

In This Issue: Zachary-A Childhood Nightmare

#

Panacea-

with a new easy swallow coating

GenCon Elvira & Company

Apocalypse Playground



artwork literature commentary and more

Death on a Bus Bench

Artists of Deciduous people,

Gothic Literature

A Handful of Broken Angels

Welcome to my Apocalyptic Play-

ground. Wherein, I keep my most treasured possessions, ideas. They come to me in the form of broken angels you know. I keep these angels here in the hopes that when you come here to see them, together we can restore them to the fragmented spectacle they were when they first came to this hallowed ground. So, in my presentation and your acceptance, humble reader, we will work together to make creatures of majesty... Creatures of the night.

This magazine is devoted to gothic literature in all of it's forms and anything else that expresses the darker and more majestic side of this dream of a fleeting world. I am currently accepting submissions of artwork. I've used most of my computer graphics in this issue and will be sorely lacking next issue. I am especially interested in running a comic series within these pages but I could use almost anything you think is appropriate.

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I am Dylan, or at least that is what I am called. I was named for the poet, who took his name from the Celtic god of the sea, whose name means "child of the dark". Dylan was the twin and opposite of Lugh the Sun god. I figure I was named well. My name alone says a lot about the person that I am. Which is good, that is what names should do.

The traditions and customs held in the ancient world that is Ireland have become very important to me. It is appropriate that my name should originate from there. Even though I'm not 100% Irish, I have adopted the Celtic heritage as my own. My name comes from it, so why not the rest of me! And as for the definition of the name, well, I'm a Goth... (gasp! He admits it!?) It is almost as if the name I was given predetermined the person I would become.

What is Dylan? Well, I'm fifteen years old, And I aspire to be an incredible artist of some sort: Painter, dancer, musician.... Most likely I'll become a starving writer in search of attention and food. Hell, I don't know.

I do know that I have a vision

I noticed at a very early age that I usually see things differently than most people. As a result I don't have too many close friends. I have trouble finding people with interests and such that are similar to mine. I have come to realize that philosophy and ideas basically run my life. (I am an INTJ for those of you who are into psycho-babble) My motto would be something like "just because you don't see something does not mean it's not there" but I don't have a motto so that's not it.

If you are reading this, then chances are you live near me. I too am wedged in the "Washmore" area. I think that is a stupid term for the Baltimore/Washington Metropolitan area. My dad uses it all the time and it has become implanted in my head, otherwise I wouldn't have used the dumb term at all.

I live in a small college town on the eastern panhandle of West Virginia. It is called Shepherdstown by some, "quaint" by the yuppie snobs that infest it and home by yours truly. My home town is dotted with crumbling stepping stones, the kind used for mounting horses and climbing into carriages. It is fifteen miles from what Jefferson thought to be one of the most beautiful places in the world, a rock upon a cliff upon the Potomac. Less than 50 years after he said that, the trees were leveled and the river valley was filled with charcoal smog. That river, however, is constantly in flux, the ebb and flow bring changes in a circular and gradual manner. Wiping out most of the bridges that Shepherdstown has ever had. Our history is recorded along several limestone monoliths between the bridge that links us with Maryland and the toothpick railroad bridge. Jefferson's rock once again juts above a scenic ribbon of water.



Shepherdstown was once home to the likes of James O'Barr, the man responsible for "The Crow". He went to College here when I was about eight years old. I vaguely remember him. There is a graveyard two blocks from my house with a beautiful stone angel that is very similar to the one on the cover of the graphic novel version of his work.

I've spent the entirety of my formative and impressionable years in a small Gothic town full of writers, care to guess what that makes me? In fact Shepherdstown has the highest percentage of professional writers than any other community of it's size in the entire country.

Anyway, The rest of my self-summary will have to wait until I am sure you really want to hear

it. I apologize for my rambling.

I also have a gothic bedroom, Complete with black light, mannequin with two interchangeable heads, homemade window curtains, and my beloved pet rat, Isis. She wears her opera gloves all the time and has an affinity for Ritz Crackers™

Let's get to the literature shall we !

Sporting freshly donned protective lab coats, three doctors settle themselves behind the one way mirror that separates them from the round, empty white room on the other side. The oldest of the three reaches across the dimly lit cubicle and hits a button on the phone. It beeps three times

"Yes doctor?" The secretary squeaks politely

The doctor almost whispers his response. "Send me the first...subject"

Thirty seconds later Mrs. Robinson walks through a sliding panel and into the bleached sterile room. She stumbles a little as her eyes adjust to the bright lights.

Each of the doctors examine papers kept on their laps before them. The second doctor, who is slightly shorter than the first and wearing a green face mask rises from her seat and situates herself near a small panel located next to the window. She speaks from behind the face mask and the mirror.

"All right Misses Robinson, you may do as you were instructed" The subject is addressed as if she is a child instead of a middle aged woman.

With this, as if on cue the third doctor nervously fumbles through the dim light for the camera lying on the floor next to his seat. Upon looking up from this excursion he finds himself unable to capture the results on film. The results have already taken their effect on poor Mrs. Robinson. The other doctors proceed to take copious notes on the recent and drastic changes displayed by the subject. The youngest doctor puts down his camera and joins them. His hand shakes as he tries to write.

The subject, Joanna Robinson, begins to speak. At first only child like gurgling noises poured through the speaker next to the window. Then, smiling, Mrs.. Robinson lays something down while bowing to her reflection. Almost like an offering. She speaks again as the orderlies carry her through the sliding panel again.

"Look , I was able to sever my own foot !"

The oldest doctor lights a cigar as he calmly watches the round room being sterilized. The other two doctors complete their notes, the youngest clings tightly to his camera with a free, but shaking hand. Three beeps spill from the telephone. The eldest answers, as the sanitation washes the final blood spots off before leaving.

"I'm sorry to interrupt sir, but there is a Mister Russell here who had appointment with another doctor at eleven o'clock today. That doctor is involved with some complications concerning one of his patients and will be unable to see Mister Russell today. He needs a checkup and a prescription for pain killer. Will you be able to see him?"

The doctor puffs his cigar, lost in thought.

"Has he been told of my policy?"

"No, um. No doctor he has not"

"What about his file, do we have that"

"you should, it was passed out this morning"

" thank you, that will be all."

The doctor, still delighting in the secretary's anxiety, turns the speaker phone off.

One minute and thirty-five seconds later, the panel on the east wall of the white room slides open, spits an old man into the blinding light and abruptly closes again. All three doctors move slightly, a cigar is snuffed out, a camera is adjusted nervously, and a case file is read from behind a green face mask.

"Ferdinand Russell, age 75 , six feet two inches tall, brown hair and brown eyes.

The elder watches the embers of his cigar slowly fade and die before asking:

"Has the subject ever experienced previous...incidents"

"no" she announces

The youngest remains as still as possible, trying not to look at the subject until he has to. A button on the wall panel is pushed and a voice spills into it from a green face mask.

"Are you familiar with the procedure here?"

The ever blinking subject nods in response.

"Then, you may do as instructed."

Mister Russell reaches into the pocket of his khaki slacks and pulls out a small pill. The subject lifts his hand to his mouth. The doctor in green takes notes of this while the youngest slams repeatedly on the shutter to his camera. The elder watches without moving at all. Ferdinand Russell slumps to the ground, hitting it with a dull thud. The east panel opens again and the sanitation crew sets to work.

The youngest stands and scowls at his superior, who is lighting another cigar.

"I can't believe that you allow people to..."

A cutoff reply raps from the smoke.

"Remember the conventions, we are bound by them to do what is necessary."

The young doctor sits in silent remission. He puts his camera away and glares through the window at the glowing room on the other side.

The telephone beeps again, three times. The secretary speaks through the speaker.

"Are you ready for another patient?"

"Yes, I believe that I am. Send Steven in."

The phone clicks off and a redheaded boy steps through the panel. He does not blink or stumble in the light. Words come from a box next to the mirror.

"Hello Steven"

She sounds almost motherly ... almost.

"Hi doctor lady!"

Steven waves to the speaker while staring at his reflection.

"Did the receptionist give your medicine?"

"Uh-huh" Steven nods and fondles the forgotten pill lying in his palm.

The doctor turns and looks to her superior for a signal. The elder then turns to his right and asks:

"Is it your turn for the commencement?"

"Yes" he mumble while clenching the camera case strap.

The elder doctor slams his cigar into the tray. Crash and burn.

The youngest tries to speak his mind but can only manage the phrase "little...baby boy".

"Your behavior is completely incompetent, further altercations will result in your expulsion, new recruit or otherwise. Any trouble beyond that and you will join the 'baby boy' out there, and no one here will feel sorry for you. We, and that includes yourself are doing this because it is necessary! Do I make myself clear?

The youngest sits and prepares his camera while mumbling "clear as a one-way mirror sir" The doctor in the face mask receives her order

"Tell the subject"

"Steven, you may take your medicine now" The boy looks again at his palm.

Suddenly, a second panel rips open from the west side of the mirror. A young doctor comes running through trying to stop the boy from swallowing the pill. Doctor reaches boy just as tablet tumbles down Steven's little gullet. The doctors eyes widen in terror as his face is quickly ravaged by small human teeth. Before the panel slides shut the subject's reflection quickly darts across and off of the mirror. The other two doctors only had time to sound an alarm, the controls to which were smashed immediately after the doctors' heads were.

The mahogany door to the viewing room slammed shut behind the running subject, leaving the room silent and smoke filled. The phone beeped only twice before it was cut off, and the smoke slowly dissipated.

A Courtship Poem

look my lordship said I,
we can see the stars.

Lovely, my lady. They are
but you are more, by far.

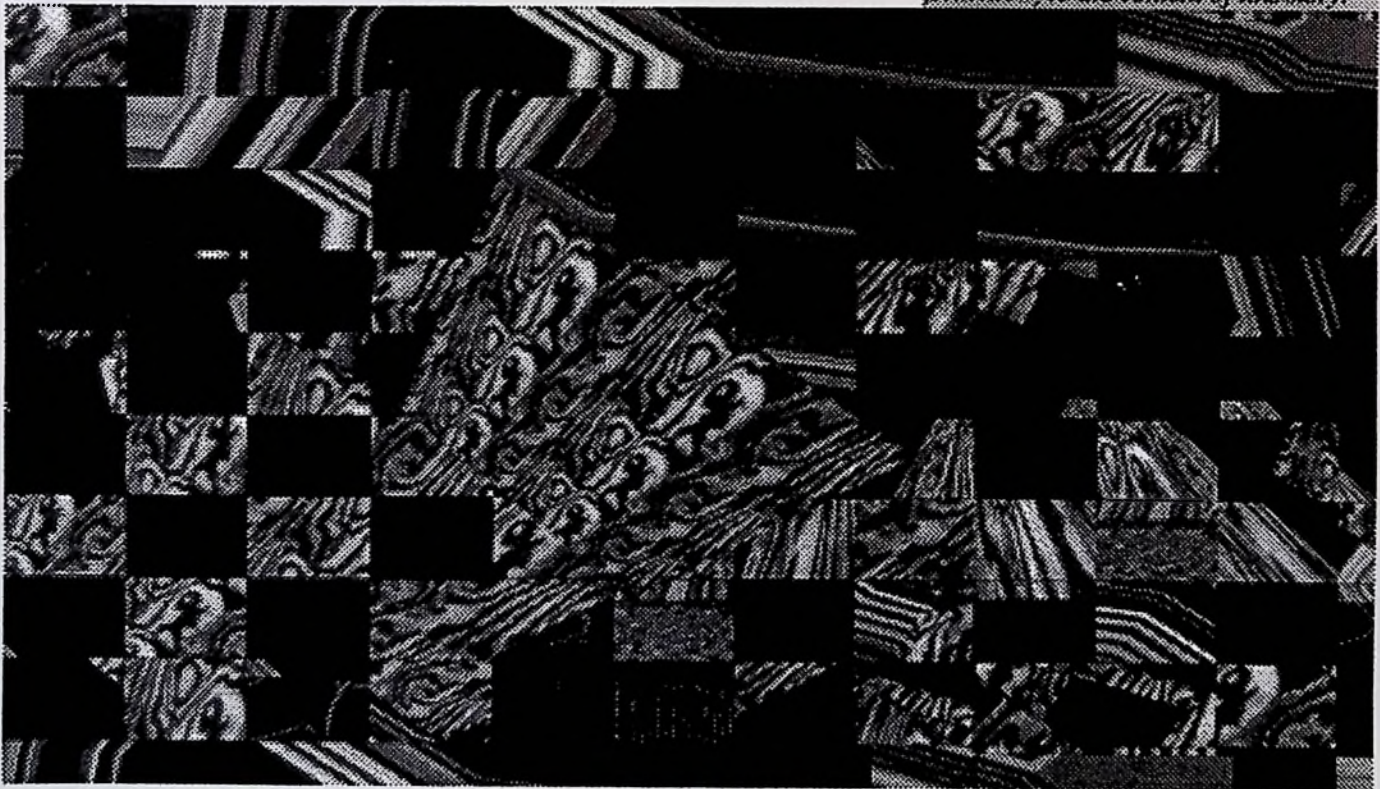
Look my lordship, said I,
I've begun to cry,
for ne'er have words been spoken
of one so fair as I,
that by and by, prove untrue
and the same shall come to you

look, my lady, upon me
and see what will be
for never has fleeting beauty seen
one so wise as me

I will be as you are now
just as you were like me
think not of the beauty that is
but that which will be
for even beauty must fade,
think not of beauty, nor of me,
we must think of age

my lady, lovely as you are,
look to yonder star
elder to you and even me
yet still as lovely as thee.

*This Picture is called "Slide-Over
Lunacy" I thought it was appropriate
somehow to the content of this story.*



Widow's Glory: A Fable

I do so love children's stories. Some of them are so wondrously laden with udder madness that I gladly remove their burden whenever I get the chance. I like the sense of wonder conveyed by the lack of a tangible reality. Here is my humble attempt at a fable

In a forest not far from here two spiders perched above the summer greenery. They were discussing the art of knitting. One of the spiders was a widow, she sat regally upon her faded silken household and proclaimed, "My web has proved the test of time, it has never failed to catch what I need for dinner" The second spider, a young maiden, looked up from her sewing. "Oh!". She sighed at the widow's overconfidence.

"Those tattered rags couldn't even catch the weakest evening sunbeam! Why don't you strengthen them? I'm sure a woman of your experience could craft beautiful webs." With this the maiden continued working.

The widow remained still, for she was content with her ancient mockery of a spider's web. She was fanning her tiny flicker flame of confidence with memories of the past. The widow remembered bumblebee dinners by moonlight with her husband.

She dined finely on everything from ant to grasshopper. No longer fat from these long ago meals, the widow waited for food to come again, all while the maiden worked. The widow looked at the maiden's web with disgust, for it was much too simple. It had a strictly regular pattern and it badly lacked grace. Then the maiden took notice of her cavedropper.

"It's not much, I admit, but it will do" she said with confidence. The maiden continued working into the later hours. She set about building a cradle for eggs. There would soon be more mouths to feed. The maiden worked hard to prepare for this, all while the widow waited patiently.

That night there came a powerful storm, and the tattered widow's web was finally ripped from its posts. Subsequently the widow died of hunger. Later that summer the maiden gracefully aged into widowhood wise and knowing of the things she had learned. Some of what she had learned was this;

She that lives upon hope alone will die fasting

The picture above is called "Veronica's memory" it was made independantly from the poem it is with. They fit well together. All of the artwork you see on these pages was done by myself with a little help from My computer. All, that is, save for the stock photograph on page 1. I use a variety of graphics programs to make my art, which comes almost solely from said computer. I am taking up photography, albeit slowly. I hope to have some photo-series contained within this publication in the near future. Some of my work has been accidental. Most of the time I have no idea what kind of image I intend to ave as a finished product. The face on the right, for example is actually two superimposed images of woodgrain that were then altered to look more like the face the so vaguely resambled. I am sorely lacking when it comes to drawing, so I have yet to design anything outside the computer. As I've already stated, I NEED someone who could help me out with their artistic skills it would be appreciated.



Midnight Train

There's a midnight train by my house
and an ambulance.
There are people in my town.
Who don't know what they are doing.
They go to work with their friends
they finish that and then..
They go home to their pets.
And wives and television sets.
The people eat their groceries.
The sleep when the day ends
they finish that and then
they get up and do it again.
The people begin to travel.
Once a week and once a year
They get up and out of bed
with their dreams still inside their heads
and take their dreams to the park with their
pets
and return to their television sets.
When tiring of once a week and once a
year
they decide it would be nice
to go somewhere with their wives
or maybe even their child
to a place where the winters are mild,
and where there are trees everywhere.
So they get on the train
then they do it again.
Once the first time and then next year
the people go on vacation.
When they return to my town
with their bellies and guts
they go for groceries and buy their beer.
Mourning the loss of their pets,
they wither for the television sets.
Some times the wish they could dance,
but they have lost their wives.

There's a midnight train by my house
and an ambulance. -

Facial Education

Ears for to hear;
fall to the floor.
Shoes for to wear;
walk on out the door.
Eyes that never see;
shut down and leave

doff thy face today,
take my face away,
make my face to say
that I've gone away,
and I don't know
when I'll be back again

"Oh, he's always been like that," I would tell them whenever my parents asked about Zachary. They wanted to know about the things we had done together, and why he never invited me to his house. Their primary concern was the things we had done; the reasons for my continually skinned knees and another mangled bicycle. I just explained he was the one who enjoyed doing all of those things. I was just tagging along for the ride.

My father usually laughed when I told him stories of my friend. My mother had always seemed a little more concerned, but I never understood why. Father had a way of explaining away the concerns Mother had. Whenever I returned home with my scrapes and bruises that Zach and I had incurred on our adventures, Dad would shrug his shoulders and laugh, "That's the way boys are." Gradually, my father my father began to laugh less often; Mother grew more and more concerned. But I was still tagging along for the ride.

Zach would intrude at anytime during the time and propose some vaguely concocted plan, which usually changed as it was put into effect. He could say anything to snag my interest.

"We're gonna have the most absolutely baddest bike race that ever was! Top of the New Street hill tonight. Be there!" He reminded me of the commercials that always interrupted my cartoons.

I always followed his lead. Whatever 'mountains' he went sailing over, I would be attached to him like a shadow, even though, at that time, I had yet to learn the art of bicycle sportsmanship. This art which, like many others, Zachary had drained of all violent potential. While I was with Zach, I never feared being injured because of my inferior abilities, for I knew he would always be in more pain despite his talents. Zachary was always more battered than any of the children by the time he crossed the finish line; and I, second to him. For Zach the pain never really mattered.

As early summer faded into late summer, Zach began to tire of his usual for glory and bruises. We now had plenty of reputation on New Street, and more bruises than either of us could count. But still he lacked contentment. He was convinced that there was more for him to do in this world of his, and he was determined to do it by the end of the summer. The closer he grew to this deadline the more depressed Zach became.

Zach had continued his boredom laced with anger for several weeks. Then one Saturday, before I had even begun my weekly ritual of watching cartoons, he barged into my bedroom, slamming the door behind him. The shock from the blow made a painting on my wall swing with a scraping noise toward the door. Zach stepped into the light that crept from over the hill, into my window, and now onto his face. The yellow light made him look sickly. Clown's eyes, from within the slanted painting, stared at him blankly.

"Hurry up and come look at what toasters can do!" His orders sounded hollow as they fell on my half awake ears. I walked down the block in my pajamas to see Zach's long awaited accomplishment. I acted as if I expected something wonderful, even though inside somewhere I had come to dread whatever it was. Though that was the fun I had with Zach. The excitement right alongside reflex repulsion. Both of which I knew to expect, and at times, love. Every one of Zachary's accomplishments was never predictable and always a thrill. This one, however, was the first to actually scare me.

Zachary had said nothing during our trek to THE PLACE, which was unusual for him, but I blamed it upon the earliness of the day. That morning it was I who had led the way to what I assumed to be his house, although I had never seen it before. He kept close behind me; we cast a joined double shadow in the morning light. As we came to the crest of the New Street hill, Zach pointed and spoke tremulously.

"Fire!" He motioned to the distinctive wisps that poured from the kitchen window. Not black but bleached gray by the rising sun. I couldn't wait to see what he had done. Ignoring Zach's reluctance I barged into the front door.

"I don't wanna go," my newfound shadow announced from behind the door.

"Why not?" I asked as we both continued toward the kitchen.

"Because there are Beasties in there."

"What's a Beastie?" I was trying to lead him into another of his 'bullshit story concoctions' as his father had called them once. I loved to hear them; he hated telling them.

Remember when Justin brought the walkie-talkies over, and the only thing he ever said into them was 'phsss phsss'?' I recalled that event as being rather disturbing to Zach.

"Yep, so what?" I sat in the living room, the kitchen would have to wait. Zachary and myself were half swallowed by the couch as he continued the discussion.

"And remember. how nobody we ever asked about the noise would tell that they made it?"

I remembered it vividly.

Zachary's voice roughened from the combination of excitement and smoke inhalation. "Well, it wasn't anybody we know that did it. It was the Beasties! And they don't just live inside of walkie-talkies either; they're in lots of different places."

I was getting nervous. The smoke was piling up across the dirty living room window. It smelled bad and continued getting darker. I stood. "Come on," I whined "Let's look at what you did in the kitchen and put it out before it stops being funny! And besides, I want some Cheerios."

Zachary told me to sit down with his eyes. I was coughing as I sat.

"You can't catch a Beastie," Zach began to preach. "There are too many places for them to hide at the same time for you to catch them. There's beasties in the toaster right now. I can smell 'em!" The smoke in the room thickened and seemed to pour from his eyes. That's when I noticed the blaze. The wall separating us from the kitchen had become blistered from the heat. A charcoal haze emitted from the crack beneath the kitchen door. The door itself was charred and smoldering, as if it had been burning for quite some time. All these things having been brought to my attention by the increased amount of morning light that leaked through the smog onto the wall at the far end of the living room. Still Zach sat on the couch and took no notice of the burning kitchen. He simply gazed at me, expecting to continue the conversation. The boy had no fear. He had always been like that. My eyes began to water and I was coughing profusely as I stood again. I looked to Zachary, who obviously had no intentions of leaving his new masterpiece behind. I swiveled and turned for the front door; beyond that door was open air and safety. But I couldn't quite see my destination. I turned to face Zach. He looked at me, in my agitated state, with a look of confusion.

"Why are you in such a hurry to leave?" As my eyes continued watering, he seemed to flicker and disappear behind the smoke, then, every few seconds I would blink and he would reappear looking just as complacent as before, only to disappear again. I said nothing to him in response because it was obvious to me why I needed to escape; my only concern was being able to do so. I heard a violent roar erupt from somewhere as the flames engulfed something else behind the blistered wall. I began frantically clawing at the grayish void in front of me, trying to find the door to freedom, breakfast and cartoons. The void seemed infinite, only occasionally being interrupted by the intrusion of a familiar shape; I bumped into a love seat, near the window, three times. I decided on the third time that I could climb out the window. I screamed as I realized this, half out of fear of falling that short distance and half out of the shock incurred by the sudden interjection of a rational thought. My cries were muffled by the roaring. The window slid open with a wail after I shoved it open violently. I let out another cry as I plummeted six feet into the bushes.

It was peaceful outside. Behind me the house was still burning. The sulfurous sting pushed me along as I ran down the hill toward my house.

There were still people inside the house! I stopped dead in my tracks. Halfway to my destination I turned to the house again. I looked to the bushes.

"Get out!! Get out!! Run!!!" Confusion wrestled with my mind as I turned to run, stopped turned to see the fire once more and ran for breakfast. I slid my fingers across my short dark brown hair while I ran in an effort to make myself appear calm. It was the least I could do.

My parents were eating as I stormed into the house. They stood out of shock. Mother looked very concerned, Father noticed that I reeked of smoke. I pointed out the way I had come before collapsing to the floor...

* * * * *

My father looked over at me, noticed I was awake and handed me a bowl of Cheerios. My mother was adjusting the picture of the clown. She was also crying. Father gave me a spoon.

"What did you see over there?" I could hear sirens from somewhere.

Mother looked over at me, wiping the tears from her eyes. "How do you feel?"

"Scared and hungry," I said with the spoon in my mouth.

"Did you see how the fire started?" Father was also concerned.

"I didn't burn down Zachary's house. Honest! The Beasties did it. They live inside of toasters and stuff. Zach didn't do it!" With this, Mother began to cry even louder. She turned to look at me.

"Honey...Zachary isn't real."

Childhood Circle

The world around me is a childhood circle
 drawn as with chalk under my feet
 round me wherever I go
 this is the circle I call my home
 never ending yet not complete
 this is where I'll always be
 standing here alone

here I stand and here I'll stay
 this is all I've seen and ever been
 waiting for the circle to be washed away
 hoping to put the eternal childhood at end
 time in my circle is measured in places
 the people outside here, mere faces
 faces I'll never know

the circle can only end when
 they stop being boys and begin
 to start seeing like men
 then they mend the circle again
 this done like their fathers before them
 they mended what they wanted ended
 all while the wind begins to blow

tears in perfect number
 one after another
 thunder dances over the skies
 as the faery tales fade to lies
 lightning breaks the clouds a sunder

above me cry the skies
 for loss of my childhood wonder-

Death on a Bus Bench

Midnight greyhound dreaming
 wake while walking to the other side

sing long forgotten songs
 of ancient heroes long since gone

wake while dreaming and realities collide

sword is raised and ritual spoken
 bus stop conversations intrude
 broken sidewalks, bus token
 eyes open to the mundane

smoke encrusted skylines
 over a wooden bench
 time for death's bus to pass by

wake while walking
 on and on the aisle talking
 of things at the end of my ride -

Deciduous People

I will firmly remember the night in November
 the night a great mother fell
 (watched her fall from the sky)
 scattered in pieces by the road and dismembered
 a twisted fence left behind.

The mother tree stood here and nowhere else
 Each time the sun rose the same shifting shadow shapes were cast
 Each day her arms would slowly creep
 upward and out
 during springs color and winters sleep.
 Up, out and watching

Old faces fade and young ones take their place
 the mother grew from their wisdom
 500 tiny leaves
 wove across the mother tree
 in winter without them
 save for the ivy greens
 one leaf each for each face seen
 tree leaves for good
 and ivy for the bad things seen

in the same spot she's always been
 for perhaps a hundred years
 maybe less maybe more
 shadowcaster and silent witness to the events of her watching place
 The stories that must have been
 enacted near the mother tree

shadow caster
 evening hiding place for losing children
 ivy covered and crying in the rain
 simple giver of jumping leaves
 so, fallen lies the mother
 no longer in her glory
 and we your children
 will do what with your story
 and the things you have seen
 in time we will forget them so it seems

we, like our mothers before us
 must one day fall to the ground
 landing flat, face-first on our shadows
 (our ivy leaves drag us down)
 even the greatest of us all must one day die
 empires fall heroes perish and giants fall from the sky -

It's raining
outside my window
is breaking
my heart
is reigning
the world outside
my window
it's raining -

And so I danced,
and, yes, though it pained me
I danced again with my love.
I danced with my only.
We danced until dusk
and then some, by candlelight .

at times in several places at once,
I danced with my only.
I danced with my love.
Beneath ancient oak we waltzed
the elm swayed with us at midnight
though it was also to die
And Bowing beneath a dying willow
I danced with my shadow.
I danced with my bride.-

Mother and I gaze at the sky
It's blue and I ask why
mother has no gods but spirits
I'm mute because I fear it

" clear on clear, my dear, is blue,
if you have no gods then none have you,
there is but something beyond the sky
I don't know what, and don't ask why" -

You can't see the angels of which she
speaks,
they aren't there because they are on
backwards
in the rain reflections of broken wind-
shields,
the angels are a puddle. -

I hear your voice
but I don't care

You can speak your mind .
but there's nothing there,
for me any more.

There's an interpersonal connection
cast aside and abandoned
people get pulled apart

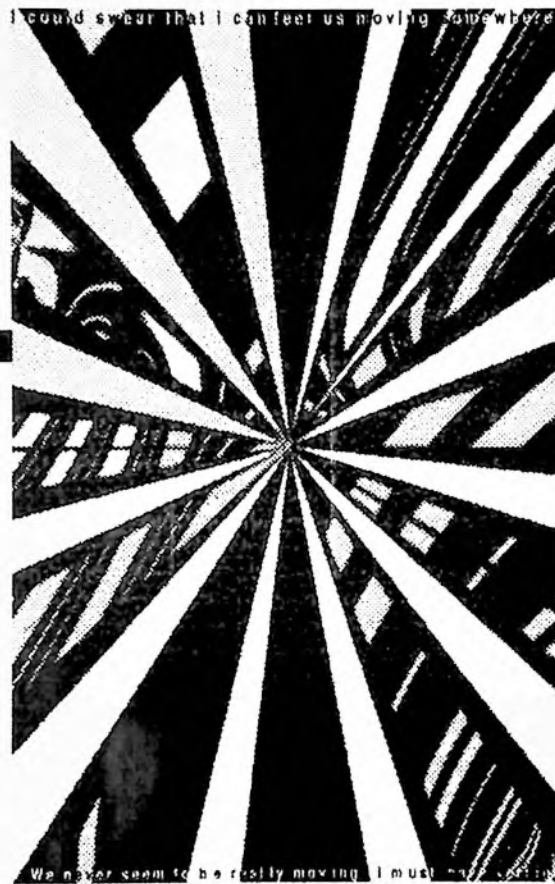
you hear my voice
but you don't care

I'm not like your other friends.
So you don't go any where,
with me anymore.

There's an interpersonal connection
making us rotten on the inside,
we think thoughts we try to hide
and say the things we shouldn't say
and pretend to mean them any way

I hope that bitch goes away
I hope the bitch goes away

I don't hear your voice



Open your eyes
what do you see
NO! Don't look there
look at me
tell me now
when you look in my eyes what do you see
don't tell me lies
you wouldn't lie to me
you would buy me the world
and give me the stars
I know you would
because I know who you are
all that there is about you I know,

Wait a minute, where did you go! -

Sometimes I could swear we are mov-
ing when we're not.
I climb up the stairs onto the bus, and
just before I sit.
I feel the movement without move-
ment.
The reflections outside the bus win-
dows are nothing.
Simply pictures of a world gone by
sometimes I could swear I'm moving.
Moving without the others.
Even if it is just for a bit.-

I started a journey long ago
and then I paused,
paused to ponder the reasons,
why go on this journey,

I remember the rain that day,
I know I was miserable
wanting causes and reasons,
why go on this journey?

I began to open the door slowly,
it only opened halfway,
and now here I stand
having paused to ponder the reasons.

I stopped, as rain fell,
paused to ponder the reasons,
why am I standing here, why,
oh why go on this journey at all?

And now I've just remembered ...
I know the causes and reasons,
I can't just die here in the rain
because...

Because...

I don't remember what the question was-

This Section, Immortal Words, is where I'll try to discuss the literary world in which I aspire to belong. I'll be taking it apart phrase by phrase and giving opinions from my point of view.

The quote I chose which is from Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Self-Reliance" is as follows: "To be great is to be misunderstood". This statement is not actually the conclusion of the essay, but, it serves as the stopping point in the text book. In my opinion it serves well as the conclusion statement. Emerson uses most of the previous parts of the selection to demonstrate why he thinks self-reliance (as opposed to the conformities and "foolish consistency" of society at large) is such a necessary part of an intellectual's personality. Because self reliance is adverse to the afore mentioned principles of society Emerson offers solace to those that practice it to the extreme. He does this with the phrase "To be great is to be misunderstood"

In most Transcendental works, emphasis is placed upon the importance of such things as intuition, use of the senses and the human spirit. Emerson suggests the use of these things are unique to the individual. The purpose of the essay was to show what could be done once these aspects of the psyche are brought to the forefront and then used to their potential. This act is better known as self-reliance.

Greatness is the outcome of self-reliance, if it is pursued. But, with this greatness comes misunderstanding. This is primarily because of the avoidance of foolish consistency. If one relies on one's self he/she will be ready, willing and able to speak out vehemently for the thoughts of that self, and should that self change it's thoughts, one should change words accordingly. It is suggested that this be done even to the point of total contradiction. This kind of irony could very well lead to confusion on the part of one's peers. If in politics, for example, a policy were defended with the utmost conviction, but, upon finding the information proving the policy useless or inane, the politician, relying on logic instead of the fear of others opinions, were to oppose that same idea the very next day! This would be the most admirable thing to do as well as the most confusing. In response to this foresight, Emerson asks: "Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood". He says that even the greatest of men (and others which he did not mention) have been misunderstood.

I feel that the quote I have chosen, and the entire essay for that matter, are almost perfect mimics of my own personal outlook on the world. I share many ideas with Emerson. I myself have often found myself in a position in which it is necessary to go my own separate way, rather than conform with the ways of those around me. I too find some of the conformities and consistencies of society to be rather foolish at times. And, yes, because of my own ability to undergo change I have often confused others. So, the quote serves as a solace to me. Even the great have been treated as I have.

I also prize the same non-conformity that was so dear to the transcendentalists. It is what keeps me in touch with what is uniquely me and mine, in the same way that conformity keeps people in touch with the world around them. Conformity may have been the reason why the works of Emerson and company were not universally understood. A complete lack of conformity WILL lead to misunderstanding, which is not always a good thing. It is most potentially harmful to a writer, whose sole purpose is to get a point across through the use of words. For example, in an art gallery, if someone is confronted with a piece of artwork that is beyond their level of ken, the assumption is that the work must be of great importance in order to be so misunderstood. Unfortunately, this is not always true either. The artist very well could have assumed that to be misunderstood is to be great. This is something that I see to be a very real threat to me. In trying to make an expression laced with perfection the artist has intentionally placed it above the heads of all others, thus rendering it silent and meaningless.

I fully intend to keep this quote as words to live by, but, if ever I find myself so misunderstood that my words fall upon deaf ears and in so doing, sorely lack the greatness which I aspire for them to have, I will have to find new words to hold so closely to my heart.

The following section, "Chains to a dream world" will be set aside for letters to the editor and the like. But since this is the first issue and there are no letters I have included random comments based loosely around some of my most recent and interesting conversations. This done in the hopes that they can continue within the pages of this 'zine.

real magic

Do you believe in magic? a question asked of me on several occasions. It is one of my favorite topics

First of all, isn't the term "real magick" a bit redundant. I was under the impression that the alternate spelling was intended to set it apart from the Las Vegas style "strip act / now you see it now you don't" show. I am afraid that I would have to plead guilty to charges of hopeless romanticism on the basis that I do believe, deep down, in the presence of magick, spirits and the like.

Dracula and/or count chocula

I have heard it said that the vampire genera has lost its luster because most of the characters are either overdone or too cute. In fact, a friend of mine called them all "count chocula" and would not ever read a single vampire story out of some kind of allergy to his sickening, but oh-so marshmallowey, sweetness. I was asked if I took offense to this gross generalization

I would say that the overuse and widespread commercialization of vampires in general has led a lot of people I know (including myself in regards to some vampires) to regard them as a sort of Count Chocula.

For all I care you can confuse Atilla the Hun with Big Bird It'd be your ignorance and misfortune, besides you ARE entitled to your opinion.

I would take offense If someone found the character from a cereal box in one of MY vampire stories. I would be offended with myself for creating that kind of drivel.

Not to worry, I am fairly confident that I wouldn't write a story that would leave room for anyone to do that.

Chains to a Dream World

"I am not a death-junkie" or "why go goth"

All of what I'm about to say pertains to remarks concerning the "new" Gothic culture and how it is, supposedly, preoccupied with nothing but death and closely related somehow to S&M. If that's not what was said, that's the way I interpreted it.. I have often heard remarks comparing one subculture to another, for example, hippies to yuppies since there is a very tangible connection between the two. I have included these in my "explanation" if you will, because they are both very definite presences in my life. I go to a private school, that's all the yuppie I can handle. Not to mention the usual tourist croud in Shepherdstown. The hippie movement comes to me through the parents of most of my generation and ,subsiquently, it is reveberated, although slightly skewed, through the whole "grunge" thing.

I'm afraid the world I've grown up in is not one dominated by free love. Nor is it a dance party and it certainly is NOT the ever perpetuated lie that is the sterile world that can be found on a golf course. That is to say I'm not a hippie, a disco junkie , or a yuppie scumbag. I'm a Goth. There is as I pointed out a connection between each of these life-styles. Allow me to show how they are connected to me. And in so doing, show what (and why) Goth is to me..

My father the hippie: My dad, whom I love dearly, seems to have complete control of the extremes his mind stretches to . As a painter, he is the single most creative person I have ever met. Granted, I may not always like what he creates, but I still admire his ability to make these things. I just wish he would paint more often. As a father, and a Quaker, he brought me up in a childhood full of constant stimulation and wonder, out of which grew respect and ultimately, peace. Let me tell you, childhood with a former hippie is incredible.

Then there is my mother. She is the woman who put me on this planet, and that is the whole of the compliments I can give her. She was (and probably still is to a much greater degree) the most angst- ridden, jaded depressed, and bizarre woman I will ever have met.

After I was born, for example, she spent months staring out the window due to some "imbalance" probably of a chemical nature. Imbalance is an understatement. Most of the conversations I can remember having with her consisted of her presenting me with viewpoints that conflicted with my father's. I remember her bragging display of an intense atheism. To the point where she viewed organized religion as evil.

Eventually my mother left me. She drove my dad into bankruptcy by spending most of the money on shoes, coffee mugs and the like and , as far as I can tell, skipped town never to be heard from (by me at least) ever again.

Then, to make another story short. My father and moved out east from the Midwest where I was born, and he remarried.

It has been said hippies were/are naive, this being the excuse for their "alternative" take on the world at large. If anyone, I think it is the yuppies that are this way. Yuppies live in a contained creative void as far as I can tell. I think they see the world in a black and white, 1 and 0 kind of way. And it is obvious that for some of them (the young ones), this is the only world they have ever known. Hippies on the other hand, know there is a "real world" and choose to avoid or drastically alter it.

So where does all this leave me?

I can not escape this world by killing precious brain cells. And I certainly don't want to "free-love" my way into the AIDS virus. And suffice it to say that I'm no business major. So, for me at least escape isn't a real option. But if you look at Goth as a means of escape as you have the other lives then your viewpoint is probably justified. The Goth way of escape would be pretty bleak. I don't look at it that way. I know better then to try to escape.

And so, failing these avoidance tactics, I stay in this shadow realm of a "real world" this place that is an apocalyptic playground for everyone in one way or another. And since I have no wish to leave this world, why not redecorate?

I cover the light of truth in numbers with black lace curtains, because I know that it is this scientific truth that has destroyed so much of the love, mystery and childlike wonder in the world. I wear black in mourning for it's loss.

It is up to me, as a Goth to carry the wonder and grace brought to me by my father, the hippie, in every way possible. Be it philosophy, words, action or even appearance (which, incidentally, resembles some aspects of Victorian life-style) And in so doing , wearing black, mourning and the like, I reinstate that wonder in all that see me.

That is the nature of Goth, not death

Those familiar with role-playing games will likely have heard of the GenCon Game Fair. It is a convergence of game players from all over the world held in Milwaukee and a good time is had by all. This fair is run by TSR, the corporate bully that owns a game called Dungeons & Dragons™. Despite the fact that my wallet wailed the whole time I really enjoyed myself. What follows are a few accounts of my adventures and brushes with greatness last August.

James O'Barr

As I have already said, James O'Barr is said to have attended college here in my hometown. This is the story of how I rediscovered that fact.

When I was seven years old, the college served as my baby-sitter. This was because my dad worked there and didn't want to leave me at home alone. One of my favorite things to do while there was play with a toy airplane in the halls to the building. It had really high ceilings that supported the kind of flights that the rubber band powered propeller sent the plane into. I would wind the propeller as much as I could and then let fly ZOOOM! I loved it, The part I didn't like was my clumsy fingers, they would release the propeller too soon, sending it cracking across my knuckles.

Once in a while, when drawing class let out, I would spend a few hours (or so it seemed) playing with my plane in the company of an art student, and some music students in the reception room to the theater.

Several years later, I rented "The Crow" and watched it with my dad. He commented on how well he thought the story was written. I told him it was written by James O'Barr and whatever else I could think of to tell him about the movie. My dad said...

"Oh yeah, I remember him"

and, much to my surprise, he told me that the man who wrote one of my all time favorite stories played airplane with me as a child.

I am not absolutely sure I believe my dad but I'd like to. So if you ever run into James O'Bar ask him where he went to college.

Tim Bradstreet

At GenCon last year I went to his booth to get some prints signed. There was a fairly short line there at the time it was me and one other, who turned out to be an asshole.. He (The asshole) picked up an unfinished copy of his work for the Cover of the Settites clanbook. (Which I loved, I love everything Settite) the man proceeded to remark about how badly it looked. I peeked over his shoulder to

see what he was remarking so rudely at. Mr. Bradstreet simply remarked "It's my work, I don't care what you think.

I'm the one with his own booth at a major convention. I told the rudevisitor that is was only half a line drawing without even any color. The man stormed off..

Just after this, Tim decided to introduce me to his friend, whom he had termed a "slacker" but he had left..

I remarked that he may have run off with my friend Nick who was also mysteriously missing. (At that point I began babbling as I am wont to do) I offered up an alternative situation, forgetting I was talking to someone I regarded as greatness.

"Or maybe they ceased to be real at the SAME time!!!!" I said. Instantly, I felt that "Oh gods, why am I such a fool" feeling come over me. But he liked my theory and we proceeded to have a half hour conversation concerning childhood imaginary friends (see Zachary), schooling and shitty girlfriends (of which I've had too many)

chalk one up for Dylan the babbler.

Elvira

It was very bright on Saturday morning during GenCon. I wore my sunglasses en route to the Con from the hotel. My sunglasses really need a description: They are the John Lennon style sunglasses with round lenses and thin metal frames. These frames are silver and the lenses are purple, as well as con cave instead of convex. They look to be inside out.

I walked straight into the concession section as soon as I arrived at the convention. I got in line behind a woman who seemed generally displeased with the entirety of the hot dog purchasing process. The man she was with looked more like a marble statue than a man, To me he seemed disgustingly muscular, And I disgustingly emaciated to him, as he left for the men's room upon my arrival in line. Or maybe he just heard the call of the wild and had to go heed it. At any rate, he left

After he had left, she turned to the spot he had occupied, seemingly hoping to complain to him. She didn't find him there, she only saw her reflection in the purple tinted lenses of my glasses. Which were the only visible part of the color spectrum that adorned my body.

It was then that I realized that Elvira was staring directly into my eyes. Sadly, in the matter of a bout ten seconds, this realization was quickly followed by two others. The first being that she's really a blonde. (It's easy to tell in person) and second, although I'm ashamed to admit having realized it, Her boobs aren't THAT big.

Oh well.

She mumbled something about my being a freak. I distinctly heard the word "Freak". She then paid for her "breakfast" and left.

Ironic isn't it that Elvira of all people would call me a freak. Didn't she eat bugs in last year's Doritos/Pepsi commercial?

Oh well again.