



Colours 1998

PN
45
C656
1998

CORETTE LIBRARY CARROLL COLLEGE



3 5962 00112 251

From the Editors

What we have learned from being editors of Colours:

1. Spell Check does not accept our spelling of Colours.
2. The British accept our spelling of Colours, but probably not our style of writing.
3. When posting mono-word posters around campus be prepared for fallout.
4. No matter how clever you try to be in calling for submissions, you still have to twist arms.
5. Deadlines are always determinedly and vigorously ignored, even by the editors.
6. Some of the best writers have no clue about the meaning of deadlines.
7. When agreeing to be a co-editor, being best friends makes it so much easier.
8. Mental telepathy is a plus.
9. (Wait a minute, Kate, I was going to say that.)
10. English professors really are human, they just learn to hide it well. (Just kidding.)

All kidding aside, this semester has been an interesting journey. We know, "interesting" is vague, but you really don't want us to go into detail. Our vision of Colours has changed over the year. Last year, Rob passed the editorial baton after working to establish Colours as a recognized literary entity. He achieved his goal of receiving more submissions than he could use.

This year, we wanted to refine Colours and to proceed in furthering the quality of Carroll's only literary magazine. To this purpose, Colours will be sold rather than freely distributed as in the past. Our goal is to establish our literary magazine as a respectable equal to other college publications. The selections reflect this goal in this 1998 edition of Colours.

There are many talented writers and poets from various departments. One of our featured writers is a Biology major and the other is an English/Psychology major. We believe that fine writing is not bound by the body of scholastic emphasis, but is freed by the soul of the human imagination. Our cover, aptly named "The River," by Nicole Karwhite, reflects this belief.

We would like to thank all of our contributors, our advisor, Jeff Morris, Ed Noonan, Mary Pullen of Neighborhood Office, and Patty Bohrman. We now pass the above mentioned literary baton to next year's editors with our best wishes.

Kate Ferrie

And

Annette "Charli" Mills

Co-editors

*Helena, Montana
1998*

CORETTE LIBRARY CARROLL COLLEGE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Kenai by Katie Laughlin.....	1
Echocardiogram: Conversations with the Heart by Katie Laughlin.....	3
Cross Over by Carolyn Sobczak.....	5
Untitled by R W T.....	10
Tone Deaf Dad by Doug Tooke.....	11
Denial and the Metaphysical Explanation of a Boy and his Depression by D. Tooke.....	12
Ruffed Grouse in Winter by Cathi Burgoyne.....	13
1968 by Cathi Burgoyne.....	14
A Penny's Worth of Friendship by Toni Simon.....	15
Beautiful Woman Number Four by Phil Cohea.....	16
Tobbits, by the Bedside by Phil Cohea.....	17
You Give Yourself Away by Carli Russell.....	18
Between Father and Son by Annette Mills.....	20
Kindred by Claire Munson.....	21
Through a Glass Darkly by Kate Ferrie.....	23
Forever Woven by April Wendt.....	25

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Katie Laughlin, a sophomore Biology student, is our featured choice in the category of poetry. Katie originally hails from Spokane, and her family now resides in Anchorage, Alaska. She is from a family of six including her brother Matt, who is also a fellow student. Although Katie is a talented poet, she credits Lorna Milne's Poetry class for fine-tuning the poetry she submitted to Colours. We hope you enjoy Katie's two poems as much as we did.

The Kenai

Katie Laughlin

Alaska, a blunt place
Blackens your eye
Kicks breath from your gut
Grinds knuckles into the dirt.
Spits.
Seizes the cruel softness of your arm
and asks, "What the hell are you doing here?"

Pressed between ocean and mountain range,
both willing to claim you, dissolve you.
Steps begin to falter, arms ache,
back punishes. Legs rebel

But if you cling—like frost on boot tips
If you clench your teeth like the
wind grips your body
Scream, screech, stab back

If you fight, demand acceptance,
Cut your teeth on rock
Spill blood on his soil
roughen skin on bark,
bind limbs to surfaces,

He will soften—reveal secrets
like the underbelly of salmon
yields to the hand who guts her.

Pull them apart. Suck still-warm
juices between your teeth
Roll flesh on your tongue
Savor nights of sun,
Days of stars.
Find life on a grass tussock
high above the Turn-Again Arm.

Take the land as a lover,
make him yours
Feel your way to the story,
how every moment leads you to this exact place.

Echocardiogram: Conversations with the Heart

Katie Laughlin

I am trying to be brave as
I sit in this cold sterile room while
a permed technician runs her steel wand
over my exposed breast.

It does not belong there,
nor do I belong in this hospital,
in Alaska, in fear.

My mother's hand rests on
the curve of my bare ankle
to keep me from crying.
I am the indifferent one, not like
my sister who lays herself out on
the kitchen table as if we could eat
her suffering. Rid her of it.

I barely recognize my own tremors
inside, much less drag them forth
for another, like the image of my
heart on the screen before me—beating
terror and exhaustion against my temple.

I bite the inside of my cheek,
through the red comes realization
My heart swells gray and white—amidst
the rush-hour traffic of my veins,
the thump of my valves—I hear the whisper.
“I am afraid,” my heart tells me.
“I am sorry, I did not know,” I breathe back.

Staring at the ceiling, cold gel
oozing to the plastic skin of the table,
I find I fear this wild harsh land
as much as I fear my time spent away from it.
Like my heart, I know it may break me.
Like my heart, I know I must embrace it.

The room empties—they leave me to dress
with the stilled image of my heart beside me.
My throat tightens, but I do not cry,
I need this time without interruptions
I rest my hand on my chest,

Once, years ago, I placed my palm
on my mother's ripened stomach.
The movements inside are the same:

Pulses of life, halting, deciding.
Cocooned in blankets of flesh, these
hesitations demand strength through their fragility.

I bear down, birthing fear,
claim it as mine, hold it to
my breast and nourish it.
The fear comes from me,
awakens me to myself.

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Carolyn Sobczak is our featured writer in the category of prose. Carolyn is a junior English/Psychology major, who will be one of the co-editors for Colours next year. Thankfully, the following story is a work of fiction, but Carolyn masters the skill of employing realistic detail. This story is the final result of her work in Dr. Ron Stottlemyer's Fiction Writing course. Grab a box of Kleenex, this one is a tear-jerker.

CROSS OVER

Carolyn Sobczak

I sulked at the kitchen table, looking out the sliding glass door. Outside it was another brilliant Colorado sunset. Blue sky melted into swirls of creamy lilac and apricot. Flaming magenta and yellow streaks rested on the peaks of the Rocky Mountains. Our crotchety neighbor across the street used to complain that it was Denver's pollution that makes the sunsets so remarkable, but I always thought it was God's way of celebrating the peacefulness of nightfall.

A cottony white cloud sat against the colorful backdrop, and a shaft of white light shone through it, illuminating a distant valley. All of that miraculous splendor in my back yard wasted, because I had to sit inside with my parents discussing sex.

I turned back to the table where Mom was already seated. Dad stood at the sink pouring a bottle of his original home-brew, which he named "Mea Gulpa," into a frosty mug he had grabbed from the freezer. He held the glass at eye-level, then took a long sip.

"Perfect."

"Dad, can you just sit down so we can get this over with?"

"Just a minute, Lee. You know how I love my beer."

"Come on, this is dumb. I already know everything about reproduction from school."

Mom shook her head at me, then looked over at Dad who had finally joined us.

"We know, Honey, we just want you to know that there are other things that go with sex. Things like virginity."

I rolled my eyes at him and Mom spoke up. "LeeAnn, your virginity is something precious. It's like a gift—a special gift that can be given only once. It should be given to someone who appreciates it and realizes the power in it."

"Your mother's right, Lee. That someone should be your husband. That someone *had better be* your husband. The Catholic Church doesn't tolerate premarital sex, and neither will we. If you're going to be a respectable person, you should wait until you're married."

I didn't really know what to say, so I just nodded at them.

"You may think we're being old fogies about this, but when you're older, you'll be glad we had this talk," Dad finished.

Being eleven, all of this was easy to accept.

However, as I made my way through Columbine High School and a long list of failed relationships, it became increasingly difficult to come to decide how I felt about sex. I learned something about making out from each guy I dated—what was good, what was bad, and that they'd break up with you if you wouldn't go all the way. My senior year in high school, I almost gave in.

Brian Colson and I had been together a couple months when he started hinting that we should do it. The hinting turned to pressuring, and he told me that there were a hundred other girls

who'd die to take my place. After all, he was the blonde and totally built captain of the soccer team. I loved him, but I knew I could easily lose him. So I decided it was time. I told him that the next night would be *the night*. He kissed me smiling, and said, "That's my girl."

I was so nervous the next day that I found myself in our church, the one place that could always calm my nerves. It was just down the street from my house, and I had made my first communion there when I was six. I'd go there and sit in the deserted worship space for hours.

It was a modern church, big and white with tall, smooth columns and lots of windows. Instead of pews we had wooden folding chairs that were padded with thick teal material. The altar was constructed of wood platforms that could be rearranged for different celebrations and ceremonies. Our church didn't have any stained glass, but someone would always donate a few arrangements of the season's most colorful flowers to line the altar. That morning there were daffodils and purple tulips.

I sat in the fourth row, my eyes closed; was I was making the right decision? The silence crept into my limbs and my heart slowed down. I focused on the faint sound of water trickling in the font of holy water in the vestibule. I thought of my parents. Mom would be disappointed if I had sex, and Dad would be outraged.

I remembered when I was five, my father sitting on the edge of my bed reading me *Sleeping Beauty* or *Snow White*. He would smooth my pale brown hair from my forehead and say, "Someday, LeeAnn, you'll find a prince, too." He'd kiss me goodnight, turn off the lights, and leave me to dream of handsome men on charging white horses.

I was their little girl, but I'd have to grow up sometime. I gazed at the crucifix, then down at my palms. I could wait.

Brian was, of course, pissed—he had bought a new box of condoms just for me, and bribed his parents out of the house for the night. We sat on his couch arguing.

"You are such a goddamn tease, Lee! We do everything but have sex, then you want to have sex, then you back out! Do you know what that does to a guy?!"

"I know, Bri, but I just don't want to anymore. I've changed my mind, and that's going to have to be okay with you."

"Well, it's not. We're through."

Needless to say, my heart hurt -- physically. I stood up and left without another word. Driving home I managed to find a somebody-done-somebody-wrong song on every station I flipped to. Would there ever be a man willing to wait for me?

I stayed in state for college. Colorado State University was only ninety minutes from Lakewood, so I could go home whenever I wanted to. At college, it was the same story; the only difference was that my girl friends started pressuring me to have sex, too. None of my college friends were virgins. When we first talked about it and I told them I was waiting for a man who would want me forever, they laughed and asked why I didn't want to "try a few out first." I told them what my parents had taught, but they insisted that I start making my own decisions and do what I felt was right at the right time. It started to sound good to me, this concept of doing what felt right, but some of the girls' conversations scared me.

The topic of sex would come up, at least weekly, and I'd listen to everyone's stories—fears of being pregnant or having a disease, regrets of waking up with a stranger after a night of drunkenness, or who had done it the most times. At some point I was always made fun of for being a virgin. Someone would say something like, "You must be the last virgin living in this dorm." I would just smile and laugh with them, never showing my pain, but a part of me was

proud that I still had this special gift to give, and that I didn't have any of their worries.

Then my third year at school I met Tyler Morgansen. After all those years, he was the one who finally swept me off my feet, just like Dad had told me someone would. I was on my usual route through the Student Union when he grabbed my hand, pulled me aside, and touched my cheek. "You have the sweetest smile of anyone I've ever met. Would you have dinner with me?"

What could I say to someone so sincere? His honey-colored eyes were pleading, and he had the cutest dimples as he begged me for a date. I agreed to meet him at The Sink, a local pizza place where all the college kids hung out. We figured out in the first two minutes of our date that our homes were only two minutes apart.

"Where are you from?" Ty asked.

"Lakewood."

"Are you serious? What high school?"

"Columbine, why? Where are you from?"

"Bear Creek! We kicked your ass three years ago at State football," he shouted.

"God, leave it to me to meet a big football fan from our old rival school—you didn't play, did you?"

"What, I don't look like a football player? I'm offended." He pouted at me then gave me that incredible smile, complete with dimples. I melted.

We started spending our weekends together, and meeting for lunch. Sometimes he'd call me late at night just to say, "I finished my paper, so I wanted to call and say goodnight." One time he told me not to lose any more weight. Me, the girl who always wore baggy jeans and sweatshirts to hide my pudginess—don't lose any more weight? I almost wept.

For Spring Break we both went home, which meant that we saw a lot of each other, especially at the lake that separated our neighborhoods. A few evenings we met for a picnic and took long walks and he told me he loved me. We met each other's parents. My mom absolutely adored Ty, and my dad told him he could come over any time for a beer.

The semester ended and we both had jobs at home, but that summer was the best time of my life. We spent some days at the amusement park, or biking in the foothills. In the evenings we went dancing at Club Vertigo, or to see Shakespeare in the Park. We even went to see 10,000 Maniacs in concert, even though Ty wasn't their number one fan.

Some nights we just sat down by the lake watching the sunset and the stars appear in the darkening sky. One time, Ty took my face in his hands, tucked a loose strand of hair behind my ear, and just looked at me. Eventually he leaned forward and kissed me softly. I was caught up in the warm, sporty scent of his cologne, the feel of his fingers on my neck, on my back. He nibbled at my ear, and sighed against my neck, making my whole body dizzy with goosebumps... We got carried away, but we stopped before things got out of control. Ty never minded that I was still a virgin and waiting for marriage.

One evening we were sitting on a little dock down at the lake watching the ducks when he took my hand and told me how much he loved me.

"LeeAnn, you are the light and the goodness in my heart. You're the only woman I want. Will you marry me?"

I put my arms around him and just held on—nothing would make me happier.

Later that week I went down to the lake for a run. The path was lit by the moon, and I had to swat mosquitoes from my face. I stopped to catch my breath and watch the ducks eating, their heads searching under the water. A breeze blew across my neck, and the ducks took off

squawking across the pond.

A hand reached around me and clamped down on my mouth, and I was pulled tightly against someone by my waist. I tried to scream, but the hand pressed tighter against my face. It was rough and callused and reeked of gasoline. It was too dark to tell, but I could imagine the black grease underneath the fingernails. I tried to lunge forward, but the hand around my waist jerked me back.

A voice hissed against my ear, “Don't even think about screaming or you're dead.” There were other rustlings behind me. Another set of hands swiftly wrapped tape around my wrists. I was thrown on the ground, and I got my first look—there were two of them. The one who had taped me up went to stand guard further down the path. The one standing over me wore combat boots and camouflaged pants, but he was shirtless. He wore a black ski mask, and his exposed eyes and mouth glowed ghastly white in the moonshine. He stood straddling me, undoing his pants. I made a slight move to get up, and he kicked my hip. “What did I tell you, bitch?!”

He dropped down over me, kneeling. He ripped my T-shirt open, and gazed down at my sports bra. My heart was beating huge in my chest. I tried to scream, but the lump in my throat weakened it to a gurgle. From his boot he whipped out a butterfly knife and went through the fluid motions of opening it. I pictured myself mangled and cut up, blood soaking into the dirt and weeds around me, my parents finding me. How could this be happening?

He held the knife over my chest and plunged. My heart stopped in that instant, but I wasn't dead—he had only sliced through my bra, and my breasts were now exposed. He shoved my taped hands over my head, making my back arch. He yanked my shorts down and lowered his body over me. Why was I, a virgin, being raped? I thought I would vomit.

“You know what we do to whores like you, don't you. We give you exactly what you want. Yeah, I can see it in your eyes. Don't you worry—Big Jim's gonna give you what you want.”

When he entered me, my body screamed. The searing burn tore me apart, wouldn't end, and I hoped I would pass out. With each thrust I could smell his sour breath, feel the moistness of it against my face. He was kissing me, shoving his raspy tongue between my lips, his saliva running down my chin. My stomach lurched and twisted, and I gagged as he forced his tongue further into my mouth. He kept pumping, harder and deeper, smashing himself into me until he could go no further.

I squeezed my eyes shut, trying to pretend this wasn't happening. Behind my eyelids were shooting stars—stars that soared and shrieked and exploded into white light, then red. My world faded to black. I didn't realize I was crying until the breeze made my tears cold on my temples. I opened my eyes. The stars above were dim, but the moon was still alive.

He was still on me, heaving and sweating. The muscles in his chest were tensed, and up close I could see a tattoo. On the skin right above his heart was a black crow with a white rose entwined in its beak.

The heaving stopped. He sat back on his heels and the pressure inside me eased somewhat. The cool air rushed against the exposed flesh between my legs. He raised his fist and slammed it into my face. Blood spilled out my nose and I struggled to breathe. He watched me gasp for air. Before I could scream, I was punched again in the jaw.

He stood up and zipped his pants. “You happy now, you little whore.”

I crumpled onto my side in a fetal position.

“Hey Griz, it's your turn with her!”

“Nah, forget it man! I hear someone coming—let's get outta here!”

Big Jim looked at me one last time, then kicked me twice in the stomach. With his second kick I heard the snapping inside my chest. I could hardly breathe. The flaming rawness between my legs spread out to my limbs. My underwear felt wet and sticky, my stomach lurched again. Trails of blood from my nose and jaw cooled and dried on the side of my face. The world spun before me, half sky, half earth. Stars were swirling again, and I had to concentrate on taking in and letting out each breath.

My eyes focused on the drying blades of grass that grew from the parched soil in front of me. The blades blurred into the pillars of the church where I had made my first communion. I saw myself wearing the wreath of ribbons and delicate white flowers in my pale brown hair. My white tights sagged around my knees and ankles, and one of my white Mary Janes was scuffed. I stood, in my dainty white dress, gazing up at the crucifix, promising to wait.

Untitled

By R W T

The banality of my life seems
so true to the purpose of my existence
Yet with strong will composure I
begin my legacy without knowledge of the end.
I search my heart for the mystery
which seems to elude every man in time.
Sorrow, sadness, death at every turn,
but the mystery still remains.

I wander aimlessly for the answers to my existence
and fight the truth of my purpose.
Who for am I to turn as the struggle
seems so helpless?

The touch of another opens my heart to the answers
and the horrible truth reveals.
I am caught in the never-ending circle
of the past; I hold firm.
My heart is torn at the truth,
but the vestige still remains
Willing the pieces together, strength
exudes from every pore with radiant glory.

Graven in my soul are
the hearts of those before.
My plight is that of those before
and those would will sustain.
As my beginning was my end,
so is my ending my beginning.
The answers and truths unfold in the
circle, the unsolvable mystery stands firm.
It holds true in every heart of every
man who has befallen this plight.
For there is no greater mystery than
a man's love for his country.
It is the most terrible beauty of all.

Tone Deaf Dad

Doug Tooke

Dead beat on a couch
A dad because he indulged
Sitting down
Get a beer, and another
Get a life, a wife, and a knife in your back

He lost his dance in a High School parking lot
To many fights
Not enough friends
Not enough damn love

He kinda shoulda sorta woulda,
But he didn't
His story is getting closer to the end
Nothing seemed to "work out."

Work out
He works out when he hits his kid
And jacks up his car
Life is as stale as last week's bread
Function is television
Senses are drunk

Why children?
What did he think that he could give?
"...beatings, bruises, and broken hearts,"
He says.

He says nothing
He does nothing
Representing the appendix of society
The unwrapped empty gift
I don't understand his presence
I seem to have misplaced his purpose

His beat is dead
And his couch is his home.

**Denial and the Metaphysical Explanation
of a Boy and his Depression.**

Doug Tooke

I walk down the sidewalk with my fist clinched because I am cold,
not because you dumped me.

Ruffed Grouse in Winter

Cathi Burgoyne

World of wintry, stilled woodland—
Ivory snow flakes feather downward
Curtaining the air in sheer drapery.
Remnants of summer cling
To barren limbs of brush and willow.
Aspen shimmer in ghostly pause.

Look closely, cradled by boughs
Against the white backdrop,
Grayish brown fluff of feathers
Expand to contain warmth.
Take to tree tops, forage on buds
And twigs—winter fare.

He, she face each other—
He with ruff of black erectile feathers;
Her more subtle. Fans for tails,
Banded by black. Speckled they are,
Mottled disguise for secret retreat,
Huddled against the storm.

Quiet now, not the drummer is he—
No bup...bup...bup...bup...up...rrr
Resounding up the draw.
No flaunting, flashing, strutting his
Resplendent plumage. For her, no buffy,
Speckled eggs sheltered in depression of forest floor.

Later they will spring from brushy
Woodland without warning. For now,
Soft murmur, days of shadow.

1968

Cathi Burgoyne

January—newlyweds,
Veteran groom. February—
News screams, Vietnamese
Lunar New Year, Tet Offensive
Terrorizes buddies left behind.

March—Bobby for president.
The peace speech—in a dank,
Dismal bar in Morro Bay the
Radio blares, Johnson won't run.
Jaded warriors hoot.

April—Martin Luther King Jr.,
Hope for interracial harmony,
Dead by a bigot's bullet in Memphis.
Despair sparks furious fires,
Grief spills through city streets.

June -- Sirhan Bishara Sirhan
Ends the race. Casket in St. Pat's
Cathedral. Pageantry of funeral train,
Rumbling toward Washington.
Mourning for the masses.

August—Chicago Eight,
Diverted by hallucinatory drugs,
Raucous rioters disrupt
Democratic National Convention
Mix absurdity with violence.

November—Nixon wins...
Secrecy, suspicion, dishonesty
Signs of the times.
Despondency permeates our souls
Youth of America disillusioned.

1968

A Penny's Worth of Friendship

Toni Simon

There you were on the path of my life
Glistening like a new penny in the sunlight
Beckoning to me like a treasure
And we sat for hours and talked about life and friendship

You had been everywhere recently
I had been no where in a long time
I saw a different world through your eyes
You saw a different kind of life through mine

Like new blossoms breaking forth in Spring
Our friendship has flourished and grown
Nurtured by caring, sharing and living
Guided by faith in something grander than ourselves

Now as I continue down the path of my life
Your friendship continues to shine like a new penny
It is a treasure I have found and I am lucky
To call you friend.

Beautiful Woman Number Four

Phil Cohea

The frivolous car of midgetary design
makes no sense around you seriously
en route to work, en route bitterly
in the car he left when he left you behind.
I remember he pinched you waiting in line
at Safeway. I saw your buttocks differently,
cupped in soft palms caressingly.
There is no sun at your desk. They've closed the blinds.
Bright yellow is wrong for you. You're not canary quick.
Your choice of clothes, the color of earth, depict
you otherwise. When sad you eat. When bored
you drive hard roads. You fill your job
and act as though it's fine to be ignored,
that you never sat there quietly and sobbed.

Tobbits, by the Bedside

Phil Cohea

Keats always left a sonnet by the bed.
(Well, not every bed of course, just those
in which he woke up grateful in repose).
I lit up a cigarette instead,
spoke in yankee slang too loud, then fled.
For Keats a poem was likely as a rose,
natural, easily composed
and flourished everywhere he visited.
Lucky him, he was a bloomin' man
and slept in verse-yielding places where
muses were ever-present in the air.
I still wake up the way I always felt.
I still wake up a blunt american,
or even worse, an irrepressible Celt.

You Give Yourself Away

Carli Russell

You try to hide your feelings for me,
we're just best friends you say
but with every longing glance,
you give yourself away.

You say it will never work,
although maybe we could try someday
but when you blurt out, "I need you,"
you give yourself away.

Your feelings are as deep as the ocean,
but you try to keep them at bay
you can't help but radiate,
you give yourself away.

You ask me how I feel for you,
what my feelings are today
you beam when I say, "I love you,"
you give yourself away.

You get so nervous every time we meet,
your mind goes blank, your thoughts astray
struggling to find the right words,
you give yourself away.

You and I sit together,
I slide my hand into yours and your eyes dart away
I can feel your hands tremble,
you give yourself away.

You can't look up at me,
your blue eyes have turned a misty gray
I can see your bashfulness,
you give yourself away.

You try to deny your feelings for me,
you say it would never work anyway.
But I can see right through you
you give yourself away.

You get scared when other men show interest,
so afraid I won't stay
desperate to keep my love,
you give yourself away.

Your emotions overwhelm you,
as today builds upon yesterday
you confess, "I'm in love with you,"
you give yourself away.

You try to hide all that you feel,
but I can always easily see through your display
because baby
you give yourself away.

BETWEEN FATHER AND SON

Annette Mills

The following is an excerpt from a novel, started by my grandfather. He was so excited about this collaboration and pleased with the early results. I will cherish his feelings as I finish our project...alone. My grandfather passed away in January. In memory of Grampa Sonny, I dedicate this excerpt to Grandma Donna.

Saddle leather creaked as Ham Gray stood in the stirrups scanning the horizon. A basin unfolded beneath the knoll that horse and rider occupied. This look-out point rose above crisp autumn grass and pungent sagebrush that stretched like gold and silver toward dim, purple mountains. Dry washes gouged through layers of sun-tempered sand. It is land carved by water, only passing through never stopping for long. Scarred and dry, the land still fed range cattle, and water could be pumped from ancient pockets beneath the surface. The basin dipped and rolled for five miles between the old cowboy and Hwy. 95. Jackrabbits dashed from brush to brush kicking up sprays of sand as Ham searched the muted hues of the landscape for any telling sign of black.

The summer range of the Circle C ranch still hid forty heifers. Black Angus. Slabs of prime rib destined for the casinos south of Hearn County, Oregon. For most of his fifty-seven years Ham had systematically combed 5,000 acres of this high-desert cattle range. He knew so well this piece of high-mountain desert Nevada forgot to claim; part of the Great Basin cut-off by straight lines on a map. Oregon really began further north, by the town of Burns, where timber built communities. Ham supposed it would have made the Nevada border crooked to include this bump-out of land. No casinos here, but plenty of antelope to the west, fishing to the north, and mule deer in the mountains behind the ranch headquarters. And shiny cars passing through on Hwy. 95: gamblers, womanizers, old folks in busses seeking loose slots and company.

Ham spied something black, squinting to define a shape. It seemed tiny in the distance, between a ramshackle shed and a rutted dirt road. It could be a cow, but the black object didn't move. Ham shook his head. "Dead cows don't bring a price at the feed-lot on Wednesdays," he said to his horse. He nudged his mount with worn boot-heels and they lumbered off the knoll, in no hurry to beat the vultures.

Morning sun glimmered on the black object. Ham approached it with leathery wrinkles frowning across his face. "Black hide don't shine," he thought. His horse shied, but didn't snort. No odor, just a bag. A large garbage bag, and Ham cussed, "Damned tourists anyhow. Why don't they just dump their crap in Nevada along with their life-savings?" Yet, it was an unusual bag, long with tough-as-hide plastic. Maybe even vinyl. Ham swung a long, skinny leg over the cantle and eased himself off his horse. He pulled the reins over the horse's pricked ears and dropped them on the ground, confident the horse would stay. He had trained his sorrel well.

The bag felt full, heavy, as Ham poked at it with his boot. A lost piece of luggage, he figured. "Maybe it was too big to haul all the way to the casinos. An idiot makin' room for his riches," he thought. Ham noticed the heavy zipper, like on a good Carhart jacket. It wrapped around both sides of the bag. He crouched, added another plug of chaw to his distended lower lip, and looked around. He saw shoe-tracks in the sand leading to the dirt road. City-slicker tracks. He also noted the tire marks where a vehicle had turned around. Fresh sign. Finally, Ham tugged at the zipper. His horse snorted, rearing back and Ham gagged for air. Stumbling to his feet, he ran, long strides to his mount, and grabbed for flaying reins before the horse headed out to the barn miles away. Catching his sorrel, mounting in mid-stride, Ham wasted no time loping across the range. He knew he'd have to call Sheriff Winters.

KINDRED

Claire Munson

A moment. An evening. We walk along Benton as the lighted windows of my home fall behind. The cold air tickles my nose. I pull my pink wool hat snug over my eyes. Our breath trails, billowing steam. We start our midnight journey, my lover and I, by my pleading. "I want to smell the bridge. Can we take a walk?" The moon hangs high illuminating our path. Diamonds of ice scatter the ground, capturing light, reflecting. The sleepy neighborhood, darkened windows, my home. We are alone, the three of us. Luna, the Great Dane pup lopes close behind, her large paws echoing thumps with each step. Already, my mind wanders.

I clutch his strong arms. We are silent. I know he notices my stare, but I am in awe. He looks ahead. The profile. Strong jaw, deep green eyes, intense, warding off the cold air. The wave of curls around his neck catches the artificial light and shines hues of red and gold. He smells like a familiarly loved scent, laundry detergent. Our cadence differs. His steps far exceed mine. His mind is moving along a different highway. Our cadence differs. I trust his direction, close my eyes and breath. Luna lopes. He knows Helena better than I. Twenty years more knowledge. "Thrill hill. We used to drive as fast as we could over the hill."

I remain silent, black tarry memories seep in. Bright city nights. Too bright. Drunk, stumbling. The neon blurs, lonesome stretches of highway. My legs detached from my body, leading me aimlessly. The man at my side, afraid of me. Too much acid. I can't speak. My dad wonders where I am. Time has no meaning. Some of my clothes are missing. Where are they? It doesn't matter. The white station wagon, Steve, Gibran. Did I put my seat belt on? Saliva begins to collect in my mouth. My trip is much different than theirs. I want to sleep. It is wearing off. Oh God, I'll need more. Don't leave me alone with them. The car leaves. My head is thrown from side to side, bashing the window, hitting his shoulder. Steve doesn't blink. Too much acid. Where are we going? Steve laughs, the road disappears on him. He drives faster. Oh God—

We ascend thrill hill. It is calm. I peer down as we reach the top. The dirt hill flattens onto the wooden bridge. Our foot steps sound hollow, deep. He stands, waiting, knowing that I need this. I lean close to the railing and breath. The warped, oily wood. Deep scents of creosote. I close my eyes and feel the moist winds of salty air brush my face. The buoys ring a sad, longing cry far away. The seagulls, calling to one another. The moon guides and dances reflections upon the water that rise and disappear. The docks. Deep wooden posts extended into the earthen sand of the ocean. My legs dangle off the dock. Creosote. Luna jumps on the edge to kiss me. I look ahead, the shores extend thousands of miles, the ocean disappears. Reeder's Alley settles quietly in its age. We walk on.

The two arches under the bridge. Beautiful. Mysterious. Darkness surrounds us as we walk. "I love this bridge." Once again thrown into silence. We hold hands and continue.

Brick buildings, stand, joined and snake down the path. Such a beautiful little pocket. Black street lamps, the kind seen in movies on a darkened city street corner, the man in the black trench coat illuminated by the conical light rays from the lamp. He smokes a cigarette. A solitary figure. Crooked bare branches hung with white Christmas lights, beaded stars, no organization to their show. Small wooden signs hang over doors. "Ecotrek," "Dundees Barber Shop," "The Fabric Store." I peer into darkened windows, see shapes, behind the darkness. The patio is cold, overturned chairs. I recall the summer, music, dancing. Another man. I look forward.

Alone at the bottom, the black sheep of the bunch, the little log cabin. The small wooden door, gray from age, splintery and unfinished, a sign "Private." "Does someone live there?" Silence again. Annual drives to Tahoe, the fright of snow driving. The snow felt so mysterious. As dad swore, chained the car, Seth and I tasted the powder, felt the stinging cold. My hands turned pink, but I clutched handfuls, felt them shrink and harden into tight, icy balls. The restless nights in a rented cabin, too much heat, too much excitement. Sledding down icy drives, a days

trip to the museum, in Donner. The Donner party. The winter caught them early as they traversed, horses and wagons across the Sierra Nevadas. They had to eat the bodies of the dead, to survive. Faded black and white photos behind glass of people, survivors and the dead. Stained with age, brown around the edges. Hard faces, no one smiles. Why? A journey for a better life, an insignificant "short cut". An historical tragedy of human suffering. I imagined an abandoned land, without casinos, suffering, peeling bark to eat from sleeping trees. We got in the van, returned to our over-heated cabin, and ate dinner.

I peer over my shoulder so as not to lose Luna. She continues a steady pace. To the left, a small wood cabin, restored. "The first modern cabin in old Last Chance Gulch mining camp..." The windows are streaked, leaving a muddy film. Stone steps lead to the small doors. Dark figures. Still. Unrecognizable. Where are the ghosts? I want to see one. "I would like to live here." He stands, silently with Luna on the sidewalk below, staring up at me. A hush of wind.

We cross the open street that gives way to Pioneer park. Dirty playground furniture, rusted springs, smiling clown, frozen by winter's sleep. A small chain link fence fends off human inhabitation. The clown is still smiling, even as we walk, away.

Luna lingers. Her small, undeveloped legs begin to tire. We encourage her, jump and call her name. Droopy eyes glare ahead. Determination. The decent of the walking mall. Gargoyles guard the evils of ancient ruins. Stone. cold, powerful, aged and silent. "I want to start a gargoyle collection."

Tullochay cemetery. Napa valley. Wine country. Fields of grapes, orderly rows, distant mansions. The downtown of Napa. Tile roofs and salmon colored buildings. Sleepy town on a sunny February day. The Mexican food is just right. Hot, but not irritating. I drive further. I want to visit. Traffic and streetlights fall behind, as rustic becomes the theme. Large iron gates hover the drive. Little, ordered streets, with numbers. Large, protective oaks shade death. Some flowers are fresh, the ground newly rooted. Some are wilted. The family plot. The simple, corroding stone. A child that expired at eight years old. My great grandmother whom I never knew. Her spirit though, I did. "The Littlest Angel" was never read to me in full. Mom always cried. It reminded her of Grandma. Sunlight beats upon the shiniest stone. "Carol Mallory Munson 1945-1991." My mother. A small green box of remains, underneath the soil, decaying into nothingness. I saw the green box. I was looking for something in dad's drawers. Heavy, with her name imprinted from the morgue. I already knew.

Wind rustles the dried oak leaves, scattering them across my path, against my body. Tears fall. We chat. Brushing the grass off my hands, I leave. Not looking back.

The clouds move gently across the shape of the moon, shade the view from our perch above the city. Light moves. Silence. Again. The cathedral points its towering, mystical shapes into the sky. "I love it here." "Yea. Me too."

I clutch his hand, swinging gently, steady for balance. Balance.

Years of memory tumble through me, sometimes haunt me. Making sense of what was and what is. He listens. Doesn't answer. Doesn't need to. He understands.

I see the orange glow from the little yellow house on the hill. Silently, we stop by the car. A long, gentle kiss. I saunter up the stairs and close my door tight. Behind me.

THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY

-Kate Ferrie

When thinking about the topic of scars, most imagine physical marks visible to others. But there are other scars people carry that cannot be seen. These scars carry pain lasting long after the physical ones fade. I know. I have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). So, how did it happen? I fell in love with a sweet and compassionate man, a man with a quirky sense of humor sharing all of the values and beliefs that I'd dreamed of in a husband. A man who, at the tender age of eighteen, was sent to a tiny nation across the globe to fight in a nasty, brutal war, and was never the same.

In 1981, wanting to make a difference for the enlisted men, Pat joined the Army Reserve as a Chaplain's Assistant. His dedication resulted in his rise to Senior Chaplain's Assistant. As a result, he was among the first Reservists sent to serve in the Persian Gulf War. Pat wrote home that helping the men, giving them the support that he hadn't received in Vietnam, was therapeutic for him. He was afraid though, if there were an explosion and there were casualties, it might worsen his PTSD.

The inevitable happened. While travelling down a road, he saw a civilian carrying an explosive device. Before he could call out, the device exploded, blowing off both of the man's forearms. Alone except for a terrified eighteen-year-old private, he ran to the man to calm and hold him until help arrived. When the medics came, they thought Pat had been injured. He looked down. Blood saturated his clothes, arms, hands, and boots; blood ran down his face.

After the accident, Pat's symptoms multiplied and intensified. He traveled home shattered inside. Humiliated because according to the medics and doctors, he was "just" a psych case. The military views anyone who suffers from PTSD as defective.

On April 26, 1992, after eighteen years of flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, and nightmares; one year after the Gulf War and twenty years after Vietnam; as I lay beside him drifting to sleep, Pat picked up a gun, placed it against his forehead, and pulled the trigger.

I am a casualty. I know what PTSD is like -- and yet a person with PTSD won't say, "I know how you feel," because anyone who has experienced it knows -- you can never know. PTSD is most consistent in its inconsistencies. But I do know PTSD from the inside out.

PTSD is the normal reaction to an abnormal or traumatic situation; it can be caused by a one-time experience or multiple incidents. Let me repeat, it is a normal reaction. A person with the condition is not weaker, more sensitive, defective, more compassionate or in any way better or less than the person standing next to them. The difference is luck. If a bullet shatters through a window, why is one person hit and another unharmed? Fate.

What is P.T.S.D. like? I have flashbacks. Not the "normal" kind that catapult back into the scene, but emotional flashbacks. In a class, at church, in a car, out with friends, suddenly, like a tidal wave, I am engulfed in feelings. Not remembering the feeling, but feeling the same emotions: the intensity, the shock, exact in every way. Sometimes, I have sensory flashbacks: a whiff of gunpowder, the blast of the gun, the feel of the warm, slick blood on my hands. I hear Pat's labored gasps for breath. My heart pounds in my throat; I tremble and sweat; my skin feels smothered. I have visual flashbacks; they visit me in my sleep. I experience Pat at the emergency room, hooked up to tubes and machines, dying.

I also undergo disassociation—a kind of non-acceptance of the reality of the event. After six years, I have not accepted that Pat is gone. I answer the phone expecting to hear his voice. A car door slams, I think he's home. My hearts leaps, I start to smile, turning to the door to welcome him; I am stopped by cruel reality reminding me, "Never again." My heart dies a little bit more.

Hypervigilance. Now there's a symptom created specifically to sink a person into the depths of humiliation. Walking down the street during the summer. A firecracker. My heart is in my throat and the world spins dizzily. Legs turn to jelly. I sink to the ground. Hands tremble

and tears well—and I am angry, very angry. Anger seems to be a common reaction. I often experience anger when afraid, sad, confused, frustrated, or helpless. Believe it or not, it is often the safest emotion.

So a cavalier attitude that runs through my psyche. I know how easily anxiety attacks can destroy, so I build a barrier. I have to down play life. If it really is as terrifying, or heinous, or painful as I have experienced, then why am I continuing? Why don't we all, the whole human race, run screaming over the cliffs into the sea, like so many giant lemmings? Why are PTSD sufferers still sane? We cope. And that is how we survive—by coping, one day at a time. We know there is no cure for the disorder. Like a cancer it eats its way into our souls.

In the movie, *The Fisher King*, Robin Williams' wife is shot and killed. Afterwards, he becomes lost in the throes of PTSD. He becomes the "Fisher King," a knight on a crusade. Entering the homeless population, he lives in abandoned basements under old warehouses. What no one can understand, unless they've seen the world through our eyes, is that there, for the grace of God, go we. One slip, one misstep, and we are Fisher Kings with insanity as our companion. Williams does not "heal," there is no magic miracle cure at the end of the movie. Williams steps away from insanity and learns to cope in society in his own skewed way.

And how do other people view us—the few, the brave, the crazy? They aren't sure. They'll say we haven't "gotten over it," or they'll tell us to "buck up," or "pull yourself together," or that it's been enough time and we need to "get on with life." They'll tell us that we are different. And they are right, we are.

Trying to decide how to express an emotion is like holding a bundle of wires and trying to match them with the correct wires in another bundle. You try a wire and it seems to match and seems to connect, but when you try to turn on a light, the doorbell rings; or if you turn on the stove, the light switches off.

Sometimes people deny there is a problem. I waited for two years before I allowed myself to consider PTSD—a wait that almost destroyed me. I ended up in an inpatient treatment center. I was afraid of my emerging feelings, that they would sweep me into insanity.

I know my feelings can destroy me, I have to guard against over-intense reactions to emotional situations. There is a family story that illustrates this point. One day my great-grandfather was walking along a river in South Dakota, not far from the family ranch. He saw a little boy with a fishing pole, sitting on the bank, crying. When Great-Grandpa asked what was the matter, the boy answered,

"I've got lots of worms, but I can't bait my hook."

"Too wiggly?"

"No, they bite and now my hands hurt."

With a sense of foreboding, Great-Grandpa looked at the little boy's swollen hands and then into the bait container. There was a mass of baby rattlesnakes, only a couple of inches long, but very venomous.

Other people see my feelings as worms, all tangled and twisted, but I know the truth, the nightmarish truth; the worms are really snakes, ready and waiting to destroy me.

So, I have learned not to experience the feelings. They are muted, like a bell wrapped in cotton. Something's inside, but there isn't outward indication. I learn to distance myself from involvement—I disassociate and isolate. "Normal" people are emotionally engaged with the world, but sometimes they have to learn when to disengage. I, on the other hand, must be emotionally disengaged from the world; I have to learn when and how to become engaged without compromising my emotional equilibrium. And it is hard, because, like Alice, I have stepped into another world and I am only able to live my life through a glass, darkly.

FOREVER WOVEN

April Wendt

Tapestries—tons of tiny threads woven together to create a bigger picture. Each thread possesses its own distinct markings, which attribute to the overall piece. My family reminds me of a tapestry.

I am the eleventh child out of fourteen and in families with multiple children some siblings draw closer to one another than do others. I belonged to my own little group of siblings, made up of my brother Josh, who entered the family four years before I did, Grace, who only beat me by two years, and myself. We spent most of our early childhood together and because of this we grew very close. One day during my sixth grade year I remember a conversation that took place between the three of us, it greatly moved me. We sat around talking about strange happenings, dreams and ghosts. My brother Josh told the story about “the black man.” According to Josh, as superstition dictated, if you saw this silhouetted man with red glowing eye sockets in a dream it meant you would die very soon. I’ll admit I became a little shaken up by this story, as Josh intended, but I insisted “the black man” was just a bunch of bologna. Boy, was I wrong. During that night I dreamed that Josh, Grace and I began walking south down a road near the College of Great Falls. We knew not why we walked we only knew that we should go forward into the silent darkness. A soft conversation emerged out of the silence, yet not a single word left our lips. As we walked on in this pseudo-silence a car drove by and the only street light went out. We apprehensively paused for a brief moment before deciding to continue. Every step we took cautiously in the dark led us closer and closer to the unknown, but we knew no fear. Slowly the street light began to give off some measurable glow. Out of our dimly lit surroundings we noticed a man approaching us. It was “him.” Soon we stared into the face of this man and he into ours as he stood inches from our beings. I bolted upright in bed and ran to my door. I opened it without a hesitation and froze. There stood both Josh and Grace in their doorways looking just as confused and terrified as I. My initial reaction came in the form of tears; the same reaction that came from my brother and sister—simultaneously. In that moment I realized that the communication threads we wove went way beyond any normal realms.

Naturally, I picked a favorite out of all my siblings. Even though Josh, Grace and I were so close, neither of them won the contest of favorites. Mike, one of my seven brothers and number three in the family, did. Mike always cared for me. As a little girl I sometimes saw Mike as my father, since he’s a good fourteen years older than me. He always seemed to be there all the time. Though I don’t think he knew this, I constantly looked to Mike to show me right from wrong. He taught me many things; the most important of which was unconditional love. Mike treated everyone as a valued person and he always gave of himself. I noticed he never asked for recognition, he just did what needed to be done. A silent example. He worked that way with me too. One day during my childhood Mike came into my room and picked me up, the way he always did. He’d swing me around then hold me close to him while he kissed my curly hair. But, for some reason, this time he didn’t put me down like he usually did, instead he just sat down on the bed and lovingly placed me on his lap. I remember staring up at his face and seeing the sadness that emanated from within his eyes. Our souls reached out and touched. While overwhelmed with emotions I did the only thing I thought to do, I smiled. Mike’s face instantly lit with a smile right back. Satisfied with this response I laid my head against his chest. He sat there holding me for a long time, as I listened to his heart beating and began to breathe in time with him. I almost fell asleep before he whispered into my ear, “You are my favorite.” At that

point nothing else seemed to matter and it didn't really. I loved Mike and he loved me. I knew it with every inch of my being. Mike's soul testified that love to me. We reached an understanding and my heart filled with so much love that my eyes began to leak; tears of happiness.

The day he told me this precious "secret," as my five-year-old mind saw it, he left home, maybe to go to college—but now I don't exactly remember why. I was too young to remember and actually too young to realize the impact of his leaving. I didn't realize how much I missed him until he came back for his first visit. He gave me a big hug and suddenly I became aware of the deprivation of his loving touch I had suffered. I didn't ever want to let go again. After that first one, Mike's visits grew fewer and farther between, but that never changed my love.

At the beginning of my third grade school year, Mike came back for a brief visit on my little brother Sam's birthday. While in the bathroom brushing my teeth I heard someone come in the side door, the one you had to go through the garage to get to. I glanced out into the hall and I squealed when I saw Mike. I ran to him and he picked me up. We embraced so hard I felt like Mike could have pulled me right into himself. Once again he kissed my curly hair before letting me down. I gazed up at the man before me in awe and my heart took a picture. In my memory this picture remains as the last time I saw my brother Mike alive.

On the night of May 6, 1985 I had a peculiar dream about a car accident. In the short dream, like a flash of light from a shooting star; I saw a red pickup heading down a road I did not recognize. In slow motion the truck tumbled off the road and I knew that the person in the car was badly hurt. I awoke to the sound of my mother sobbing loudly just outside my door. I remember thinking; "Please God let Veronica be alright." For some reason my older sister Veronica, who had been in a car accident a few weeks earlier, became the only person I could think of who could drive. Then, somehow with all the commotion going on outside my closed door I felt calm and drifted back to sleep.

The next morning when I woke up, I knew something was wrong. I could feel it in the air, I could feel it in the silence of the house, and most of all, I could feel it in my heart. Not long after I woke up, my parents came into my room, I could tell my mother had been crying. Her swollen eyes failed to catch my gaze. Her silence frightened me and engulfed me with sadness. Each parent took a place at my side on my bed and it seemed as if they had rehearsed that action hundreds of times. A strange feeling overcame me. I felt like I knew what would happen, as if I watched it before, but as an outside observer. I almost remembered where, but when they stuck their hands on me I instantly pulled back from wherever I was going. I felt so uncomfortable. I began to truly see my parents for the first time. I looked right into their hearts, and for the first time I touched souls with them. "April we have some bad news. Mike died last night in a car accident." My mother couldn't finish because she was sobbing too hard to form words. My father went on, "We're sorry. You don't have to go to school today if you don't want to." With that my mother got up and started to leave as my father kissed me for the first time on my curly hair. I just sat there; I didn't know what else to do. I'm surprised that I didn't cry.

Later on in that week, I told my older sister Sarah about my dream, and she told me that the night Mike died she woke up at 12:01am. It bothered her that she remembered what time the clock said when she woke up. We understood why, after my mother had read us the police reports. On May 7, 1985 Michael Edward Wendt died at precisely 12:01am. His red pickup truck went off the road; Mike was thrown from it and died instantly when he hit the pavement.

Each member of the family reacted differently. I spent a lot of time alone trying to figure out the meaning of death. I didn't really understand it until I saw Mike's body in that casket. I half expected him to get up, swing me around then pull me close so he could kiss me on my curly hair. He never did. I stood in front of Mike's casket for what seemed like hours, staring. Mike's girlfriend, Lisa, broke my trance when she came up to me and handed me a white rose while she kissed my curly hair. Each one of us placed a rose on Mike's closed coffin just before they buried it. I put mine where I thought his lips were. I don't ever remember crying.

Not long after the funeral we drove to the site where Mike died. Mom said it would help

us to say good-bye. The idea made me sick, but I had to go. When I got out of the van tingles ran through every part of my body. I knew that road; I recognized it as exactly the same road I saw in my dream. I noticed only one difference, a cross now stood next to the ditch Mike's car hit.

Sometimes I think I came to Helena to be closer to that road; to be closer to my memory of Mike. I couldn't find the road until one day I found myself walking down a familiar road that seemed not so familiar anymore. I looked around, a lot of changes took place over time, a traffic light now stood where one never existed and countless new houses replaced a landmark I distinctly remembered. Mike's cross—gone—probably taken down when that traffic light went up. Suddenly, I hated that road because no memory of Mike remained. I wanted to hold onto those memories, but they were gone now. My heart swelled immensely just before it broke, forcing my eyes to leak tears of heartbreak.

At the beginning of this year I felt lost and the only thing I could think of to do was to go and walk that road by myself. As I got closer and closer to the spot, a wave of peace came and engulfed my loneliness. I looked up, and my knees about gave when I saw Mike's cross. I don't know why I didn't see it there before; it stood right there in plain sight. I found great comfort in that road, at that spot, standing in front of Mike's cross. I began to see the little threads of my tapestry—the tapestry of my heart. I clearly saw the woven pattern. I saw Josh and Grace, I saw my childhood, I saw the dream, I saw Mike, and I received a revelation as I saw many other individual threads woven in. I began to see how these threads expanded over time and made their way into some of my relationships outside of my family. I thought of Paul—my best friend—and the threads' intricacy grew more apparent. They truly crossed. One day when I was experiencing some very emotional setbacks Paul came over to comfort me. As I stood in a heart wrenching silence looking out my window, Paul slowly came up behind me. He put his arm around my shoulder and gently pulled me to his chest. I closed my eyes as I listened to his heartbeat and almost drifted off to sleep. In that moment Paul leaned over and kissed me on my curly hair.



