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Cover Page Footnote
Originally published as: Volume 7, Issue 1, 2006.

This full issue is available in The Angle: https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol2007/iss1/17
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ANGLE'S HOME GROWN AWARDS

READERS' CHOICE

FIRST PLACE Splash.............................................................. Will Farrel
SECOND PLACE UNDER LIMBS........................................... Meghan Prichard
THIRD PLACE CURiosity OF ETERNITY............................... Phillip J. Celata

EDITOR'S PICK:
IF IT MAKES ME COCKY THEN SO BE IT............................ Keith J. Alexander

FACULTY AWARD:
THE WRONG END OF GOODMAN STREET............................. Laura D. Nolasco

"DESTRUCTION"  THERESA CHARLEBOIS
Splash! The water is cold, clear, and barely chlorinated, yet just enough so that your eyes sting when opened while submerged in it. Thousands of tiny bubbles fizzle up beneath you, stimulating your entire body. It’s like being inside a shaken soda can, freshly opened.

I was six and as I broke through the surface for air the laughter and sound of the annual end of summer block party filled my ears once again.

"Nice," shouted one of my peers. "Did it hurt?"

"Dude, that splash was like a geyser!" exclaimed another kid.

"It's cool," I shot back confidently. "I'm gonna do it again."

My face beaming, I began to wade through the four feet of water I had just thrown myself into and over to the side of the pool.

"Willis, keep the water in the pool please," hollered a slightly irritated voice. It was Chris, the pool owner, at whose house the party was always held. He was on the far right side of the patio, manning the grill and making hamburgers for after swimming. He was a good twenty feet from me and I could see water stains on his back and sleeve that I had no doubt put there with my high flying karate bangin’ hardcore ninja kick that had earned me the praise of my peers. I guess it had been a big splash, though it didn’t feel like one. I hadn’t felt the smack, thwack, or wack of my skin hitting hard against the rough churning of the waters’ surface. There had been no sudden rush to the head as the water immersed me, and no flood of pressure anywhere in the process.

"I’m sorry," I shouted in the hurried manner of a child whose only interest at hand was the good time he was having. I hobbled up the ladder, shaking and shaking to keep my board in the cold blue once again.

The rush faded as quickly as it came. I broke through the surface once more gasping for air.

"Willis! Keep the water in the pool! Please!" shouted Chris. "You keep soaking everyone’s dinner! How are we supposed to eat if you just keep dumping water on the food.” He was furious and had more than a few drops on him now. His entire backside was soaked and he was dripping wet from balding head to sandal studded toes. The fury in his eyes burned like a bonfire that had long since gone out of control. “I’m not gonna say it again, please keep the water in the pool. If you can’t do that, then I’m gonna have to ask you to get out.”

My back stung from the force of the impact. That sting quickly turned into an ache, as though I had just been punctured with ten thousand needles. Looking around I could see from all the disapproving glances that that last one had been a real deuzy.

"Will, keep it down,” a stern voice said behind me.

I turned to see my father standing there with several of the other neighborhood men who were only present because their wives had forced them to be. He was holding something, a shiny silver can. I squinted for a better view. It was a beer. I was stunned. My parents didn’t drink, that’s what they had always told me; and for some reason, I had prided myself on that fact. You were never supposed to drink, that was my understanding. Beer was bad for you because it had alcohol in it, which was poison and would kill you. I had had this discussion several times with my parents in the past, both, separately and individually, earlier that day as a matter of fact; and yet, there was my father, drinking, killing himself.

There was an enormous lump forming in the back of my throat and I felt as though someone had just punched me in the gut, hard. I glanced over to where my mother was as my eyes welled. She was in a fit of riotous laughter with the neighborhood women under the green tweed umbrella at the round wooden table by the barbecue, wine bottles piled high on its flaky surface. I didn’t realize it then, but looking back now I
can see that she was drunk, beyond drunk, totally smashed, and having the time of her life.

My eyes burned, throat hurt, and my stomach felt as though it was about to reject its contents through the door way they had waltzed in through. I bolted. Grabbing hold of the metal rim, I launched myself over it and onto the split paint of the deck’s wooden surface. I ran. I ran as fast as my legs could carry me, down the driveway and through the open blue picket gate, and across the neighbor’s lawn to mine. Ripping open the screen door, I threw myself hard against the big oak door of my home. I bruised my shoulder, but it opened. Upstairs in my room, I sobbed and wallowed there for what seemed like an eternity. Five minutes later my father came in huffing and out breath, shouting my name. I didn’t answer his calls, but that didn’t matter since he knew right where to find me.

“What’s the matter?” he gasped.
“Your drinking,” I sobbed, eyes red and face stained with tears.
“So?” he said confused.
“You told me to never ever, ever drink,” I stammered. “You told me you and mom don’t drink, never drink, why are you drinking?” I was shouting at him by this point and my mental state was beyond that of a total train wreck. “You’re killing yourself!” I screamed
“Well, ya see, that’s not totally true,” my fathered stammered, at a loss for words. He raised the silver can to his lips for another drink.

At that instant I tore the can from his hands, and smashed the aluminum container and all its contents against the pale blue plaster of my wall. It collided and crumpled against the wall, tearing a small chunk of it free and leaving a minor crater, a scar, that remains to this day. The remaining beer, excised from its thin shiny prison, went in all directions, covering my arm and the wall, dripping down to the carpet.

“What the hell is wrong with you!” exclaimed my father in disbelief. “Look it’s an adult thing, you’ll understand when you’re older.”
“No it’s not,” I shot back.
“Look,” my father said, ”what do you want?”
“What do I want?” I demanded. “What do I want?” I repeated his words over and over, perplexed. This was a curve ball I hadn’t been anticipating, and now the ball was in my court. I stepped back from him and took a few moments to think over what it was that I wanted.

“I want you stop drinking,” I said.
“You don’t want me to drink?” My father repeated my words, completely confused.
“Yes!” I shouted. “If you’re going to tell me what not to do, then you should not do it also. Otherwise you’re a liar and I won’t listen to you.”
“Ok,” he said calmly. “Ok, I won’t drink anymore.” He shook my shoulder and gave me a slight pat to try and reassure me.

“Promise?” I said
“I promise,” my father said. “I won’t drink anymore. Now, how about we get back to the party? Everyone was pretty confused and worried when you left.”

As we walked back to the party I asked him: “So you really won’t do it anymore?”

“I really won’t do it anymore” my father said. “I won’t drink.”

“Hey!” exclaimed Chris as we walked back through the gate and into the party.

“Willis, what happened? Here Paul have another beer.”

I watched in horror as our host handed my father another can. I could do nothing, but stand there dumbfounded, feeling the welling pain in my eyes as I watched him open it and raise it. I couldn’t believe it. Had he lied to me? Had everything he had just said been for nothing? How could this be? This was my father here.

Turning his head, he smiled at me. Then pulled that silver bullet from the air, and in one quick flick of his wrist, turned it on its head, pouring the canister’s vile contents onto the ground.

Splash!
I am creased from every blade
That died before I came.
Underneath bloomed apples that bruise
The way all things living do.

And I remember now
Why wilting trees are less like me.
And so much more like you.

I don’t remember anything.
I don’t remember anything I don’t want to.
Blooming beards that hide a brown-eyed boy
Or jet black baby’s rooms.

Leaving is leaving when fall comes calling.
And I forget regret when all it is, is longing.

The snow moves outside my bed frame.
I’m in a children’s book
Where everything comes alive.
Wish while still half asleep to hesitate,
Curl into something small.

I’ll tell you one thing
When everything’s in frost
There is nothing left of fall.
SPLENDID SONGS AND HOLY GRAILS,
A MOONLIT NIGHTS WITH FAIRY TALES,
EVERYTHING WE DO THIS DAY,
WILL SOON BE WASHED AWAY.

FIRE, ICE, SUN, AND STARS,
NEVER CAN I TRAVEL FAR,
EARTH, WATER, AND THE MOON,
WISH I COULD BE HOME SOON.

MY FATE IT SEEMS TAKES ILL OF ME,
THE BLINDING OBLIVION OF TRAGEDY,
BUT NOTHING SEEMS TO COME TO ME,
THE ENTERTAINMENT OF IRONY.

AS I CREEP FROM THIS SORROWFUL PLACE,
SADDENING EXPRESSION ON MY FACE,
LIFE HOLDS STILL ITS MAGIC GLOW,
YET NEVER HAS IT BURNED SO LOW.

PLANETS SPANNING 'CROSS THE SKY,
CAN NEVER WILLINGLY MY THOUGHTS DENY,
WINGS OF FEATHERS CROSSING NEAR,
NEVER HELD SECRETS SO DEAR,
TO ME THE MYSTERY NEVER FADES,
TILL THE COMING OF THE END OF DAYS.
KEITH J. ALEXANDER

IF IT MAKES ME COCKY THEN SO BE IT

One can never show too much love for his or her self
The saying goes too much of a good thing can kill you
Well I should have been dead already
You see before cupid struck me in my heart to make me love my light skin Latina,
He struck me in my mind to make me love myself
I guess I love my self a little too much
But if it makes me cocky then so be it

If it makes me cocky to strive for perfection in an imperfect society
Filled with a mass variety of cultures who are attacked by capitalist vultures but
embraced by communist ideas that take away my fears, then so be it

If it makes me cocky to speak up
To those who make fun of my father for
Having the ability to count my poems but not being able to read them, then so be it

If it makes me cocky to say that
The lovers who love my love don’t love me
‘Cause the color of my skin closer to O.J.’s glove
Rather than a dove holding an olive branch, then so be it

If it makes me cocky when I tell you that
I refuse to be misused by the radio stations and the news
The crooked cops that hold their glocks and all they do is abuse, then so be it

If it makes me cocky when I say that Ima make it out the ghetto, Ima make it out the
ghetto. I’m going to make it out of the ghetto not in cuffs or in a body bag and when I
return, Ima give my community the one thing they never had which is love, then so be it.

But what does cockiness want with me?
Cockiness wants me to tell the gangs to leave my community
Cockiness wants me to tell the cops to stop harassing me
Cockiness wants me to love my girl without getting dirty looks
Cockiness wants me to help my father read chapter books
Cockiness wants communism and capitalism to end and
Cockiness wants me to brush my hair in the mirror for 5 hrs until my waves begin to
spin.
I tried running away from cockiness but it lives with in me after each footstep after each
breath. I tried to escape. But escape is like sleep and when sleep is permanent it’s death.
So I say to you if death makes me cocky, then so be it.
LAURA D. NOLASCO

THE WRONG END OF GOODMAN STREET

¡Ay qué rico!
It was my destino to get lost and stay lost
and to drive down the wrong end of Goodman Street
away from the posh Park Avenue cafés
where once I sat
a silent, painted trophy at your side
sipped cappuccino
and sighed at passers-by.

You of the infallible star and crescent,
even more almighty than the God
you say you pray to
two times a day,
had your chance to save me
from the seedy side of Goodman Street
but gracias a Dios
you left me all those boxes
full of Spanish books
and to hell with the dining room set,
the couch and the three chests of drawers.

One night we really did get lost
and drove away from the ritzy end
of Goodman Street
past all those little stores
with names like Sana’a Market and Queen Stop
y tú te sacaste de la casilla
I never saw anyone’s cage
rattled more than yours.

Ay por Dios
what good are all your framed diplomas
on the wall
when you look down your hooked, hawk-like nose
at all these darker dwellers
in the inner city of your mind?

Those you crushed under your
all-powerful heel shod with the finest
Italian leather--
those cinnamon-skinned mothers
who work in all those little stores
because they refuse to go on welfare
and their cabecita rizada daughters
who wonder how I got such soft, straight hair—
gather round as reggaeton blares
from my little silver Nissan
your poisoned gift.

Any day I expect you to flag us down
get him the hell out of the passenger seat
he’s black!
but then again
what in God’s name would you,
in your Christian Dior suits
I never bothered to learn to press,
be doing on the wrong end
of Goodman Street?

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\footnote{During the Gulf War of 1991, Dr. Emil Homerin of the University of Rochester stated that Arabs and Muslims “dwell in the slums of our mind.”}

\section*{Elias Van Son}

\textbf{L'ARTISTE}

while i may spread my arms and smile,
i wish and wait for more brilliant wings.
and l'Artiste pulled the sun from the morning sea,
but i slept while this was happening.
the sparrow's songs still birth inside my mouth,
yet they find no voice with which to sing.
and i might share my mother's eyes,
but she sees jesus christ in everything.
"DOMINICAN PARADISE"  
THERESA CHARLEBOIS

"OLD FASHION ROLLER WITH DAFFODILS"  KRISTI BROWN

"OVERGROWN"  THERESA CHARLEBOIS
"Peace in Nature"

Sean King
The coin spins
It spins fast and strong at first
Spinning rapidly in a circle
Like nothing can make it fall
You can even hit it with your finger and it wont fall
But then the coin slows down
Very subtle at first
The velocity of the spin begins to weaken
The circle begins to get smaller
And smaller
And smaller
And smaller
It starts to spin very slowly now
Just a little more…
It falls
Rocking back forth
Trying to get back up
Trying to spin
But the downfall is too great
Eventually, it is inevitable
The coin lays flat
Heads down
Born to be a kid all my life.
Always ready to play.
Move on move on,
Roll with the punches
The sun sets on another day.

Wanted to grow up to be big and tall,
I'm only five foot nine.
Gotta move on
And roll with the punches
Tomorrow will be my time.

There was a time when all I wanted,
Was one place to call my home.
Moving on
Rollin' with the punches
Now I just want to roam.

I once thought the answer was love,
Until life gave me questions again.
So I moved on
And rolled with the punches
Maybe the questions never end.

I am terrified of the future,
But I want to be there.
Moving
And rolling
Again.

Sometimes life seems too slow,
So we look for a chance to move on.
But spend your whole life looking ahead...
And pretty soon your life will be gone.
with the rush of the wind
they rise from the dead
swaying to the beat of
imaginary music
a chorus line
some even in toe shoes
primed to ballet
on a blanket
of light snow
or waltz down
an eternal stage
nature's perfect finale
for cold brown oak leaves
whose glory days of
greens, reds, yellows
deserve one more reprise
in this all too brief
november resurrection
IN THE RAIN, AUGUST 1ST, 2005

I was playing in the rain
and I thought that it was storming
because storming lights the sky
and makes puddles
and I was counting it
and I seemed so happy,

but looking up with my eyes closed
letting the rain pelt down
and pool
in the corners
the lightning
streaking
through my skin

you could think
I was crying.

Holding back
a curse
the world could hear.
Do you know what it's like
To be a woman
Of twenty-one
Who's now just maturing
Gaining hips
And breasts that fill an A cup?
Do you know what it's like
To be a woman
Who tries to mount
The one she loves
With hips that won't move
And knees that won't bend
Crippled hands that won't hold
The weight of her body?
Do you know what it's like
To feel less than a woman?
To be sexually stripped
So young
By drugs that help the disease
That kills the body
Yet the body is killed
By the drugs that steal
The womanly body.
Do you know what it's like
To feel less than, every night of your life?
Because lying there just isn't enough.
Arthritis has taken my movement away-
I guess I'll just wait for the day, when
I won't feel any less than a woman.
The eight of us had spent dozens of summer nights on the gently sloping roof, the outlines of the neighboring houses softly blending in with the creases of the night. On those nights, our quiet laughing slipped from our mouths and glided through the air, settling among trees, on the ground, on houses until everything around seemed to be laughing with us in the warmth and joy of summer nights. On those nights, we knew that the eight of us would spend the rest of our lives together on the roof. Some nights would be marked by silliness. The boys would hang from the jutting gutters, race up and down the angles of the roof, and pretend to slip while leaning precariously over the edges. The girls would tickle the palms of the boys hanging from the gutters; declare the winners of the roof races, or pretend to shove the boys who were leaning precariously over the edges. Some nights, the soon arriving summer rain would be palpable through the dark. Other nights, when the sky was clean and clear, we would watch the stars beckoning above us, shining with the secrets of other worlds, eloquently expressing the vastness of the dark. Occasional nights the smoke from a nearby bonfire would sift its way through the shadows, clinging to our bodies, leaving the scent of wood lightly in our noses. Some nights might pass quieter than others with the sound of the giant trees and melodic crickets willing us into a dreamy silence broken by the occasionally deep breath of a friend slipping into sleep. Each night would be spent together, contentedly in each other's presence. We would live our nights on the roof, in the trust and comfort that comes from knowing we would always be surrounded by those who love us.

Tonight was different. The warmth of the night was replaced by the cool, brittle feeling of the soon arriving fall rain. The sounds of the night were taut and forced, as though an invisible power was making the trees sway and crickets sing despite their true desire to find protection from the coolness of the autumn air. The darkness, which was usually so fluid and smooth, was chokingly tight and dense, its sharp edges slicing through the air. Summer was ending and much time would pass before we spent any nights together in the comfort of the roof. As we descended from the roof and spoke our goodbyes, the autumn air caught our breath in threads of white that quickly vanished into the piercing dark.
Boys in English class
their legs spread wide,
khaki shorts are
dark tunnels up
their inner thighs.

(Don't forget to stare)

Girls aren't gaudy;
gawk, gaping mouth open
longing for a single
lick or even

(What's a body but a toy?)

Hughes, you got it!
Right on man!
He is fiiiiine
she is hot...
To the bed young
stallions.
Let's make love, let's
make sweat
Let's play,

('How do we understand these things?')

Good girls explore,
Good girls explode
Good girls get your mind out of
the gutter.

The professor is looking at you.
MIKE REILLY

THE ILL-FATED MERRY-GO-ROUND

We go around in circles,
Circling roundabout
Till one of us

Gets thrown off.

And who always gets thrown off?
Me.
It's always me.
And I don't know why.

Sure other people get thrown off.
It happens all the time.
But I wonder how I can never,
Stay on that merry-go-round at all.

It's a fun ride,
And I would love to stay on
But I'm always thrown off
Even though I want to stay.

I wonder,
Why?
Why, does this happen?

I'm sick and tired
Of jumping on every new merry-go-round,
And being thrown off every time
Into the mud and into obscurity.

I cannot stand this.
I do the same thing every time.
I am reliable.
I am a hard worker.
I am nice and kind.
I try to be friendly.
And yet, I am thrown off,
Every time.
I don't get it.
I never do anything wrong.
I always try to do right,
And yet again, I get kick out.

I feel like my life is
One continuous circle,
That goes around and around.
And when one thing ends
Another thing begins.

But it has the exact same outcome as the previous one.
I just want to feel wanted,
And belong somewhere.
And not get thrown off every time.

So, once again.
I get back up,
Wipe myself off,
And ride that ill-fated merry-go-round,
Once again.

I know it's coming.
I know I'll be shunned again.
But why do I try again?
When I know the outcome each time.

So on I go,
Climbing aboard the next circus attraction,
Hoping not to be spit back out,
And belong somewhere for once.
This is your sex on the pirate-puritan hangover
This is your death in a sea-faring guillotine
This is your blood dipping into the gold flax loom
This is your drunken holy heart with cigarette burns
This is your blooming gun growing dead flowers
This is your czarist political mouth
This is your burning blue finger

This is
This is
This is
This is

a remembrance of home.
Submission Guidelines

-All writing submissions must be sent to angle@sjfc.edu.
-Although we have previously required your work to be sent pasted into e-mails, we ask you to please send all pieces attached in a single document.
-Please include your name or a pen name and the title(s) of the piece(s) submitted in the body of the e-mail.
-Art can be submitted in JPEG, photograph, photocopy, or actual form.
-All submissions are judged anonymously.

Thank You!