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EDITOR'S NOTE

URBANA v5 is a Literary and Arts Magazine. It's produced by Miami Dade College InterAmerican Campus students. It is entirely comprised of student creative work. URBANA v5 is proud of its diversity and like the community around it, it is overflowing with talented student artists and writers that produce work in various genres. The Campus in which these artists move is located in Little Havana.

These artists and writers are emblematic of the community to which they belong. They form a dynamic crossroads of culture, language, social-economic status and age. They come from numerous countries and speak a variety of languages, including but not limited to English, Spanish, Creole and Portuguese. Their ages span from 17 to over 60. URBANA v5 is just as likely to showcase work by a recent high school grad or senior citizen.

Many of the artists and authors are newcomers to our country and some were professionals, such as doctors, architects and lawyers, in their countries of origin. Consequently, this wealth of knowledge and professional experience set these students apart from many of

their peers at similar institutions and give them a unique perspective when creating their artistic work. In addition to pursuing their artistic dreams and passions many of these students are also pursuing a career in Journalism, Nursing, Education or Translation to name only a few.

URBANA v5's goal this year is to reflect as best as possible that mosaic crossroads of diversity, knowledge, experience and talent. We hope you enjoy this modest representation of our student body's creative work.

Carl Cañizares
Editor-In-Chief
URBANAv5

2011 Awards

Urbana volume 4 was recognized with the following awards by the Florida College System Press Association, Division A (state):

1st Place, Illustration with Text-Individual, Melissa Larrocha

1st Place, Illustrations with Text - General, Michelin Javier, Melissa Larrocha and Laura Loret de Mola

3rd Place, Photography, Bertha Campo

3rd Place, Poetry, Rachel Delgado



FRONT COVER

Photograph:

CITADEL

NELDO GARCÍA

LAYOUT

Written work is presented in sections by genre: fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Artwork and photography are presented throughout the magazine either as individual pieces accompanying written work or grouped as stand alone collections.

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NATURAL EXALTATION NELDO GARCÍA





PREFACE

The poetry published in this volume speaks of love and lovers, of God and Country and of heroes and villains. Whether by imagery, rhyme or creative use of language, each of them is effective in evoking the pain, joy, pride, lust, patriotism, anger or gratitude each poet attempts to express.

ATOMIC LOVE

ORLANDO PADRON

The hearts we possess
are made up of positive vibes;
any negative feelings
would remain outside.

The bond we preserve
will never go off course;
how our hearts interact
could become a nuclear force.

We live a balanced life, hand in hand,
while awake and as we slumber.
Each indelible moment together
is represented as our atomic number.

I'll show you my affection
by creating a datum,
clarifying our love is inseparable
like an atom.

HUELLAS DEL DESTINO

TANIA KUSSY

No llores por un amor
Si fue verdadero
Tras sus huellas volverá
Si no fue sincero
Otro lo reemplazará
No se acaba el mundo
Cuando un amor se va.

AMOR INOLVIDABLE

ANDREA ORDUNA

Si todo entre los dos ya ha concluido...
si ya nuestra pasión atormentada
huyó como un venado perseguido
a ocultarse en la selva de la nada.

Si todo termino...si se ha extinguido
en nosotros la dulce llamarada
del amor, a la vez que en tu jornada,
y en mi jornada, floreció el olvido.

Si eso es verdad. ¿Por qué cuando te encuentro
me tiembla el alma y corazón adentro
aguda espina sin piedad me hiere?

¿Por qué? porque el amor en su batalla
a veces huye...y agoniza y calla.
y pena...y pena... pero nunca muere.

TODO
TANIA MORELL

MATERNIDAD

ANDREA ORDUNA

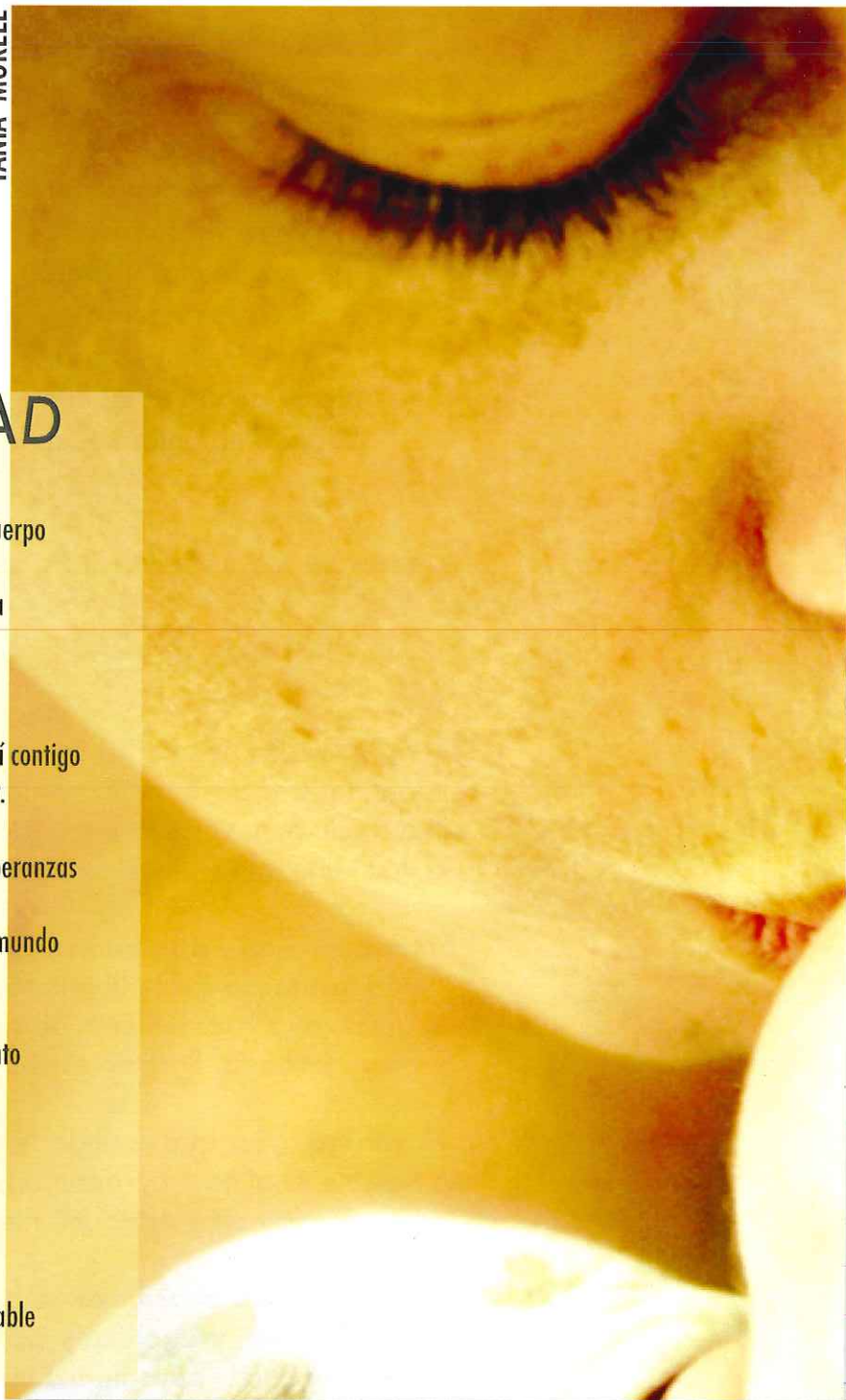
Hoy que tu hijo ya no está en tu cuerpo
hoy que puedes mirarlo dormir
hoy que sientes la sensación divina
de saber que nutres su existir.

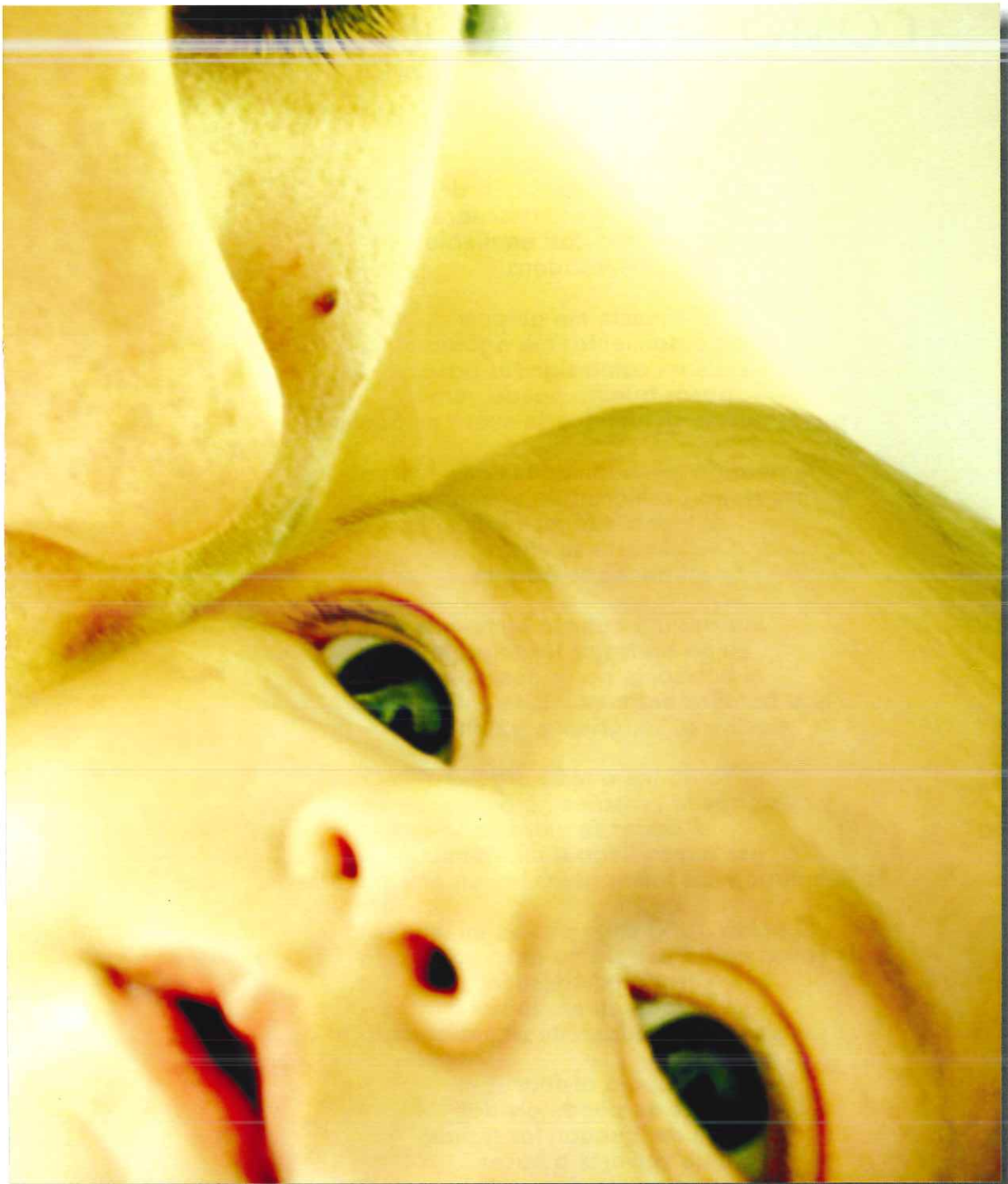
Quiero hablarte, hermana mía
y decirte que yo viví...que compartí contigo
la experiencia que acabas de tener.

A este niño que hoy te llena de esperanzas
lo criarás con dulzura y energía.
Lo formarás para que enfrente al mundo
con coraje...con fe y con alegría.

Que no conozca el gris del desaliento
y que viva su vida sin temor,
lo vas a conseguir, estoy segura,
pues le darás amor...todo tu amor.

Todo esfuerzo por él vale la pena
y su ternura fuerzas te dará
pues nada en el mundo es comparable
a la dulce plenitud de ser mamá.





COMO SE PUEDE OLVIDAR

TANIA MORELL

Nada ha cambiado
aun se sienten tus pasos casi dormidos
el amargo vacío descubre
una realidad casi en niebla
perturbadora

El silencio me golpea
los pensamientos me agobian
desde mi cama sigo tus pasos
pasos que no puedo ver
pasos que se sienten fuerte sobre mi pecho

He perdido mis habilidades, mis fuerzas
es mi cuerpo deshidratado un mar de llanto
el techo está mas bajo
el suelo se eleva
mi pecho se aprieta

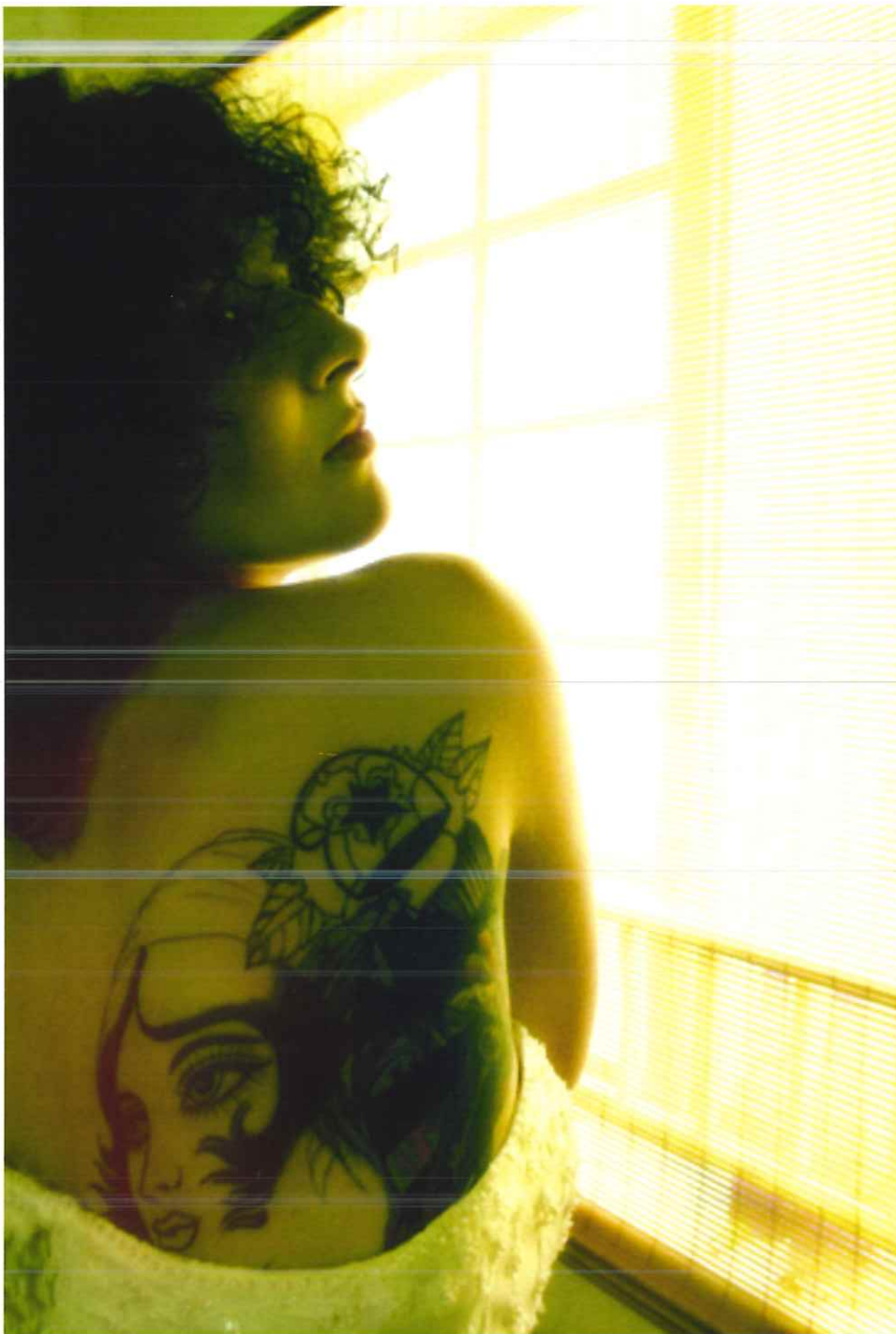
Me deslizo babosa humeante
caigo sin tratar levantarme
el horizonte no se deslumbra
hay batallas entre mi mente y mi cuerpo
mortífera, sangrienta, extenuante

Ya no me queda orgullo
y por ende la sensatez ha desaparecido
el poder se extravió
ese nunca llegó a mis manos
las mentiras y las falsas ideas te han envenenado

El ácido abrió un hueco en mi lengua
causa carne putrefacta descorazonada
tirada con desdén
posada en mis labios
siendo aquel pedazo mi ultimo bocado

Como olvidar
como se puede olvidar
si aun me quedan las ganas
de volverte a hacer
lo que no me perdonaste.

FINISHED TANIA MORELL



MIRA KOMO

C MUEVE

REYNALDO MEZA

Mira komo c mueve
El cuerpo nunca miente
me está llamando silenciosamente
Miro a sus ojos espejos de su mente
Quiere menearlo suavemente

Mira komo c mueve
Con ella nadie puede
Es pura llama que no muere
Quiere prenderse junto a mi sin querer
Para romper la pista lentamente

Mira komo c mueve
Bajo el sol o cuando llueve
Nada la puede parar solo yo que tengo su llave
Viene a mi porque le doy bien suave
Komo a ella le gusta, sin parar toda la noche

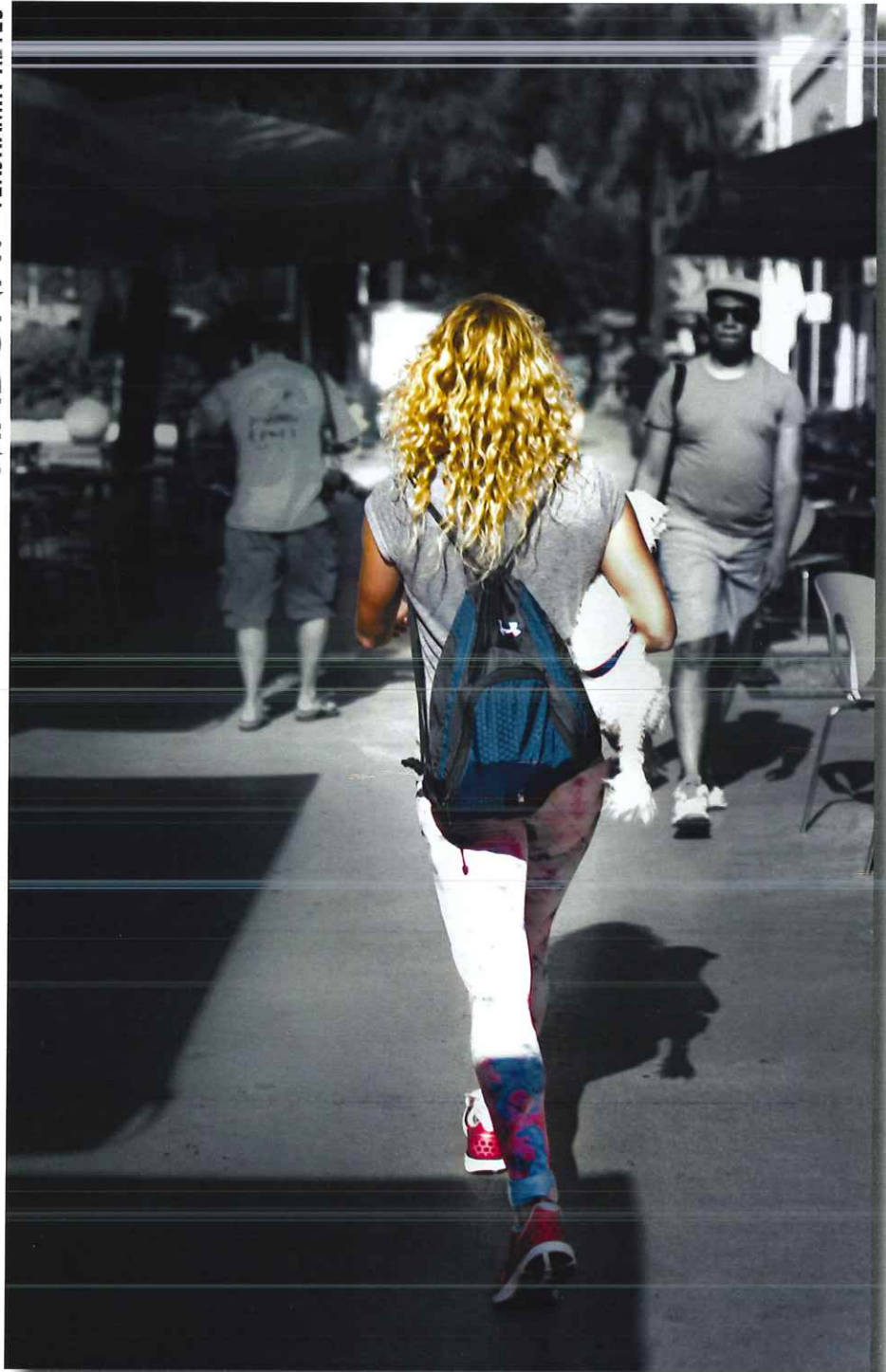
Mira komo c mueve
Everything that I need she has
Great mind and strength
Tomando sus curvas voy suavemente
Puedo meterme en un accidente

Mira komo c mueve
Nadie deja de mirarle
Yo solo C komo hacerle
Pa' apaciguar esta llama que no muere
C hacerlo komo ella quiere

Mira komo c mueve
Inflammable c mueve siempre
Arrancando suspiros de la gente
Solo tiene ojos para mí, solamente
Para ella nadie mas existe

Mira komo c mueve
Confía en mí ciegamente
A veces juega fuertemente
Komo probando mi mente y su suerte
Pero C que ella es mía solamente.

MADONA? VENJHAMIN REYES



SUEÑO ECLIPSADO

AMAYA VIÑAS

Ya no puede dar más luz,
carcomida está la vela,
agoniza el corazón,
se fue lo que más anhela
A cantar su triste pena
viene henchido de agonía
y añorando a su amado
se refugia en la poesía

Por la espalda la apuñalan
a lo largo del camino
los recuerdos de un amor
que ha tronchado el destino
Una pasión imposible
a punto de fallecer
que como roca inmóvil,
llora cada atardecer

Corazón adolorido,
prisionero del pasado,
hasta que una llama prenda,
otro fuego enajenado,
amarás el ígneo néctar,
de tu sueño eclipsado

UNTITLED 02 JOSUE SANTANA



CARTAGENA

REYNALDO MEZA

Arena, mar y sol acarician a mi Cartagena
Arropan con amor a mi niña buena
Añorándote estoy aquí en tierra ajena
Te recuerdo bajo el sol o en luna llena
Te extraño mi corralito de piedra

Las olas llevan el ritmo de una cumbia
Acariciándote los pies a mi querida Colombia
y con un mapale te proclaman la heroica
tus hijos con su sangre escribieron tu historia
y recordamos con un vallenato toda tu Gloria

por nuestra sangre corre la libertad y alegría
y con una indomable percusión llevan el ritmo del día
incontables noches pasaste en vigilia
para erradicar la opresión e injusticia
por eso te llamamos la Heroica



SUNRISE NELDO GARCÍA



SUNNY DAY

CARL CAÑIZARES

Loosen your tie and roll up
Your sleeve. Break out the
Wine for your chosen team.
It's victory in November
Twenty-Twelve and it's
Red all over on this sunny day.

Cut the waste and look away.
Stand your ground and don't
Cave in. Right is right
On this January day
Twenty-Thirteen and it's
Red all over on this sunny day.

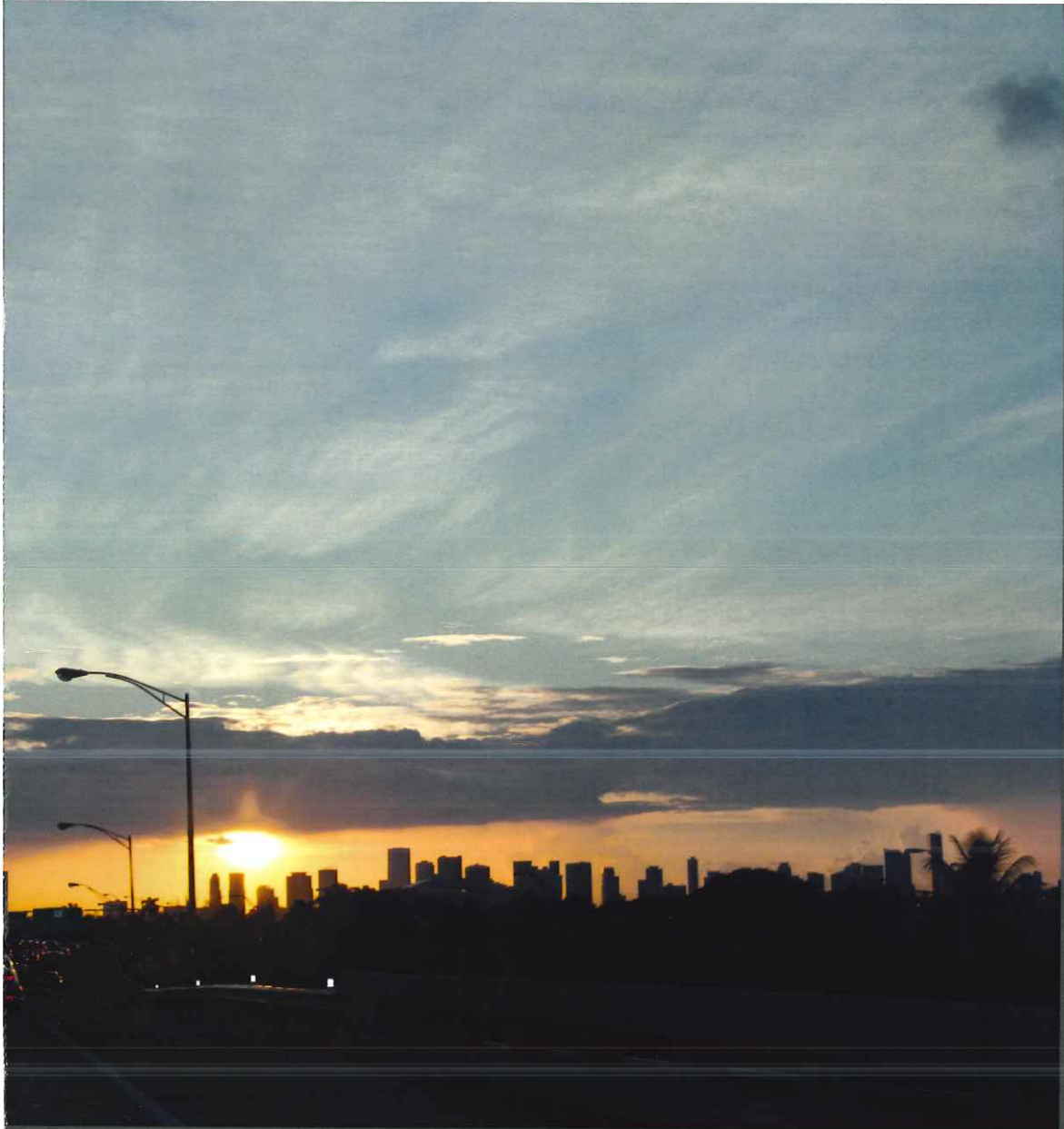
Deny the complaints. Ignore the
Claims. Entitlements aren't real,
Not anymore.
It's a new deal this May
Twenty-Thirteen and it's
Red all over on this sunny day.

The walls falter. The ceilings
Cave. The un-entitled loot while the
Righteous look on amazed
In the August heat of
Twenty-Thirteen and it's
Red all over on this sunny day.



photography:

AWAKENING NELDO GARCÍA



DETRÁS DE LOS MUROS

REBECA SANTANA

Detrás de los muros se encuentra la vida,
los planes , las luchas por el porvenir,
Detrás de los muros: el llanto y la risa,
la monotonía del diario vivir.
Detrás de los muros esta la alegría,
la lágrima viva de algún desamor,
la inocencia tierna muere cada día,
se forja el futuro de un mundo mejor.

Detrás de esos muros tengo mis libretas,
los sueños de luna, guitarra y canción,
tengo mis desvelos, sonrisas y ojeras,
guardo mi locura y mi amarga pasión.
Aquí están mis viejos y nuevos amigos,
mi olor preferido, mi brisa y mi estrella.
Aquí escondí poemas en mis bolsillos,
grite tonterías y me creí bella.

Detrás de estos muros se esconden problemas,
ansiedades, miedos con raíz de ternura.
Detrás de estos muros se rompen esquemas
de una vida dulce, complaciente y pura.
Estos muros altos ocultan afuera
el hogar caliente, el agua y la holganza,
la mascota linda, los cuentos de abuela,
el dulce sabor y la verde esperanza.

Los muros no caen, no pueden romperse.
Se quedan tejidos como un gran tapiz
guardando distancias, haciendo valerse
por si misma al alma, desnuda y feliz.



DF 2 RUBI ZAVALA



SIEMPRE

REBECA SANTANA

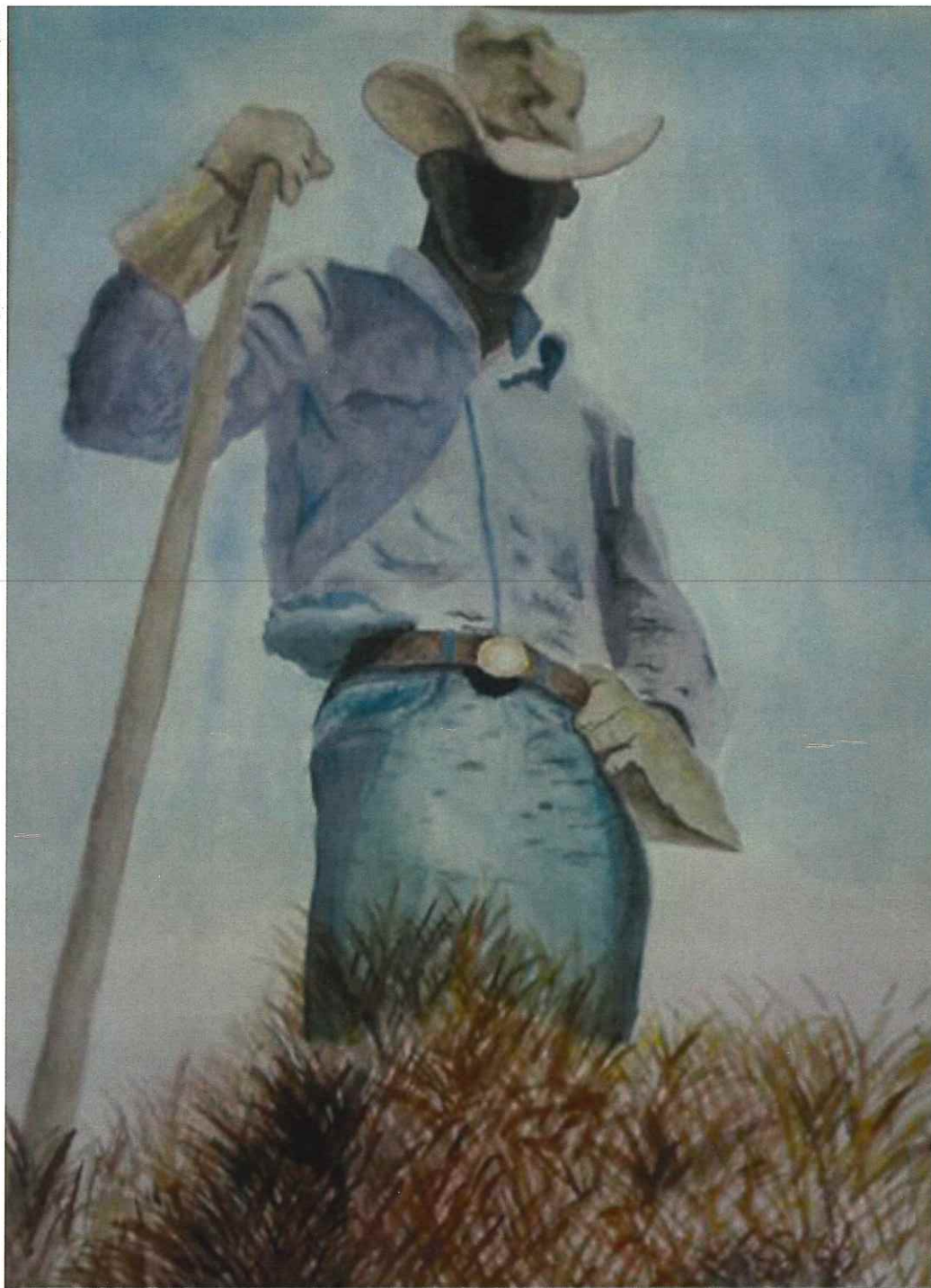
Aunque no te escuche,
aunque yo esté lejos,
como aire que sube
va mi pensamiento.
Y siento que vuela, y noventa millas
...se vuelve un camino de flores y arcilla.
Y ya no me importa si me es duro amarte,
si cambias de nombre...siempre voy a hallarte.
Con ese cantío de pregón, de fiesta,
de niño en la escuela, de abuela en su siesta.
El perro en el patio, la cola, el mercado,
el solar, la bulla ,el camión, el prado.
Todos mis amigos, los viejos, los nuevos,
los cantos de cuna, la cuota, los huevos
El polvo, la calle, la risa se siente,
el vecino, el chisme, se fue la corriente!
Siempre serás mía, y nuestra, y de todos
aunque no te escuche, aunque yo esté lejos.
Y me rio y lloro, y canto y me quejo,
y te reconozco al ver el espejo.
Tengo tu bandera tatuada en mi frente,
siempre seré tuya, Cuba hermosa, SIEMPRE!





CARPOOLING WITH A CUBAN TWIST
JONATHAN ROBLEDO

WORKING MAN MONICA PANEQUE



ABSTRACT MONICA PANEQUE



WAR MUSIC

JONATHAN FLORES

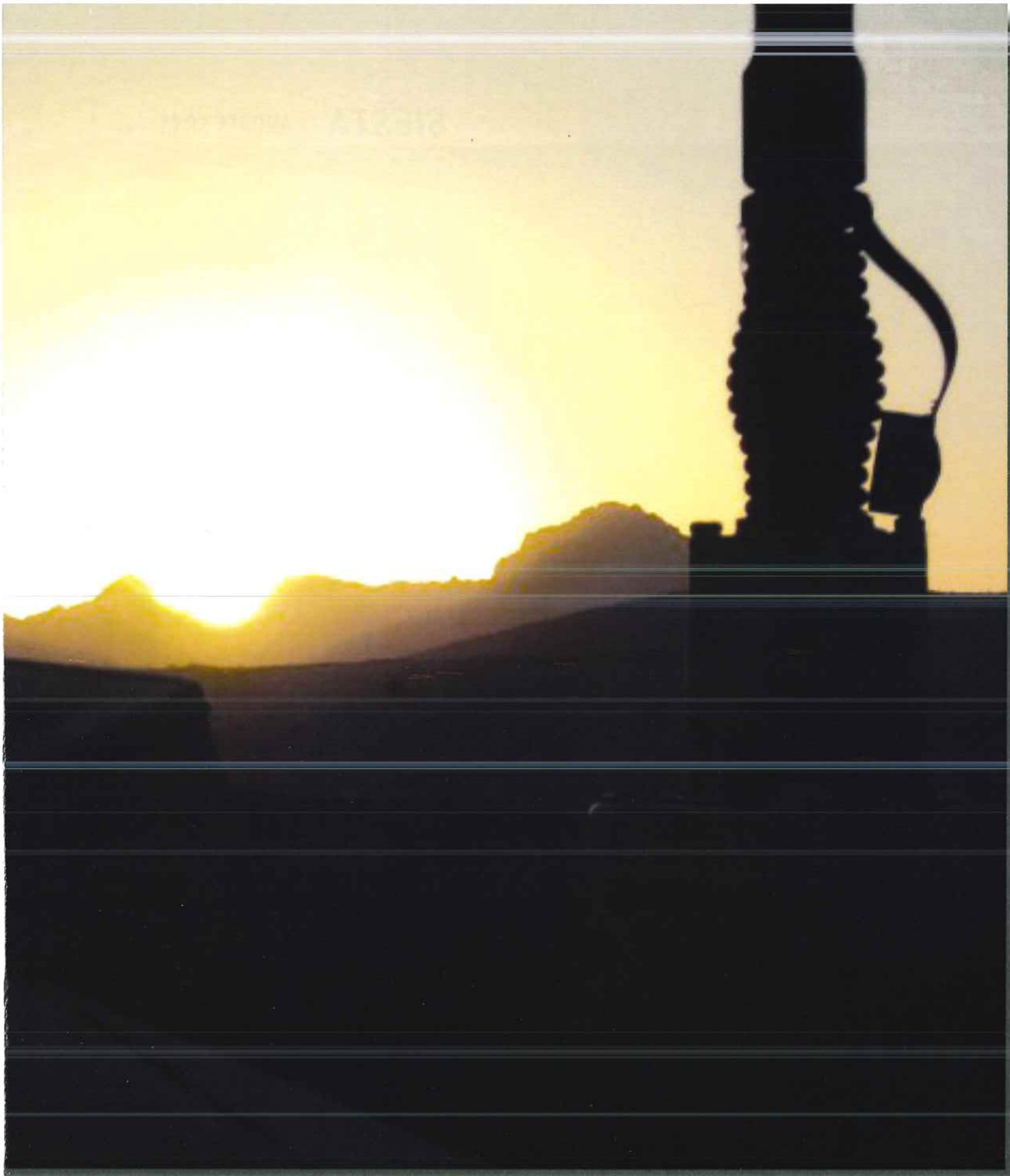
I run, I climb, I slide, I fall
Escaping from danger, that is all
"Swish!" next to my ear, "Bam!" in front and "Boom!" behind
We should've known, we made a mistake, there was a sign
A red flag, a blue flag and a white
Not the American flag, it's the Taliban wanting to fight
Each a marker to blow us piece by piece
But our training keeps us from resting in peace
We pass by the blue, "Boom!" Shocked, what to do?
We pass by the white, "Bam!" Fighting back, they are out of sight
We pass by the red, "Swish!" There is blood,
distress and friends shot in the head

I run, I climb, I slide, I fall
Escaping from danger, that is all
"Swish!" next to my ear, "Bam!" in front and "Boom!" behind
I'm running, running for my life
Surrounded by steep mountains and rocky hills
This is a nightmare where everyone dies or kills
I reach out to one rock, it slips and I go
Back down again to a place I don't want to know
I look to my left and look to my right
I am luckier than my buddies; they're bleeding and full of fright

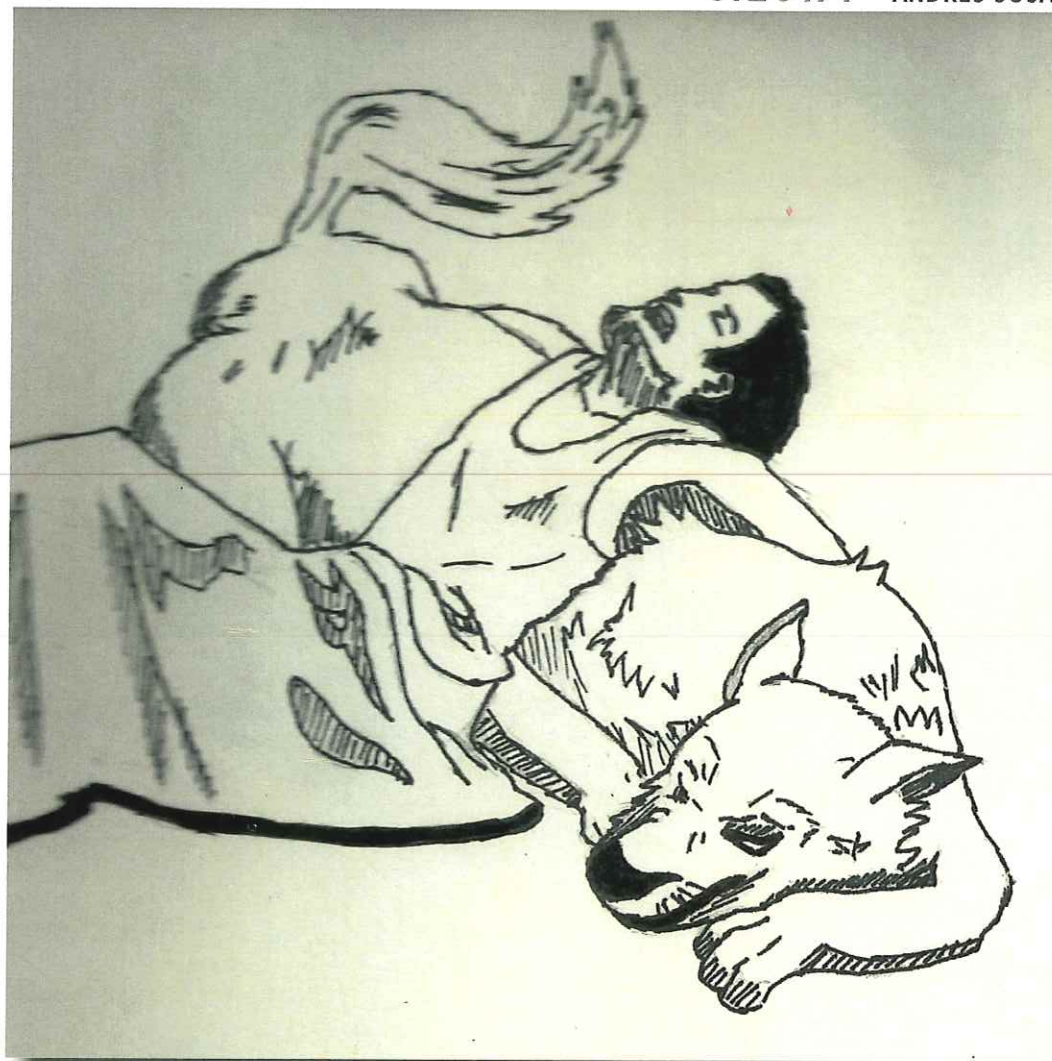
Thinking back about these times, the music just comes back to my ears
"Boom! Bam! Swish! Boom! Bam! Swish!"

photography:

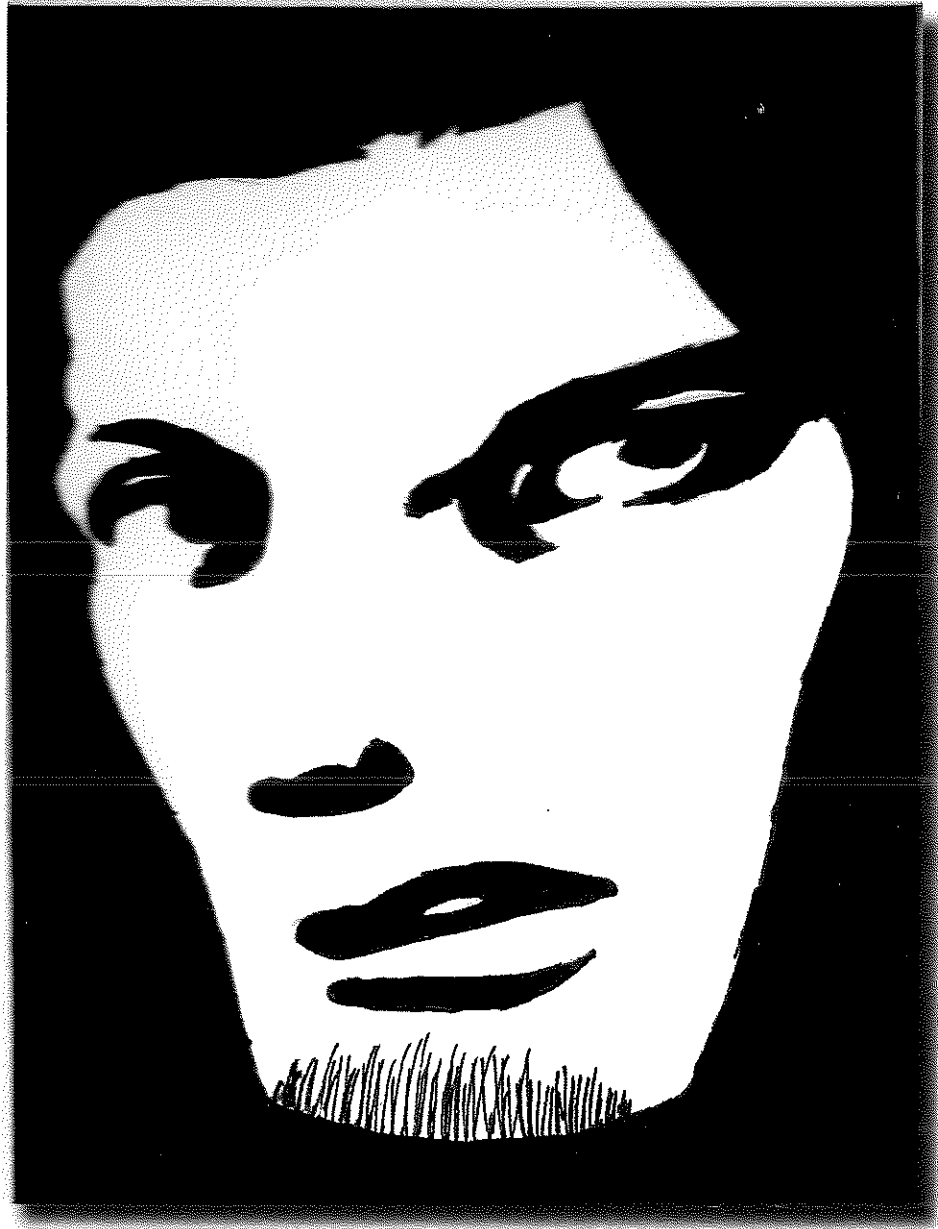
WAR BEAUTY
JONATHAN FLORES



SIESTA ANDRES SOSA



I LOST THE GAME ANDRES SOSA



MEMORIAL DAY

REYNALDO MEZA

Semper Fi es su apodo
Lealtad, temple, decisión y arrojo
Mortal con el enemigo
Bondadosos con su gente y amigos
Batallan contra el mal y el peligro por el mundo
Sin importarles sus vidas un bledo
Maldiciones se mezclan con sus tabacos
La muerte caza alrededor de ellos
Y la sortean con un pacto con Dios
Muchos regresan mutilados
De alma y cuerpo
Con sus vidas pagan el máximo precio
En un trueque sin retorno
Dejando a su gente triste sin Consuelo
Semper Fi de cuerpo y alma es su sello!

COURAGE JOSUE SANTANA





SACRED ILLUMINE VENJAMIN REYES





PREFACE

The works of fiction published in this volume range from flash or sudden fiction to more developed short stories. These writers address a variety of topics from personal tragedy to political commentary. We hope they move you to reflect on the topics they touch.

SLOW & STEADY

ARIEL RAMOS

As the sun beams into my eyes, I wake up and get to my feet. I yawn as I stretch my body. The smell of wet soil and garbage doesn't bother me, as it would a person wearing a tie and a fancy watch. As I stand there, I notice the white Nissan with a Miami Heat plate rush by. I know it's a quarter to seven. My neighbors start to walk to the service vans that provide the only free meal. A frigid drop lands on my head. I look up to see the high bridges over me, but the longer I gaze, the higher I feel I'm flying. The cars overhead rush with thunderous engines, and I wake up from reality.

ción

After my free meal, I sit for a while under the noisy bridge. After a few hours the driver of the white Nissan rushes by with a burger in his mouth and I know it's a quarter to twelve. As the young driver of the Nissan stops at a traffic light, he punches the steering wheel. He must be in a hurry. I slowly get to my feet and walk towards the busy street. I begin to ask for money and food in the sweltering temperature.

After four hours and seven dollars, a familiar car pulls up next to me. The young driver of the Nissan that is always in a hurry stops to give me a bottle of water.

"Can I give you some advice?" I say.

Surprised at what I asked him, he grins at me. "Sure," he says.

"You should really slow down,"

"And why in the world would I do that?" he asks.

"Because life is beautiful when you slow down and enjoy it."

"Really?" he responds sarcastically.

"Really." I answer back. "I had it all once, used to live always stressed out. I was always in a hurry, until it all came to a sudden halt and I lost it all," I paused for a second as the traffic light turned green. "Life is not a race, but a journey."

"Sure," he tells me and speeds off.

Before disappearing from sight, I notice for the first time cars passing him as he slows down.



c o l l e c t i o n

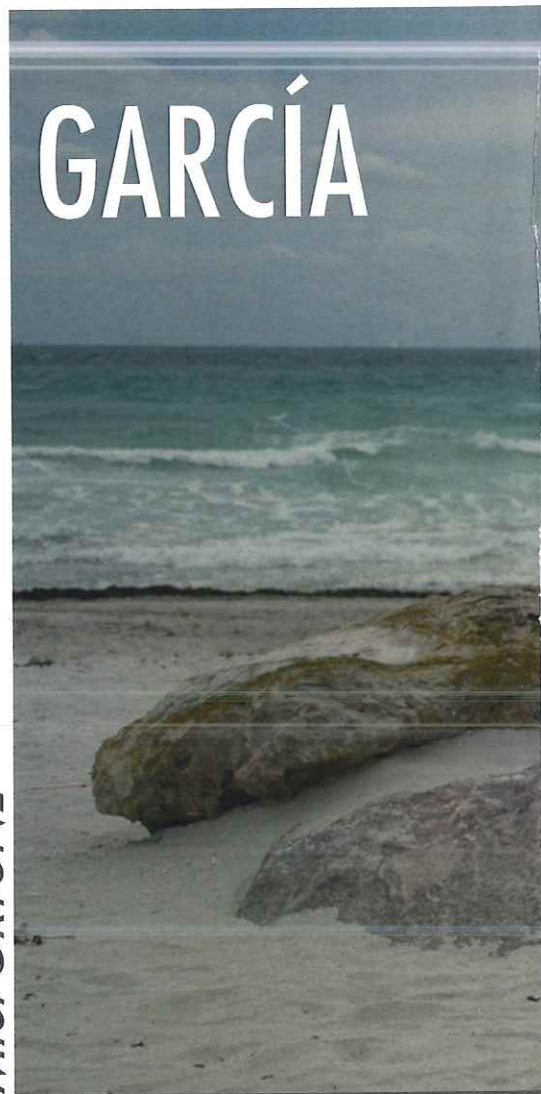
Series:

BEACH

neldo

GARCÍA

MISFORTUNE

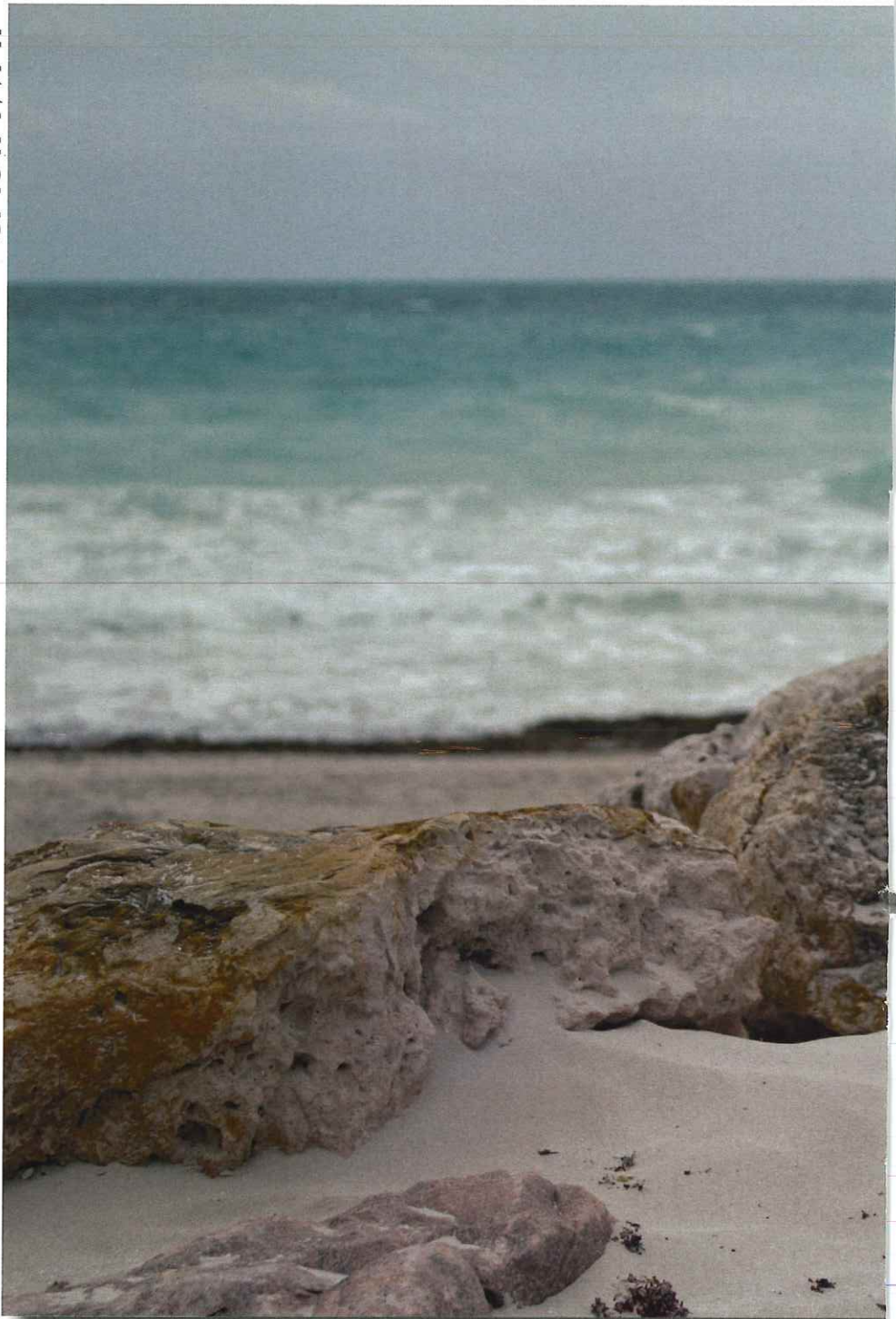


BRIDGES



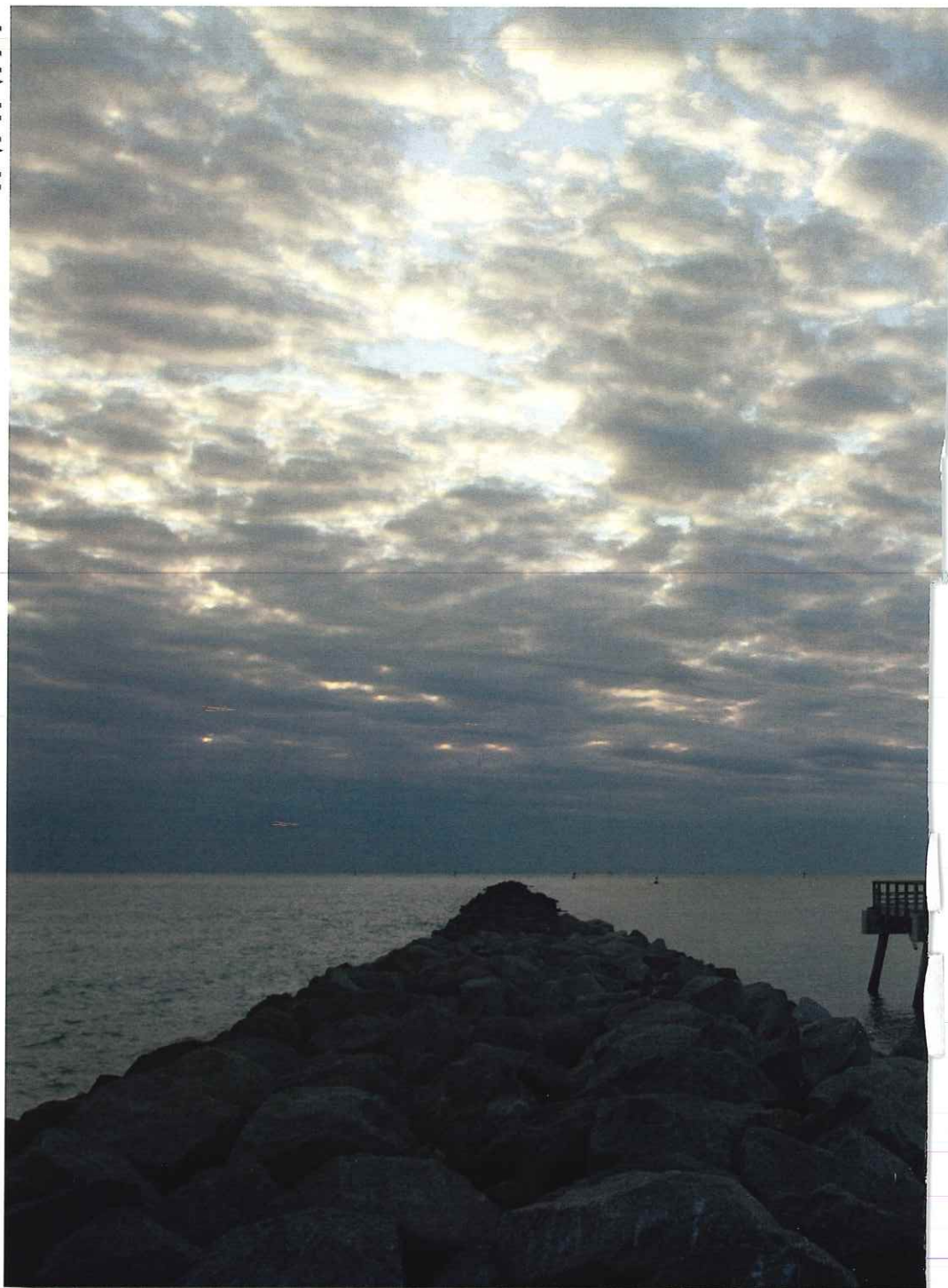


CASTAWAY





INFINITY





MRS. SCHWARTZ
CARL CAÑIZARES

As children our regular visits to the beach were to the mid-beach area of 71st Street. Car loads of families from the other side of the bay would arrive every Saturday, from May to August, unload their six kids, four coolers, eight lounge chairs, four regular folding chairs, a domino table, (of course playing dominoes was part of the sacred ritual), two umbrellas, and what seemed an unending number of sacks with clothes and food. We must have seemed like a gypsy troop setting up camp. At the end of each of these one day excursions, we had to pack up all our belongings and drive back across the bay to our suburbs in the west.

Later as teenagers we ventured further north to the "cool" beaches of BalHarbor, Haulover and Sunny Isles and to the southern-most beaches of Key Biscayne. However, none of these regular destinations stir up the fondest memories. Not their pristine crème color sand, turquoise blue water (clear enough to see your toes when chest deep), or balmy breezes that swept over our bronzing bodies succeeded in

placing them at the top of the list.

That honor goes to South Beach. However, when I was growing up we knew South Beach as *Playa de los Viejos*, loosely translated meaning, the Old Folk Beach. Our visits there were memorable. We knew something was up when packing the car we took twice as much food and all of our clothes were in suitcases.

"Mom, where are we going?" I asked.

"*A la playa*," Mom answered.

"I can see we're going to the beach, but why the suitcases?" My sister Lidia jumped in with her sarcastic teenage tone.

"*Una sorpresa*," Mom replied.

A surprise? I knew my brother and sister were thinking what I was thinking, maybe we're going to Disney World? It turned out they weren't thinking that at all and that wasn't what my parents had in mind either. It became clear to me too

when we didn't take the turn-off towards the turnpike which we would have taken to go north to Orlando. Instead my dad kept driving due east straight to the beaches, but at reaching Collins Ave (A1A) he turned south instead of turning north as we usually did.

After an additional 20 minute drive through blocks and blocks of beige and brown stucco buildings, with only an occasional pastel colored one in between, we finally arrived at our destination, The Beacon Hotel. Well, at first glance I wasn't at all impressed. It's hard to get a 10 year old in the 70's excited when driving up to a forty year-old hotel and greeted by 25 senior citizens sitting on the hotel's terrazzo veranda.

"¿Que te parece?" my dad asked.

"You want to know what we think?" My sister asked him as she flapped her arms around and pulled her hair in disbelief.

I didn't know then what a rhetorical question was, but I knew enough to know that my dad wasn't really asking for our opinion or approval. My big sister was either the gutsiest 17 year-old I had ever met,

or just plain-out crazy. I eventually learned it was neither. Lidia was genuinely overcome with disappointment, which lasted all of 10 minutes. Her tune changed when my mother told her she could invite her boyfriend to spend the day with us. It took her about ten seconds to find the pay phone booth in the lobby.

While my sister chatted on the phone, the rest of the clan had to unload the car and trek the stuff up to the third floor, given the elevator had a sign strung through the metal accordion door that read *Temporarily Out of Order*. Funny thing is, three years later on our final stay there, the initials I had fingered through the dust on the sign during that first visit could still be made out. Truth be told I didn't do much of the trekking. After the first load, I hung out with my sister at the telephone booth; I enjoyed pestering her. My brother Mickey, the middle kid, and my parents got everything to the room.

Then it only got better. As my sister chatted on the phone, I saw my aunts and uncles at the front desk checking in and out in the terrazzo veranda facing the ocean were my cousins, all four of them. I knew then,

this would be a vacation I wouldn't soon forget. Sure enough, for the following three years the otherwise routine summers were bookended by the best Memorial and Labor Day weekends I can remember. Those six weekends were full of early morning strolls on the beach with my Uncle Rodolfo and Aunt Providence, the only three early birds in the entire family, and late night camp fires out on the beach with my cousins, siblings and about 15 of their friends, singing and playing guitar until well past 2:00AM. Being the youngest among all my cousins and siblings, I was teased and taunted but never excluded. That meant the world to me and was well worth the mischievous abuse.

There were times that all the young people split up and did their own thing with their friends. Even I had made friends at the hotel my own age, and even one not so much my age. I remember the first time Mrs. Schwartz challenged me to a game of backgammon. She was good. I usually spent the early evenings with my dad and two uncles playing dominoes out on the terrazzo veranda, where the cool breeze that came off the ocean made it difficult to believe it was a sweltering 98 degrees just a block west where the

breeze just didn't reach. On one of these nights, my dad and uncles were watching something on TV, I don't recall what it was, but their faces were glued to the tube and there was no prying them away. I went out to the veranda and kicked the plastic dominoes table we had brought.

"You should not do that!" an old woman sitting out on the edge of the veranda scolded.

"It's my dad's." I said.

"So that gives you the right to go kicking it around?"

"No Ma'am."

"What is your name?" she asked, then waved me over and patted the chair next to her, "Sit."

I was too shy to answer and not brave enough to disobey. I went over and sat next to her. Within minutes we had set up the backgammon board on the dominoes table and she proceeded to teach me how to play a game I had never seen before. She told me her name and told me that when she was a little girl she lived in Poland. Then later, she moved to New York City,

got married and had five children and 11 grandchildren. When I asked her where they were, she looked out towards the ocean for a moment then back at me.

"Ok, enough teaching you how to play. I challenge you now. You win or you lose. We will see now."

I lost. The backgammon game that is; but I won something that I can't quite name even to this day. Mrs. Schwartz was a permanent fixture at the Beacon Hotel and I looked forward to playing backgammon with her every evening those two weekends per year. I even convinced my parents to drive by on July 4th (we were already on this side of the bay, what was a 20 minute extra drive through bumper to bumper holiday traffic?) so we could just say hello; and that we did. Her glassy eyes spoke of her joy to see us. The second year I was actually able to win some of the backgammon games. It got harder to say goodbye that second Labor Day. On the third year, she wasn't out on the veranda when we arrived. I rushed to the front desk to ask for her, but the new clerk had no idea who I was talking about. No one seemed to know whom I was asking about. On our second

night my sister, already married by then, came to see me.

"She's gone, Carl."

"Where to?" I asked incredulously.

She didn't have to spell it out for me. Her uncharacteristic silence and patience with me eventually helped me understand what she meant. I never learned Mrs. Schwartz's first name, but for some reason I thought maybe her name was Hana or Ester. After that third Labor Day we never did go back as a whole family. The older cousins were all getting married and moving away, the uncles were ill, the area was beginning its final decline into poverty and crime before re-emerging 20 years later as the Art Deco historical gem that it has always been, albeit no one seemed to know it. I've forgotten how to play backgammon, but I haven't forgotten Mrs. Schwartz.



c o l l e c t i o n

venjhamin

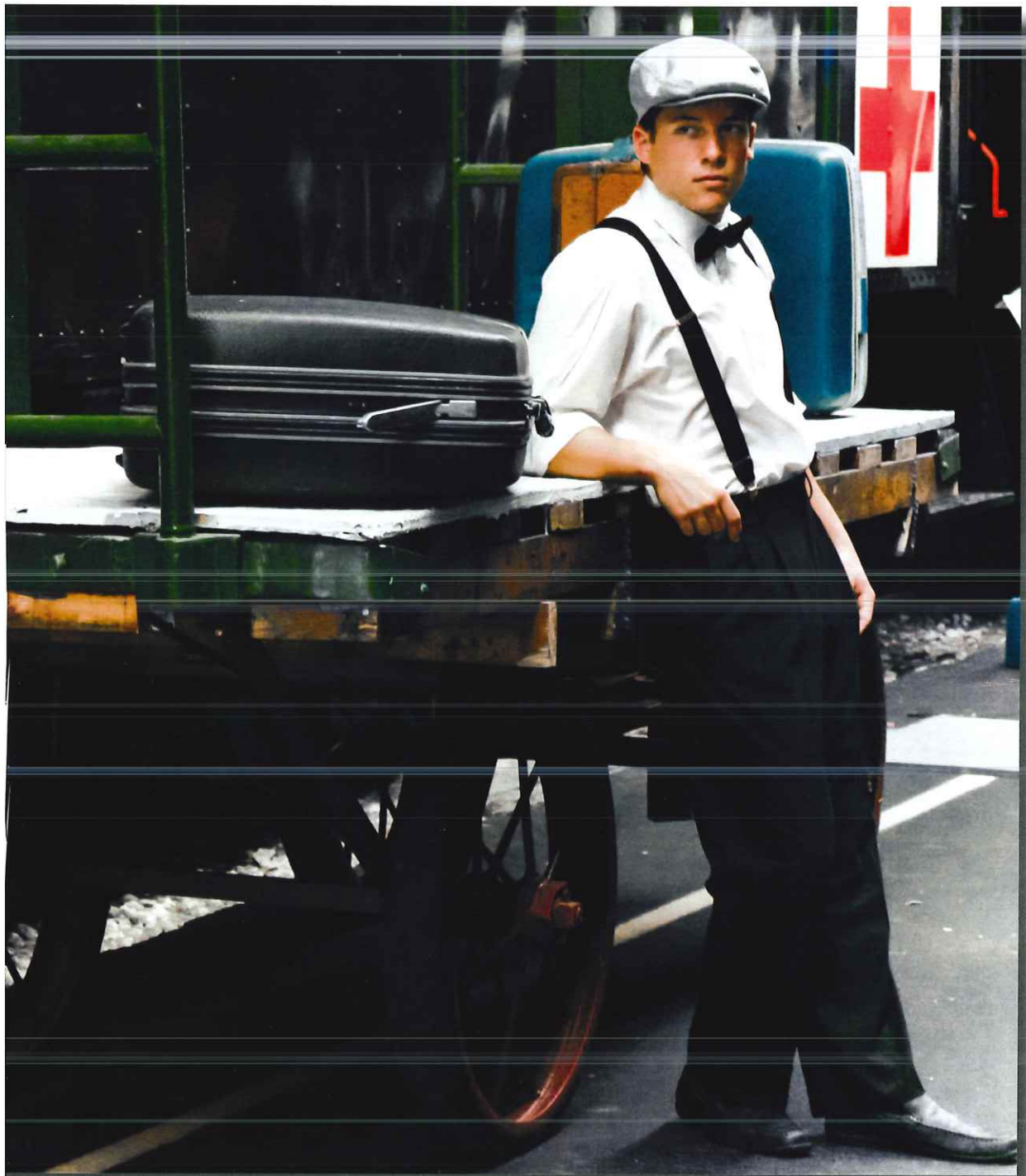
REYES

Series:

VINTAGE

ANTICIPATE





CLASSIC POP



ALL ABOARD



CUPIDITY





BERTA

CARL CAÑIZARES

The woman played with her chips and salsa, taking one, dipping it, then swirling it around some more before taking a bite. Alone at the bar, she stood out among the rest of the patrons. The others, mostly in pairs, guys waving their fists at the b-ball game on the screen and lovers close enough to feel each other's breaths on their skin, were all in their twenties or thirties. She was at least 70. Her soft yellow Polo shirt seemed to fade into her porcelain white skin. As she ate her chips and chased them down with a tall frosted mug of beer, she stared at the young couple next to her. Her stare was fixed at the man's back. Feeling a burning sensation burrowing into him, he turned around.

"Loneliness sucks!" she said to him in Spanish before he ever had a chance to part his lips.

"I'm sorry," he said, still confused.

"No need, it's part of life. You think you get used to it but you don't," she said. Then she leaned over to shake his hand and added, "I'm Berta."

The man twisted around awkwardly and shook her hand. "I'm José and this is my wife Arelys."

"You make a beautiful couple. You remind me of my husband and me."

"Is he here?" Arelys asked.

Berta didn't respond; she seemed to disconnect briefly before returning her attention to Arelys with a muted reluctant smile. After only a moment, she resumed her casual chat with the couple. The bartender approached Berta, removed the empty mug and set a fresh napkin in its place.

"Another one?" he asked.

"¿Qué?"

"Would you like another beer," he asked her in Spanish.

"*Si por favor*," Berta replied.

Berta, José and Arelys continued chatting until the couple's meal arrived. Berta nursed her beer and perused the menu, as

the couple slowly returned to their private conversation.

"¿Dónde está el baño?" Berta asked the bartender.

The bartender pointed to the restroom sign and explained the route to her. Just as she was out of sight from the bar area, an elderly man in his 70s approached the bar and asked for a shot of whiskey and a beer. He raised the shot glass and whispered just below his breath, "this one's for lo-," he paused for a moment and then continued, "self-sufficiency," and then downed the shot and chased it with his beer, killing half of it in one gulp.

"Would you like to see a menu?" the bartender asked.

"No gracias, I'm not staying; I just needed to wet my whistle," he said with a rough throaty tone before finishing off the rest of the beer, paying his tab and departing out of sight.

Berta returned to her beer and nursed it a while longer before finally ordering another; this time she asked for a shot of whiskey to accompany it. She sat there nursing her fresh beer while the young couple she had been chatting with

ate their meal. Forty minutes later the couple paid their bill and got up to leave.

"Adios." Berta said reluctantly.

"Adios," the couple called out as they walked away.

Berta played with her chips and salsa, taking one, dipping it, then swirling it around some more before taking a bite.



c o l l e c t i o n

SERIES:

ATMOSPHERE



DAWN OF LIGHT



venjhamin **REYES**

DOWNFALL

ELYSE 'VIVI' CAVEDA

I grinned at the bright reflection of my face. I just needed to wash the windshield, and then I'd be finished. The laughter of children reached my ears as families walked down to the park at the end of the street. A sweet elderly couple across the street was trimming the hedge on their front lawn, and I waved hello when I was sure they saw me. I didn't see them wave back, but I paid it no mind, picking up my bucket of soapy water and my big yellow sponge. Deciding to let it dry in the sun, I walked over to the front of the car when I was done.

It was after I fell face first into the ground that I finally realized a great amount of force had made contact with the back of my head. The bucket flew out of my hand and rolled into a gutter down the street. I stood and gathered myself as quickly as possible when I noticed a butter knife with a heavy handle on the ground behind me. I picked it up and looked around sharply for someone to blame. After only a second, it was obvious to me that none of the people around could have

thrown something with that level of accuracy - so I looked up. I'm not sure what I expected to see, but the clouds were beginning to turn gray. Still, that wasn't out of the ordinary, maybe even a little welcomed.

Then, against the dark grey background of a storm cloud, something shimmered. Just for a second, it was so quick I was scarcely sure I saw it until I heard a great sound of crashing scraping metal. I looked to my left, and sticking straight up from my car was what appeared to be a machete. It glinted and gleamed with each wobble it produced. Another sound followed, this time more blunt, until it was followed by a scream. The old woman thrashed in silent panicked movements, contorted in fear and pain. Her husband was the only one yelling and shouting; his line of vision never veered from the lobster knife sticking out of her body.

I looked up one more time, and the entire sky was glistening as if it had been dusted with glitter. The stars seemed to have come out early to drill the sky with blinding

CLOUDS VENJHAMIN REYES



dashes and dots. The first downfall came hurling into view when most people were transfixed in awe. I had already run to the front door, fumbling with shaking fingers and cold metal keys until I was able to slam the door behind me. I tottered into the living room when it started to rain: bread knives, table knives, oyster knives, daggers, meat cleavers, rapiers, and katanas. It rained every kind of knife or blade I had ever seen and some I never had. They rained down on the street, stabbing into the pavement or adjacent gardens, and I watched it all through my bay window in perversely frozen horror.

The old woman on the other side of the street was pinned to the ground by the lobster knife. She opened her mouth, but her screams were drowned out and then silenced by the piercing sound of a thousand blades hitting concrete, metal and flesh. Within moments, she had been disassembled. The families that had made their way to the park were now running back to their houses, and didn't even consider knocking on a neighbor's door for sanctuary, so insular was each home in our community.

From what I could see, all the

knives landed blade down, no matter how heavy the handle was - which was bizarre. A blue car, long-swords and scimitars sticking out of the roof, swerved and skidded down the road making it look like a demented metal porcupine. In a matter of minutes, most of the people on the street had been chopped to pieces, save for a few. Some, a middle aged woman, a toddler and the husband of the woman across the street, were moderately unscathed, and so, stood completely still, hoping, like me, that the rain would stop before they were torn apart.

I closed the curtains and listened to the knives hitting the roof of my house. Through the din of crashing, a low groan reverberated in the house. I leaned against the wall with my eyes closed, wondering how long it would take for the roof to collapse.



GATES OF HEAVEN VENJHAMIN REYES

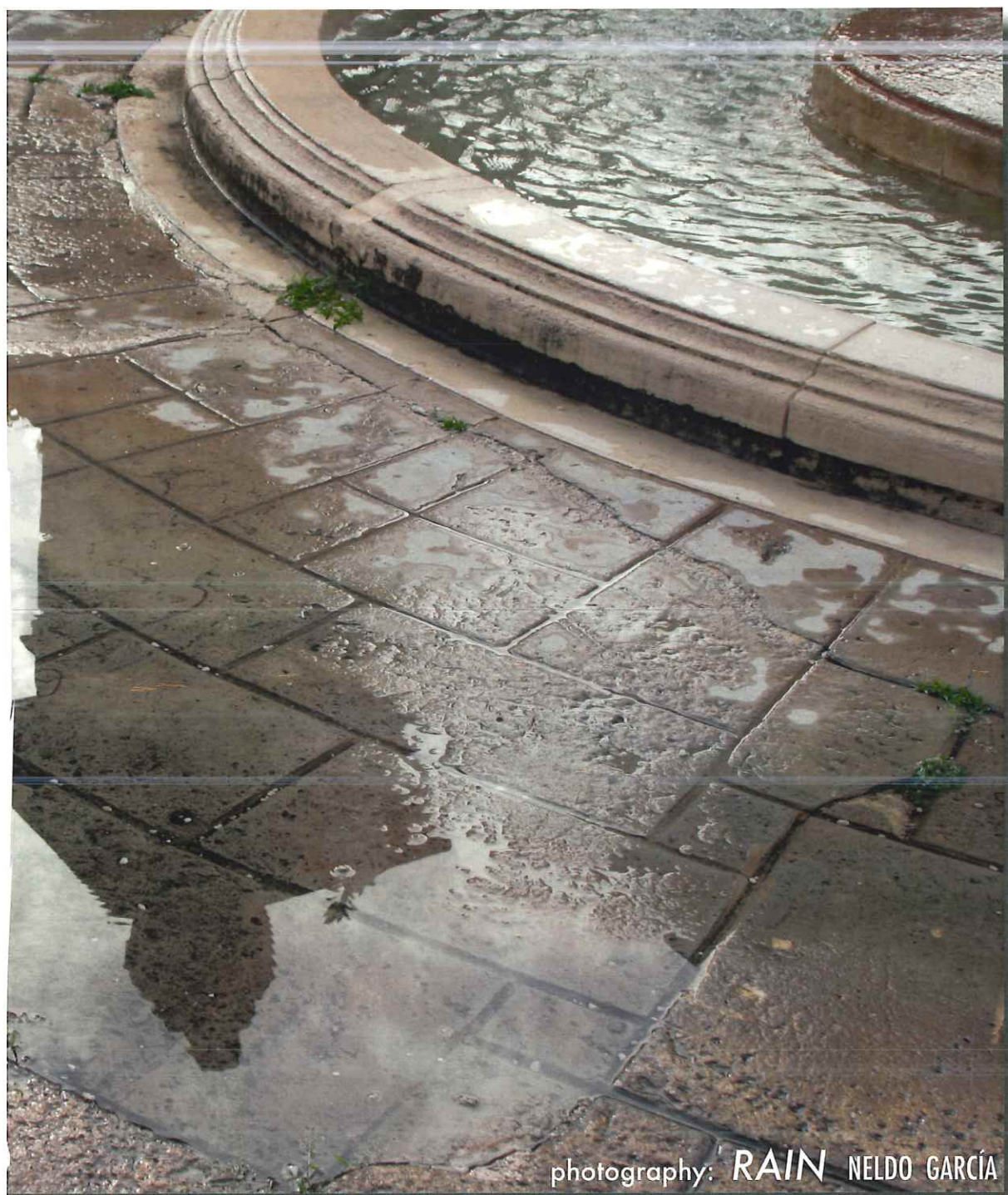


RAIN

CARL CAÑIZARES

Summer has crawled into life once more; its arrival causes the living to slow down, to catch their breath, and the dead to rot and decompose exponentially faster. I place the dustpan next to the dead bird. It weighs more than I expected as I brush it up along with the spilt cat food in its midst. Still in my jammies, I rise from my squatting position only to stand silently watching and listening for something I can neither see nor hear just beyond the backyard porch. I move out into the wet uncovered patio, dust pan still in hand, and sit on the wrought iron rocker. I notice the wetness seeping through my jammies too late, and resign myself to the moist soggy feeling, not that different from the hot humid air's effect on the rest of me. The night is dark; no moonlight penetrates the heavy avocado and mango canopy. Beyond the cover of the tall trees a dark starless sky has given way to a patchy and puffy ceiling of various shades of grey. *Was it only yesterday that it all started to go wrong?*





photography: **RAIN** NELDO GARCÍA

When I left work unusually early I wasn't expecting a 2-hour traffic jam to get home. The expressway on ramp was covered in spent wet flowers from a silvery branch of a Royal Poinciana. The regal centerpiece of a lushly over landscaped

FDOT highway swale, the tree spread its orange-red canopy over the spiral road.

I struggled to not dwell on the day's event as I drove north on LeJeune Road which had only

photography: HEAVEN 7 LUIS ALVAREZ



recently been released from a two-year stint in construction purgatory. Below tall live oaks that lined both sides of the ten-lane boulevard and its center median a variety of ground cover species weaved a tri-color path in and out between the oaks completely litter free. I rolled down the window and tossed out the *Layoff Notice* I had set on the dashboard. I had been looking at it since I left the office-parking garage, and I was starting to feel it was staring back at me.

Layoffs, budget cuts and political promises had been the buzz that had spread through the hallways all week-long, and today it had knocked on my door.

I'm almost home, I told myself as my gas guzzling pickup inched its way north on Red Road straddling the dark murky water of that 10-mile canal. A manatee, six iguanas (two of them, road kill), four egrets, and one hour later I had moved three-quarters of a mile; *progress!*

I arrived home, fixed a drink and shed my business attire. In the covered porch out back I sat and watched the shady yard grow darker as the clouds got ominous

and a distant rumbling seemed to come closer. Since the thunder had sent the cats to their hidden refuge, I fetched the parakeet; *it could use some fresh air*. The first drops bounced off the wide bird of paradise leaves and gently landed on my wrist as I hung the parakeet cage outside, safe from my feline friends. My thoughts wandered off in search of *why's*, *how's* and *now what's*.

Defeated, I showered
and went to bed.

A loud boom and a bright flash brought me back out of my stupor and into the pitch black. As I got up to go back inside I tripped over the cat's dish. Inside the house, my search for a broom and dustpan was interrupted by four phone calls from well wishing co-workers happy they were not the ones let go. Defeated, I showered and went to bed.

I thought I woke at the sound of the pounding rain beating on the roof, but it was not that sound that drew me from my sleep. A commotion, a squeal and a loud thump reminded me of what I had forgotten. I threw on my robe and ran outside, but it was too late. The rain had stopped.

≈

OF LUST, LOFT & PIGEON POOP

GISSEL MAYEDO

The morning began like any other Sunday morning: black coffee in my favorite bone china cup, the Miami Herald neatly rolled up into a small bundle wrapped in plastic still moist with morning dew and a #2 pencil in hand for circling the classifieds. However, this morning would be like no other. I felt a sense of urgency, an urgency that denied me the pleasure of tasting the bitter black dark roast steaming in my cup. My taste buds had betrayed me as punishment for my wrong doings; only the ones on the far sides of my tongue, the ones that taste sourness, performed their function. The doctor said it was psychosomatic and the sooner I dealt with the unresolved emotions festering inside of me, the sooner my taste buds would allow me the sense of flavor once again. It wasn't they who failed me; it was I who had failed them.

The source of all my troubles was lying next to the newspaper on the kitchen table, inside a torn white envelope marked "registered letter"

dated two weeks earlier. A single knock at the door had brought me face to face with the mail carrier and the ominous letter. How could a simple piece of registered mail bring forth such a tumultuous frantic disruption to one's life?

Just three weeks earlier, not yet sleep deprived, I had made love with abandon, and had spent dusk drawing the sunset's red and orange hues that filtered through the clouds from my bedroom window. A mother pigeon had abandoned her nest on the sill along with three ugly un-plumed fledglings I named Pugsley, Uncle Fester and Lurch. The names fit them well because of their awkward ugliness. Even with all the pigeon poop, feather-down and nest clippings littering my sill they gave me reason to wake up in the morning, looking forward to finding them all there, waiting for me to feed them. I felt needed.

Jacqueline and I hadn't spoken a word in those three weeks. Not a text, an email, not even mere eye contact. I couldn't blame her for

SUFFER RUBI ZAVALA



showing such indifference. I was partially to blame. I had allowed the stress of that letter to come between us. Although working within inches of each other daily, close enough to smell each other's breath and close enough that the scent of the honey almond shampoo she used in the shower that morning inebriated me; one would surmise that we were complete strangers rather than lovers. Her indifference cut through me like the scalpel she

wielded in her right hand. It was I who bled in that operating room daily, rather than the patient I had anesthetized. Every day a part of me would die in that O.R.; "la petite mort." Walking into the O.R. the smell of the sterile environment was enough to send my stomach lurching into waves of nausea. My skin flushed and my body ached, screaming for just a simple glance of her in the surgical suite. That would have been enough to hold

me over until who knows when. I feasted nightly on remnant crumbs of our love; year old love letters she had penned still scantily held the scent of her perfume and were my saving grace. I lay there quivering, cradled in the arms of Hypnos each night with her letters crumpled in my hand.

This horrible wedge that had come between Jacqueline and me - the turmoil that was now my life - was all due to this letter that came in the mail. During those two weeks,

weeks from the date of this letter to vacate. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

It was not an inconvenience; it was sheer devastation, like a death in the family; the loss of a limb. Thirteen years I had lived in this loft. It had seen me through long sleepless nights of studying for anesthesiology boards, thesis writing and the occasional love letter. Christmases with our friends and family, pictures of vacations spent together and walls

I feasted nightly on remnant crumbs of our love...

I had closed myself off to her and in return, she had alienated herself from me. She had picked up some of her belongings and left.

In bright red letters the color of venous blood, my blood, the letter read:

This letter is to officially inform you that your lease will not be renewed. The building and land are being sold for development. You have three

covered with framed diplomas, accolades and achievements earned through years of study. Upstairs in the loft a large futon, with Goose down pillows and a white comforter that permeated in both our scents, lay in lonesome disarray. It had been witness to nights of passion, lust and bonds of love being forged. For the past three weeks I had slept on the couch in my study, unable to bring myself to climb the loft stairs. Now, everything had been deleted, gone with the stroke of a pen.

UNTITLED 01 CAMILA AGUIAR OLIVARES



I abhorred red ink. I raised the now cold black coffee and took a sip, still, no taste.

Great, just great! It was then that I noticed a classified ad beckoning at me to read it from the middle of a wet coffee ring where the cup had sat:

Up for lease, 35th street and Madeira Avenue. 1,000 SF loft, hard wood floors, built-in library, kitchenette, cable

and water included. Open house this weekend. If interested, please drive by from 12-3 pm. Peggy Williams.

My autonomic nervous system drove the car there. I didn't even realize how or when I arrived; I just knew I was at the address and being greeted by a woman resembling Doris Day with a bouffant hair do. She looked as if she had walked out of a McCall's

magazine. I gathered myself, and we began to chat about the property and the lease.

"You are actually the first person to see the loft. Please come in." We walked side

by side, entering the foyer and glaring at

the beautiful hard wood floors; she looked up at me through misty eyes.

*with a stroke of a pen,
the place was mine ...*

mother and how she had been an artist; she had used the loft as a studio. The kitchen's only use was to brew coffee, bake an occasional pie

in the oven and to wash her brushes in the sink. Easels, paints and brush-

es, the remnants of an artist's life stood be-

fore us. Hundreds of books lined the walls in teak bookshelves.

"The loft has been sealed about 15 years. After my mother's death I couldn't bear to visit the place, but I am ready to move on now and lease it with the option to buy. To the appropriate person of course; too many memories in this place, you know?"

Just as we entered the kitchen area, at exactly the stroke of noon, a large wall clock resembling a Folgers's percolator pot began to chime. One just like my grandmother had bought with five Sperry & Hutchinson green trading stamp books saved after purchasing groceries from the A&P. The place looked as if time had stood still.

Peggy began to tell me about her

"Books can stay if you like, I don't have much use for them anyhow, and you are welcomed to keep them if you wish as well as the pictures on the walls in the upstairs nook. That's if you're interested in a three year lease?"

"I'd like that very much thank you, and yes! I accept the lease." Was I dreaming? Perhaps, but I was not about to wake up from this dream now, not now.

"I feel good about you, I Like your vibes" she exclaimed in a Timothy Learish sort of way and with a stroke of a pen, the place was mine for the next three years, with the option to buy of course.

The kitchen window had a wonderful wide red windowsill, perfect for Pugsley, Uncle Fester and Lurch. The loft was quaint with a spiraling wrought iron staircase reminiscent of the old 60's movies, which led to a nook, perfect for a large futon. It had a bohemian ambiance to it. Pencil sketches and framed original drawings of wild orchids that strangely resembled vulvas, were neatly placed along the walls. They were signed: "with Love, Georgia O'Keefe". A month alone and I was starting to see mirages in wild orchids? I sat there in shock but for a moment, just absorbing the sheer madness of it all, and then gathered myself.

row, right then and there. What had I done? Had I thrown out the baby with the bathwater? Perhaps I had.

Moving day came. Lurch, Uncle Fester and Pugsley traveled in their nest inside a cardboard box marked: EGGS, DO NOT CRUSH. My first guests, and from the looks of them on the windowsill overlooking the small yard, it was a good place, a place where new memories would be forged. I sat there on the floor, the bookcases, the oil paintings, brushes, easels and colored chalks staring at me, witnesses to my loneliness. I felt a moment of elation as I looked around my new

The realization that she was gone, truly gone, had seeped deep into my bone marrow...

Thoughts of Jacqueline flooded my mind and a wave of nausea washed over me. I started to cry for all the days I had not cried and for all the nights we had not spent together or made love. The realization that she was gone, truly gone, had seeped deep into my bone mar-

digs, of having found a new place to call home, but at what price? The elation was short lived.

In my haste, I had lost, forgotten, what was most essential, and for this, I had to face the reality of my actions, but I wasn't truly alone; I

had the kids on the windowsill and Georgia O'Keefe's orchids watching over my sleep.

I'd just begun to unpack the boxes marked "kitchen" when a diminutive knock sounded at the side kitchen door; the fledglings, startled, started to peep and flutter their featherless wings. There, on the other side of that door, stood what was most essential to me, in wrinkled blue scrubs that showed signs of a sleepless night on call and holding in her right hand the scrap of paper I had left my neighbor. Nothing was said for a few uncomfortable moments; we both stood there, staring at each other. I broke the painful silence.

"Care for a cup of black coffee and a hot shower stranger? I haven't unpacked the good china," I said, looking at her through misty eyes, biting my lower lip as to hide my quivering chin, "so a Styrofoam Dixie cup will have to do."

"Please, thank you."

I could see her trying to swallow a hard knot that was tightly lodged in her throat; her face flushed and reddened. A comfortable silence ensued. We both glanced down at

the floor and walked into the kitchen without a word being said.

"I'll introduce you to Georgia after you shower."

"Georgia?"

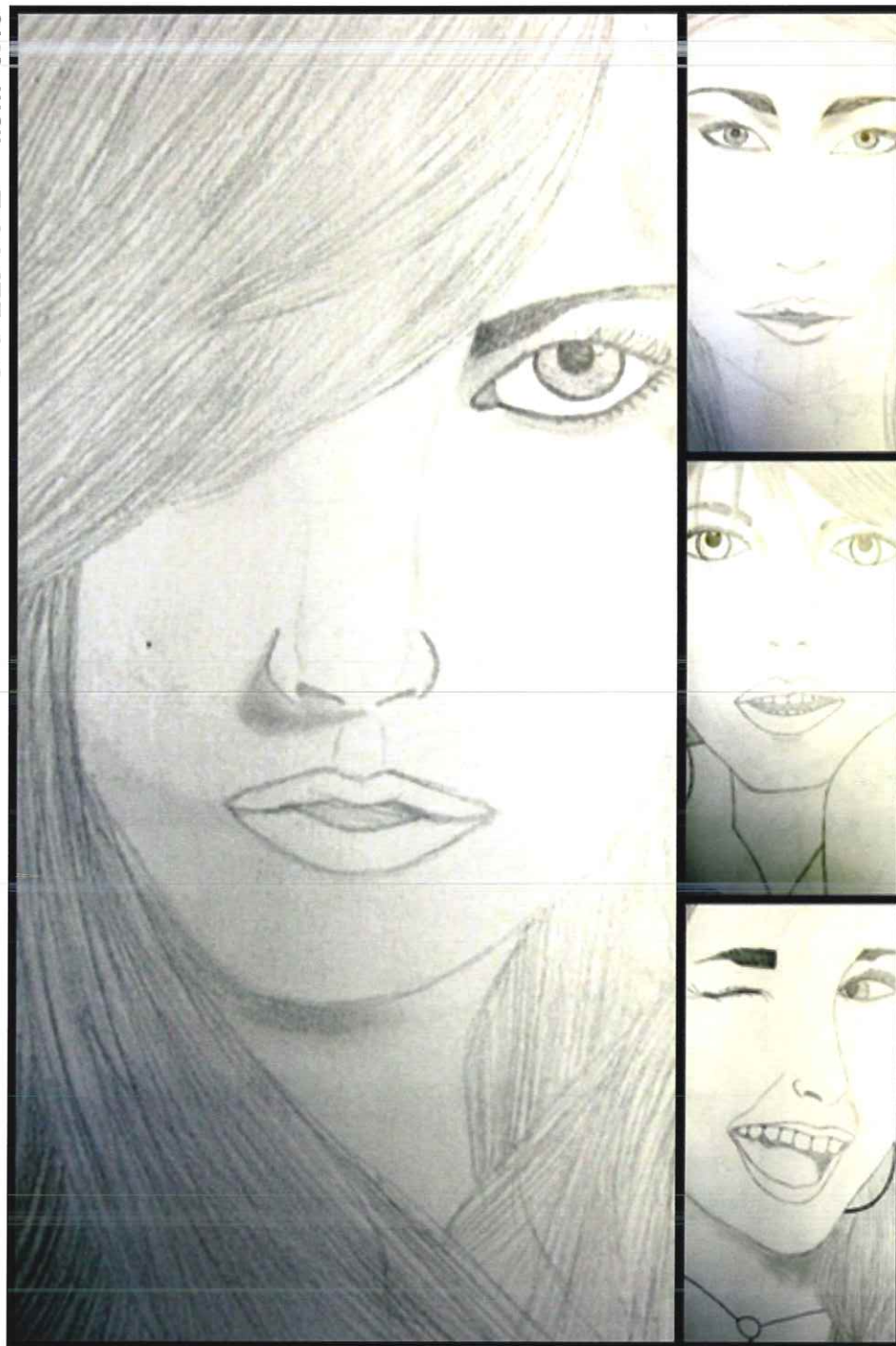
"Never mind," I said, and as we both sipped our black coffee in white Styrofoam Dixie cups, she looked up at me.

"This dark roast is delicious; tastes percolated."

I smiled and nodded in agreement, and at that very moment, realized, that yes, it was the most delicious dark roast I had ever tasted.



COLLAGE RUTH COTO



c o l l e c t i o n

camila

OLIVARES

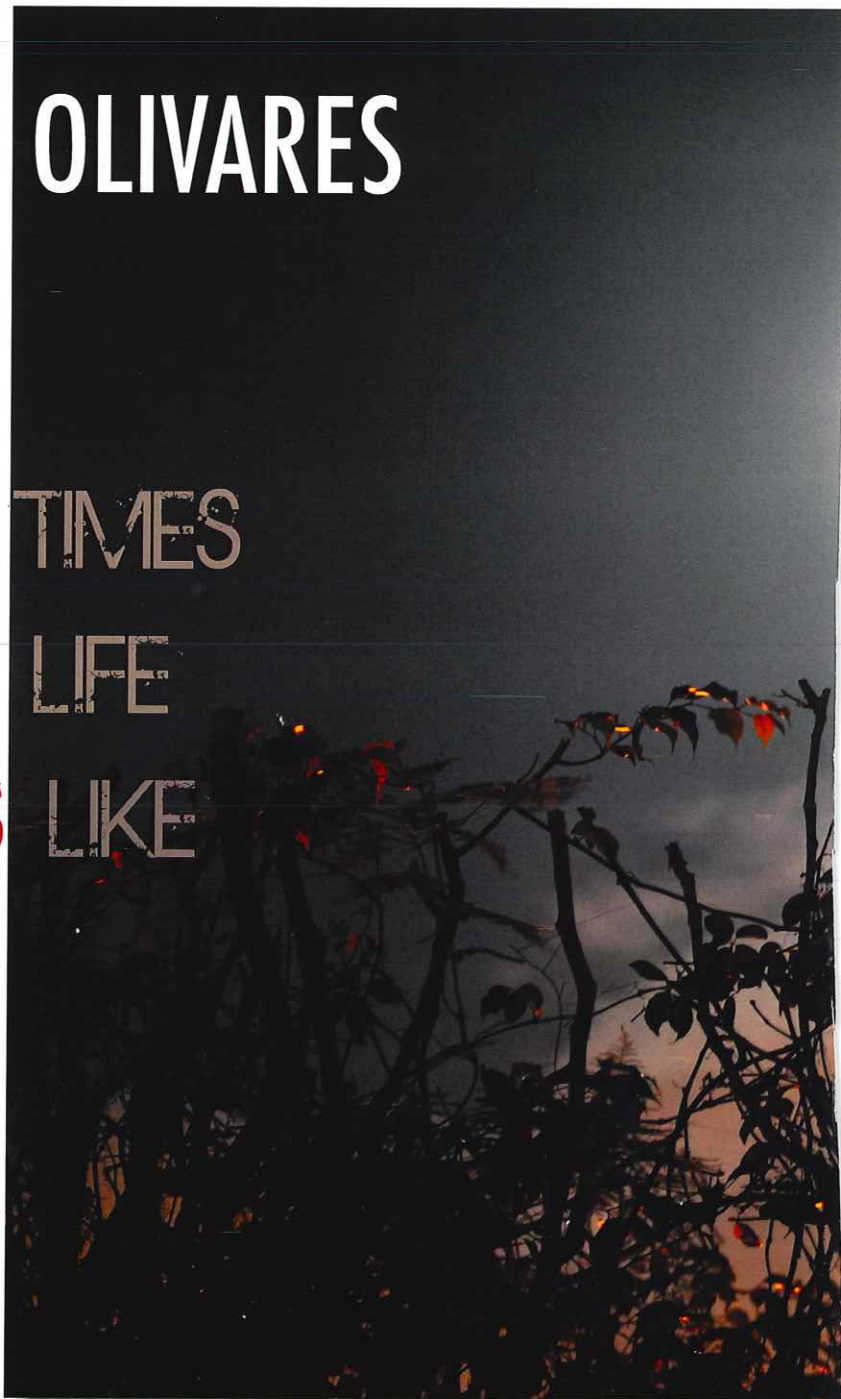
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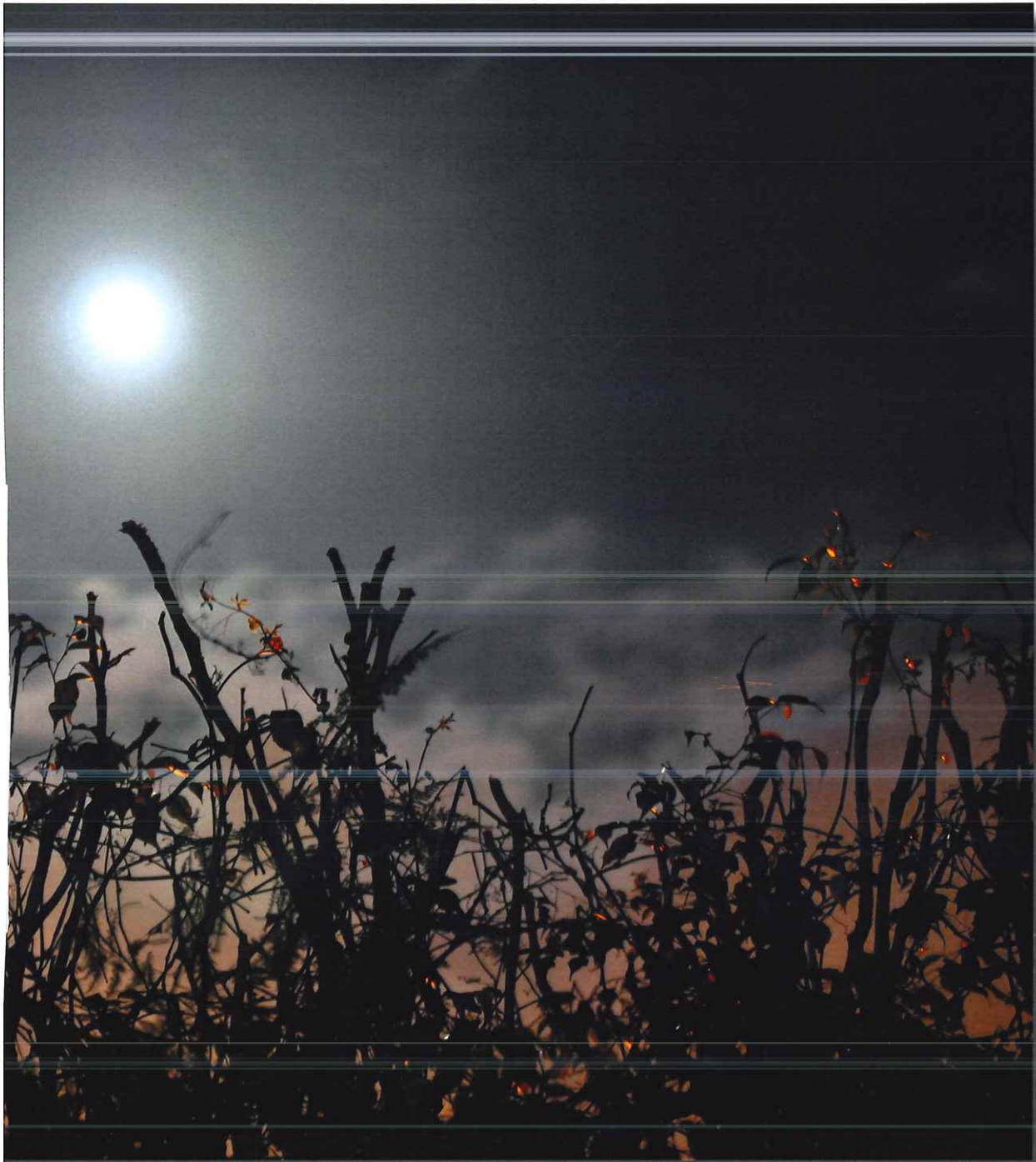
SOME TIMES

MY LIFE

FEELS LIKE

UNTITLED 06





UNTITLED 02



UNTITLED 03



TAINTED SUNLIGHT

SANDRA RODRIGUEZ

He was tall- Strong. His hair was brown- Wavy and messy. His eyes were green- The kind of eyes that spoke to you without his lips saying a single word. His smile was blinding- Intoxicating. His shoulders were broad- Inviting. I fell in love with him the summer before I started high school. He was two years older than me, a friend of a friend's. We met by chance, but became friends quickly. It was so easy falling for him, not that I ever intended to. He was sweet and kind- Funny. We spent hours on the phone. Countless summer days were spent by the pool, just talking. But friends was all we were, good friends, but friends none the less. I knew, even then, that I couldn't tell him how I felt. At the time I was content just having him in my life, even if just as a friend.

I can't lie and say it didn't hurt to be just friends. I felt a stab in my heart every time he told me about the new girl he liked. It hurt to have him so close and yet so unattainable. Still, I decided having him in my life as a friend was better than not having him at all.

Being the good friends that we

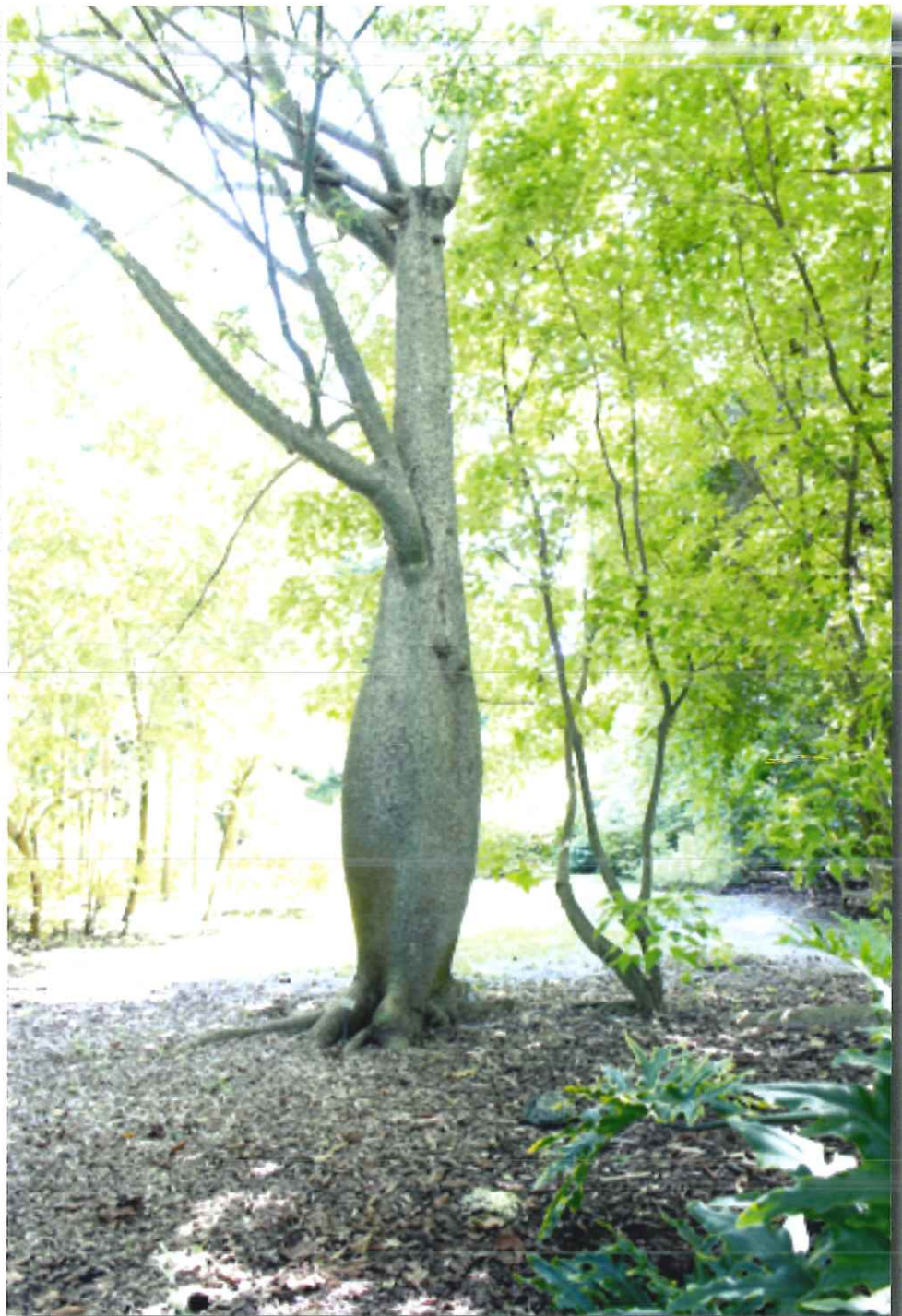
were, I was not surprised when he called me one rainy spring afternoon my sophomore year. "You have to come see my tree house," he said, "I can't believe you've never seen it." I was always excited to hang out with him, and this time was no different. I was overjoyed, bouncing off the walls like a child on a sugar high. I know it sounds silly, a fifteen year old girl ecstatic over a tree house, but this wasn't just any tree house - it was his tree house.

I tried to sound nonchalant as I mumbled, "Sure," into the phone before rushing out the door and running to his house a block away. Once there, I rang the doorbell and tried to still my heart as I waited for him to open the door.

"That was quick," he commented as he opened the door with a smile. He grabbed my hand to pull me inside. "Come on," he said laughing. I couldn't help but smile too. I remember wondering then, does he know?

He let my hand go when we reached the tree house. It was a tiny thing. To be honest, it didn't

WALKING ALONE MARTA ALBA



even look that sturdy. There was a tiny ladder leading up to a small square hole in the floor of the tree house.

"I know it isn't much," he began, but I cut him off before he could say anymore.

"It's awesome," I was smiling like a fool, so happy to be standing at the foot of a tree house with the boy I loved. Not many girls were this lucky.

"Let's go up," he suggested. I should have said no. I should have gone home

and finished my homework. I should have taken

a second look at that tiny shack of a tree house and decided not to go up. I should have kindly smiled and said no. But I was young, I was in love, and I was naïve.

"Okay," I said grabbing onto the ratty ladder to make my way up. Inside the tree house was small. The two of us hardly fit inside together. The only way we managed to fit was lying side by side, one side of his body touching one side of my mine. There was a small hole in the roof. I could see the clouds passing by through it.

"What do you think that cloud is shaped like?" He asked, taking a hold of my hand and casually playing with my fingers. My heart must have skipped a beat, maybe even a few. Again I thought- does he know? He must know.

"I don't know," I said nervously. I couldn't focus on the shape of a cloud, not when he was holding my hand. No boy had ever held my hand before. No boy had ever laid this close to me. No boy had ever invited me to see his tree house. There were many firsts that day.

It was everything I thought my first kiss would be.

"I think it looks like a heart," he replied, squeezing my hand. I giggled then, not because something was funny but because here I was lying next to the boy I loved with my hand in his looking at clouds and discerning shapes. He turned his head to mine and whispered, "You're beautiful." His breath tickled my ear so I giggled again and looked at him. It was then that he kissed me. It was everything I thought my first kiss would be. Sweet, cute, romantic- Innocent. He smiled as he pulled away. I smiled too, from ear to ear. Then he kissed me again,

with more passion and vigor. His hand moved to the back of my head.

I was happy, but through my elated state I felt it- something was wrong. There was a tiny warning sign somewhere in the back of my head, at least I like to think there was. Something felt wrong. I put my hand

up to his chest and pushed a little. "Maybe we should s l o w

down," I said softly, but there was something different in his eyes. Something wrong. He smiled, but it wasn't the warm inviting smile from two minutes ago, the smile I had grown to love. It was cold, "Maybe we shouldn't" was his reply.

I opened my mouth to protest but his mouth covered mine before I could utter a single syllable. His hand was still on the back of my head and he wrapped it in my hair. I couldn't pull away from him. I tried to push him off, but he pushed my hand away. He was stronger than me. Before I could stop it he was on top of me.

"No." It was the first word that came to my head and the only

word I could fit in between his feverish kisses. "No, no, no," I repeated with increasing volume.

"You're so beautiful," he whispered, but it sounded dirty- tainted.

He was touching me, his hands were everywhere. "No." I was yelling now and my body started to catch up. I kicked. I threw punches.

I tried one more time to fight, to kick, to escape his grasp, to scream...

I was screaming now. He covered my mouth. "Be quiet. Isn't this what you wanted?" he said. He was angry. "No, no, no," I said again, but I couldn't lower my voice. I couldn't stop yelling.

He didn't like that, so he hit me- Hard. My head hit the wood. I felt him pull my pants down. He was trying to touch me and fumble with his pants. I tried one more time to fight, to kick, to harm, to escape his grasp, to scream, but it was useless. He hit me again, a fist to the side of the head.

I stopped fighting. I stopped kicking. I stopped screaming. I stopped breathing. I lay like a corpse with tears in my eyes looking through

the small hole in the roof of the tree house.

There are some things you never forget. Some things don't fade with time. Things like the smell of wood and sweat, mingling together. Or the feel of

someone's uninvited breath on your neck. Or even the sound of a spring time rain falling around you and squeaky wood. You don't forget the way time slowed to a crawl. Or the thumping of one body against another. And certainly not the sun creeping in through tiny cracks and a small hole in the roof of a tree house to blind you. Images and sensations I could never erase, no matter how hard I tried.

When he finished, he sat up. Smiling. I still couldn't move. He kissed my forehead. "That was fun, let's do it again sometime." He had to have noticed the tears rolling down my cheeks, my lack of movement, or even the slowness of my breath. It was hard to ignore, but he said nothing. He pulled his pants up and made his way down the ladder, "I'll be right back," he yelled. I was sore aching and bloody. I wanted

to crawl up into a ball and die right there in that tiny stupid tree house, but I didn't. I found enough strength to pull my pants back up and get out of that tree house- fast. I didn't know where he had gone, but I

I thought some more about it. I would have to tell more than one person.

didn't want to be there when he got back. Walking back through the house to leave was not an option, so I left through the side door, like a cheap whore.

When I got home I went straight to the bathroom to shower. I scrubbed every inch of body, every patch of skin he touched. I scrubbed until I was red, and still I felt dirty. I cried until there were no tears left to cry. Afterwards I went to my bed and just lay there, thinking.

I thought about going to the police. I could have told them what he did. He would deny it, of course, and say I had made it up. I couldn't show them the pounding in my head from when he hit me, but I could show them the bruises he left on my arms and legs while he held me down. It would be a big scandal. But then I thought some more about it.

I would have to tell more than one person. I would have to explain why I went into the tree house to begin with. I would have to tell a group of strangers that the boy I loved had ignored my tears and cries and done what he wanted with my body. And if it ever went to trial, it would be his word against mine. I would say yes and he would say no. I had just washed away any possible evidence in the shower. People

would have to decide who was lying and who was telling the truth. I would have to tell more strangers what happened. What it would all boil down to was one simple thing—who had the more convincing story? And what if that wasn't me? What if they believed him?

So I decided, that day while lying in bed, void of all emotion, that I would not tell anyone. I would not tell a room full of strangers, I would not tell friends, I would not tell relatives, I would not tell. And I never did. I never went to the police, or a friend, or a relative. I never told anyone.

Now, some seventy years later, I still have not told anyone about that

day. Not my parents, not my husband, not a close friend, no one. I alone bare my secret. The only time I came close to telling someone was when my husband proposed to me, but I never went through with it. The truth is, by the time he proposed, I had buried the memory and the regrets. The regrets had taken with

I want to die...knowing that someone out there knows that sweet boys can turn into monsters in an instant.

them the midnight crying fits and the fear of tree houses. I was no longer visibly damaged.

My husband's recent death, however, has awakened in me a need to tell someone. I still can't talk to anyone about it, not that I really have anyone to talk to. Justice is not what I seek. I long ago gave up the hope that somehow, someday, justice would be served to me. No, I merely want to unburden by myself before my eventual passing.

I want to die, alone in my bed, knowing that someone out there knows that sweet boys can turn into monsters in an instant. I think that will give me peace of mind, if nothing else.

Before I go, I will say this. There is one thing that still strikes fear in my heart. One thing that still steals my breath and leaves me cold. I could never escape the memory completely; time doesn't help with that. The glint of sunlight in my eye blinding me momentarily never fails to quicken my heartbeat and bring tears to my eyes. It is the one thing that brings to life the memory of that rainy spring day. That momentary blindness makes me feel so helpless. Most people find happiness in sunlight, but I find it is a constant reminder that some monsters steal innocence in a tiny tree house in the middle of the day.

Natalie



photography: **SOL** TANIA MORELL



TENTACLES

ELYSE 'VIVI' CAVEDA

"Wait up, Chris! Alex just found out his phone doesn't have parental blocks!" shouted a slightly chubby blonde boy in a preppy school uniform. Chris cringed and stopped dead in his tracks, thinking he had gotten out of class early enough to not have to walk home with some of his most loathsome classmates. He was wrong.

"I really don't have time to watch porn or whatever with you guys, I have stuff to do in a little while," Chris said clearly, but deliberately avoiding eye contact.

Alex finally caught up just in time to hear this and remarked slyly, "Oh, so you have a girlfriend now?" He smirked, barely looking up from an expensive touch-screen phone that no fourteen year old would really ever need.

Two of the three boys sniggered only to see a particular shade of red had slowly crept its way onto Chris's cheeks.

"You do have a girlfriend, don't you? Amazing. Everyone thought you were queer." said the blonde

boy giddily, patting Chris on the back.

"Shut up, Robert."

"Blah, enough gossiping, take a look at this!" Alex waved the phone in front of both their faces. The screen displayed a Japanese website, the video buffering for a second before playing.

There was a moment of silence as the animated cartoon featured a rather busty young Japanese schoolgirl cleaning a chalkboard with jiggling vigor.

"Dude, gross!" bellowed Robert as soon as a monstrous demonic blob raised the girl's skirt and inserted a series of phallic limbs into most of her orifices. "Why can't they just have a human dude with an actual thing do it to her?"

Chris groaned loudly at the fact that this conversation was even happening. His head was already swollen with the pointlessness of the things these two idiots discussed every day, and it was getting to be all too much for him.

Alex ignored him and slid his glasses up the bridge of his nose in a professorial manner. "In Japan, they have decency laws against showing penises, even in porn. Tentacles are an easy way to get around it, so they became a popular theme."

"Freakin' weird. You sure know a lot about this stuff, Alex." Robert huffed with more than a dash of discomfort as he pushed the hand holding the phone away from his face.

Alex pocketed the phone smoothly without even blinking. "Oh, I agree. It's completely weird. I'm just fascinated by how sick some things on the internet are; not to mention that people actually get off on this. What kind of person—"

"This is my house, guys. I'll see you on Monday." Chris interrupted, already two steps up his porch with a jingling set of keys at the ready.

"Weren't we meeting at Robert's house on Sunday?" Alex said with a puzzled expression.

"Nope, I've got to clean my room and mow the lawn." The last word of the sentence was punctuated by the abrupt slam of the front door.

Only when the third lock on the door clicked into place, could Chris sigh loudly in relief. He promptly dropped his backpack onto a chair, and was about to take off his jacket when he felt a cool embrace come from behind to take hold of his arms and shoulders. He tilted his head back as he felt murmuring nuzzles travel up his spine and neck.

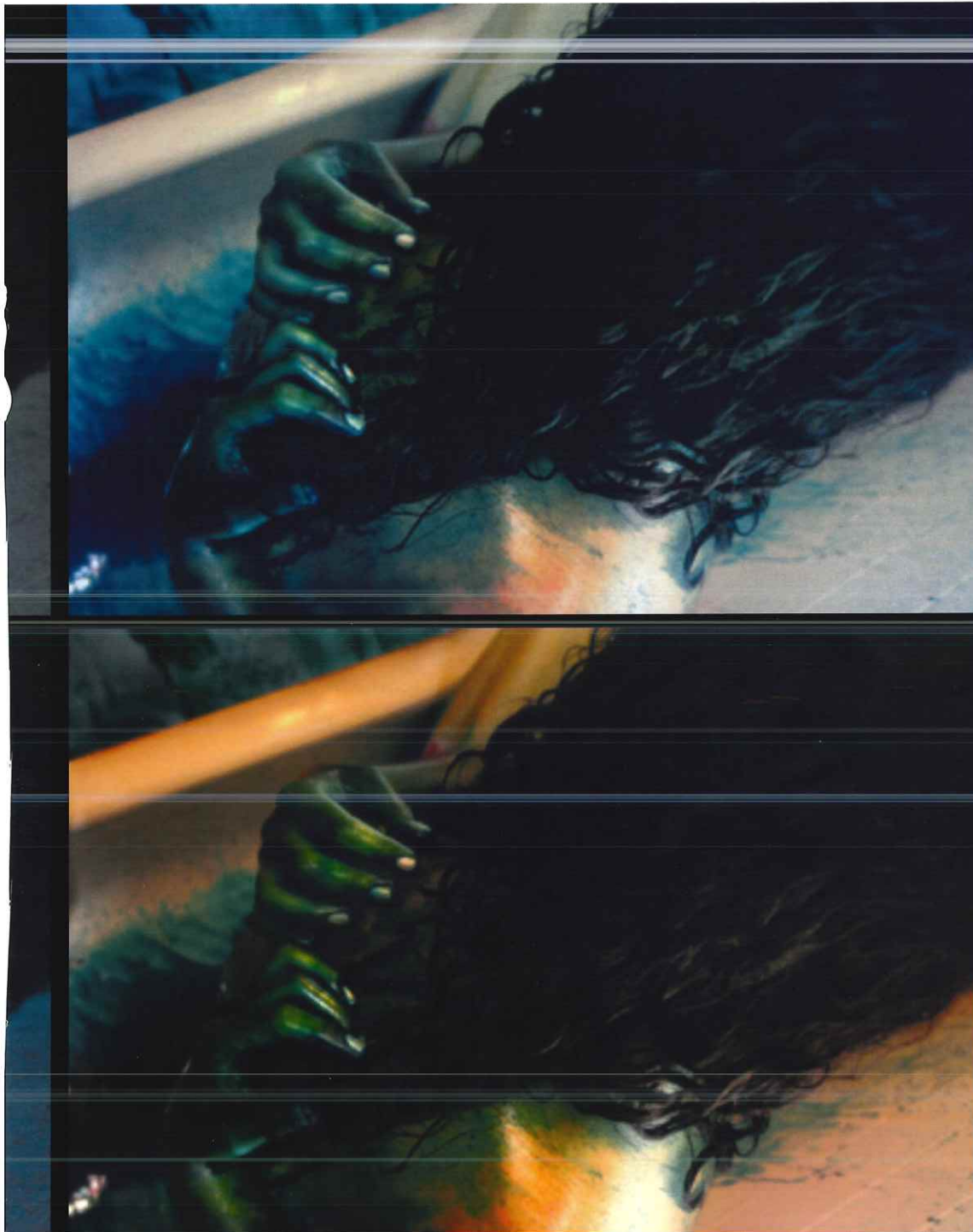
"Oh Chris, you know I think you're so cute when you're in your school uniform. Keep it on today." said a mature, feminine voice with a commanding air.

Feeling something slide deftly into his slacks, he reeled further backward, having long since rested all his weight back on her. "Anything for you." He exhaled deeply before allowing himself to be enveloped in her wonderfully tingling gelatinous ooze; half a dozen tentacles wrapped around his chest.



BLACK & BLUE TANIA MORELL





PREFACE

This section contains personal experience essays, travel essays and other essays of a non-fiction nature.

As mentioned in the Introduction Page, our student body is amazingly diverse in culture, language and experience. Consequently, we are fortunate to have a plethora of students that were doctors, architects and scientists in their countries of origin and who are now starting new careers in the U.S. through their studies at IAC.

Furthermore many of these professionals have published books in their field and in their native language in a variety of subjects.

Fortunately, URBANA has always accepted submissions written in any language of a registered student and we continue to honor that tradition and commitment today. Consequently, this section includes essays and papers in English and Spanish.

ALIVE

ELYSE 'VIVI' CAVEDA

Not many people plan to spend the rest of their lives surrounded by death. I'm just a happy exception to that general rule. I try my best to let people know about the lively, warm type of person I am before all-else. It's far too easy to conjure up the humorously morbid mortician stereotype, but people close to me know better than that. I would like to think that I'm now a passionate and motivated person with a lot of hopes and goals because of my choice to be a funeral services major, rather than in spite of it.

My friends call me "Vivi," which happens to be the Latin word for "Alive." This was no ironic choice on their part, but instead, an affectionate nickname. I've been obsessed with a character called Vivi from the popular video game Final Fantasy IX since I was eight years old. Since that age, I've fixated on him as the ideal friend. He was warm, compassionate, intelligent, and towards the end of the game, struggled with the concept of his own mortality. I wanted to be the kind of person who could

help others come to a comfortable place with that kind of reality - with mortality. Just like Vivi, I've always tried to be the kind of person that can be there to help somebody on possibly the worst day of their life. I try and exude a type of comforting aura, but I've still got a long way to go to be the kind of person I want to be.

At the end of tenth grade, I dropped out of high school. Most people seem to be at least a little surprised to hear that, but I think I saw it coming for years. I had a long run of psychological issues that culminated in an existential breakdown. Knowing that our time in this existence was limited, I became increasingly frustrated with things I perceived as a waste of my time. I wanted to be free, and live my life according to my every whim, even if that just manifested in staying home and playing video games all day.

One day, I realized that I wasn't doing myself any favors. That maybe being steadfast is a virtue on the path to actually living life to its fullest extent.

After three years of shutting myself in my bedroom every day, I opened my front door and stepped outside my house. Not just to take out the trash, or check the mailbox, but to embrace the world again. I started by taking online classes, soon got my GED, and now sit in a college classroom as I type this essay. Now, I know that when you hit rock bottom in any sense, the only way to go is up. I intend to stay this path and I intend to become a respected and educated person.

My grandmother died due to heart failure three years ago. Despite all my talk of mortality and short life spans, I had never experienced the loss of a human family member until that day. I watched the funeral directors and attendants move from office to office in the funeral parlor where my weeping grandfather sat. I saw so much noble efficiency in how they carried out their tasks. I saw them exercising a perfect measure of sensitivity toward my family. I saw them utterly in their element.

When I got to see my grandmother in her casket, I was taken aback with how well they took care of her body. I was overcome

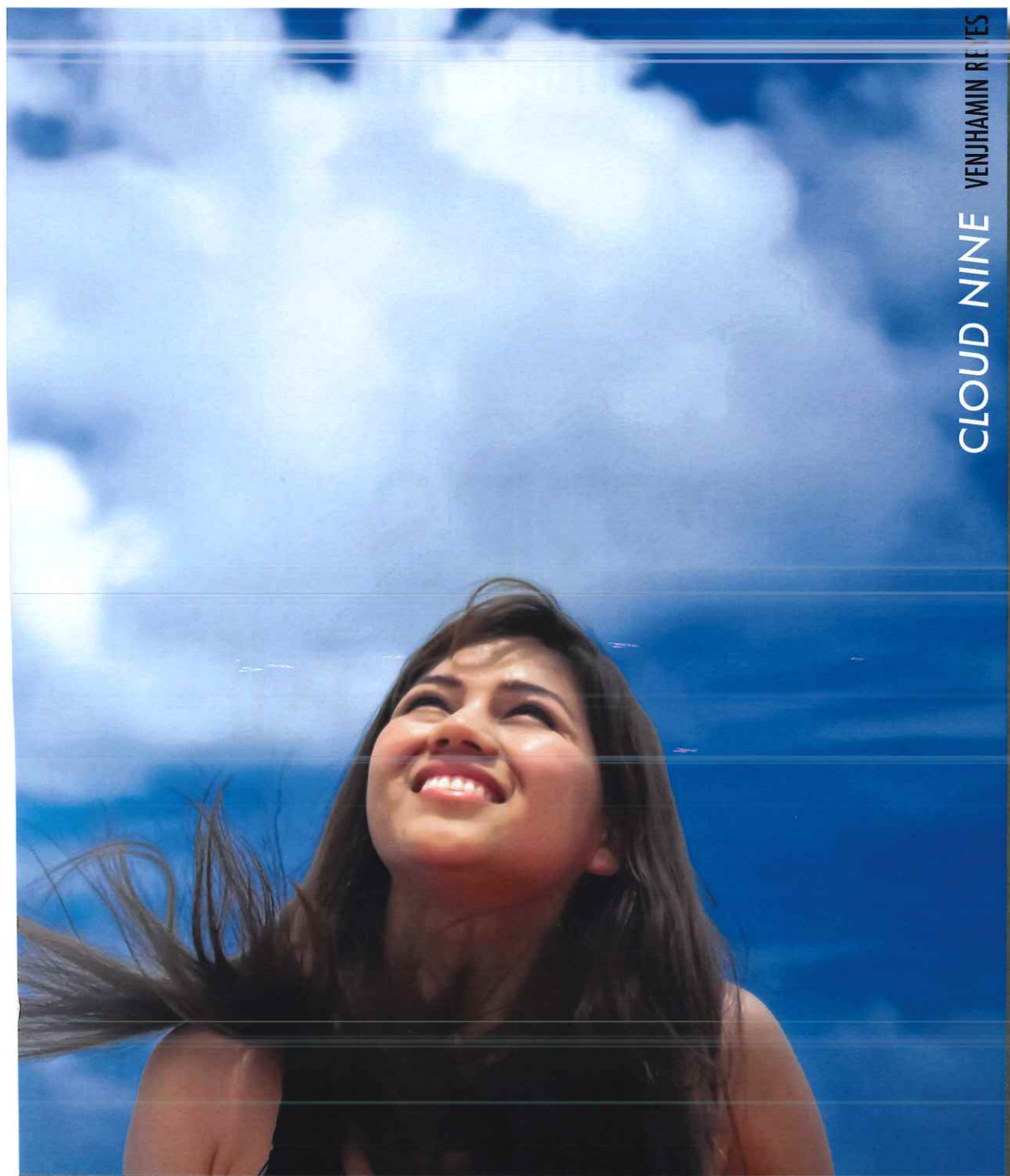
with emotion; suddenly everything made sense to me. I want to make that kind of a difference in someone's life, and I want to restore a measure of honor to those whom's time on earth has drawn to a close - to put the bereaved at peace with their loss. If I prosper in this career and make one person feel the way I did in that late spring three years ago, then my whole life would have been worth it.

Mostly, I'm just glad to be alive to see this day.

I'm not a two dimensional caricature of a person, and there

is quite a lot to my personality aside from what some might imagine after hearing what my major is. I'm a very lucky person. I have been blessed with a family that stands by me. Each and every day is a fortunate day. I can appreciate the every day beauty that surrounds me more than ever. Mostly, I'm just glad to be alive to see this day. I'm glad to be Vivi.





CLOUD NINE VENJAMIN REYES

raffaele **AMMAVUTA**

SERIES

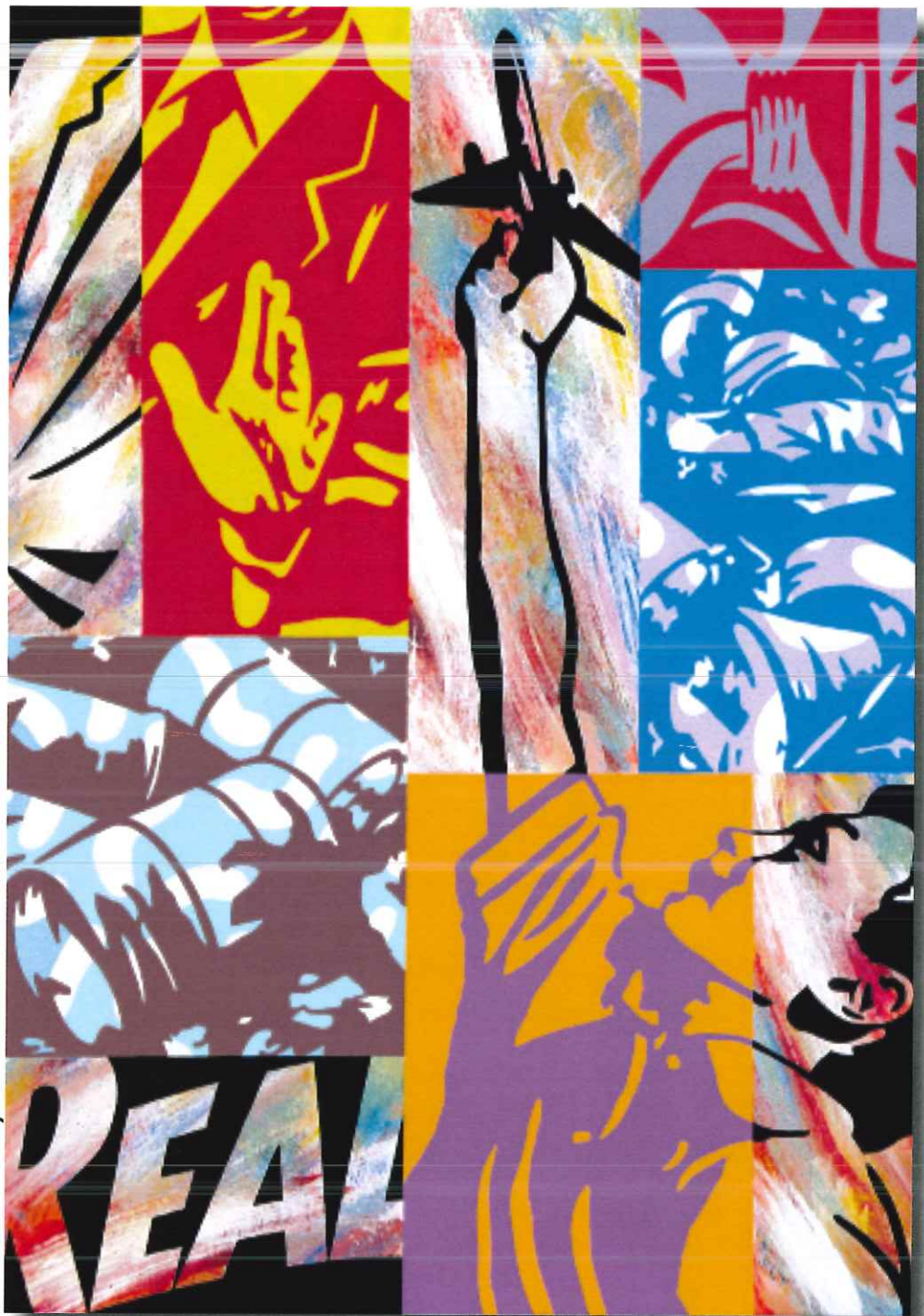
ONE

GUNS & ROSES (p.100)

FREE (p.101)

Acrylic on Canvas

REAL Acrylic on Canvas







SPIC & SPAN
Acrylic on Canvas



GULP
Acrylic on Canvas



FLORENCE, BEYOND ART

RAFFAELE AMMAVUTA

"Who hasn't seen Michelangelo's *David*, Botticelli's *Venus* or Brunelleschi's *Dome*?" These are icons of Florence everyone is familiar with. People might not remember the artists' names, but they associate these images with the City of Renaissance. With millions of tourists each year, Florence is considered one of the most popular and desirable tourist destinations. There is so much to experience in terms of art and architecture. These treasures are in every corner, every street and every square to enjoy: museums, palaces, art galleries, buildings, churches and monuments. But also, there are other treasures to discover and experience: sophisticated stores, cafés, markets, bakeries, craft workshops, and antique shops.

I still remember the anticipation and excitement as a kid in elementary school when the month of May was approaching. The school year was about to finish and the teacher would have taken the class for a few field trips in the historical center of Florence, my hometown. It was sunny and the fresh crisp air

was already warm when we got off the bus in *Piazza Duomo*. We were immediately mesmerized by the beauty of this huge cathedral, The Dome, one of the biggest buildings of the Christian World. Commissioned to the architect Arnolfo di Cambio in 1296, it took almost 200 years to be completed, by several architects. The enormous Dome, designed by Brunelleschi, is a technical wonder. The architect came up with the revolutionary idea to use self-supporting interlocking bricks to avoid any internal structure. The Dome, the very symbol of Florence, rises 350 feet and offers an expansive, spectacular view of the city. The exterior of the whole cathedral is a delicate pattern mix of white, green and pink marble that shines in the sunlight. The façade, with its sculptures, endless bas-relieves and carvings, is an amazing combination of balanced, rigorous design and brilliant creativity that looks like precious lace from the distance.

"Come on kids, it is time to go! The Dome will be our next field trip," the teacher shouted.

DAVID AND THE PERSEO
RAFFAELE AMMAVUTA



While walking orderly in line with my classmates along Via Calzaioli, one of the most elegant streets in town, I was fascinated by the rigorous style of the buildings, the beauty of the stores and the sweet, intense smell of pastry coming from the cafés.

"What's that building , Teacher?" I asked.

"That's Palazzo Rucellai," she answered.

"What about that one?" somebody else asked.

"That is Palazzo Antinori," she said.

"When were these buildings built?" a third classmate asked.

"In the 1300's, when Florence was one of the richest cities of Europe, and art and commerce flourished," the Teacher said.

All these buildings, which belonged to noble families, were grand and majestic. They expressed a sense of perfection, elegance and severity aimed to reflect wealth and power. I marveled at the stores along the street selling shoes, clothes, fashion accessories,

jewelry, ceramics and antiques. The store windows were all refined and polished, displaying the items with a sense of uniqueness. Also, the stylish cafés with people sitting outside at tables, sipping cappuccino, eating pastries, and speaking foreign languages, were just beautiful to watch.

Once outside of the Uffizi, I was amazed by the superb architectural structure of the palace. It was designed by the architect Giorgio Vasari in 1550, originally to house the Administrative Offices of Cosimo de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany. However, from the beginning, Cosimo de' Medici took aside the whole third floor to house his art collection which was enriched overtime by other members of the family. The elegant colonnade complex runs down from Piazza della Signoria toward the Arno River like a grand avenue. The enormous museum contains masterworks of paintings from the Middle Ages to the 18th century, from artists such as Giotto, Botticelli, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Paolo Uccello, Raffaello, Piero della Francesca and Bellini; you name it, it's there. In addition, the museum houses a vast collection of paintings from the Dutch School and sculptures from Roman times. All the masterpieces that we had

THE DUOMO
RAFFAELE AMMAVUTA



seen in books, while in school, were waiting for us.

Once inside the Uffizi, the Botticelli's Venus was a dream. The Goddess of Love was in the center of the painting, emerging from the ocean, driven ashore by the wind on a huge shell. On the right, the Spring Goddess was waiting to welcome her with a gown to cover her naked beauty. On the left, the God of Wind and an angel were caressing Venus with their breath, blowing flowers all around, moving Venus' long hair, the gown and the leaves in the background. Venus was radiant, pure and gorgeous. The scene was sublime. My jaw dropped from amazement.

The morning was gone and the Teacher took us to the Mercato Centrale to have lunch. We were blown away by the feverish activities of the market. The vendors shouted, with a thick Florentine accent, to attract customers to their merchandise, fresh colorful fruit in yellows, reds, oranges, browns and every color in between. Also there were the vegetables in all shades of green and the intense, inviting smell of cold cuts and cheese that made us want to taste that sopressata, that wild boar prosciutto or that cheese from Sardinia one had nev-

er had before. We headed to the bakery, where we bought generous pieces of focaccia bread filled with prosciutto and cheese. It was exhilarating. It was warm, fragrant, crusty on the outside and soft on the inside; the filling melting in our mouth. All the simple ingredients: olive oil, salt and herbs were perfectly balanced. We also bought some zesty and juicy fruit from the greengrocer and went to sit on the steps of the market to enjoy the scenery of daily life. Everybody was talking, moving and gesturing animatedly. The butcher singing while cutting meat, the baker taking more bread out of the oven, the greengrocer loading fruit and vegetables on the stalls, the grocer giving samples of cheese to customers and the fish vendor, with squids in each of his hands, shouting that his fish was the best. It was spectacular, pure theatre.

Florence is beyond art. That is what I like about it. Yes, one can enjoy the treasures of history, art and architecture and travel back in time, but it is also an intense pleasure to wander around the narrow streets and hidden squares to find and experience the treasures of daily life. Whenever I'm back in Florence, I love strolling through the street. Without knowing where

PALAZZO VECCHIO
RAFFAELE AMMAVUTA



I'm going, I just let my senses guide me. I know though that I have to follow that sweet, divine smell of pastry that pulls me to enter a pasticceria. The little pieces of colorful fruit have been placed by patient, knowledgeable hands. Just looking at these treasures is mouth watering. The freshness of the dough and the cream are amazing. I eat two of them and drink a strong, creamy espresso that instantly wakes me up. Recharged, I continue to explore. I pass a little square with a well right in the center of it and as I look up, an old lady is leaning out of the window. She looks at me, I smile and wave at her, she nods and smiles back at me.

While walking, I am attracted to a tiny window that reveals a leather workshop. The craftsman has managed to create glass shelves displaying little leather boxes in different dimensions: squared, round, triangular and in different colors.

"May I come in?" I ask.

"Are you kidding? Of course," the craftsman replies with his sharp Florentine sense of humor.

Surprisingly, the workshop is bigger than I thought. The desk, where the man works, has tools to cut,

curve and bend the leather, and create texture to it. The smell is exhilarating, and I am fascinated by the passion and devotion the man puts into his work; knowledge and skills passed down from generations. I end up buying three boxes.

Back in the street, I pass a florist, a bookstore and an antique shop. A heavenly smell of bread circulates in the air and pretty soon a bakery appears around the corner. Inside, the scent of the olive oil and the aroma of the herbs are invigorating. Different kinds of focaccia bread are displayed: rosemary, onion, arugula, olive, potato, basil and tomato. The baker presses her fingers to give texture to the dough's surface and to create holes to let the olive oil sit there. I have to try three pieces. How is it possible that these simple ingredients give such flavor? The baker knows what she is doing.

As I leave the bakery I turn left and follow a little street that leads to the Arno River. I sit on the parapet to enjoy the sun of the late afternoon and the sound of the flowing water. Ponte Vecchio, the Old Bridge, another of the most beloved and precious icons of Florence is right there; intact in its beauty. It has been watching the water flow for 700 years.

While contemplating the view, I find myself smiling and breathing deep to capture the moment. My mind goes back to the other exquisite treasures I experienced during the afternoon, the pastries,



FLORENCE
RAFFAELE AMMAVUTA



c o l l e c t i o n

raffaele
AMMAVUTA

**SERIES
TWO**

SHINE
Acrylic on Canvas





OBSSESSION
Acrylic on Canvas



WIN
Acrylic on Canvas



UNTITLED
Acrylic on Canvas



UNA MANERA DIFERENTE DE VER LOS CONFLICTOS HUMANOS

WILFREDO GUIBERT Y MARIANELA PRENDES

La mayoría de nosotros nos vemos involucrados en conflictos día tras día. Puede que yo tenga un conflicto conmigo mismo sobre si debo o no ver la televisión en español. En un matrimonio puede surgir un conflicto sobre como enfrentar una dificultad que tienen en sus relaciones sexuales o tal vez dos equipos de baloncesto entren en conflicto al discutir las reglas de juego.

¿Que provoca conflictos?

¿Los conflictos son buenos o malos?

Los conflictos se producen porque todos nosotros somos personas diferentes que además nos agrupamos en familias y grupos que son diferentes y no funcionan de la misma manera. Esto produce que tengamos con mucha frecuencia distintas opiniones, sentimientos y experiencias sobre las cosas y la manera de lograr determinados objetivos. Por eso, los conflictos son parte indisoluble de nuestra vida y dado que ellos son inevitables, parece tener sentido el tratar de aprender cómo manejarlos de forma creadora y

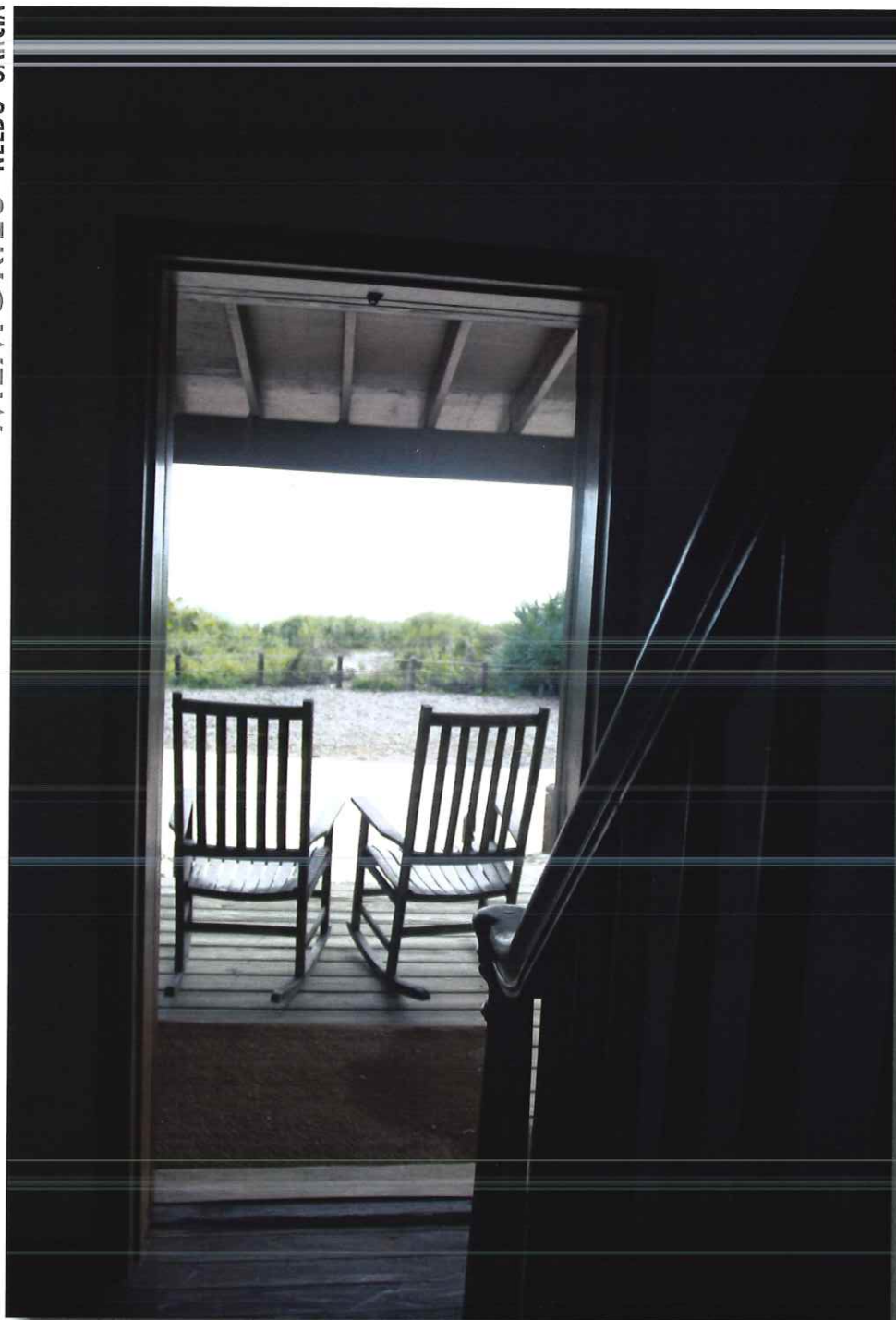
constructiva.

Para que haya conflicto la persona o las partes deben percibirlo como tal, pues el hecho de que exista o no un conflicto es cuestión de percepción; si nadie tiene conciencia de que hay un conflicto, entonces este no existe. El conflicto puede ser también una lucha dentro de nuestra propia mente que se desata como resultado de necesidades, deseos o tentaciones.

Definimos el conflicto como "un proceso que se inicia cuando una o más personas o partes no pueden ponerse de acuerdo con respecto a algo y perciben de forma consciente este desacuerdo". Esta definición abarca toda una gama de grados de conflictos humanos, desde los actos violentos y francos hasta las formas sutiles de desacuerdo con uno mismo.

Los conflictos se originan por la oposición, por la pobre disponibilidad de recursos materiales o espirituales, la incompatibilidad de metas, las diferencias en la interpretación de hechos, la intensificación

MEMORIES NELDO GARCÍA



de las emociones, las diferencias en los valores y creencias y por algunas formas de interacción no cooperativas.

Los conflictos son de distinto rango, desde desacuerdos de pequeña monta hasta una guerra nuclear y se manifiestan de muy diversas formas como: contradicciones internas, actuaciones hipócritas o existencia de prejuicios, desavenencias o desacuerdos, usos de ironías o expresiones indirectas, discusiones, luchas físicas o agresiones y guerras en diferentes escalas.

Dependiendo del espacio social que abarquen los conflictos estos pueden ser intragrupales e intergrupales. Los primeros son los que surgen entre personas de un grupo en particular; por ejemplo, a muchos estudiantes no les importa interrumpir las clases conversando, con los ruidos del celular, comiendo en clases o llegando tarde mientras que a otros esto les molesta pues les dificulta su atención a la clase. Esta contradicción se intensifica cuando los profesores se muestran indiferentes a ella o no predicán con el ejemplo.

Los conflictos intergrupales son los que ocurren entre grupos de diversos tamaños y alcances, incluyendo clubes, organizaciones,

comunidades y naciones. Ejemplo: muchos estudiantes del College piensan que el método empleado en las clases de Speech/Listening para enseñar no es bueno mientras que muchos profesores piensan que si y que los malos resultados en el cumplimiento de los objetivos se deben al poco esfuerzo de los estudiantes.

Una vez que sabemos todos estos aspectos interesantes sobre los conflictos nos preguntamos: ¿Tienen alguna utilidad los conflictos?

A la mayoría de las personas que se les solicita que describan lo que entienden por conflictos, generan opiniones que incluyen por lo general una serie de palabras negativas como: problema, ira, hostilidad, violencia u odio. Esto indica que la mayoría de nosotros abordamos el conflicto desde una actitud o creencia fatalista que lo valora como un elemento negativo, que causa dolor, provoca estrés, miedo, violencia y entorpece las relaciones.

Las connotaciones negativas que muchas personas damos a los conflictos son el resultado de mensajes que hemos recibido y asimilado en el transcurso de la vida y proceden de nuestros padres, maestros, amigos, medios de comunicación y la

literatura. Estos mensajes han contribuido a crear actitudes y creencias negativas en torno a los conflictos, que se manifiestan en como reaccionamos ante ellos.

En la población son muy populares algunas creencias negativas sobre los conflictos, las cuales dificultan nuestro desempeño efectivo en la vida social, donde necesariamente hay que interactuar con las diferencias en criterios, actitudes y modos de actuar de otras personas y grupos humanos. Algunas de estas creencias son:

- Cuando pierdas no te enfades y ya, véngate.
- Evita el conflicto a toda costa pues conduce a problema.
- No discutas las orientaciones que te da el jefe.
- Si no te entienden no discutas.

Sin embargo, los conflictos son útiles, en tanto pueden aportarnos cambios positivos y nos permiten darnos cuenta de otros ángulos de visión de un conocimiento, un problema o situación determinada. Ellos se convierten en positivos o negativos de acuerdo a como los percibimos y manejamos:

- Usados de forma constructiva, los conflictos pueden resultar

efectivos porque ayudan a producir un cambio, pueden ser un intercambio de información y de ideas, de ahí que contribuyan a promover la comprensión, a ser una experiencia gratificante y a llevar al logro de resultados positivos.

- Usados de forma destructiva, los conflictos pueden herir sentimientos, generar incompreensión y conducir, incluso, a la violencia.

Los conflictos se van desarrollando con el discurrir del tiempo y cuando están encubiertos o imperceptibles siempre habrá un incidente que los haga salir a la luz pública. Además puede empeorarse un conflicto, si se arrastran también conflictos del pasado; de ahí que resulte importante hacer frente al conflicto en el mismo momento en que surge.

Todos deberíamos saber que los conflictos tienen muchas soluciones posibles y que aunque no siempre generemos el conflicto, sí podemos siempre elegir la forma en que vamos a afrontarlo, aun en circunstancias de emergencia.

Muchas personas creen que los conflictos se deben evitar pues indican que uno tiene problemas emocionales o

que los grupos no funcionan bien y este anticuado estándar afecta la manera en que ellas y los grupos enfrentan los conflictos. Sin embargo, los investigadores dicen que los conflictos son naturales e inevitables en la vida de cualquier persona o grupo y que no siempre son malos, sino que pueden ser una fuerza positiva que determine el desarrollo personal y el rendimiento de los grupos y su buena cohesión.

Recientes investigaciones en el campo de la inteligencia emocional dicen que "los conflictos pueden ser una fuerza positiva en un grupo y que para que un grupo se desempeñe de manera efectiva es imprescindible que exista cierto grado de conflicto" que ayuda al desarrollo de una cohesión dinámica interna, a reforzar sus metas y a mejorar su rendimiento.

El conflicto es constructivo cuando mejora la calidad de las decisiones,

estimula la creatividad y la innovación, fomenta el interés y la curiosidad de

los miembros del grupo, ofrece un medio para ventilar pro-

blemas y liberar tensiones, fomenta un entorno de evaluación de uno mismo y de cambio.

¿Cómo podemos evaluar los conflictos a nivel familiar y personal?

Los podemos evaluar como:

- Ganar - Perder. Ocurre cuando una de las partes evita el enfrentamiento de forma sistemática por pereza, desidia o miedo. La persona evita el conflicto a priori y prefiere perder de entrada en lugar de enfrentarse al otro independientemente de que pueda tener razón. Su salida a la angustia es la huida. En esta clase de conflictos también están los que quieren y pretenden vencer siempre.
- Perder - Perder. Ambas partes pierden, son los conflictos mal manejados y mal resueltos, fácilmente reconocibles porque las personas se que-

dan con una sensación de insatisfacción, frustración, impotencia y soledad. Son conflictos en los que la falta de escucha, el juzgar al otro previamente, las posturas extremas y el lenguaje ofensivo van distanciando a las personas involucradas hasta construir barreras de prejuicios.

- Ganar - Ganar es el conflicto positivo, debería predominar entre nosotros. Se gana a través de la comprensión del otro y la negociación de los valores en juego. Se gana en aprendizaje de estrategias y en experiencias positivas. Se negocian las condiciones, los tiempos, las modalidades, etc., para solucionar el conflicto. Todos ceden algo y todos ganan algo, parece el modo más eficaz y sano para enfrentarse a situaciones conflictivas. Lo importante no es cómo eliminar o prevenir el conflicto, sino cómo sostener una controversia animada, sin disputas letales y que te desarrolle en algún sentido.

¿Qué consejos claves existen para la resolución positiva de los conflictos?

Las personas que desean visión constructiva de los conflictos y resolución positiva de los mismos deben seguir los 10 consejos claves que le damos a continuación:

- 1°. Considerar los conflictos algo natural y abordarlo en cuanto tengas conciencia de ellos.
- 2°. Escuchar atentamente para entender bien el problema y centrarse en este y no en la persona y sus características.
- 3°. Determinar si un resultado es realmente relevante a la resolución del conflicto, mediante la formulación de preguntas abiertas y directas sobre el mismo.
- 4°. Intentar llevar las suposiciones ocultas (creencias y/o emociones) sobre un conflicto a la superficie, de tal manera que puedan ser discutidas.
- 5°. Escuchar atentamente, no expreses tus contra argumentos cuando la persona está hablando, oye su lógica y su razonamiento, aunque no estés de acuerdo.

6°. Anima a que se expresen los sentimientos que están debajo de las ideas. Los sentimientos pueden bloquear la posibilidad de oír y la expansión de nuestra mente.

7°. Evitar las afirmaciones absolutas que no dejan sitio para las aclaraciones. Ejemplo: "Nunca creeré que", "no voy a hablar del asunto", "no voy a entender aunque...".

8°. Intentar crear una situación de ganar-ganar. Un enfoque útil es el que hace que cada persona implicada en el conflicto afirme: "Lo que quiero que tú sigas haciendo"; "Lo que quiero que tú empieces a hacer" y "Lo que quiero que tú dejes de hacer".

9°. No imponer acuerdos y centrarse en negociar los puntos que conducen a que ambos ganen con las soluciones encontradas y realizar su seguimiento.

10°. Solicitar la asistencia de mediadores o dependencias que pueden ayudar cuando usted sienta que se están agotando las soluciones o las posibilidades de acuerdos.

Estas reflexiones y sugerencias permiten que nuestro manejo de los conflictos sea más efectivo y que gradualmente incorporemos a nuestro estilo de vivir una manera más creadora y constructiva de verlos y de resolverlos para aprovechar al máximo las riquezas que tienen las diferencias, la diversidad y la multiculturalidad.

Desearíamos que después de leer este artículo y con la intención de saber qué tan buenas son sus habilidades para resolver conflictos actualmente, completarás un cuestionario muy interesante llamado GUÍA BÁSICA PARA LA RESOLUCIÓN DE CONFLICTOS que mide estas habilidades y que aparece en la versión "on line" de esta revista.



HOPE OF LOVE FLORENCIA RODRIGUEZ



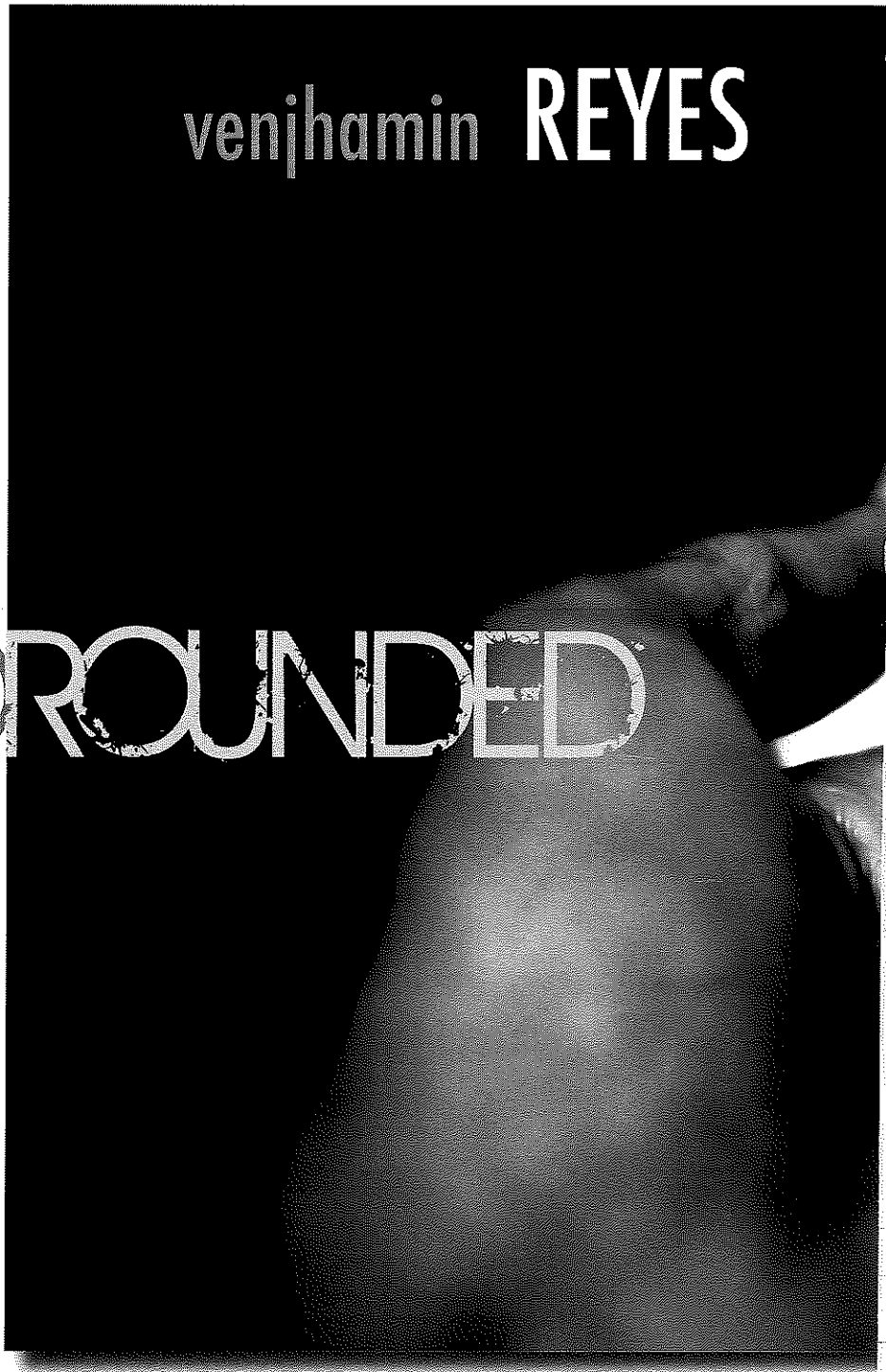
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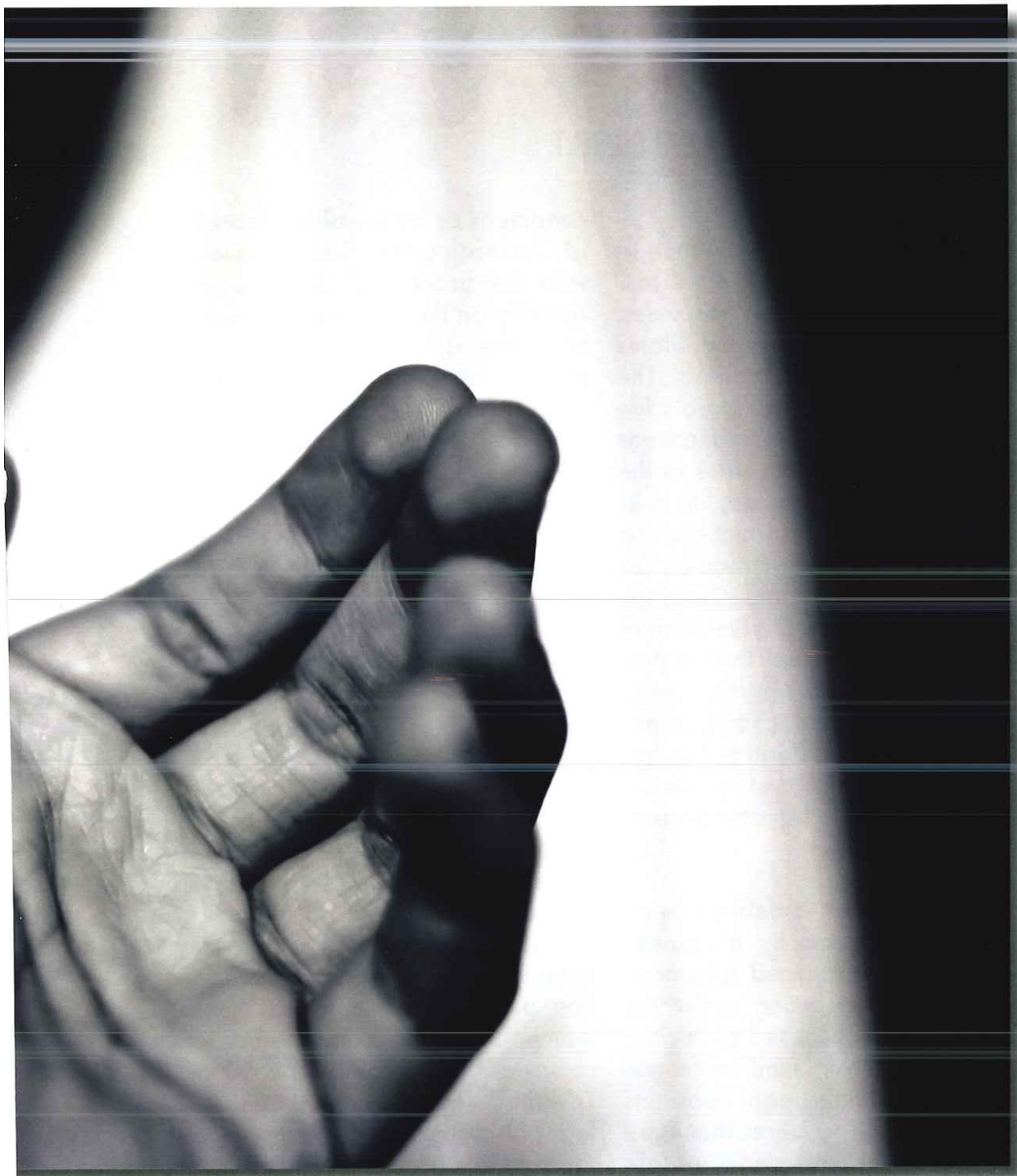
SERIES:

GROUNDING

HELPING HAND

venjhamin REYES





LEGAL ABORTIONS SAVE WOMEN'S LIVES

MARIANELA PRENDES & WILFREDO GUIBERT

Why is Legal abortion such a controversial topic? It's a hot topic that has been widely discussed and debated in the United States due to its ethical implications. The ending of a fetus' or embryo's life is one of those ethical implications in which many on both sides of the question agree that human life in its beginning deserves respect and the right to be protected. However, for many there is a second ethical implication that trumps the first, that of protecting women and their rights. Illegal and unsafe abortion practices lead to severe complications and even maternal deaths. This has a detrimental impact not just on the immediate families but also on society as a whole.

A legal abortion is defined as an abortion performed by a licensed physician, or a licensed advanced practice clinician acting under the supervision of a licensed physician, and under certain medical conditions. Consequently, legal abortions are regulated procedures that were previously practiced under unsafe

conditions or by unskilled abortionists increasing the risks associated with the procedure. So, one perspective on this issue is that women have the right to receive proper medical care when they seek abortion services.

It is a fact that every year a large number of women seek and decide to use induced abortions in order to terminate unwanted pregnancies. Thus, the practice of abortion represents a relevant social and health problem that must be solved with the intervention of government and social and health authorities.

There are three important reasons why we consider legal abortions necessary. The first and most important is that legal abortions have a relevant impact on the reduction of maternal mortality and other complications due to unsafe abortion practices. Second, it allows women to obtain a timely abortion reducing the risk of complications. The third reason is that regulated legal abortions allow for the gathering of creditable statistical data.

MOTHER & DAUGHTER VENJHAMIN REYES



According to the World Health Organization, 47,000 women die annually worldwide from complications directly related to illegal abortions. It's important to note that in the United States, prior to 1973, as many as 5,000 American women died annually as a direct result of unsafe abortions. After induced abortion was legalized, the rates of maternal mortality and related complications due to illegal abortions decreased about 84%. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that the current death rate due to abortion in the US is very low (0.6 x 100,000 abortions).

The qualified and immediate medical intervention that legalized abortion services offer in case of serious complications that may develop during the procedure (heavy bleeding, perforation of the uterus, cervical laceration, etc.) is an important component of the successful delivery of this service that illegal abortions usually could not offer. This ability along with the opportunity to seek timely medical care when complications like infections, retained tissue, etc., appear after the procedure, contributes to the reduction of long-term abortion complications and maternal death rates. It can be said then that legal

abortions save thousands of women every year in the United States.

Complications due to abortions are more common when the procedure is done after the first trimester of gestation (13 weeks). Since legal abortion services allow a woman to have an abortion prior to the 13th week of gestation, the risk of complications is reduced. For example, in the United States, 88% of abortions are performed in the first trimester of gestation, most of them before the ninth week of gestation; therefore, the risk of complications derived from the procedure is minimal. On the other hand, the prohibition of the procedure delays when an abortion is performed, as a consequence of the limited access to illegal abortionists, and increases abortion rates in the second and third trimester of gestation.

The legalization of abortion is not only a way to provide effective and competent medical service to women who seek an abortion, but is also a way to obtain trustworthy data. It allows social institutions and authorities to identify the characteristics and profile of women who are at a high risk of unintended pregnancies and abortions. Likewise, it allows them to know the magnitude of the problem and implement programs

to address it. In countries where abortion is illegal, statistics about abortion rates and related complications are unknown and can only be estimated from death rates or complications that require hospitalization.

Statistics show that in the United States induced abortions are more frequent between the ages of 20 and 29, and among African American, Hispanic, low educated and low income women. Thus, the rates of induced abortions are related to critical social

problems that are caused by socioeconomic differences

and/or due to a lack of access to health care services and education. Consequently, it is common that many women who seek an abortion are not aware of the ethical implications and medical complications that may stem from the procedure. Nor are they aware of the existence of other options, aside from an abortion, to cope with the unwanted pregnancy. Many of them do not know about the adoption process or the different programs that allow mothers to be in contact with the family that adopts their babies, or have misgivings about this option. Others reject the option of

parenting assuming they cannot afford a baby even before exploring the possibility of getting support and help from relatives, friends and government institutions that could have helped with the costs of parenting.

Regarding the use of contraceptive methods, statistics also show that many women who have abortions use contraceptives inconsistently or do not use any contraceptive method at all. The lack of access to health services and contraceptive

methods along with the lack of knowledge regarding their use

and function put women at risk of having unwanted pregnancies and multiple induced abortions. The risk of complications increases with the number of abortions. Moreover, legal abortion services, in contrast to illegal abortionists, provide counseling about abortion and contraceptive methods to prevent repeated unwanted pregnancies.

These social problems associated with the rates of abortion in the U.S. led us to reflect and point out some observations. All women at risk of unwanted pregnancies should know:

legal abortions are necessary and save women.

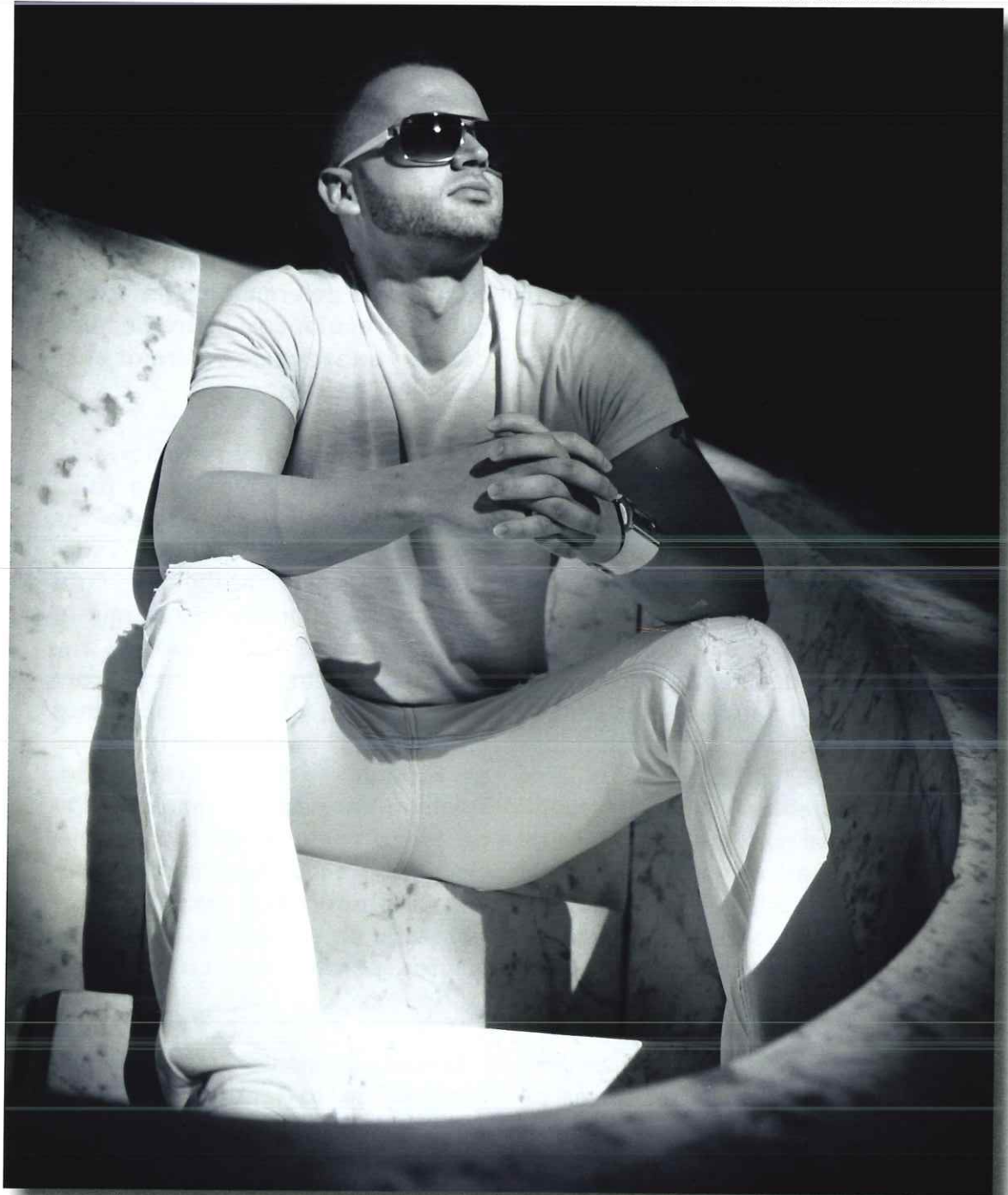
- All women of reproductive age are at risk of getting pregnant when they have unprotected sexual intercourse. So, always use a contraceptive method.
- Use contraceptive methods correctly and systematically for them to be effective.
- The risks from the use of contraceptive methods of any type are always lower than the risks from having an abortion.
- Always consider an abortion as a last resort option since it implies the termination of a human life that deserves to be respected and protected.
- An abortion should only be performed in the first trimester of gestation when the risks of complications are minimal.
- The risk of complications increases with repeated abortions, consequently they should be avoided.
- Giving the baby away for adoption is a way to give the baby the chance to live, and to bring joy to infertile couples and other families that want to adopt. So, it is an option that should always be considered before deciding to abort.
- Parenting is the best option; family and friends along with different government programs and institutions, with the intervention of social workers, can support and help single women to cope with unwanted pregnancies.

All these considerations lead to the conclusion that in this multicultural country, where unwanted pregnancies are a relevant problem and where minorities have less access to health care services and less social opportunities, legal abortions are necessary and save women.

Rather than prohibiting and illegalizing abortions, the best way to reduce the rates of abortion is by considering the observations listed above, by reducing socioeconomic differences, by increasing access to education and health care services and by offering a variety of effective, safe, and affordable contraceptive methods to minorities.



INTO THE LIGHT VENJHAMIN REYES



REENCONTRAR EL SUEÑO

WILFREDO GUIBERT Y MARIANELA PRENDES

"La sensación de que *-yo puedo hacerlo-* constituye el principal motor del cambio".

Profesor Robert Kaplan

Es muy placentero dormir bien las horas necesarias y soñar sobre cosas agradables o excitantes mientras que dormir intermitentemente con pesadillas frecuentes o no poder dormir puede resultar en detrimento de la salud y la calidad de vida de las personas.

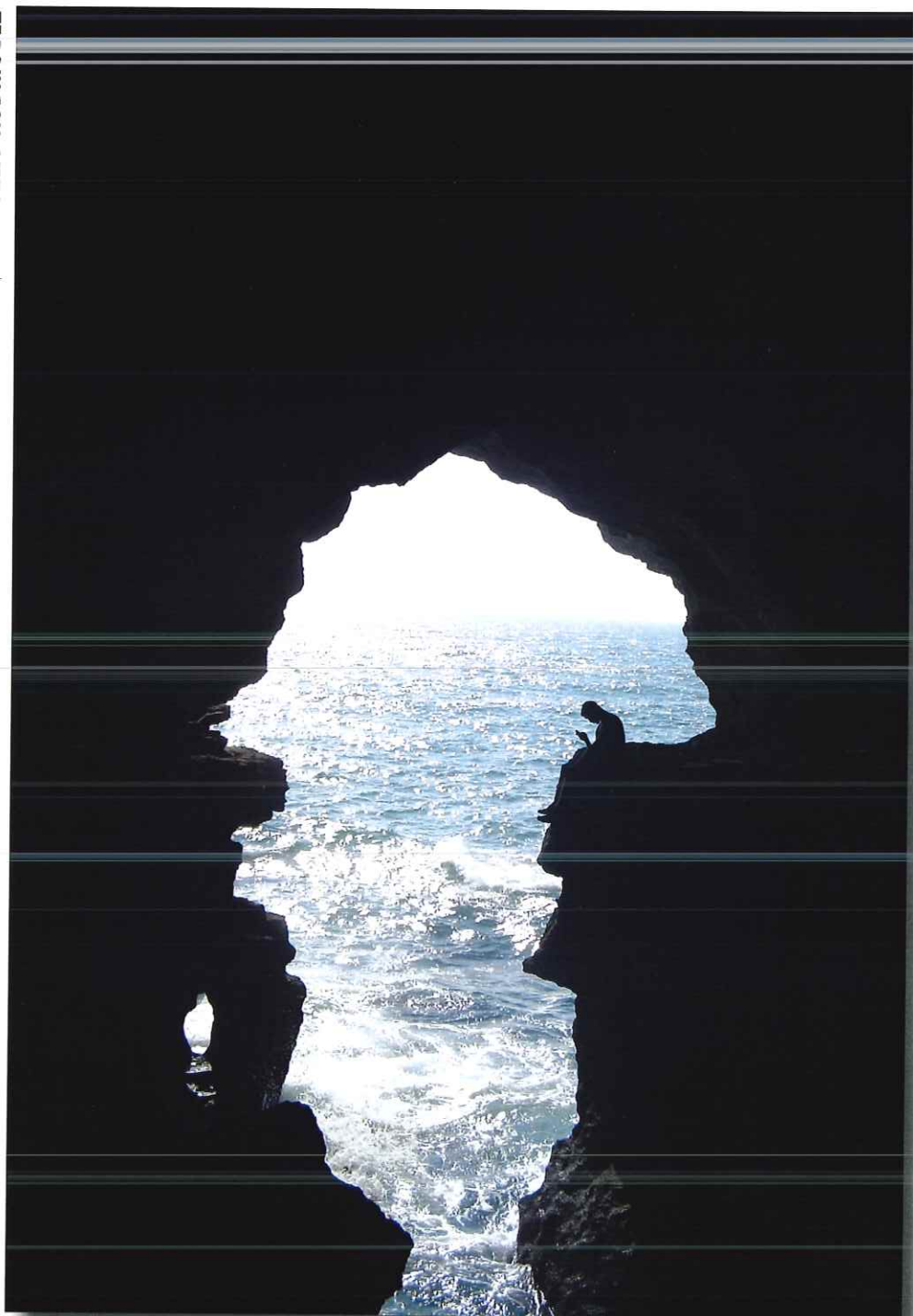
El sueño es el descanso diario de la mente, el momento de crecer nuestros cuerpos en desarrollo y el momento en que nuestra mente analiza a nivel inconsciente los problemas complicados y las incertidumbres que nos preocupan. William Shakespeare le llamaba al sueño "el principal nutridor en el festín de la vida" y esto es verdad porque el sueño permite el descanso del cerebro y de todas las estructuras biológicas que sostienen la vida y la salud de los seres humanos.

Los adultos con responsabilidades sociales y familiares necesitan tener una buena salud psíquica, es decir, un estado en que la perso-

na está satisfecha de sí misma, se relaciona bien con los demás y es capaz de resistir y afrontar los problemas cotidianos. Para lograr este estado de buen funcionamiento psicológico es determinante tener una buena y regular costumbre de buen dormir y saber cómo controlar el insomnio cuando aparece.

El sueño normal satisfactorio incrementa nuestra resistencia física y psicológica lo cual permite aumentar nuestro autocontrol y disminuir nuestra vulnerabilidad. Para cualquier ser humano no dormir lo suficiente tiene consecuencias negativas a corto plazo como son: somnolencia, cambios repentinos en el humor, pérdida de la memoria reciente y falta de creatividad. También tiene consecuencias a largo plazo como: obesidad, envejecimiento precoz, agotamiento, disminución del deseo sexual, mayor riesgo de enfermedades cardiovasculares, pérdida crónica de la memoria, etc.

El funcionamiento normal del mecanismo de la tensión emocional es indispensable para la acción eficiente, pero cuando las personas



no duermen lo suficiente, este mecanismo se altera y en un corto plazo (8 meses) la persona podría presentar síntomas de una alteración psicológica. Cuando esto último sucede aparece en las personas la imperiosa necesidad de reencontrar el sueño.

La mayoría de los problemas con el sueño aparecen producto de conflictos emocionales mantenidos en el tiempo, de preocupaciones e inseguridades que las personas sienten ante problemas sociales, familiares y económicos, de estar trabajando mucho días y meses durante la madrugada, de consumir drogas o medicamentos que alteran el funcionamiento del sistema nervioso central y de no tener un horario regular estable para dormir.

Ustedes se preguntarán ¿qué hace falta para conciliar el sueño y dormir bien cada día?

Existen diversos métodos que nos permiten mantener un buen hábito de dormir, un sueño reparador y poder autocontrolar el insomnio cuando tenemos dificultades para que se produzca la inducción del sueño normal en nuestra mente.

En primer lugar, dormir la cantidad de horas necesarias acorde

con la edad y en el momento más oportuno. Los adultos deben dormir como mínimo 6 horas diarias, los adolescentes y los jóvenes 8 horas y los niños al menos 10 horas. La noche es el mejor momento para dormir porque es cuando se dan las mejores condiciones medioambientales y sociales para una satisfactoria inducción del sueño como mecanismo natural e involuntario del cuerpo humano.

Segundo, los ejercicios físicos, un protector universal de la salud del hombre, son además un excelente inductor del sueño reparador. Para un buen sueño nocturno qué agradable, saludable y beneficiosa es una caminata por lugares que nos permiten ejercitarnos mientras nos mantenemos en contacto con la naturaleza. Un ejemplo lo constituyen los caminos hechos con rekortan en el parque Kennedy de Coconut Grove donde siempre es posible una buena sesión de ejercicios físicos y de relajación sobre la hierba.

En tercer lugar, hace falta tratar de tener siempre un día de vida motivante, entretenido y con un saldo optimista al final de este, donde realicemos actividades apacibles y relajadas antes de irnos a la cama y evitemos consumir bebidas estimulantes como el café, té,

chocolate, y las que contienen cola a partir de la media noche.

También ayuda a dormir el darse un baño con agua caliente antes de acostarse, tener un ambiente propicio para dormir como temperatura agradable, oscuridad en la habitación, ausencia de ruidos, colchón cómodo y rígido, no tener hambre o no haber cenado abundantemente antes de ir a dormir. Cuando uno está próximo a acostarse debe tratar de no tener disgustos o discusiones de signo negativo y en caso de tenerla debe posponer el ir a dormir al menos dos horas, haciendo algo manual o conversando con otra persona.

Muchos expertos en los problemas del sueño afirman que las personas que presentan problemas para dormir durante más de 7 días continuos deben considerar que están teniendo insomnio. Cuando esto ocurre existen una serie de hábitos sencillos que deberíamos seguir para lograr un autocontrol en el enfrentamiento del mismo. Estos son:

1. Acostarse con la intención de dormir, solo cuando tengan sueño.
2. No utilizar la cama para nada

que no sea dormir excepto la actividad sexual.

3. Si cuando se acuesta observa que no puede dormir, levántese y vaya a otra habitación a realizar actividades que desee y vuelva a su cuarto solo para dormir. Repita esta rutina tantas veces como sea necesario durante la noche.
4. Cuando no tenga sueño siempre piense "como no tengo sueño le voy a aprovechar las horas a la noche haciendo algo productivo o entretenido" e inicie alguna actividad. No insista en querer dormir a toda costa.

Estos métodos y hábitos sencillos son la clave que ayudará a su cuerpo a adquirir un ritmo consistente de sueño y a su mente a reencontrar el mecanismo natural de inducción del sueño. Su puesta en práctica les ayudará además a mostrarse a ustedes mismos, que las acciones activas de la persona son mejores para un buen sueño y bienestar que la inacción y la apatía.



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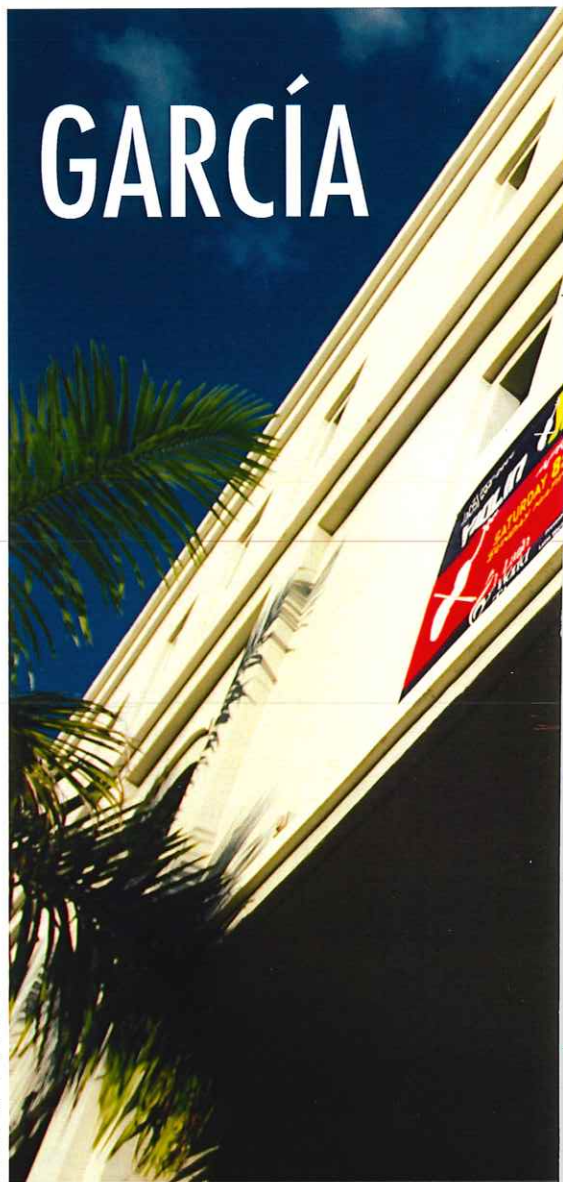
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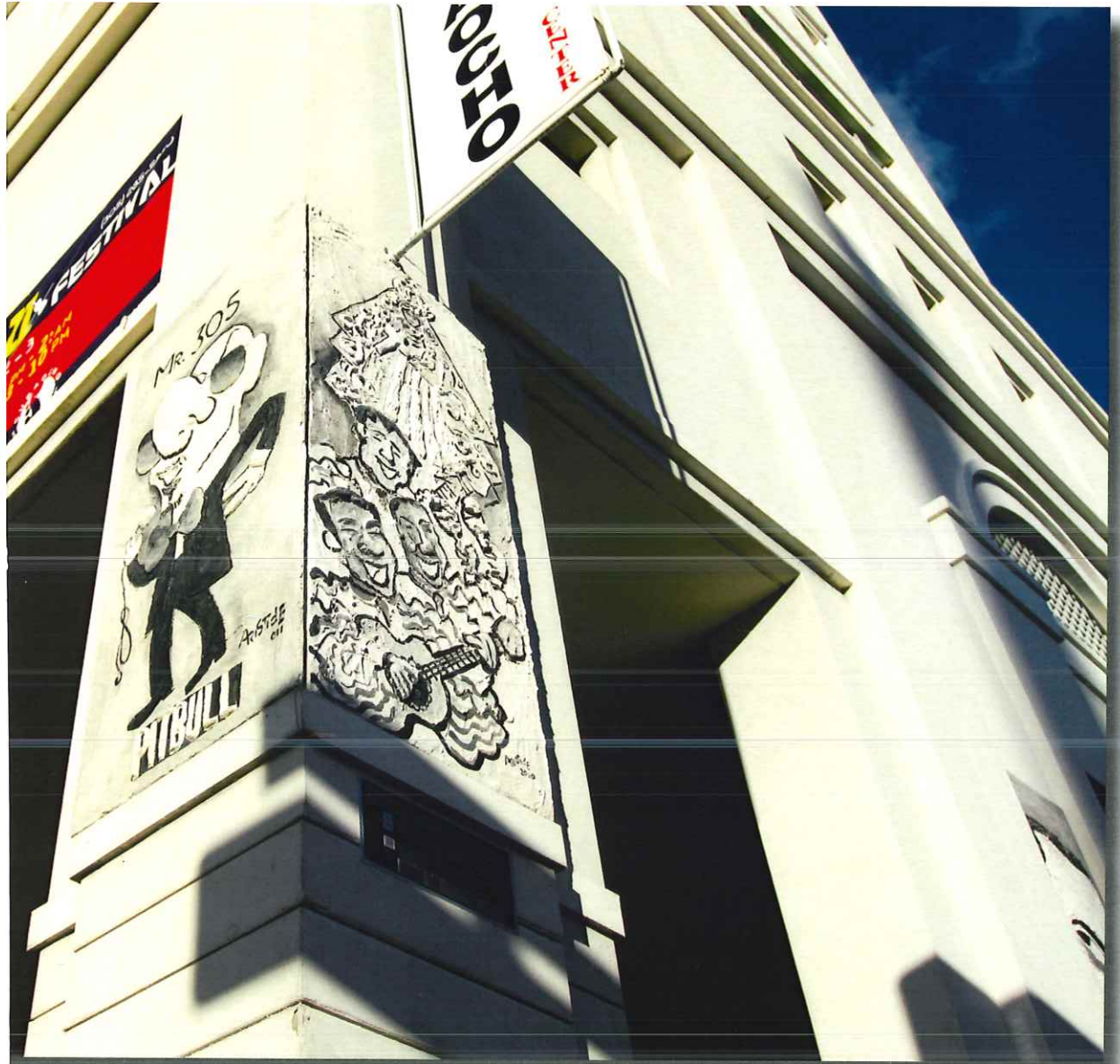
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Mephis Drive



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OCCUPY MIAMI DAVID MARTINS



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THANK YOU

This magazine could not have been produced without input from our entire editorial and design staff. However, a special thank you must go to those members that worked late into the night for way too many nights and even through the holidays. Thank You, Marianela, Neldo, Vivi and Wilfredo. This magazine could not have happened without you.

A warm thank you must also go to our dedicated faculty advisors, Emily Sendin and Liza Greenberg.

Likewise, much gratitude goes to all the IAC students that submitted the work that appears herein. Your work, not the magazine, is a testament to the plethora of talent and passion that lives and struggles daily at our campus and in our community. Nonetheless, I hope that URBANA v5 was able to achieve its goal of reflecting, as best as possible, our student's diversity, knowledge, experience and talent. We hope you enjoyed this modest representation of our student body's creative work.

Carl Cañizares
Editor-In-Chief
URBANAv5

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