

1995

## Reflections 1995

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# REFLECTIONS '95

*A Literary Journal of Gardner-Webb University*



# *REFLECTIONS*

Volume 27

1995

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## Literary Contest

Each year, the English Department of Gardner-Webb University sponsors a poetry contest for undergraduate student submissions in conjunction with the publication of Reflections. All works are judged anonymously. This year's poetry judges were Frank Bonner, June Hobbs, Janet Land, and Brad Southard.

## Poetry Awards

First Place:	For My Father	Karen Brower
Second Place:	if the rivers	Charles Freeman
Third Place:	The Tunes of Memory	Chris V. Bridges

## Honorable Mention

A Reply to Keats' "To Autumn": To Winter	Katrina Ogren
Am I Dead?	Heather Love
Changing Winds	Chris V. Bridges

## Art Contest

This year, the Art Department has sponsored a contest for undergraduate student submissions. All works were judged anonymously. The art judges were Susan Carlisle Bell, Melissa Brown, Ford McDonald, and Ted Vaughan.

## Art Awards

First Place:	Two Times Over	Sabrina Barnes
Second Place:	Peace	Mickie Norman
Third Place:	Untitled	Yasuhiro Mori

## Honorable Mention

The Great Adventurer	Emily Johnson
Daily Bread	Katherine Ellison

## Photography Contest

This year, the Communications Department has sponsored a contest for undergraduate submissions of photography. All photographs were judged anonymously. The judges were Susan Carlisle Bell and Ted Vaughan.

## Photography Awards

First Place:	Jason Kerr
Second Place:	Jason Kerr
Third Place:	Brenda Ledford
Honorable Mention:	Shawn Childress





## **First Place**

*Jason Kerr*

## For My Father

Last night I dreamed that you were here again  
You walked with me through the parking lot  
and we went into the store together,  
you with your arm around my shoulders.  
We chased each other and disturbed the peace  
like giddy little children.  
And when you finally caught me,  
beside the glass case filled with milk and juice,  
You held me close, the two of us panting for air.  
I saw that exhilarating smile creep upon your lips—  
that smile I haven't seen in years  
Your bright hazel-brown eyes crinkling at the corners.

I'll keep that smile with me  
to think of when times get tough  
And I'll use that smile to remember  
that even though you're gone, you'll always be here with  
me.  
All this came to me last night  
Oh, the power of a dream

*Karen Brower*

## A Reply to Keats' "To Autumn" To Winter

Season of ice and barren trees, no mirth,  
    Archenemy of the Apollo Red;  
Wishing to block his freeing of the earth  
    With winds that dance over lands of the dead;  
Hoping the Chariot will fall down  
    And the Sun will lose His child of the day  
        To melt the ground, where His poor son shall rest  
Though yellow's there to find, all else left grey.  
    And still shadows grow along the bound path,  
    No animals around for Buzzard's wrath,  
        For Spring wants Death's victims' blood to be blessed.

Who has seen thee in melancholy light?  
    Often they seek the Sun's reflection when  
The true beauty of thy work remains slight.  
    Thy art does not lie in the Sun's grand sin.  
Day does not give glory to thee at all  
    The Immortal Death comes with Spring's flowers  
        Making thy own immortality weak  
In return, three thou kill: Spring, Summer, Fall  
    Shaking with fear you call Death by the hour  
    To make your sisters shiver and cower  
        Thou watchest them die with sympathy bleak.

Where do they await their return to earth?  
    Forget them, thou hast to kill to live here,—  
Icicles form sharply by new found mirth  
    But cascade as water late in the year;  
Then it is understood that tears come fast  
    When the lake quickly melts and life is near;  
        One of the three now awakened from sleep,  
Thy own life into sleep's darkness is cast;  
    Snakes recover and fill the land with fear;  
    Once again, for one moment, it is clear—  
        Death feeds on the life thou wishest to keep.

*Katrina Ogren*

## Be There

The rain keeps falling in the cold winter air.  
It's not quite cool enough for snow,  
but enough to make me long for spring.

With no clothes for the wet  
and little for the cold  
all I feel is winter's hold  
on my weak body.

Wet cold is the worst  
for there is no chance to get warm  
as the water pulls heat out  
like a leech does the blood,  
never to return.

My toes are numb and my fingers burn,  
with only one flame left in me  
to make me live on.

Let me find you again  
when i can move on,  
and you the same as I left  
when I was still warm.

If not, I will return to the cold  
with every flame that ever I left you  
taken back in one hold,  
and you left standing wet in the cold,  
as my fire returns spring to my soul.

*Stephen Wade Gamm*

## Unknown Factor

Why do I listen to the minstrel,  
and not to the prophet?  
Why do I pay attention to the jester,  
and cast off the wise man?  
I wait for my voice,  
but what I really need is direction.  
All of my feeble attempts to relate  
have left me void and empty.  
I have lost my self in search of position.  
When I know there is purpose in the hands of the creator.

*Adrian Brashier*

## Savior

Cross Hanger  
    cliff hanger, my soul  
        over hell;  
Blood Shedder  
    grace-shedding, my soul  
        without hope;  
Sin Bearer  
    Guilt takes my soul  
        reborn alive  
Joy Giver  
Joy receiver, my soul  
    Jesus Child

*Ken Lida*

## Glass Box

The girl sits patiently upon the steps,  
looking, waiting to see the sights her eyes need to see  
listening for the words her ears long to hear  
and waiting for the feelings she doesn't have—  
she is numb,  
Numb to the harshness of the winter's cold wind  
unfeeling to the cruelty of the human race  
trying not to feel the burdening weights  
which lie stubbornly upon her shoulders like a ton of bricks—  
she does not cry,  
Keeping it all inside until the pressure gets too high  
and the glass box she has closed herself into  
shatters into a million insignificant pieces  
only to be swept up by the wind  
and carried to the ends of the earth—  
ESCAPE

*Karen Brower*

## Have You Ever Reached Out?

Have you ever reached out  
And was shut off like a water faucet?  
Have you ever reached out  
And felt like the boat was missed?  
Have you ever reached out  
And your cry was silenced like an unwanted  
telephone ring?

Have you ever reached out  
And you were scolded and you didn't  
know why?  
Have you ever reached out  
And found it a waste of time?  
Have you ever reached out?  
I have . . . .

*Gretchen Fritz*



## Peace

*Mickie Norman*



## The Children and the Fire

They come to me bearing memories  
of sounds and music, of lambs and lions,  
of families, fun, and laughter, as well as  
memories of myself, memories that had been  
buried by the dragon of forget inside of a fire,  
a raging and consuming fire which would not forget  
me.

I once lost the fire and was free from its attractive  
charm,  
but the children brought it back, back from the dragon  
and the place of its hiding, for they thought  
that I without the fire was nothing,  
that the fire and I were one,  
We were not so.

I still remember,  
remember the children and remember  
their glory, remember their innocence, remember  
their dreams of glorious fields, rainbows, and places  
beyond,  
remember smiles, sparkling eyes, joyous grins, and  
their dependence,  
undergirded by a fire, a fire whose time for  
extinguishing had not yet come.

*Chris V. Bridges*

## Growing Apart

No one ever told me,  
No one ever let me know;  
Enjoy your family now,  
You'll part when you grow.

I wish sometimes,  
For the unit we once had;  
Where in the same house,  
Slept R.J., Robin, Mom, and Dad.

These times are gone.  
My memories must do;  
But just to say I lived it,  
This is a blessing too.

*Robert Blair*

## Little Tommy and His Kite

Brother of the fields,  
Your blonde hair shines in the sun light.  
As you run, your T-shirt bubbles  
To make room for the wind.

Friend of the yellow kite,  
Your hand reaches for the clouds.  
It is freedom that you give him,  
As he plays in the treacherous wind.  
It is freedom that you receive from him,  
As you frolic in the weeds.

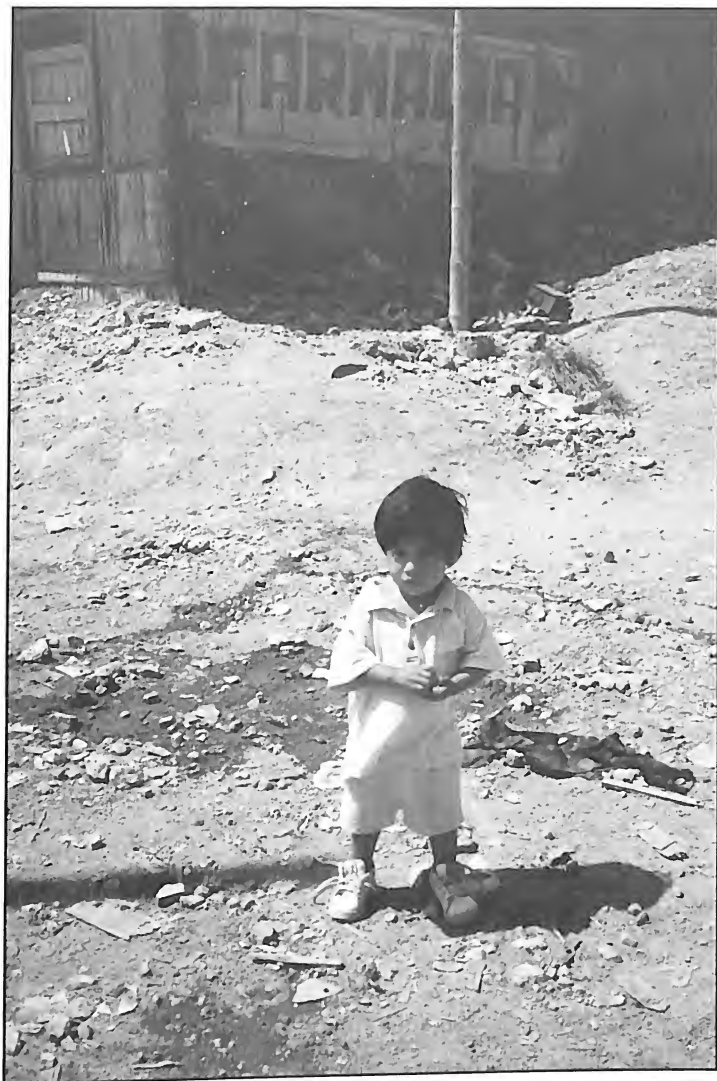
Son of alcoholic mother,  
Son of abusive father,  
Play while it's still light  
And know you're in the eternal Father's hands.

*Heather Love*

So now what?  
You've left me here again.  
This glass and wooden siding I call "Hell."  
I HATE You for not coming to my rescue,  
And Myself for never letting on.  
When younger I would cry and scream and beg  
For you to never make me return.  
Did you never wonder why?  
Did you ever stop and think?  
So here I sit again in eerie silence.  
My heart is racing, yet the tears do not fall.  
Why cry? The pain will stop tomorrow—

Except in my mind.  
If I ran away he would just find me.  
If I scream the punishment will be great.  
If I cry out for help...but who will help me?  
Daddy? God?  
You two are supposed to protect me.  
I know you have no idea—  
So God, what's your excuse?  
I'm left to protect myself.  
The door is locked (he has a key)  
My Mom is close (she is asleep)  
I'll beg and plead (he has no heart)  
I'll tell tomorrow (I have no courage)  
Daddy, you're my only hope for Saviour—  
My so-called "Saviour" hasn't helped me yet  
Please Daddy, guess what is happening—  
Please Daddy, I can't take much more.  
Please Daddy, I'm not made of steel.  
.....DADDY!

*Anonymous*



*Shawn Childress*

## He who is

Looking into the distance  
I see reflections  
of those things which were to come  
came  
went  
looking beneath me I  
begin to recognize places  
I was going  
at  
went  
the rises  
sets and spins we spin we go  
why  
looking upward  
onward  
into the arms  
arms of He  
who is he?  
Unknown king  
ruler  
patriarch  
deity  
Yes  
well, and no  
He is  
friend  
father  
idealist  
trinity  
"all for one and one for all"  
He is mine  
and I am his  
resting gently in his hands  
dangled  
held through fire  
storm  
and blight  
Only so to know  
who He is.

*Andrew H. Minneman*

if the rivers that flow into the sea  
could dream  
what would they be  
an ocean standing deep and wide  
or a spring running down a mountain side

maybe a tributary that brings the flow  
or an open delta that lets it go  
perhaps the drain from a summer's rain  
would all their dreaming be in vain

would it be the mud on an old  
dirt road  
or the dew on the grass that has been  
freshly mowed  
maybe the rain that falls from the sky  
or a pain-caused tear that drops from an eye

that frozen water that cools a drink  
or the annoying drip in a metal sink  
fluffy clouds that float without a sound  
probably the snow that dances to the ground

any of these it could possibly be  
    what if the rivers were you and me  
our lives and dreams may be simple and plain  
    if we dwell in the most high  
    our dreams  
        are not  
        in vain

*Charles Freeman*



## Daily Bread

*Katherine Ellison*



Following a light into the tunneling darkness  
Words change into hidden meanings  
Assumptions never clarified—still believing  
Willing to have permanent scars bearing love  
Hanging onto phrases not intended for a heart to hear  
Ignoring everything following the one bringing light to  
    darkness  
Words of compassionate friendship create a love that grows  
And is shared in two different ways  
When the darkness ceases and the one bearing light is  
    uncovered  
Eyes see their own imagination.

*Aubrey Moore*

## My Best Friend

I waited for him to sneak up on me,  
But he never did.  
I watched over my shoulder for years (sure that he was  
following),  
But he never was.

I looked at the path ahead, it was empty,  
And I felt lonely.  
Then I felt someone take my hand  
And there he was  
Just like he'd always been.

*Aubrey Moore*

## Am I Dead?

I used to hate learning my spelling words,  
And double checking my multiplication tables.  
Taking a bath seemed to be a punishment,  
And I dreaded setting the table.  
Now I have a hundred tasks.  
I wonder why God listened  
When I asked if I could grow up.  
I thought he knew best.

The trees still wave at me  
To challenge me to climb.  
The sun's forehead peers out of bed  
And asks if I can come out to play.  
The water and the rocks laugh in the valley  
And I feel that I no longer belong;  
Not like the children whose job  
Is to frolic with them.

I fear that my childhood has vanished  
And before I can find that same simple lifestyle,  
I will have discovered that I am already dead.

*Heather Love*

## WHO I AM

They are who I am, not I.  
They compose me, they encompass me,  
as I do them.  
They  
are who I am.

They gave to me: themselves,  
I kept what they offered  
and gave the same.  
They  
are who I was.

They will continue to come, and steadily  
will increase in multitudes  
without ceasing.  
They  
are who I will be.

They, at their end will live  
again through me,  
as I through them.  
They  
are who I am.

*Chris V. Bridges*

This is the place in which I sleep  
This is the place in which I see  
This place is home  
When I say home, I just don't mean the place where I eat  
I also mean the place where I dwell  
A place where the muggers the thieves the drug sellers  
the rapists are all known well

This place called home  
A place where I see  
Little boys play the game of hide and go seek  
Years go by and games do change  
They no longer go hide from each other, the game has changed  
To selling drugs on the streets  
The rules are the same  
They hide their drugs  
They hide from the police  
They even hide from other drug sellers  
with whom they have to compete.

Where I live there's no white picket fence  
There's no dog running in the yard  
THERE'S NO YARD  
There's drug dealers, thieves, homeless, and  
people trying to steal your car.  
Gunshots are fired  
I think of them as my alarm

To wake up and get out of this society  
To be free, safe, and away from any harm  
Right now I'm not capable of doing this  
I'm trapped behind bars  
So now I can only see things  
And go to sleep  
Over the loud gunshot alarms.

*Vas-Shawn K. Scott*

Words will not come  
To express what I feel  
How I need to tell you  
When the time is right.

Time is running short  
The moment is coming  
When I must say goodbye  
(But it isn't good  
It's lonely and cold)

Meaningless conversations  
Thrown to the wind  
Eager ears are no longer there  
To catch them  
They go unheard  
Who knows where.

If things were different  
If I was different  
If time was forever  
And so were we  
If today could be the beginning  
Not the end:

I'd probably do it all over again  
And wonder if, how, and why  
And still be confused  
And you'd still be leaving.

*Aubrey Moore*

## In Earnest

What became of the sacrifice of atonement  
I offered the gods?  
On its ashes  
Grew the bitter leaves of wormwood.  
They say for the body odour to go  
The whole armpit must be washed.

*Ndiangang Terence*

## Yet in Her Prime?

Lo! The harmattan hurrying westwards  
Has chased the sunshine of early morn  
And yonder the buzzing bee  
The flower's juice has sucked.

Open your doors O woman  
That I may espy  
If the seasons of the earth  
Have smouldered  
The fire of your hearth.

*Ndiangang Terence*



*Jason Kerr*



## Changing Winds

The same winds that  
fly a kite, that  
cushion the birds, that  
guide the leaves gently down  
also  
are the same  
that  
bring in storms, that  
tear down a mountain, that  
consume tired sailors.

We too are at that extreme  
in our humanity.  
A most conservative stand  
turns into a liberal fall, the  
wrongest of wrongs becomes the  
rightest of rights, the strongest leader becomes the  
meekest follower.  
Why should we, oh humanity,  
criticize the winds?

*Chris V. Bridges*

## Point of View

My mind slips into the past.  
It's like a nightmare.  
It grabs hold of me and won't let go.  
I recall the sting of voices.  
I am left a victim to mere opinion.  
My strength is gone.  
I crawl into a fetal position.  
Does the present even exist?  
I'm so tired of this.  
I can not please the world.  
I will please the one who made it.

*Adrian Brashier*

## Drain

Draw a pen  
let its blue blood smear across a page  
What is left?  
The crust of a thought.

*Joshua Landry*

# My Flower

I will never be a rose...Roses are too beautiful. Too sweet, too perfect. They have thorns hidden by deception.

I will never be a violet. They have the air of mystery. Too dark—purple. Purple, dark blue. Too moody. Moody Blues.

I will never be a morning glory. I hate mornings; and I will never wither and die if the sun beats down on me.

I will never be a mum. There are too many petals. Too many facets. Are they each tiny individual petals or four big bumpy big ones?

I will never be a daisy. Too trendy. Hippies and Retros like them. So quaint, so published. They're on every Volkswagen bug windshield.

I will be a wildflower. Maybe a dandelion—simple. If you look hard, I am durable but tender. When I grow old, I will puff up into a cloud of dreams.

When the wind of life comes blowing, I will spread my dreams, wishes, hopes, truths, my touch everywhere. Somehow, my life's dreams will come true.

I'm not really a weed. I don't really need to be cut down. I'm just a reminder of how life and love and dreams ought to be.

I will never be planted. I will grow wherever I want and you will never kill me off.

*Etta Castles*

# The Chosen Few

It was dark  
Up on the hill  
Throughout the palace  
All was still

The knight approached  
And mounted his horse  
It was time to depart  
For that long, dreaded course

The knight was captured  
As the battles were fought  
He must be saved  
Or nothing is taught

Through the woods  
The knight will ride  
To the valley  
Below the mountainside

Trudging onward  
To save the king  
Lost in thought  
He began to sing

He was suddenly startled  
By a frightening sound  
He did not understand  
For this was common ground

In the distance  
He could plainly see  
A fire-breathing dragon  
Larger than the trees

He continued to ride  
Prepared to attack  
He knew he was in danger  
For he could not turn back

He charged at the creature  
With dagger in hand  
He aimed for the heart  
The dragon fell over the land

Closing in on the valley  
He came to a brook  
He paused for a moment  
To take a long look  
The once clear blue

Was now dark red  
During the battle  
Blood had been shed  
He finally reached the valley  
And sat on a rock  
He observed his surroundings  
Then went into shock

There before him  
Lying on the ground  
Was the king's sword  
And his golden crown

The knight grew silent  
He mounted his steed  
He now must do  
The dreadful deed

He rode back to the palace  
And this is what he said,  
"We are all abandoned now  
for our king is dead."

He entered the king's chambers  
And knelt beside his bed  
Drowning himself in sadness  
But tears he could not shed

He heard a voice behind him  
Sternly made of lead  
"Slowly turn and face me  
or I will have your head."

The knight jumped up  
And drew his sword  
He found himself facing  
His mighty lord

He bowed before the king  
And wept at his feet  
He should have known  
The king could not be beat

He gazed out the window  
At the moon's glowing hue  
He knew that the king  
Was among the chosen few.

*Heidi Watts*



## The Great Adventurer

*Emily Johnson*

Black people walk tall  
Black people walk with too much pride  
Urban black people like to think they can  
kick the hell out of the white man's hide  
They live in the worst society  
Where crime is very high  
They wonder why they were born into these societies  
To live their lives and sometimes to die

Black people walk with too much pride  
Black people walk tall  
Urban black people look for all the reasons why  
their lives are going wrong  
Blame it on the white man  
He held us in chains  
Now he has these agencies to keep us restrained  
This is what the Urban black man's cry is  
They claim they were never given a chance  
Urban black people have pride; they can play sports and  
dance

Black people walk tall  
Black people walk with too much pride  
Urban black people will never amount to anything  
Unless they get off their asses  
And help their own black hides.

*Vas-Shawn K. Scott*

## QUESTIONS

Will you cry for those who have no more tears?  
Will you sing for those whose song is sung?  
Will you dream for those who dare not?  
Will you live a life to honor those who died?

When the wolf cries his last,  
When the eagle no longer soars,  
When the rivers run of lost blood,  
Will you seek to keep the circle closed?

As the sun wanes weaker,  
As the moon fills the night,  
As the darkness descends,  
Will you be a guiding light?

Do you hear the unborn crying?  
Do you see the earth is dying?  
Do you feel the balance breaking?  
And will you heal the wounded race?

*Cynthia Picklesimer*

## Breaking Up...

Once you've been lured deeply  
into another's eyes  
reading almost every  
flaring emotion

Once you've gently touched another's  
perfectly exposed surface  
with passionate force  
that bleeds.

Once you've opened the inside  
of your mind  
for another to leisurely walk  
among your  
dreams.

Once you've given more time  
and energy  
than all the hours that  
exceed a  
lifetime of work.

And, once you learn to forget  
yourself  
long enough  
to cry, laugh, and hurt  
for another...  
How can you go back to "Just Friends"?

*Heidi Gardner*



## Prayer

Lord, if I told you that I love you,  
would I be lying?  
If I said just the right words,  
would you be impressed?  
If I said thank you for giving your life,  
would I find peace?  
If I got on my knees,  
would that show strength?  
If I cried,  
would this be more sacred?  
If I wrote this down,  
would I remember this?  
In the name of Jesus.  
Amen.

*Adrian Brashier*

## The Tunes of Memory

Born for another sky,  
That would be the day we'd die.  
Songs on a bus, oft not in key,  
Tunes for him, and tunes for me.

Swings on swings and swarms of small,  
why did we come here after all?  
Rogues and roughs and rains and rights,  
If not for His work, we'd give up the fight.

With a lone poet, the stranger and I  
discussed questions of life 'til dawn was nigh.  
A Genuine glance, we questioned with fear  
and soon the time of good-byes came near.

Born for another sky,  
That would be the day we'd die.  
I'm glad memories are in one key,  
Tunes for him, and tunes for me.

*Chris V. Bridges*

They say there is a God  
But I do not see him  
They say that he exists  
But how do I know  
He never answers My pleas  
He never hears My cries  
And you, they call you a hypocrite  
You with the Bible in your hand  
You, like me, will go to Hell they say  
Because I do not believe in God  
And you, the perfect one, is judge by all  
They say life is great with God  
My life is better without him  
Why do you oh, preacher one say I will go to Hell  
I thought that is where I lived now.

*Mandy Mooneyham*

I WAS BAPTIZED AS A CHILD  
THAT DOES MEAN I'M A BAPTIZED ADULT  
AS A CHILD YOU'RE TOLD WHAT TO BELIEVE IN  
BY MOTHER, FATHER, OR GUARDIAN OF SOME SORT

AS I SIT BACK AND CONTEMPLATE ON WHAT I WANT TO BE  
I WANT TO BE RICH HAVE FUN AND MAKE LOTS OF MONEY

WELL I'M AN ADULT NOW, AND THEY TELL ME THAT'S NOT  
WHAT A PERSON  
SHOULD BE  
YOU SHOULD BE WHO YOU ARE  
AND FINDING WHO I AM IS FINDING IF I HAVE GOD IN ME

IS THIS TRUE, WELL INTRODUCE ME TO GOD  
IS HE JESUS OR THE ALMIGHTY ALLAH  
IS GOD WHAT THE CHINESE OR THE HINDUS BELIEVE IN  
I DON'T KNOW

A LOT OF THINGS CONFUSE ME  
THE BIBLE; GOD'S WORDS RIGHT THIS MUST MEAN HE'S  
THE AUTHOR  
THE LIBRARIAN WASN'T SURE OF THIS  
THE PICTURE OF JESUS  
IN THE BIBLE I SEE WHITE CHARACTERISTICS  
SOME SAY HE HAD SIGNS OF BLACKNESS  
HOW CAN A PICTURE BE SO DETAILED  
WHEN HE WALKED THE EARTH HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO  
IT CONFUSES ME  
SEE IT FROM MY PERSPECTIVE  
WE'RE ALL LIVING BEINGS ON THIS EARTH  
HUMANS ARE HUMAN-BEINGS  
ANIMALS ARE LOWER-BEINGS  
I SEE GOD AS A HIGHER-BEING  
THE HIGHEST OF THEM ALL  
WHY LABEL GOD A NAME  
WE DID NOT CREATE GOD, GOD CREATED US.

*Vas-Shawn K. Scott*

# MEN!

I do suppose they are necessary  
Reproduction, Power, and Strength  
Possibly an occasional laugh  
A little pleasure here and there.

It seems to hold true  
Until they manipulate you  
Turning your world into black coal  
Chewing your heart to spit up the soul.

First they'll bear red roses  
Followed by a poem or two  
Yet, others will have heard  
Their cheap and deceiving words.

Yes, you may have them at first  
The shiny spark in their eye  
But, inside they will plot  
Thus begins the first lie.

A killer test, late night at work,  
Out with a friend,  
And, who could ever be jealous of  
Dear old grandma?

Oh! What a fool you will be  
His innocent smile is all you'll see  
Remembering that delightful first kiss  
Afraid of what you might miss.

Be warned now, before it's too late  
You'll gamble with your own fate  
Don't play their teasing game  
Or you'll risk the chance of pain.

*Heidi Gardner*



*Brenda Ledford*

# My Room

A somber mood hung heavy in the musty air, weighed down even more by the constant darkness which is characteristic of this room, the room in which I live. Meager rays of light do try to trespass beyond the thick drapes but are discouraged by a gloomy atmosphere, so that the room remains in a dusky shroud.

I sit here quietly, listening to the gentle ticking of the clock which hangs on a far wall, I watch the shadows which surround me. They haunt me constantly, sinking into dark corners, peering out of every crevice and doorway, occupying the entire room, dominating it with their overwhelming presence. The shadows slink over the floor not only when night falls but even while the gleaming arms of the sun try to push themselves through my dreary windows. It seems that they will never leave me.

I hate them watching me, observing my every action. I can feel their gray eyes wherever I am, boring into my body, drilling through my tormented being. They try to capture me, relentlessly they pursue me, chasing me around the gloom that has become my life.

I try to leave them, but they always return to me, waiting until a peaceful smile crosses my mournful face, then they glide back into my room, my life. The shadows welcome themselves, drifting like a fog, hanging against rosy colored walls which turn ashen at their mysterious touch. As I live I try not to acknowledge their presence, but I am trapped by their strange persistence. They often lead me, moving around the small, young room in hypnotic circles, filling me with a familiar sense of dread and despair. It is during these times that I can feel my mind yearning to be with them, to become one with those that trace such strange and powerful patterns across the cold floor of the room.

The shadows then reach out for me, their misty hands groping into what little light there is left, trying desperately to find where I conceal myself. I hear them coming for me, their hushed whispers and low groans are inescapable, the search never ceases. Soon they discover me, ripping me from my place of refuge and then proceeding to pummel me down with fists made of memories and fingers of steel.

The beating seems endless, my throat is cut raw from my incessant weeping, though I know my tears will never stop them, but only feed their angry, fierce hunger. Soon, I won't be able to feel my body as all life will be wrenched from it. It is then that the shadows will finally enter me, pushing through my wounds, desperate to reside in my new hollow cavity.

Now as I sit here dying, I wait for the shadows to come for me again, I wait for them to beckon me with idle fancies. I sit patiently as time passes by and the cycle of my life begins once more.

*Petra Orloff*

## Carolina Foothills High School Poets Awards

This year, Reflections accepted submissions of poetry from regional high school students. Having judged the submissions, the Reflections staff is delighted to announce the following winners.

First Place:	Hard Wood Floors	Robbie Lee
Second Place:	The Lobster Tank	Kevin Graham
Third Place:	Her Daughter	James Hopper

### Honorable Mention

Words of an Alluring Blossom	Susan L. Cannon
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# Hard Wood Floors

I rise from the hard wood floor;  
My numb cheek tingles,  
And the sun stings my eyes.  
He's in the kitchen  
Listening to the radio:  
"Old Rugged Cross."  
I would shut it off,  
But my hands are tied.  
Then he sees me—  
Awake.

I wake from the hard wood floor,  
My cold cheek rushes  
Losing blood.  
He's in the living room  
Watching television:  
Billy Graham crusade.  
I would shut it off,  
But my wrists are bound to my feet.  
He walks to the door  
Waiting for my retreat.

I glance from the hard wood floor,  
My feet swell as I stand  
Hoping that the prayer will end.  
He's close beside me,  
Holding my arm with bony fingers  
Watching the pacing pastor:  
Spitting hell fire and damnation.  
I would shut them in,  
But I can't move.  
And the doors won't lock.

*Robbie Lee  
Woodruff High School  
Spartanburg, SC*

## The Lobster Tank

He's dying,  
a bit early, even for a lobster in a grocery store.  
But, all the same, he's dying.  
I assume he's ill,  
and so do his pals.  
They all pile up on the other side of the tank  
to watch him die.  
They don't like death, but still, it fascinates the hell out  
of them.  
He's all alone, probably just sitting there, waiting to die.  
He must be different,  
he looks the same as all of the others to me,  
but he doesn't belong.  
They watch him with wicked fascination.  
But I think he's lucky.  
A lone soul, he's dying slowly,  
saying goodbye to the world we carved out for him.  
The rest of them, having stuck together and imitated  
each other,  
will all burn to death  
in the pot below the lobster tank.

*Kevin Graham  
Ashbrook High School  
Gastonia, NC*

## her daughter

"i swear you were everything i had"  
and  
the days  
now empty covered her  
like blankets of silent memories—  
old films  
flicking, flicking—they ran over  
and over.

and  
the feeling she had  
when she just found out and she  
wouldn't,                      couldn't  
believe

it was true, the moment  
she  
was forced to realize  
no matter how much she  
wanted to change it  
she                      couldn't.how  
she couldn't do anything  
but cry.

"i'll mourn forever; it's my own  
death too—"  
i suppose all  
wind  
dies to you, and  
the flowers and trees too.  
the blue in the sky must be lifeless—

i'm sorry; i'm sorry  
that everything was stolen from you  
and that it's  
possible everything could be.  
i'm sorry a child's  
laughter is now only an  
echo of misery in your soul.

i'm sorry she was taken,  
i'm sorry,  
i'm sorry.

*James Hopper  
Ashbrook High School  
Gastonia, NC*

## Words of an Alluring Blossom

O beautiful  
butterfly  
why must you  
flutterby?  
and leave me dying.  
O favorite creature of the gods  
your colors have entrapped my soul!  
please—  
that white daisy cannot see  
you value half as much as I.  
no, Mr. Butterfly,  
I DO need you  
come . . .  
lie upon my flower  
drink of my enchanting nectar  
and sleep . . .  
until you love me  
more.

*Susan L. Cannon  
Boiling Springs High School  
Inman, SC*

# The Swings

*(dedicated to my grandchildren, Corey and Sarah—Summer 1993)*

The swings are quiet.

As I sit on my deck overlooking my backyard on this early June morning, I notice with pain that the swings are quiet.

Their grandpa spent days readying them for Corey's and Sarah's visit—an inquisitive three year-old and eighteen month-old: New seats for the two swings, new chains replaced the old rusty ones, more cement to make it steady, new bolts, nuts, and screws replacing missing or rusted ones, wax paper for the slide to make it smooth and swift, and even an old bean bag at the bottom of the slide to prevent skinned knees—and possible tears.

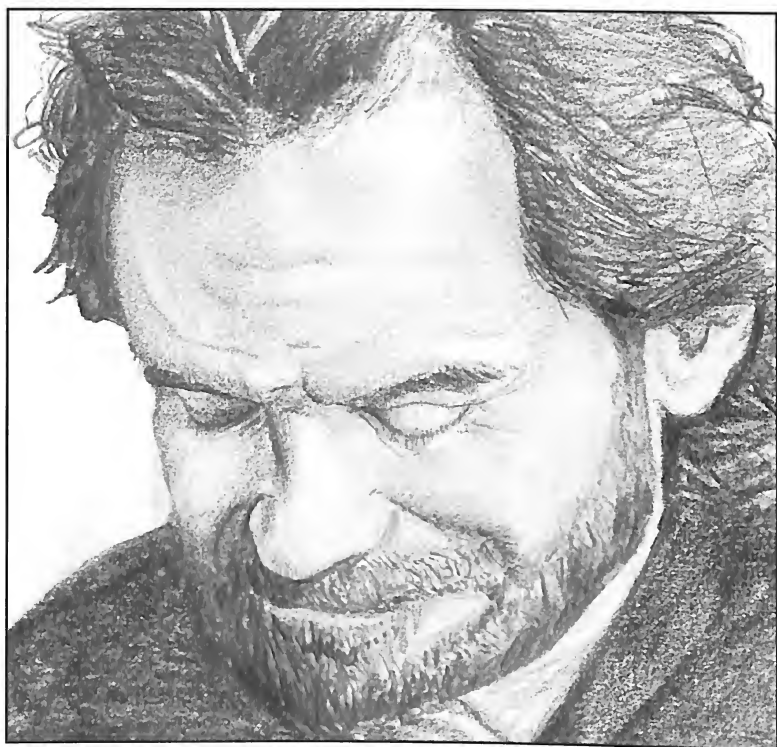
But now the swings are quiet.

For one week this summer the swing area in the backyard was filled with sweet laughter, the amazement of flying, echoes of "I want to go again!" and "My turn PaPa" and "My turn MeMa." Cries of "Help me!" Then later, "I can do it myself!" Beautiful eyes sparkling, little hands clutching and exploring, little bodies experimenting with different ways of sliding, climbing, and swinging. Corey proclaiming proudly that his "PaPa made this for me." It was a noisy, happy, busy place to be—that old swing set in the backyard.

But now the swings are quiet.

They've gone back to their home in Dallas, Texas. Won't be at Grandma's and Grandpa's for probably another year. So the swings are quiet. And all the bean bags in the world can't prevent the tears of this grandma on this June morning because . . . the swings are quiet.

*Johnnie Hamrick*



*Yasuhiro Mori*