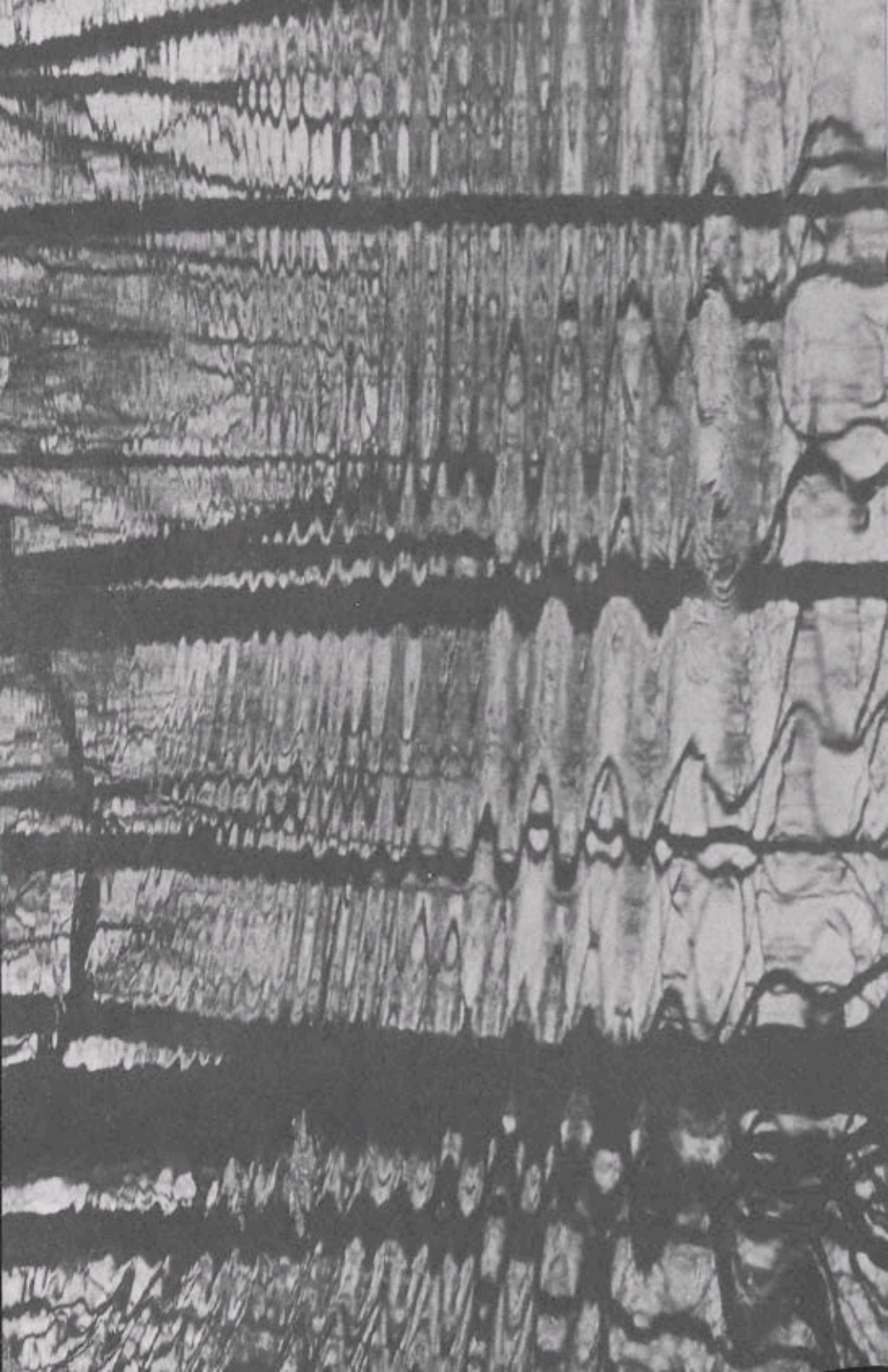
THE Idol
SPRING 1992



JM I 21 1992

The Idol

SPRING 1992

EDITOR
Melissa Fabel

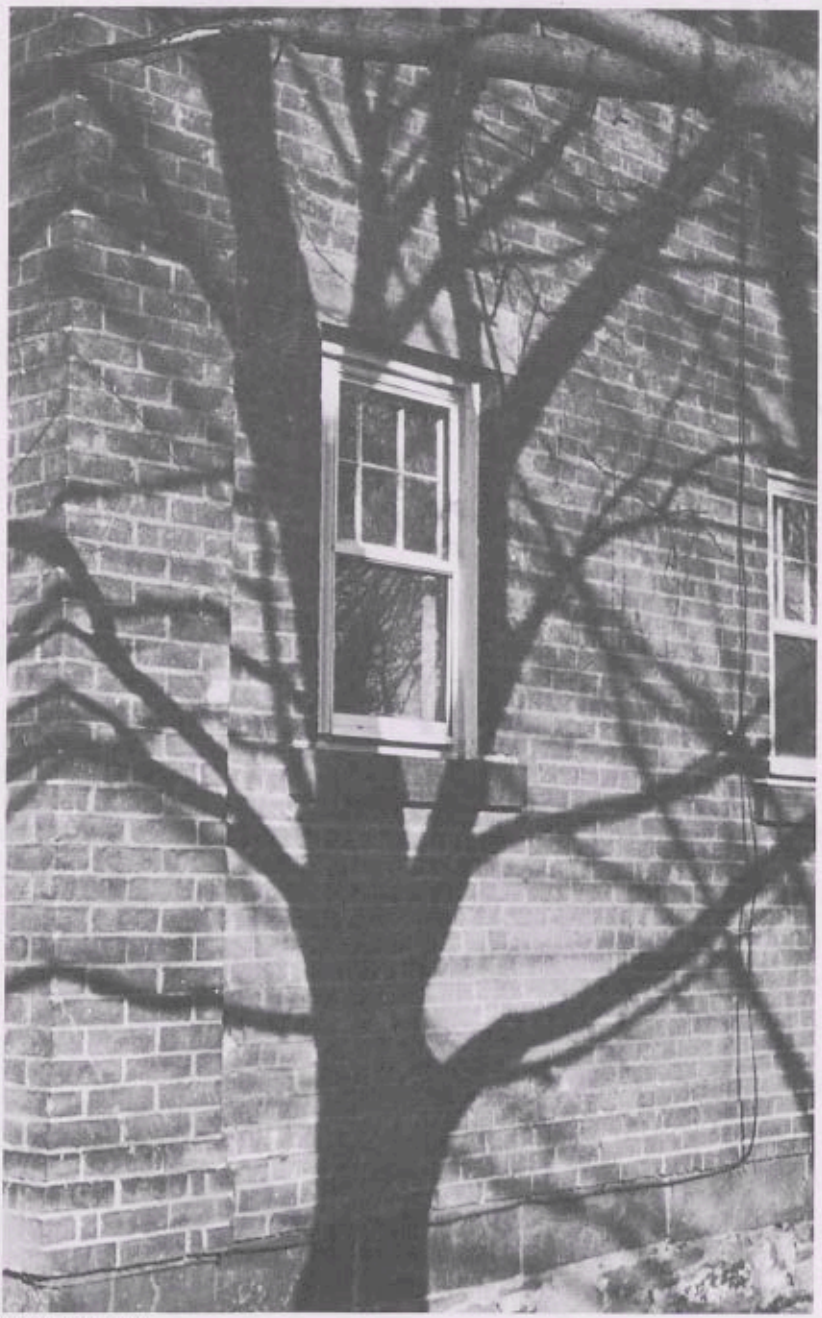
ASSISTANT EDITOR
Gabrielle Small

ARTS EDITOR
Jessica Page

FACULTY ADVISOR
Jordan Smith

FRONT COVER
William E. Stevenson

BACK COVER
William E. Stevenson



SUSAN SKLAR

MUSIC

Showering is disloyal; I lose
you to the smell of soap and
shampoo.
I step in, and the scent left
on me is washed
off my hands, rinsed
from my hair, dripped
away.
Last night, when you
leaned with me - towards
me - and whispered, I
caught it as poetry, although
you did not mean for it
to be anything but
truth.
"Between the silent
ringing and your
heartbeat, I hear
a concert." How
amused I was
to find
your drumsticks on my
couch this afternoon.

JULIE MEDOW

"MARINA BERNARD, SPRING 1992"

LISA M. TAIT

TEXTURE TREAT MEETS EPISODE EVER

On the first night I was a madman,
gunning people down like toys.
The next night I was a cop,
arresting a little boy.

The third night I fell in love with a girl from Viet-Nam,
who'd been raised since age 6 to look and act like an American.
Finally, Joe the Indian Chief Wrestler fell back on me,
Just in time to run down the railroad tracks at 3 AM
looking for a new car.

Good thing the F.B.I. hadn't snagged us the previous day.

JEREMY D. COUNTRYMAN

GREG LEIDNER

YOUR ASS

I will not kiss your ass
Or live only to hear you
Speak my name
I am not shapeless
If you nod my way offhand.

Don't think I mourn you in the dark
Whisper your name in the shower
I do not talk to you in the mirror
But you can see that
My eyes are teeth and I bite you.

You saunter by me
A grin for my loins
Simple thighs do not thrill me.
I inhale the wind and spit you out.

I do not faint
At the sight of your ass
Wrestle with girls to touch you
Or imagine our children.
I suck in the sky, I swallow the world.
There is nothing that you give me
That I will not win myself.
I will not kiss your ass.
I will not even watch it go by.

JULIE SHANEBROOK

PACES

I: January, 1990

The greatest wisdom of all, I think,
is that death which was foreign was brought
so true
as the beat of hebrew came
pouring through the late
afternoon sun on the green:

Oseh shalom bimromav
hu ya a se shalom aleynu
v'alchol yisrael
v'imru amen.

The spill of dirt on stripped
wood echoed, and broke
my heart. You stood,
head bowed and darkened skin -
usually flushed with pink,
now pale.

At your home, reflections
covered, dishes in the sink, the dogs
sent away, and his car still parked outside.
We sat eating pickles and rye bread
feeling delicately out of place.

"This will only last until Thursday,"
you said, "but I'll keep the cloth
for a week on the outside, and thirty days hidden.
My mom couldn't sleep
last night alone, so I stayed
though the mattress was hard."

"Oh life as futile, then, as frail!" sticks to me,
for I just finished the poem
by Tennyson. Yes, it helped
the Queen, and the poet, too.
But I couldn't dare suggest
that now it might soothe.

"I don't know these guests; I'm going
to take another pill.
Thank God
that I came home
two Saturdays ago."

II: April

I can only pretend
how slowly a day concludes
in your mind's recollecting
solitude. Perhaps thoughts
melt like chocolate in
the sun, as you figure out pieces
which have just begun to unform.

Back to school, mother's wishes,
to integrate limbs attached to
the brain. As if location quells
anything . . . mainstreamed you go;
shying away from the faint
looks of "Yes, I know."

But it passes through you
in transit, mainly concerned with
sleeping it all away, exhausted of emotions
for (Help Me) subtle commotions
of these days. No solace in routine, and
who to blame.

III: July, 1997

Perched a top the widow's walk, I
see all the ships, and the way
the water floats and dips
against the wind and other elements
of time (It Is Nothing But
One Huge Rhyme).

Boats like the ones in
my son's bathtub
are propped like helpless jellyfish
clutching the tide. (Even The Colors
Will Not Subside
When I Close My Eyes.)

Without an anchor, I fear that they
will drift away, so I look
for the east, and begin to pray.
(This Is Crazy, But I
Do It Anyway . . . Sentimental Impulses
Are Not Uncommon These Days.)

I stay till the sun vanishes
behind the dunes, changing the scene
to a summer's moon (How Quickly Night Comes
From An Afternoon)! Crawl down the steps,
and tuck my baby into his bed.

Now under our sheets, I reach
for my husband who pulls me
in, and takes my hand. His skin
is still consumed by heat
from the suntan he earned
today on the beach,
and smelling like Solarcane.
Why
do we allow ourselves
to get this way?
They say that humans
are social animals: that link
puts us higher on the chain, distinct
and separate from all other beasts.
(The Wonders Of Lies, Pain, and Conceit!)

JULIE MEDOW

When we're together
Time

When we're apart
Time

Sense the pleasure
Time

Sense the purpose
Time

Go to the show
Time

Kiss in the foyer
Time

Be my lady
Time

Be my love
Time after Time.

GLENN T. KONOPASKE

CORINNE SELINGER

de colores (of colors)

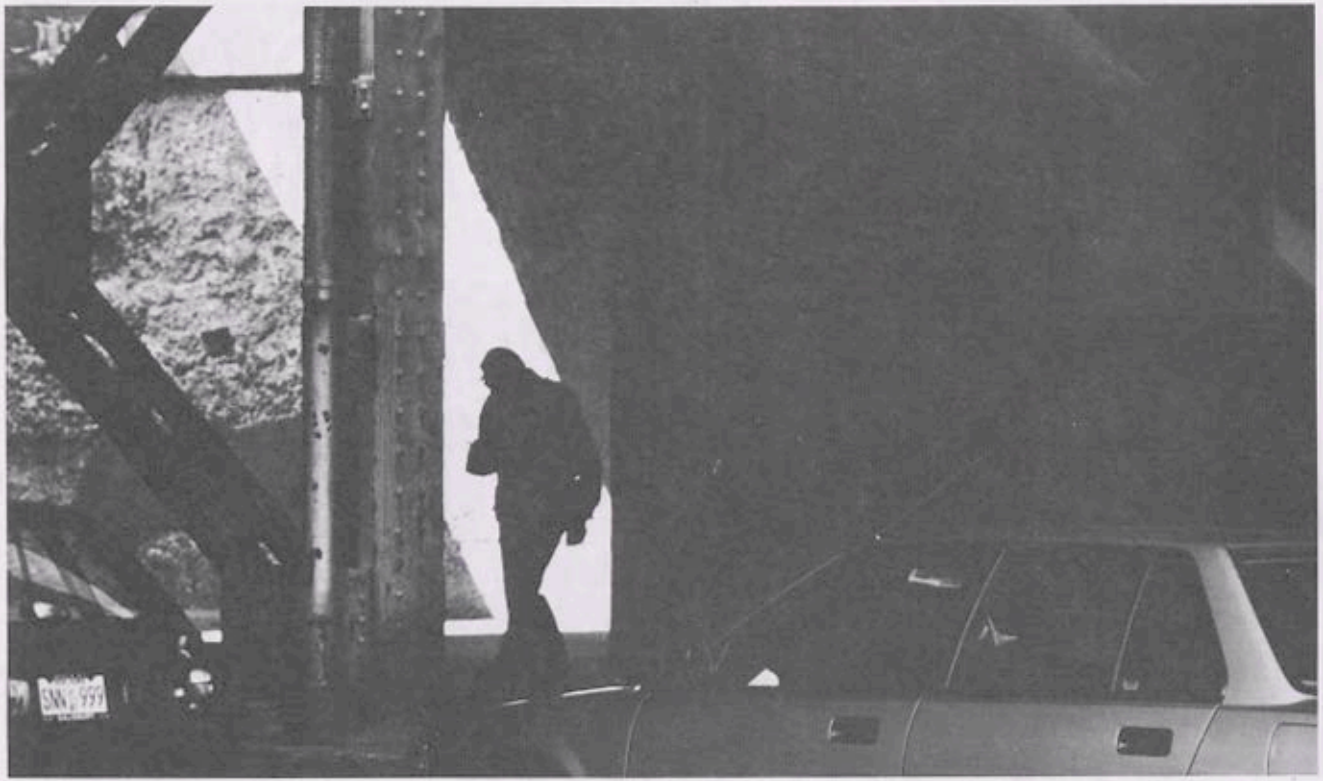
green and red make brown
the nature of our blood won't let them hold us down.
black and white make grey
we and they will make peace one day.

Of we, colors do not come
meticulous mental midgets
Continually counting digits
of we and they

Damn!, Where are they from?

Nature of a dream,
Horror of a scream,
Creatures of God, they do not seem.
Adore the color of another
As red and yellow heat of hate
We must smother.

JOE X. KOTRIGHT GONZÁLEZ JR.



CORINNE SELINGER

ENLIGHTENED EYES ON PURIFYING HIGHS

Complete the improper heat
Produced from the ambers that meet my
Lips that kissed her until
The fire was kindled
And its dream dwindled.

Every father, in the mirror,
Sees his son.
SoCo, JD, 151;
From fear carelessness, or painted fun;
Am I the One?
Life: there is none;
Should I consider a gun?

DOUG REDSTONE

RED LIGHT:

Follow me into the depth of my unknowing.
First, dress warmly,
I would not want you to catch a chill.
Tell me what you see.
Is it too dark for your eyes?
Close them and take my hand,
Lets walk to the red light.
I'm sorry that you cannot warm here,
This light gives off no heat.
When you fell off your bicycle
Did you know that you would be let off here?
You are still a child.

Naive is a child that never grows,
Genious is a child that always knows.
Keep going, do not be afraid.
Collect your tears now!
Please do not waste them,
Water is scarce here.
Can you feel the shards of broken glass under your feet?
Can you feel the pain if you can't see
The blood?
I would offer you a bandage
But your wounds will never heal.
Don't worry, soon you will be numb.

Are you afraid to feel?
I am.

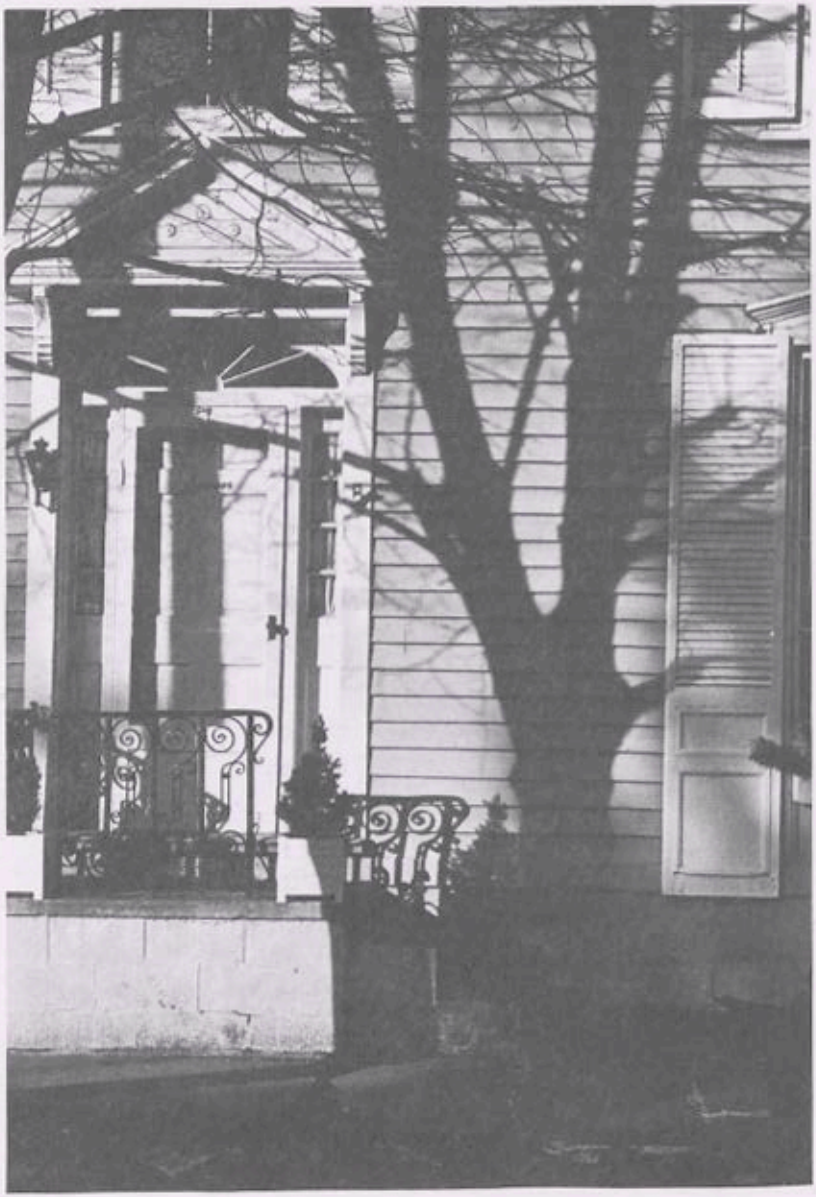
CLIFF BIRBROWER

TO A HUMPBACK WHALE BEACHED AT MISQUAMICUT

The tide has ebbed and left you now
without the buoyant dance you'd always known
Now in the sand with the pipers and gulls,
near where distant hulls have cleft the brine,
you lie drying.

You, prone and still,
withering in the sunlight like a jellyfish
spat up from the ocean to burn on the solid element's fringe;
soon, perhaps, the tide will lift you off once more
to the blue, to your world of froth and flow,
to your element, born yours to traverse, to tame. To linger
within its rocky confines was your fate and now here
the bleached sand clings to your dampness, withholding
you from your briny dwelling.

DAN BULLEN



SUSAN SKLAR

Lord, I say
To have me today
Mama's comin' on home.
Don't know my daddy's name,
Don't know my summa' home.

I am the lost soul,
Crying myself to sleep.
This mattress — so cold.
Lord, I don't see your
face.
I pray tomorrow will
come.
I say I don't see
your face.

Now, Tara, my little sis.
She sells — never a kiss.
I struggle — I survive.
O Lord take me outa'
this place.

"Pickin' blueberries, blackberries, huckleberries,
In the summa'"
No help in this cold life.
I need a helping hand.
I need dignity to stand.
A little boy who's old a nine,
Give me a place to sleep,
to love, to shine.

I don't see a face now.
Don't know life without
pain.
Can tell sorrow,
Describe the rain.
It hurts to move,
Hurts to sing.
Blues is all I got,
"Let freedom ring?"

Lord, I'm, so alone
Can't find my home.
No mama, not today,
I've nothin' left to
say . . .

GLENN T. KONOPASKE

WILLIAM E. STEVENSON

COMMUNICATION

Atomic elemental buzz holds fast.
Wolfpacks huddle until the night has past.

Lonely strangers engage in urgent lust.
Frenzied killers shriek with every stabbing thrust.

Patients pay for an analyst's advice.
Lovers stare into each other's eyes.

Distant radios signal and receive.
Flashing fireflies call out from the trees.

A working brain connected to a tongue,
Why don't we let the obvious be done?

JOSH RUBINSTEIN

SUSAN SKLAR

SISTER STORIES

One day, my sister came home and announced to me that she had met God. "I met God on the way home from Susan's house," she said casually, hanging up her jacket.

"You met who?" I asked, incredulous.

"God," she replied patiently, in the confident older-sister way she had when she thought I didn't understand something.

I pondered this for a moment.

"So tell me," I said, "what's he like?"

She shrugged nonchalantly. "Just like any man."

"How did you meet him?" I asked curiously.

"Well, she said, eager to be pressed for her story, "I was playing with Susan and it started to get dark and I was cold and wanted to come home. Then, when I was walking up the sidewalk, I saw him."

"You saw God?" I asked, still doubtful.

"Yes," she replied, annoyed. "God. The God. I already told you that."

"Well, how did you know it was him?" I questioned.

"He said 'Hi Samantha, you're late for dinner'" she answered.

"So what?" I argued. "How did you know it was God?"

She looked exasperated. "He knew my name! He knew that I was late for dinner! How could he know that if he wasn't God? I never saw him before."

I thought about this to myself for a minute. She was probably right. No one knew everyone's name unless they knew everything, and only God knew everything. She was right, it must have been God.

"Does he live on our street?" I asked.

"No," she replied, and looked confused for a moment. "At least, I don't think so. I never saw him before. He's probably visiting."

"Girls!" called my mother from the kitchen. "Wash your hands and come down for dinner!"

Samantha went into the bathroom to wash. I followed her and made a hasty pretense of washing my hands. I really hated to wash my hands when I knew they weren't dirty, so I just ran them under warm water for a few seconds and watched Samantha with annoyance. She was very elaborate when it came to anything involving soap and water. She adjusted the hot and cold water faucets carefully, then made huge amounts of foam with the soap and then lathered and rinsed her hands three times. I dried my own hands carelessly and waited impatiently for her to finish.

"Look," I said, as we went down the stairs. "Did he know that you knew who he was?"

"Of course," she said. "I said 'Hi, God. I know it's late but I was playing with Susan and forgot what time it was'."

I was astounded. "You called him God? He didn't mind?"

"Of course not," she said. "That's his name."

"Did you talk about anything else?"

"No," she replied condescendingly. "I was late for dinner and I would have gotten in trouble. And it was almost dark and I'm not allowed to be out alone when it gets dark."

This was a sore point for me, for she knew that I wasn't even allowed to cross the street by myself yet, much less be out alone as she had been.

Samantha took this opportunity to mock my lesser privileges. "Because you're not allowed to be out by yourself, you'll never see God."

"How do you know?" I asked furiously.

"Because," she replied confidently. "God only lets himself be seen to people who are alone, and you're never alone. He would never let himself be seen to little kids with their baby-sitters."

I was angry and hurt. "You don't know that, Samantha! I bet he would show himself to anyone, no matter who they were with if he wanted to."

"Well, since I saw him and you didn't, I guess that means that he wanted to talk to me more than anyone else. He's God, he can do anything he wants."

We entered the dining room, Samantha with a self-righteous smirk on her face and me with thinly concealed anger.

"Sit down, girls," my mother said. We began to eat. I was subdued and preoccupied and could not concentrate on my meal. No one seemed to notice that I was glaring at Samantha instead of eating my dinner.

"So," my mother said, passing the salad plates. "Anything exciting happen in school today?"

"Yes!" broke in Samantha, before I could utter a word. She could always find something interesting about her day in the second grade to tell at dinner. Her stories were long and detailed, and by the time she finished them, I had either forgotten what I had wanted to say or become discouraged by her constant enthusiasm, fearing that my story might pale in comparison.

"Well, tell us, by all means," my father said in a jovial tone. He looked relaxed and happy after having his after-work martini.

"Well, we were having snack," began Samantha, "and Rachel was passing out the ginger snaps when Mrs. Schultz asked us if we had seen Adam Benker. And nobody had. So she thought that maybe Adam had gone to the bathroom without asking her, even though you're not supposed to do that. So she asked Peter to go to the boys' room to see if Adam was there. And then he came back and said that Adam wasn't there.

"Aha!" exclaimed my father. "A mystery!"

Samantha continued cheerfully, encouraged by his response. "Then Mrs. Schultz looked out onto the playground to see if Adam was playing outside, but he's lucky he wasn't 'cause you'd really be in trouble if you went outside by yourself when it wasn't recess."

"Samantha," interrupted my mother. "Put your napkin on your lap."

"Mommy are you listening?" Samantha demanded, unfolding her napkin and neatly putting it in place.

"Yes," she replied absently, cutting my meat.

"Well, then, there were all these noises like moaning and yelling and at first nobody knew where they were coming from. And then Mrs. Schultz said, 'Oh! Adam's in the supply closet!' And she went to open it and it was locked and she didn't have the key. So she had to go get the man to open it, and Adam kept yelling 'Help! Let me out! I'm locked in!'" She paused for full dramatic effect. "And he was crying."

"In the supply closet?" asked my mother. "How did he get in there?"

"He needed more glue and the door shut while he was in there," replied Samantha.

"That doesn't seem like a very safe closet if it locks automatically," remarked my father.

"Well, anyway," said Samantha. "Then we had music. And Mr. Andre did the funniest thing. He-"

At this point, I had had quite enough of both Samantha's stories and her tendency to preside over the dinner table. I wanted to tell my parents about her visit from God to see how they would react, and I tried to do it in a way that would embarrass and humble her.

"Why don't you tell them about God, Samantha?" I asked nastily.

She gave me a haughty look. "Okay," she said. "I met God on the way home from Susan's house today."

My father choked on his lamb chop and reached for his water. "What?" he asked, still sputtering.

"What's this?" asked my mother.

Samantha sighed with weariness, as if saddled with the responsibility of explaining something to an idiot, "I met God today when I came home from Susan's," she repeated.

"God?" my mother asked, an amused smile on her face.

"Yes, God," Samantha insisted. "I talked to him. It's the truth."

"Really," said my father. "I had no idea we had such important neighbors."

"He doesn't live here," Samantha told him. "He just came to see me. He told me that I was late for dinner."

"You were," said my mother. "Samantha, will you please help me clear the table?" They both left the table, leaving me alone with my father. I gave him a questioning look.

He winked at me, then took a long drink of water. "God," he mused. "I wonder if Samantha can arrange for the driveway to stop freezing over from now on."

"There's a man who comes around in the dark," Samantha told me.

"What does he do?" I asked.

"Well, actually, he's invisible," she said, formulating more details. "So it doesn't really matter if he comes around in the day or night, because you can't see him."

"So why does he come around in the dark?" I asked, confused.

"Because people are asleep in the dark, so it's easier," she replied.

"But what does he do?" I persisted.

Her tone became serious. "He has the power to make people blind or give them black eyes if he wants to."

"Why would he want to do that?" I asked, horrified.

"Because he's a bad man," she said darkly. "He's very bad. It's terrible to give people black eyes or make them blind just because you feel like doing it."

I agreed, it was a terrible thing.

Samantha gave me a slow, appraising look from head to toe. "You know," she said. "I think you're the kind of person that he does that to. Yes, you're surely someone that he would pick on for that."

"Why me?" I asked, terribly frightened.

"I don't know," she said slowly. "You just look like that type of

person that he would do that to. He doesn't like brown-eyed people," (Samantha's eyes were blue). "I would really be careful if I were you."

I rushed to the mirror to examine my eyes. Yes, they were definitely brown, as deep brown as eyes could get. There was no escape.

"What should I do?" I asked her. "Can I hide from him?"

"Oh, you can try," she said. "But he'll find you. He has lots of power. He can find anyone that he wants to."

I was near tears. "I don't know what to do!" I wailed. "Can I change the color of my eyes?"

"No," she snapped. "No one can change the color of their eyes, stupid. That's impossible. But don't worry. If he does find you and makes you blind, I'll help you. I'll hold your hand and make sure that you don't fall down or get lost when you're blind. Maybe Daddy will get a seeing eye dog for you. Want me to go ask?"

I didn't know what to say, being only slightly comforted by Samantha's offer of help.

"Don't worry," said Samantha, getting out the dress-up clothes. "Want to play waitress and customer?"

"Now tell me again," I said. "What does a burglar steal?"

"A burglar steals clothes," replied Samantha. "Sometimes sheets and blankets and pillows too."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because," she said. "That's what they steal. Ask anyone. It's true."

"But there are so many different kinds," I said, puzzled. "Tell me what they all do again."

"I have to tell you a hundred times," she said, aggravated. "When will you pay attention?"

"I pay attention," I said quickly. "I just can't remember what they all do."

"Okay, listen," she said. "Now. A burglar steals clothes. Crooks steal jewelry and other things like clocks. Thieves steal TVs and record players. Robbers steal all the furniture."

"Why don't they all just steal everything they can?" I asked.

"Because," she explained. "They just can't. A burglar isn't supposed to take things that a thief can. They don't want to, either. Burglars need clothes, so they steal clothes. Crooks need more

jewelry, so they steal it. That's why it works. None of them takes things that they're not supposed to, so there's enough to go around when they go steal from a house."

"I don't really care what they steal," I said. "This is dumb."

"No, it's not," she insisted. "You have to know. Because if you wake up one night and there's a bad man in your house you have to know what he wants so you can help him get it."

"Why would you help him get it?" I asked.

"If you don't help him, he might hurt you," she said. "You just have to hope that he'll take what he wants and go without hurting you. That's why if you know that he's a burglar, you can go get all the clothes in the house for him."

"What does a burglar do with all those clothes?" I asked.

"He takes it home and gives it to his family. Burglars have big families and no money for clothes. That's why they need to steal clothes," she explained.

"Oh," I said, after contemplating this for a minute. "Are there any burglars or other men like that around here?"

"No," she replied. "I asked Mommy if there were any and she said no. She said that they all live in California and won't come here because it's too cold. So we shouldn't ever go to California."

I was relieved. "I hope we never go there!"

"But," Samantha continued. "I think that there are lots of kidnappers around here. We talked about it in school. You shouldn't ever talk to strangers, even if they're being nice or giving you candy."

"What's a kidnapper?"

"Another bad man who likes to steal young children, especially younger sisters," Samantha said wickedly.

"I don't believe you," I said coolly, getting up from the floor.

"Where are you going?" she asked. "We haven't finished our game."

"I don't feel like playing this anymore," I said, and went off to play by myself.

That night I had a nightmare. I dreamed that I was walking up the stairs to my room, when all of a sudden two large men in ski vests climbed out from underneath the little table in the hallway. They grabbed me and tried to force me down the stairs.

"Don't take me!" I cried hoarsely, nearly paralyzed with fright. "Take my sister! She sleeping in the next room!"

And they did.

"I am seven and you are six," called Samantha, twisting herself around and around on the swing.

"So?" I asked, swinging higher, letting my feet almost touch the leaves of the tree. Samantha was afraid to swing high and never let herself be pushed, preferring her feet to remain on the ground. I loved to be pushed on the swing and demanded it constantly. I could never get high enough.

"So," Samantha replied, slightly dizzy from her twirling. "I will always be a year older. I will always know more. You'll never catch up with me!" She got off the swing and ran out a little ways into the yard.

"Wait," I called, and let my feet brush against the ground to stop the swing. I got off and ran towards her. "I'll be seven next year." I said hopefully.

She rolled her eyes. "You don't get it, do you?" she asked. "If you're seven, I'll be eight. When you're eight, I'll be nine. You can't catch up. You never can. I'll always be older, and you'll never know more than me. Because once you get to know as much as I do, I'll already know more." She climbed onto one of the large rocks we had in our backyard.

I was a little afraid of climbing those rocks, but I followed her. "I can do anything that you can," I said angrily, teetering a little on the rock.

"No, you can't," she insisted. "You're still not allowed to stay up until nine. You're not allowed to play outside by yourself. You can't walk home from school sometimes by yourself like I can. You can't touch the stove." She paused for a minute, thinking. "And I get a bigger allowance than you do."

Not only was I angered by her taunts, but I realized that she was right. There was no advantage in being younger. I never got to do anything first, I would never catch up. I wanted to show her up somehow, to win just for once, but I didn't know how.

Suddenly I had an idea.

"So what?" I retorted. "I'd much rather be younger anyway. I get to do lots of things that you can't."

"Like what?" she asked suspiciously.

"Well," I began, "Daddy won't carry you when you're tired anymore, you're too heavy. But I'm not. I always get to be carried. And you're also too big to sleep in their bed with them. I'm not though. And you have to do a lot more chores around the house than I do, because I'm still too little to help. And I get all the attention from everyone for being the baby."

Her eyes narrowed as she tried to think of a good comeback.

She hated that I got so much attention from relatives and friends for being the baby, a situation that I took great advantage of.

She shrugged. "I really don't care," she said. "I'd much rather be older. It's much better." But this time, I was not convinced.

"Samantha!" called her friend Susan from the street. "Want to come over to play?" Susan and her friend Lisa were older girls from our neighborhood who would occasionally deign to play with Samantha, although sometimes they thought even she was too young for them. They never asked me to play. They thought I was a baby.

"Coming!" yelled Samantha. She jumped off the rock and ran from the yard.

Sometimes I was hurt when she abandoned me in favor of her older friends. But not this time. I started back to the swing-set, happy to be alone, and got on my favorite swing, the one Samantha usually got to first. I pushed off and pumped my legs as hard as I could to gain momentum, until I soared as high as the trees.

GABRIELLE SMALL

❧

"ASPEN'S ASPEN"

REBECCA SMACKEY

Harmonies of man,

Beautiful symphonies of peace.

Love sets the rhythm.

Understanding sets the tone.

Trust —the beat.

Hope — the words.

Us —the voices.

GLENN T. KONOPASKE