

A lot depends--
 so much depends
 upon
 a blue--

A great deal dep--
 So much depends
 upon
 a red skate
 board--

A plethora of d--
 So much depends
 upon
 a red wheel
 barrow
 glazed like a
 doughnut--

So much depends
 upon
 a red wheel
 barrow
 glazed with rain
 water
 underneath--

So much depends
 upon
 a red wheel
 barrow
 glazed with rain
 water
 in front of--

So much depends
 upon
 a red wheel
 barrow
 glazed with rain
 water

beside the beige--
 ducks--

beside the white
 chickens.

So much depends
 upon
 a red wheel
 barrow
 glazed with rain
 water
 beside the white
 chickens.

volume 8, issue 3

March 1989
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Special thanks to the Graphics Center and *The Valley Vanguard*.

Cardinal Sins

all from the tree of knowledge

"Never trust a man in a blue trenchcoat,
never drive a car when you're dead."

--Tom Waits,
"Telephone Call From Istanbul"

5	Brocade	Ann Thomas
6	Once ... In A Passing By	Eric W. Markley
7	J. Company	fã
8	Waiting Room	Lisa Straney
10	On Nemerov Reading Kizer	Marc Beaudin
11	A Nicie's Kid	Marianne Desmarais
15	Drawing From Memory	Michael Griffor
16	Guilt	Marc Beaudin
17	Denial	Jennie Larson
18	Sister Sun, Sister Moon	Elizabeth Hiles
20	Luna	Michael Griffor

Photography by Kevin Benham

The poem, "If I Ever," which appeared anonymously in our last issue was written by Cheryl Stoick. Please accept our apologies for the mix-up.

--The Editors

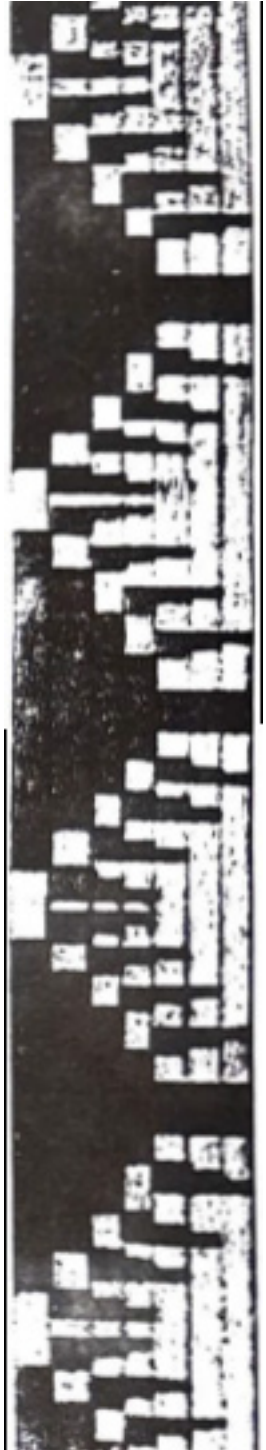
FROM THE EDITOR ...

After three cans of Coke, a package of Lorna Dunes and listening to every cassette in the office twice, I finally have in front of me an issue that I'm very proud of. Being my first issue as Editor, this endeavor has taught me a great deal, such as how to use the Macintosh, that Lorna Dunes and Coke don't mix and that we need some new tapes in here.

This has truly been a group effort and I would like to thank some of the people who were a part of it. First of all, my wonderful staff who were willing to stretch our meetings long enough to sort through all the submissions (even when I forgot to get the donuts). Also *The Valley Vanguard* for letting us use their computer(Earl, you've got to stock the refrigerator. Grape Nuts and tuna fish just won't cut it),and Kevin Benham,or letting us use his terrific stairwell series of photos. I'll get back to this in a moment, but most of all, I would like to thank everyone who submitted. Many of the pieces that didn't make it were so close that I hope the authors will revise and resubmit them.

Now back to the photographs. This is the first example of a new trend for the magazine. Each issue will contain a different visual theme repeated throughout its pages. I'm hoping that this will give *The Sins* a greater and sense stories of unity.

The poems and stories in this issue provide a wide range of tones. From the hilarious "Waiting Room" to the poignant "Sister Sun, Sister Moon," this issue will take you on a literary rollercoaster, so if you have your ticket and you are taller than the arm of the plywood clown, "All aboard!!" And enjoy the ride.



WRITING AND
PHOTOGRAPHY
CONTEST

Cardinal Sins announces its annual writing and photography contest! The contest, open to students, faculty and staff of SVSU, includes four categories: Poetry, Short Fiction, Black and White Photography, and 2-D art. Prizes of \$75 (first place) and \$35 (second place) will be awarded in each category. Deadline for the contest is Noon, Monday, April 10. Winners will be announced at the "Non-Stop Poetic Cabaret" on Wednesday, April 19. Contest rules can be picked up at the office of Evening Services on the second floor walkway.

SUBMISSIONS

To submit poetry, short fiction, black and white photography, or 2-D art, take your work, with your name and phone number, to the Evening Services office. The nice people there will show you where to put it. Old submissions, with suggestions for editing, can be picked up at the same place after the current issue is published.

TALENT SOUGHT FOR
"NON-STOP POETIC
CABARET"

Are you a musician, story-teller, poet, singer, tight-rope walker or an entertainer of any kind? If so, WE NEED YOU!!! Cardinal Sins is looking for people to participate in our upcoming "Non-Stop Poetic Cabaret." The annual arts festival will be held on Wednesday, April 19 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the lobby of the Arbury Fine Arts Center. A published Michigan poet will be featured and many faculty and student readings will be given. Also expected are as many artistic exhibitions (of any medium) as can be scheduled. The Marshall M. Fredricks Sculpture Gallery will be open as well.

Brocade

I have opened up to you
exposing deformities.
This is a new experience,
it is instinctive for me to hide.
For years, this has been my fashion,
I must also open to myself.
How else can I heal, but to acknowledge,
and with each disclosure I'm set free.
While binding others in the web,
I'm convinced that I am now unfettered.
Rejoice for me.
With rejoicing comes understanding;
we all have imperfections.
They are woven in the fabric,
blended threads make fine brocade.

--Ann Thomas

Once ... In a Passing By

SHADOWS

sideways
darkness
muddled
stupor
in cold
sleeping
a power that is
spout
God's
red crush
wide open wound
on cement
salacious
nymph
diseased
under the sledge-
hammer
old
man
visible
invisable
he makes a silent
wish
another falling star
under
flicker
alleyways
cardboard
and sleeping
his own
word
love
in window
outside
under
-Eric W. Markley

Waiting Room

Well, here it is--the dream afternoon I've been waiting a year for. I see the office is still the same old tan and olive drab--about as exciting as my grandma's 20-year old mottled shag carpet she complains about every year. So high you can lose your shoes in it and so old half of it sticks to your feet every time you walk, leaving a bare patch behind.

Let's see what they've got for entertainment. *Highlights*? Thank God. I've been dying to read the special holiday issue. And my favorite Bible bedtime stories! I know them all by heart. Of course there's the overgrown toy box with about 10,000 red plastic fire trucks spilling all over. Maybe I'll mosey on over there and take a peek if I don't trip over baby blocks and jack-in-the-boxes and break all the bones in my lower body.

What's that? A helicopter? Oh, it's the bathroom fan. I swear every time someone comes out of there it sounds like something's going to land on either me or the receptionist. Good old Uniform. She looks like a fern. At least her hair does. She probably thinks her new do looks pretty special but it's more like someone blow torched a five foot high afro. Real pretty Uniform. Right now I could use some action. This *Highlights* special isn't living up to my expectations. I could get more thrills reading the *Wall Street Journal* a hundred times a day for the rest of my life.

I can hear the drill. Or should I say every buzzing mosquito in the state of Michigan has decided to relocate to my ears? Actually it's more like all the cats in heat in the Northern hemisphere are crammed in this office, all surrounding my ears and screaming until I see purple.

Oh swell, Uniform. Let stupid firetruck Willie go first even though I've been stuck here since Thanksgiving. I've seen enough people go in and out to fill a football stadium. I want to get out of here!

J. Company

He tipped his head and bodies spilled out
of his right ear onto her shoulder.

P.O.W.'s released by intense security as
she rocked him into infancy.

--fā

“Am I next?”

I’m trying to sound as polite as possible even though every time Uni-fern smiles and says, “Not yet,” I’d like to kick her nice tall yellow teeth right in. I’m usually not a hostile person but something makes me want to fight when all I can see are rows and rows of grinning yellow incisors. Her whole face disappears. Nothing but teeth for days.

The phone never stops. It’s so loud I’d rather have my room full of baby ben alarms with no way of turning them off. At least no one with yellow teeth would have to answer them.

I’ll close my eyes and try to relax even though I know it’s no use. The whole world is ringing or buzzing like there’s no tomorrow. Maybe a Mack truck will run me down and save me from this organized insanity.

--Lisa Straney



On Nemerov Reading Kizer

He grips the podium like a jack-hammer
and smashes us,
gloriously, into bits of stone.
Straddling the stage,
he lets the machine wail
sending vibrations of rhyme
into the pavement of our minds.
Chewing through the poetry,
he laughs,
as shards of cement
fly into the beaten crowd.

Lifting myself from the rubble,
I see *her*,
draped in a chair beside him,
with her head far back
so her face
has disappeared behind her neck,
as though dead;
yet satisfied.

--Marc Beaudin

Here I am, walkin' to that bus station 'gain today. Seems the balls of my feet never quit achin'. 'N here I am, walkin' again. Just hate that big place. All them people. The nice-kept ones, their noses stuck in the air, going to their cushy jobs they got cashiering and like, but they ain't no better 'en anyone else there. We all got jobs, just the same. That's why I'm at the station, I clean the place. Don't miss a day. Not like those nicies, always callin' in sick 'cause they too lazy to get up in the morning. No, I never miss a day. 'Course, if you ain't got the nicies, then you got the bums. They always 'round the stations, layin' on the benches and stinkin' up the place. They real friendly, but I don't get talkin' to 'em. How can I? They ain't 'tributin' to society, they ain't got no job. And they want me to sit 'round all day, like them, and blow the wind? Can't be done. Can't be.

Here it is. This station is so big, I swear the buses could fit just as well in it as out. I swear them grey, brick walls get greyer and greyer every day I come here. 'N the paint's peelin' everywhere ya look. I can't do much 'bout that, but no one can say it ain't clean 'cause I do my job.

Oh, here comes that Archie. Wantin' to chat like the rest of 'em, I bet. Yea, it's a nice day, Archie. It really ain't no better than yesterday or the day before, but if he thinks it's better, he can think it. I ain't got the time to spend arguin' 'bout how warm the air is outside. No, not much Archie, how 'bout you? Gotta be halfway polite, I guess. Ya got a dog, huh. Great Archie, that's real nice. But don't be bringin' it in here, ya know, 'cause I keep the floors real nice. Glad you think so. Just no further than the doors, and be careful with all them people comin' in all the time. No, I know you know. But I don't think he knows. No one with no job's gonna know how hard it is keepin' things nice and orderly. But I ain't got the time to be arguin' 'bout what he knows and what he don't know. I still got half the station to sweep yet. Here comes that nicie,



Ms. Wilkins. She makes us call her Mrs. Wilkins, says it means she's independent. I don't care what she is. Hi, Ms. Wilkins. Yea, I'm fine. Yea, I sure am glad it's Friday too. Why do I care if it's Friday? This is a bus station. Still's goin' to get dirty tomorrow and the day after. Just 'cause she works at that big market the other side a town. Sellin' their fruits and such. Probably gettin' free ones too. Just 'cause they give her the Saturdays off, she thinks everyone gets their Saturdays off. Well, some of us have to work. We don't get our Saturdays off. Wouldn't want mine off anyway. Make me lazy like the rest of 'em. Ms. Wilkins is askin' me how long I been here. Quite a while I tell her. That surely I can find something better and don't I ever get tired of it all? Sure I get tired of it. But I got a job. Not like Archie. Friendly Archie who's so happy to have a dog and he ain't got a blanket to sleep on and no money for food. Yea, I got a job. I keep the floor clean and the dumpsters empty. When it looks a little

lighter 'round here, I figure I done a good day's work. Ain't nothin' feels better 'n that. She says she's happy for me. Sure am glad she said that or it'd be botherin' me for weeks. How could I go on? Least she's leavin' now. Just hate talkin' to nicies. She prob'ly gets her fruits free, too.

The big bus is pullin' in. Good, they're all clearin' out. Now maybe a person can get some work done 'round here. Some people got jobs to do. Can't be gabbin' all the time. The last of the buses left, and now the station's empty. 'Cept for Archie, he's still here. Archie's tryin' to stuff his ol' newspapers under a bench so no one els'll find 'em. If he brings that dog in here, he's gonna be needin' 'em for more 'n jus' keepin' his body warm. And he thinks it's nice out.

One thing 'bout this place is the smoke. The more people, the more smoke. 'N once they leave it goes down, pretty much leaves altogether, but then another bus pulls in 'n the people come back, 'n their cigarettes, cigars, and pipes come back. Pipes kinda smell good though, I



guess, but with all the rest, it still gets pretty bad in here.

Here comes the last bus for the day. There goes Josh 'n Henry. Always the same people. Wait, never seen him here before. Looks like another nicie. Just what I need. 'N he's got a kid. I don't need no more kids 'round this place. They mess things up twice's much's the adults. Probably ain't well behaved at all. Them nicies spoil their kids rotten, givin' 'em everythin they want and then they wonder why their kids are such losers. Not like my kids, my kids got real manners. Oh, great, here comes the kid. Can't he keep an eye on 'em? Better just stay outa my way. Go 'way kid! Leave! What? Why it's my dumpin' basket. I put all the stuff that's inside them garbage pails, in my dumpin' basket, like this, see? That's neat? You think that's neat, huh! Ya wanna try it, huh? O.K. See, it gets picked up like this 'n then ya toss it into my dumpin' basket, like this. After all the pails are in my basket, it all gets taken away. Un huh. Yea, that's my broom. Yea it is big. Too big for you to use, though. Yea, maybe when you're older. What? You wanna be like me. You do? Well! Here comes your bus, guess ya gotta go. It was nice meetin' ya. 'Bye now. He's not too bad, for a nicie's kid.

--Marianne Desmarais

Drawing From Memory

It is a child's view of the world
A rendering done in crayon
In which the sky is too blue
The sand too yellow
And the water too green.
In the distance
A sinister clown's nose
Hovers near the horizon
Softening the hard lines
But casting no shadows.
Standing here alone on the beach
Is more than one soul can bear
So one by one
Seagulls are added.
Caught in midflight
They shout at each other
In sad scratchy voices.
I remember this place
And swimming here years ago
But in memory
I stand alone on the beach
Watching myself swim,
Pushing through the carefully drawn waves.
I flow in perfect form
Stroke after strong stroke
But coming no closer to shore.
A child grabs a blood red crayon
And scribbles his angry mark
On the world.

--Michael Griffor

Guilt

The echoes
of the back door
slamming

shake the sprawling
pine

and out drop a dozen
mourning
doves.

As they fall
upward
they flap their pillowed
wings

to slow their descent
and ease the pain of
slamming

against the grey
winter sky.

--Marc Beaudin

Denial

The five year old boy said to his aunt,
"Did you see that man?"

She said, "Do you mean your father?"
My father's hands are never still.
That man is not my father.

She drew him close, and told again
that dead people can't move.
I heard mother say -No! No! This is not real.

Mother knows.

She kissed that man.

She cried out -he is cold, so cold!

My father is warm.

I heard you say -you would be cold too if you were in the freezer.

You made her laugh and cry.

Just make her laugh.

Please.

--Jennie Larson

"They found a tumor on my thyroid," you say,
your voice thready and distant,
thinning over the miles of phone line,
fading under the thrum of fear
that instantly fills my ears.
"It won't be cancer," I answer, briskly,
assuredly. But all at once
your lite seems to play out before me
and in an eclipse I see you
in so many familiar poses -
there in your sprawling kitchen,
clanging utensils and pots,
humming happily while you cook,
or sitting at the scarred wood table
reading and drinking tea,
your head bent in solemn concentration
at sunset, walking in silhouette
up the dirt road past the creek,
your legs athletic and long
under baggy cotton shorts.
But most clearly I see you
wandering your acre of gardens, moving
through great drifts of bloom,
trailed by your retinue
of animal admirers,
two dogs and four cats
in ritualized pursuit -
or stooping to pick a bouquet
and disturbing a small riot of white butterflies
that rise like petals
caught on a gust of wind, dancing
in brief confusion above your head
before fanning idly away.
There, kneeling in the reddish soil
with the sun on your summer-brown arms,
lighting up your shining hair,
you are eternal,
set permanently in relief
against the green Wisconsin hills.

And I realize
that in my life you have been
as fixed a presence as the sun
or the moon,
and at the thought of losing you
the earth seems to whirl away beneath my feet,
and with it all the touchstones of safety
that I have ever known,
so that suddenly I am a frantic child again,
lost in a crowd and calling your name.
"Yes," I say, groping for solid footing,
"everything will be all right."
It has to be.

--Elizabeth Hiles



Luna

I wander around
this empty house
desperately trying
to fill in the hollow spaces
with sound
which only makes
the emptiness that much louder.

Then the moon
drifts through a window
bringing a memory
of someone I thought
I'd lost
while passing
through the darkness.

Taking the moon's hand
we leave together
into the night.

--Michael Griffor

