

# 2nd Year Pieces

2004-2005

## Summer

by Garret Spenst

This day is not an ordinary day.  
Adolescent children scream with joy  
inside a sunny bus putting along.

Fields of full-bloomed summer roses pass their eyes --  
warm scents filling young bodies;  
transporting childish minds.

Riding bikes and sticky-fingered camping nights  
flow through innocent thoughts.  
After today, the children will play.

---

## The Maze

by Kirsten Wiking

An endless tunnel coils  
through my head.  
The clockwork of my brain  
ticks as shiny new thoughts enter.  
My mind begins to hum  
with satisfaction --  
new ideas to manipulate  
appear from the surface world.  
A conveyer belt  
of inspirations  
proceeds, awaiting organization  
under my blond tresses.  
Occasionally, a faded memory;  
a lonely teardrop in time  
is recalled. It bursts into  
my thoughts like a burglar entering a house.  
Everything from that isolated moment  
is brought to my attention.  
My brain is flooded  
with that memory:  
a bizarre two-dimensional world,  
where nothing but itself exists.  
My five senses are saturated in  
that solitary instant.  
Snap! The familiar wavelengths  
of my name echo through deep canyons  
of my skull, flashing me

## The Great Battle

by Jordan Sussi

With capes raised, enraged, the bloody  
cocks glare at each other,  
exhausted from combat,  
their last bit of energy allowing them to vault,  
slashing fiercely with sharp, long spurs.  
Blood spews from gashed throats.  
White, crimson, cocks fall,  
face down, side by side,  
no longer alive:  
Dark red fluid drains from torn, feathered throats.

---

## Ease

by Katie McDaniel

My feet slide into soothing velvety blankets,  
feeling relaxed and ready for rest.  
Every aching and tender muscle  
is keen to lie down.  
After a day of grueling Nordic practice,  
my neck and head about to collapse, I  
slink into my cozy supple pillow like a worm.  
My quads and hamstrings are cross and annoyed  
at my coach for dragging them up four more hills.  
They sink into a gentle mattress: the day's work forgotten,  
the feeling of relaxation floods my body, easing every  
pain.  
My brain settles into a meditative state.  
I leisurely drift toward deep sleep.  
What would I do without  
↳my bed?

---

## Joy

by Jamie Valle

On dark nights, a round white moon rises high;  
snow falls gleaming in luminous moonlight.  
Like sprinkling salt, snow descends,  
a flurry of white.

I am compelled to go out and

out of my head and back  
toward society's idea of  
"real".

---

**That's who I am**  
by Jamie Valle

Five foot six,  
complimented by dark brown, sinuous  
hair. Deep blue eyes glint  
under lazy, worn  
lashes. A veteran at smelling, my wide nose  
prominently dominates my face.  
A husky, broad body; muscular calves and wide feet  
are the source of my athletic achievements; my pride.  
Thirteen, hurrying to get school work  
done as a commuter rushes to catch his plane.  
Flooded with stress, striving to  
do my best. At the center  
a wide smile gleams, plated  
with metal braces.

---

**Ending Lives**  
by Jamie Valle

A piercing bullet bursts through pine trees  
racing towards oncoming enemies:  
a photo finish.  
Who prevails:  
bullet or man?

Weary soldiers run towards a nearby forest  
as saliva drips from mouths; sweet freedom nears.  
Pine fragrance envelopes soldiers entering refuge.  
Singing with joy, the bullet slices brisk air,  
on the hunt, ready for fresh blood.  
Nearing a running man, it approaches with fury.  
The company immediately drops  
to firm ground.

A whistle heard overhead  
means life is spared.  
The projectile speeds along  
toward another patch of pines.  
Splinters fly. Lodging in rough bark,  
the bullet's life is spent as  
its master slumps to  
a hard grave, laden with lead.

lie in the absorbent  
sea of monotony.

My face dampens as  
more snow tumbles down an overcast sky,  
settling upon my chilled nose.

The world is silenced;  
I am humbled and relaxed under  
sweet tranquil skies of falling  
snow.

---

**Earthquakes**  
by Forrest Reiling

A water glass stands alone.  
Ripples course energetically  
as it rattles on the counter.  
Angrily, pots and pans clang;  
earth vibrates.  
A fissure snakes to a car like an enraged viper,  
swallowing the automobile whole.  
Buildings are reduced to matchsticks  
in an instant. Human structures resemble  
card houses in the midst  
of a rampaging sledgehammer.  
Cities disintegrate to rubble.  
All is quiet. Ripples recede  
from the water glass, that stands  
alone.

---

**Somebody**

by Jordan Sussi

Tears poured from my red eyes.  
"Why now?" I thought.  
"Why couldn't it have been somebody else?  
Somebody of less importance,  
somebody unnoticed,  
somebody,  
like me."

He was such a kind, loving person,  
like a father to me. For a few years now  
he's been gone,  
and can no longer be  
with somebody

---

### **Descent**

by Forrest Reiling

A lone raindrop falls from godly heights.  
It whistles in anticipation,  
as its long journey downward begins.  
Rapid decent accelerates, like a racer  
after the gun. The drop  
is the first of its kind;  
the harbinger of a storm.  
A target approaches like hellhounds,  
like the end of life,  
descending without control.  
Tyranny of gravity governs drops' every  
movement without escape,  
no chance of rebellion;  
still there is ho-  
"plop".

---

### **Destruction**

by Kathryn Pope

Dazzling lightening blazes across blustering sky.  
A deep rumbling announces the unwelcome  
arrival of rain; torrents of water strike sodden ground.  
Small rodents scurry for cover,  
frantic to escape nature's wrath.  
Dark foreboding waters  
beat relentlessly against shores, unwilling  
to be restrained. Chaos  
envelopes this imposing scene.

---

### **Raccoons**

by Cameron Charles

It is a sunny day in late May. My dad, Cory, and I drive  
into our driveway, weary from a long trip. As we unpack  
our gear, we hear two raccoons fighting in a pine-tree.  
Before we know it, they begin falling from tree-limb to  
tree-limb, until finally they plunge to the earth.

Alarmed, my dad instructs me to get the twenty-gauge  
shotgun. I bolt into my house and snatch it from the safe.  
During this time, one of the snickering raccoons is  
climbing up a different pine-tree. It notices my presence

like his grandson,  
somebody,  
like me.

---

### **Fire Theater**

by Kirsten Wiking

Long shadows  
of tall dead trees  
stretch across fallen branches and  
unhealthy grass.  
Slowly  
the air thickens, intensifying  
all feeling. Jolts of fiery hot lightning  
catapult through midnight sky,  
striking hapless pines.  
Everything combusts  
in crimson flame. All life is  
trapped in a  
flaming cage of doom.

---

### **Frosty Trek**

by Emily Mulnick

Brittle snow crunches under  
each step. Fingers tingle with bitter cold.  
Blowing hot air into my winter gloves,  
warmth spreads into numb hands.  
Exhaling small clouds of  
white smoke, I breathe;  
light wind  
blows through the passageway; chilly, and crisp.  
Dull light, like a bulb sputtering, reveals  
the end of the forest,  
hope that there will be a town.  
Walking into the clearing,  
I gaze around and find myself staring at  
more snow.

---

### **Weekend Habits**

by Cameron Charles

Saturday morning,  
opening my eyes, I rush out of bed,  
like a bunny excitedly scurries about.  
Being lazy, I ask my older brother, Clay,  
to make me breakfast. He prepares delicious,

and stares at me with huge, beady eyes.

I pull the gun to my quivering shoulder and squeeze the trigger. The stalk of the gun throws back my shoulder as the limp raccoon tumbles out of the towering tree. I run up to the lifeless corpse and gaze at its limp body lying in the cool grass. I look around for the other raccoon, but it has escaped.

I begin to feel bad for the dead raccoon, but I did what needed to be done. Ever since that day, we have not had and trouble with raccoons.

---

**Crystal Rain**  
by Kirsten Wiking

Cream-colored branches  
and wet leaves  
surround me. The smell of rotting logs  
and damp fur lingers.  
Plump rain droplets  
drench the whole wood: eyes  
pouring over an intriguing novel, a  
melancholy mood.  
One more step and Secret Lake  
appears.

---

**Farewell**  
by Kathryn Pope

Sadness weighs heavily upon still air,  
a blanket of fog over somber scenes. Obscure  
black-cloaked figures cluster around  
the open grave, staring vacantly  
into infinite depths. The monotonous  
droning of a preacher's voice drags the mourners into a  
melancholy trance.  
Rays of sunlight alight upon the small party,  
failing to penetrate that overwhelming agony consuming  
the spirits of all present.

---

**Boiling Beaches**  
by Emily Mulnick

Sand flows between my toes.  
Waves splash the shore, soaking my feet

fluffy pancakes that melt in my mouth  
as I try to chew on them.  
Afterwards, I relax on my enormous comfy couch  
with my dad and older brother watching college football.  
Without  
thinking, I turn the channel to a different game.  
The game is very awkward;  
the referees have made a bad call, the fans are booing,  
the coaches yell from the sidelines.  
We begin to laugh at the television  
surprise.

---

**Loneliness**  
by Kathryn Pope

Hot, arid wind whips  
across barren landscape. No living  
creature in sight; heat of afternoon sun  
bleaches vacant expanses.  
A lonely silence consumes the empty scene, uninterrupted  
by welcome signs of activity.

---

**Turbulence**  
by Kirsten Wiking

*Ladies and Gentlemen, please prepare for take off.*

It is common knowledge that airplane crashes most  
commonly happen during take-off and landing. I  
frantically search the cabin to see if any of the other  
passengers are as uneasy as I am with this thought. The  
cool monotone voice continues: *Please open your  
emergency pamphlet and direct your attention to the front  
of the cabin. My assistant Tammy will walk you through  
the emergency procedures.* Tammy is a middle-aged  
woman with frizzy blond hair and a pearly smile. It is a  
baffling idea that she will be the one to save us in the event  
of a plane crash.

I snap open the Emergency Guide and begin to  
meticulously read the information. Why is it that, in all  
airplane Emergency pamphlets, the cartoon passengers  
look so calm? They've just been through a mid-air  
collision, yet they all have serene faces and cheery smiles.  
The plane has just begun speeding up on the runway and  
my body prepares for the worst. My feet are planted in the  
floor space in front of me; my clammy fingers grip onto  
the armrests. The plane successfully takes off, and does not

as though someone with really bad aim  
were spraying me with a hose.  
Sweat drenches my face;  
the sun's rays beat harshly: an abusive husband punching  
his wife, who might collapse under the force.  
The heat overtakes me;  
I sit down, feeling dizzy.  
Growling like a lion, my stomach tells me  
it's time for lunch. Relaxing, and starting on a cheese  
sandwich, and chips.  
I swallow, letting the food  
nourish my stomach.  
Palm trees sway; a light breeze  
brushes the scorching beach.

---

crash, yet.

Tammy now begins to come around with drinks and refreshments. I order a small cup of water and a bag of extra-salty complementary peanuts. The man next to me orders a V8 Juice. Then, almost as quickly as he had received it, it is spilt on his L.L. Bean Sweater-Vest. He begins to maliciously spit out swear words. All the mothers on the plane start to glare at him, and then switch their gaze to me, assuming I'm his daughter and wondering why I don't shut him up.

A decision is made to hide. I hastily walk into the bathroom and lock the door. Inside the lavatory, it smells like Mr. Clean Economy Size Cleanser and Ajax. My mind begins to drift in and out of the events that took place before the plane ride: the horrible cab driver who let out a mortifying smokers-wheeze every thirty seconds; the snide woman who checked in my luggage; the tedious metal detector which I had to go through four times, due to a metal belt buckle.

A sharp jolt forces me back into the present. My head is hurled into the bathroom mirror, leaving a plum-colored bump on my forehead. *Ladies and gentlemen please fasten your seat belts, immediately! We will momentarily be experiencing turbulence!* The cool voice has now become the loud, panicked voice. All my fears once again flood my mind. A ruthless push catapults me backward, stuffing my elbow into a pale blue trashcan. My eyes urgently hunt for an emergency seatbelt. Instead, I grasp onto the paper towel dispenser, praying for dear life. A few more small heaves; the turbulence has momentarily ended. My body slowly begins to relax and expel a heavy sigh of relief. The door once more begins to violently shake. My hands clutch the towel dispenser and I think, oh no, not again!

"Get out of there, what is taking you so long?" says a raspy, high-pitched voice. I clumsily open the door and the same man, who was moments ago cursing the stain on his shirt, is now pushing me out of the way and marching into the bathroom. The stain is now a few shades lighter but quite a bit larger. I scamper back to my seat and reach for a sip of water, but all of it is gone. Mr. Sweater Vest must have decided to use my water to dilute the stain on his shirt. He returns to notice me looking at my empty water cup and lets out a small snort of amusement, with no apology. I suddenly feel bad for Tammy the stewardess, having to deal with ignorant, cruel people and never being able to let her pearly pink-lipstick smile drop.

The tranquil voice makes a new announcement: *Ladies and Gentlemen, please be sure that your seats and tray*

*tables are in their locked and upright positions while we prepare for landing. As the plane makes its final decent, I don't even think about the plane crashing or about the possibility that I may be on the wrong plane or in the wrong country. These thoughts never cross my mind. All that I can think about is going home.*