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ANGLER'S HOME GROWN AWARDS

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FIRST PLACE WE DID, THEY DID, HE DID......Crystal Clark
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Lisa Brotz "Monkeyland"
CRYSTAL CLARK

WE DID, THEY DID, HE DID

They mentally raped me
He looked upon my beautiful dark skin
Which he disgraced
And physically degraded me.
He forced me to abandon my culture and life
He mentally raped me
They looked upon my beautiful dark skin
Which they disgraced
And pierced my dark skin with whips
That cut deep into my soul like a knife.
They mentally raped me
He looked upon my dark skin, my dark skin
My dark skin
Which he disgraced.
We did, They did, He did.

JESSICA CHIMENTO “OREGON VINEYARD”
i took the media march with a city cop and wore my cuffs so proud. like old and honest wedding bands.

like sterling silver olsen twins wrapped around my guilty hands. and he just can't stop telling me how they'll all chew me piece by piece with their smooth microphone beaks till i learn to love the cameras and cold courtroom seats.

but prison's where i'll fall in love.

parole is how they'll break my heart.

cocaine fed malnourished eyes

so they could watch me bathe in hot crimes.

"allelujiah! we wanna see him strung up sweet," cries the picket line's one mouth. "we're gonna drag his body through the streets until we see justice run out." and when the victim takes the stand, well-rehearsed and casket tanned, i'll feel that courage start to melt like mascara scared as hell. we watch the prosecution dance the victory shuffle. and when they shake each other's hands and make greedy weekend plans, i'll paint my life out on the walls of an eight by eight foot cell shared by an empty man that tastes like trouble.
i swear she swore she'd never tell.

cause every word i hear her say cuts close like barbed wire lingerie.
and all the freckles on my face are switching sides and changing place till she won't recognize death.

prison's where i fell in love.

parole is how they broke my heart.

probation kept the cameras on

so my loss of pride was televised.
The world is vast…
            in time and space, kind and place;
It is easy to look past what stares in our face
We search beyond what we possess,
            even overlooking the most amazing treasures.
We go to all measures to seek more intense pleasures
            that will distract us from our bleak realities.
Insignificant intrusions of detrimental delusion
            capture our cortex in an utter state of confusion.
Dilute your self-proclaimed substantialities
            and sharpen your naturally given abilities.
Susceptibility to your unique and individual kryptonite
            could transform your personality and alter your life.
Life…meaningless without death;
Possession…pointless without theft;
Resuscitate my shriveled lungs for I was left in a breathless state.
Devoid of sane thought processes so I crazily contemplate.
Does a revelation beckon and tease?
Can you ask politely without saying please?
Sacrificial lambs to appease the gods above.
Something superficial such as the thought of love.
It use to be real, but now I feel contradiction.
My award-winning documentary has become a work of fiction.
ANDREW BRUNTON

LOVE LETTER TO THE UPSTAIRS EDITOR

Please let me in
to the pages of your
magazine.

Regards,
the pen.

P.S. I know you in your top floor office like a magistrate
guarding precious subjects in vaults below from
my ink and even your own hired hands. Although I
may be down on a low floor, I am still not above flattery in the rooms
of your basement café. And, anyway, I’m sure you’re a great poet in your
own right.
Couldn’t we meet, about half-way up, and share ideas about art? Or at least
the art of publishing feelings? Please respond when you are able.
I have learned to hate
stuffed grape leaves and baklava, too.
God only knows
I never learned to make them right.
I preferred to buy the canned kind
or the ones on a bakery tray
so I could put pen to paper.
How did I know it was a mortal sin
not to spend all day rolling the leaves
and all night watching them simmer in a pot
on the stovetop?
I should have been stoned to death
for serving my guests
store-bought baklava.

The heavy syrup still tastes like vinegar
so bring me a plate of plátanos instead--
the green and the yellow kind as well
fried in olive oil.
Comfort me with flan and arroz con dulce.
When I scream it’s ¡Ay Dios mío, ayúdame!
And six sisters come running
from Santo Domingo, San Juan, Guadalajara,
Bogotá and even Brooklyn and the Bronx
while the mother hangs her hatted head
and intones, Ay qué cuerpecito lindo, qué pelo suave.
And the brother holds my arm
so I don’t fall on the ice
in front of the tienda
on the day of
la llegada de los Reyes Magos.
The Magi came bearing gifts
and the hat-wearing mother
whose pot of rice and beans
is an offering unto itself
comes out of the kitchen at our approach
and smiles at the six sisters who know
that the leaf-rolling, baklava-baking
Arab Martha Stewart y algo más
would have let me slip and fall.

The brother tells me
to keep on serving la comida hecha,
his frozen hand locked in a testament
with mine--
his cinnamon to my confectioner’s sugar.

Ay ay ay . . .
Arab women bearing pots of grape leaves
and trays of baklava
are far, far worse
than Greeks bearing gifts.
“Let’s go eat,” Maggie says when we get into the car.

Johnny grabs a beer out like before, he chugs it and I snatch it from him again. This is his second beer, which means there are four more bottles for him to grab at when I’m not looking. “Are you stupid, Noy?” I ask, using his Laotian name to emphasize how serious I am. He shrugs and starts driving. I hand Maggie the beer; she gladly accepts. A little way down the street, there’s a road block and several police cars. “Yo, cops up ahead,” I say.

We hide the beer as Johnny slows down and looks up at the cop outside of the driver seat window. He towers over the car, and has to bend down to get a good look into the inside. The light from the road flares flicker from behind him, illuminating his large figure. “Where are you guys coming from?” the officer asks.

“Bowling,” Johnny replies.

“You been drinking anything tonight?” he asks, looking into the car. He looks at us, sketching our faces into his memory, then returns his attention to Johnny again. I move my leg and cover the six pack.

The lights from the cop cars glare into my eyes and I close them, turning my face towards the cop at the driver’s door. He’s holding a flashlight in his hands but it isn’t on. The other cops, that are standing by their cars, watch us intently, waiting for a signal, anything that might look threatening. The street is bare, and if it had been our intention, we could easily speed off.

“No, sir,” Johnny replies.

After a while, the officer lets us go.

“Oh shit, I can not believe that just happened,” Maggie burst out. Her sigh echoes from the back to the front. “I thought we were in trouble for a second.”

“You!” Johnny says. “I was the one who had to talk to him. I was praying that he didn’t smell the alcohol on my breath.”

“I’m just glad he didn’t make us get out of the car or something,” I put in. “You seen all them cops? Why were they all there?”

“Duh, Vassana, it’s Labor Day weekend. They’re making sure no one is drinking and driving,” Maggie replies. “Like Johnny.”

We cross over the bridge near Lyell Avenue where we stop at a red light. We are at the corner of St. Paul, just down the road from where all the clubs are located. In front of us is a red tow truck with a man inside, and to our right is a red pick-up truck. There are two people inside, but I can only make out the man in the driver seat.

We’re laughing in the car, still joking around about the cops that had stopped us earlier, when we hear a motorcycle revving its engine. The sound is distant at first, but as it gets louder, I turn to my right. I have always had a fascination with motorcycles, especially the sporty ones. I can see the motorcycle before it passes our car, and my heart speeds up. “Oh my God,” I whisper, pressing my palm against the glass window, “He’s not going to stop in time, you guys-” The bike crashes into back of the red pick-up truck, tucking perfectly under the bumper. I move my head back and forth from my cousin to the man on the road. My mouth moves before I have time to
process what to do. “Oh my God! Johnny, pull over, we have to help him! Call the
police someone; we got to call the police.” I rush out the car, my shaking hands
covering my mouth. I pace back and forth, my breath coming in short gasps. I look
around for something stable to hold onto, somewhere to go where I can hide and cower
like a child.

Maggie comes out, quickly pouring out the beer and tossing the bottle into the car. She
closes the door and stands by my side. I start to move towards the biker and Maggie
stops me. “No, Vassana, don’t go. I don’t think I can handle this, I can’t watch.”

Maggie should be the tougher one of us, but here she is, scared. “Go into the car, Mags,”
I say, using the nickname I gave her. “If you don’t think you can handle this, just sit in
the car and don’t think about it.” She gets into the car and I walk closer to the biker.

“There’s been an accident at the corner of St. Paul and...” My cousin’s voice fades away
as I hear another motorcycle. I turn and a man runs off his bike, dashing past me.

“Pedro!” he yells. “Get up, Pedro!”

Nothing.

“Wait, there’s a man here that knows the victim,” the man from the tow truck says to the
911 operator. Turning to the motorcyclist, the tow trucker talks to him. “Just stay right
here, okay? There’s police coming and they’re going to need to talk to you.” The man
quickly gets onto his motorcycle and maneuvers his bike around his fallen friend’s head.
“He’s leaving! Quickly, write this down!” The man from the tow truck starts shouting
the man’s license plate number.

“No, he’s not moving,” Johnny says, turning away from the man.

The body twitches. That’s when I notice the oil quickly spilling from the wreckage. I
don’t know if it belongs to the motorcycle or the truck. “Johnny, his body is twitching
and there’s oil leaking from somewhere. Shouldn’t we move him or something?”

“No, don’t move him,” the tow trucker says, “He could have broken bones.”

I tower over the man. He’s got a helmet on with the lid pushed up. There’s a thin line of
blood streaming down from above his brow. His eyes are closed. His body is still
twitching, but just like that, it stops moving. I take a step back. “Oh my God...I
think...I think...His body just stopped moving.”

“The police are coming soon,” Johnny informs us, “Tell Maggie to move the car.” I tell
Maggie to move the car and so she parks it across the street in an empty parking lot. She
comes over and stands next to me. Johnny turns to me and speaks in Laotian.

I turn to Maggie and whisper to her. The cops are already streaming in like a swarm of
bees. Cop, ambulance, cop...It becomes a blur. “Johnny says to tell you that you drove
tonight and not him.” She nods.

A Caucasian officer comes over and asks Johnny some questions. Name. Birthday.
Address. Number. Statement. He turns to Maggie and attempts to do the same.

“Why do you need my address?” she asks. “If I give you my statement why do you need
my address and number? It makes no sense.” I force myself not to laugh.

Later, the same officer comes back. “Do you want me to call your father so that he
knows where you are?” he asks Maggie.

The thought of calling our parents struck me hard. I think about what my mom would
say and how she would react. I know she’s going to yell at me for coming out with
Johnny tonight. She has never liked him, and tonight just proves that it was stupidity on
my part for leaving with him. My mom should be at home right now, sleeping...

The same way I should be, but I can’t.

I open my eyes by slow degrees. My heart races, the beat pounding in my ears. My palms are starting to coat with sweat as I finally open up my eyes. I saw the man Pedro towering over my bed. His hands were reaching out to me, attempting to pull me in. I throw the covers over my head and shut my eyes. I didn’t want to be pulled into where he is. Wherever he is now. I don’t want to be a part of it. I pull the covers down and once more, I open my eyes. He’s gone now, dead, so there was no chance of him hurting me, but the thought still plagues me. An illusion— but was it really? After life, no one knows for sure where the road can lead. Perhaps what I saw was real.

I give into fear and go into my mother’s room. I lay in her bed and she gives me a hug. “I can’t sleep.” I curl in her bed like I use to do when I was younger, inhaling her scent.

“When I was your age back in Laos, I seen a lot of people die,” she tells me, “People like you and me, and even soldiers. I’ve seen them all die. After a while, it just doesn’t affect you anymore. Dying is a part of life that we’re never going to understand, we just have to accept it.”

“I know... But he was just laying there, Mom.”

“You’ll be better in the morning,” she assures me, “just close your eyes.”

Lisa Brotz “Xhosa Mother”
PHOTOGRAPH "BIG BEN, LONDON"  KATHY PYZIK
ART GALLERY

PHOTOGRAPH "MOULIN ROUGE"  KATHY PYZIK

COMPUTER ANIMATION "SIBLING RIVALRY"  CASEY VANDERWALL

OIL PASTEL "TURNIP"  EMILY RYAN

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ART GALLERY

ACRYLIC PAINTING "TOUCHDOWN"  JUSTIN MILLER

http://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol2006/iss3/16
An empty bottle lies
tipped –
clear gin spills on the coat of the bitch who left the barstool beside me
and her tongue in my mouth – cigarettes and wine.
She’s a beauty or I’m too drunk
and can’t remember her name –
so I call her baby.
Blue eyes, brown hair –
a disposition that could get me in trouble.
I’m thinking backwards – straight to the bedroom.
Another instance of being myself.
another bottle
another baptism
another cheap fuck –
bending thoughts away from
the cold streets.
The bartender leans over and tells me stories about the woman –
she’s bad news,
he says.
Beat it while you can.
But it’s too late for the back door –
she emerges from shadows –
pool tables –
drunks in booths who barely move their eyes as she passes.
Maybe we had another drink –
maybe my hand went up her skirt –
finding nothing –
no silk or lace –
no happy ending tonight.
No number to call back,
no warm embrace to replace the bottle,
no words of comfort like –
I love you,
I miss you when you’re gone,
just harder,
faster,
until we finish.
She’s the same as the rest –
beautiful,
easy,
ugly before and after –
but those few moments when the liquid
drains reality and I still
haven’t cleaned these sheets.
I.

She sleeps with it every night. Her bear, Mr. B. Ratty, legs torn. Bleeding stuffing from his side. Stains from sloppy dinners. It never leaves her side. Short fat fingers clutching to the one thing smaller than herself.


II.

The sky matches her black dress. The black clouds billow like her veil. Over fields of polished stones. Engraved crescents rising over fertile grass. Over hills, she marches. A short procession of one, two, three. Siblings. Two brothers dressed in suits. She remembers when they used to refuse to dress up for church. Today their mother did not force them into ties and shiny shoes. She couldn’t, she was not there.

III.

She sleeps with lights on. Since he left. Screaming into pillows that still smell like his hair. Dented plaster above her bed. Residue of bitter nights alone. She found one of his razors in the shower. Slumped, staring for hours before rising from freezing water. To throw it away. It’s not you, it’s me, he said. But now every night she asks her mirror what the hell is wrong with her.
dangled above
flaming fire-pit below
still not uttering a sound
as they lower the rope

"Tell us what she said"
the ugly monkey growls
"Or be burnt at the stake"
she spits out with a hiss

"Never" yells the dangler
"Never will I betray a friend"

"Oh yes you will"
the mangy giraffe cackles
"You've done it before,
"You can do it again"

"No I haven't!!"
yelled the dangler
getting hotter now, though not from the fire
"I have yet to betray a friend"

the concept of never
was lost on the gruesome two
and the dangler was dropped
into the fiery blaze

the little bear cub
sitting up in the tree
began to weep
at the sizzling scene

for it was her words, her thoughts
the dangler wouldn't share
her friendship
the dangler wouldn't betray

the little bear cub
swore an oath to stay

she would stay until she had revenged
the friend who had been killed that day
MICHAEL REILLY

HAPPY VALENTINE’S DAY

Valentine’s Day is a tradition,
A day of festivities,
In which we celebrate
The one we love and share feelings with.

It is a joyful day
In which people give flowers,
And gifts to their significant other,
And spend time with them
Under the meteor showers.

This holiday represents
Romance
Passion
Desire
Love

This holiday represents the
Drive in all humans,
To find a person
That they feel complete with.

However not everyone gets to
Celebrate this day as others do.
They are like me,
And instead have
Nothing to celebrate at all.

We are the people
Whose Valentine’s days
Are filled with
Grief
Agony
Pain
Sorrow
Depression
and Loneliness.

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We wish for the day
That our dreams come true
That are hearts are filled with joy,
And that our lives could be complete
With someone to hold on,
To talk to,
And to share our lives with.

Even for a split second
We wish to hold our sweethearts
In our arms,
And protect them from all evil.

But no matter how much we walk through life,
And how many people we surround ourselves with,
We always feel like we are alone.
Because the partner in our lives is missing,
And this gaping hole is impossible to fill.

To all of those who are with their soul mates,
Or are in a relationship.
Be thankful that you have someone,
On this day of love and romance.

And,
Please,
Cherish this day.
By spending time with your significant other,
At least for our sake.
Because our day will be a miserable one,
And we will walk that lonely road...

Yet again.
Meghan Prichard

Shower in the Dark

Soft bristles misplaced
I hope you grab that Bic.
Rip your pretty gums,
Molars and front teeth.

It’s that black blood.
The kind you love and you hate,
The kind that comes
Unannounced.
Pouring out
With skin still white and green.

I take my time
Peeling off the skin
Where your hands have slept.
Limp and serene.

The bathroom drains are overflowing
The sewage is on the rise.
Like tide that loves the shore
Like waves that hate horizon lines.

And my bare feet start screamin’
For a clean hose and clean mind.
But baby you keep coming.
A bar of dirty soap
That keeps me from getting clean.

How I wish I were underwater.
In a stream of heat and steam.
With your fingers wrapped around me.
The sharpest blade
The reddest clean.
EMILY RYAN

THE DUNES

It was a beautiful hot day.
I had taken my bike for a ride across the dunes,
finally resting where I could go no further.
The beach there was bright white
900 miles from your smile, I needed to write you.
Not exactly.

It was a beautiful breezy day.
I biked across the dunes for miles
until I reached the end, and rested on the sand.
The sky was without a cloud
I took out my journal to talk to you.
Not exactly.

It was a beautiful summer day.
Sweating and tired on the dunes, I biked for miles,
to where the land met water, and I had no choice but to rest.
The ocean was calm
I needed you there with me.
Not exactly.

It was a beautiful Long Island day.
Pedaling over the dunes, I was lost in silent sand,
only to be found at the top of paradise.
The world I knew dissolved
Except for you.
Not exactly.

It was years ago on a beautiful day.
I set out to see the sights among the dunes,
and found the perfect life; gritty, salty and warm.
The waves took over me
I will find you again in paradise.
Not exactly.

It was our first love
We pedaled along young and wonderful,
over the dunes and under the sun.
To where we could go no further and the ocean divided our ways.
Do you look for me in paradise?
I. Hope

Beyond his eyes a worldly cast is broke.
Fulfills the wounded half left out of book.
Lest birds and roads chime daily knolls,
Or Father Time intone the knolls,
He sleeps away a fast impending yoke.

Awake he finds a cold and blackened room.
Runs naked hands across the airy doom.
Trips over his chair, remembers it there
Runs hands along walls, makes light and recalls
Just the path to find his writer’s loom.

But what of stars—the nails who keep the roof,
The Earth—admonishment for seeking truth.
The moon—a friend and advice giver.
The sea—a joke of man’s endeavor.
Who hints the promise of a fluid noose.

And with each stroke the words begin to pile.
Thoughts classified, recorded, stamped and filed.
What do they serve in this collide?
He nor they can strong decide
If the ticks for rest or sticks of pyre.

Rightly they begin to get confused
The shy madness inside each day accrues.
They pray for footholds in some others’ poems,
And keep to the places they’re told are their homes
Laughing, as those who see and know all often do.

“Oh, come now children, you will have your time,
But now it’s best to know your place assigned,
Thank for your part upon my stage
The holy words on my holy page,
Keep that the stitch knows not the quilt’s design."
II. Prayer

Close the eyes, levee break,
Oh Lord, to once just fall awake.
For forever, for a day, hear
The planetary lyre play.
To find one metaphor received
Soul enhanced, body relieved.
For forever, for a day
Lord, please, say you
What you have to say.

KATHY PYZIK
“Sacred Heart Cathedral, Paris”
To love and to live
One must learn to laugh at life

At all of one’s finished failures
That are fighting to fray the future

Begin a start sweeter than the sour
Sound of the screaming cease of sight

And beat the bitter betrayal that
Beckons on to the better beam of light

Living life without laughing a little
Leaves life weak and limp

And weary to the waters of the willow
Which watch the life that’s worthwhile

But instead invite the infected Ivy
That engulfs the integrity and indulges virtue

Where dead dreams destroy destiny
And the desire to deem dignity

Which kills the kindness that
Conquers kindred spirits

But heightened hues of honesty
Highlight happiness and laughter

And rise revitalized reasons
To realize one’s renewal

This knowing of nothing notes the
Needing for knowing something

But tattered times tell tales of
Totaled dreams and tired laughter

So forget the fatal foe that is failure
And fight for the fresh freedom of laughter

And learn to live life
Just by laughing a little
JESSICA CHIMENTO "A VIEW INTO TUSCANY"
Submission Guidelines

- All writing submissions must be sent to angle@sjfc.edu.
- We ask you to please paste your work into the email. We no longer accept attachments.
- Please include your name, address, phone number, and the title(s) of the piece(s) submitted.
- Art can be submitted in JPEG, photograph, photocopy, or actual form.
- All submissions are judged anonymously.

The Next Angle Deadline is March 20th