<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF DISCONTENT</th>
<th>ART</th>
<th>JAMIE OBERSCHLAKE</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROW</td>
<td>PROSE</td>
<td>JERRY HOLT</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE KILLING</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>JOHN STEGEeman</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OF STRANGERS</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>A.TAYLOR</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOLLOW</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>BARBARA MURDOCK</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMD</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>BARBARA MURDOCK</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTITLED</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>BARBARA MURDOCK</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SUN WAS</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>BARBARA MURDOCK</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRAFTED FROM</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>NIKKI BLANKENSHIP</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE FIRES OF HELL</td>
<td>PROSE</td>
<td>JOAN PARKER</td>
<td>11-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIDE THE LIGHT</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>JAMIE OBERSCHLAKE</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP FOUR</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>STEPHANY R. SMITH</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLOOMS IN CAPTIVITY</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>KIM CRUM</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTIST STATEMENT</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>CHARLES HASKINS</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTIST STATEMENT</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>K.CRUM, C. HASKINS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PICASSO NUDE</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>K.CRUM, C. HASKINS</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAN GOUGH NUDE</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>K.CRUM, C. HASKINS</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'KEEFE NUDE</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>K.CRUM, C. HASKINS</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACON NUDE</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>K.CRUM, C. HASKINS</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOYA NUDE</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>CHARLES HASKINS</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOXCAR TRAGEDY</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>JULIE HOECKH</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKY</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>JAMIE OBERSCHLAKE</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOTH</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>MONICA STAFFORD</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTRIC PEPPER</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>MONICA STAFFORD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEANNA AS OPHelia</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>MONICA STAFFORD</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTIST STATEMENT</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>KIMBERLY RHOTON</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KETTLE</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>JOEY DEPEW</td>
<td>32-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POEM</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>TARYN MALONE</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO LADIES I'VE</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>JUSTIN R. ISAAC</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNOWN IN THE</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>DEREK DAWSON</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLICAL SENSE</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>TARYN MALONE</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEEP RED</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>TARYN MALONE</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITING IN RUNES</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>MONICA STAFFORD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLORAS</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>MONICA STAFFORD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAYLA'S #14</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>MONICA STAFFORD</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEELING FAT AS</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>MONICA STAFFORD</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A COW</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>JAMIE OBERSCHLAKE</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAMAW DORIS</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>BARBARA MURDOCK</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMOKERS</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>MICHAEL PIPPIN</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTITLED</td>
<td>PROSE</td>
<td>ROB CHESTNUT</td>
<td>45-47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTITLED</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>TARYN MALONE</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASH REGISTER</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>JUSTIN R. ISAAC</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RECKLESSLY</td>
<td>POETRY</td>
<td>TARYN MALONE</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GROW

JAMIE OBERSCHLAKE

WOODCUT

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The morning of the day Lucifer Jones came back from the dead, it snowed like hell. It was late March already, but we can still get a good one in Southern Ohio at that time of year. But even if it hadn’t been for Lucifer and the snow, I’d have had other reasons to remember that day. For one thing, I got fired, and for another, I met Corrie Blake.

Start with getting fired, since that began my day. It was a little after eight and I was into my second cup of Folgers, sitting on my sofa and warily watching the lead sky through the sliding glass door on my little balcony. I have the second floor of the old Portsmouth Shoe Company, which was cut up into apartments after shoes and steel and every other industry but the coke plant folded its tent around here in the late fifties. And that’s pretty much what my balcony looks out on: the rotting corpse of downtown Portsmouth. Fortunately, I can also see the Kentucky hills just across the Ohio River in the distance, which are always worth looking at. So is the Scioto--pronounced Sigh-Oh-Ta--which joins the Ohio at the southwest edge of town, but the Ohio is far more impressive. Once upon a time it would have been possible to see it from where I was sitting, but in 1937 the town finally flooded one too many times, and thus a levee was built that stands seventy-two feet high.

I could also see the tops of a couple buildings on the Two Rivers College campus, which so far as I knew then was still my place of employment. I’d been working Security there for nearly two years, mostly the night shift. The school has just over three thousand students, most of them commuters, so I’d spent most of those nights double-checking locks or jimmying car windows for students who had locked up their keys. Security was boring work, but it suited my life and I would have been content to keep on doing it. But then the phone rang.
"Samuel Haggard?" The woman's voice was unfamiliar.

"Speaking," I said.

"Hold for Ms. Denning, please." I heard myself being flicked into the AT&T limbo known as Call Waiting.

Ms. Denning--Rosalyn Denning--I did know. She was twenty-nine years old, and she held a doctorate from the University of South Carolina. She was Assistant to the President at Two Rivers College, and she was downright beautiful to look at. But on the one social evening we'd ever shared, I'd found myself forgetting about her looks because the woman was so much fun to listen to. Her voice reminded me of strong tea with honey, and her stories--reminiscences of growing up black in the south, of being a first-generation college graduate, and of living a life so worth telling, caught me up completely. I'd been surprised as hell that she'd ever agreed to go out with me, and very pleased we'd had such a good time: good steaks down at The Ribber and an electric, sweaty couple of hours listening to Jim Miller's Blues Band at Thompson's down by the shoelace factory. When she called the next day to tell me that she'd had so much fun we'd better not do it again, I'd told her I wouldn't have thought she'd pull rank on me. But no, she'd said: it wasn't that. And don't get any dumbass ideas, because it wasn't the black-white thing, that Old Crap as she put it, either.

"That's good," I'd said like a dipshit fool, "because I wouldn't care even if you were a--what's Spock?"

"A Vulcan."

"Yeah."

"Well, I'm not. I'm a sharecropper's daughter who worked my black ass off to get where I am. I made a promise to my daddy to do this, and I'm keeping it.
Later on I'll do something else. Hope you're around, Sam. In the meantime--see ya."
That had been last summer, but I still thought about Rosalyn Denning sometimes. I'd even hoped she'd call me. But this one didn't sound like the call I had in mind.

"Sam," her voice: that voice, the same one. "Hi."
"Hi," I said.
"We need to talk. I..." she stopped. "Oh, hell. Come over."
"Okay, Thirty minutes?"
"Make it fifteen. I have a board meeting." She hung up.

I slugged down the rest of my coffee, pulled on my heavy coat, locked up, and went down the stairs. Once outside, the wind hit me like an angry lover's slap. The wind rarely blows hard here: the enclosure of the valley won't let it in. But this morning had brought something mean and bone-cold whipping down from the hills: something brutal.

I walked the two blocks down to Second and headed across the parking lot for the Performing Arts Center towards Administration. I stuck my hands deep in my pockets and wished I'd worn some gloves. In fact, I was feeling generally defenseless by the time I made it to the main building. From a few feet away I could see Phil Pixley just inside the glass doors, pushing one open for me.

"Pix," I said, huffing in. "It's cold."
"It's the end of the world. End of life on this planet as we know it. River's going to freeze, you wait. Just like in '89." He sniffed. "When's tickets?" He demanded.

Pix was a good enough guy, but not exactly a linear thinker. Weathered and gnomish with a face like a chamois, he was Senior Maintenance and the Administration Building had been his janitorial kingdom for nearly thirty years. Some people thought he was
crazy, but I could usually follow him. Here he was not inquiring about tickets to the end of the world, but about when tickets might go on sale for the Cincinnati Reds baseball season. Since this was the year of the strike, I certainly didn't have the answer. But I wasn't going to tell Pix that: he'd told me long ago that as far as he was concerned baseball was the one thing in the world that made any sense.

"Maybe this ought to be the year you get into basketball," I told him.

"Fuck basketball," he replied, and slumped down the hall.

The President's suite was spacious for a campus of this size. A college girl sporting braided brown hair and granny glasses out of 1968 sat behind the regular secretary's desk, peering hard at a computer screen.

"Hi," I said. "Where's Pat?"

She looked up, distracted. "Oh," she said. "She's out today. I think her car wouldn't start."

"Sam Haggard. I'm to see Ms. Denning."

Behind her glasses, her eyes revealed dark knowledge. By that point I knew it: I was on the block. I gave an inner sigh and sat back. The girl picked up the phone and buzzed Rosalyn's office. She announced my presence, and then hung up. "Go on back," she said, and returned to her computer screen.

I'd never been in Rosalyn's office before. It was just off the President's, a comfortable room with a bay window and a round conference table. Rosalyn was at the table, elbow deep in manila folders. She greeted me without getting up and gestured to the chair across from her. I sat.

She threw down her pen and put both arms on the table before her, lacing her fingers. "You're fired," she said, without preamble.
Follow

I'll follow her I think,
I have in dreams.
Followed her down paths
I would otherwise avoid.

I'll follow her impulses
Delight in her dreams.
I think, I'll be taken.
Unable, Unwilling, to resist.

She'll follow me I think,
She has in dreams.
Followed me down paths
That made no sense to take.

She'll follow my paths
Delight in my dreams.
Maybe, she'll be charmed.
Unable, Unwilling, to resist.

We'll cease to follow, I think.
CMD

Sometimes when you win, you lose
Hidden from all despair, but exposed, naked
Sometimes when you lose, you win
Broken free from my depraved bondage

Hidden from all despair, but exposed, naked
Light in all its beauty, burns
Broken free from my depraved bondage
Release brings confusion and madness

Light in all its beauty, burns
My eyes crave the darkness of your mind
Release brings confusion and madness
My mind craves the beauty of your eyes

My eyes crave the darkness of your mind
I have taken sweet refuge
My mind craves the beauty of your eyes
I can see into your soul

I have taken sweet refuge
You have denied me passage
I can see into your soul
You have turned away from me

You have denied me passage
Into the darkness I desire
You have turned away from me
Into the light of another

Into the darkness I desire
I fear I can not go
Into the light of another
It seems that you have made your choice

I fear I can not go . . .
These secrets hurt me more
It seems that you have made your choice
I have to leave you alone

These secrets hurt me more
Sometimes when you lose, you win
I have to leave you alone
Sometimes when you win, you lose
UNTITLED

PHOTOGRAPH

Published by Digital Commons @ Shawnee State University, 2005
I awoke sober
From bits of sweaty dreams-
faint foggy sex
with lingering orgasms.
Strips of hair lay paper mache'd
across my forehead.
My tongue searches through
thick inhalations for hidden saliva.
As its tip investigates
the cemented corners of my lips,
exhausted thirst
leaves me cursing the sun
and praying for
caffeine rain.
I think we're all born with some sort of sixth sense, what we might call intuition, or conscience, but that's not exactly putting a finger on it. There's really more to it than that, and even though I can't seem to link this intangible thing to traditional vocabulary, it's not hard to recognize, once you admit it exists.

For a long time I played lost and confused, and when hard situations came into my life, I settled for being the victim. It's easier to let other people, or fate, or God, or whatever take the blame for the things that go wrong in our lives, and sometimes we do fall prey to the predator, but that isn't always the case. When I look back on my life, I see that I almost always knew the right choices to make. Some combination of mind and heart spoke to me, pointed out the signs, told me when trouble was ahead, but I often didn't listen. In fact, I pretended that this kind of instinct wasn't even there, because once you own up to it, once you acknowledge it's real, the fact that we are all responsible for our own lives becomes brilliantly obvious.

It was a day in March, most likely a Saturday, and I was on spring break. Probably not the kind of spring break you might be thinking of, not the kind that occurs in a blurry fog on the warm beaches of Cancun where college students flock to assert their independence and secretly embarrass their parents. The only thing I was going to get out of my break was time off from school, and even that wasn't a big deal for me. Let's put it this way, if A's were handed out for skipping, I'd be at the top of my class. I guess I skipped so much because I was afraid, afraid of someone noticing what I thought were my inadequacies. In my mind, I was too stupid, too fat, too silly, too ugly, and I couldn't come close to rationalizing these feelings away. Whether they were real or not, these shortfalls became my crutch, my excuse to ignore the true problems in my life. But I was all out of focus back then, and I just couldn't seem to get my head on straight. Listening to that conscience type-thing in my mind was freaky, it told me all kinds of truths about myself, and I really didn't like hearing it. Instead I tried to drown out all that confusion with increasingly self-destructive behavior. But I've digressed.

So like I said, it was a day in March, probably a Saturday, and I was on spring break. Just a week before, I'd met Tim, through a friend of a friend. I never would've guessed, upon that first meeting, how much befriending him would change my life. All I knew then was that he was a party kid, a raver, just like me. We were both creatures
of the night, but while Tim was a major player of the game, I was still in my rookie season. Yet, I was already addicted to the rave scene, and the sensory overload it provided. The hypnotizing laser-lights, the deep pulse of the bass, the liquid bodies of the dancers, all these things felt primal and rebellious, and I was hooked. So when Tim asked me to go with him and his friends to a party that night in March, I overlooked the fact that I barely knew him, and began to think that my spring break could turn out after all.

The party we planned on attending was called "Ride the Light." All raves had catchy names like that. I was instructed to meet Tim and his friends at his house, which was about an hour drive from my place. When I got there, I met the group I would be traveling with--Joe, Jason, and Jen. I would eventually become good friends with them, although that might not be the best way to say it. We'd end up spending lots of nights together, and I would think of them as friends for a long time, but then one day I would say aloud what I had always known: "I can't trust you."

Joe was the driver that night. He had borrowed his grandfather's truck, I don't know what kind of truck exactly, but it was as dark and as shiny as the wet blacktop it was parked on. We got a late start that evening, something about a phone call, something about pills, but two hours after our set departure time, we were finally on I-70, headed towards Columbus.

The journey there was nearly a nightmare. Because of the late start, Joe felt compelled to make up for lost time. He was speeding, and I don't mean ten over the limit either. We were reaching speeds of one hundred, weaving in and out of lanes, cutting people off, even taking the shoulder to pass, I was shocked at first, and then I was scared. My heart began to pound, begging to be released from the pesky chest imprisoning it.

"God, I wish I wasn't here right now. Please get me out of this!" I was half praying, half begging. To make matters worse, I was sharing the front passenger seat with Tim who was anything but petite. It was hard to keep steady, especially since the seatbelt wouldn't fit around both of us, and I held onto his knee to keep from bouncing around. I looked at the front windshield and imagined myself flying through it.

"Someone has to tell him to slow down," I told myself. I looked to the backseat for help, but Jason and Jen were about as uneasy as an old man on a park bench; I wondered what was wrong with these people. Right about
then I saw the flashing lights. "This is it," I thought. I'm about to pass out." But I wasn't getting light-headed—we were getting pulled over by a cop.

Everyone started panicking when they heard the sirens. "Great," I thought, "now they all panic." Joe eased off the accelerator and pulled over on the side of the road.

"Where's the weed?" he asked.

"Got it covered," was Jason's response. I then saw my seat buddy, Tim, stick something in his shoe. He handed me his wallet and told me to hide it. I wanted to know why, but the police officer was approaching, so without a word, I quickly stuffed it into the large pocket of my hooded sweatshirt.

"You were going pretty fast there," was the cop's opening line. He was almost laughing when he said it. "You should know that when you drive like a bat out of hell, people with cell phones call the police. We've been waiting for you."

Then the policeman shined his flashlight on Tim and me, saying, "I'll need to see both of your I.D.'s too." He walked around to the passenger side window, and I handed him my driver's license. Tim said he didn't have his with him.

"Well, son," the cop started, "you'll need to come back to the cruiser so I can check your social security number. Step on out of your vehicle."

I remember feeling panicked, nauseous even. What did Tim put in his shoe? Why did he ask me to hide his wallet? Why was Joe speeding if he knew there were drugs in the car? I was so angry with myself for getting involved with these guys. I smelled the recklessness on them before we even left, but I ignored it. I know now that I should've just told Joe to slow down. I had that right to protect myself, to speak up, but it would be years before I digested that lesson.

The rest of us sat in the truck for ten minutes before the officer came back with Tim. He warned us to be careful, gave Joe a speeding ticket, gave Tim and me tickets for not wearing our seatbelt, and then sent us on our way. It turns out that Tim had given me his wallet to keep his license hidden. He knew he had a warrant out, and if the cop had run his social security number, he would've been taken to jail. So he gave his brother's S.S. number instead. I knew what he did was wrong, but I was happy he wasn't arrested, especially when I discovered what was in his shoe. It was enough Ecstasy to be sent to prison for a long, long time.

By this point in the night, I was really disappointed
in myself. I no longer wanted to be around these guys, but I was stuck in the situation. There would be no way home, maybe not until closing time, and if you know anything about raves, you know that they last until the early morning hours, sometimes into the next afternoon. I really didn’t want to leave the party anyway. I just felt like, had I been given the opportunity to leave, I should’ve taken it, but most likely I wouldn’t have. But since the chance to leave was only hypothetical, I decided to have as much fun as possible, while I could.

There was a massive line outside the venue when we finally reached Columbus. It was freezing, and I was glad I hadn’t left my sweatshirt in the car. Jen, a tiny little thing, was shivering. She moved up close to me for warmth, and I wrapped my arms around her to shield her from the wind. She was wearing a sleeveless top in the middle of March, but that’s the kind of thing you wear to a rave. It gets so hot inside from all the bodies, all dancing.

The minute we entered the warehouse, it was like we had landed in Oz. There was color everywhere. The laser and strobe lights traveled across our faces, distorting images. The speakers bounced to the beat of the screaming music it projected. I’d only been to a few parties before, and this was certainly the largest. We walked toward the dance floor and stood there watching, no, staring, at the breakers flip their bodies around like Olympic gymnasts. My focus turned to a girl with pink hair and a pink shirt. She was dancing with glow sticks, and they momentarily entranced me. Later I’d see her holding a pet ferret. Nearby there were girls with blue wigs and fairy wings attached to their backs. They were what you call "candy kids," easily identifiable by the massive amounts of "candy," or colorful plastic jewelry they were wearing. Then there were the mean looking guys in striped polo shirts and bandanas wrapped around their heads. They were always labeled "jaded junglists" for their cynical attitudes and love of jungle music.

You see, there are so many types of "kids" at a party. Everyone is slipped into some category according to their preference in music. Those candy kids liked happy hardcore and house music, a term coined in the 80’s by regulars at the Warehouse Club in Chicago. The polo shirt guys listen to jungle and drum-n-bass music, deeper and darker than house. They want to be acknowledged as "old school" partiers, those who have been around the scene for awhile and who like to lament about the deterioration of dance culture. It’s stupid really. It’s elitist. People pretend to like what’s in vogue just to squeeze their way into the
top realm of the raver hierarchy. It's silly, just like high school. But I didn't see that then. I wanted to fit in just like everyone else.

We'd been at the party for no more than an hour when Tim grabbed my hand and pulled me through the crowd. He took me into the "chill room," an area with couches and chairs that you could relax on after dancing. The music wasn't quite as loud in there, so it was the most convenient place to hold a conversation, although it was still necessary to lean in toward the other person to make sense of their words. I looked around the room, and saw Jen sitting on some guys lap. Tim traced my view and laughed.

"She told him it was her birthday, so that he'd give her free pills."

I was shocked that someone so small and innocent looking could be just the opposite. But all I did was laugh back at Tim's remark. I wasn't about to say what I was really thinking. Then Tim stepped in closer and said, "Are you ready to roll?"

I was not a complete stranger to rolling (rolling is just a term to describe an ecstasy high). I had taken pills twice before. The first time I didn't like it, the second time felt amazing, but I had never done ecstasy in public; it was always in a place I felt familiar with. Furthermore, I hadn't planned on ever doing it again. I was curious and experimental, but I wasn't going to become one of those kids sprawled out on the bathroom floor, grinding their teeth, and giving back rubs to strangers. However, there are times in life that we all work against our better judgment, and this was one of those times for me. So I took the pill.

Thirty minutes later I was wandering around the venue in a trance-like state. All the sights and sounds that had spoken to me in sobriety were now screaming. The music was stimulating my nerve endings, making me feel as if I was swimming through Jello. I had entered into a different dimension, a world where reality, the place where all my worries and uncertainties still lingered, became obsolete.

Despite the build-up, there is no real tragic ending to this particular event in my life. I didn't end up arrested or in the hospital that night, and neither did any of the other characters. But we don't all live happily ever after either. Tim, who couldn't hold a job and had to move in with his grandmother, went to jail three times in the two and a half years I knew him, and Jason, who fled on drug charges for dealing crystal meth, is nowhere to be found.
Jen dropped out of high school to work as a stripper, but quit when she became pregnant. Last I heard she and Joe were trying to have a relationship.

When I took that pill, my night changed. My memories of fear, disappointment, and anger had faded into the background. For years to come I would look back on that party as one of the most exciting nights of my life, and I would constantly try to recreate it. But my attempts would prove to be futile, because that night, as I wanted to remember it, didn't exist.

I wanted to remember being in total ecstasy, and I did at first, but with each rave came a new set of risks. These dangers eventually accumulated into a force that I could not deny, and I could no longer pretend that my experiences as "Ride the Light" were any different than those that followed.

Today I know that I denied that little voice in my head, that intuition, that conscience, so that I could escape the truth. I could've learned my lesson in one evening, but I decided to allow that night to be the first of many chapters in the story of my downward spiral. There would be more parties, more drugs, and more pretending I wasn't to blame, but eventually, slowly, I was able to make my way back to myself. Along the way, I began to believe that we all have our own ultimate destiny, but it is up to us to choose what path we travel, the dark or the light.
BLOOMS IN CAPTIVITY "SELF PORTRAIT"

STEPHANY R. SMITH

MIXED MEDIA

https://digitalcommons.shawnee.edu/silhouette/vol2005/iss3/1
Kimberly Crum
Brief Artist Statement for Silhouette

In the art world some work is considered fine art and some is considered pornographic. With this series I have tried to shine a light on the line that separates the two. This vague separation is what I am interested in. The paintings which I have chosen to use in this series are symbols of what fine art is historically. By using undisputed recognizable master works I have hoped to make a connection with the viewer. I then use this connection to confront the viewer with the uncomfortable nature of nudity. By altering the connection with the work the viewer may have once had, I hope to change their ideas of what fine art is. I hope to produce a more open-minded interpretation of art while convincing the viewer that art can be found in places often unexpected.

Charles Haskins
Brief Artist Statement for Silhouette

When I was approached by Kim Crum to work on what was to be her new series I was immediately interested. I had already been working with the figure in many of my own paintings and was exploring the role of the figure in my narrative works. This series gave me the opportunity to get closer to the figure and further explore its possibilities. In this collaboration both Kim and I shared the experiences of our fields and both participated in painting and photography. Our common goal was to present fine art in a place were some people refused to find fine art.
PICASSO NUDE  KIM CRUM & CHARLES HASKINS

ACRYLIC

https://digitalcommons.shawnee.edu/silhouette/vol2005/iss3/1
VAN GOGH NUDE  KIM CRUM & CHARLES HASKINS

ACRYLIC
O'KEEFE NUDE

KIM CRUM & CHARLES HASKINS

ACRYLIC

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BOXCAR TRAGEDY

CHARLES HASKINS

OIL ON BOARD

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SKY

JULIE HOECKH

DIGITAL PHOTO

https://digitalcommons.shawnee.edu/silhouette/vol2005/iss3/1
ELECTRIC PEPPER

MONICA STAFFORD

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPH HAND PAINTED

https://digitalcommons.shawnee.edu/silhouette/vol2005/iss3/1
Monica Stafford
Brief Artist Statement for Silhouette

It took a lot for me to agree to do this show. I am terribly insecure about my work and my pieces have only been seen in a few shows. So, when I was approached by Artworks to do a show on my own, I was very hesitant. I thought to myself, I have nothing to show, none of my pieces are good enough, and of course what almost every artist thinks...who would want to see my stuff.

Then it dawned on me that I should simply show what I have. I decided to go with that idea and named the show "Accumulation." The pieces displayed range from my very first photography class, projects I would do at home, and more recent ones. The only real theme of the exhibit is the growth process. The audience can see, whether it be technically or conceptually, my growth as an artist. This is a very difficult thing to display for all the public to see. I always worry what others think of the work and even what they think of me for doing it. However, everyone (including myself) eventually has to get over that. I must say that doing this show has done me a world of good. I have gone from never having done a solo exhibit and never having sold any pieces, to doing a show and selling a few works all at the same time. If anything else comes from doing this show, I hope that at least my confronting my own fears about myself and my work inspires others to do the same.
KETTLE

KIMBERLY RHOTON

STONEWARE THROWN/COIL
I wasn't there the moment my Dad died.
Dad...Dad?
God please, this isn't real.
I see you.
I see you behind me, your belt in hand.
I was wrong. Teach me.
Dad?...God please, Dad.
I see you...beside me.
My best friend.
Please Dad.
Breathe...Dad breathe!
The machines aren't enough Dad, do it!
You have to do it
You can't do it
Can you?
It's me Dad, remember?
Please Dad do it
Inhale...exhale...
Your eyes look at me so heavy
"Let me go, son, I'm ready"
"Let me go"
No I can't! Remember? Remember Dad?
"Yes, I remember...but my time has drawn..."
No! No Dad! No time! Nothing has drawn!
Inhale...exhale...
"Son let me go..."
Please Dad
Can't you stay for me?
"I wish I could..."
Please Dad do it. Please?
"I wish I could..."
I wasn't there.
Please forgive me.
I only want to hear you.
Tell me what's wrong.
Anything...I'll fix it Dad, anything.
Breathe Dad...Please breathe!
We don't want you to go.
Stay with us.
Stay with me.
Please Dad stay with me.
It's your son Dad... please Dad breathe
Your oldest son, don't let me go.
Please Dad don't let me go.
Take my hand.
Take my anything.
I would give it all for you to stay.
I love you so much
Don't go
Don't go
Dad
Dad?
Oh God Dad no
No!
I
I love you
So much
Please don't leave me
Dad?
Dad!
I'll go on
Only because I have to
You'll be proud
On my word
You'll be proud
God only knows how much I miss you
How much I need you
How much I want you back
Dad?
Daddy?
I would give anything
If you would just breathe.
I can tell you what it is not:

No, I can't.

Two human forms
Lots of it.

For years, I thought I knew—could cast a spell by blinking a battered lash.

How cruel of him to fool me! The lush! Melting slush puppies 6 years old
My father's treat to end the school day. He could not buy me. Even the bleach
Could not reach deep enough under my scalp to burn the dead out. Yet I was
Pretty. They told me so. Practicing piano, x-mas songs keyed slow & steady,
Steady & slow. How the hell was I to know that the music, too, refused to go?
Yet Father, he went (only after he sent scrolls of curses, curses my way. "Every
Dog has its day," he used to say. When he left, I forgot how to pray.) Pastor
Said I wore too much black, and coerced others off God's chosen path. I did it
For the devil, for the rebel, for Hell. All things considered, I did it quite swell.
Even now, my teachers pat me on the congratulatory back. If they only listened
Closely, to what I lack, ack, ck. I tell you, they would hear my heart crack.

So this is love.
To The Ladies I've Known In The Biblical Sense
Justin R. Isaac

I fondly remember my first love Eve
And her delicious forbidden fruit.
She gave true knowledge of the world I know now.
To bad at the time I was such a brute.

Next came the Philistine, Delilah,
Be she only loved me for my hair.
After they cut it off.
Like the others she was never there.

Oh yes, my dear Bathsheba,
Now she really made me cry.
I looked twice as I saw her bath
It's her own fault I sent her husband to die.

I've tried to forget about you Jezebel.
You vindictive little bitch.
Always seeking a new idol,
You forgot about me you heathen witch.

Finally I come to you my Mary Magdalene.
You were always my favorite little whore.
But then you had to go and become a saint,
And being with you became such a bore.

To those ladies I've loved in a Biblical sense,
If you wonder how I'll survive, only time will tell.
Thanks for the memories, both the bad and the good.
And to most of you, I'll see you in Hell.
Deep Red

Derek Dawson

The drums were pounding from underground
albino monkeys dance to the sound
the temples falter and fall together
all arches crumble; they’re gone forever
so lest we stumble it’s best we grow
and let the kingdoms glean what we know
the final hours all come together
where all the creatures lose communication

Disgusting scene as the snakes all spit
they writhe and snap in their hissing fits
and loose the venom into the maidens
a sacrifice to the gods we sadden
and understanding becomes a martyr
a lamb we give freely to slaughter
we crumble now as ignorance grows
the deities, enraged, bring closure

The reasonable stature of the echo
becomes a swan on the placid surface
lake and bird so tranquil together
combined so well, water and feather
then thunder rumbles and hardship flows
wreaking havoc upon the enigmatic couple
flight ensues to escape the tumult
but all in vain; escape is a sore illusion

The final hours all come together
(we crumble now as ignorance grows)
where all the creatures lose communication
(the deities, enraged, bring closure)
flight ensues to escape the tumult
(but all in vain, escape is a sore illusion)
deep red comes forth in the final hours
(roaming freely to see what it may)
I carved your name into my thigh
   And said a prayer.
That was all it took. I was yours.
All of a sudden, I had a name,
Good family, respectable friends.

You wrote me off like a bad check,
Accidentally brushing against the cashier's hand
As she took it. Soft. White. Cherry.

Now the amputation must begin.

*I am back.*
Invoke the dead in me to rise.
I've a bone to pick with you, Master.

Your death shall be my Spring,
And the humming of my wings
Shall lull me into the pit of your nightmares.
Floras

Scrambling back to my childhood,
I see that you are missing.

I was just as empty then as now,
Just as childless and barren

Yet something has changed.
I could not choose him to begin with-

Back then, I was merely a product
Of a lineage that couldn't decipher me.

Yet now, after plucking you up and
Out of the ground like an oleander,

I see that the path home is never-ending.
I can find no water glass to save you.
KAYLA'S #14 MONICA STAFFORD

PHOTOGRAPH

Published by Digital Commons @ Shawnee State University, 2005
FEELING FAT AS A COW  MONICA STAFFORD

PHOTOGRAPH

https://digitalcommons.shawnee.edu/silhouette/vol2005/iss3/1
MAMAW DORIS
MONICA STAFFORD

PHOTO COLLAGE

Published by Digital Commons @ Shawnee State University, 2005
THE SMOKERS

JAMIE OBERSCHLAKE

WOODCUT
UNTITLED

BARBARA MURDOCK

PHOTOGRAPH

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From the hate i hold inside
To the hate masked in pride

Now...
My future path is nothing but a narrow road of Destruction

With two displayed paths of life I'll always choose the same
Consumed by rage, I get lost in dreams but can't lose this Hate!
I rule my fate with an Iron fist I'll smash through ya face!!
take 2 inch blades, touch ya neck and hope ya flinch a spec
I'll rip the flesh from the lips of the fuckin Kiss of Death!
Im sick of stressin bout living without ol gods gift of breath
I once heard a voice of reason and choked that bitch to death!
I'll kill the best wit precision of Prophets living blessed
U disrespect, Ill grip ya neck til ya spine's disintegratin
then give respects when u lowered ya final destination
my Minds so full of hate it bursts on the first to add to it!
Ill grab and stab students jus to teach em to not act stupid!!
kidnap 2 kids, in the trunk jus to say in the backs two 10's
so step back fool this game of life might just attack u kid
I've only had one truly bad job in my life, and I recommend, when presented with the choice between a good job and a bad job, you take the good one. There is, however, something to be said about a bad job. For three months, I worked behind a cash register at a movie theatre selling popcorn and candy and soda. Sometimes I sold tickets, sometimes I ripped tickets, but I was usually behind the concession. Each time someone approached the counter, I would say, “Hello, welcome to the Sony Loews Beaver Valley Cinema Six. Can I interest you in a super combo? That is a large popcorn and a large soda for only six dollars and fifty cents, which is a savings of one dollar. And, of course, there are free refills on both the large soda and the large popcorn.”

(Incidentally, if you just bought two adult tickets and paid with a twenty, you had exactly six dollars and fifty cents in your hand. And that designed to look purely coincidental. Most people thought it was.) I said this to every customer.

Hello, welcome to the Sony Loews Beaver Valley Cinema Six. Can I interest you in a super combo? That is a large popcorn and a large soda for only six dollars and fifty cents, which is a savings of one dollar. And, of course, there are free refills on both the large soda and the large popcorn.

And while complaining about the outrageous price and unnecessary and impractical excess of free refills at a movie theatre, the customer usually bought one. One woman, while handing me the six dollars and fifty cents in her hand, asked me how I could sleep at night.

But there is something pure and something revolting about working behind a cash register. It
must be the opposite of what people who work at the national mint feel every day or however often money is printed. They must feel like money is clean and full of potential, like a child just starting school. The money I saw and felt and took was dirty and ravaged, like a recent graduate caked with mud and substance abuse problems.

My misplaced friend Dan once told me that you couldn't be a liberal unless you have spent time behind a cash register. I thought this was a good idea. And like any good idea it isn't entirely true. There is some truth in it, but it is more honest than true. And of course, there is a huge difference between truth and honesty.

He said it and I liked it because it made us feel better about ourselves. We were both teaching assistants/grad students at a school that received sizable donations from NCR. And while I was naively trying to turn all of my students into friends, Dan was frantically trying to turn his into lovers. And we heard from our new friends and lovers the pains and sorrows of pulling together tuition money from part-time jobs and grim reaper loans. And we nodded understandingly, but we weren't paying tuition, and we both felt like heretics. We pseudo-confessed this to each other. And we saw our new friends and lovers standing in bursar lines while we walked past them to the grad office to turn in our tuition waivers. We bypassed that college cash register, so we would often need to remind ourselves of bygone days of retail, and say things like "you couldn't be a liberal unless you have spent some time behind a cash register." This let us feel like we had put in our worker time, giving us the necessary experience, and put in our higher education time, giving us supplemental intellectual perspective.

But Dan was being honest, and there really is
something about working behind a cash register that ust sinks into you. You see it, and you get it, and it either drives you away or pulls you down.

There is a young woman who works at this little gas station that I frequent. She looks young. She looks like she probably can't even drive yet. And yet she is in charge of these gas pumps and the credit card charges and the cash register. And she does it all while chatting with the customers in this matured, slightly worn out way. The cash register has aged her, and I hope she gets an opportunity to take a long break away from it because working behind a cash register is like giving blood. It is painful, yet useful, and if you do it for too long, it can kill you.

Recklessly Conservative Justin R. Isaac

They are diseased those who choose to abstain from the pleasure of this life. Ironic, they are the lepers of the modern world, "CLEAN!" their warning to the wayward. They are the undesirables, outcasts, and pariahs who live their moderate lives excessively. Prodigal lives with prodigal hopes, prodigal souls with prodigal dreams.
The Kiss

Taryn Malone

Archie Bunker would certainly disapprove:
What with that passionate embrace
Of blind bodies roaming the plains.

All of a sudden the lights fade
And I can't remember my name
Your breath is all that steadies me.

On tiptoes, my limbs entwine themselves
So that nothing remains divided.
I cannot speak with your hands

Mumbling spells about my waist.
Now don't pull away so!
Press your centre blade into me

I can feel it growing keener
With each palpable lip-pulse.
For a moment, I preserve you

Like a four-leaf clover between pulp.
Your salty soul congeals in my mouth.
Small babies bubble in my throat

And I turn to gold-you girl,
My lord. I see cakes and rings
And vows. Lots of shiny things.

The place spins as we come undone.
I can hardly make out anything but your eyes-
Brown, hungry, brilliant pools.

In their reflection, Fate bounds toward me
Like an infant's blonde wail in the night
HE SILHOUETTE IS DEDICATED TO CELEBRATING THE ART AND IDEAS OF THE STUDENTS AND FACULTY OF SHAWNEE STATE UNIVERSITY AND OF THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE. WE WELCOME SUBMISSIONS OF ART, POETRY AND PROSE.

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