only a bath towel. It was Leslie.

"Michael - Love, I'm going to be a little late. Please explain to our guests that I have to work late tonight. Election campaign proposals, you know."

"But Les..." he began.

"Now is everything ready? Did you find my note I left on the kitchen table? Why didn't you call me?"

Michael glanced at Micky, who reported 6:20 p.m. Where had the time flown? The guests would begin arriving at seven.

"Leslie, how late will you be?"

"I don't know, exactly. A half hour, maybe forty-five minutes. You did pick up the flowers, didn't you? And called the caterer?"

He assured her that he had.

"Good. Now Michael - Love, wear your gray and yellow plaid suit - and don't worry. Everything will work out beautifully! Goodbye."

"Wait..." Michael said, but he heard the receiver click.

That was Leslie - always in a hurry and on the go. It was that aspect of her personality that first struck and held his interest. Recalling this made Michael smile despite his being nervous for the dinner party. He reached for his gray and yellow plaid suit and remembered an incident that had occurred six years before.

The Women's Liberation Movement was at its peak and a group of Georgetown University students were conducting a rally downtown. He was only twenty-five then and had just started at McBriden Advertising Agency as a commercial artist. While leaving the building one evening he was surrounded by a group of students and asked to sign a petition suggesting more females in higher government positions. When he had refused and tried to walk away, a young lady with outstanding blue eyes grabbed him by the arm. Leslie. At first he thought her insane. She discussed women's rights and insisted that women should be given equal pay with equal work. She quoted Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinam and argued that some women were just as good, if not better than some men. Then she asked him if he would join her in a cup of tea. She was hideous, so Michael accepted - much to her surprise. Then she suggested they go to her place and he had agreed - much to his own surprise.

Looking back now, it all seemed quite typical. Knowing Leslie as he did now, he would have expected this type of proposal.

Michael stood in the middle of his bedroom and viewed his reflection in the full-length mirror. Leslie was right. He was extremely attractive when he dressed up a bit.

In the front room everything was set just the way Leslie had wanted. The centerpiece from Dijon's was on the table. The beef stroganoff would arrive promptly at seven o'clock. Michael was wearing his grey and yellow plaid suit and waiting to greet his guests.

Michael opened the four double-hung windows and cleaned out the ash trays. His watch said it was six forty-five, so he sat on the couch and tried to relax. Leslie would want him to. He recalled something she had said that first evening at her place. He recalled something she had said that first evening at her place.

"You are always so nervous. Why can't you relax and just take things as they come? You'd would be much happier."

That was what Leslie did. She never allowed things to get to her. And now, while working on her law degree at George Washington, she still managed to work for the senator and maintain an active social life. She was truly one in a million.....

The doorbell rang and interrupted Michael's meditation of Leslie. He jumped up from the couch and hurried to answer. But before opening it, he put on a wide smile. Leslie would want him to.

LAKE SKATING

by Joseph Kempf

3 below, and around the shore
and across this frozen surface of pond
a trace of powdered snow. Above,
a far sun, hard as diamond,
embedded in sky of electric blue.
Beneath me, whisper of skates on ice,
air sharp in nostrils as knives.

I am bird! can feel wings,
like Mercury's, grow on skates,
feathers spring from shoulder blades.
Thus hawks hang on precipice of sky,
cleave winds like whetted steel.

Below the surface, gray scaled shadows,
almost ice, move through olive murk:
ponderous, heavy-blooded, slow.
Up here, swift thrill. But also fear
that bird-heart within, skates, and I,
like voyagers of old, might giddy sail
clear off the edge
of
this ice-poled world.

As I stand here,
watching the tail lights of your car get
smaller
'till they are nothing more than faintly glowing
cigarette tips,

I think that nothing else
could make me feel so sad.

While growing up, I'd always looked forward to summer.
Now I want it to be quick to burn itself up,
so that crisp brown leaves adorn
autumn trees,
and your black Chevrolet can be seen
once again
amid the various Volkswagens and vans
in the dormitory parking lot.

by Cathy Caldwell

