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fall 2007

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tufts' black literary and visual arts magazine

Editors' Note :

It's that time of year again... you know, the time where we present you with the finest poetry and artwork that the Tufts community has to offer, and you wish you had submitted. :-)

We decided that this year, we wanted to present you with something simple and practical that still represented what we are as an organization. As *Onyx*, we are a literary and visual arts magazine. Apart from *Onyx*, we are just like you; we are individuals who face the same adversities, the same struggles with relationships, identity, family, academics, friends, and the like.

In coming up with a theme for this semester's issue, we decided not to name it, since one word cannot begin to express the diversity of everyone's experiences. So, as you cross off the upcoming days, waiting in anticipation to turn the pages of time with us, we urge you to proceed with caution. This journey is one of remembrance, forgiveness, acceptance, and truth—and you know what they say about truth: it can hurt.

Enjoy,
Leila

**Onyx* would also like to take this time to remember the late Professor Gerald R. Gill.

*Cover by Anjali Nirmalan

Onyx Executive Board 2007-2008:

Editors

Britney Cuffee

Leila Rush

Arts Editor

Danielle Okai

Assistant Arts Editor

Ashley Calhoun

Editorial Assistant

Rosede Opetubo

Layout Editors

Domonique Johnson

Briane Knight

December 2007

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
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| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 Christmas Day | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

January 2008

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| | | 1 New Years Day | 2 | 3 Bosede's B-day Editor's Asst. | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 Classes Begin | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 Martin Luther King Day No Classes | 22 | 23 Substitute Monday's Schedule for Today | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 Last Day for AS&E Students to ADD Classes | 31 | | |

Black-maled

Society is trying to black male me.

Hurt me

Degrade me

And Fail me

Put me in jail or enslave me

If to blackmail is to set up to fail

Then every black male is born black mailed

Born the black sheep

To become the dark meat

Marinated, grilled and degraded on TV

Born to entertain or take the blame

Or to evoke shame

Permanently on the blacklist

Suspects and defendants

Convicts or Immigrants

Dealers on the black market or medicine men of Black magic

Always imitated but never idolized

Despised but never recognized

Black-maled



Brandon Taylor

February 2008

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|----|-----------------------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----|
| | | | | | 1 Black History Month Begins | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 President's Day Observed No Classes | 19 | 20 Last Day for AS&E Students, except first- years, to DROP classes | 21 Substitute Monday's Schedule Today | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 Last day to make-up incomplete FA07 grades | 28 | 29 Black History Month Ends | |



Victoria Petrosino

Glass

We lie together
on Sunday mornings.
We say there is time to change
more than just the bed sheets,
but I haven't done laundry in weeks,
and towels, like promises, pile up.

We pull the curtains closed,
(But the neighbors went
to the Cape for the weekend).
We read newspapers,
without stepping outside,
as if strangers are the enemy.

Last night, in anger,
you threw a wine bottle,
empty and fragile, I spent hours
trying to pick up the shards,
but I still cut my foot on the fragments.

In bed, you apologized,
running your hand through my hair,
so that pieces fell across my eyes.
I told you it was alright,
and turned the lights off.

March 2008

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| | | | | | | Spring Recess Begins |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| Domonique's B-day Layout Editor | | | | | | |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| | Spring Recess Ends | | | | | |
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April 2008

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| | | | | Last Day for first years to DROP w/o record of enrollment | | |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| | Graduate and Under- graduate Registration Begins | | | | | |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| | | | | | Graduate and Under- graduate Registration Ends | |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| | Patriots' Day Observed No Classes | | | | | |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |
| | Classes End Last Day for AS&E Students to Withdraw | Reading Period Begins | Reading Period | | | |

"The Destruction of Eve"

- i -

Kinky and coarse, its ends tangle,
Impassible and unconquerable,
Entwined in hedonistic ferocity

Parted then smoothed
Tugged then twisted
Pulled then plaited
Brawny hands and nimble fingers
Attempt the daunting task at hand-
Taming the indomitable Negro mane

Bosede Opetubo

- ii -

Heavy with oils and various synthetic chemicals and
Sopping from untested, artificial substances
The scorching metal hisses as
Teeth steam
and smoke
and scream
While raking the damp bush

- iii -

Iron thread strings of onyx and wool
Collapse under the high heat of combs and curlers
The rigid wires fall
Into straight lines
Like cornfields.
Row by row
Damaged internally, eternally

Now tame
Now yielding
Now normal
Now sightly
Now plain
and black
and sleek
and heavy
and so neatly bundled
and nicely encased
in a long, limp
ponytail.

May 2008

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|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----|
| | | | | 1 Reading Period | 2 Final Examinations Begin | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 Final Examinations End | 10 |
| 11 Britney's B-day Editor | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 Commencement | 19 Residence Halls Close | 20 | 21 First Summer Session Starts | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 Memorial Day No Classes | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

SENIOR WEEK



Britney Cuffee

June 2008

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| <i>15</i> | <i>16</i> | <i>17</i> | <i>18</i> | <i>19</i> | <i>20</i> | <i>21</i> |
| <i>22</i> | <i>23</i> | <i>24</i> | <i>25</i> | <i>26</i> | <i>27</i> | <i>28</i> |
| <i>29</i> | <i>30</i> | | | | First Summer Session Ends | |

Expelling Queens

By Steven Hanton

With jealousy in her right hand
And thunder in her left,
She has seen four of the seven seas.
With saffron on her left side
And me on her right,
She will not see the remaining three.

I was one of those girls who grew up
too fast,
breasts at twelve, slender legs at thirteen,
[already something worth whistling at]
sex with boys from PS 14
at fourteen.
And such is how it should have been,
The truest sequence for my growth into femaleness,
no alcohol needed,
just pure lack of inhibition and irresistibility,
guessing that I've done more than most,
that you had low standards,
just some vanilla-extract, in the afternoon:
blowjobs in the back of class,
or in the bathroom,
missionary in your bed, with you frantic, knowing your brother's
coming back from the court in twenty minutes.
Uncreative, to the point,
and to my displeasure.
I refused to even fake my orgasms,
instead just grimacing and grabbing my skirt
on my way out the door.

And in this way, my
transformation from girlhood took approximately
four years. Two to go through puberty,
one to have as much sex as I could,
And yet another to figure out that I was
completely
and dully dissatisfied.

And so I turned to my sister.

If I was a little more Remy Ma,
without the nasty extensions but just as
reckless, sliding between gender roles and
acting without reason. Poppin' lip before
I could realize the consequences
-- that I'd have to fight that girl, or that I'd have to take the long
way home
to avoid being jumped.
If I was more Remy Ma,
then my sister was more Sylvia Plath,
not as white but just as suicidal,
incredibly precise.
Much more intuitive than me,
having known beforehand that she wouldn't enjoy random sex.
But she kept this knowledge to herself,
in her typical self-centeredness, all the while noting
my development.

And when I asked her why she didn't warn me,
why she didn't tell me about the rumors that I wouldn't
be able to stop,
the girls I'd have to beat up every week because they
were stupid enough to commit to boys who couldn't remember
their math homework, much less
come clingy chick's name.
Why she didn't save me—
she saw the snake, saw me reach for the fruit.
Knew I'd know too much.
She remained silent through my whole
feminization, my puberty and subsequent self-destruction.
She was the definition of unmoved,
just another tree in the soundless Garden of Eden.

"I let it happen because you didn't seem to know:
woman is a beast of burden.
And you don't have much choice between heroines:
Delilah or Ruth, but be warned:
Both shall end in your ruin.

Peace be with you."

July 2008

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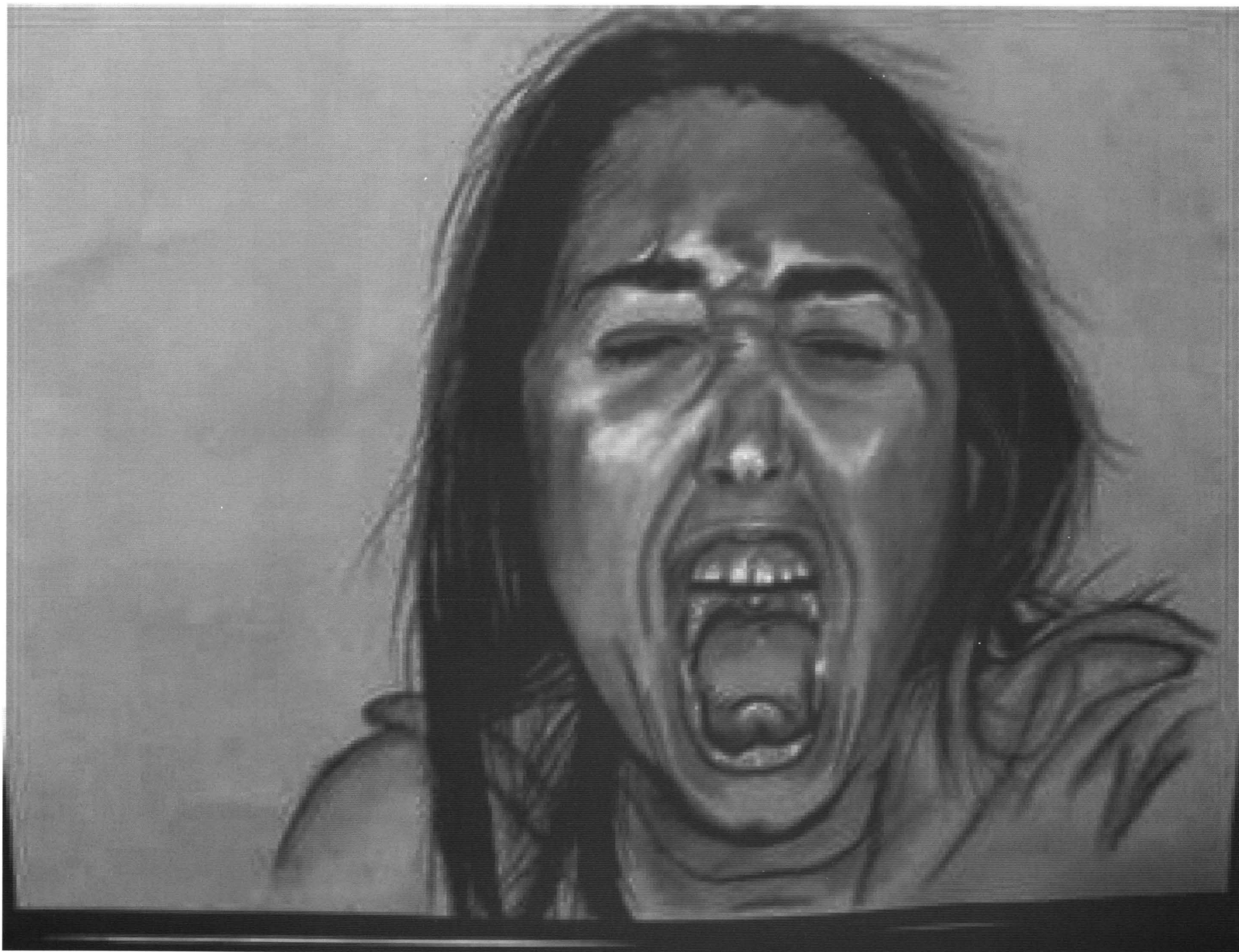
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| | | Second Summer Session Starts | | | Independence Day No Classes | |
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Caroline Roma

August 2008

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| | | | | | Second Summer Session Ends | |
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| | | Leila's B-day Editor | | | | |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| | | | Matriculation | | | |
| 31 | | | | | | |

Hey- I'm Just Crying Out

By Domonique Johnson

I am a female
yes, I know...a shocker, right?
I do female type things
I am not a girlie-girl or a tomboy-
just a girl
So I like to talk...but miss me with the drama
I can watch sports...but I would rather be shaking my ass somewhere
I love boys...but I want a man
I can cook, clean, and I'm pretty good with kids...but I'm not trynna be wifey

I have my head on pretty straight
I refuse to play the stupid role, but I am not a bitch...yet I won't hesitate to pull the
card

I got the three B's:
Brains, Booty, and Beauty-
and please let it be known...I can work all three evenly

I am a pretty damn good catch...so why am I still single!!!?
-simple: I love ASSHOLES

The more abrasive and game playing
the more you are my superstar

If you got swagga and you fly
then I'm trying my hardest to make you mine

The more shit you talk and stupid shit you do
the more I wanna get to know you

But a' last...maturity has set in

Maybe my tears are all gone
or my emotions are all gone
Maybe I'm wiser
or just plain sick and tired

Shit I don't know-

But what I do know:

Ain't No Mo' for Them...the last one dried me up when I flipped him out the
door

So after time of healing (and charges being dropped) and gaining security in myself—
I'm on a new tip now!!!

Remember I am a female...so I can change my mind often, so
Did you know there is something called a "good guy" aka a "nice guy"?
yea, I was shocked too!!!

But I won't waste a line or two on the description, but I will say:
Assholes have nothing on Good Guys.

So this is a call to all the Good Guys out there:
I'm a Good Woman

a little burnt out, but not washed up
With my attributes and your qualities
we could def hold it down and blow it up

So if you're a good guy having a hard time
fucking with them chickens

Holla at this dime

'cuz I done with them other cats

Give me the time

I will guarantee

finishing last won't be bad with me!!!

September 2008

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| | Labor Day No Classes | Classes Begin | | | | |
| <i>7</i> | <i>8</i> | <i>9</i> | <i>10</i> | <i>11</i> | <i>12</i> | <i>13</i> |
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| <i>14</i> | <i>15</i> | <i>16</i> | <i>17</i> | <i>18</i> | <i>19</i> | <i>20</i> |
| | | Last Day for AS&E Students to ADD classes | Ashley's B-day Asst. Arts Editor | | | |
| <i>21</i> | <i>22</i> | <i>23</i> | <i>24</i> | <i>25</i> | <i>26</i> | <i>27</i> |
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| <i>28</i> | <i>29</i> | <i>30</i> | | | | |
| | | Last Day for AS&E Students to DROP classes | | | | |

For the Nice Girl

By Theodore Boughter-Dornfeld

Bottom line:

You sold.

Not because you're not with me,
Just cause you're with an asshole.

I'm tired of complaints about jerks,
Accept it, or leave it alone.
Just my thoughts,
Letting my dome roam like Tony Romo
On a fly pattern to T.O.

I would say this:
If you want to talk about Man,
And his naturally dogmatic nature;
Collectively, women should take some of that responsibility.

Cause you could wrap it up in a real nice gift box,
And hand it out at the next baller convention,
But that doesn't make you ill ma, and in the long run
It doesn't make you feel better about yourself either.

There are plenty of fly young dudes out there,
Playing the scene.
I know, cause nice dudes take that rap all the time
For another brother's crimes, and I've been there myself
Trying to play the heartbreaker, so
I can't hate too much.
I've read excerpts from Augustine of Hippo,
And the Saints have dirt too (we all do).

Just feel me on this one-

It's a learning process,
And if he isn't treating you right,
You're the fool for sticking around.
And I'm not hitting you with a completely unsympathetic frown,
But the point still stands,
The soul is the beauty of a man,
And all that shit on the exterior,
Well, let's just say that things aren't always as they appear.

It's a cycle, Juliet -
And Romeo has been frustrated.
I'm talking with grown-up sincerity,
And I know, sometimes the little boy manages
To creep his way back into the picture,
But believe me when I say that I'm trying,
It's a complex mixture.

So when I whisper sweet somethings up
To your moonlit balcony from below,
Tell you that when I'm with you,
I can feel myself grow,
Or shower you with the praises that you deserve
And make you glow,
All I ask is that you hear me.

And believe me, I see-
Other dudes are going to keep jacking styles and flows,
Keep a limp in their walk and talk real low,
Just remember though,
He can only quote Shakespeare for so long,
Before you and he realize, he's just singing another man's song (even
if it is the bomb).

More importantly,
I want to see that you really are happy,
Because I see the way you smile when you're with me,
The way you push the long strands of your hair back when we laugh.
And I know that a lot of the time, when you're drunk,
Or the few times you decided to get high,
That you come to me,
Reach out to me.

Sad part of this story is-
I can't be.

I can't be your knight in shining armor,
Or your Cinderella plan,
Because you have to save yourself,
Before you can be saved by any other man.

October 2008

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| | Columbus Day No Classes | | | | | |
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November 2008

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| 9 | 10 | 11 Veteran's Day No Classes | 12 Last Day for First- years to DROP classes | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 Thanksgiving Break No Classes | 27 Thanksgiving Day No Classes | 28 Danielle's B-day Arts Editor Thanksgiving Break No Classes | 29 |
| 30 | | | | | | |



If only you were happy,
Then I'd be content with the distance between your thoughts and your words,
My hand and your hand
But the fabricated smile that brands you from cheek to cheek
Is the mark of a slave, head held powerlessly,
Loved unemotionally, dying slowly.

I ride on my stallion of hope, piercing the darkness.
Wind whipped eyes allow me to see you clearer.
Upon arrival, the door is ajar, uninviting.
I walk in and scope the scene.

You
Unconscious on the couch, arms crossed shielding your heart from the pain.
Not breathing, nor beating. You're dead.

You Wrote Your Own Obituary
By Adam Arazi

He
Not surprised by your demise.
Saturated with scotch, relaxing on a chair,
Hands stained with the remains of your soul,
Wreaking of control

Me
Understanding it all, I reverse through the door.
If only I cared, maybe your life would be spared.
I brought the newspaper to your front door.
Just make sure to read my favorite section.
It features you.

December 2008

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| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 Classes End Last Day for AS&E Students to Withdraw | 9 Reading Period | 10 Reading Period | 11 Finals Begin | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 Finals End | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 Christmas | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |



