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Pieces of You

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Cover Page Footnote

"Third Prize Winner" Appeared in the issue: Volume 3, Issue 4, 2003.

MICHELLE GIRARDI

PIECES OF YOU

When you leave
the room,
I am left alone
in a world of wonder—
in a museum dedicated to you—
Scattered change on your desk,
the silver watch on your dresser,
khaki and denim hung neatly, upside-down,
next to shirts too big for me that would,
should I bury my face in them,
fill my body with the sweet, simple
smell of you—
But I do not wish to disturb the display—
Just as velvet ropes once dissuaded me
from touching ancient arrowheads or
effigies of Neanderthals,
my awe and reverence for those things that are
the daily life around you—
the pieces of you—
won't allow me to risk
blemishing your perfection.

And as I stare at the items on your shelf—
Mentadent, Shout Spray and Wash, Scope—
I am overcome, thinking,
These are yours, the things you see everyday, the things you touch.
And now I am an anthropologist, an observer,
wondering what you were thinking as you bought them,
how often you really use Shout on your clothes.
And it amazes me that when you stood
in some drug store or supermarket and considered
buying toothpaste—
maybe looking for a sale—
you weren't thinking of me.
You were unaware that I existed, hundreds of miles away—
and at that moment, maybe I was buying socks or soap
or watching a movie, or writing a poem, just as unaware of you—
But your trip to the store was just another
action that led to our eventual and powerful
intersection in our formerly separate lives.

You had no idea
while casually placing items in a plastic basket—
probably thinking of your week at work, a friend you would see that night,
or trying to avoid the stock clerk kneeling beside you—
that one day I would be staring
at that Scope bottle as if it were a treasured jewel or artifact,
a piece of you, and now, somehow—
through the twists and magic of fate and fortune and love—
find a piece of me.