

Roberta Bailey, a UNL graduate student in English and mother of six.

Welfare Lines

the veins on that woman's legs crawl
upward like halloween trees purple claws that milk
life into swollen ankles before draining
it altogether i think

no cheese again i can't use more
grapefruit juice you'd think we could get
good food

the poor must never sleep it fades them crooked
faces even the children are faded ancient

hope you brought bags today there ain't
any boxes stack those cans sideways
in that cart lady they won't fall out

cigarette smoke acid sweat close
my sinuses only two more and i am
next but that white haired woman

i'll be a minute ed after velma there

lied to her husband i feel a growl in my
throat like a dog i want to protect
that last box in the corner the women

i'm sorry lady the sign says be sure
you got all your food the first time

don't look nearly as embarrassed to be
here i can't get clean enough when i leave i
keep wiping at my clothes and looking

don't you think you could keep that child
still he stepped on my foot i have
arthritis and he just came over and hurt
me.

for reflections is there any color in my face her
veins creep toward me until the legs i
stare at are my own

Trish Martin is a junior English major. She has been published in the 1991 and 1992 issues of Laurus.

Mel

You in your paper skin, thin as onion skin and you
are beautiful still; butterfly wings, if I touch you, you will
come off on my fingers. Old man do you miss your life?
Your hands are the color of red plums and they are crossed
with veins; you have the skin of an unborn baby,
iridescent and glowy in a near-dead way.

You sing a hymn for us on Saturday afternoon, and that is
all you do, you cannot find the strength to speak.
Your wife visits for you, while you make small, pathetic noises,
high and girlish and painful. You wipe your eyes, your
hands shaking and goofy and what can I do but look at
you and try not to cry and try not to stare and try not to
be so young and able. My body is clear-headed and smart.
It thankfully does what I tell it to do.

I tell it to leave you here now, to follow your grandson out the
door and to the car, remembering your bewildered eyes.
I tell my body to forget that I am dying just as fast as you are, you
just began your slow climb 70 years earlier than I did.

Then later, in the quiet of your grandson's breath and the
care against the road, I think, what does it all matter?
Now, death no longer frightens me, and I see that it has lost its
sting for you also, you with your skin looking almost blue, like
a baby's, and absolutely sunken in, your bones absorbing your flesh.
What can be more than faith? I wonder. We are on the same journey
to the source, old man, and we just try to be content and
hopeful along the way.

•student discount•



futons
the unmade bed
FUTON ♦ FURNITURE

Omaha

108th & Center

402/397-9340

**Direct Your Hair
To
Great Color**

\$8 OFF!

**Perm Hair Color - Framesi Color
Semi-Perm Redken Shades and
Highlights (including weaves)**

Directives

1200 "N"

In the Atrium

477-6921



**Announcing:
HERBIE HUSKER
Tryouts**

Interviews will be held:

**Wednesday, April 22
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm
&
Thursday, April 23
3:00 pm to 6:00 pm**

**City Union,
Room will be posted.**

For more information and
to sign up for an interview time call
Terri, 477-8164 and leave a message.

**REPRESENT THE CORNHUSKERS
WITH SPIRIT AND PRIDE**

**You.... Yes You,
Could Be Herbie**