EDITORS NOTE
I would like to thank this year’s WOODEN TEETH staff for their hard work and valuable input. I would also like to thank the Publications Committee and Liz Panyon for their guidance. Good luck to next year’s Editor Tom Jackson!
SUBMISSIONS POLICY
WOODEN TEETH will consider and is interested in all literary and art forms. Poetry, short stories, essays on any subject in any style can be accepted. Photographs and artwork are valued and welcome. All originals can be returned upon request.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE
Place all submissions along with your name, local address, and telephone number in the 'Submissions' envelope at Marvin Center Room 422.

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EPITAPH
by Stefani Olsen

She was the hostess of the party; she had provided the liquor. Now he was drunk and held her over-fed grey cat above him and he writhed on the floor. The pupils of its wide yellow eyes were dilated, and its ears were tensed back along its head. The cat began to flail desperately in the air...to slash at his wrists. Anesthetized, he continued to sobber and writhe, gibbering.

"It’s my fault I should have locked her in another room she’s nervous enough around people and they’d drain I’m not sober either."

"No. Don’t tease her, please. She’s frightened now."

"I’m just playing with it. Yes, Kitty. MEOW! MEOW! Hissississt."

"She has been my pet for years...since, I think..."

she’s become part of me that’s why I brought her to New York to be my companion she’s become I’m responsible and now letting this man

The woman rose and snatched her cat from his arms. Empty, they remained suspended, the fingers waving in the air. She drew her cat to her breast and staggered unsteadily toward the balcony. She slid open the sliding glass door and bent to put the cat gently outside.

She’ll be cold out there but at least she’ll still be here in the morning when I wake up. I can get her and feed her. Can’t think of anything better to do tonight. she’ll be all right out there even if she’s not use to it afraid.

She slid the door shut and turned back into the room.

What did you—you didn’t throw it out the window? Nyahhhummman... His mouth lay open as he tilted his head back to laugh."

"No. She’s alright on the balcony. I think..."

away from you and away from me because it’s still early and I’ll be drunk later too.

Lights crossed and glistened in the restaurant-bar, creating an amber glow. She sat at a small table across from a clean-shaven man. His wavy dark hair, flecked with the first signs of grey, was combed behind his ears and his cheeks were dimpled. She stared intently—sometimes directly at him; often beyond him. The belted black dress which she wore clung to her slender, crossed thighs. She curled and uncursed her toes in the tips of her heeled shoes.

"I wanted you to know that just because I haven’t called in a few months doesn’t mean I haven’t been thinking of you. I wanted to compensate...a chance to catch up tonight.

"Mmmm. I see."

"What did you think when you got my roses?"

"I was surprised."

your seduction can only work if I allow it to. You don’t have to realize I know I’m in control o.k. I think I understand you now and o.k. only why is my heart beating so fast? I’m resigned to what it wants but all this time it’s beginning to gel now. Uh huh.

He smiled and reclined in his chair, slinging his left arm over the back. They sat silently for moments, sipping from glasses of wine.

"Do you want me to take you back to your apartment tonight?"

"No."

The crash had come earlier in the party, but she had not noticed it then. She stood in front of the shattered bathroom mirror, looking at her reflection. The cracks deflected pieces of her image; a bit of nose was disconnected by a large crack which ran through the center. Splintered slivers protruded at the base of the frame. Reflected in these pieces her mouth was distorted. She remained at the mirror for a long time.

Beneath her in the sink the butts of extinguished cigarettes lay amidst droplets of blackened water and ash.

I don’t know how I’m going to fix this how did this happen? I don’t know did I he it no no but something there was something maybe yes who is responsible? Broken beer bottles maybe struggle argue but the music’s been loud.

Someone began banging on the bathroom door, calling her name. She looked down and raised both hands to her temple, holding her head between them.

"Cmon. It’s not too late. You can’t call it quits now.

She turned and left the bathroom to rejoin the party.

She lay beneath a thick comforter and studied his face as he slept. Dim sunlight fell from the window. She began to gaze around the room, surveying its rich furnishings. The leaves of a large plant peered from between two mahogany bookshelves. She read the titles of the books there; books on law and ethics, philosophy, reference books on court proceedings and statutes shared the shelves with his
nurture and attention who has the time to lavish on frivolities priorities we must remember priorities are a must on a nuclear age budget love become expendable instead we need jiffy-pop and miracle grow

The chords of music coozed together like dripping colors, becoming muddy as they mixed. Sitting on the carpeted floor the woman felt the rank dampness of overturned drinks. A sparse group lingered near the bedrooms. Dimly she heard their spurious laughter, the sloppy vowels of drunken and fatigued speech. The air was cold and on the damp carpet the woman shivered; she grasped each of her shoulders in a self-encircling embrace. Her deep red robe fell loosely about her body.

Her cat on the balcony paced in front of the sliding glass door, nudging at the base. The woman crawled toward the door and leaned her cheek against the cool of the pane. She stood and slid the glass door open quickly, stumbling onto the balcony. The animal started at her approach then walked to her and began to circle her ankle. It rubbed its back against her calf and purred. The woman knelt and plunged her face, held it, nuzzled it. She massaged its shoulders vigorously, still more vigorously stroked the fur at the sides of its head. She rocked with the animal. Stroking its throat she gripped and squeezed. The cat’s eyes bulged. Its skin was pulled taut on its face until its gums and teeth were exposed and began to turn white. A shrill squeak escaped the animal; it began to struggle, its hind legs thrusting against her forearms. She jumped back to avoid the cat’s swiping front paws and nearly lost her grip. Then, still holding onto the cat, she flung herself back, head first against the sliding glass door. Shattered glass tore her forehead and ears; she loosened one hand from the cat’s throat and groped for a piece of glass. Grasping broken glass in one hand, she pressed the cat’s neck to the floor with the other. She moaned as she cut at the cat’s eyes, at its throat, slashed through the corners of its mouth.

Moments later its body was limp in her hands. She smeared her face with its blood as if in purgation; lifting its body she held her face buried in its bloody fur.

dead inside-out

Someone heard her shriek and ran to see her straddling the balcony fence. She was dragged, screaming, semi-conscious, to the floor of the balcony.
INNER CIRCLE
by Evan Samson

Look at me and my fish-scale face
It hurts.
It peels.
It leaves a trace of scab and scar
And pus-filled infection.
Take a look in my direction.
You’ll discover why I cover myself in darkness.

At night I penetrate this crowd
Of boys and men.
My poison then speaks not as loud.
Without good looks,
Without young looks,
Without cash to garner looks from the good and young,
My chords are sung behind a tree.
I meet success unless they see
That I belong to no one’s race.
I make them touch below my face.
The moon is my worst enemy.

My childhood promised greater worth.
I wasn’t queer.
She held me near.
And dear to her heart was my Anglican soul.
She birthed me whole.
But time plays tricks.
It tricked my skin.
It tricked my sex.
What trick is next if not the trick of death depicted
In nightmares and icons?
(Is my cross self-inflicted?)
I’ve already the sores but, as yet, no disciples.

Please take me to bed.
I’m naked and dead
With sins I can’t shed
With skins I can’t shed.
Mr. Death, will you wed me tonight?

MUSHROOM CLOUD
by Evan Samson

Beauty
That blinds us to
Mass incineration.
Talk about perfect smiles:
Like hell.
SCAPEGOATS
by Keith Wasserman

Morning breaks.
Bruised and battered, a bum
Rises from his gutter sleep
Squinting at the light-blazed sky.
It starts to drizzle.

LOST, UNFOUNDED
by Bob Fisser

Who is lost now,
you or I?
Must the world be in tune
with the phases of your feelings
or should I have resonance
for the chords of your thoughts?

Who has lost now,
you or I?
You said you didn’t know
what you would have done
without me.
I said you were the only one
able to save my sanity.

Who will feel loss now,
you or I?
If we are not aware
of mutual infliction
then there’s nothing
we’ve lost
that had any value.

MY JACKET
by Keith Wasserman

I covered my jacket with opinion
On literature and religion
And took a walk in university streets
Shaking hands and chatting with those I’d meet,

But one professor came to me
Buttoned up in pride
And said, “Take your jacket off;
It ain’t that cold outside.”
UNTITLED
by Noah Pollack

She makes herself feel like the fall wind,
All day the changes are evident,
Leaves are forced from trees to descend
To the hardening ground's decayment.
Then a rest from the wrath warms the day,
And easily the sun and wind exist
Until, altered in some mystic way,
She turns fast and bitterly resists.
Yet apparently controlled by none,
Free in flight, inflicting upon things
The sorrow and anger hidden from
All who refuse the one wish she sings,
Searching for a love to take her soul
She winds endlessly out of control.

GEORGETOWN—2 AM
by Jon Hutchens

Wearing holy gloves gives me the impression
of hard living.
Walking through the tweed set, having them stare
me down.

Chasing a scene out in front of the hall,
Chasing innocent girls away with a laugh.
Mimicking justices of the peace with my fingers.
I fall on the ground, my stomach hurts from laughing.

HOME—5 AM
by Jon Hutchens

To say nothing of the darkness in which I write this,
I feel the wind at my bed creating sensations
unknown to me.
Without any lights I conjure up a feeling of on the wilds,
Sun at my face
The cool air tugging at my lungs and eyes.

Crying out in the boredom,
I feel like running into a thousand days
unmatched by the unknown.
If i had my way 'round here things would be different. i'd be right and that old woman screaming like a subway car would be as quiet as a casket. but the train drowns her like pierced earing blood. i get on the boat to the electric power plant an' forget my worries safe in the arms of the utility industry. the seats are smooth brail books, all the classics. i'm used to it now. the garbage can next to me holds a bag of day old fruit and some wholey donuts with faces too big to be true. ecstatic locks of blonde hair waver with indecision in the sticky tunnel breeze. last stop the police man says grinning shots at the lethargic pack of underground rats. he's sprayed with laquer and kept frozen for posterity. everyone feels better about it now.

Put hour hat on girl and don't cover yo'face with dat hair dat speaks in tongues. git d' glasses off d' stump and blacken yo' eyes with oil paints. der's hun'ry animals in d' frontyard an' dey don't like petroleum produc's one bit. wha's yo' mudda gonna tink? wha's yo' fadda gotta do? d preachers on to it so start circlin' an let d scapegoats have it. you ain't gonna kill me wit' dose smilin' eyes and dat flat stomach. now push dat tube ov'r d cliff and baby let me follo it don.

i forgot her name and so just called her gas leak, it was better to remember. i wanted a power saw to make life faster and easier. but i only got the fertilizer that calls itself hi-grade. as a result i was havin' little success with the door. finally the booze came in swinging like a caboose. everybody swallowed til they stank with memories. i watched a scientist shrouded in sobriety and well meaning accusations. the ceiling dropped, and the water balloons decided to do the same. always follow the things on top. but it wouldn't always come that way sometimes a fire engine would arrive and everyone could hoof and gawk.

Winter came in a minute so i shut the window and boiled cold water. the zebra stove smelled like vomit. i hid on the wall when the phone wrang and it wired my ear shut. i didn't say hello. could be a crank call or maybe just the dog catcher. wanna go to the street corner and hump the curb? no, i got summer on the stove, gotta keep a watch to tell what time it is: u'm lost withou it. my father was a clock and my mother a cheetah. this is ridiculous the walking fence barks like a baseball into a glove. i gotta go my girl's on fire and their's someone on the other line. he wasn't lyin' i could hear the gal, she couldn't stop the whalin for her life.
FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED
by Stefani Olsen

SHE: Pardon me, but do you mind if I inquire what book that is you're reading?
HE: It's *The Existential Imagination* by...
SHE: That's it.
HE: Huh?
SHE: That's the one I wanted to check out.
HE: Oh, well I...
SHE: But you go ahead.
HE: No, really I...
SHE: I'll just sit here and take some notes from the ones I have here.
HE: Uh, O.K.
(Pause)
SHE: I'm sorry, but did anyone ever tell you that you have beautiful forearms?
HE: I what?
SHE: I love your forearms.
HE: (LAUGHSUNEASILY) Well, thank you.
SHE: As a matter of fact, that's why I came over to your table.
HE: I see... that's the wildest compliment I've ever been paid.
SHE: Don't think I'm weird, or anything, but that's sort of a thing with me.
HE: Is that why you come to libraries, to 'check out' forearms?
SHE: No. As a matter of face, people usually have their forearms covered in libraries, you know.
HE: Maybe I should, too.
SHE: Although I probably wouldn't have noticed yours except for the fact that they really are... nice.
HE: If they're going to distract you from your notes I'll...
SHE: Is that why you wear your shirt-sleeves rolled up to your elbows?
HE: Why?
SHE: Because you want your forearms to be exposed.
HE: Of course not.
SHE: I'm sorry, I guess not.
HE: You understand, I never thought of my forearms as being sexy before.
SHE: Sex?
HE: Huh?
SHE: Sexy—I never said that.
HE: Well, when you make such a point of...
SHE: I never said that they were sexy, just that...
HE: ...saying that... I only thought that you meant—
SHE: You said it, I didn't.
HE: If I was reading too much into what you said, I'm sorry.
SHE: No, actually I'm glad you said it, you see.
HE: Oh.
SHE: That too.
HE: So... uhhh... you're not interested in existentialism then.
SHE: Well, actually I'm a student of art.
HE: I see.
SHE: I don't think you think I meant it about your forearms.
HE: I think you meant it.
SHE: I mean I didn't just say that to strike up conversation with you on the basis of your forearms.
HE: What would you like to talk about?
SHE: You think I said that just as a ruse to walk over here and get to know you and that really upsets me.
HE: Well, I have to admit, I can't understand why a young woman would walk up to a man—any strange man—exclusively for the purpose of telling him that he had sexy forearms if she ummm... wasn't otherwise...
SHE: I never said that.
HE: But you meant it...
SHE: Not exclusively—among other things.
HE: Among other things about me?
SHE: Among other things about your forearms.
HE: You mean if, as a result, I had asked you out or something, you wouldn't have accepted?
SHE: Well, I don't know, but that's certainly not why I said...
HE: Oh, I don't know quite how to take that.
SHE: I don't want you to think that it's anything but the fact that I really appreciate your forearms.
HE: Sure.
SHE: Not as a means you see, to you, but for their intrinsic value.
HE: Of course, I guess I'll have to be a little more careful about displaying them in public.
SHE: Don't be flip.
HE: Well, how do you expect me to react?
SHE: I guess it does sound a little... different.
HE: I don't even know what constitutes a good forearm.
SHE: OH LISTEN! Muscular, but in a compact way—not chunky or massive, and pale is definitely out of the question—soft, even skin, furry...
HE: FURRY??

SHE: Yes, but you’ve got to understand, not gross quantities of kinky hair, or anything, but just the right amount of fur that lays softly down across the outside of the forearm...

HE: Hairy, you mean?

SHE: YES!

HE: I thought that’s what you meant...

SHE: And so as not to ruin the effect, they must be attached to at least moderately attractive hands.

HE: You’ve given this a lot of serious thought, haven’t you?

SHE: It’s what drove me into art—into painting.

HE: Is that so?

SHE: The desire to express, to communicate as I see it, the beauty of the forearms of man.

HE: Right.

SHE: I tried to do it in poetry once—to write an ode to the forearms of man, but was unsuccessful, because it’s something that just can’t be captured in words alone.

HE: An ode to the forearms of Mankind?

SHE: No, an ode to the forearms of man; not capital ‘m’ but lower-case ‘m’...understand?

HE: That’s what I thought you meant at first.

SHE: The problem is—and tell me if you agree—that I suspect my perceptions are too subjective to be comprehended by even the most receptive audience.

HE: I think you hit the nail right on the head.

SHE: It’s something that can only be understood by someone who shares my enthusiasm.

HE: And I can imagine that those are few and far between.

SHE: DAMNED FEW!

HE: I must admit that I am not among the gifted minority.

SHE: But I’m also a failure as an artist because I haven’t been able to capture their essence on canvas either, and it’s killing me.

HE: Car I ask why this is so important to you?

SHE: I think it all started with the first man I ever really noticed.

HE: Now that might have some bearing on your obsession.

SHE: We were only passing acquaintances, but my preoccupation with his forearms was beginning to invade every aspect of my waking life.

HE: Did it become...disrupting?

SHE: Disrupting, distracting, YES, intensely.

HE: You know, therapy might help you get this out of your system.

SHE: I even used to fantasize something—just for the sake of turning the tables, just for fun—I used to fantasize about it.

HE: Oh my God.

SHE: You know how men make obscene phone calls to women, heavy breathing, lewd suggestions, etcetera?

HE: Yes, because they don’t always make them to women.

SHE: At any rate, I wanted to call this guy up, you see, in the middle of the night, panting, and just when he was most expectant, say, ‘I want to pet your forearms.’

HE: You could be more original.

SHE: How?

HE: Like ‘pant, pant, pant, I want to paint your toenails, pant, pant, pant, I want to lick your eyelashes, pant, pant, pant, I want to shave your legs...’

SHE: The only problem with that is that I personally don’t have a thing for painted toenails, eyelashes, or silken legs on men.

HE: True, but it would have the same effect.

SHE: Of course, I never did it.

HE: I have heard of strange fetishes, but...

SHE: No, No, NO!

HE: Huh?

SHE: The word fetish implies something sexual.

HE: And of course, there’s nothing sexual about your, uh...appreciation of forearms?

SHE: Absolutely, emphatically not.

HE: Then why would you think of making a mock-obscene phone call in which you...

SHE: That was just for fun. For shock value.

HE: I beg your pardon.

SHE: My own appreciation is purely aesthetic, understand?

HE: Miss, do you have any idea what Freud would say about you?

SHE: Oh, you pervert! You twisted mind!

HE: I’m not the one with the unhealthy preoccupation with one aspect of the human anatomy.

SHE: Your problem is that even you have difficulty appreciating your own forearms as something beautiful in and of themselves.

HE: No one has ever encouraged me to see them in that way.

SHE: That’s just it—we live in a society in which people rape the concept by assuming something gutteral about it.

HE: Was that remark supposed to contain a double-entendre, or something?

SHE: Rape, as in defile...gutteral as in of the gutter—off the streets, scummy...
HE: Why didn't you say so?
SHE: You knew what I meant.
HE: This is obviously fruitless.
SHE: What? This conversation, or my particular aesthetic interest?
HE: Both.
SHE: I see.
HE: About your obsession—from what you've told me—since you are never going to capture it in art, you must get over it.
SHE: And if it gives me joy?
HE: You're too narrow-minded.
SHE: Oh?
HE: You have to learn to appreciate other parts of the male body.
SHE: I get the point.
HE: That's it.
SHE: Like now.
HE: Yes?
SHE: I'm really beginning to realize what a uniquely gorgeous toupee you have.
HE: Terrific. For a small fee, I'm sure it would be happy to sit for you sometime.