

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a creative thesis written by Renae Ogle entitled "Momentum and Back." I have examined the final paper copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in English.

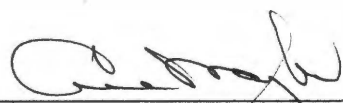

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We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:


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Accepted for the Council:


Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

Momentum and Back

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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Thesis
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Dedication

To my mother and father, whose life choices
dared me to live life in the moment.

Thanks to you both.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the dedication, courage and knowledge of key counselors and teachers in my life, especially Dr.David Inman who first offered me a new way of seeing and healing, and Professor Marilyn Kallet whose non-judgmental approach to my material validated my need to write it.

Abstract

Momentum and Back is a creative autobiographical work that is drawn from both key points of the writer's life and personal introspection. The story is told through narrative lyrical poetry with additional information in the introduction. The work is organized in chronological order of subject matter and is divided as such: Early Years; The Men – Interiors; The Marriage; The Men – Evocations; Dreams, Observations and Introspection; and Final Thoughts. The categories denote subject matter that deals with early life events, touches down through childhood, adolescence and key adult topics. It closes with spiritual questions and personal insights.

As an auto-biographical piece, presenting the material in a period/time ordered sequence is done to allow the reader to come away with a more complete and chronologically ordered picture of the life and the lessons learned.

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Introduction

The poets and writers whose work have most strongly influenced my own begin with the modern writers.

Before I studied poetry, my image of Walt Whitman was that he was stodgy, conventional and conformist; exactly the opposite is true. Whitman was a very experimental poet. In my opinion, he began the long trek toward harmony of form and content. That should be the goal; to have form and content reinforce one another so they compliment rather than vie with one another. If form is too prevalent, content takes a back seat and the reader is drawn more toward noticing how a thing is said rather than what is actually being said. Of course, if form and especially rhythm of word is not part of the scheme, then meaning is lost on the reader.

Whitman was a non-conformist in both his personal life and his work; he lived an alternative lifestyle and didn't keep that fact out of his work. In his poem, "What I Heard at the Close of the Day," he speaks about how happy he will be when his lover joins him. As the reader continues through the poem, it becomes clear that the lover he refers to is a man. When I consider the time and also that he was in a new America, which was quite Puritan in its politics, I applaud his bravado and daring. Despite the risk of public judgment, he was true to himself. Whitman stated in an editorial in *Harper's Magazine* that one must make one's own style. He gives himself and poets after him permission to step outside of the box of conventionality and tradition through his example.

In addition to Whitman, there are two other writers whose work has influenced mine. They are the modern poet William Carlos Williams and the contemporary poet Sharon Olds.

William Carlos Williams – the very name fills me with admiration. My respect for his work is two-fold. It has to do with his life choices, the immediacy of his poetry, the sparseness of his verse, and the fact that he lived and worked (as a country doctor) among everyday folk.

Williams drew inspiration both in form and content from the ordinariness of everyday existence. One of the most well-known edicts from Williams is, “No ideas but in things.” When I was studying his work and heard this to be his main credo, I knew I would like him. What is really special about his poems is that you can find the idea in them so consistently. The stark simplicity of subject matter (a red wheelbarrow, a plum in the ice box) that most of us take for granted is what makes Williams shine. There is an immediacy about the words and the situation, that bridges the gap between then and now as if no time has passed from the moment he stood there in his kitchen in bare feet and debated whether or not to eat the delicious fruit. From Williams I learned to pare down. Through his example of “The Locust Tree in Flower,” (both versions) I was able to see the process of strict editing. When I wrote “Throw Away Man,” my second version was a pastiche of Williams’ second version of his poem. I shall always be grateful for his example. There is one more example I wish to share.

When I first read Sharon Olds’ book, *Satan Says*, I felt like I was listening to an old friend. What impressed me most was her honesty and what felt like a commitment to uncovering a truth. Reading her work gave me the courage to put my material out there;

material that, like hers, isn't what everyone may want to know about, but which needs to be said. It's difficult when we have skeletons, ghosts or memories that haunt us, especially if the family that wounded us also trained us to be silent. In her poem entitled, "Burn Center" from her book, *The Dead and the Living*, she writes about the duality of her experience as her mother's daughter. The poem is about her mother's gift of a burn center to a hospital. Olds uses the burning body as a metaphor for her life as the daughter of a negligent philanthropist. The images evoke feelings of cruelty and bitter irony.

There is a particular passage in that poem that is especially visceral. It reads:

She speaks of the beds in her name, the suspension baths and square miles of lint, and I think of the years with her, as her child, as if without skin, walking around scalded raw, first degree burns over ninety percent of my body. I would stick to doorways I tried to walk through, stick to chairs as I tried to rise, pieces of my flesh tearing off easily as well-done pork, and no one gave me a strip of gauze, or a pat of butter to melt on my crackling side, but when I would cry out she would hold me to her hot griddle, when my scorched head stank she would draw me deeper into the burning room of her life.

What struck me the most when I was first read this poem was the rage. There is a sense of betrayal that often comes when we share information about family patterns, especially when the dialogue roams into the realm of family secrets. The guilt can be very palpable and extremely persuasive toward achieving its own end: maintaining family silence. It took a role model such as Sharon Olds and a poetry teacher who is open and real to finally give me permission to put my unique set of family memories on paper. I thank them both.

The poetry presented in this thesis opens with what I consider the beginning – my childhood. That, in and of itself, is neither a unique nor an unusual place for a creative autobiography, which this largely is; however, the story itself is not typical. It starts with the story of a tragic loss in my life that, I believe, established a direction and momentum for the other events to occur; I came away from a childhood full of stories about this larger than life man who did indeed, live fast, die young and leave a good looking corpse (what was left of it). For most of my life, I've been able to tell the story to select people but the idea of writing about it hadn't yet taken root. When poetry first came into my life, I was already halfway into my healing work, yet I still felt young and angry. When I began to read people such as Walt Whitman, or William Carlos Williams, my work evolved into narrative lyrics in order to relate my life experiences, perceptions and emotions. Whitman encouraged honesty and risk taking as did Sharon Olds. William Carlos Williams taught me sparseness. His work challenged me to look for different ways to say the hard to say and new ways to talk about the everyday. Williams saw usefulness in everything. The work herein seeks to relate the everyday and the extremes that exist in life.

The subject matter in this manuscript begins with a poem that was one of the later ones written but which was a breakthrough poem in that I had finally found a way to say in swift detail exactly what happened to my father in his final hours. The poems that follow that one are part of the metaphorical momentum; that is, the subject matter deals with events that are seen as the result of the life lived in the wake of the original tragedy. Included in this group are poems that refer to my mother's rage and the effects that had on my brother and myself. Two poems in this group deviate slightly from the rest. *Rain*

Memory is a pleasant recollection of closeness between my mother's sister and myself. *Inaction* seeks to communicate, metaphorically, the message I often received from my mother, and addresses my perception of her priorities. The series ends with a poem that names adolescent transgressions, offers no apologies, but seeks to heal and ultimately find a resolution of that phase of life.

The second section entitled, "The Men," begins with several poems about an early adulthood relationship, and addresses other experiences from that period both in the specific and general context. My writing style with regard to my interpersonal material seeks to relate both the romantic and sexual aspects of the experiences, and tends to be open and, usually, honest to a fault in that the resulting self-portrait is sometimes less than flattering.

Section III, "The Marriage," is perhaps the one section in the manuscript that is mostly tragic. When these poems were written, I was in a time of life changes and great turmoil. Many of the poems are centered on the page as if seeking to find balance during that time. *Throw Away Man* introduces the spouse in a rather negative light but also seeks to communicate that he is not abusive in a vacuum but rather has his own parcel of trouble. Other poems in this section seek to work out emotions that are volatile and unsettling, such as *Primal*. When the subject matter is upsetting and perplexing, the poetry can often help to clarify ambiguous emotions.

The forth section again addresses romantic experiences; this time, however, they take place after the marriage. In this group, the poems express romance, sexuality, and a kind of bewilderment over both what has changed and what has not between the sexes. The group begins with a healing work entitled, "My malady," that addresses her issues in

a general way. The placement of this poem with the rest of “the men” is meant to insinuate this aspect of life as something that cannot be mastered. The reaction to this knowledge varies from lamenting it to celebrating and even reveling in it; that the only choice left is to embrace the hurt.

The section entitled, “Dreams Observations and Introspections,” is comprised of poems that cover a wide range of subject matter from spider dreams to children, tragic events in the world, and personal and local observations.

The last section entitled, “Final Thoughts,” offers epiphany-like material including otherworldly desires, and spiritual realizations. It opens with a healing poem, which is both a prayer for healing, and a reminder that the process will be slow and tedious. As we move through this section, the poems are more abstract and reflect a desire to become one with the earth. This final poem draws the circle to a close by expressing a hope for the future and a hope that perhaps her light can shine again.

When I write, I have two main objectives: to explore my own psyche and to communicate that exploration. In my work, I struggle not to become clichéd in terms of the psychology that is out there, but at the same time, I work toward revealing the inner life. My content consists of what I’ve experienced, what I feel and sometimes what I think others feel. My style is drawn from the artists I’ve been exposed to, yet it is my own because it contains my life material. I listen to my own inner voice as it guides me to apply what I know to what I feel.

As far as form is concerned, my poetry varies but is mostly free verse. In free verse there is an aesthetic, a rhythm. My poetry teacher taught me that when I listened to her read. My diction is clear and straightforward. The structure of the lines, their length

and number per stanza is determined by the rhythms that emerge as the poem develops. There are many considerations when writing poetry—will it be read aloud or is it to be experienced on the page, what length lends itself to what content, how will the lines be divided; will they be short or long, and finally, what will be the overall tone of the piece. How will it live on the page? My early years of studying fine art have been helpful because I've learned that white space is just important as the words themselves. Ultimately, my greatest reward comes when I end up somewhere new and unexpected at the end of the poem.

As a first step, I carry index cards around with me and often jot down a thought or a scene. When I get home or am finally able to get to the computer, it could be hours or even days after the initial germ was planted. My mood is now different because of the passing of time. I take my index cards out and begin to see what I wrote and how I feel about it now then I put the initial words down. From there, the poem takes on a life of its own. As I do when I work with clay, I become secondary when I'm working on a piece of poetry. I give myself over to the process for that period of time. Then, just as I learned to do when I painted, I put my brush down, walk away and come back later to revise and further work it until I feel a sense of completion. It is satisfying, real? I strive toward sparseness while considering the many aspects of voice. Do I want to sound commanding, angry, or sad? What am I trying to say? To whom am I saying it? Do I sound preachy or overly sentimental? Is it funny? I love the abstract, yet I don't want to lose my reader. How much background should I give? Throughout the editing process, these considerations and others come into play.

As stated, the material for my work comes from many places; my childhood, my life experiences, my marriage, my children, nature, love, hate, sex, guilt, abandonment, and memories. Sometimes, I'm moved by something I see and need to put into context. Sometimes, it's like a drawing that needs to be painted only words are the brush. Words can paint the sublime, the horrible, the grotesque and the beautiful. I wish to paint them all.

I

Early Years

Momentum and Back

My early choices of men
were bereft
of logic,
powered by
a retarded impetus,
devoid of
mutuality--
they led me
at twenty-four
to flirt
with death,

and that led
to my work--
prints and paintings,
abstracted renderings
of my image
of the day
my father died,
gleaned from
childhood stories
told me
by Mom and the
Pottstown Mercury.

A car race
on an icy
Pennsylvania highway
one drives away,
one doesn't.
Gruesome deathscape,
passenger details,
year, model, make.

Gnarled metal
grafted with
flesh and bone
enmeshed
with tree bark
and blacktop,
his body parts
liberated from
themselves.

What can
you say after that,
and where can
you go from there
except back?

Brother's Father

Death visits,
 unwanted
 obtrusive,
Stealing them with time –
 like Dali clocks.

A young father dies suddenly –
 angry
 abandoned—
Mother's rage finds a home.
 Brother is never a child.

Drugs seductively mask themselves as refuge –
 beckoning
 winking,
like the disease carrying prostitute.
 Brother is never a man.

Death visits,
 laughing
 taunting—
The dripping, ticking child's clock
 steals a father again.

Pacification

Today in the car
as I'm fingering
a single strand of
hair I had recently
plucked from my head,
my daughter said to me,
"Mommy, stop doing that
with your hair, it's gross."

One year old
when my father died
in a violent car crash,
I began to pull
my curly hair,
his gift to me,
out in handfuls
and shove it
into my mouth.

Mother tried mittens,
I chewed through them—
tied my hands,
I wiggled out.
The doctor said,
*Shave it or she'll end up
with a ball of hair
in her stomach.*

With tears streaming,
mother shaved
my head,
was relieved
when it
came back curly.

Over the years
when men I've loved
drifted in and out—
when my marriage
was ending,
I'm damn lucky
I didn't go bald.

Dr. Jekyll and Mrs. Hyde

As I raise my kids, I can't help but wonder about their impression of me.
Is it like mine of my mom – a kind of Dr. Jekyll and Mrs. Hyde

who while professing a profound love did with a leather
strap across the ass, send a different message.

Why did she whip us with a belt? There was never a sure way to know
what would bring it out. Less than a C on a report card.

There was the time I wouldn't eat my liver – Dr. Jekyll was in full form
at the rectangular table. The one with the gray Formica top.

Last one to the table, last one to leave. She was determined I should eat chicken
liver she had tried to pass off as *not real liver*. I wasn't buying it.

I could smell it a mile away. Everyone else ate and ran. I moved the rest of
the food around with the fork and stared at my plate. Her voice was pitching high.

I looked up to see the belt in her hand. She pulled my chair out, knelt down and
said quietly into my eyes, *You will eat this liver, if you eat it and throw it up,*

*You will lick the throw up off the floor. You will not leave this chair until you
eat this liver.* Her eyes were dark, her face crimson down to her neck. A tiny

web of spittle lay glistening on her bottom lip. I knew with everything my eight year old
body had at that point become that there was no way I could make my stomach digest

that liver. She stood over me, hands on hips – the single, uncloaked ceiling light
throbbing to her beat – her sobs mixing with her screams. The wall clock over my

head ticking and taunting me – mother's mouth springs open, torrents of words streaming
out, face twisted – *Why are you doing this to me?* The hand with the belt raised up and

crashed down on me. Something had gone wrong. The buckle was on the wrong end. I
was on the floor, my eye throbbing. She kneeled down. *What have I done, what have I*

*done? I hurt my baby. Oh my god. Then, You'll have to tell everyone you ran into the
door. You'll do that for me, won't you honey?*

Her Choice

Mommy is in the living room with them. Paul and I are peering around the doorway of the utility room straining our ears. Mommy's voice has that high

screamy sound it gets when she's upset. I know these two guys. Harry's been around a while. I like him. He has big kids and lets me sit on his lap and let

stinkers on it. I got scared the first time I met the other one. He had a real red eye and talks funny. Mommy said the eye was sick with pink eye and he talks funny

cause he's from a place over the ocean called Austria. My little brother and I are still trying to see and hear. Mommy's hands are shaky as she hands the funny

talking one the phone. He makes his call, talks a little then hands it back. Mommy nods and moves over next to him. Harry's head hangs down as he

walks past me and Paul to the cellar to collect his tools and work clothes. I cry out to him, "Please don't go." I turn to my mother, "Mommy, I don't want him to go."

Harry keeps going. I run to my bedroom, stand on the old couch and watch him drive off, leaving me and a trail of dust behind. The funny talking one picks me

up. "Put me down. I hate you," I scream hitting him in the chest with my ten-year old fists. Mommy stands behind him and looks at me with that

squinty-eyed, pointy-lipped look. "Stop that," she shrills. There's that voice. The bitch has chosen.

Secret Keeper

Family secrets for sale
Hell yes, I want to sell the
damn things. I hate them.

Then I listen to these talk
shows where people
come on and spill their guts
in front of the world. Not my style.

I don't want to tell
all the secrets to
everybody. My shrink has

most of them already.
I want to talk about
being the keeper
of those secrets.

What that does to a child.
I want to talk
about what it's like

to be told to keep the secrets by
one maternal soul only to have
them dredged out by another
who wants to know but swears she
"won't tell anyone."

She lied.

My Brother in Name Only

His pointy upper lip and the way
he could twist his mouth make it look
like a race track, his finger the car
meandering around the curves.

His eyes are green.
The right one has a
spot of brown in it.

I remember my mom and
her mom, their hands on his
mouth squeezing, smiling,
he's such a little devil.

The little devil bastard huffing lighter
fluid when he was about fifteen.
1971 I'd guess.

I didn't know it until once
I saw him hold a white cloth to his
nose and breathe deep.
I begged him to quit.

I could see as I looked into his
glazed over eyes he already had
one foot out the escape hatch door.

Disjointed memories, scattered
pieces of a lost puzzle litter my mind
overshadowed by the rage I feel at his
abandonment of me

Survivor Guilt

In a phone conversation with my mother tonight my brother's name comes up. He's been in a state institution for over twenty years.

She tells me how hard he cried that day at the Philadelphia airport, the day I left for the military in 1973. I say I didn't know.

I say I've always felt guilty about him not making it through his teens. It was the sixties and he wasn't strong enough.

She says not to; it wasn't my fault.

I think: *Why then, did you tell me he cried when I left?*

I know we share the guilt for failing him and I think of the men I've tried to save since; addicts, abusers, men scapegoated by *mother* as Paul was.

Every time his name comes up, she gets defensive; then I remember why I failed to save him. I was too busy saving myself.

Rain Memory

Grey concrete slab
outside porch -
Aunt Lucille and me standing
together on a hot summer day -

Grammy's old white
barn in the distance.
My favorite rock perch sits in the
middle of the yard, elongated and flat.

Suddenly, aunt touches my arm lightly,
smiles, points - my eyes follow
the path of her finger, her arm
encircles my waist, I whisper *ahhh*.

There through the shining sun,
a glistening circle of rain spins
toward aunt and me,
drops across

my beloved perch,
a spherical spectacle
moving brilliant and
brief through our lives.

Inaction

the nameless thing
creeps into my
little black crepe
evening bag,
pulls,
tugs, tears,
rips

i hear the nay sayer
you can't
you shouldn't
play if safe
no! don't jump—

it isn't that I
don't care
for you but,
broken bones
are expensive.

Old Crush

Dream of Greg,
Lisa's brother –
Lisa was my best friend.

He used to chase me with
spiders. Did a lot of drugs.

In the dream I was in a tree.
He walked under it,
I came down.

In a park with a stone
wall in the middle.

We sat on the wall
And talked.
He was nice to me.

That's how I know it was a dream.

Washing Away

Water tumbles
over rocks
into a pool
under the
stone bridge,
then begins
a second fall.

Suitcases of brown
and blue
crash on the rock.
Locks spring open.
The water washes
their contents
down stream –
faded blue jeans
with wide frayed bottoms,
peasant tops reeking
of marijuana;
Smoke on the Water.

LSD memories,
Lisa calling,
sees motorcycles
coming out from
under the couch.
Sober later,
she calls again and
sings,
I've seen fire,
And I've seen rain,

Back then,
we all saw
fire and rain.

Paul's drugs,
Dad's drinking,
Mom's screaming,
my shrinking,
a final thrust,
a final leap,
the water cleans it all.

II

The Men

Interiors

Pain Revisited

I call you after
five years to tell
you I'm writing
a story of us.

I miss you
you say, *I'm glad you*
called.

Remember the train ride
to Berlin.

I wonder if you can see me blush
through the lines.

Your spin gets in and I write.
I send you a copy.

You write back.
You excited me
but I'm married
you're married, so
I can't feel it
anymore.

I spent the week
crying in supermarket
aisles, the old lady
staring at me over
the pork chop counter,
fresh tears flowing.

You were my first.

Shell Collecting

There's a lump in my throat,
an ache in my head
that the sounds of the ocean
invite me to shed and
replace with laughter.

Memories of beach walks,
shell collecting,
and my own
solid
steady
breath.

Rhode Island, cowrie shells,
you with your
diamond
tipped
drill
bit.

I strung the shells
with seed beads,
draped them
round
my
neck.

Hippie Girl.

A Deadly Place

I am very sad today.
I can't stop crying.
I dreamt last night about John.
He was at the door.
It felt so good to see him—
such a relief.

I always vowed never to regret.

Yet as I now embark on the rest
of my life alone, a sadness I can't
name is sinking into my being.
It grabs my chest and wrings
my heart out.

After this dream, I realize how much
I miss John and us. I wonder why
he never asked me to marry him
and how will I ever get past this
deadly place.

I am alone and I am not enough.

Fire Escape Love

You climb the fire escape stairs
two at a time.
Little knuckle taps *ping*
on the brittle pane
of my balcony bedroom door.

Voice breathless, man-husky says,
Woman, let me in, they're after me.
I open the door to tell you I
was asleep, my legs are shaking.

The wood floor creaks under
your leather boot.
Your opening line—
Cold enough out there to freeze
the nipple off a witch's tit.

You lower your head, reach up,
unloose the long, curly auburn
pony tail—bronze eyes sideways glance
under thick chocolate lashes—and say,
I know you like it down.

Twenty years later
the aphrodisiac lingers.

Still Life

Red linen slippers—
fish that won't bite.

Taking pictures of him
on the rocks.

He wants the fish.
The fish wants life.

I want pictures.

I turn,
focus.

Art is everything,
especially
Red linen slippers
on rocks.

Safe Love

I can't dig any deeper to find out how I really feel.
I've given you all that I have and I'm empty
cause
no one fills me up,
kisses me good night
or fills in for the
lover in my dreams.

hell, I don't want a
white horse rider anymore
I'll take a long tall walker—

Someone to hold my hand
and whisper, "Let's talk."
as he leads me to
the plush green grass,
our lakeside rendezvous.

We'll spread out the old
tattered patchwork quilt
and lie side by side and
for the first time in my life
I'll know that to be safe in
love means I won't be
criticized, judged, threatened
or in any way maligned or
messed with.

It means that I can lie here on this
blanket and be okay.

The Value of Silence

Impulsivity rages
recklessly, leading
the intrepid usurper
far from the
value of silence.

It isn't how
much or how
many but
the intensity
with which

you give of yourself,
especially to the
parasite you know
only wants
your soul.

Lesson Number 4

A look into a
dark corner
of a mind
that love
doesn't
live in
is enough
to teach
even the
bravest of
explorers
that
some dark
corners
are best
left alone.

No Chance

There isn't a chance in hell that I will ever recover from damages to head and heart sustained over my lifetime;

My first love couldn't tear himself away from family obligations, and Cookie, the second one, lived by the mountain man credo, "I'll see ya when I see ya, woman."

by the ravages of love lost and hearts broken;

by too many ghosts visiting my dreams and memories;

Gregory had a scar on his left cheek from a fight in Upper Darby over a heroin deal; Brian left me on a deserted beach at night and took me for an nighttime ocean bob and weave on a 21 foot Islander off the coast of Corpus Christi; I saw myself die.

awakening the fires of yearning;

Cookie is still the best lover I've ever had.

III

The Marriage

Throw Away Man (1st version)

I married a man with crystal blue eyes
that turn steel or black in the heat,
white hot blue.

Alive in my throat is the gritty
yellow gall, the spit he sent down
from the top of too many scaffoldings.

His anger is twisted like feet
that are ravaged from clinging to
a threadbare tightrope.

There's no place to put the
burnt-out carcass.

So, it walks like a ghost through our
lives, the children's and mine
dangling a cigarette from the dead knotty
fingers .

The fingers that were so much
in demand on the dry-wall circuit now retired
A black-out up high, workers comp
won't touch him.

*Get on this machine boy, the technician said,
Let's see whatchya got.
Then the doctor Uh oh, looks like a
little tumor's done built a nest in your brain.*

Oh my God
*Well now hold on little lady. See, the thing is
it ain't the kind gonna kill him right away.
It's just gonna make him have fits an black-outs
sometimes. It might not kill him for years.*

A sigh of relief
*acourse he'll have to be on medicine to control
the fits and he'll be mean as a old bear ifn he
runs outta the medicine.*

So, it walks through our lives like a ghost.
There's no place to put the burnt-out carcass.

Throw Away Man

(2nd version)

I married a man
with blue eyes

twisted anger
gritty yellow gall

carcass burnt-out
walks ghost-like

knotty fingers
dangling cigarette

black-out up high
machine

brain tumor
medicine

walks ghost-like
burnt-out carcass

Emotional Yardstick

*How much did that cost?
Where were you today?*

*No, I'm not mad.
I'm not raising my voice.
Ok, now I am.*

How long does it take for
a marriage to fall apart?

How many blows to
the guts and aorta?

Use an emotional yardstick.

When your husband slaps
your face.

When he kicks
you out of bed.

When the kids say—
Mommy, leave him.

Primal

The pain of this
wrong union
wrenches itself
in my chest,

travels upward a
silken snake writhing
stops at my throat
to stifle my breath

then extruding itself
from my mouth
squeezes my tongue
so hard

hot tears well up
in my eyes,
so heavy laden are they
that my head drops

down in my hands.
I surrender
myself
to the torment.

In the Aftermath

I threw my husband out of the house because he pulled a knife on me. Now he doesn't know what to do with his life because I was it.

He calls me. I let the machine pick up—hear him key in some numbers so he can monitor the room. I let this go on because it keeps me focused,

helps me remember what I need to do. Lately, I feel relaxed enough to meditate again. The kids and I are having fun with him gone.

There's this other part of me though. The part that's used to taking care of him. That part still worries. I know he doesn't have a life without us. I

knew it before he did. When we met, it was a dual rescue thing. We had both run away from home and ended up in Florida on the streets. Had to go live in a mission

and he was there. Hellofa place to meet someone, I guess. It kind of explains the rest. I tried to tell him we were high risk. He couldn't hear me. Now, in

the aftermath, he has to live that reality. I hope he's strong enough. Sometimes he says, "See what you've done to me."

When I hear that, I know he can never come back.

The End of Ignorance

There are no more profundities in my bag of tricks.
My eyes burn and sting, my tongue is swollen.
My fingers move on the keyboard with the rhythm
of a woman whose anger can't be stayed.

Swollen stinging tongue, burning eyes
can't read the fine print on the marriage license—
and the anger rises – bile in my throat
Choking me, leaving me sweating and dangerous.

The writing on the license is faded.
Funny thing is, I never knew what it said—
it choked me in danger and sweat
And the promised rescuer never showed.

My fingers move on the keyboard with the rhythm,
there's a *no vacancy* sign on the billboard of my soul.

Wasted

On the bed
he sleeps,
head propped
on two
fat pink pillows,
black hair
spikes splayed.
Fuzzy blue blanket
covers his
bottom half.

Yet, the joint
its dead ash
threatening to fall,
stays pinched between
index and middle fingers,
propped up
on the
mouthed end
by an
unassuming thumb.

In disbelief I sit and
stare at my ex-husband,
my emotions for him
still raw and
as I reflect
I am reminded
of his life;
a functionally literate
high school drop out,
construction laborer,
he became a major
player faker
just to survive.

Hard lessons,
but mine was
the hardest;
to admit
that maybe
he didn't want
to be saved.

Emptiness Revisited
(or The Gunshot)

Cauldron
Depth
Black
Shot
Tear through
Soft tissue
Almost
Gone

Recuperating your Losses

Decisions made in haste,
in anger
can
leave you
Alone.

How do you
continue on—
get up in
the morning,
go to bed
alone at night?

Need a room
somewhere.

A dark place of
solitude and
no mirrors.

I Want

I've met a new man
warm and sensitive
he listens to what I say
interested, I think.

The marriage is over.
We don't live together
But I let my son live with him
Big mistake.

I want the boy back
I want the new man
I want the husband
to go away.

Weep

My therapist says I need to grieve for the end of my marriage.
Sometimes, like now, my eyes tear up but fear wants to run the show.

Fear that once I start I'll flood the earth with the sorrow of wasted years,
the sorrow that no matter how many times I laid down my will at his feet,
he isn't any better.

My flesh wasn't good enough to heal him, my sacrifice didn't appease the gods, they
didn't reach their hands down and flood him with their white light.

His wounds remain and now I must heal mine and I have no idea how.

Dumping Ground Parody

I sit here in my own
over-extended tears,
sobbing for the choices
I've made that have me
lost at forty-six,
knowing I have one more
chance to fix it,
and not knowing
where to go with that.

I am a writer
because it keeps me from
being homicidal—
from murdering
my ex-husband.
But I'm no good at it.
I'm better at letting
him psych me into believing
I can't get out from
the mud he's buried me under.

When I cry over the torment,
when I reach for this keyboard
to pour it into lest I implode,
I still don't know what to say.
The mud is staying inside me now.
I can't get rid of the brown,
It has become my worst fear—
It's me.

The One After That

In the afterward of writing the poem about my stolen bicycle
visits a brand new emotion.

About to be man-less again, the vulnerability
resonates in my groin.

That is to be ignored next to the profound need to have
someone take me in his arms and fix it,

Get me another bike, tell me that I do ok and am
bound to make a mistake some time or other.

Rock it out of me, dance me
around the feeling of sadness.

Hug me, let me grieve the violation that a stolen bicycle
can evoke within my travel worn heart.

And let me grieve for the child that took it.

Turning and Returning

It's mid August
and already fall colors
dot the side of the mountain
as it looks down over
the road and the river.

A log drifts into the
water, gets hung up
on the rock under me.
I free it.
It travels on.

The freedom I felt
once I loosed myself
from my husband's grasp
is gone.

There is no such thing
as moving on,
only moving through
then returning.

IV

The Men

Evocations

My Malady

Each step labored,
the chaos I've created
is undetermined.
Two steps, one step
up, back,
Quickstep—
lurch

Like walking
through a landmine,
toys, paper,
unfolded laundry—
debris masquerading
as the chaos of now
when it's really the
baggage from then—renamed.

I have tablets
for my malady—
one for dreams,
one for waking,
usually unavailable when
I'm choking on the rage—
buried somewhere under
the debris when
I need to write
to breathe.

I end up
running downstairs
desperate, clutching
at the white paper
in the printer—
breathless,
illegibly scrawling,
hoping I get it all,
knowing I won't,
never will
and still

As I go back
up to bed,
I take

some paper
with me
to write
it down
in the dark.

Bad Girl

too many choices
I feel like a bad girl.

Slip it in baby
slow at first, then
STOP at the first

blind intersection,
skid into the hotel
lobby—Come to a

screeching halt in the
verboden room - adjacent (say it like a stewardess would)
to the incline

slide down, slide down
down, down

It's in my stomach now
but likes to crawl down
to the other place.

Stays just long enough to
cause a longing, a remembrance
of the lover I surrendered to,

the other place I had to
crawl into to recover, when
the dirty girl visited

kept her up at night
humping, moving to a beat
inside her head, but I (intensify and slow down)

beat her back with sticks
and stones, rituals and weapons
I chanted and sweated through

the desire he left

Raw

Lift up the layers of my tragedy
soft layers of cloud covered ground cover
to reveal
an interior
crablike
Softness

Aim words
fashioned by the poet
and the knave,
and with deadly accuracy

Reduce the crab to
a reddened
quivering
waste

then dine on me
My love

Inspiration #2

A conversation takes place in the middle of the night between two strangers.
Stylized, slick, non-extending words, ricocheting bullets that

draw no blood but sink into the psyche, penetrating the grey matter
a non-threatening penis unable to impregnate the unraveling fortress

and when it's over there's no after-glow cigarette but a lingering sense
that the sweet pain of penetration transcends and is reciprocal.

One Time Two-Timer

You're a one time
Two-timer

You work your undressing act
above the shoulders—
find out what the raw material
is made of, vulnerable to

You oscillate
with voice *creamy*
then **sandpaper**,
testosterone laden
Words seductively laced
with stinging
Truth

As they replay inside my head,
Neurons fire, new realities
take shape,
and it doesn't matter
if I ever love again.

You Win

You said you would—
how stupid of me to
doubt.

If winning means that
even though we barely
touched,
your words and the
impression of you would
remain long after you left,

would occupy
my mind lingering
there to play and frolic
in the gray matter
teasing it,
so it dreams of
sex with your gray matter,

then yes, you win.

Your Impression

The planetary alignment,
the moon magnified 50 times
through the eye of a long black
lens—

every thought, every elongation
of every phallic, pseudo-phallic,
non-phallic thingy

my eyes rest on no matter what
I am doing or saying or listening to
or not doing it to

swirls around my body licking it
with imaginary gusts of your breath—
the silver spattered

patch of wiry tickly growth
below the open mouth, the face
listening intently

soaking up what I want
to give you, what I want to
tell you,

even stuff you don't want to know.

An Unpious Evening

It was an evening spent in retrospective.
It started out innocently enough.
Nothing was supposed to happen.
It did add an element to a new perspective.
Now I know that things are most likely
to happen when they're
not supposed to, and
I know that I can't drink peppermint schnapps.

Sometimes, as I travel down the road
in my maroon exterior,
gray interior motorized vehicle
random memories and disjointed images
enter my mental junkyard of
other disjointed images and
the absolute beauty of it all makes me horny.

Yep, I said it.
blue skies,
cars traveling,
it all unraveling,
turns me on.
I know how my body is.
I know that it walks around
turned on most of the time,
but I channel it.

I rein it in.
Whoa, girl.
Settle.
That is until that evening.
I know it was the peppermint schnapps.

Paranoid Ravings of a Horny Toadess

My underwear gets damp and
I walk around wanting sex a lot.
What in the heck is happening to me?

I can't stand it. Don't know what to do.
I write poems and the
words are so dirty to me

when I read them,
yet the area in question is
still wet and wanting.

What in the hell can I do?
Clean the house,
work-out, pray, wish, hope.

The Gift

I am a frightened little girl
I'm afraid you won't like me
I'm afraid the next man I let in my bed
won't like me.
I'm afraid my husband doesn't like me.
I guess after I let another man in my bed,
he wouldn't.
But no, it's not like that, it's like this.
I am a mess.

There's a hole inside that I've tried to
fill with my drug of choice.
That's an NA term.
oh yes, I've been there and group therapy
where I learned that the fear and the lack
of a solid sense of autonomy are the gifts
my mother gave me.

The word gift to that particular parcel felt like a fit.
*But wait, I'd say my mother loved me.
she'd grab me in the darkened
wood paneled hallway
and plant a playful kiss on my
cheek and tell me I was cute. Yes my
mother did that for me. How can you
say she didn't love me.*

What else did she do, they'd ask
Didn't find the answers until
months later. By then they knew
them well and so did I.

An Age-Old Dialogue

His question: Will you?

Her question: Will I what?

His question: Can we?

Her question: Why?

His question: Don't you know what I want?

Her question: (Deep breath) Is there a correlational relationship between this sex act that you are proposing we engage in and love?

His question: Correlational relationship?

Her question: Yea, you know, if I fuck you will you stay with me and love me?

Meld With Me

I handed myself over to another human being again. It's what I do.
Meet a man and meld with him in an urgent need to become one.

But it happened too fast, the urgency was too great and when the centrifugal
force of my desire threatened to split him in two, he let go of my hand.

Now I'm spinning, out of control, alone.
Sometimes, he reaches in to steady me, yet

remains on the outside of it,
his arm in, his body out,

and I'm getting
smaller and smaller.

Pain Again

Make scream a rigid blue monument,
glorious metal metaphor.
Sculpt from mad harmony.
Write by glass.
Suffer mean.
Compose openly.
Experiment.
Junk the masterpiece.
Death will know.

Does a pain that lays heavy
on your chest have the right
to expand your character to the
point that the body needs oxygen
beyond its capacity to hold?

Should you breathe the pain into
your arms and legs and allow it
to squeeze your eyes until the
liquid has nowhere to go but
down into your breast where the
pain laughs at itself?

Can you unlodge the pain for me,
please? I think I'm dying.

V

Dreams, Observations, Introspection

Mom and Me against the Spiders

The spiders are back, crawling with fat, hairy bodies through toys strewn haphazardly on the gray and black speckled linoleum floor. My hand on mom's arm, eyes wide, mouth emitting screams, *get that one over there – Oh shit, there's another one.*

We're jumping around on hot coals trying to keep them off of my feet and legs as they crawl in and out of red and blue toys playing a game of tag. Suddenly, they're gone. We breathe easier.

*Oh no, wait, there's a white one. An albino spider?
It's mounting my foot.
Mommy, get the spider.*

Old Money

Watching "On Golden Pond" tonight, I was reminded of the days I spent at Carol's mother's cabin at Saranac Lake back in '77.

I was so young, only 22, unattached, carefree. The feel of it was so familiar. They had a home on the cape as well. It's funny how people with cabins on lakes and homes on ocean fronts are. I grew up without those things.

I met Carol in the military of all places. Didn't know she came from old money until she told me. There is a difference between us in that she had something to guard and she wondered, I think, if once I knew about it, did I like her for her money.

It seems that as long as the money is there, they will wonder that, and that seems to me to be a damn shame.

Chick on a Motorcycle

Driving to day care
in evening traffic,
I see, in front of me,
a petite blonde on a motorcycle

in a black leather
ensemble with fringe,
boots, and white helmet,
a peace sign centered in the middle.

Blonde hair everywhere,
bold silhouette, wild aesthetic.

I find myself wondering –
where is she going,
are men afraid of her,
does she live two lives or is
this who she is all the time?

Then, I'm riding motorcycle,
cruising to L.A. or New Orleans
for Mardi Gras; standing at the
chasm of the Grand Canyon; crying
in the middle of the Painted Desert.

As she fades into a black dot,
I wonder of that soft surreal form—
Does she demand passion?

Autumn

She's crying now
at my ear,
*I don't want to be
stuck here with you
while the boys play.*

She's seven.
She climbs in my lap.
I smell her hair,
 face,
 hands.
shampoo
 chocolate
 candy.

There's a place on
the edge of her chin
that's so soft
my kisses slide off.

When I look closely
at her hair,
I see
the whole world.

It's Only This

My daughter at nine is already
asking the tough one,
Mommy, why are we here?

I pause to reflect,
to search for
the best answer
and in that interval,
a thousand images
of my life
flash pell-mell
before me.

Struggling to settle
on the one
that will
encapsulate it all,
I turn to
look at her
next to me
in the car—
her red hair
reflecting every color,
tawny freckles
dotting porcelain skin—
and with sharp intake of
breath suddenly realize—
It's This!

To allow myself to zoom in
to one moment after
the kaleidoscope of images
have quieted—
images of birth and death,
love and betrayal,
raw indifferent pain,
and willingly
give myself
to it all again.

My Skin

My son tells me
that he can feel
experience when
his hand meets
the arm I offer.

He has no idea.

Sometimes I remember
where I've been, what
I've done and think
that I don't deserve to
be his mother.

I let life teach me.
dove in –
tasted,
sampled,
tested fate,
humanity,
God.

Fate turned out to
be almost as fickle
as me.

Humanity let me down.

God threw up his hands
in exasperation.

Recipe for a Nightmare

Secrete black macadam.
Drive.

Leave tears, slap pillow,
cry, rage into the night.

Release fear, walk away.
Sleep.

Sep 11 – Green

World Trade Center hit today. – Pentagon hit and on fire.
Walking around campus, I have goose bumps. I'm angry.
Adrenalin pumping. I talk to a man near the library –
Bruce – also from PA -- says, “nuke em to the ground.”

Younger people look
relaxed, calm, apathetic.
Well, I'm okay so why worry
seems to be the mood.
I want to enlist right now.
Probably too old.

Later on the way to supper,
in the forest green Ford Explorer
I weep at the red light
thinking about the dead and lost,
so close to my first home.

My shoulders shudder as
the tears push their way out
and Michael
from the vantage point
of shotgun
says in the voice of
not quite teenager
“Mom, why you crying?”

I turn my head to look at him,
“All those people,”
is all I can say.
He sucks in his breath,
brow slightly furrowed,
and answers, “Well, stop it,
you'll get me started.”

Too late,
so he weeps
with me through the light,
the familiar green
taunting us with its
unwavering insistence
that life goes on.

In Order of Importance

October 22, 2001 is on the accident report with GEICO insurance company as the day I had a fender bender in the parking lot of the University of Tennessee Campus.

Sitting in the Rathskeller dining room on campus afterwards I'm doing my usual people perusing as a young black male leaves the checkout line and heads my way.

Baggy jeans held up by wide hip bones, gray t-shirt covering his broad chest, short cropped hair, his wide gait carries him toward me.

My eyes focus on a large link silver chain hanging low on his chest and what looks to be a large oddly shaped heart hanging from it.

My eyes remain riveted to it as the space between him and me closes and when he is almost upon the spot where I sit I see

that it is a silver and rhinestone studded hand grenade complete with clip. As the light from overhead dances on it, it winks benignly at me unaware of the implications.

First Set Up In a Series

My 30th high school reunion
Is on Oct 4 – 5, 2002,
Just about three weeks from now.

But I can't go.

Maybe it's for the best,

Hell none of those people
really liked me or knew
me anyway.

Debbie Smith always liked to see
me in pain—maybe this would be
her night.

Or maybe they'd just get to know
me and like me for the hell of it.

I sent my work that was published
to the reunion committee.
Bet Inspiration #2 will throw them

for a loop. Wonder if the woman
in charge is a control freak

with a censorial bent
cause if she is no one
will see it anyway.

That's how it goes.

People randomly decide what's
good for me, based usually on
what's good for them.

It's a set-up.

That's what I used to say
To my ex-husband
in the middle of a fight.

I'd be angry and shouting,
then just as easily laugh
at something unforeseen

he or I did or said – he'd
get mad at me for that too
and I'd throw my hands up in

exasperation and say,
"It's a set-up.

I'm shit either way.
It's Catch 22—a vicious
circle we keep revisiting.

A healthy relationship is
supposed to travel in a
linear motion. If it goes

in a circle
that means
the same stuff

is being rehashed over
and over and
nothing gets solved."

He'd look up and say,
What should we do
and I'd say, "You go."

So he went one time but then
got depressed cause we have
kids together and even though

we're divorced, he's back now.
He doesn't hurt me anymore,
but I'm numb.

I don't know how I feel.
I have to go away
to get in touch
with me again.

I have to go to that reunion.

No Wrinkles Please

I don't mind the passage of time.
I like the wisdom that comes with age.

Yoga keeps me limber,
laughter keeps me young.

But, the other day I looked hard at
myself in the mirror and saw that the
lines were sprouting more lines
like the ripples in a pond when
you throw in a pebble.

And so, in my prayers I have added
an addendum—
Have me age and become a
sage, wise and helpful to the
youth that I encounter, but God
no more wrinkles, please.

VI

Final Thoughts

Healing Ritual

One o'clock this morning,
edgy and stressed, I
meditate to the soothing
sound of a woman's silky voice—
music like massaging fingers
wraps seductively around my
ear drums, moves down my body.
My sitting torso begins
to dance in a circle

Yet, I am blocked from release by
a real felt thing inside.
I twist, turn,
breathe deeply to uncork it—
more resistance,
a cinder block
sandblasting cannot touch.

A slow chipping away,
the tedious uncovering
and acknowledgement
of each fear—then
a loving mantra,
a poultice for healing
and a very slight shift
of the psyche is perceived.

Neck and back muscles
usually so tight, let go
and a release is felt
in the little girl place.
She cries, then whispers,
"If I fall now, will you catch me?"

"Yes" I tell her, "it's finally okay, you can let go."

She doesn't believe me
and I know
that like a patient parent,
I will have to tell
her again and again.

Affective Wood
or
Mood Music Paint Personified

A vacant bench in the “Unframed” gallery
beckons the muse to view oil of wood on wood.

A tree trunk broken by a natural force
or the simple passing of time,
juts out helter-skelter at the severed place.

Its sharp wooden spikes and ragged edges
pointing upward, downward,
diagonally angled—

certain only that
one direction is
out of the question.

The Matriarchy

The women are
trying to save me.

I feel them pulling—
with hands gnarled,

skin loose and wrinkled.
Their silent screams

etched in the outlines
of bulging eyes,

surprised and hurt
that they

have to do
this again.

On Being Civilized

In the most exclusive place
in the world, I wouldn't know
how to behave because
when I go out to lunch,
shopping, to the movies,
I have to resist a most
egregious impulse
to do things I shouldn't
just because I know
I'm not supposed to.

Prone Position

Feels so good
looking up,
flat on my back,
legs at rest –
neck given a reprieve
from the weight
of my head.

Dive

I want to dive
into the trees
when I am at an
above them
vantage point.

I see myself
walking naked
among them,
unscathed.

Nature isn't
soft even if
its aesthetic is.

I know that
my skin would
be impressed
with sharp thorns,
broken tree branches.

Consolation—
death will
bring us
together.

And so It Goes

Hurting through space
Looking at the computer screen
Watching *Evening at the Apollo*
On the computer screen is the
Hurting through space screen saver
But at that moment watching people
Perform their hearts out, reminded of the streets
They live in, their brash New York accents,
My mind begins to connect the two, ideas
About consequences, there being no tomorrow
Living for now, and we are a big ball hurtling
Through space—what if there is no tomorrow?
There's an art to living that way.

Read an article in the *New York Times* online that
The scientists are warning Bush about global warming.
Sometimes when I see us hurtling through space,
The New York Apollo crowd celebrating their uniqueness,
Global warming, living for the moment, there is a tiny
Window that opens up in my mind for
A brief flash and the spark of life ignites again.

Had a dream last night about my ex-husband,
a penis dream. He was brandishing it about,
offering it to me in that way that only he can do.
It's slick length beckoning to me— I awoke feeling a
relief that I finally broke its spell. Yet, I still retain
the sadness that it wanted so much and gave so little.

In the Middle of Nowhere

I dream of an
isolated place
with tall trees,
gray sky,
brown dirt,
that allows,
no – insists,

that I drop
my guard
slide my
escapist tendencies
to the left,

let it move my legs
til I drop to my knees,
fling the
mud in the air,
and cover
my aging body
with the earth.

I picture myself—
breasts too little
to sag, belly
protruding from
birthing
two children,
thighs lumpy,
ass soft

and ache to
become part
of the muck.

Talking with God

Swimming in the lake that
I now view, not in this spot—
I remember what I saw then.

I'm moving gracefully in the
water stroking my way through it
relaxed breathing deeply,
talking to God –
forgive me for,
I'm sorry for—
Thank you for my kids,
Oh and could you help me with—

I lay it at your feet,
but it would be nice to know
if you hear me. Could you
let me know?

I don't really think he will, but
after I ask it, I turn my body
around in the water so I am
on my back, look up,
not expecting anything at all,

but there it is. A cloud
of God's image. A profile—
like the God in Michelangelo's
ceiling. My cynical eyes quickly
sweep for details—
clean lines, completeness in
ear and nostril, eye socket, mouth,
long flowing beard. A work of art
in the sky.

So now when I begin to stray,
think I'm in charge,
I remember.

Finally, when I go into the church
to pray I know with
whom I speak.

Love or Tolerance?

Have we become unable
to see that the first
rules were the right ones?

The Ten Commandments
The Golden Rule—

Before Utilitarianism, Egoism,
Individualism, Hedonism—

What He did when he was here,
how He treated people,
it's really that simple.

Got a letter today inviting me
to be on a wall of tolerance
they're building in Alabama.

Of course, I have to be a member
and that costs thirty five dollars.

Pretty cool, I guess
unless it's a scam.

Not sure if I want to be
on a wall closely associated
with tolerance.

Somebody might shoot me.

The Inside Light

The extra light in the kitchen went out the other day.
Now there's just the one.
It casts a half-lit pallor on the room.
I feel like that. Half-lit.
Like part of the light in me needs changing.

In the darkness of my half-lit innards,
when I'm banging into walls,
bruising my shins on half-remembered
loves lost, there is a faint illumination,
a possibility that in some way, someday
when the light does get replaced again,
it'll be brighter than before.

VITA

Renae Ogle was born in Southeastern Pennsylvania and graduated from Boyertown High School in 1972. She joined the Army after high school and studied the German language while stationed there. She recalls how journal keeping was her first writing endeavor when she was in the military –it kept her out of serious trouble.

After her discharge in 1976, she moved to Rhode Island and took courses during the evening at the local community college while working at a methadone maintenance center as a secretary during the day. The following year, she returned to Pennsylvania and enrolled in Montgomery County Community College full time. In the fall of 1977, she moved to upstate New York to pursue art studies and received her A.A. in Liberal Arts from North Country Community College in Saranac Lake, NY in 1979. That fall she returned to Pennsylvania and worked for a while. In 1982, she returned to school at the University of West Chester.

In 1984, she moved to Los Angeles and worked in a VA hospital for a few years. She married in 1987 and worked in Knoxville as a data entry clerk and a server (she managed an apartment building and even tried her hand at cosmetology) until her return to college in 1995 at the University of Tennessee. Because she had transferred so many credits in Art, she began her studies at UT in that major but changed to English in 1998 and received her B.A. in English/Creative Writing in the spring of 2000.

In the fall of 2000 she began her Graduate Assistantship and has assisted in teaching both English 101 and 102 (fall and spring 2000/2001) in addition to tutorial work in the University Writing Center. In the spring of 2002, she instructed her own English 101 class while serving as the assistant to the Director of Creative Writing, Professor Marilyn Kallet. She also assisted her in her position as co-editor of a book entitled "Leaving the Nest." Finally, she served as a reader this summer for the Knoxville Writer's Guild while working on her thesis.

Two of her works have been published in separate issues of the University of Tennessee's own *Phoenix Literary and Arts Magazine* - In the fall 2000 issue, a piece called: "Inspiration #2" - In the spring of 2002, a photo entitled, "Drink."

