

The Vaguest Notion

2004



Southern Wesleyan University
907 Wesleyan Drive
Central, SC 29630

enlightened prisoner of torture

I'd rather rip off my ingrown toenail and
lick the puss off my feet
Or dive from the top of the library onto a
bed full of nails.
No, I think I'd prefer swallowing acid and
corroding my intestines.
But maybe I should use fish hooks to shove
through my pupils.
Or a dull butter knife to cut off my head.
I could always use a power drill to bore into
my brain.
Rather than sit in this class for another
hour that seems like a day.

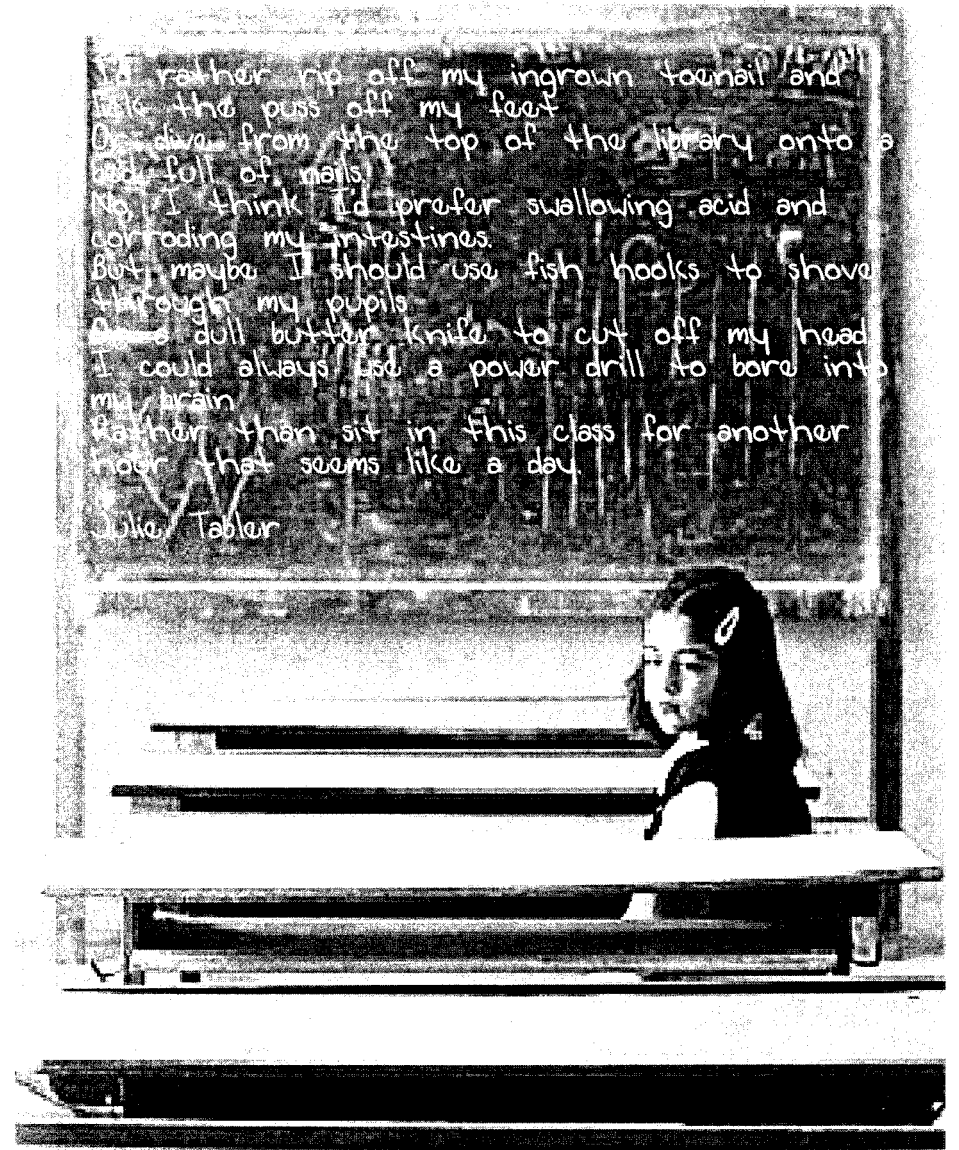
Julie Tabler

A Dream By the Sea

A grain of sand fell
 Hard on the tile.
A breeze blew a
 Gust into the room.
A whisper
 Echoed in the air.
A strong hand
 Touched lightly on a cheek.

A heart awoke in reply.

-anonymous



True Love Waits

Sometimes we hear it in the news
A kind of love that gives good views
Young lovers fall in love
Just like God sends a dove

We know the deal
But how is it real?
Advice rolls around like dice
God gently comes and shows us to think twice

Waiting is the best thing
It's not all about getting a ring
Because patience is worth more than a dime
Suddenly one finds the love of a lifetime

From acknowledgement to friendship
From dating to marriage
The usual relationship
That is found with courage

God has someone in store for you
Wait and see that this dream will come true
Save yourself for your future spouse
God will bless that night without a doubt

How many shouts can this message cry?
True love waits and should never die!

Julie Bozard

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Lindsay Harris
Amy Towles
Jason Parrish
Aaron Tolan
Nathan Moore

Thinking Back

As we sit in the rain on that night cool and crisp,
A thought crossed my mind, but not my lips.
Some things, I know, are better unsaid,
In regard to a heart that's ripped into shreds.
But the echo of anguish, of sorrow and lies,
Of heartache and headache and tears in my eyes,
Can't erase the memory of love and care.
This thought I have wished with you I could share,
But as we sit in the rain on this night cool and crisp,
I push the thought backward and crush with my lips.

Amy Towles

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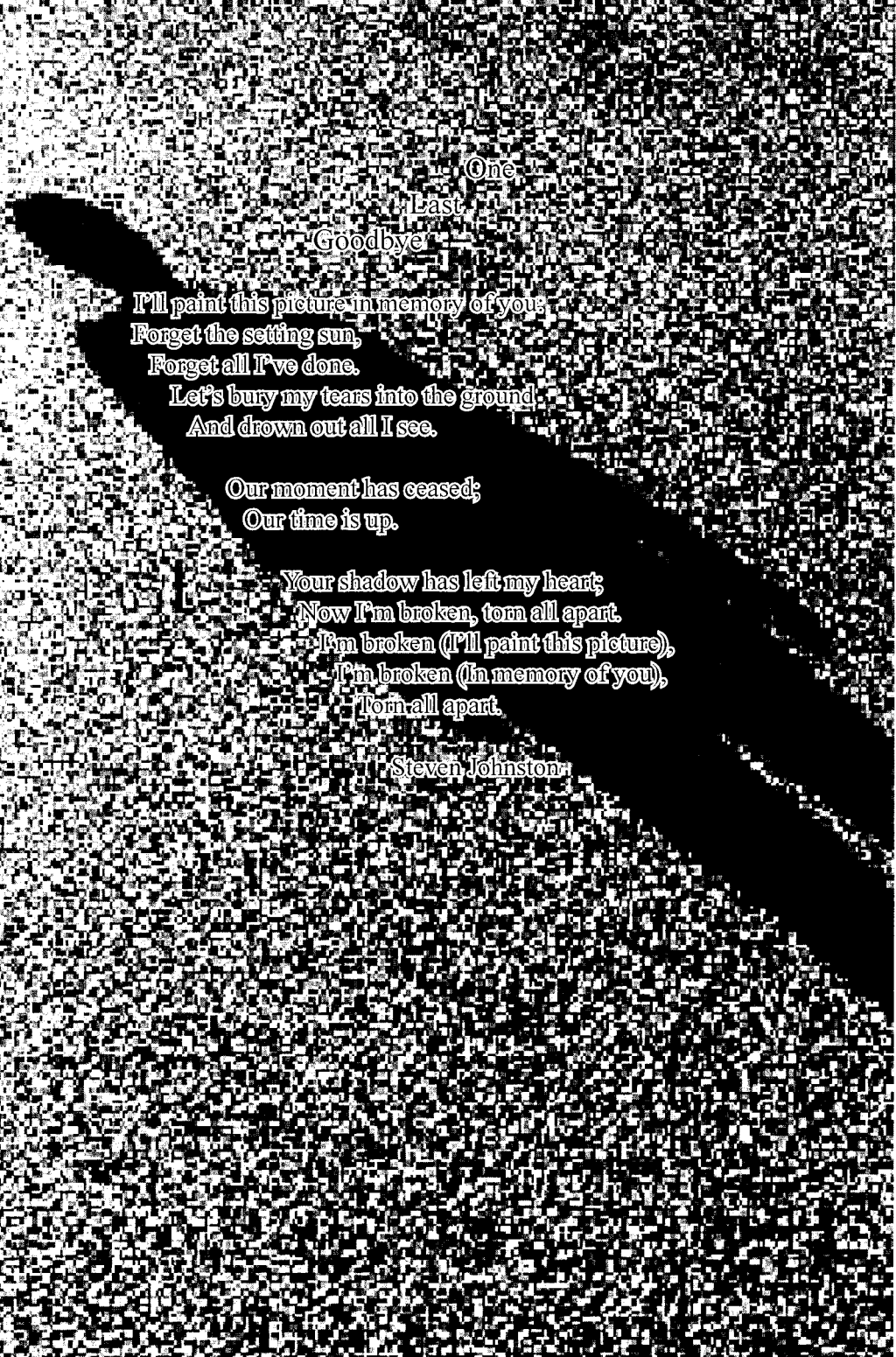
It is the policy of *The Vaguest Notion* to accept literary and artistic submissions from students and faculty of Southern Wesleyan University. Each piece is presented to the staff without identification of its author or artist, and the staff subsequently votes on which works will be accepted for publication. Selection of literary pieces is based on subject, literary merit, and the staff's personal tastes. Selection of art and photography is based upon parallel criteria.

Colophon

The Vaguest Notion 2004 used Adobe InDesign 2.0.2 for typesetting and layout, with Adobe Photoshop 7.0 for photograph manipulation. As of May 2004, *The Vaguest Notion* was produced in completely digital media.

Acknowledgements

Jackie Price
 Janelle Beamer



One
 Last
 Goodbye

I'll paint this picture in memory of you,
 Forget the setting sun,
 Forget all I've done.
 Let's bury my tears into the ground,
 And drown out all I see.

Our moment has ceased;
 Our time is up.

Your shadow has left my heart;
 Now I'm broken, torn all apart.
 I'm broken (I'll paint this picture),
 I'm broken (in memory of you),
 Torn all apart.

Steven Johnston

TVN Biographies

Nathan Bryson is a senior majoring in Internet computing and Music. Originally from Brevard, NC he intends to pursue a graduate degree in Music Business, with plans to work in the recording industry.

Lindsay Harris is a junior from Raleigh, NC. She is majoring in Elementary Education, and enjoys taking pictures in her spare time. She is often inspired by the beauty of God's creation.

Ashley Joiner "The written word is an expression of myself – my thoughts, ideas and heart. At best, it is uncensored, unrhymed and without carefully planned direction."

Camilo Rodriguez "I was born in beautiful Bogota, Colombia. I have been at SWU for four years playing soccer (and studying), and my piece is just a glimpse of what life at SWU could be sometimes. I also had a great time here and will remember SWU for ever."

Julie Bozard "Since I was fifteen years old, I have enjoyed being a strong supporter for speaking out on 'True Love Waits' as a testimony in my life. I thank the Lord for his faithfulness in building my integrity, courage and passion."

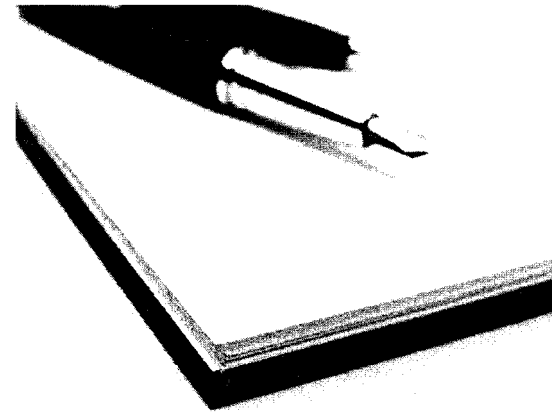
Erica Kelley hails from the town of Six Mile, population 562, South Carolina. She is currently a senior at SWU and will graduate in December with a degree in English a communications concentration. When asked about her motivation for this piece, Erica states, "I was just letting Nathan know up front that I am not a writer."

Julie Tabler "When writing *enlightened prisoner of torture*, I realized that college is nothing more than an insipid university. As Sir Winston Churchill once said, 'I am always ready to learn, but I do not always like being taught.'"

Steven Johnston "I was driving down the road and the line, 'I'll paint this picture for you,' got stuck in my head. Its influence comes from a person who I thought was a really close friend. I never got a chance to say goodbye so I named this song 'One Last Goodbye.'"

Why I Am Not a Writer

I am not a writer. I decided to major in English because it seemed like a good starting point for a college degree. I love to read. I love to think about what I have read and I love to read what will make me think. When



I am required to write, I usually put words on paper as though I were reading it.

I am not really a storyteller or a poet. Sometimes I rhyme, but not on purpose. Then I have to say that cheesy line about how, "I'm a poet, but don't know it, but my feet show it. . . they're Longfellows." Budump-ching. That was sad. . . I

know. So this is how I write: generally un-opinionated and without focus, as you see.

I do love to journal. I have learned that if I journal, I will not simply say the first thing that comes to my mind. I find it easier to think before I speak or react in most cases if I journal about the situation.

Whenever I try to write, for instance, a submission for a school's literary magazine, the product is a boring, "we've-heard-this-all-before" type work. It is almost a shame that even as an English major, I cannot write. I could be delusional and think that every work of my hands is extraordinary. That would be even sadder than the whole rhyme thing.

So, I am an English major who cannot write. I apologize for wasting the space on this page. Thank you.

Erica Kelley

Society

Everyone get into a line.
I will lead you, now stay behind.
I am the master, you are my tools.
Just make sure you follow my rules.

I am society.

I tell you what is wrong and right.
I encourage prejudice, war, and fights.
I separate the rich and the poor.
Everyone stays behind their respectful doors.

I am society.

I have created your way of life.
I pick who should be man and wife.
If you don't do exactly what I tell,
I threaten you with the fires of Hell.

I am society.

I keep you from the one you love,
By establishing a number I thought of.
I make sure you must longingly wait.
People need love, I thrive on hate.

I am society.

Oh yes, I believe I can hear you cry.
Because you're apart, all you can do is ask why.
Yearning lovers think I'm so unfair.
For I am the reason they go nowhere.

I am society.

Amy Towles

Dedalus

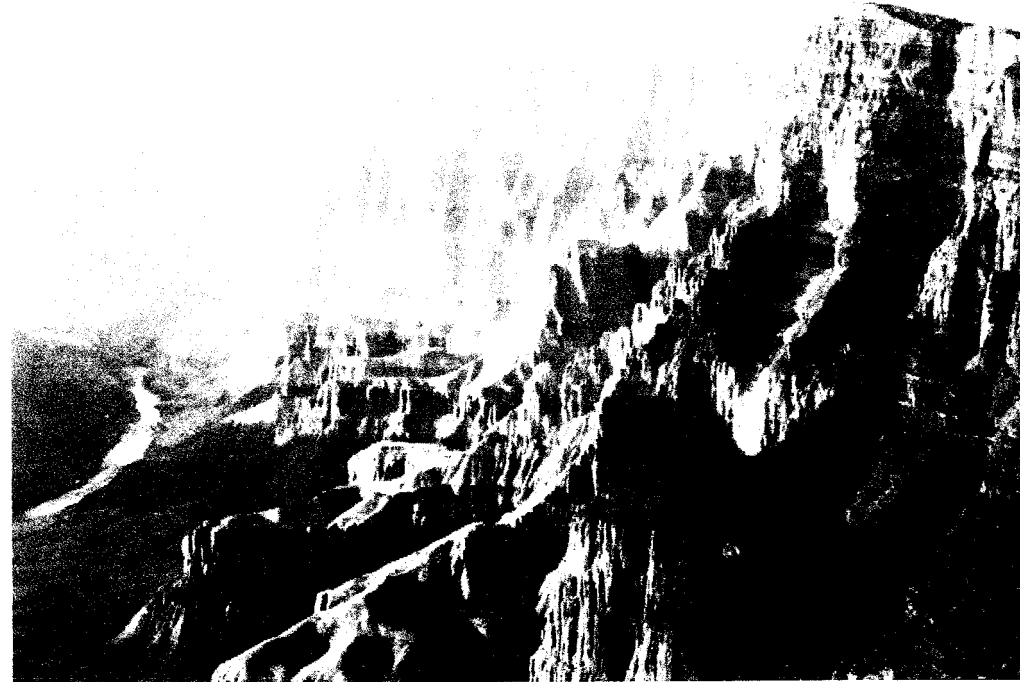
Wild eyes of youth lost in the ocean before him
as he sings a song about savannas where a lioness
stalks a gazelle. Dreams and desire of escape and
flight from this island wasteland.

The double cheeseburger from McDonald's eaten
before his infamous flight made him cramp and tumble
towards Gotham City, but Batman can't catch him
he lost his wings too.

Shells along the beach are broken and the tide is out
as this old man walks along the shore wearing a dirty
sweater and torn pants, but cut by the shattered shells
his feet don't bleed.

The old man no longer sings,
but the desert is now a spring.

Aaron Tolan



YOU THOUGHT YOUR LIFE WAS BORING??

BED TO CLASS

THE HARDEST AND MOST HORRENDOUS ACTION IN THE DAY

CLASS TO CHAPEL

A BREAK FROM CLASSES, TIME TO CATCH SOME FRESH AIR

CHAPEL TO LUNCH

ENJOYABLE TIME OF SATISFACTION AND FELLOWSHIP

LUNCH TO CLASS

PERFECT TIME FOR A NAP

CLASS TO NAP

GREAT TIME FOR DOING WORK AND STUDY

NAP TO FRIENDS

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON CAMPUS, SOME SPORTS, VIDEO GAMES....!

FRIENDS TO HOMEWORK

THERE IS NO EXIT, IT NEEDS TO HAPPEN SOMETIME

HOMEWORK TO BED

THAT'S IT!!! WELCOME TO AN EXCITING DAY ON CAMPUS!!

CAMILLO RODRIGUEZ



The love and comfort Chris had felt when he first came to the group quickly faded as the waves of hatred spread across the platform and through the audience. As Chris began to cry, he slipped quietly from his seat and hurried out the back door.

The pain and confusion Chris felt overcame him and he sat in his car sobbing. He had felt rejected and alienated for so long, yet the youth group had seemed to offer so much hope. In an instant that new hope was gone and the fear and pain had grown infinitely deeper. He wanted to run into the gym and scream, "I'm gay," and finally be rid of the secret that had tormented him for so long. Overwhelmed by grief and pain, Chris drove down a secluded road. In the dim light in his car he hastily wrote a note to his family explaining that he loved them, but the pain was simply too much to bear. Placing the note on the seat of the car he walked to the train tracks and lay down. He looked at his watch. It was 12:14.

Nathan Bryson

Chris continued to bury himself in school work and every activity he could find, hoping to push his pain farther back in his mind. After leaving his small town far away, he hoped to find a new beginning where no one would know him and he could be separated from the pressures of his home life. It seemed, however, that at a school as small as his, his dreams of being able to discard the masks he had lived behind for so long would not soon be realized. Often at night, Chris would ask God why he had made him different. Many nights he called home crying, hoping his mother would answer the phone. He blamed his sadness on a bad test grade or a bad day at practice, never having the courage to reveal the truth behind his pain.

Chris first saw the flyer on a typical afternoon announcing a new group for college students at a local church. At first he dismissed the idea. His church at home had caused him enough heartache in the past and he was not sure he was ready to commit to a new church. During the week he passed the sign many times, each time glancing at the sign, and each time dismissing the idea. Chris did not even consider going to the service until a good friend asked him to go. After some thought he agreed to accompany her to the opening service, although he was skeptical.

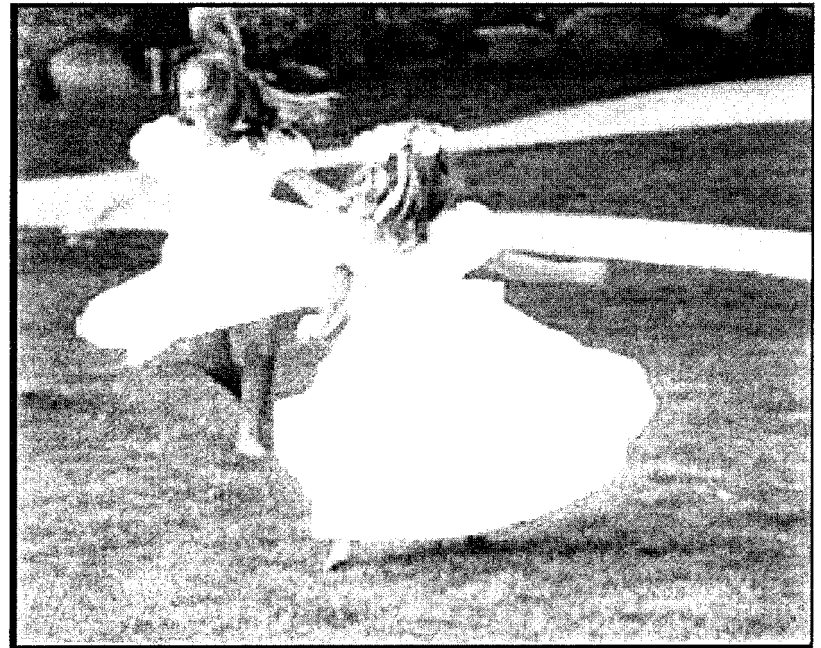
The first service was to be held on a Sunday evening in the gym of the church. His friend Sara picked him up and she and Chris rode together to the service. Not sure what to expect, Chris quietly entered the building just as the service was about to start so he did not have to speak to anyone. Chris actually enjoyed the music during the service and was able to stay awake for the whole sermon, something that almost never happened in his home church. Encouraged by the service, Chris decided to stay and talk to other newcomers after the service was over. He met several people from his school and some other people from the community.

Chris had been attending the college services for several weeks, growing more encouraged each week, when a guest came to speak. While Chris enjoyed the pastor he also enjoyed a change of pace on occasion. The sermon began innocently enough and the speaker invited everyone to turn in his or her Bible and read the scripture with him. Before the speaker began to read the scripture, Chris had already scanned the passage and could feel himself starting to blush. It felt as if the gym was growing smaller and everyone was looking at him. As the sermon began, Chris tried to press himself lower into the seat. The speaker grew more agitated as he spoke and it seemed as if he were speaking directly to Chris.

The National Gallery

I am in a ballroom
Waltzing the dance – not of romance or fairy tales or even forgotten chivalry.
Instead I am taken –
Whisked away by dreams of divine passion –
Spurred on –
Crafted perfectly –
Only appreciated by those who have an inkling of inspiration...
To restore the vitality of prose and art and verse
The quietness of this Renaissance is charmingly reflecting –
And still I am enlivened by their smiles and laughs, their whispers and
writings, their
 Furrowed brows –
O how uplifting –
The portrait of those who delight in passion.

Ashley Joiner



Mocha Gourmet Sweetness

Three teaspoons of sugar sweetness
gourmet creamers: Cafe Mocha, French
Vanilla
bitterness dissolved by 18 childhoods
pampered by the last sugary drop

Tongue defended from the black bitterness
by gallons consumed in 47 eternities
untamed in the beer mug purchased
only for these bleak mornings

Six for the caffeine addict
percolated on the same hot plate
from the same pot the 2 cups
were poured on the same mourning
the same water trickled through
the common grounds inside

Aaron Tolan

Nowhere to Turn

The excitement was overwhelming. The endless stream of bustling people seemed strangely distant as Christopher sat contemplating his new surroundings. The concrete block walls and stained ceiling tiles seemed palatial, despite the tiny size of the room, only twelve feet square. Chris had never had a room of his own before, and even though he would be sharing this room with someone he'd yet to meet, his sense of ownership rivaled that of a new homeowner. While his mother finished unpacking his clothes, Chris put his last poster on the wall. The poster showed a single ray of sunshine glowing through the trees. To Chris, the ray seemed like a ray of hope. He centered the poster above his couch, an old seat given to him by his grandmother.

The sun was setting outside of the dorm window and Chris knew his parents would be leaving soon to make the four-hour trip home. He and his parents had never been close, which he had begun to regret as he had packed his room getting ready to move to school. There were so many things he wanted to be able to tell his mother, but she would be so far away. He had tried to find a few minutes to talk to her before they had left but in the hustle of packing he never found a moment alone with her. As Chris walked his parents to the car, he held his mother's hand, something he rarely did in public. As he shut his mother's door, he felt as if his last chance was slipping away but he felt powerless to grasp it. He was determined not to cry as his parents left. He hid his sadness, much like he always had. Upon returning to his room, he discovered that his roommate had arrived. The pain would have to stay buried.

College life fit well with Chris. He quickly made friends with many of the guys on his hall and joined the intramural soccer team. Many nights Chris would finish his homework and fall asleep only minutes after crawling into his bed. He looked forward to weekends with friends. A late night movie and a trip to the Huddle House may not have seemed strange to many, but to Chris having no curfew offered a sense of freedom he had never felt before. As he lay in bed, he heard the train passing in the distance and he marveled at how the train passed every night at exactly 12:15. He wanted desperately to be able to talk to someone. Even if they did not have any answers for him, at least he would be able to get some of the questions off his chest.

Dead Rose

The bell sings the clanky
song of my visit to
Grandma's flower shop.

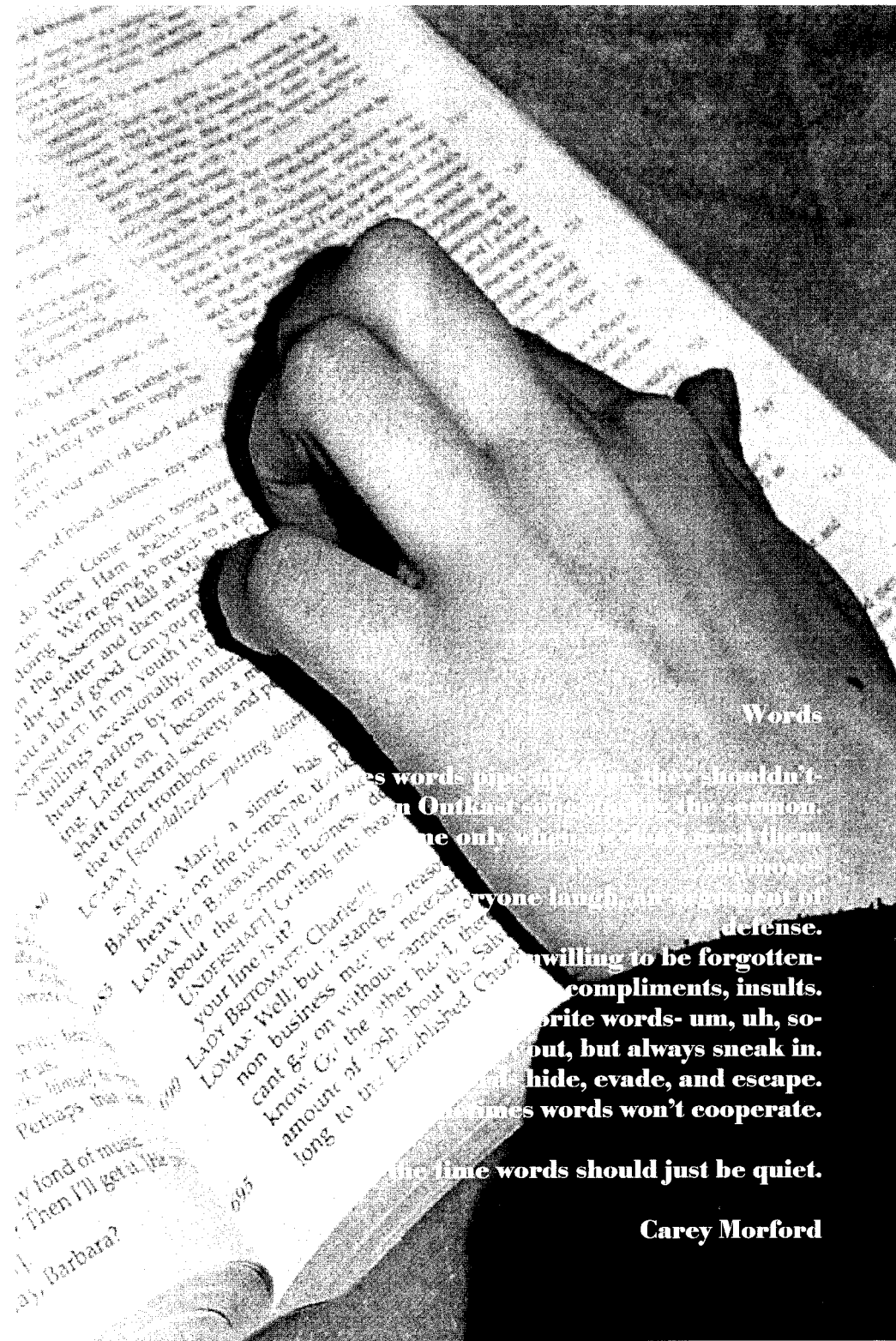
Usually the butterfly
lady is fluttering
through the room landing
on plant or flower
to trim or water:
singing, a transposition
of the sunlight and
green growth within.

Today the missing song
fades the green around
me into black.

So I attempt my own
solo as I call to her, but
her low alto does not
answer: the sun, the
orchestra director warns
me not to interrupt
the symphony.

Searching, I find her beside
the compost heap grasping
an old drooping bouquet
of white roses. Tears
drip from her nose onto
wilted petals; sobs,
a low base, harmonize the bent flowers.

Aaron Tolan



Words

Words pipe in when they shouldn't—
in Outlook some of the common
one only when they should
everyone laugh, an agreement of
defense.
willing to be forgotten—
compliments, insults.
write words—um, uh, so—
out, but always sneak in.
hide, evade, and escape.
times words won't cooperate.
the fine words should just be quiet.

Carey Morford

Moonlit Epiphany

**Under the shine of the moon,
In the shadow of wild clouds,
As the crickets chirp the stars into eyes
And the heathen dance among the leaves
Wishes are broken and dreams are fled
Even as darkness creeps across the face
of a child.**

**Nightmare in the night: the child
Cries the tears of the moon.
Shadows drink of the memory map
In the recesses of stormy clouds
Outside her bedroom window, leaves
Whirl with their new-found falling.**

**She whimpers at her own existence
So alone, this lovely, lonely
And starts at the first sound
Under the heavy line of the moon.
She is trapped and aware
Where no light is seen
As awake, she feels the
Sweep of the wind
That would take her
From the light
Shint of the moon.**

**She has found herself before among the leaves
And there her loneliness was more,
But no more, under silver moon,
Can her brand new existence
Be defined to another as "child."
She feels the slipping away of the last clouds.**

**Rolling to the sunrise, the clouds
Vanish to the horizon and the leaves
Settle for the morning. This used-to-be child,
Sings songs that were made
When old men knew the meaning of existence
And granted them to the moon.**

**She smiles and swings out of sight, as a halo of sunlight
Shines on her, then warm as clouds on her smiling
Face, she is a new existence no longer a**