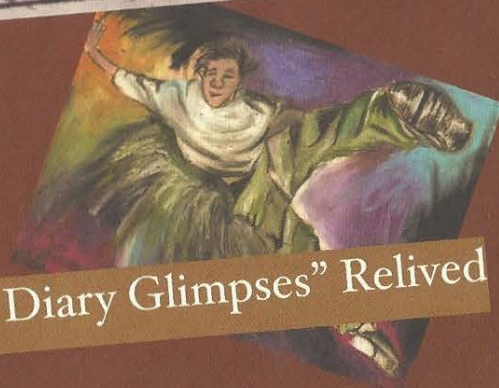
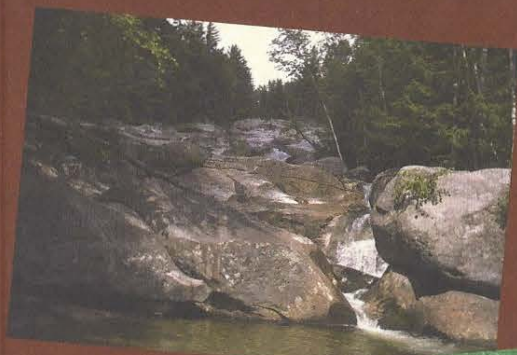


Vol. 2 XI
Hemetera 2007



"Dear Diary Glimpses" Relived

Editors' Note

In our opinion, one could safely say that *Hemetera* is the collective diary of the many talented women of Regis College. As poets, playwrights, prose writers, photographers, and artists, we all feel the insatiable need to express ourselves. While these modes of expression are as varied as our individual persons, the common thread woven throughout our art is life. Thus, we have deemed it appropriate to title this issue of *Hemetera* "Dear Diary Glimpses' Relived," much in debt to those women of Regis College who have paved the way, so to speak, for our expressions. Please take a moment out of your busy lives to experience these treasures- these poems, dramatic scene, short stories, photographs, and artwork- that so deeply reveal the lives of our expressive spirits.

Laura Gaughan '10

Jennifer LeBlanc '10

Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart.

-William Wordsworth

Dedication

To Sister Therese Higgins, CSJ



This year's *Hemetera* is dedicated to Sister Therese Higgins, CSJ, one of the Associate Editors of the original 1946 journal. In the March, 1947 issue of *Hemetera*, Sr. Therese expresses her love of writing through this short passage of her story "Dear Diary Glimpses...." She writes, "Four years ago I made a promise! Never again would I deign to scratch your nervous little fluttering pages with my bold and personal strokes. . . . I beg a reprieve, dear Diary" (Sr. Therese Higgins). Clearly, we can all relate to Sr. Therese's need for self expression. Her passion can serve as an inspiration to us all.

In addition to her contributions to *Hemetera*, Sr. Therese is a Regis College graduate of 1947. From 1974 to 1992, she served as our college's President, and she has also been an invaluable member of the Regis College English Department. The editors of *Hemetera* 2007 would like to extend their sincere gratitude and appreciation on behalf of the students. We dedicate this issue to Sr. Therese, for without her, *Hemetera* would not have been possible.

Hemetera 2007

Poetry Editor:	Jennifer LeBlanc '10
Drama & Fiction Editor:	Laura Gaughan '10
Advisory Editor:	Professor Patricia Elliott
Production:	Megan Michaud '10

Special Thanks

Archivist:	Sister Mary-Rita Grady
Graphic Design Program:	Beth Rochefort

In 1946 a "doughty seedling poked its vigorous head" into the Regis College Community with the emergence of the new literary magazine *Hemetera*, meaning "Our Own" in Greek. The magazine was founded as an opportunity to spotlight the creative talents of the student body. Published annually by the students of Regis College, the magazine welcomes submissions of poetry, prose, artwork, and photography.

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Ifcoma Onuorah
Pensive, Acrylic paint and pencil

Poetry Workshop

In the poetry workshop,
our visiting poet gave
an assignment: write about
a relative doing something,
describe the person;
(perhaps this is someone
who makes you angry).
We wrote ten minutes
no more, came up
with mother, father, cousin,
Uncle Sal.

Annie read—
her father's suicide.
She finished; we sat silent.
The poet said, "it's hard
to comment
if I can't see the page."
We left it at that.
The workshop ended.
The only thing that did.

Professor Patricia Elliott

Nonce Poem in Provincetown

I know I am lucky and alone, coiling
my dark heart into the fashion of friendship.
I can still smile; I can still care for children without roar-
ing like a supernatural lioness in Henri Rousseau.
I can swim to the rocky ledge of barnacles
and return without panting or panicking.
I can smack the beating of my heart to a slight pulsing
rhythm by focusing my breath on a simple
target.

When the grief comes rolling across the target,
my clear, unmasked mind,
I can hear it as mistake or brood its pulsing
insistence to capture me again.
But no one really can resist my smack
of joy and reasonableness. I do seem OK.
I'm like the sea creature living in the barnacles:
Unless you get up close, roar a little whisper in the dry casings,
it's easy to miss the coiling of my breath.

Professor Julia Lisella

What Woman Is

What is Woman?

There *is* a difference between
She and *Him*, right?

Barbie dolls, action figures
blue, pink, ballet, football. . .

It's not hard to mix and match those
when you know what *She* is.

So, what *is* Woman?

Not hard to tell.

She is definitely not *Him*, the
Ideal Human Model, da Vinci's

perfect multi-limbed sketch
sent to space to be studied by ET.

If aliens came to destroy the Human Race
they would be confused upon discovering
this *Other Species*, a race wavered by the Moon every
month,

lacking a "stem on the apple."

An Incomplete Man

that should have

hung out in the womb a while longer.

There are some

who wake and thank God
that they were not born Woman,

Cursed and Fallen

because people said Eve

led Adam to Sin.

So she covers her face

for shame, for fear.

Motherly smiles and silken skirts

hide a world of Pain.

Amanda E. Beaulieu '08

memory & question

i.

my memory is a butterfly
that dances over my prom night.

yet trying to remember burns the insect's purpose.

force is the death of beauty.

did my manicured nails snag the black lace,
my mother reminding me that nothing is perfect?

mostly, though, how did the moon manage such beauty?...
he not by my side.

ii.

do butterflies dance over prom nights,
or do they crumble under the monotony of my verse?

portions of pink butterflies lying on the pavement.

iii.

can *manicured* nails snag black lace?

iv.

mostly, though, how did the moon manage such beauty?...
he not by my side.

Jennifer LeBlanc '10

The Haunting

I feel cold in the room you just walked out of.
Your loving energy still lingers
as it passes through,
around,
in me.

My thoughts seem to twist in my mouth,
yet my tongue has no capacity for words.
I close my lips to feel the only lasting moisture I know to
be real.
My lips are a garden's poignant rose,
staying shut until the winter passes
and an evocative spring blossoms a summer waiting to
appear.

More than a memorable shadow cast or history created.
Time shows no penitence to recurring days I fail to see
you.
All my words add up to this
the haunting I feel.

Jullianne Halley Doherty '07

Children's Hour of Dream

Night settles through the house
like a lead apron on his chest.
Yet he cannot help but squirm at the coming of
the Children's Hour of Dream.

In the glimmer of darkness
creatures crescendo from the shadows
casting doubts about the line between
cognizance and sleep.

Wisps of smoke plume and wane,
then suddenly shoot out
from under the floorboards.
Scream of silent breathing.

The Children's Hour of Dream
images aren't what they seem.
Rip through memory in
syncopated pounding beat.

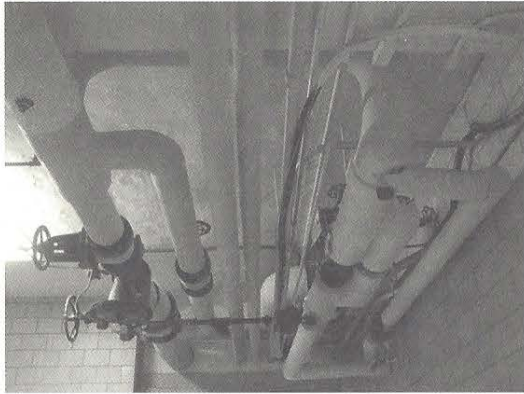
The beasts contort themselves as
closer closer and closer
the lumbering hulking masses are seen
grimacing with gleaming teeth.

Under the door a river starts to flow.
Its ripples echo through the floor,
figments swirl around the ankles,
reflecting a distorted sheen.

The serpentine current coils into a snake.
Its head rises and eyes flicker
an impetuous glare at the other phantoms,
and they recoil, then flee.

Licking the tension that clings to the air,
it pauses before lunging to attack him.
A cacophony of anguish awakens the end of
the Children's Hour of Dream.

Caroline Kim '10



Nyree Kibarian
Pipes, Photograph

Hanging My Hat in London

Carrying secondhand luggage up three flights of
sinuous stairs.

Noise still lingering in the hall
from the pub below,
a three-floor walk up.

She scrambled for her keys
hidden within an oversized purse.
She opened the old wooden door with
the bad paint job, cracking and peeling.

I had seen bathrooms bigger than this.
Enough room for only a bed,
a dresser,
and a mirror—just not enough height to hang it on the wall.

She listed the qualities on her fingers—
“no stove”
“shower’s broken”
“no freezer”
and no heat, that one I discovered on my own.

The window looked across to another flat above a pub.
Christmas lights draped between the buildings
illuminating the street
like still fireflies, dancing over Highgate Village.
These lights proved themselves worthy when the power
went out.

I had never seen anything so beautiful, so inviting.
I felt warm and wanted.
This hole in the wall
was the finest place to hang my hat.

Elizabeth Eacmen '07

Louisiana Fugitive

Sitting in a N'Orleans jail cell
blockaded from the rest of the city,
each day I dream of
breaking free and rejoining
life in N'Orleans.
But each dream ends
with Hopelessness.

All of a sudden
I hear massive winds,
and I can feel a draft
whip through my cell.

I turn to my cell mate,
only to see a smile on his face.
"I've been here
20 years and not once
have I felt a wind like that."

Soon I hear a sound
of water crash through
the cinder block walls.
Water begins to flood
the cells around me,
and pretty soon the blocks
begin to break apart.

I know this is the chance
every inmate waits for.
We all begin to swim away
and know that Katrina's chaos
has offered us freedom.
Jail is the last place
they'll look for
missing persons.

Megan Michaud '10

Replay

As I replay all my memories,
looking through special days,
thinking how much work it took.
Then realizing that you
were not there.

While building my milestones,
you were everywhere,
but here.

When I struggled with work,
you were everywhere,
but here.

When I was struggling with cash,
you were everywhere,
but here,
only coming around at times
that fit your purpose.

Present day comes,
I'm all grown.

Still you are everywhere,
but here.

I no longer need you here,
because while you were everywhere,
someone else was right here.

Atiya Charley '07

Beauty from Pain

So . . . what now?
What can you do
after something like this
happens?
Move on
as if nothing stopped dead
in the road of your life
and made a tortured collage
of your emotions?

You can pretend,
but I know you're
screaming inside.
Morning light does not
reach the eyes
of the deceased.

Wake up!
You're alive!
Take that collage
of pain and suffering,
and make it
Beautiful.

Amanda E. Beaulieu '08

Some Sound of Peace

Some sound,
one whisper of
crashing leaves.
Drops of white stopping a stream in its path.
Dying greens turning into pale sticks of yellow,
breathing still,
drinking in bits and pieces of spring.
Holding on to a lullaby
that was sung months before.
Mother,
Dear sweet Mother who sends down silver beams,
who sheds light and shields tears, who murmurs love
into life,
why would you send down frozen drops of rain
when all we long for is the scent of your
perfume?
The smell of brooks descending,
of circles and ovals pushing up through the Earth
draped
in reds and pinks.
Mother, put on your robes of brilliant colors,
put away your pearls of white, your freezing wood
bracelets,
your kisses of frost.
We remember your sweet song,
we long for your sweet song
to smooth this world of sharpness and harsh words,
to quiet the anger between nations
and subside the black smog.
Bring your peace,
bring spring over winter's world.

Jullianne Halley Doherty '07

Solar Rouge

The sun peeked through the shade that was not
all the way
closed from the night before.
My window looks onto a flat surface of rocks—
privacy is kept.

The sun warmed the spot on my face
where my cheekbone is most defined.
Solar rouge.

A foreign shade of lipstick smeared on my right
shoulder
like war paint.
In the sun, more like battle scars.

Finally drawing all of my energy to move,
I turn over and see her back,
clothes somewhere adorning my cluttered floor.

It takes all of my strength to reach for my cell
phone.
Looking for the time (but secretly wishing that
time would stand still).
8:14am—only six more minutes of bliss.

I don't want to go to work.
Maybe the store won't open because of snow.
A girl can dream.

Elizabeth Eacmen '07

Stella

Have you met Stella?
She is not what she used to be,
or was all that strength
just below the surface?
I am surprised to see the
things she can do.
I want to tell you
that Stella has found a
groove and is making
her own moves.

Claire Gorman

A Ghost

I've been running for a while,
I've been running from a ghost.
She is the ghost called the past.

I move on continually,
but every now and then
she comes back like a wrecking force,
making me insecure, hindering me.

She hinders me in love
when loves I've left behind
come back and play
with the strings of my heart.

My heart is fragile, can't you see?
Past, stay in your grave.
I have buried you quite well,
but not well enough.

Megan Michaud '10

unconscious

the black shadow of time looms over my life,
ocean diamond and braided rope resting on my
hand.

champagne glasses tumble down from the gray sky,
thoughts of yesterday calling my name.

unconscious,
like lyrics repeated to the beat of the drum,
catch one raindrop on your tongue.

hold...
tomorrow can come too soon.

notice the passing of the porcelain seconds.

Jennifer LeBlanc '10



Darlene Rogers
A Comfort Corner, Watercolor

LAST WORDS SCENE VI

Lights up on stage left. WALTER, in his thirties, is lying on the couch asleep. He wears pajamas. He has been there all night.

SOPHIE, who is about four, enters, holding a disbeveled stuffed dog. She runs over to the couch and pokes WALTER in the shoulder to wake him up.

SOPHIE: Daddy, daddy, daddy!

WALTER: *With a yawn.* Good morning, sweet pea.

SOPHIE: Daddy, why are you sleeping out here?

WALTER: Mommy didn't want me sleeping in the room last night.

SOPHIE: Why?

WALTER: Oh nothing, sweetie. Grown up stuff.

SOPHIE: You could've come to my room.

WALTER: I was going to, but you were asleep. I didn't want to wake you up.

SOPHIE: Okay. *Pause.* Daddy, Humphrey wants to ask you a question. *She passes the stuffed dog to WALTER.*

WALTER: *Takes the dog and places it next to his ear.* Speak up, Humphrey. I can't hear you.

SOPHIE: How can you not hear him, daddy? He's yelling at you!

WALTER: Oh, Humphrey, you know that I don't speak Dog very well.

SOPHIE: Daddy, he's speaking in English.

WALTER: He speaks English now? It's pretty broken English, honey. I can't understand what he's saying. Could you translate for me?

SOPHIE: Fine. He wants to know if you'll come to his birthday party.

WALTER: Oh! Of course I will, Humphrey. Aw, I'm touched. I had no idea that I meant that much to you.

SOPHIE: *Taking WALTER's hand.* The party's just about to start, daddy, we should go.

WALTER: Oh wow, Humphrey. Your party is at seven in the morning? Boy, you don't waste any time, do you?

SOPHIE leads WALTER to center stage where there is a small table set up. There are four chairs placed around it. One is occupied by another stuffed dog. Plastic tea cups and pastries sit on the table. A banner hangs over the table that says, "Happy Birthday, Humfry!"

WALTER: Wow, this is really nice.

SOPHIE: *Props Humphrey up on his seat.* Daddy, this is Delilah. *She introduces the other dog to WALTER.*

WALTER: *Taking the dog's paw.* It's nice to meet you, Delilah. And how do you know the birthday boy?

SOPHIE: *Giggling.* Daddy, she's his wife!

WALTER: Oh! My apologies, Delilah. You just look so young. The thought that you were married didn't even cross my mind.

SOPHIE: Humphrey wants to start. *Ducks under the table and pulls out a tiny plastic birthday cake and four cone shaped party hats. She hands one to WALTER, places one on her own head and then gets up and puts them on both dogs. After the party preparations are complete, she sits back down.* Okay, daddy, time to sing.

WALTER: *Singing his scales.* Me me me me me.... Mo mo mo mo mo...
La la la la la la la la -

SOPHIE: Daddy!

WALTER: What? I was warming up.

SOPHIE and WALTER: Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday, dear Humphrey! Happy birthday to you!

WALTER: Oh, Delilah, that's a lovely singing voice you have there.

SOPHIE: Shhh! Daddy, she wasn't singing.

WALTER: Well, why not? That's rather rude, Delilah, not singing to your husband on his birthday.

SOPHIE: Her and Humphrey had a fight last night. She kicked Humphrey out of the room. He had to sleep on the floor.

WALTER: That's a shame, buddy. I feel your pain.

SOPHIE: *Places her ear next to Humphrey's mouth.* What's that, Humphrey? *Nodding.* Daddy, Humphrey wants to ask you something.

WALTER: Fire away, Humphrey, my boy!

SOPHIE: Can he give you a hug?

WALTER: Of course you can, Humphrey. I'd be honored.

SOPHIE bands Humphrey to WALTER who hugs him.

Lights down on stage left and center.

Laura Gaughan '10

A Night Encounter

I slammed the door shut and ran towards the driveway, the tears streaming down my face. I had no destination in mind; I just kept putting one foot in front of the other. Eventually, my tears dried up, crystallizing on my cheeks. I tried buttoning my jacket, but my fingers fumbled, missing the buttonholes because of the darkness of the night. There were only a few stars that shone from above; that brightness together with the quarter-smile of the moon was the only light visible.

My mind kept reliving the fight I had just had with my husband. The banging and yelling inside my mind almost drowned out the footsteps that were now closing in from behind. Hearing the slight pounding of footsteps brought me out of my reverie; I suddenly became aware of the emptiness of the street which loomed ahead. I quickened my step, glancing around for anyone to call out to, but found no one. The footsteps behind me mimicked my pace, and I found myself suddenly running towards my family home. I did not recall the three mile trek that led me to this forgotten neighborhood.

My heart rose into my throat as I felt the cool breath of the person, now directly upon me. I stumbled and hit the pavement, placing my hands over my face to protect myself from the attacker. It was then that I heard the blaring of a horn and watched as a car pulled over, cutting off my path to safety. In that split second, I saw my attacker leave the scene.

Gasping for breath, my body visibly shaking, I realized how close harm had come to me. Blinking, I looked up to see a friend of mine rushing out of the car, chasing the unknown person into the shadows.

A short time later, my rescuer hurried back, asking me if I were okay, his chase unsuccessful. I told him I would be fine and thanked him. I listened to his reprimand for walking alone late at night. The imposing danger and what could have happened to me took precedence in my mind, so much so that I could not remember the argument that had brought me so far away from home. My friend helped me into his car and drove me back to where I had started from.

Wordlessly, I left him and walked slowly back up my driveway.

Darlene Rogers '07

The Proclamation

AD 40:

"The tiger, Trac."

"What?"

"The tiger, that beast that has been slaughtering the peasants. They say that it is demon, or a god."

Lady Trung Trac stared at her sister Nhi, uncomprehending. It was challenging for Trac to focus; she had spent another sleepless night alone in her bed, her eyes bloodshot from silent weeping. It had been many weeks since the Chinese overlord had killed Trac's husband, the lord Thi Sach, and though she would not publicly shed a tear and look pathetic in mourning attire before her people, Trung Trac's heart was shattered. She had lost her adored husband to a foreign dictator's sword.

Trung Nhi scooted forward on her couch, a slow smile spreading across her face. "That is what we need to do to unite the Vietnamese!"

"Nhi," Trac sighed wearily, her head sinking into her hand. "I am not following you."

The smile faltered on Nhi's youthful face for a moment. "Trac, we know that we have to drive the Chinese out. All of the Vietnamese know that. But our people are afraid; the Chinese have appeared very powerful, and made our people think their leaders are very weak."

Slowly, the haze of grief began to lift, and Trac finally understood her sister's words. Trac's head snapped up, her eyes wide. "If we kill the tiger--"

"If you kill the tiger," Nhi corrected, her eyes bright and twinkling. "If you kill the tiger, then the Vietnamese people will have hope. You will have done what no Chinese invader had been able to do in a decade. If you destroy the tiger god, you will become a god, and you'll have thousands of soldiers at your back."

Trac stared at her sister. That was it. She had to prove to her people that she was not weak, that they were not weak; if she killed the tiger and revealed how fearless she was, the Vietnamese people would have faith. They would follow Trung Trac into war, and remove the hated invaders for good.

Nhi was still outlining her plan eagerly as Trac slowly came back to her senses. "... You are the better hunter, Trac, and the better fighter. You go and kill the tiger, bring it back, and we will skin it in the city square. I shall stretch the hide out and dry it, and we will use it to write our proclamation on it. I can do that, I have been rehearsing the lines for a while--Trac? Sister, where are you going?"

"To get my elephant," Trac said as she swept off her couch, calling to her servants. "I do not want to wait a moment longer."

Trac stood in the waist-high palms, her back pressed up against the rough trunk of a tree. She felt hot blood working its way down her arm, slicking her palm as she gripped the handle of her sword, dripping down and mingling with the blood of the monster on her blade.

Behind Trac, she could hear her elephant trumpeting in alarm, and her retainers shouting in a panic, Nhi screaming in fear. Trac did not dare turn to wave to her sister and their guards, to let them know where she was, that she was alive.

The tiger was waiting for her to turn her back.

Trac felt her sword arm growing heavy, the muscles quaking both from exhaustion and fear. She stared at the beast crouched only feet from her in the palm fronds, its blood staining the dirt as its wicked eyes bore through her, filled with hate.

The peasants were right; this was no ordinary tiger. Trac and Nhi had assumed that the accounts were exaggerated, that it was merely a toothless old tiger that found humans to be easy prey. In the days that Trung Trac and Trung Nhi had spent tracking the cat through the jungle, the sisters learned that they had chosen a cunning foe, a creature of uncanny intelligence, and terrifying size.

From atop her favorite elephant, Trac had managed to wound the devil with her arrows, but was startled that the tiger had shaken off what would have killed normal animals. The more Trac and Nhi pursued the tiger, the more enraged it became, until it scaled a tree and lunged, knocking Trac to the ground and dragging her into the undergrowth. Her retainers had shrieked in horror and readied their own bows, but quick-thinking Nhi cried for them to stop; there was no way the men could hit the tiger without killing Lady Trac.

Trac had managed to free her sword from her side and drove it deep between the tiger's ribs. The beast gave a scream of pain, batting her aside with one huge paw. Both woman and tiger staggered back rapidly, putting distance between one another. The tiger sank down into the leaves, but did not lick its wounds, as an ordinary tiger would. It folded its ears back and screamed in fury.

Trac had never seen a tiger so huge. Its teeth had to be the length of her hand. She could feel her flesh beginning to bruise where the tiger had struck her.

The devil snarled and flexed its claws, but did not move to stand. Its bright fur bristled along its neck, and its tail flipped impatiently.

Trac's mouth had gone dry, and she sagged against the tree, cold with terror. How could she kill such a demon? It was impossible; she feared that if she blinked, the tiger would be atop her in an instant

Her sword nearly slid free of her hand, and Trac instinctively clamped down on it. She would never let this sword touch the ground.

It had been a gift from Thi Sach, her loyal husband, her childhood friend, her teacher and student and confidante and lover

He was the reason Trac was here now, facing down the tiger that had terrorized Vietnam for ten years. It was his selflessness, and the love for his country, his wife and his sister-in-law and their people that drove Thi Sach to take a stand against the dictators. Thi Sach fought the Chinese governor on behalf of his people and his overthrown king, Hung, and was murdered for it.

'It cannot continue any longer,' Trac thought, slowly standing up. 'I will not allow the invaders to make more widows. I will not have them defile my land, and sully my husband's name!'

Startled to see Trac stand so tall, the tiger narrowed its eyes. It hissed a warning, and struggled to rise to its feet, but it did not have the strength left.

Raising her sword, Trac strode towards the tiger. "Your death will bring freedom to Vietnam."

There was furor in the city square. Word spread like wildfire that Lady Trung Trac had killed the demon tiger, and was displaying its hide for all to see. Farmers and shop owners jostled one another; noblemen and their wives elbowed their way through the crowd to see the tiger skin raised high, to read the proclamation written by Lady Trac's sister, Trung Nhi:

**Foremost, I will avenge my country,
Second, I will restore the Hung lineage,
Third, I will avenge the death of my husband,
Lastly, I vow that these goals will be accomplished.**

Trung Trac and Trung Nhi were successful in their campaign to free Vietnam from Chinese rule, leading armies numbering at 80,000 into battle, which included other famous women soldiers. The proclamation written above was actually from a speech Trung Trac gave to her troops. The sisters were named queens of the newly freed Vietnam, and Trung Trac was called "Trung Vuong; She-King Trung." Less than two years later, an outraged and embarrassed Emperor of China sent a much larger army to retake Vietnam. The Trung sisters were unprepared and, rather than face public torture and humiliation, they committed suicide together by drowning. The Trung sisters are national heroes and are honored with a festival and national holiday.

Kara Senecal '08

Mona Lisa

I lay on my back on the carpet, feeling the sweat run down my forehead, wearing a pair of cut off jean shorts that hardly cover my bottom. My pale, freckly legs stretch out in a V, the same with my arms. The shoulder of my pink tank top lazily drifts from its place on my shoulder, revealing the strap of my purple training bra. Holding my hands out in front of my face, I examine them. The pink nails, with the half moons of white near the base stick out from my long skinny fingers. I run them through my strawberry blond hair that's spread out on the carpet behind my head. While sticking my right leg up into the air so it will catch some of the air from my ceiling fan, I yell, "Mother, hurry up with that lemonade. I'm dyin' in this heat."

"Hold your horses," I hear her walking up the hallway towards the kitchen, she stops in the living room and says, "Baby, put on some music." I obey, rolling over onto my stomach and crawling on my knees over to our record collection, which is propped up against the side of the bookshelf. After flipping through the heavy square albums, I choose Elton John's *Honky Chateau*. Standing, I pull the large circular record from its protective sleeve and place it on the record player, dropping the needle into the first of its many tiny grooves. After the first few seconds of scratchy nothingness, I hear the beginning keys of "Honky Cat". Lying back down on the floor, this time on my stomach, I watch my mother working in the kitchen. She stirs yellow powder into a large plastic pitcher, humming to herself. Her blond curls are drawn up in a French twist in the back of her head. One stray curl creeps down her bare shoulders. She wears a white lacy tube top and a tight pair of blue jeans, which hug her hips as she sways to "Honky Cat". "Mom's got a big butt," I giggle, turning over on my back, craning my neck to see her reaction.

She stops stirring, grabs her bottom and turns to me with a look of pretend shock on her face. Her amber eyes narrow and she looks as though she is about to pounce on me, but instead, a look of satisfaction dawns on her face as she begins to dance. She throws her lightly tanned arms up in the air and shakes her hips while bending her knees and walks towards me, "Get back, Honky cat!" she sings, pointing at me.

"No, don't dance!" I cover my eyes. "Mothers don't dance."

"Don't they?" she tip toes towards me like a ballerina and grabs my hand.

"No!" I shriek, "Get off!"

"Shhh . . ." she pulls me up, looking pleased with herself. ". . . it's like tryin' to drink whiskey from a bottle of wiiiiiiine!" She dips me back so that my hair sweeps across the carpet and blows a raspberry on my neck.

I laugh while flailing my arms and pull away from her. She bends at the waist shaking her shoulders and singing to me, ". . . Livin' in the city, boy, is gonna break your heart!" She grabs the television remote from the end table next to the couch and tosses it to me. It's my stand in microphone.

"But how can you stay, when your heart says no? How can you stop when your feet say go?" I sing, jogging in place, laughing, and staring into my mother's eyes. A few escaped curls bounce along side her face as she bobs up and down.

I can feel the sweat beading on my face and neck, but I refuse to stop dancing until the song is over. With her hands she plays a fake trombone as I skip around her in a circle. She stops and grabs me around the waist. "Mother!" I scream as she twirls me.

"Hush! Have a little fun, baby." I watch her bare feet on the carpet, trying to keep balance. "You're getting too old for this, girlie," she laughs, putting me down as the song ends.

She leaves me sprawled out on the floor of the living room, heaving for breath as small streams of perspiration flow down my face. I watch her wipe sweat from her hairline with her arm. Picking up the pitcher and two glasses filled with ice, she saunters into the living room. She sits on the end of the couch and places the pitcher on the small end table. "Come here and sit next to me, dawlin'," she taps the space on the couch next to her. I obey and plop myself down.

She pours lemonade into one of the glasses and I listen to the cracking noise of the ice cubes as the liquid hits them. My mouth begins to water and I reach out for the glass. "Not yet," looking at me sternly, she takes my hair and places it all over my one shoulder so that my neck is exposed. Then she places the cold glass of ice and lemonade on my neck. The cool sensation fills me and I give a little shiver. She laughs and hands me the glass.

She pours herself a glass and leans back, her head touching the wall. I sit Indian style next to her, holding my glass gingerly, so as not to drop it. I watch the droplets of sweat on her face and neck and for the first time notice stress lines forming on her face. She closes her eyes and rubs the bottom of her glass along her forehead, sighing with relief.

I reach across in front of her and put my glass down on the table. Then I nestle my head into her lap, lying on my side. I can feel her hands stroke my hair. "You've got your daddy's red hair," she tells me for the millionth time.

"I know," I say, "but I wish it was curly like yours."

"No, you don't. It's so pretty and straight. I wish I had your hair." "Let's trade." She laughs at me.

In the silence that follows she strokes my hair as "Rocket Man" begins to play. She stops for a moment, as if in shock, and then I hear her begin to sing. "... It's lonely out in space ..."

I smile, but she can't see me.

"I always think of him when I hear this song," she mumbles, as if I'm not supposed to hear.

"Who, Mommy?"

"Your daddy."

"Why?" I turn onto my back so that I'm looking up at her face.

"Cause he's never here, baby, that's why." I can hear the pain in her voice and see her chin quiver as she speaks.

"But he's just working," I say in my father's defense.

"I know, dawlin'."

I can see tears brimming in her eyes as she tries to look away.

"Mommy," I reach my hand up to touch her cheek. "I love you."

Her face hardens. "You better," she snickers, while wiping her eyes. "Jump up there, baby, and turn the record over," she tells me.

I roll off the couch, walk to the shelf and turn the record over.

"Look at you walk," she says, "Swingin' those little hips of yours. Aren't you a little young for that?"

I spin around, feeling my hair fly through the air, "Mother, I'm eleven," I tell her in all seriousness.

A look of mock concern crosses her face. "Forgive me, honey."

I can see her studying me out of the corner of my eye as I flip the record over. "Do you want me to take your picture?" she asks.

"Sure," I shrug my shoulders.

"Then go get my camera, it's on my dresser." I skip down the hallway and into her bedroom. I see the double bed with the pale blue comforter. Only the left side is disturbed. I walk over to the right side, my father's side. I bend down and smell the pillow. It smells like him, peppermint and polyester.

"Can't you find it?" My mother calls from the living room.

"No, I got it." I yell back to her. I grab the camera off the end of the dresser and run back into the living room. She is sitting on the floor with a yellow rose from the bouquet on the kitchen table in her hand. She dips her nose into the soft petals.

"I love roses."

"Me too. Especially yellow ones," I say.

I hand her the camera and sit down next to her. She places her hands on my face, examining me. Using her fingers, she gives my hair a side part, so that my bangs sweep across my face. She tucks it behind my ears. Pulling her hands away, she looks at me skeptically, then puts the rose behind my ear. "There," she says, nodding. "Get up on the couch."

She waltzes over to the record players and moves the needle to "Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters". The sweet piano and Elton's voice blend beautifully. She closes her eyes, soaking it in. "I thank the Lord there's people out there like you," she sings, pointing at me.

I giggle.

She squats on the floor and ducks behind the camera. "Now smile, Mona Lisa."

I do, but only for her.

Laura Gaughan '10



Meagan Leedberg
Step Falls, Photograph



Sherley Armand
Untitled, Photograph



Ifeoma Onuorah
Dance it Out, Color pencil and oil pastel



Ifeoma Onuorah
Download, Music, Technology, Acrylic paint, color pencil, and oil pastel



Ifeoma Onuorah
Jazz Band, Color pencil and soft pastel



Ifeoma Onuorah
My Little Apartment, Color pencil and oil pastel

Colophon

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