

Julie Evans

There are two things that are  
infinite:

The universe and human stupidity;  
And I am not yet sure about the  
universe.

*Albert Einstein*

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## Neutron Shower Over the Hundred Acre Wood

"Tut, tut, tut — it looks like rain"

said Christopher Robin, umbrellaed and slickered;  
while creating storm clouds that tumble and strain,  
away at a distance the Pentagon snickered

With honey in paw ole Pooh wandered by —  
round-bellied-brown-bear who never felt pain —  
when an ear splitting crash brought hail from the sky,  
formed from fast neutrons, instead of warm rain.

Into the shower they walked hand in hand,  
but Christopher wondered why neutrons went through  
both umbrella and rainhat, down deep in the land  
burning hot scars, like no raindrops he knew.

Pooh suffered worse as the neutrons ate in,  
and he writhed while he screamed in a pitiful whine,  
while the Pentagon laughed for it knew how to win  
over Pooh bear and friends for the rest of all time.

*Jim Anderson*

You drove us to Kansas  
while you sang with me,  
plowing through dusty tunnels bordered by milo,  
singing "Tumbling Tumbleweeds".  
We woke without you,  
humming. . .

Sweet burning pipes  
seemed to send you to me  
in autumntime.  
Once you sat with me in the rain watching football.  
You threw me a buttonhook.  
I was stripped to the waist  
just like the other two,  
and you popped us flies  
and grounders,

I was always looking for traces of you,  
Your name in white on the door,  
Driftwood in the back of your drawer,  
Blueberries on your dash

You came again  
and drive us back through the tunnel  
towards the mountains and the sage.  
We were singing  
and counting the white horses.

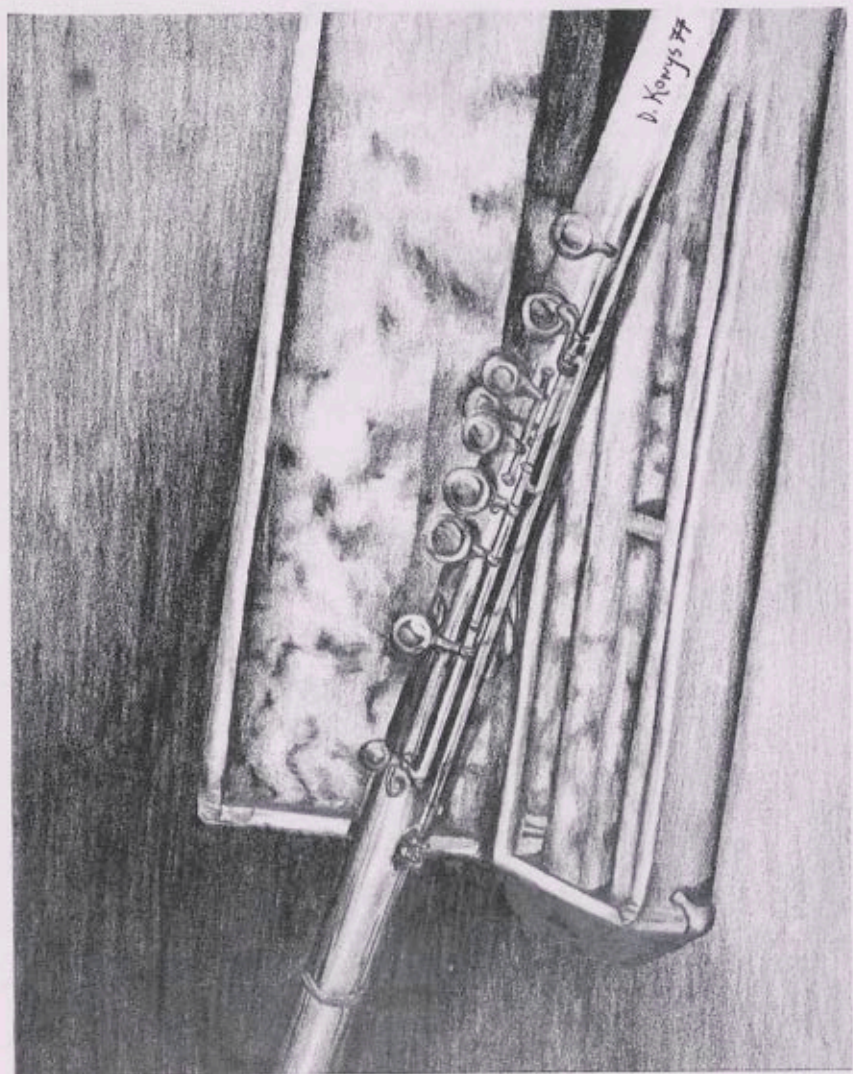
*Andrea Bowers*



## Sixth Grade Thoughts

Huge tits hanging down over the desk  
They're enormous.  
Lean over a little more,  
WOW! Jeezz.  
Them's something.  
How the hell they expect me to concentrate  
On my classwork  
When they allow things like that  
In the room.  
Man, I don't mind math  
But them things are multiplying.  
They gonna take over the world.  
Imagin' using them as floats in the pool,  
Wo-ow you'd never sink;  
She ought to have them bronzed  
And donate them to a museum.

*(written by an anonymous  
Carpathian Monk circa 1400 A.D.)*



## The Fire

I turn a log and set the fire again  
to burn and blaze. My friends have left the house,  
my home is still. The silence feels so queer  
my house was once a noisy place where talk  
came easily and chatter filled the room.  
Now all has changed: the fire is all that's left  
to fill the vacancy and so my thoughts.  
The fire now flickers, casting little flames  
of light around the room that seem to jump  
along the walls and speak to me, remind  
me of our hollow jabber — but we let  
it pass — it was enough to fill the gap.  
We spoke and heard and learned of each but then  
and now — somehow — our speech all seemed untrue:  
We talked of what we did or said and not  
of what we thought. That's not so bad I guess —  
but then it seems it's not quite right. And so  
I wish a conversation could be like  
a little stream that fell around each stone  
and peeked in every hollow on its path  
discovering every branch while tumbling on  
along the way. A stream does not neglect  
its banks — it nibbles them a tiny bit  
and samples every piece. And so we should  
be samplers too and peer in every thought,  
to give some meaning to our words, and to  
each other's view. But now, the fire calls me  
with its dry crackling voice and bids  
me turn it over, for it could go out.

*Ellen Heininger*



## Two Years Hence/Another Fine Fool

"Two years hence,"  
said the dreamer's queen  
as they sat and reflected  
on what might have been,

"You won't have existed  
you'll have faded away  
as Fall fades to winter,  
and men fade to grey,

"And the thoughts of a Dreamer,  
that once crossed my mind  
will be replaced with those  
of a different kind."

He peered out From over his spectacles  
at the trembling Figure before him.

"This isn't finished," he said.

"No."

"You must finish it."

"Please," begged the slightly built man,  
"I can't, I just can't."

The Master stood up slowly. "Damn it,  
I'll teach you to disobey me."

He reached into his vest pocket for a  
fistful of invective, and hurled it at the  
poet, crushing his pitiful substance to dust.

"Another Fine Fool", he said,  
and laughed  
maliciously.

*Daniel Payne*



## Splintered Reflections

by

*Daniel Payne*

The horse I rode walked through the halls of a square building, his iron shoes clattering on the hard floor. Opulent tapestries hung along the walls of the building, forming a history of a long forgotten dynasty. Flickering oil lamps stood in intervals of about thirty feet or so, providing enough light to guide the horse, but not enough to enable me to find a way out of the building.

"Come on," I exhorted the horse, and prodding him with my heel, he broke into a slow canter. I pulled him to the right and we turned into the same hall we had traversed ten minutes ago. Our shadows flickered on the wall, following us around the four halls as they had been doing for untold hours.

Though I realized there was no passageway out, I had to search. I wasn't certain how I had gotten here in the first place, but still, there had to be a way to get out.

By now we had passed through the hall we had begun our journey in. Though the tapestries and oil lamps remained, I could notice new details that I had missed in my earlier circuits of the building. The floor, I could now see, was a white substance, hard, smooth and slippery, with irregular black specks scattered throughout. The wall was brick, painted a dull gray.

As I rode steadily through the halls, I began to fear that soon the lights would go out. They were only oil lamps, and surely their fuel could not last forever. It was true that they had shown no sign of dimming, but what if they did? There would be no chance to find an exit from this place if it was bathed with darkness.

The horse seemed to be getting tired, so I reined him to a halt and dismounted. I was quite sore from the long ride, and it felt good to stretch and walk about. I went over to the wall of tapestries and gazed at them curiously. Who were these people, and why did they stare so?

I stood in front of a fat woman, with grotesque flabby jowls, stringy hair, and the painfully strained look in her eyes that was characteristic of all the tapestries.

"My, but you are ugly", I murmured to the fat lady.

I walked back to the horse and held him by the reins, leading him around the halls again.

After one more circuit of the building I stopped in front of the greasy fat lady, and observed her once again. She was, if anything, even uglier than before. Reaching into my pocket, I



pulled out a pen and proceeded to disfigure the incredibly repulsive portrait. After a few moments I stepped back to admire my handiwork. True, she was no less ugly, but, there was less of her to see, and that in itself was a blessing. I saluted her, and clambered atop my mount, riding off down the hall.

I no longer had a clear view of the rest of the tapestries, as the halls were becoming quite draughty and the flickering of the lanterns made it quite difficult to see clearly. On my next passage of the hall I noticed that the caricature of the ugly woman had seemingly disappeared.

The closeness of these now familiar halls pressed heavily about me. Despite the draught, it was becoming uncomfortably warm and malodorous. Even the tapestries were becoming too familiar to provide much of a diversion, when I suddenly came upon one which broke the boredom completely.

At the end of one of the hallways, placed almost directly underneath an oil lamp (perhaps so as to be more visible), was a portrait of me.

As I dismounted and stood close enough to get a good look, I observed with approval the excellent likeness of my features. In fact, it would have been absolutely lifelike, if it were not for the fixed, paralyzed stare of my portrait's eyes. The eyes fascinated me, and the portrait and I stared intensely at each other. For long minutes we dueled, until I grew tired, and tried to close my eyes to rest. But this was now impossible, for our eyes were joined together in an unbreakable union.

My eyes began to water and sting, and my whole body felt unearthly tired. I was trying to collapse, when I noticed the eyes on the tapestry opening wider and wider, until they took up almost the entire picture. From there, the pupils of the eyes expanded and merged, taking up the entire tapestry, and in them was reflected a lush field, bordered with stately oak trees.

Released from the spell of the eyes, I looked behind me to see if the reflected field was really there. It was not. Bitterly disappointed, I turned back to where the picture had been. However, instead of a tapestry, there stood an open window, looking out over a huge green field, bordered with beautiful, stately trees.

I leaned out of the window and inhaled deeply. Ah! What a relief. I climbed out and dropped softly to the lush grass below. I was about to leave when I remembered that the horse was still inside, with his head sticking outside the window, waiting to get out. I turned to a passing gardener and asked if there was a way to get my horse out of the building. He looked at me curiously.



"Eh? What horse is that, mister?" He grinned maliciously.

"Why, this one, of course". I turned to the window, which now stood empty. I rushed back to the building and, sticking my head in through the window, I looked up and down the hall. There was no horse to be seen. And when I turned to explain my situation to the gardener, there was not a soul there.

In the forest, beautiful tall oaks stood beside the well-kept turf path. Sunlight flickered through the leaves, running about playfully in all directions. Somewhere near I could hear the sound of a waterfall splashing in the calmness of an August day.

Along the side of the path stood two parallel rows of splendid yellow tulips, each flower standing exactly eight inches tall, as a small sign which stood nearby proclaimed. Delighted, I decided to walk closer to the side of the path in order to drink in their fragrance.

Strangely enough, the closer I got, the taller they grew. When I stood within an arm's length of them, they had grown to be about seven feet tall. Amazed, I reached out to touch one of these impressive creatures. My fingers explored the trunk ("stem" no longer seemed to be appropriate), and, much to my surprise, I discovered that it was a plastic. I was greatly relieved, for now I felt reasonably certain that I had nothing to fear from proportionately sized bees.

I walked on.

The bay sparked a bright blue, reflecting the sky on its beautiful body. Sailboats floated in the distance, white on blue. Sand and shells abounded on the beach, which was only about ten feet wide and separated from the forest by a thick stand of bulrushes. Gulls floated overhead, and a tern darted by with a shining, struggling fish caught in its beak. The silvery fish escaped briefly, falling back towards the bay, but before it reached the water, the tern had struck again, carrying it triumphantly to the shore.

An old wooden pier, long abandoned to the ravages of wind, sea, and time, jutted out into the bay. On it sat a young girl of seventeen, blond hair blown about by the salty wind, laying on a blanket with two books beside her.

I walked out onto the dock, and kissed her, tasting the salt on her lips when mine touched hers. She closed her eyes and lay back on the blanket. I stretched out beside her and gently touched her leg.

"I've got your book", she said, sitting up and handing one of the books to me. I took the book from her.

"I'll read this one while you read yours", she said.

I opened the book and glanced through it. At another time, in another place, I could enjoy it, but not right now.

"I can't read it now", I told her. I reached out and held her. She placed her book to one side and turned her face to mine. We kissed, and I moved closer to her, pulling the blanket over us.

As I passed through the eerie suburban ghetto, I looked about from time to time, expecting to see a crazed attacker come charging at me from out of the midnight darkness. Broken rows of broken apartments loomed up, and faded away in slow succession. I hoped to reach the lakes in the wealthy section of town soon enough to get a little sleep this late summer night.

"Hey." A voice came to me from the darkness of a tenement doorway. "C'mere kid".

I walked over to the doorway, trying to keep from betraying my fear to the stranger.

Sitting on the steps of the apartment was a man in an old black overcoat and baggy trousers. The man's head was not on his neck, which disturbed me immensely, and I was even more surprised when I found that the voice of the man came from a dismembered head which he held in his lap. The eyes of the head looked at me appraisingly.

"Listen." The head sang.

"Though I sit here with no face, don't fear, my head is in my hands."

"Wait!" I shouted, "I won't listen, I won't stay!"

I ran down the street, the sound of my footsteps echoing hollowly on the deserted road. I glanced back and saw that the man didn't pursue me, he just stood there silently, with his head under his arm.

As I lay in the cool grass by the lake, asleep, but not yet unconscious, I felt that my arms had been cut away from my body, but I was not there to object. I wanted to cry, but I knew that if I did, all would think me strange, and none would understand.

THE END

## The New Sister

Ocean spills from her eyes  
As she furrows a pine block  
Routing the outline  
Of a blubbery seal swimming  
Across distances.

She prints notepaper:  
Inking the blockface —  
Rolls an even layer on the wood,  
Presses steady and long  
Until the sea lives on paper.

Her letters open  
With that briny smell,  
Folded bone white as the sea —  
Atop the page imprinted  
A seal adrift.

Swimming or drifting  
Her open-eyed seal rides  
The tide onto parched surf  
And sand is drenched  
With the wet and life of the sea.

*Jim Anderson*



Your fourth of July pops awaken me,  
they crack of you  
scampering across the sand  
now cool,  
Mop of hair breathing with salty mist.

And you wake them all up too.  
They laugh at your ashen rock  
you,  
tampering with minor fires,  
short-lived suns bang of clumsy youth

Your fired eyes won't stop  
demanding  
heat from the night,  
fire in the black.

You want me  
to come Loud boy,  
your shots on my pillow  
your heat in my flesh

Out of my sleep I seek you and  
the red and white on black  
blasting on,  
I join you.  
They laugh at me too.

*Anonymous*





## Playing My Guitar

I sit, play my guitar,  
And ten people more have died.  
With each note the blood of  
An innocent man flows  
And dries crusting the fucking earth.

And I sit and play my guitar,  
While a mother suckles her child with  
Blood flowing from her nipple  
And milk flowing in her veins,  
Singing a song of eternity.

And I play my guitar  
While Karakatowa erupts about me  
And lightning strikes all good men  
And the putrid smell of burnt flesh  
Hangs in the air.

And I sit playing my guitar  
While my unborn child lies dead at my feet,  
His eyes scorched by burning coals,  
A barbed hook pierced through his right testicle  
His mouth sucking at his dismembered left.

And I sit, and play my guitar  
While a woman is raped in the park  
Beneath my window,  
And I feel the heat of her transgressor  
And hear his groans outlast her cries of pain.

And I sit, and play my guitar,  
And life is pleasant, and nature abounds.  
There is good, if only you seek it.  
Look at me, I know  
Just listen to the sounds.

*Neil Skolnik*

## That's Life

Two images jumping back and forth  
and back  
and forth.

Tired eyes playing  
games.

Both teachers are at the  
front of the room.

Both saying the same thing,

And both  
boring.

White dust on a black wall,  
tells it all.

My mind is covered by a white film,

And I see the world through  
a chalkdust haze.

*Neil Skolnik*



## The Walls

by

*Brian Peake*

I can't get out. There is no way out of here.

I long for the nurturant warmth and security that once seemed so confining to be back amid my brothers, so warm and moist, moving in and out, and glistening in the sun. I need their presence, to help allay my fears. I haven't long to live. If I could only get out, I might find true liberation, not this oppressive substitute. I have wings, yet what good is it to fly? That I might dash my brains out against these walls? I can see the world; I can see to infinity through the openings in the walls. But alas! They are not openings at all. The world out there is solid, an illusion! Is some awful trick being played on me? If so, who is my tormentor? These lumbering giants who are continually trying to squash me seem more annoyed at my presence than would willing captors. Their efforts toward my disposal are random and impulsive; I can easily dodge their aimless blows. No, if there is a purpose for my immurement, these beings, by all appearances, have little to do with it. Something beyond them, something mysterious and recondite, has arranged this. I cannot believe this is my fate. To be free, to fly among my comrades, to taste all the universe has to offer, to explore, to make love, to have children — it seemed so inevitable; it was the Way. As a child, I could peer out from my ever-dwindling home and weep for joy, knowing that freedom would soon be mine. I could see it all; I could smell it and taste it. It was there, all around me. When the time arrived for the transformation, I could hardly contain my enthusiasm. In my pupa I dreamt of flying, of buzzing away to infinity with my brothers. It was a blissful sleep. I knew none of this oppressive fear; my future seemed so clear and fine. But when I awoke and burst from my encasement, I was engulfed in dizzying confusion; I hardly knew who or where I was. I was utterly transformed. My new appendages ached and my senses were out of kilter. I blindly began to fly. After that, all is confused and hazy. I must have blacked out; the next thing I remember is awakening in this accursed labyrinth.

This is some terrible joke. I can see everything out there. But there is really nothing — a giant image put before me, for me to bounce off. Continually I bounce, bounce off the illusion. My delicate body cannot withstand any more of this bouncing, but the



illusion seems so real; I cannot contain myself. Oh, if only I could melt through this transparency, and become part of the illusion! But I am real, and thus barred from that image which is at once solid, yet moving. It seems so real, but I keep bouncing off . . .

And now the giants are after me, those miserable beings, armed with their broad-ended truncheons. They're driving me to every corner of this maze. My fear growing, my body weak from bouncing, I can barely avoid their thunderous bats. I must fly to where they cannot reach me — but where? I shall hide; I will not be squashed by these detestable creatures. I will find a nook in which to crawl, and sleep. I will awaken from this incubus into, perhaps, the world I desire. I haven't long to live; maybe death will bring something desirous. But I will not be squashed.

## To My Mother in Winter

A flow of blue in your nightgown  
has touched me  
as if it were your tears.  
Hidden form in the flannelled ric-rac I have known  
but since have left for nylon,  
pink nylon  
to mark the woman years.

I hurt when flanneled blue was torn  
from me,  
I know it warm  
I won't return quite yet  
though

I'll watch your nudity of moment,  
clutch of time, caress of blue.  
A year ago it would have angered me  
in fright  
to catch you in this frailty,  
a guiseless fear,  
with child's shroud, this stream of blue  
which time forbades me now to wear.  
Three years before I could not bear your lapse  
back into blue,  
reserving it as mine  
I seized upon the weeping color,  
a womanchild then could be defined  
though I knew that blue was not the end  
nor pink for you.

But now I choose to weep  
so quietly  
at flannelled blue.  
Still, it frightens me,  
I cannot see as clearly  
when it is you who cries  
for blue.

Oh I do not condemn your honesty.  
Sleep the night as weary child,  
Defy the pink admonishments  
to always charge ahead in stoic smile.  
Nylon paints a womaness, they sing to you,  
Abandon Blue!

But the mother is the child too  
and I will forever guard you  
on your night's return to frailty  
and blue.

*Andrea Bowers*

Only coolness was our  
blanket as we lay —  
fire's reflections hid their warmth  
in the hollows of your eyes.

Blazing blue: I knew you  
By the ghost that touched my hand.  
Even your quickest rule could not  
guard that ghost, that unveiling of a  
smile.

You gave it before mind's  
Deadness came crashing down.

*Lori Barth*





1.

Atomic Stereo echoes in the auricles of the "stay tuned  
we'll be right back" people,  
Brought together by coke acid musicians  
Heard through whiskey soaked ears, felt through  
Jack Daniels Flaming Shot Hashish Don't Knock It Till  
You've Tried It  
Numb skin.

2.

Marshmallow minds entertain kaleidoscopic visions.  
A troubled thought lights on the brain, and  
An instilled D.J., in the back of the mind,  
Turns on a sweet comfortable song, growing softly louder, and  
NO! I think I want . . . I Want To Think!  
And we'll be back in sixty seconds . . . . .

3.

Lightning flashes, then disappears;  
Energy can not be created or destroyed.  
Einstein knew nothing about energy that is wasted.

4.

In the early hours of morning,  
A ray of light sneaks through a closed shutter,  
Falls upon a crusted eyelid.  
A boy carefully wipes a flaked eyelash from his pupil and  
Rises to the distant sound of  
Crickets and birds.  
Somewhere, he hears the sound of a turntable  
Revolving, no record.  
He smiles, opens the window,  
And looks upon a  
New world.

*Neil Skolnik*

## Shell

I of the mad thirst race to know  
And he of the mainstream dance  
Crossed paths, and collided.  
On the rebound I said with a mouth,  
"Unenlightened, your life is a shell"  
From the dirt he replied with a smile,  
"Memories form a yolk of their own"  
Muddy and merry, he danced to his friends  
Musing and murmuring, I hastened on  
To study a porno film.

*Brian Peake*

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of a college literary-arts magazine is to foster intellectual growth, promote artistic creativity, and enhance student awareness and appreciation of the many modes of expression for feeling and thought. Feeling and thought are infinite and so are the possibilities for a magazine dedicated to this proposition. Such a magazine should have no set ideology or goal other than to present to the student body a wide gamut of well thought out, stimulating material as is possible. In order to fulfill these objectives, the magazine needs many contributors. Colleges have large numbers of talented individuals, and it is our hope that such talent should not be wasted, or forgotten, lying in drawers. To share our thoughts (and our scribblings) is one of the most satisfying feelings one can have and give, and we sincerely hope that our readers realize the opportunity available to them through IDOL magazine, and utilize this opportunity to the fullest extent.



