

The Plaid Skirt Perspective



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The Plaid Skirt Perspective

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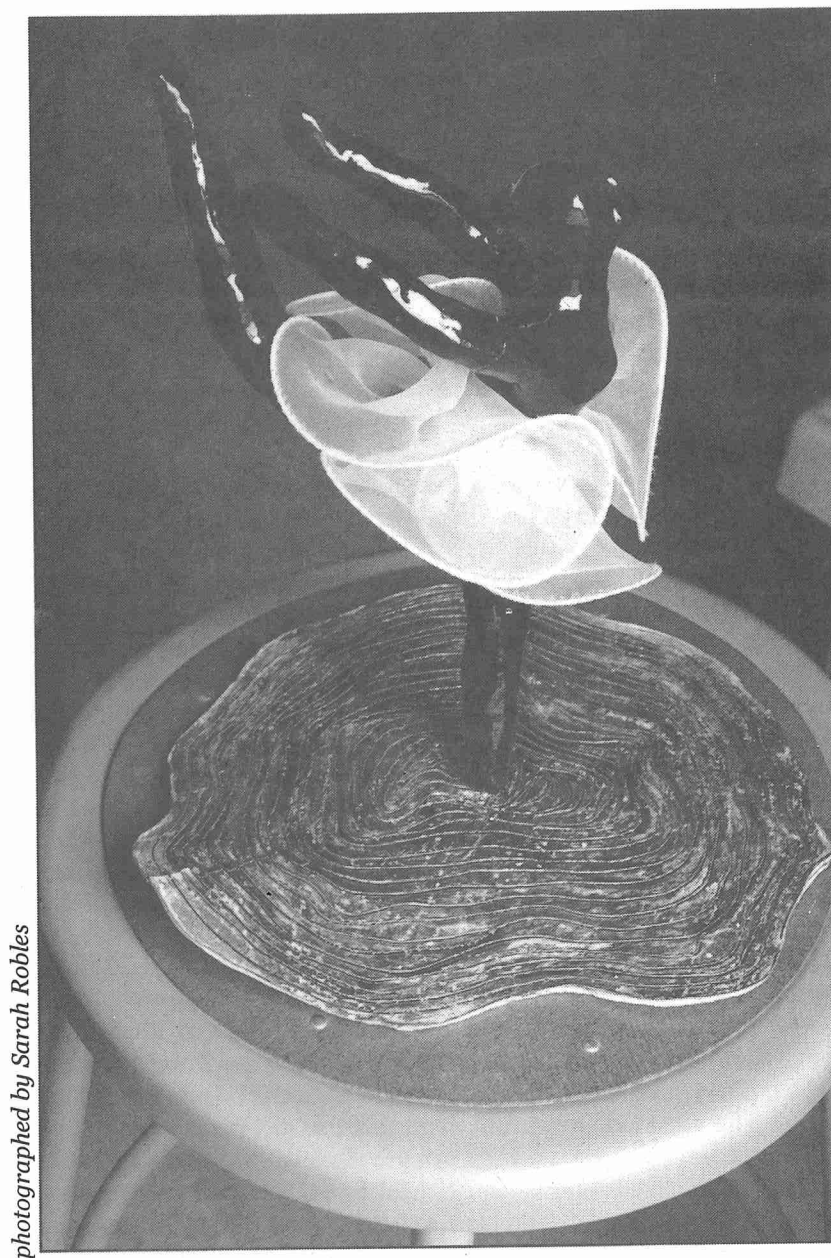
Veronica's lyrical clarity speaks to our hearts the way good poetry should. Too often, poetry tries to tackle "profound" themes without accounting for our everyday lives. How ordinary a thing it is to make tamales, how normal. And yet, through this we understand so much more about being human. The poem's repetition and urgent insistence on "togetherness" is an antidote to America's cultural celebration of the individual. We need poems like this in our world, the same way we need community, the same way we need family and tradition.

Melissa Ellis "A City With No People" <i>Second Place</i>	27
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Melissa embraces the enigmatic, the mysterious, the dreamlike, the contradictory. In her poem, the wind is "driven by a lie that was never told," which causes the reader to ask "What lie?" And though there isn't a clear answer, that seems to be part of the point. Poetry like this, which revels in the weird and dares to paint a surreal picture of "a city with no people," gives us pause the way good art should.

Ashley Hernandez "Acvice" <i>Third Place</i>	29
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Ashley's direct and vivid narrative voice gets out of the way of the poem, and though the idea behind the words remains shrouded somewhat by the Grandpa's smile, the reader knows he is talking about, among other things, death. "Advice" illustrates how a poet can be utterly clear without being obvious. The poet admits that her grandpa's advice "meant so many things," but asks the most important question of all at the end: "what / did it mean / to me?"



photographed by Sarah Robles

by Sarah Bennett

It was as though the afternoon had stopped to share its sorrow with 114 Meadow Drive. And on the porch sat four bodies, two siblings and two parents, who would rather not have to face the gift horse. Joel and Kayla Seanz sat closer to each other than they had since Kayla was old enough to walk on her own. The porch swing creaked as the bottom of Kayla's shoes swung back and forth, all of them hoping the creaking would drown out the thoughts in their heads.

From the open window blared the afternoon news. It told them the story they new all too well. As the news told them, it was a day of mourning.

Four sets of eyes watched a battered blue car struggle up the driveway. The windows were dark enough that nothing could be seen inside. An officer's car had been used because it would be inconspicuous. As it sputtered to a stop it may as well have been topped by a bright red sign reading "despair inside."

A portly officer, because all officers are portly, jumped from the front seat. He tugged at his belt and gave a rather unnecessary bow. When he received no response, he shrugged and opened the door to the backseat.

An eternity passed before anything happened.

Even God held his breath as Marie Seanz placed a small white shoe on the driveway. Her body followed rather reluctantly, and when she finally stood up before them, her eyes met only the ground. Clumps of thick black hair fell over her face, masking heavy-lidded eyes and thin pale skin. Her large pink shirt fell desperately over her thin frame, and her crossed arms failed to cover the large red stain across the front buttons.

And no one remembered that only three days ago, Marie had ironed that pink shirt four times. She had kept ironing it until it was perfect. Everything on Marie Seanz had to be perfect. Didn't they know it.

The afternoon news told them that this girl was a survivor; emerging from John Adams High School three days after one nameless boy had begun shooting. Having shot the bullet that killed this assassin, as the afternoon news told them, Marie Seanz was a hero.

But there was no happy homecoming for Marie Seanz. There was no banner, no balloons, no ticker-tape. Just a girl, who's had always had always been noticed for her unusually flushed cheeks, a girl who now look pallid and empty. She stood in her place in the driveway, vacant, for longer than any of them dared to count.

Deciding that this was a family matter, the portly officer gave another bow and jumped back into his car. It sputtered out of the driveway, kicking up dust in its departure.

Once the dust settled around her ankles, Marie began to walk up the steps.

She walked past her parents. Her father's jaw was clenched in the way a strong father's jaw should be, and her mother's hand was clasped over her mouth, covering her fear.

She walked past her sister Kayla, who was only fourteen and could hardly begin to grasp what was happening to her sister and her family, who had happened to be sick the day that the nameless boy had decided to shoot.

And she walked past her brother Joel, who continued to play in his head that moment he ran out of the school, leaving his sister inside. He played it over even then.

Marie Seanz was not going to be alright, all of them had known it. But it wasn't until they watched her disappear in the house that they truly understood.

"I've been wearing mom's clothes for three days. If she doesn't come out before I go back to school, I'll kick the door down," Kayla told the locked door stubbornly. She shook her head as her brother walked up the stairs behind her.

"If you'd been through what she's been through, you'd be locked up in there too," he told her. Kayla turned to him, pressing her lips in thought.

"If I'd been through what she's been through, no one would care." Kayla did not wait for any kind of response. She knew that any one he could give would be a lie. If there was anything Kayla Seanz despised, it was a lie.

Joel was happy that his sister didn't bait any kind of retort. His head was entirely too lethargic at that point to prepare one. He stared, instead, directly where she had been standing.

On the other side of the door Marie was watching the evening news. Marie's best friend, Abigail Seanz, would have her funeral in two days, at some church too far for an emotionally distraught mother to drive.

Joel thought back to the first time he'd met Abigail. It had been more than three years. Only two weeks into her freshman year, Marie had shuffled in an awkward girl with red braces and a crooked smile. "This is Abigail," she had said. "She sits next to me in almost all my classes. We

have the same last name. I think we're sisters."

And Abigail had turned some shade of bright pink and circled her hands uncomfortably. Three years of high school as Marie Seanz's "sister" had made Abigail Seanz a little less awkward and a lot more confident, although she still blushed every time Marie introduced her as so.

"Believed to be one of the last casualties, Abigail died only one hour before the remaining three hostages were released." Joel heard his mother's footsteps behind him. He knew it was her because of the way she took haggard breaths every couple of seconds. With a glance back he saw how red her eyes were. He also saw that she wasn't looking at him.

Her eyes were fixed on the doorknob.

"You're the one who let her have a television in her room," he said coldly, walking back to his room.

Kayla was no longer wearing her mother's clothes. But after six days, she had not yet seen one hair of her sister.

On the fourth night Kayla woke up from her rather uncomfortable bed on the couch to find a pile of clothes sitting in front of her. She jumped up and ripped out a piece of paper from her binder, running up the stairs and slipping it under the door.

The paper had said, "thank you."

Kayla's gratefulness had died some. She sat counting the pictures in the living room, although she knew all the numbers already. She'd entertained herself this way for as long as she could remember. They were all the same, save for one. Still four pictures of Kayla, still seven pictures of Joel, but now only ten pictures of Marie. One was missing. Kayla searched the frames for the one that eluded her. A picture of Marie and Abigail that had once sat on the end table by the door was gone.

"Are you sulking again?" Joel asked coming down the stairs.

"Are you badgering again?" Kayla replied.

"No. I wanted to show you something." Joel jumped over the back of the couch and sat next to her. He was holding his yearbook.

Kayla wasn't in it.

"What's this about?" she asked. The truth was Kayla had been sulking. She would much rather be left to her sulking alone.

"You know how they won't say his name?" Joel asked. Kayla stared at him blankly. "The one who-who- are you going to make me say it?"

Kayla shook her head. "I know," she assured him.

Joel continued. "I realized that I never knew his name. I'd seen him around school thousands of times. I even had a class with him! But I

couldn't even begin to guess his name."

Joel flipped open the yearbook to a picture of a boy. "His name. If he had never done what he did, I'd probably have never known his name."

Kayla stared at the picture for as long as she could before her eyes began to burn. He stared out at her through sunken eyes.

How could they not have known?

Everything is obvious in hindsight. But he, he screamed troubled. Even in his yearbook picture he called out for help.

And that's what he would always be; a nameless yearbook picture, a bullied kid with no real identity. And in just a few moments, with a few shots of his father's firearm, he had reduced himself to a gray headstone and an epitaph reading "Can he now rest in peace?"

Kayla shut the yearbook. Joel looked up at her questioning.

She didn't want to look at all the faces she would never see again.

The Seanz Family had stopped wondering when Marie was going to come out of her room. Every day they'd go about their usual business. It was the first time in all her sixteen years that Marie wasn't all they talked about.

But she all they thought about.

When people asked Joel or Kayla how their sister was doing, they didn't respond.

And no one dared to ask Marie's mother why she hadn't returned to work since her daughter's homecoming.

But it had only been three weeks.

The Seanz family was sitting in the living room when they heard a muffled cough.

Marie was standing at the top of the staircase. She looked surprisingly well-kept for having been barricaded in her room for three weeks. But one thing was startlingly different about her. Her hair, which had once fallen to the small of her back, was cut unevenly at her shoulders. She saw them staring at her hair, and she grasped at it unconsciously.

"It wouldn't come out," she said. "It wouldn't come out."

She let the moment hang in the air as she stepped down the stairs. No one made any movement or sound.

"They don't know what happened," she informed them. She continued down the stairs. The moment was so eerie and the look on her face was so distant that none of them could believe it was happening. "They said that I shot him in self defense. That he was going to shoot

me." With every word, her voice trembled. Her hand grasped the railing so tightly that her knuckles began to turn white. It was draining the life from her just to tell them. "They said he was going to shoot me. But he wasn't. The first day he promised me that I would make it out alive."

She finally stopped on the last step. Her eyes met her brother's. "It wasn't self defense," she declared confidently. "It was revenge."

"He killed Abigail," Joel said, sounding as though he understood completely. Marie nodded. He did.

"She told me not to let him get away. She made me promise that he would pay. She made me promise."

Marie had begun to shake and she fell to her knees. The small locks of hair fell over her face as she shook and cried.

"I promised. I promised."

No one moved to comfort her.

Nothing would ever be the same again.

Noon

by Angelica Pena

I'm sitting on my porch
The sky is burning orange and bleeding electric pink
The sun is slowly retiring
The sweltering air begins to cool
Cars constantly pass all heading home
But they're breaking the peace of my noon
The birds sing their twilight song
The ants dwindle in sidewalk cracks
All the homes on the block smile with full families
And the night animals slowly wake readying to prowl the not yet dark streets
The kids inside are probably watching TV
But not me
I'm watching my noon
My cats come and sit beside me
Looking out at the darkening sky and slowly calming street
With those ...
Glassy slit eyes.

Traditional Tamales

by Veronica Laborde

The Plaid Skirt Perspective Poetry Contest First Place Winner

Every year before Christmas
we make our tamales
together

A tradition started way before I
and as we do now, so they did before
together

the beans, the meat,
the chicken, the masa,
we prepared, we mixed,
together

The younger children play
as we work
listening to the musical language of our people
we relax
together

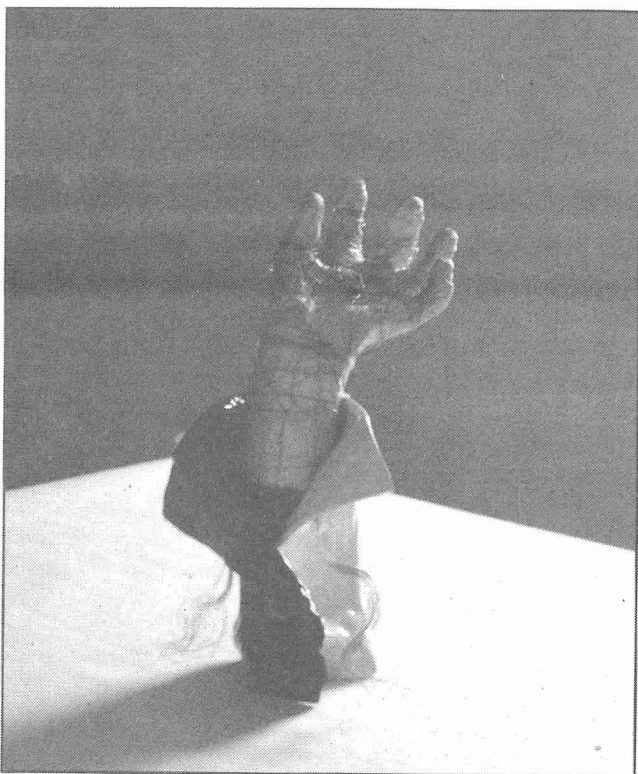
We sit around our great and mighty table
telling stories of our lives and pasts
as we experienced together

We assemble ourselves
grouping the tamales
we cook them
together

Finally, the tamales are hot and ready
smelling fresh, warm, and welcoming
We embrace in their delightful aroma
together

Before our wonderful feast
we gather in a circle of prayer
blessing the food and honoring the departed
We remember our people
together

photographed by Sarah Robles



by Hilary Shynett

The Suspended

by Gabriela De Hoyos

"Manu tried to block my shot, and I guess his face just got caught. I really didn't mean for my whole arm and elbow to swing, if you ask me, it was all clean."

"But Kolbe, he fell on the floor, there surely must have been something more."

"Nah. But I guess the NBA agrees, because they suspended me. But don't worry, all my fans, because it's just one game. When I get back to playing, my game will still be the same!"

Driver's Ed

by Francis Flores

Walk in every day, same time, same people
Old, neglected building,
What's left of ceiling falling in
Trash cans, buckets, water drips down
Writings on the wall,
A vandals' claim to fame
Down the creaking hall, through the wood white door
One small room with tables
Adolescents crowded 'round
Learn how to drive from the aged bald man
Whose name you can't remember
Hard at hearing, borderline senile
Take a breath, it's my last day
My turn to drive the tired green van,
Abused minivan, alignment off course
Drive to the depths of town
A few stops for the instructor, too
Chinese food, library, pick up trash cans
Driver's education at it's best.

Angel On Earth

by Austyn Fogel Hammargren

The faceless angel ponders,
Her knees to her chest.
Made of wood and metal,
Painted with dry colors.
She drifts into another world.

My mother dreams of the future,
And who we will become.
She guides and watches,
Us live of happy lives.
Ponders for a brighter future.

Kinga

by Amanda Vargas

Kinga exhaled deeply as she fell atop her bed. Kinga was 5'8" by the time she was in eighth grade; though now twenty-two she had grown so accustomed to lying about her height she didn't even know how tall she was. She had a perpetual olive-colored tan, long, straight, honey-colored hair that wisped at the ends, and eyes the color of a sea turtle. Kinga was oblivious to it all; never spending more than seven minutes washing up after PE, she was hated by all the girls for her ease and grace. This hatred was however obvious to Kinga and throughout middle school and high school she had slowly been developing a tick in her right-eye in response to numerous lunch breaks spent in the bathroom.

College proved an easier feat for Kinga; she was no longer subject to the obvious stares and back-handed mutterings, the double-takes and sideways glances were much more bearable. Constantly accompanied by Aliana, her cousin, Kinga never let herself meet someone. On the first day back from Christmas vacations, Kinga walked into her Film Criticism class, a simple half-credit necessary for graduation that Kinga had brooded over for weeks. Recovering from a horrible case of food poisoning from tainted Christmas tamales, Kinga walked into class alone, pallid and with two days of grease in her hair, and was poked in the eye by someone reaching to turn off the lights.

"Aw, crap!" her iced mocha frappuccino spilling down her white polar-bear UGGs.

"Normally, people say 'Are you all right?' and not 'Aw Crap'."

"Hey, buddy..." Kinga began, an acerbic retort on the edge of her lips, before she stopped frozen. The man standing in front of her was the most gorgeous thing she'd ever seen.

"What was that?" the handsome stranger said. Kinga had been staring, babbling awkwardly while her mocha frappuccino slid down her UGGs and congealed around her toes.

"Uh, nothing. Is this Film Criticism?"

"Yes, and you're late. You missed my awesome introduction; it's like spotting the great blue whale, it only happens at the beginning of semester, so you're out of luck. I'm Dr. Santiago, and you are?"

"Kinga," her right eye twitching as she said her name.

"Wow, Kinga, that's different. Well, take a seat, we are about to begin *Dr. Strangelove*."

Kinga collapsed into the nearest seat; it seemed a miracle that her legs sustained her to her seat. Throughout the next week, Dr. Santiago had the same effect on her; she rarely contributed to class, yet

all her work was outstanding as she hung on his every word.

Finally, after three weeks of total silence in Film Criticism, Dr. Santiago announced before the end of class a Film Festival that was to be held at the end of the week downtown. He was showcasing a film on the current role of Women in Islamic Culture and their contributions to Islamic film.

"Not the most interesting subject, but relevant... and free."

Kinga was resolved to go. Thirty-second shorts of David (Dr. Santiago's first name, Kinga discovered after reading an inter-office e-mail on his computer) professing his undying love for her flashed in her head, and she blushed as David came to rouse her from her daydream, telling her that class had been dismissed.

After two days of bribery and extortion Kinga convinced Aliana to go with her to the film festival. They arrived just as the velvet rope was to be closed by a burly body guard.

"Hey, don't close it!" yelled Kinga as she ran toward the rope.

"Sorry, Miss, but the gate closes at 9. I can't let you in."

"What! But my teacher is in there, I came to see his film. Please, please let us in." begged Kinga. She could see David falling in love with another woman interested in whatever the hell his movie was based on, and professing his undying love to her instead of Kinga. Arguing ensued as Kinga grew more and more outraged, pulling her self to her full height.

"Hey, hey what is all this racket about?" David had come to the door, smiling slyly as he saw Kinga viscusly poking a manicured finger into the bouncer's chest.

"I didn't know you could talk."

"Only when I'm pissed," blurted Kinga before she could stop herself.

"Oh my God, I'm sorry," Kinga said, blushing. She did not mean for him to hear that.

"No, no it's okay. Let them in Vergil, they're with me." The bouncer looked a little bit perturbed, but Kinga could not tell if it was because David let them in, or because Aliana snorted loudly when she heard his name.

"So, I guess better late than never," said David, as people yelled his name and he smoothly waved back in acknowledgment.

"Well, we would have been on time except that Kinga hyperventilated in the stairwell parking lot on the way over," Aliana blurted out, her eyes bulging as the last syllable came out of her mouth. Kinga looked over at Aliana with a look that could freeze hell, but David laughed.

"Need to work out some more, eh Kinga?"

"Um, yeah, work those quads." Kinga said her right eye twitching, while pinching Aliana's arm fat in revenge. David took them through a dark, crowded hallway that was lined with velvet and smokers drinking colorful beverages and looking jaded. They entered a large, classic looking movie theater with velvet maroon curtains draping the edge of the large movie screen. Kinga guessed the theater used to be part of an old playhouse judging by the stage and orchestra pit in front of the giant screen. David led them down the aisle to the second row, and graciously let Aliana, then Kinga pass into their seats at the end of the row.

"Rule is you have to love my movie in order to pass the semester," David murmured in Kinga's ear, holding her arm above the elbow before she went to seat; Kinga felt goose bumps rise on her arms and prayed that David didn't comment on her hairy arms.

"That was just a joke, by the way," he said, looking slightly abashed at Kinga's non-response to his joke. Kinga laughed tensely in a delayed attempt to cover up her embarrassment, and sighed as David walked back up the aisle to schmooze some more.

Looking around, Kinga could tell there had been plenty of renovations to obtain the ambiance of the theater. The chairs had their original wood backings and armrests, the ceiling and border around the stage was polished and the delicate engravings were emblazoned with Rococo designs. Each over-stuffed chair had the same soft, maroon velvet that lined the walls of the entrance; gilded lanterns were found on the walls, delicately spaced apart to allow just enough light for one to see, yet create a dark, romantic atmosphere. Kinga felt that at any moment Dracula would come over and seduce her into giving up her life's blood. Kinga noticed David sitting two rows ahead of her, in the perfect spot where she could see his profile without him really noticing her. The lights dimmed and applause and cheers roared from the floor to the mezzanine as an elderly gentleman who seemed to be the vampire's leader introduced the film festival and the first movie: David's.

The movie was proving as boring as Kinga had anticipated, yet she snapped back to attention when the flashing sign of *Victoria's Secret* appeared on screen with many burka-clad women filing in. The next scene was of a woman entirely covered in an ornate emerald hajib except a thin slit for her eyes, the caption read:

"Oh yeah, under this garment is one hot mama! Mmm, mmm." Kinga exploded in laughter at reading this. Kinga was still laughing as someone in the mezzanine yelled, "Shut up!" and Kinga looked up, wiping tears from her eyes and caught David's eye and that of a lovely

red-head sitting next to him, looking aghast. Kinga sobered up real quick and her right-eye began to twitch uncontrollably, she slunk back into her chair and remained quiet and red-faced throughout the next two hours.

Later, at the after party in the lobby of the theater, Kinga grabbed Aliana's arm and dragged her through the crowd and toward the bar to say goodbye to David; she was still mortified from her laughing fit during the movie and did not want to stay any longer. As she neared David, she spotted him and the red-head talking and bits of their conversation floated toward Kinga.

"So, do you know that blonde Amazon that let out a donkey laugh during your movie?" the red-head asked, Kinga decided she hated her.

"Oh, Kinga. Yeah, she's in my film criticism class, I think that was the first time I heard her voice," replied David.

"Kinga, huh? Well, she's very beautiful you have to admit." Kinga's heart leapt and she decided she did not hate the red-head.

"What? Oh, I don't know, I don't really go for girls like her. I mean, I think her legs go up to my armpit, and she's just looks too fake. Blonde hair and a perpetual tan; plus, she has hairy arms." Kinga's heart hit her stomach, and the room began to spin. She could feel her right-eye twitch painfully, as memories of middle school taunts swam into her vision. She ran out of the lobby not even noticing if Aliana was following her or not, and drove to her apartment in silence.

Two days later, she convinced herself to go back to Film Criticism. Walking in, pale and with two days worth of grease in her hair, she ran into David on the way over to turn off the lights.

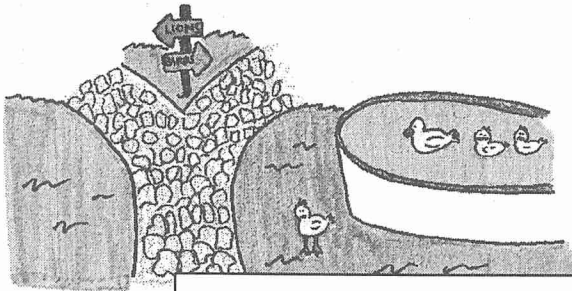
"Hey, Kinga! I didn't get to talk to you after the festival, I was looking for you." Kinga barely heard this remark; she looked into David's eyes and her right-eye began to twitch once more and she ran. Running back to her apartment across campus, everything suddenly seemed clear; the ruthless teasing of her childhood was the source of her tick. Being called "Betty Spaghetti" and "Kinga 'da Legs" had not helped her self-esteem, and perhaps, armed with this knowledge, she would be able to conquer her tick and face David and confess her true feelings before telling him to shove it for saying she had hairy arms. Exhaling deeply after revealing this epiphany to Aliana, she looked to Aliana, expecting to her to be proud of her realization, but instead found a look like that on a bulldog before pouncing on the yippy neighbor poodle.

"Give me a break, no one wants to hear a pretty person complain!" replied Aliana, smacking Kinga squarely in the face with a pillow.

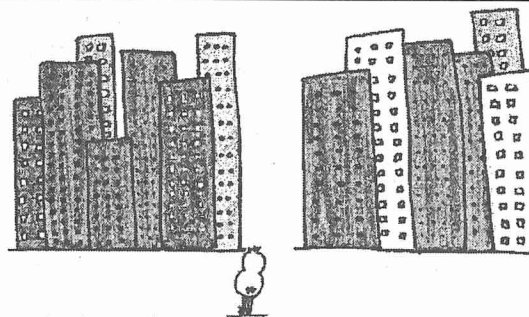
David's Adventure: The City

by Jasmine Garcia

David always wished to see the world outside the zoo. So one day, he decided to go on an adventure of his own.



Little did he know that there were so many people outside the zoo.

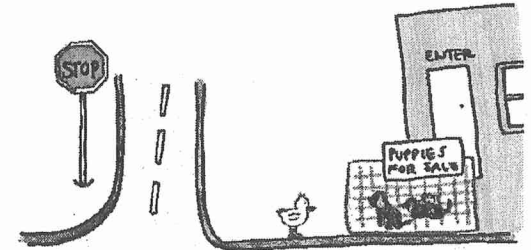


And little did he know that the city was so big. The buildings were much taller than David.

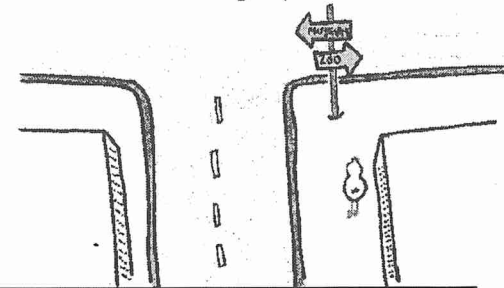
The Plaid Skirt Perspective

Jasmine Garcia

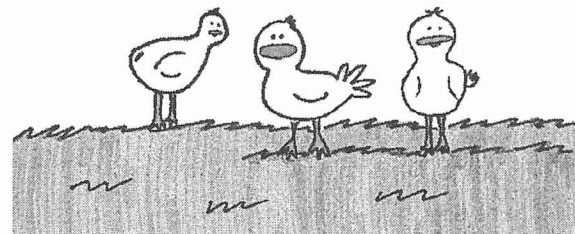
David wanted to go back home, but he seemed to be lost. So, he asked for help.



"Go straight" is what they had told him, and so he did. Luckily, he found signs showing him he was on the right path.



After a long day, David was finally back home with his family. Who knows what his next adventure will be.



The Request

by Kristan Hilron

Stop being the way you are
So oblivious to your selfish state
Trying so hard
And missing the mark entirely

Be true
Be real
Be who I know is there

This stranger is awkward and suspicious
Inadvertently pushing me away
Unexpectedly having their hopes diminished

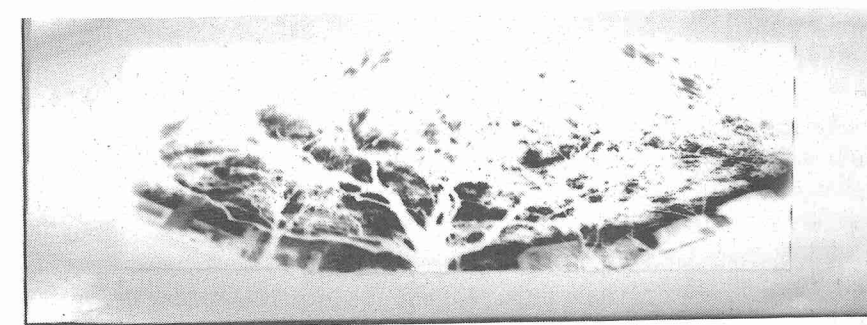
But instead of stopping
Trying harder
And becoming even more relentless
Even more determined

Difficult to watch
But even more to ignore
When will it stop
Is it too late

Angel

by Jasmin Hernandez

The angel sees.
The angel knows.
She guides my every move.
In my mind, she is like a small oak figure.
Sitting on my shelf. She waits for me all my days.
Never judging any of my ways. My mother.
Angel on my shelf. The conscience in my heart.
Beating in my mind. My very own angel.



by Brasil Segura

It All Started in That Stupid Café

by Alicia Monsibais

It was about 1 o'clock in the afternoon, that crowd at its peak in the small café. Every table and chair was left occupied, except one. In the back corner of the café sat a small table where a young woman around the age of twenty-three was engrossed in a novel. A man, who had just bought an espresso, searched for a seat. Tall, dark, and handsome didn't even begin to describe the guy. He noticed the seat that was open, and then walked over.

"Um, excuse me miss, is this seat taken?" he asked.

Jillian was startled to say the least. She was so caught up in her book that she didn't even notice him coming towards her. She looked up at the man and put a small smile on her face.

"Sure," she replied in her usual quiet voice, "I don't mind."

He smiled and sat down. Jillian, who had just reached the most exciting part of her book, continued to read. The man cleared his throat and stuck out his hand.

"I'm Caleb Hara."

"Jillian, Jillian Rae."

"It's my pleasure, Ms. Jillian Rae, to make your acquaintance." Jillian became amused by his pathetic attempt to flirt with her.

"Likewise," she said before returning to her book.

A few minutes passed and she, again, was caught up in her book. Caleb couldn't take his beautiful stormy grey eyes off of her. He, in fact, found it quite amusing; when she got to some part in the book he saw her smile, a genuine smile. It was cute.

He again attempted to make conversation with her.

"So, I see you enjoy reading Layla Rae's novels, I've read a few myself. Though I do find it interesting that someone else besides me enjoys reading such graphic scenes about torture and other grotesque topics." Jillian looked up from her book, again feeling that tight knot of annoyance in her chest.

"Well, I don't find her books very graphic. And for one thing her books are not about grotesque topics, they are stories about people and their struggle to survive situations that are seemingly impossible to get through. She writes in a unique way and uses a lot of symbolism and imagery to explain how they feel as well as explaining how that certain situation seems to them; endless torture. Not many people understand that, and that is why the books seem so grotesque to them, they miss the entire point." Jillian sighed and returned to her book; hoping and wishing this guy would just get the message and leave her alone.

After twenty minutes or so, she closed her book and stood up. Caleb stood as well.

"Leaving so soon?"

Jillian continued to gather her belongings.

"Yes, unfortunately I have to get back to work." Caleb shrugged

"I guess it can't be helped."

Jillian shrugged and began to walk out of the café. Caleb quickly caught up to her.

"Hey Jillian! I'll see you Friday around seven, alright?" She looked at him somewhat confused.

"Excuse me?"

"Yeah, our date. I'll meet you here around seven. Dress nice." She looked at him, surprised and annoyed at his forwardness.

"Wait...what?" Caleb quickly grabbed her hand and kissed it.

"Until then I bid you adieu."

Jillian was stunned and quite amused, never had a man been so determined to go out with her, it was quite strange. Snapping out of her stupor, she looked at her watch and freaked out. It was about 1:40, and she was supposed to be at her next job in ten minutes.

"Crap!" she cried out, she knew her sister would be very upset if she were to be late.

"Jillian!" cried a young woman rushing into the kitchen. Jillian looked up from the cake she was currently decorating.

"What is it, Layla?"

The young woman walked up to her older twin sister.

"So Jilli," Layla said slowly, "Who's the guy?"

Jillian raised her eyebrow at her older sister before turning back to the task at hand.

"And what guy would you be talking about?"

"You know, the guy at the café. The one that sat with you?"

Jillian looked up with a confused expression.

"How did you know about that?" The older of the two smiled.

"So there *was* a guy, and here I thought Sue was lying."

"Sue? How did Sue find out?"

"She said she was having a nice quiet lunch at this cute little café, when she saw you sitting all by your lonesome. She was about to go over and see if you would like to join her, when she saw a very handsome man sit across from you. So naturally she came to ask me who he was."

"So why exactly is she so interested in my affairs?"

"Honey, when an employee sees their boss with a mysterious