

[2001]

Winged Nation



Winged Nation

Volume 9

Winged Nation

Volume Nine
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*We will live, we have lived
Where language is concealed. Is perilous.*
- Eavan Boland,
"Writing in a Time of Violence"

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the staff.

Winged Nation is the proud product of a feminist community at the
College of William and Mary. Our publication provides opportunities to
share our unique perspectives, and to explore gendered experience.

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Please
Ryan Greene-Roesel

My soul lives in between my thighs

Sucking on it last night, as you would
a red lolly-

pop
you slid your tongue over its surface

brittle, shiny, slathered in your saliva
it grew thinner

You could not resist: you bit.

It crumbled down your throat
in microcrystalline shards of sweetness
and disappeared

(My mother told me never to bite hard
candy. You were to suck, and suck
and savor
forever)

Never Too Rich Nor Too Thin

Rachel Goldman

The anorexic lollipop headed trust fund babies
Who smoke cigarettes for breakfast
And munch rose petals for lunch
Who have been going downhill since 13
And have been shopping uptown since 12
Who get fucked like ladies in silk Prada nighties
And get dressed like queens by private appointment
Never named anything that can't be whined
Never named anything that can't be called to tea
Never named anything that can't be huskily bit into a Tiffany
marked ear
And talked about the next day in one sucked-in breath
While sitting by sapphire trimmed pools

never to swim
but to gaze with inbred vanity at their own reflections
water's crisp edge licks thinly the image of invisible pearl skin on
burgundy lips
having conference with imported wine and imported
European
men with dark mysterious
nipples, tart and smart as the goat cheese dumplings served
with a chilled
Merlot drops tracing the cleft chins down to the clever
bulging interlocking "C"
stitched
Speedos.
All for

the women who jet to London to bank
And then to Vienna for cocktails
Who contort their faces at the stench of new money
And drop champagne flutes at the sight of bad taste
Spilling blue blood and sweet n' low tears
gaspng the name of the designer they wish to be buried in

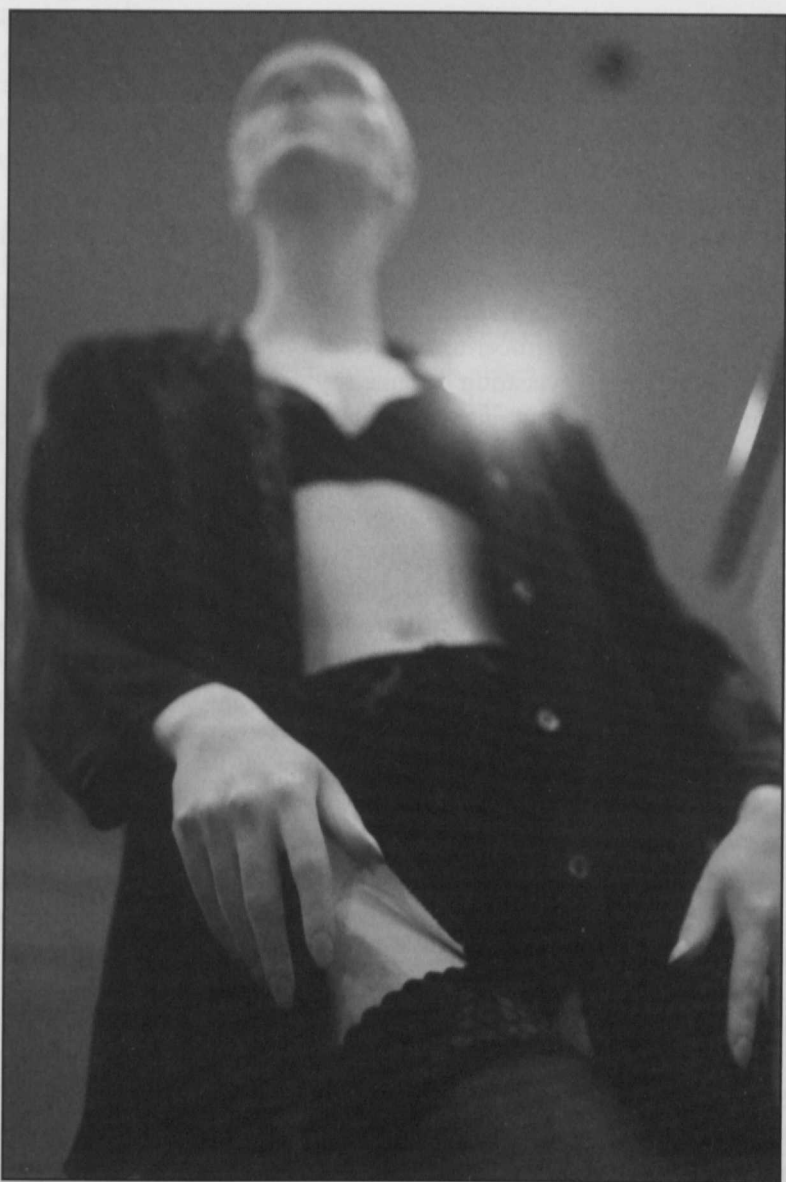
First Child

Beth Keener

She rises from her bath
stands
a moment in mist
imagines pressing
prune fingers to
handprints in the
ancient caves of Dordogne
as she cups
the slick of her
full stomach
 which
 utters
 serenely
a parenthesis)



Grace Camblos, Victoria's Secret (1)



Grace Camblos, Victoria's Secret (3)

I Jumped

Amy Cadge

I'll never forget the first time I jumped on one of those huge trampolines. I was in Basalt, Colorado, three hours west of Denver. They call Denver the Mile-High City. Basalt is higher. I was higher. Every jump took me higher.

Summer vacation from E.T. Richardson Middle School landed me, Wendy, and my mom in Denver. Kit Foster and Mindy Day met us there. Kit drove. Mindy took pictures because she is an artist. We all stayed at Kit's cabins on Frying Pan Road. An addressed envelope reads Basalt, CO but she lives so far from Basalt that only dry ice gets groceries home still frozen.

The week's vacation became my week of firsts: first time seeing the Rocky Mountains with wide green eyes, first time feeling altitude sickness in my sea-level belly, first time feeling that circular black expanse of stretchy bouncy material called a trampoline beneath my socks.

I wasn't an envious child, but I did turn slightly green when I saw backyards with resident trampolines. I wanted one. My backyard wanted one. My mom said no. "It's too much of an insurance risk, especially with so many kids in the neighborhood," she'd tell me.

"Why can't we just get a fence?" I'd reply. "Then we could get a dog, too."

A dog and a trampoline held permanent positions on my Christmas wish list. My mom had dog allergies, but I knew a trampoline had no power to make her sneeze. She still gave me a firm no.

Trampolines and dogs were the few things my mom refused to comply with during my childhood. She always said yes to reading Bobsey Twins past bedtime and playing in the sprinkler and eating Dairy Queen ice cream cones with colored sprinkles.

She also said yes to summer vacations.

So there we were in Colorado. We visited the Colorado River and the bathroom of the fanciest hotel in Aspen. We drove 80mph with the windows open and sang silly songs about gettin' goin' and *quantalla goosetalla*. Kit wore barefeet under long swishy dresses and pressed flowers inside transparent paper. Mindy stood on her head against the cabin wall when she wasn't shooting an abandoned house or a dilapidated barn. My mom watched the hummingbirds and read.

And me, I looked out through my 11-year old eyes and saw the Rocky Mountains for the first time. More impressive than the mountains were two things: a black lab named Zeke and one of those huge trampolines.

I didn't jump right away. I didn't touch Zeke right away. We arrived at night and went directly to bed. The next morning brought something my mom called Altitude Sickness into my belly. My brain called it Bad Onion Rings from Red's Barbecue.

Not wanting to jostle an unhappy stomach, I stayed on the loft's lumpy mattress, staring into the speckled Pyrex bowl on my pillow all morning. The white dots in its glaze taunted me with their infinite array of constellations. Clumsy-footed hippos danced the Jitterbug in my belly, trying to get out through my throat.

I peeked through the floorboards when I heard Zeke's collar jingle below the loft. I squinted through slits in the window when I heard Wendy go outside to jump. I wanted to jump. This time my own allergy said no. I was allergic to altitude.

Mid-morning my mom brought Pepto-Bismol up on a shining silver spoon. As soon as the thick and grainy concoction rolled across my tastebuds, I knew that everything would be okay. I gave the bowl a new glaze. Pink, like sunrise to cover those dizzying constellations. Then I went outside.

It was August. August in the Rocky Mountains felt different than August in the suburbs of Philly. No farting noise from sweaty feet inside plastic purple Jellies. No air pressing like steamy cotton balls into my lungs. No Jack & Jill ice cream truck jingling tunes from Rabbit Hill nursery school. Just hummingbirds, blue skies, sharp open air, and big brown mountains.

My stomach toughened up. My eyes looked high. My feet bounced and bounced. All I did was jump. Jump and flip. Forget Red's onion rings and dancing hippos. Just jump.

X Body as Remembrance

Anna-Claire Fourness

within the instep
the dying swan of
Pavlova, the
ankle shared
of many
sprained once, up
the blondish leg halo
to knee scars telling
like Altamira
scaling hips sharp
like Egypt Pyramids
housing well these
turned-out bones
across back
Pollock in muted
brown-tones
father moles
appoint elbows
to brush towards
woman navel
belly deep as birth
solid ribs to
snapping neck
chin, angular, supports
ten pound heaviness
of inflection

Song
for Jack Attack

Sarah Feightner

Someday baby
maybe I'll let it all just
 hang out,
like Ginsberg said in his song for all the excellence
 of excess.
Like you shouting into that crowded
 night-drunk Saturday
 "Get down on yo' knees, bitch,
 and smile like a donut!"
 and I was green for your gift for offensiveness.
Wondering maybe if I shouldn't start painting
 and turn all those blue silences of mine into something
 nude and Picasso.
Much as it freaks me out
 Juliet was too fond and just *look*
 what happened to her
I want excessive loves — courage love
 like lion music
 like sheer cliff precipice
 diving holy psalms!
I want an excess of hope — to love him anyway
 to regard without regard
 to let it all
 spill over like words on the page and my hair coming
down, not caring where it falls or if it leaves me/you empty exposed
fuckable frightened gushing honesty (pure as it must be trite)
grammatically and/or socially incorrect (so do excuse my language
please) but a real fuckin' mess
 all over every one and place and thing I am in undeniable
 excess of song!

Untitled

Beth Keener

More than anything else
traveling
breaks it down
"it" being the essentials
like t.p. and underwear (a few pair)
and maybe a pair of pants
(nopants might warrant an arrest)
and the biggest essential a someone
not any one
but someone who'll marvel over
color mood strokes in a painting
or over quotes in a book
But also be droolingdumb
willing to bark on a train
or create musicals in the streets
(like one called the Rolly Polly Penis)
making eachother peeyourpants
the 2 of u walking around like
()
a set of parentheses



Beth Keener, Untitled

Flight

Robyn Benson

Robyn, derived from Robert, "of shining fame"
Yet a woman, and no red breasts,
No blushing ruffled plumage.

The Caped Crusader's sidekick gone solo
Girl Wonder without gadgets;
I've arias of chirps instead,
Concertos at your window when you crave silence.

The perspective's different up here:
Proportionality prevails.
Perhaps I'll make Nottingham Forests everywhere
Rob from the righteous (read: superior, vulture)
Give to the humble (read: modest, sparrow)

Thank or blame my mother
For the "y," the need to question,
The pull to soar.
Wanderlust.

Bike Ride
Beth Keener

so i'm riding my brother's bike
and this little pear-shaped seat with its
convenient indentations
well it's making my ride
chafingly unpleasant
because balls, ya know,
are a tidbit smaller than buns
but hey, it's worth it
because today's a beautiful day

The Female Adventure

Andrea Calabretta

"Your two-o'clock!" the receptionist at the front desk screamed.

Minutes later, Victoria emerged through a purple curtain from the salon's inner realm. She was a vision in black leather. The circumference of her hair was twice that of her head. She eyed me suspiciously. Her calculating gaze made me want to run home and put on a prom dress, but one scarlet-tipped finger beckoned me through the curtain into the mirrored room.

I had already met resistance at European Beauty Concepts, Hair Dimensions, and Illusions by Marcus. Somehow The Female Adventure sounded more promising.

Victoria draped me in plastic leopard-print, concealing my soft gray sweater and faded jeans. I smiled at my Doc Martens poking out beneath the smock. "Let's get you washed," she said.

I wondered how she would broach the subject, but Victoria wasn't shy. "So what happened to your hair?" she asked. None of the usual *Do you believe this weather we're having?* or *What are you studying at school, hon?* I could feel her Lee Press-Ons digging into my scalp.

"I was in Italy last semester... I got it cut there."

"Oh yeah? I was gonna say it's pretty unusual for around here. You're lettin' it grow out, I guess?"

"Um no," I apologized, "I like it this way."

I thought of the two men who had called me "Sir" that week. One, a townie my roommate played pool against at the Library Tavern, had said "Seuse me, sir" when he nudged me with his cue stick. The other, a bagger at the Fresh Market, had asked, "Paper or plastic, Sir?" I was pretty sure these qualified me as *a breaker of social expectations*; I had written a paper on it for my class in Social Psychology.

Victoria turned the water on full-force, shot it at my head.

Humans are a social species, I had written, and acceptance into society is extremely important to our sense of well-being. Through acceptance, humans receive the emotional support, affection, and social companionship that are fundamental needs.

At her station, Victoria pushed me into the swivel chair, then

used the toe of one stilettoed foot to pump it as high as it would go. My heavy boots dangled inches from the floor. Victoria towered over me, her scissor-hand poised near my right ear. We stared at one another in the mirror.

In this norm deviation experiment, the subject displayed an abnormal physical characteristic.

"Honey, let me tell you somethin'," she started, "my husband would beat the hell outta me if I cut my hair this short."

I wasn't sure how to respond.

"Um, I'm not married."

Victoria snorted. "Damn good thing," she muttered.

One significant result of the experiment was the response observed in females, who reacted to the deviation more than males. According to Lang's Gender Socialization Theory, women tend to conform more to social norms, and thus they expect other women to conform as well.

"I'm just gonna shape this up a little for ya," she explained, "take a little off the sides, angle those sideburns a bit, make 'em a little wispy."

"A little shorter on top, please," I told Victoria.

"Hell, you wanna look like G.I. Jane?"

The literature states that three behaviors usually occur once a norm has been violated that attempt to correct the deviant.

Victoria swiveled the chair from the mirror with a deft flick of her wrist. My reflection spun away. I could feel the scissors lightly disturbing the surface of my hair. I wondered if she was just clicking the blades together over my head.

"Could you use the clippers on the back part?" I asked.

"I don't think so, honey, I never use 'em, 'cept on men." She shoved the back of my head forward, slamming my chin into my chest, and applied the cold shears to my neck.

First, the group attempts to bring the individual back to the fold.

Victoria leaned over me, examining the front of my hair. I was eye-level with her Wonder Bra when she suggested the bangs. And before I could protest, she was flattening my cultivated spikes, brushing them forward, making little snipping movements.

Struggling to break free from the leopard print, I jerked my head to the side and grabbed the thin wrist of her scissor-hand. The

women under the blowers put down their magazines, and the Korean lady stopped sweeping.

It is important that we be accepted in order for us to receive the positive attention and social information that we need to function as part of the group.

I prised the scissors from Victoria's claws.

When we do cross that line and deviate from what others believe to be normal, we often evoke responses from those around us that neither the deviant nor the observer finds comfortable.

Pointing the open blades at her inflated breasts, I lowered myself slowly from the swivel chair. My left hand reached for a smoking curling iron at the next station, and I wrenched it from the wall plug in one swift motion. I waved my weapons at the onlookers.

If becoming aware of normative influence is the first step to resistance for the deviant, taking action is the second.

Suddenly, Victoria lunged. One Lee Press-On left a gash across the back of my hand. But Victoria's palm dripped blood, and her right cheek bore the long burn of the hot iron.

Still brandishing the scissors in one hand and the iron in the other, I backed slowly out the door of The Female Adventure. The leopard-print cape billowed behind me as I ran across the parking lot.

Should a person deviate from a norm, negative consequences are inevitable.

Shouting Out

Alyssa Meyers

Sliding into morning on the downtown bus,
there is a way through this tough uncertain flesh.
He knows it, knows these angles, knows the tense
of pain and not-pain.
Small joys when the world was young:
black-eyed susans, rain through eight-paned glass,
luna moths collecting on the screen like telegrams.
Sonshine Gospel Hour on the radio, singing:
Shout out joyous for the Lord,
He's coming, oh yes, any day now
Gonna take me to the Promised Land, oh Lord
Last night, the yellow patterned linoleum opened,
cracked, swallowed me whole, safe in the arms
of Jesus.
He has eyes like suns: desperate, scorching, alive.
where does he go when I am not-here, in the small
grey space between collarbones and chest?
I can't see now, trapped by my own flesh,
betrayed by my own bones. But
on the Last Day I will see with eyes
clearer than water, shouting out.



Grace Camblos, Jessie Parker

Coffee Break

Sonya Islam

*In an instant decaf moment
My faith in you departs.
I'm not dissolved completely
But I'd like our end to start*

NOW

You tell me that my bitterness
Has tinged your conscience brown.
While I hide behind the comic strips,
You wash your pancakes down

With burning sweet sunrise liquor
That steams up in the cold
As I think of *her* still swirled inside
My white French terry robe

So you can protest at my silence
Till a spinning dime bangs down,
And stutter over truthful words
As though they're foreign sounds-

Diner meals aren't meant to last,
I don't need a refill-
You should leave without another word
And let me pay my bill.

Recipe for Flamenco

Laura Stine

In Spanish *sangre* means blood
but *sangria*
means the pull of caves
where gypsies give birth
night after night
to flamenco.

To begin:
an orange
an apple
a lemon

 Cut with a steady rhythm
 of hands.

Add:
red wine and brandy,
to loosen soft wails from the throat.

Stir ingredients
and let fruit spiral
through ruffles,
arc of arms,
down spines severe.

Now, the stomp of heels
echoed
by wooden fingers.

To ease the grief
of a thousand nights:
add a cup of sugar
and watch it dissolve
into red.

Untitled

Beth Keener

i saw a **T**ootallman
towering over the crowd at the concert tonight
he jumped to the beat of ben harper's faster songs
darting up
and
down awkwardly
still in the air when the rest of the crowd had landed
and the whole time i was flinching because
it seemed he was about to
T
i
m
b
e
r
fall on me
and **T**ootallman,
did you purposely stand in front of
the shortest people because
tooshortman is behind you and looking
more than a little disgruntled

The Lyre
Philip Clark

Shafts of light
Pierced the mossy rock.
They were the first in months.
The path was dim.
I followed the lyre.

I could not see
The strings he plucked.
The path was steep.
Notes chimed like bells.
I trusted the lyre.

He always trusted
That I would follow.
Like light, his hair was golden.
I followed the light.
I followed the lyre.

Before we walked,
He said I would live.
His head turned.
His eyes strained.
I trusted the lyre.

Pretty

Rachel Goldman

your dress hangs in my closet, mommy
tan, soft, luminous
screaming its number, two
making all of my clothes hold stale breath to feel good about
 themselves
with one serving of
“do you want to go running after desert”
and
“what you ordered is huge, big enough to share”
as I hide trying not to get caught
in the gold reflection of the mirror
with rounded flesh crying and upper brow sweating
clenching my stomach as we share the dressing room
anything but to be weighed weekly once more
wearing thin clothes and spitting in a cup before you got home
inhaling the decaying glue
grasping your magazine layout to the album page
“honey, you can’t wear that you will stretch it out”

your suit hangs in my closet, bubby
Chanel with mink collar
diamond pin, a gift more expensive than my home
sticking its nose up at all my ready-to-wear
trying to give understated lessons
in waves of
“dear, I didn’t know you could wear my size”
and
“let me teach you my favorite...toning exercises”
as I looked wide-eyed at your elegance
you insisted I order ice cream
with my small child fingers gripping
and hot fudge dripping
waiting for signs of satisfaction
then choosing to inform me of my

“excessive mass”
on the second bite
pointing talons transparent

dressed in big pearl rings
to think I said my first word on your prompt
“pretty.”



Grace Camblos, Hilary

Pheremonal

Abbie Doss

they drip from me
smug shapechangers slipping
out my pores
rated XX
a mockery of regularity.

waiting
suspiciously
to greet
my roommate or
my mother-
to become their own
uninvited clocks.

they preach
timelessness
disorganization
I view them
with disgust.

Friday becomes
Next Thursday.
How can you make plans
with that kind of schedule
One has to be prepared
for just about anything.

the Redness of it all
(You know Plato was a man)
reminds me that
I can never quite be
sure of nature.



Beth Keener, Untitled

Kochininako,

A Version of the Yellow Woman Story from Leslie
Silko's "Yellow Woman" and Pueblo Oral Tradition

Andrea Calabretta

"Hello out there, Indians," she had heard the announcer on the radio say. "It's nine o'clock on Monday morning, the eleventh of April." And then the pickup truck had stalled once, heaved a shuddering last breath, and died quietly. She got out and looked down the road. No one. She leaned against the truck, kicking at the dusty dirt until it swirled around her ankles, and thinking about fry bread for dinner, the reason for going all the way to the store in Pesh-do-elish.

She hadn't heard him coming—strange on such a deserted road—but when she looked up he was there, smiling at her through the windshield of his blue pickup as he slowed to a stop in front of her. He pushed open the passenger door, and she climbed in. If it had been a white person, even a woman or a cop, she would have told her name or made some explanation about where she was going. But as it was, she didn't need to say anything.

His hair was long in the old-fashioned style, braided neatly and tied with leather cord. He hasn't been to Indian school, she thought, those boys all look like overgrown ex-Marines. This Indian was beautiful. He wore Levis and a faded blue shirt, turquoise in his earlobes, and his face was brown and smooth like river sand.

They rode silently in the spring heat. No one passed going the other direction. She looked out the window at the weeds, picked up by wind and blown along the wash, and the dark clouds hovering on the horizon, until big drops of rain began to splash against the windshield. A good sign. She fell asleep with her head against the door frame.

"Yellow Woman," he said. "Wake up. We're here."

She had heard that before, that "Yellow Woman."

Pesh-do-elish. Fry bread. "Where are we?" she asked.

The rain clouds had moved off to the west, over where the sun was setting.

"Just above the pueblo."

She could tell he wasn't from Laguna. Hopi maybe?

"Can you see it? The lights down there?"

But she couldn't. She couldn't see the pueblo at all. Just his little Hogan on top of the mesa and the blue pickup parked next to the

corral. He had helped her down from the truck, and she was still holding onto his hand.

"Come on, Yellow Woman." He pulled her a little toward the hogan.

And then she remembered what her grandmother had told her. Yellow Woman, Kochininako, the one who ran away down the river and was kidnapped by a Kachina river spirit. He kept her there up north with his relatives. She came back with twin boys.

This Indian handed her a sack of corn flour and a piece of dried mutton. She cooked over the fire he had made in the stove, and they ate outside in silence. She thought about her mother, at home, and the baby. Tom would be out looking for her.

"Do you know that story?" she asked him, "about Yellow Woman and the river spirit?" He smiled then and led her inside the warm hogan.

When she woke up, it was morning. She turned and felt dampness on the blanket. She found him outside, working at a piece of flint.

"Who are you?" she demanded.

"You knew last night, Yellow Woman." He smiled at her.

"Those eyes. You must be a Zuni."

He shook his head and mounted the white horse, rode off down the mesa toward the wash before she could say anything else.

She was alone all day. I can leave, she thought. What am I doing here? But then she remembered his skin, and then the warmth of his mouth. She had seen his hair out of its braids, black and shiny like the pelt of a river otter. "Yellow Woman," her grandmother had said, "she was kidnapped, but it wasn't like she didn't want to go. Oh no, those Kachinas who bring us the rain, they're very powerful."

She had fried potatoes and made coffee by the time he returned with six rabbits hanging from the saddle. They ate together quietly, and then he pushed her down into the soft sand outside the hogan. The night sky was all around her, and she felt as though they were under water, rocking gently with the current of a slow-moving stream.

In the morning, she shook sand from her hair and waited for him to wake up. If anyone else came by, she thought, I'd know he was just a Navajo, somebody's cousin or uncle. But they were alone on top of the mesa, and she could not even see the highway. She moved back to him and ran her hands along his belly until he woke

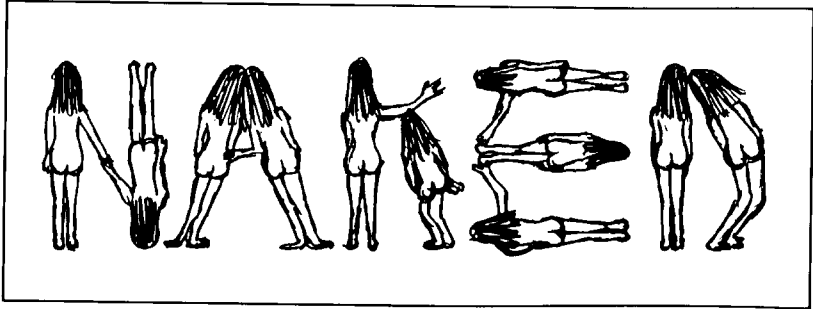
and whispered in her ear.

"I must take you back now, Yellow Woman, it's time for you to go home."

She cried, rubbing her tears into his neck.

He had to leave her there, on the highway, next to her pickup. It came to life the first time she turned the key over in the ignition, the radio blaring and the tires kicking up big clouds of dust as she pulled away.

She drove the road winding down to the pueblo, watching rain clouds on the horizon and thinking about her family, Tom, what to tell them. Kidnapped, she was thinking, by a Navajo. The first drops of rain were hitting the windshield when she heard the announcer on the radio. "Hello out there, Indians," he said. "It's nine o'clock on Monday morning, the eleventh of April."



Robyn Benson, Staff Photo

A Lover's Challenge
Philip Clark

There is the water.
Walk.



Grace Camblos, Untitled

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and everyone else who has supported our efforts.

*When outspoken women are no longer silenced with ridicule,
we will know we have achieved something like equality.*

- Erica Jong, *Fear of Flying*