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[tablet
spring 06
:synthesis]

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This issue of Tablet inaugurates a new editorial staff that embodies not only a wholly different character but also renewed enthusiasm and fresh vision for the publication. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of the Tablet staff, the absurd patience of our advisors, and the continually astounding talents of our contributors, the Spring 2006 issue of Tablet has arrived. We are exceedingly proud of the constant growth and dynamism of our publication and look forward to the possibilities that lie in its future.

Tablet Spring 2006 : Synthesis.

It's hot.

Please see for yourself.



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The Fear Hut

In some brackish fields,
where the earth stays so damp that
the deer's saltlicks melt

there's a fear shelter.
A shanty actually,
perched upon warped reeds.

Here we're doing things,
like talking between our selves,
saying this 'n that.

I'll go: Where're the stars?
And then you'll go: They're not here,
let's tend to what's mine.

So here's my Cabbage
Moon-Rose, blossomed out beneath
a frozen gem dome.

We mind her white stems
nightly, minding our manners,
drinking silvered oil.

Giving us no woe.
Her gills breathe the night's shade while
fair leaves yield pale love.

Days we box her in
like an old opera glove
dabbed with strange aged scents.

And we're so vexed by
her pallid petal tones of
light that comes from shade,

and her unripe fruit.
Truly a wonder, her blanched,
bitter apples are.

Matt Swope



chelsea purvis
dulces

digital photograph

French, Finger, Fourteen

Robyn Schneider

Those girls who promenade. Those stringy things, all legs and elbows, boy-skinny, with no curves. Those double-zero girls, eyeliner and astringent dabbed on in double doses, pouty lips, attitude.

Those girls.

They come waltzing into Subway, order sandwiches to share in high-pitched giggles, real laughter as short as their skirts. They drink too much Coke, mix it sometimes with Crush and Barq's Root Beer and Fanta. A suicide, they call it.

They chew the straws and get refills, a second serving of suicide. Those girls have the world by its glossy sheen, quivering in their manicured grasp. Who else gets a second serving of suicide? Who else is so unaware of everything that jokes spew forth in conduits, spigots, gushes?

Those girls do not shower in P.E. They are not shy, in their sheer thongs with princess, slut, sexy, babe in sparkly script across the front. They don't want to be told anything, like run laps, do ten push-ups, take a shower. They drag their feet and slide smoothly in small, slow strides through the red chalk of the running field. They groan and roll their eyes and knee the floor for push-ups. They spray Body Shop fragrance in the locker rooms, the smell thick and oozing, like Hostess cupcakes, like pimples.

Those girls belong to no one.

They wear low-slung belts with cut outs of stars, metal studs, buckles on the side or in the back, worthless buckles. They wear those belts like jewelry. Those girls wear boys like jewelry, boys with luminous hair, gelled to show delicate pink scalp. Those girls laugh through gloss-slicked lips at silly boy jokes, innuendo they don't, or shouldn't, understand.

They sit on boys' laps and wiggle their butts and talk about parties where the keg never showed, parties where some girl did some boy in the bathroom, parties they've been to, parties they've heard of, parties, and people sometimes, that never existed. Those girls wander the mall in packs, with no purses. They touch everything they want to touch, sass the salespeople, talk about the prices in loud voices.

Those girls are studded like their belts and bracelets, pierced in neat spirals up their earlobes. They are like clams, hiding a treasure; they have jeweled rings in their bellybuttons.

Those girls have loud, angry music and drama. They steal each other's boyfriends, buy a shirt they can't have because their friend already has it, pass notes, chat on AIM, talk behind each other's backs.

Those girls are their own ecosystem, a little self-contained world of bitchy back-talk, alleged blowjobs, traitors, mascara, text messages and BFF's. Those girls do not have opinions about real things, political things. They do not read books, or even articles in fashion magazines. They take online quizzes to find out if they will marry Orlando Bloom or Chad Michael Murray. They leave makeup stains on the downstairs phone, from cradling it to their neck while they paint their toenails with tiny hearts and flowers.

Those girls with tiny magnetic mirrors in their lockers, fingers stained by pots of lipgloss shared in homeroom in place of the pledge of allegiance, too young to wear tampons, too careless to watch the news.

I know those girls, those soon to be prom queens, soon to be sorority sisters, soon to be interns and employees and bosses, mothers, aunts, godparents. They disperse like miniature hairsprays, spread

their designer discount wings and take off.

They leave me still in awe, watching, waiting for the return, the decade later reunion, when they will reappear in pantsuits and pearls and chignons, clutching toddlers who pick their noses and scream for punch, side by side with Ken Doll husbands, those gay looking square-jawed men with perfect vision and bleached underpants.

In the flickering lights of the auditorium, I will see them again as they were, faint shadows of fourteen-year-olds dancing around their newly-Botoxed unwrinkles.

I will stand there and gawk at the women who were once those girls, and they will not notice me at first. They won't remember I was the one they borrowed gum from once in third period Algebra, the girl with the locker across from theirs, the nerdy one, the quiet thinker, the straight A never-been-frenched grades-reflect-my-cup-size observer tormented by the intricacies of popularity I could never attain.

They will come over to me and read my nametag, frown, try to remember and then pretend they do, and I will smile, oh yes, show off those eight years of orthodontia and reminisce about those parties, too.

Yes, I was the girl in the bathroom that time. Remember the party sophomore year where boys really were swinging from the chandeliers? The time the cops came and instead of breaking us up, they stayed and got drunk?

Then they will walk away, those girls, remembering our four-year friendship just as vividly as they remember everything else that never was. Just as vividly as I remember them.

jun cha
moma's pain

oil on canvas 18" by 24"



how i know

jason kim

sitting.
with him...

the wind flies,
full force

between

every follicle
of my hair.



kate



by elena megalos

digital photograph, acrylic, tracing paper, and ink on wood

space

She enters on palms and knees
Mother is out and the door is open
The aroma of mildew fills her nostrils
Earthy, thick, comforting
The sharp aftershock of mothballs
She strokes a vulnerable spot in the floorboards
Sagging wood, nearly soft
Caramel lacquer tears like paper
She fingers the buckle that completes stiff black heels
As she slides her feet inside
Dust nestles gently between her toes
She loses her face to the folds of long skirts
Searches in vain for a trace of perfume
Diaphonous purples and burnt oranges
Sweep delicately across her cheeks
Her curious hands have no regard
For fragile fabrics
Yellow antique lace shreds at the mercy
Of ruddy fingers
Filmy corners conceal forgotten pennies
These walls
Preserve her mother's mystery

She does not yet know—

A slouching beam
Weary with the weight
Of blouses she never needed
Faint gold stains
Already permanent
A battered brown diary
Beneath a chaotic pile of mismatched socks
Crumpled pink lace in the corner
Panties shoplifted just last week
Seven condoms from the clinic
Hiding in the folds of \$100 denim
The mild scent of sweat
No mothballs
Nothing worth preserving

cosmo hammond



pieces of history
by **jerone hsu**
digital photograph

Silverware

I admire the bodies of spoons
Generous, spacious and deep
 like full moons
They illuminate my insides
with miso granules, vitamin rich tides,
 seaweed soup.

I savor the decisive shapes of forks
Sectioned into wands, poignant
 straightened torques
of rationalized emotion
Warm, weightless broth,
 nut-salad potion
 concoction.

I grip tightly the edges of knives
Aggressive, sharp
 individual lives
They tear muscle,
 finely sliced,
 sharp and serrated
 rose-nail pricks.

Farrah Sarafa

Deer Sighting
Matt Swope

Somehow, the white
shimmers with a million
mica clippings embedded.

Enough to stay
interest for years. This is
not the right season
but anyway,
but anyway—

The macadam is
dry, still warmish, an unyielding
black toad's skin
resting quietly aside
hazy gray dusted gravel
which no one has ever laid
hands on, just ahead of
where the grasses end.
You turn down the radio before

Cranking down the window's
sideways-green-glass panel
behind its sail of a triangle.
I watch as your knees
dent the hard white top-stitched
red vinyl,
leaning out so

The length of the beam,
forested,
that seeks a buck,
may meander wand-like,
an electric conveyor of sight.

One solid plank of light,
its spanning agility no issue,
and, like a thought, moves
all of itself
all at once.

Roving over the
tangles of
briefly lit branches,
with their leaves undersides'
(in the breeze that's just arrived),
turning into veinous
silver dusted moths.

Blood, Sand and Tears of a Young Boy

Farrah Sarafa

I wipe my tears while they—
they have no tears left to cry.
Dehydrated, like dried pineapple,
the closest they come to resembling the concentric yellow
and fiber-branching slices
is the tired eye;
swollen and puffed like a pregnant belly
their shadow-plated arches, underneath
reveal how much they question “why.”

“For what are you longing,”
I ask, looking into the complicated retina of the young boy.
“What is floating in the water of your deep and narrow well, my dear?”
He only speaks fear.

I feel his mother’s cries moving inside of me,
shaking off flower vases and pots of marble stone
from granite table-tops
I shiver; steady in will and
willing to stay, I am made from glass
while this little boy is made from clay.
He is brought to be potted by American soldiers
from which the Israelis may drink their raisin-milk in warm,
making excuses to stay
in my mother’s Palestine.

Placing my hand on his cold winter’s chest
I transfer my comforts as warmth, but their flag’s pointing west;
they are looking for help from a nation that is “best,”
though it is we
that have made Iraq into a land of nuclear test.
Missile tanks and planks
for cannonballs make storm in a place where
smoke bombs, tear gases and raping little girls from lower classes bring
to form
nerve knots and tissue clots
along the green-starred spine of Iraq.
These people need no more tears;
they are merely
hungry.

“What does she hide beneath her big red striped gown?” He asks, inquiring
of her tasks.
“Rice with cumin-spiced meats and lemon-sesame treats
or niter, sulfur and charcoal dynamite for an endless fight
against the rest of the world,” he wonders of her vast plunders.

Desert souls, their tears are made of blood mixed with sand
CNN bulletin interrupts my bliss with news of terrors
about red and flaming wearers
of suicide and contempt.
My laughs push into cries
and form a current for the Arabian Sea
whose crystal salts perspire and become of me.
Her waves undulate like thin layers of blood thickened with sand and
stone
like a serpent’s plea to be let free
and to roam
the Garden of Eden.

muralitharan
sriharsh gowtham

oil on canvas
24" by 30"





lawrence sulak
untitled (oakham, ma)

digital photograph

- ed chow -

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- daimyo deck series -
origami paper, ink, digital manipulation



beat
by jerone hsu
digital photograph

“We’re late. Get in the car, Ella.”

Barbara called to her seven-year-old daughter from the front porch as she hobbled to her Mercedes station wagon, struggling with the buckle on her right stiletto. She knew that she looked a wreck and it killed her. There hadn’t been time to style her hair properly after all. It hung limp in a brown plastic barrette from earlier in the afternoon, pieces falling out periodically. Lipstick had been stashed haphazardly into a clutch on her way out the door five seconds ago. She would have the red lights on the drive over to prepare her face. She knew she must keep telling herself this. The red lights. Moments to breathe, to calm down. She could not arrive at her husband’s firm party looking as though she’d just completed a treadmill workout. Sweat on her brow, smearing her anti-aging foundation. Utterly unacceptable.

The party had already started. A glance at her wristwatch confirmed her fear. At the driver’s side of the car, Barbara tried to replay in her head the downward spiral of an afternoon she’d planned perfectly. The arrival of the invitation had given her three weeks of warning. Three weeks to plan the flawless execution of an evening with which she could prove herself. She’d scheduled Saturday to a tee. Renee, the sixteen-year-old down the block, was to watch Ella until midnight. Warren was to book an early flight home from his three-day business trip. He’d hail a cab, be back from the airport and on the front porch by a quarter to six. They would get ready together, drive together, arrive together. This was Warren’s night, after all. His firm’s annual holiday potluck. And Barbara would make her husband proud. Because while he was still airborne, she would be preparing her masterpiece.

The pie took less than an hour to bake, but it was a work three weeks in the making. “Dessert” had been her assignment, and she knew that the word graced the dotted line of at least four other invitations. Hers would be best. There was no other option, and she had three weeks to ensure it. A journey through musty cookbooks she’d checked out from the public library. Tedious leafing through the yellowing pages. Poring over combinations of ingredients, making notes in the margins of photocopies. A little more butter here, a little less sugar there. This would be pie number seven. The previous six had been mere drafts. Apple first. But apple had been or-

dinary, and the attempt had been promptly banished to the wastebasket. Sweeping through the doors of the firm party with an American classic that someone else’s wife had already baked would be nothing short of mortifying. Especially in the event that the other woman’s pie tasted better. Attempts at pumpkin (but Thanksgiving had been so recent), cherry (not nearly fresh enough), banana cream (so unrefined!), and lemon meringue (but Warren hated lemon) had joined the discarded apple in the dumpster out back. Blackberry had been the winning flavor at last. And this pie, her perfected second shot at the flavor, would be a first attempt in the eyes and mouths of her husband and his colleagues. Barbara had always been sure to eliminate evidence of her “rough drafts” before Ella or Warren came home. The wasted fruit and wasted time would seem silly to an outsider, she knew. The glamorous life of Barbara Lynn Cutwright would not appear so glamorous anymore—her long hours at home without the burden of a job devoted to the execution of culinary delights doomed after the first bite. And for a silly potluck, no less. But it *wasn’t* a silly potluck; the pie *was* worth it. Her entrance to the party would be sublime. She knew because she had watched it many times in her head. She and Warren would sweep through the doors, her “dessert” assignment in hand, Warren’s arm around her waist. Her green satin cocktail dress would drape her body in all the right places, inviting second glances from male and female guests alike. There would be whispers. With subtle nods men would compliment Warren on his choice in mate. With tight, forced smiles, women would mask surges of envy. And Barbara would glow modestly, pretend she noticed none of it. She would make her way to the end of the table and lay her pie to rest. Come dessert time, she would remain to the side of the activity, engaged in affectionate conversation with her husband. A guest would approach the couple and tap her shoulder. He would apologize for interrupting the two, then in a gentle voice, tell her, “I believe that was the best pie I’ve ever had.” She would smile, bowing her head slightly. “Thank you”...

“Ella! Car! Now!”

But Renee had cancelled at noon. *I’m so sorry to be calling this last minute like this, but I woke up feeling disgusting this morning. I don’t know if it’s a good idea to let Ella near me*

tonight. Click. "Fuck," Barbara had spat into the dead receiver. She had spent the better part of the day making phone call after phone call, searching frantically for a sitter that could be at their house by six. No luck. Maria, their housekeeper, had been a last resort. It was a Saturday night, one of two free nights a week Maria had to spend with her own children. And with no car and a house twenty minutes in the wrong direction, Maria was not an ideal candidate. But with no other choice, it was settled. Ella had a place to go. She and Warren would simply restructure the evening, leave forty-five minutes earlier than expected. Warren would have to shower and change quickly. She would have the pie in the oven sooner. It would still need an hour to cool...

"Ella!" Barbara started back towards the house, becoming more frantic with every step. She could hear the stress in her own voice. She could feel the evening unraveling in her stomach. Warren had called from the airport an hour ago to say that his flight was delayed. It would be easier for him to take a cab to the party straight from the terminal, he'd told her. She had aggressively argued otherwise, insisted that *she* would pick him up instead, but he had refused to hear it. *I don't want to hold you back, hon. You do what you need to do, and I'll see you there at seven.* Ten past seven now. Her husband was already at the party, no doubt. Socializing with his colleagues. Tossing around terms Barbara didn't even fully understand. Engaging in flirtatious debate with Linda, his partner. Linda, who had been over for dinner twice now. Linda who was always sure to compliment Barbara on her "divine cooking." *I really do admire a woman who can cook like this. To have the time to try out so many delicious recipes. Must feel luxurious. It's a shame, really, that with this work schedule I never get around to the kitchen. Chinese take-out is the norm, I'm afraid.* Barbara had no choice but to smile, to offer her another serving, to desperately stroke Warren's thigh under the table...

"Ella! What are you doing up there?" She was in the foyer now. She'd told her daughter on the way out that she could run and grab a coloring book and some crayons from her bedroom. Ella had expressed concern that there was "nothing fun to do at Maria's." That had seemed like an hour ago. Barbara felt her head becoming hot. The party had started without her. Twenty minutes to Maria's...

"Ella! Get out of your bedroom. Now!"

Twenty-five minutes from Maria's to downtown...

"I'm serious. We need to go!"

Forty-five minutes to breathe. Ten red lights to apply her make-up. Twelve red-lights? More?

The pie. She'd left it on the stove to cool so she could go upstairs to put on her green satin dress. She hadn't known then that Warren would call and cancel. That the dress would not fit like she'd remembered. That it would rip and require an emergency mending. That Ella would spill her finger-paints all over the new beige carpet at a quarter after six. That without Maria, clean-up would be a lengthy and difficult process. Barbara rushed into the kitchen. Her potluck assignment was sitting sadly atop the bottom right stove burner where she had left it. It had cooled. In fact, it was *cold* now, forgotten. She frowned for a moment; her pie was *better* than this. *She* was better than this. Shuffling to the pantry, Barbara threw open the doors. Her hands fumbled frantically for the saran wrap.

"Ella!" She wrapped the pie clumsily. The clear film gave it a sloppy appearance. Like she'd thrown it together in minutes. Used a pre-cooked crust and canned berry filling...

"Mama." Ella was standing at the top of the stairs struggling to hold something heavy-looking. Barbara squinted at her daughter, who remained still, sniffing softly. The large fish bowl to came into focus.

"It's Rufus, Mama."

Rufus was the gold fish.

"He's dead."

Ella had won him at a Cinco de Mayo carnival earlier that year. This would have marked his eighth month of survival.

"I was getting my coloring books and when I went to say goodnight Rufus was floating on his back."

Barbara let out an exhausted sigh. She had never liked Rufus. He had made Ella's room smell terrible. It had been Warren, not she, who had defended Rufus' right to remain in the house. Right now, Barbara disliked Rufus more than ever. He was contributing to the deterioration of a night that was already on the decline.

"What are we going to do, Mama?"

Ella had started walking down the stairs towards her

mother. The water in the bowl threatened to splash out and soil the carpet with each step. Rufus, a sad orange streak on the surface, swayed with Ella's every movement.

"Stop moving, Ella! You're going to spill it." Barbara ran up to meet her daughter, taking the fish bowl from her.

"We have to do something, Mama." Ella was visibly fighting an influx of tears.

"Ella, Mama's had a very stressful day. We were supposed to leave a long time ago, and now Mama's going to be very late to Daddy's party." She had reached the top of the stairs, fish bowl in hand.

"But Daddy's not even here!" Ella had begun to pulse up and down, her small body struggling to contain an eruption of frustration.

Barbara winced. *Be gentle*, she told herself. *It's not her fault*. "I know, sweetheart. That's because Daddy's going to meet Mama at the party. In fact, Daddy's there already. It's Mama who's late, you see. And if we keep taking so long to get out the door, Mama's going to be even more late."

"But Rufus—"

"Ella!" Barbara snapped, severing the end of her daughter's plea. She closed her eyes for a moment, regaining her composure. "Rufus is just going to have to wait."

Ella chose not to accept the statement. "I'm not leaving him here! He needs to have a funeral."

"There's no *time* for a funeral, Ella," Barbara hissed.

Ella began to jump up and down and wail. "It's not fair! It's not *fair*! You're not being *fair*, Mama. I miss Rufus!"

Barbara closed her eyes and began to massage her temples. "Ella. Mama knows that this is very difficult for you. But you need to know that right now you and Rufus are making this very difficult for *me*."

"I want Rufus! *Rufus!*" Snot was now running freely from Ella's nostrils.

Barbara opened her eyes. She looked from messy Ella to messy Ella's deceased pet and back again.

"Rufus!" Ella's wails were nearly incoherent now. She had resorted to animal sounds to express her pain.

"Okay," Barbara whispered to herself. She took two deep breaths.

"Okay, Ella, that's enough," she said quietly. Ella didn't

appear to hear her.

"Enough, Ella!"

Ella stopped wailing. Stunned for a second, she looked up at her mother.

Barbara tightened her grasp of the fishbowl and turned a sharp right into the nearest bathroom. It took Ella a moment to register the sudden motion. She scrambled after her mother, her wet black eyes widening. "What are you doing with him?" She had calmed down, but her small voice quivered still.

Barbara didn't answer. Working quickly and efficiently, she placed the bowl on the counter, thrusting her hand in, removing the hot pink coral, the plastic mermaid.

"Mama." Ella tugged at the hem of her mother's dress.

"Ella," Barbara snapped, "Please don't touch my dress. It's fragile. And your hands are covered in snot right now."

Ella let go of the green satin.

"Mama, what are you doing?"

"I'm working. If you're quiet I'll be able to finish quicker. Then we'll go."

She pumped liquid soap into her palm, lathering deliberately, rinsing her hands beneath the faucet until all suds were gone. Ella watched her, wide-eyed.

"Are we giving Rufus a funeral?" she asked quietly.

"Yes, Ella. We're giving Rufus a funeral."

Barbara dried her hands on a pink-striped towel nearby. She picked up the fishbowl and promptly emptied its contents into the toilet. Murky water and a momentary flash of orange. She flushed.

"All done," she said quietly. She placed the empty bowl next to the sink and walked out. Ella stared as the water swirled downwards, saying nothing. Rufus was gone. Ella put the top lid down reverently and walked out of the bathroom, glancing over her shoulder as she followed her mother out.

They said nothing to one another as they drove to Maria's house. At every other red light, Barbara glanced at the pie, which rested now on the passenger's seat next to her, looking pathetic in its clear plastic coating. Ella sat in the back seat in a state of shock, staring at the *Cinderella* coloring book in her lap with glazed eyes. Barbara didn't think to apply her lipstick after all.

Ella broke the silence ten minutes into the ride. She murmured timidly to her mother.

"Do you think Maria will be upset that we're late?"

"No," Barbara responded quietly. "She'll be fine."

Ella looked down, considering her next question for a moment.

"Is Daddy gonna be mad that you're late to his party?"

"No, Ella. I don't think Daddy or anyone there will even notice."

Barbara glanced at her daughter's reflection in the rear-view mirror. Ella was looking out of the window absently. She had allowed her coloring book to fall to the floor. As she watched her daughter, Barbara parted her lips, searching for an apology, but was unable to form the words. The car was silent for a few minutes. Dreamily, almost to herself, Ella asked aloud, "Do you think Rufus is going to heaven even though you flushed him down the toilet?"

Barbara's eyes remained focused on the road ahead. She did not want to look at her daughter right now. "I don't think goldfish go to heaven, Ella."

Ella looked down. "That wasn't very nice," she said quietly.

"Rufus was only a fish, Ella," Barbara answered quietly, bitterly. "He didn't really matter."

He mattered to me. Ella thought better than to say it out loud.

Barbara entered the party, pie in hand. On shaky stilettos, she walked to the table and set her creation down at the end. There, it joined two other pies, a cake, and a pudding trifle. Her eyes scanned the unattractive debris of the potluck. Evidently, dinner had been enjoyed without her.

"Barbara!" Warren walked up to his wife, standing tall in his grey suit, appearing too well-rested for a man just off an airplane. Linda followed close behind, shiny red fabric swaying at her hips. "We were wondering what happened to you," he said, kissing her on the forehead and tucking a loose piece of hair behind her ear.

"I was a little...held up." She forced a tight smile.

"Well, just as long as you didn't stay home the extra couple hours just to bake this pie! Looks like we've got more than enough dessert here already." Warren nudged his wife warmly. Linda laughed.

"Yes, well...the pie was no trouble at all, I can assure you." Barbara laughed so she wouldn't cry.

"I can't wait to try it," said Linda. "You arrived just in time. We were about to have dessert anyway."

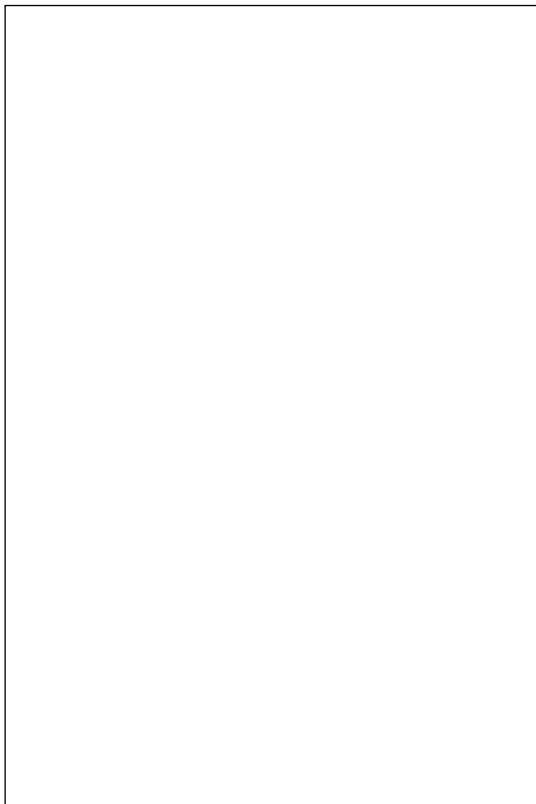
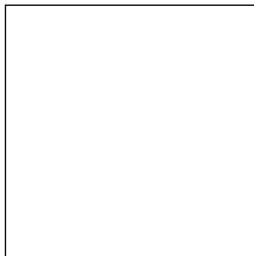
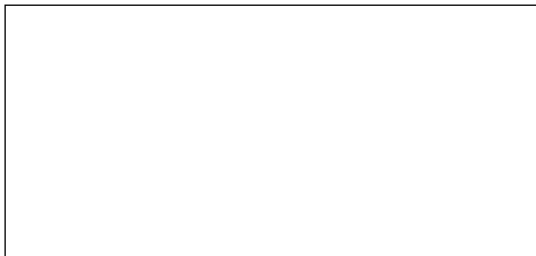
Barbara sat on a couch to the side of the commotion while other guests enjoyed forkfuls of assorted sweets. She watched her husband mingle with his colleagues, his colleagues mingle with one another, allowing her eyes to relax until the lawyers and secretaries became gentle blurs of color and sound. She tried to drift to sleep with eyes open. *Yes, sleep is what I need.*

Her senses were forced back into commission when a guest tapped her on the shoulder. He was holding a small plate of her sad blackberry masterpiece.

"I'm so sorry to interrupt," he said softly, "but I believe this is the best pie I've ever had."

Barbara wearily smiled and bowed her head slightly. "Thank you."

ysbirtes



Immersed in Rice

Like the water
they take the shape of the gunnysack.
Lying inside, one heavy mass of little seedy grains.

I reach to caress them. Stretching
to the deep corners of the bag,
swooshing and swerving, cupping
a cluster carefully and letting them
pour onto the floor,
listening to the rainy sound.

My hands swimming in the sea
of seeds—
holding on wholly until I can grasp
the river of rice.

But my mother, abruptly barging in on me,
and I, crouched beside a dense leather sofa,
looking up in fear. What are you doing? she asks.
She scorches the river dry.

My seedy sprinkles
all scoured to a pile of soot.

Jason Kim

Descriptions of Dissolution

Perhaps we built our castle
Too close to the water's edge.
We wanted to watch the waves
From our window, holding hands.
Perhaps we should not have built
Our foundation out of sand
And thoughts of immortality,
But they seemed such strong support.

I heard sand pouring in
Through crevices in the ceiling,
Streaming down the walls.
I did not run or scream,
But closed my eyes and hummed.
Then crash and water gushing,
The moat spilled over.
We built that moat to bar
The world from trespassing,
Untouchable, we thought it made us,
But it surged through our castle,
Washing away my patience
For your criticisms.
Leaving you on one bank
And on the other I,
Now guarded from each other.

I watched your eyes watch mine watch yours.
You put up your hand to wave to me,
But your fingers cracked and crumbled,
And I saw you start to disintegrate.
Desperately I searched for band aids
But the fissures raced down your spine,
Your nose broke off, undiminished,
Husks of hair pulled away from your scalp.
Then the skin melted off your bones
Into a steaming puddle on the floor.
The dog lapped it up, oblivious
To a stench like stale burnt popcorn.
I stood solitary, staring
Not believing I allowed it
To happen.

We had no hurricane shutters,
No strong doorways to protect us,
No tornado cellar in which to hide,
We had nothing the day our walls came down.

Michelle Diamond

plange muhle I digital photograph

by daniel linder



Eudoxia.

Of the West: I fall, I fall.

Trumped by coppered ramparts and
heathenish tides of hairshirts.

Too late your hand's season of oracle because
there go all my originals, my emeralds, and furs—
my merciless ardenscies.

You burn this skin while
I practice my selves. Our
spines pluck a lyre's tune, off-
key and dumbfounded.

Matt Swope

Jun Cha has been drawing since age two. Now seventeen, he has been commissioned to paint a number of murals for local neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles. Currently in the process of designing and developing a video game and clothing line, he also tattoos throughout Santa Monica, South Central, and East L.A.

Originally from California, **Ed Chow** is currently illustration major at Parsons School of Design. His best friends are Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop. He sews in his free time. He likes robots, kittens, electric guitars, the 50's and Japanese culture! His heroes are Ashley Wood and Katsuya Terrada. His favorite movie is Kamikaze Girls. His favorite bands are probably Saosin and Nightmare. Single hot tall boy looking for a smart and funny girlfriend! Interested parties may reach ed at edatron@gmail.com

Michelle Nicole Diamond, born and raised in Miami, Florida, is a sophomore in the college. She is majoring in political science, history, and creative writing. This is her first submission to Tablet.

Sriharsh Gowtham is a CC sophomore majoring in Biology. A typical pro-Indian, he recently took a liking to macaroni and cheese, and wishes he could sing like Udit Narayan.

Cosmo Hammond wishes his name was Sultana.

Jerone Hsu has a funny haircut.

Jason Kim, CC '08, writes poetry when he can in order to alleviate the suffering of other privileged, upper-middle class classmates like Ingrid. He loves James Merrill and likes to stand in the Beyonce position in photographs--right in the center.

Daniel Linder, born in 1975 and raised in Germany, studied architecture in Germany, Switzerland, and at Columbia. He has traveled (nearly) all over the world, never without his camera. His aim in architecture and art is to create a state of craft like a Japanese blade smith: reduce the noise until the pure essence of the chosen topic is left.

Elena Megalos, CC 08, enjoys dessert, mixed media creations, and Venice, California.

Chelsea Purvis: Chelsea is a senior History major at Yale University who is actively involved in international social justice work. She is a member of the Yale undergraduate group Yspaniola, which aids Haitian refugee communities in the Dominican Republic. Next year Chelsea will be pursuing a Masters in Economic and Social History at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar.

Lawrence R. Sulak II (aka "Lawrencium") is a CC '08 neuroscience major, born in Boston, MA and bred all over this beautiful world.

Farrah Sarafa is a Comparative Literature and Columbia MEALAC graduate student, translator, cultural activist and poet. Daughter of a Palestinian-born mother and Iraqi-born father, she finds that poetry, a confluence of music, voice, language and love, is the most extraordinary response to the current degradation in the Middle East.

Robyn Schneider (BC '08) is the author of numerous books for teenagers. Too many people read her blog.

Lexi Tsien-Shiang is a CC 07 anthropology major from the San Francisco area, California. She found this package of postcards at the Salvation Army on 107th and Broadway and bought them knowing they would be easy to draw on while in class (where she does a large portion of her drawings). She is currently in Santiago Chile, soaking up the Technicolor graffiti and rummaging through antique fairs for old Chilean futbol magazines, army cufflinks, and, of course, more postcards.

Matt Swope is a General Studies senior majoring in Art history.



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w/ sweet potato frosting, served w/ salad	
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Served w/ rice & salad	
* Swordfish Kabab	11.99
Served w/ rice & salad	
Stuffed Chicken Breast w/ Mozzarella Cheese & Broccoli (served w/ 2 side items)	10.99
Vegetable Lasagna	9.99
Served w/ green salad	
Meat Loaf (Turkey / Beef)	10.99
Served w/ two side items	
Chili Con Carne	8.99
Topped w/ scallions & cheese, served w/ rice	
Seafood Soup	5.99
Shrimp, clams & salmon	

GRILLED CHICKEN STRIPS

Served w/ Pickle Sauce
(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Steamed Vegetables	10.99
Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Pasta Salad	10.99
Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Caesar Salad	10.99
Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Tomato	10.99
Cucumber Salad	10.99
Grilled Chicken Strips w/ House Salad	10.99
* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ 2 Side Items	10.99
Grilled Chicken Strips Over Pasta w/ Marinara Sauce	10.99

SALADS

* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Any Salad	10.99
* Vegetarian Platter	6.50
Any 2 side items plus corn bread	
* House Salad (Lg)	5.25
* Caesar Salad (Lg)	5.25

DRESSINGS

Golden Italian, Blue Cheese, French, Ranch, Balsamic Vinaigrette, Oil & Vinegar, Honey Mustard, Thousand Island, Lite Fat Caesarian Dressing
(Extra Charge for Extra Dressings)

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Real Mashed Potatoes	2.35	4.25
Baked Potatoes	2.35	4.25
Seasoned Fries	2.35	4.25
Garlic Parsley Potatoes	2.35	4.25
Whipped Sweet Potatoes	2.35	4.25
Sweet Potato Fries	2.35	4.25
VEGETABLES		
* Fresh Steamed Vegetables	2.35	4.25
* Steamed Broccoli	2.35	4.25
* Green Beans Almondine	2.35	4.25
* Steamed Baby Carrot	2.35	4.25
Corn on the Cob	2.35	4.25
Loose Corn	2.35	4.25
* Collard Greens	2.35	4.25
SALADS		
* Caesar Salad	2.35	5.25
Cole Slaw	2.35	4.25
Potato Salad	2.35	4.25
Pasta Salad	2.35	4.25
* Tomato & Cucumber Salad	2.35	4.25
* Fresh Melon Cup	2.35	4.25
* Green Salad	2.35	4.25
MORE SIDES		
Rice (Yellow)	2.35	4.25
Honey Baked Beans	2.35	4.25
Sweet Plantain	2.35	4.25
Corn Bread	0.85	----
Cinnamon Raisin Apples	2.35	4.25
Cranberry Creation	2.35	4.25
Stuffing	2.35	4.25
Fried Okra	2.35	4.25
Miscroni & Cheese	2.35	4.25

SPECIAL SIDE ITEMS

Creamed Spinach	5m	5.90
Avocado Slices	2.99	----

BEVERAGES

Pink Lemonade	1.50
Mixed (Ice Tea & Lemonade)	1.10
Fresh Brewed Iced Tea	1.10
Can Soda	1.10
Bottle Soda 20 oz.	1.60
Snapple	1.60
Stewart's Root Beer	1.60
Mistie	1.60
Juices (Cranberry, Apple)	1.50
Orange Juice	1.60
Milk 16 oz.	1.60
Water	1.10
2 Liter Soda	3.25

SMOOTHIES

Strawberry	3.75
Mango	3.75
Pina Colada	3.75

APPETIZERS

(Add any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Chicken Fingers	(8) 6.99 (12) 10.99
Buffalo Wings	(10) 6.99 (20) 12.99
Onion Rings (R)	4.99
Mozzarella Sticks (7)	4.99
Jalapeno Poppers (R)	5.50
Taquito (N)	5.50
Fried Jumbo Shrimp (R)	6.25
Chili Cheese Fries	5.99

(Fried w/ potatoes in Canada / Applesauce Oil)

SOUPS & CHILI CON CARNE

Served w/ Corn Bread
(Add any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Chicken Gumbo (Louisiana Style)	4.75
Chicken Vegetable	4.75
Soup of the Day	4.75
Chili Con Carne	5.99
Topped w/ scallions & cheese, served w/ rice	
Seafood Soup	5.99
Shrimp, clams & salmon	

FRESH SEAFOOD

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

* Baked Salmon (12 oz) (served w/ 2 side items)	12.50
Salmon & Pasta in a Pink Sauce	10.99
Served w/ salad	
* Swordfish Kabab	11.99
Served w/ rice & salad	
Seafood Soup	5.99
Shrimp, clams & salmon	

FRIED SEAFOOD PLATTERS

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread
(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Jumbo Shrimp (R)	11.99
Cod Fish Fillet (2)	10.99
Crab Meat Cake (2)	10.99
Seafood Combo (R)	11.99

(Fried w/ Potatoes in Canada / Soybean Oil)

BURRITOS

Served on a Fresh Flour Tortilla w/ Rice, Black Beans,
Mexican Salsa, Cheddar Cheese
(Add any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Grilled Chicken Burrito	6.99
Ruff Burger Burrito	6.99
Rottisserie Chicken Burrito	5.99
Steak Burrito	7.50
Chicken Fingers Burrito	5.99

WRAPS

Served on a Fresh Flour Tortilla
(Add any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Grilled Chicken Wrap w/ lettuce & tomato, Italian Dressing	6.99
Grilled Chicken Caesar Wrap	6.99
w/ Romano cheese & Caesar dressing	
Veggie Burger Wrap	5.99
w/ lettuce, tomato & avocado, Italian Dressing	
Turkey Burger Wrap	5.99
w/ lettuce, tomato & avocado, Italian Dressing	
Bar-B-Q Beef Wrap w/ yellow rice	6.99
Bar-B-Q Chicken Wrap w/ yellow rice	5.99
Salmon Wrap w/ tartar sauce	6.99
w/ nonfat hollandaise, tomatoes & romaine cheese	
Bar-B-Que Pulled Pork w/ yellow rice	5.99

(Add any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

TEXAS CARVER PLATTER

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread
(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

* Carved Turkey	10.99
* Grilled Brisket of Beef	10.99
Meat Loaf (Turkey / Beef)	10.99
* Grilled NY Shell Steak (12 oz)	14.99
Bar-B-Que Pulled Pork	10.99

ROTTISERIE CHICKEN

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread
(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Quarter Chicken Platter (dark meat)	6.50
* Quarter Chicken Platter (white meat)	7.50
Half Chicken Platter	9.50
Whole Chicken Feast (serves 2-3)	17.99
Whole Chicken (no side items)	9.99

FRIED CHICKEN

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread
(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

2 Pieces Platter	6.50
3 Pieces Platter	7.75
5 Pieces Bucket (no side items)	17.99
8 Pieces Bucket (no side items)	9.99
Chicken Fingers Platter	9.50

BAR-B-O BABY BACK RIBS

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread
(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Half Rack Platter	12.99
Full Rack Platter	19.99
Full Rack Feast (serves 2-3)	22.99
Full Rack (with no side items)	16.75

CHICKEN & RIBS COMBINATION

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread
(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Half Rib & Quarter Chicken Platter	15.99
Half Rib & 2 pcs. Fried Chicken Platter	15.99
Full Rack & Half Chicken Feast (serves 2)	28.99

CHAR-GRILLED BURGERS

Served w/ Steamed Fries, Lettuce, Tomatoes & Pickles
(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Turkey Burger Deluxe	5.50 / 6.99
(w/ apple / onion)	
Veggie Burger Deluxe	5.50 / 6.99
(w/ apple / onion)	
Salmon Burger	5.50 / 6.99
(w/ apple / onion)	
Red Burger Deluxe (10 oz.)	7.99
Add Cheese/Fried Onion/Bacon/Mushroom	75 / 75 / 25 / 25

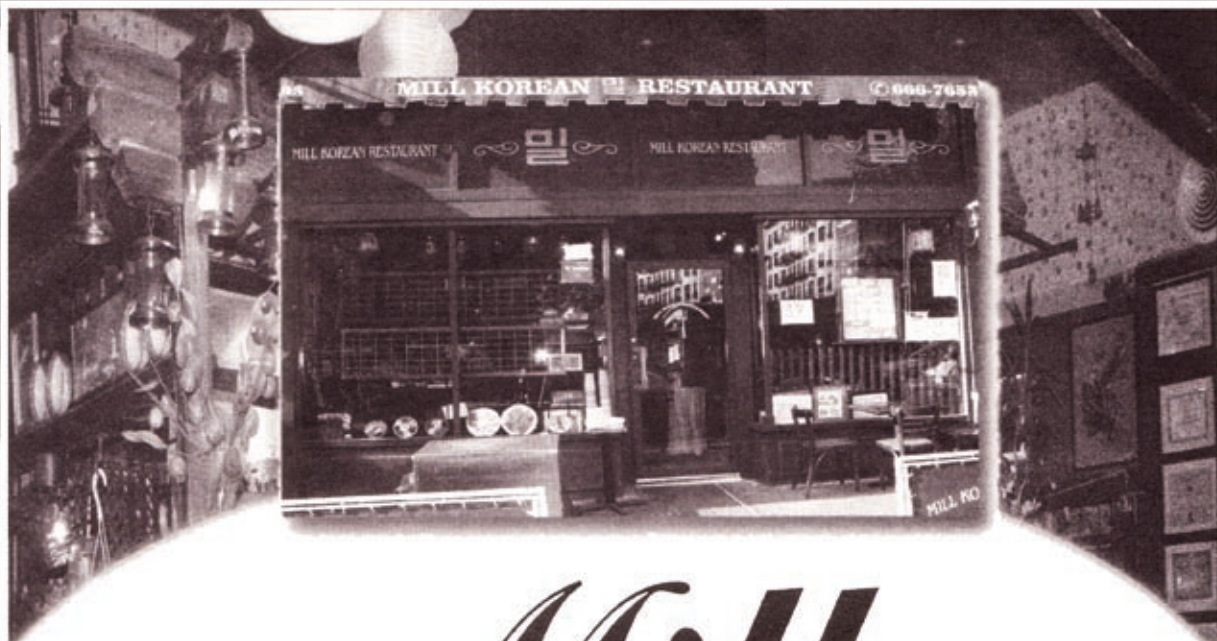
HERO SANDWICHES

(Add any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Grilled Chicken Strips	7.25
Philly Chicken	7.25
Carved Turkey	7.75
Brisket of Beef	7.75
Fish Fillet	6.25
Crab Meat Cake	6.25
Bar-B-Que Beef	7.75
Bar-B-Que Chicken	6.25
Philly Steak	7.50
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