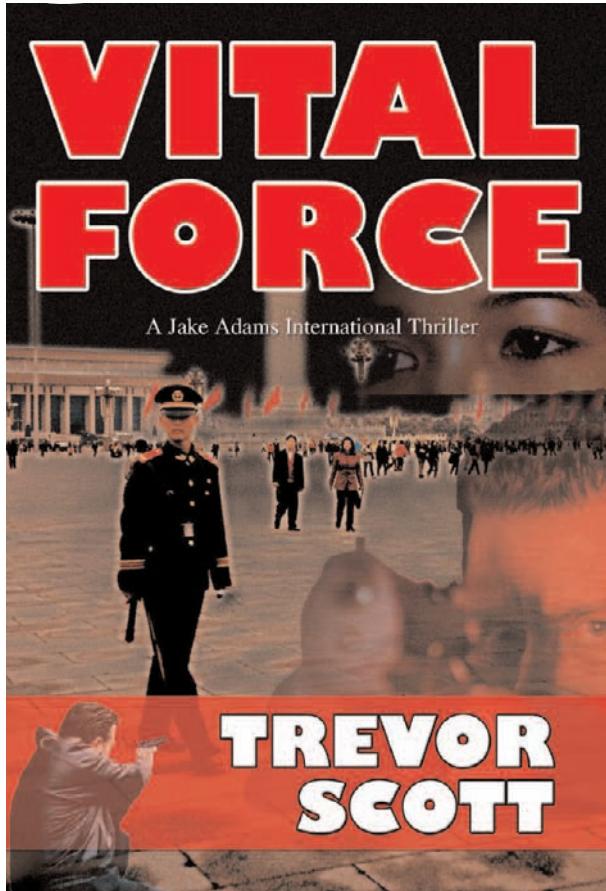


# Summer Reading



## PROLOGUE

Volgograd, Soviet Union

The metal bar smashed against the side of his head, knocking Jake Adams to his knees, the wooden chair still lashed to his naked back. His face landed with a thud on the wet, moldy pavement, his eyelashes fluttering in a puddle of his own blood as his eyeballs swirled around trying to focus on anything. Anything that would let Jake know he was still alive.

"We can stop any time, Adams," came the harsh, Slavic voice that Jake had learned to hate over the past two weeks. "Just tell us what we need to know."



Jake shifted his shoulders and tried to lift his head from the cold floor. The taste of iron from his blood seeped through his teeth as he swallowed. He couldn't last much longer like this. He had eaten only stale bread and drank only filthy water during his stay along the Volga River—captured and brought to this dungeon-like basement after only two days in the city that had, until twenty-some years before, been known as Stalingrad. Over 14 days he had thought he was losing his mind, envisioning ghosts of some three million people who had died during the Nazi siege and eventual surrender. Apparitions of his mind, he was sure, but in that dank cell he currently called home, he could almost hear the screams of horror and cries of pain from those killed in that war. Maybe the screams were his own, echoing off the thick stone walls.

The Soviet GRU officer, dressed in civilian clothes, shoved the metal bar under Jake's chin and pressed down against his wind pipe, bringing instant pain and cutting off his air.

**"SUDDENLY, THE HEAVY METAL DOOR BURST OPEN AND JAKE COULD SEE A COUPLE SETS OF LEGS. UNIFORMS. THEN MUFFLED RUSSIAN. IF HIS LEFT EARDRUM HADN'T BURST FROM A BLOW TWO DAYS AGO, HE COULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD WHAT THEY WERE SAYING."**

Jake's mind spun as he gasped for breath. He had to hold out. He couldn't tell them anything. His cover story placed him in Volgograd promoting a communications company that did not exist. At least not in any real sense. Sure the company had offices in Baltimore and Munich, where Jake reportedly worked. But it was all a front set up by the CIA. That's what his captors suspected and what Jake had to never confirm. Yet, he knew that at this very moment the offices in both cities would be wiped clean and cleared out like a speakeasy one step ahead of the Feds. Only a few knew Jake's real mission in Volgograd, and all would deny any knowledge of the same.

Struggling against the bar at his throat, Jake lifted his chin. His brutal captor let up on the metal bar. Jake coughed and spit up blood. Recovering, he said, "You know, Ivan, you need to work a little on your people

skills." He coughed again, trying to catch his breath and waiting for the next blow. His ribs were broken, his shoulder separated, and he was sure he had a fractured skull. He wished they would get it over with and kill him. The pain would end. Another part of him, that with a desire to beat these bastards at their own game, wanted nothing more than to last until their hands were blistered.

Suddenly, the heavy metal door burst open and Jake could see a couple sets of legs. Uniforms. Then muffled Russian. If his left eardrum hadn't burst from a blow two days ago, he could have understood what they were saying.

Hands grasped under Jake's arms and pulled him to a sitting position on his chair. His eyes focused on the man he had called Ivan for the past two weeks standing at the door about to leave. "Have a nice day," Jake mumbled.

Disgusted, the GRU officer left and slammed the door in his wake.

Shifting his head to his left, Jake's eyes finally settled on a man in a Soviet uniform. Something wasn't right, though. The man was wearing the uniform of the Soviet Missile Forces. A captain.

Jake looked closer at the man's face. "Yuri?" He barely got the name out before he felt himself sliding forward, his mind reeling.

Then came the blackness.

## CHAPTER 1

Fifteen Years Later  
Khabarovsk Province, Russia

Isolated in the taiga of the Russian Far East, among the thick pines and rolling hills, the mobile SS-27 missile sat atop the transporter erector launcher, camouflaged in forest green and brown that made it blend into its surroundings. The launcher slowly rose into firing position.

Back in the snowy forest some hundred meters, the darkness of night did not allow a view of the launcher by the 40 heavily armed soldiers huddled in fox holes.

The crew inside the mobile launch facility had only the view on their video monitors from cameras strapped to trees, and even those were grainy and obscured somewhat by the green from the night vision optics.

Jake Adams watched as each crewman prepared for the launch. He was the only American in the box, sent to observe the launch as part of a cooperative exchange. And he was still wondering why he was there, since he was no longer with the Air Force or the American Intelligence Network, the two-year-old agency that combined the CIA, FBI, NSA, ATF, DEA, and, like the cancer it had become, nearly every other acronym in the U.S. government. He had never officially worked for the

**"IT WAS STRANGE FOR JAKE TO HEAR THIS DEDICATED AND HIGHLY DECORATED COLD WARRIOR ADMIT THAT HE HAD GUT FEELINGS ABOUT ANYTHING, AND ESPECIALLY SOMETHING THIS IMPORTANT."**

AIN, having at one time been with the former CIA, but he had been called back on occasion to help the network. This assignment had come about by request from an old Soviet officer, Yuri Pushkina, whom he had met in the Ukraine while verifying the destruction of intermediate-range nuclear missiles in the late '80s. And again in Volgograd.

Now, Jake watched his old friend, a colonel in the Russian Missile Forces, pace nervously from station to station while he awaited the launch command from the central command authority outside of Moscow, some

3,000 miles to the west. The colonel's plodding gait brought images in



Jake's mind of a bull stamping back and forth, hoping to catch a bullfighter off guard.

The facility itself was stuffed beyond capacity. Normally there would have been a man at each end of the box-like control room that resembled a small European truck trailer lined with communications equipment. Each of the launch officers was separated by distance, just like the American crews, to make it nearly impossible to fire the missiles without at least the collusion of two dedicated officers simultaneously turning their launch keys. Beyond them, a half dozen enlisted men manned other consoles. All were dressed in forest camouflage jumpsuits.

The extra observers, like Jake and a couple of other dignitaries, made the walls seem to close in on them. The red lights and glow from the green luminescent, static-free floor gave the small room an eerie atmosphere.

"Why so nervous?" Jake asked the colonel.

Yuri shrugged his broad shoulders, the boards on his impeccable dress uniform rising. "I don't know." He put his arm around Jake's shoulder and pulled him aside. "You remember outside Kiev, before the hoist dropped and nearly broke the case on that nuke? I had a feeling inside my stomach. Something was wrong. I have same feeling."

It was strange for Jake to hear this dedicated and highly decorated Cold Warrior admit that he had gut feelings about anything, and especially something this important. "Sounds like you just want everything to go right, Yuri. Nothing wrong with that. What'll they do, send you to Siberia?"

That got a laugh from Yuri, who had grown up in central Siberia, and any assignment east or west of his homeland would have been considered cushy.

"You see," Yuri said. "That's why I wanted you here." The tall, strong man lifted his square chin and went back to looking over the shoulders of his men.

Twenty minutes now from the scheduled launch time. Jake checked his watch and hoped his advice was correct. The SS-27 was a newer weapon. This launch had only been scheduled after the last test, two months ago, had resulted in the missile exploding in its launcher. They were testing a new guidance system, using only the SS-27

three-stage rocket. Everything else was new. In fact, if this test went as planned, the Russians would destroy an entire class of long-range intercontinental ballistic missiles. It was a modernization of the force that Washington, London and Paris all agreed was necessary, and that Moscow had found money for by oil sales to those three countries. The one stipulation from the Western nations had been an observer at each step of the way. Independent observers with no current affiliation with any government.



North Pacific  
Sea of Okhotsk

Flying at 36,000 feet, the Boeing 747, painted black as the night, cruised north along the Kamchatka Peninsula, just outside Russian international airspace.

Monitoring a console in what would have been the upper first-class section, Colonel Tim Powers glanced sideways at a major from his new command. Colonel Powers had been a Cold War missile officer, spending 24-hour shifts hunkered down deep underground in launch facilities in North Dakota and Wyoming. Later, as he gained rank, he had transferred to Space Command, a post that he thought would bring his first star.

"How far from the Russian coast?" the colonel asked the flight crew over his mic.

"Right on our flight plan, Sir," came the voice of the pilot, Captain Billy Waters, with a strong Georgia accent. "We're banking west now and will start turning south in exactly ten minutes. Still in international airspace."

"Thanks, Billy." The colonel shifted nervously in his chair and glanced around the compartment at his fellow officers. All of them had been hand-picked by Colonel Powers, not only for their high compartmentalized security clearances, but for their ability to keep their mouths shut at the "O" Club with their fellow officers.

Although the Russians knew they were there, and, in fact, had encouraged their observing presence, they also had no idea of their true mission. Had they known, they would have scrambled MIGs and shot them from the sky. If they could. The colonel smiled thinking about that possible encounter. Would they be able to counter

those air-to-air missiles? They had done it repeatedly with American Sidewinders, so there was no reason to believe their success would be any less effective with inferior Russian missiles.

"Heading south," the pilot said.

The large plane started a slow bank to the left.

They were close now. Time to test the true capabilities of this bird, the colonel thought.

"COIL up and ready?" the colonel asked.

"Check."

"Yes, Sir."

"All right, folks. Let's prepare for the launch." He checked his watch, which was synchronized to nuclear time down to a hundredth of a second. "Five minutes, twenty two seconds."

The colonel checked each of his crew. They were determined, their eyes intense and focused on their screens. They were about to commit a breech of international law, but that didn't seem to bother any of them. If all went as planned, missiles would become as innocuous as the bow and arrow. He smiled. Welcome to modern warfare.

Inside the Russian launch facility, the men made last-minute preparations. Jake knew the trailer was nearly soundproof, but he still considered plugging his ears during the launch. He had observed a number of ground-launched cruise missile launches at Vandenburg Air Force Base, California, in the '80s, and they had been a lot louder than he would have thought—especially while outside and a short distance away.

Watching his old friend and sometime adversary, Jake could sense a high level of angst and uncertainty in the man. Something he would have never guessed possible in Yuri Pushkina.

Yuri waved Jake over to a console that would show the flight path of the modified SS-27 Topol-M missile.

"Here we go, my friend," Yuri said. "Ten seconds."

Jake and Yuri watched the computer monitor over the shoulder of a young captain. As the time counted off, the first indication that they had a launch was not on the computer, but the slight shaking felt throughout the compartment and the muffled roar from outside. Then the missile showed progress on the computer screen, climbing to three times the speed of sound toward the northeast in just seconds. Jake knew that the missile would swiftly reach a speed of 24,000 kilometers per hour in a few minutes. At that rate, with a nuclear payload, the missile would be able to strike Seattle in 30 minutes and Los Angeles in less than 40.

Hell of a deal, Jake thought, watching the computer screen, as the missile reached a trajectory passing over the Tatar Straight and Sakhalin Island. Soon, the missile would reach critical velocity and altitude over the Sea of Okhotsk, and pass over the Kamchatka Peninsula before the planned self destruction over the Bering Sea, where a Russian sub would mark the reentry and ensure nothing remained on the surface. Which was unlikely, Jake knew, considering the speed of descent and the destructive charge.

Yuri leaned forward toward the screen as the missile started to cross the Sea of Okhotsk.

Then it happened. The unlikely. The improbable. Suddenly, the computer image that signified the missile disappeared.

"What the hell?" Yuri yelled in Russian. "What happened, Captain Petrov?"

The young captain clicked a few keys on his computer, desperately trying to make the missile re-appear. Nothing. He shook his head in disbelief. "It is gone, Colonel Pushkina."

The next few minutes were chaos as secure phones rang from superiors and Yuri tried his best to explain that he had no idea what had happened. ■



**Trevor Scott '93** has a master's degree in writing from NMU. He's written for newspapers and has served in the U.S. Navy on aircraft carriers, working with ICBMs, cruise missiles, and in joint efforts with the German Army and Soviet nuclear inspection teams. He has traveled to more than 35 countries and is a martial artist. All experiences that "keep his writing authentic."

In addition to other novels of intrigue, *Vital Force* is the fourth book in his Jake Adams international thriller series. *Boom Town*, the first in a new mystery series, will be released in July. Visit [www.trevorscott.us](http://www.trevorscott.us).



*"There's nothing out there."*

—Scientist Fred Eisele,  
describing Antarctica's  
Polar Plateau



## Human, Considering the Polar Plateau

by Kathleen M. Heideman '94 MA

We are curious by nature — curious, yet find we yearn for something we already know: at the end of Antarctica's Taylor Valley, sunlight outlines every detail, but there's no human scale — nevertheless, we find ourselves sizing up each glacier — *Hello?* — appraising each dome of snow

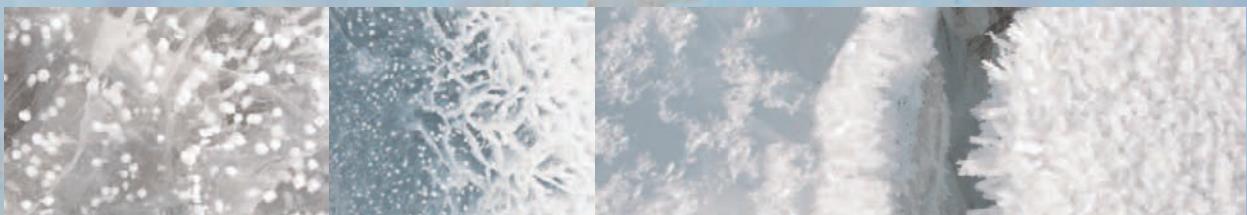
as if it were a stranger in a dark bar, a 3-bdrm bungalow we might be purchasing. *Aren't your Asgaards low, compared to the Rockies — I mean, wouldn't we grow to love them less in time?* Our echo bounces, hails itself (well *hello* there...), tumbles into icy scree below. Friendly by nature, yet we yearn for what we know:

each human eye contains a tiny yardstick marked with pencil: average pine tree, average crow, — when we are uncertain, we lift that eye to the world. **WHAT EXPERTS KNOW:** before shooting, exhale. Better photographs are your reward for being still. *Hello? — You try being still, sizing up this snow.*

I've seen how we throw ourselves upon it, expecting powder, tho snow is different here, a noun with no verbish give, cement, glassine, or grains in spin-drifts. The cloud is waist-high. The horizon provides no scale for us to weigh this world upon, so we go on calculating, over-exposing, under-estimating, yearning for what we know

of elsewhere: dim bricks, timbers to build a home with. We used to own a yardstick: *average love, average plateau,* but the Polar Plateau runs for — what, a thousand miles? No bookstores, electrical lines, sentinel pines; we fail to find our familiar, yet all the while the eye darts around like an optimistic crow in search of broken twigs beneath snow,

another crow. Yardsticks, smooth as skis — we slide backwards. The eye wants one blasted tree in the snow so it can figure the distance to the plateau. Is that too much to ask? Where will the tailor hem this slippery tale? My uncle trained one crow to say hello: *Hello?* it cried. *Hello?* That's all it knew. We are curious by nature but know even a trained crow must prefer answers, yes or no, to endless distance, endless questions, endless snow.



Kathleen M. Heideman has an MA in English from NMU. Her poem and photos were inspired by her recent adventures in the National Science Foundation Antarctic Artists and Writers Program. She's been an artist in residence at many national parks and between stanzas is developer of the MCAD Distance Learning Initiative at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. She suffers from wanderlust.



# COLD

by John Smolens

Liesl Tiomenen saw the man from her kitchen window. It was snowing so hard that he was barely visible, standing at the edge of the woods. He stared toward the house, his arms folded so his hands were clamped under his armpits. He wore a soiled canvas coat and gray trousers, but no hat. His stillness reminded her of the deer that often came into the yard to eat the carrots and apples she left for them.

Liesl went out into the shed and took Harold's .30-.30 Winchester carbine down off the rack, then opened the back door, holding the rifle across her chest. The man didn't move. The north wind chilled the right side of her face; her fingers on the stock felt brittle. He was young, not more than 25, and she could see that he was shivering.

"All right," she said. "You can

come inside."

He began walking immediately, his legs lifting up out of the snow that was almost to his knees.

"Slowly," she said. "And put your hands down at your sides where I can see them."

He stopped and watched her. Then he dropped his arms to his sides and continued on toward the house.

When the door opened, he had expected an old man or woman. Something about the house suggested that retired people lived there, the way it looked simple but well maintained. There were recent asphalt shingle patches on the roof, the wood storm windows had been freshly painted, and a lot of firewood was stacked against the shed. It was the smell of chimney smoke

that had drawn him toward the house.

But it was a woman, maybe in her early forties. She was tall and her long blond hair was tied in a thick braid that hung over her left shoulder. Her hands were large, and one thumb appeared to be smeared with mud. When he reached her, she pointed the rifle at his chest and he stopped. She stared at him a moment, her blue eyes showing no panic or fear, only determination. He tried to quit shaking, but it only made it seem worse.

"Okay," she said, stepping back into the shed. This close he could see that there was something odd about her mouth; her lips seemed out of kilter. When she spoke there was a kind of sag to the right side of her face, as though the muscles were lax. "Kitchen's that way."

He stepped into the shed and opened the door to the warm, heavy air of the house. There was the smell of burning wood, and something else that he couldn't identify—a pleasant scent of damp earth. It made him lightheaded, and his shaking only got worse.

He fell to the floor, his palms slapping on the wood, and didn't move.

Liesl walked around him, watching his face. There was a small cut beneath his eye and twigs and pine needles were entangled in his short black hair. She poked him in the shoulder with the rifle, but he didn't respond. He wasn't faking. She went to the stove and turned on the burner beneath the teapot. Reaching into the pocket of her flannel shirt, she took out a pack of cigarettes. She held the tip to the flame for a moment, then raised the cigarette to her lips and inhaled.

**"She poked him in the shoulder with the rifle, but he didn't respond. He wasn't faking. She went to the stove and turned on the burner beneath the teapot. Reaching into the pocket of her flannel shirt, she took out a pack of cigarettes. She held the tip to the flame for a moment, then raised the cigarette to her lips and inhaled."**

When he opened his eyes, she was standing at the stove, smoking a cigarette, the rifle tucked beneath one arm and angled down. Not exactly pointed at him, but not far off either.

"Can you get up?"

"I think so."

"Then sit in the chair by the radiator and keep your hands on the table."

He watched her raise the cigarette to that mouth, then the tobacco glowed. He inhaled through his nose and the smoke helped revive him. For a moment she looked pleased, then she reached in the pocket of her flannel shirt, took out a pack of Winstons and tossed them on the kitchen table.

"Thanks," he said. There was a book of matches beneath the cellophane. His hands were shaking so bad the first match waved out; the second he had a hard time holding

steady to light the cigarette. When he got it lit, he watched the match flame burn down to his fingertips. After it went out, he said, "Nothing. Can't feel a thing."

"Rub them," she said. "Rub them together."

He did, working the palms slowly against each other.

"When'd you break out?"

"Two days ago. Musta walked fifty miles."

She smiled crookedly around her cigarette. "You're not twelve miles from the prison."

"The woods they never stop up here."

"Why do you think they put prisons in the Upper Peninsula? You think you're the first one to try to walk away? They usually turn themselves in—you're lucky you haven't already frozen to death."

The teakettle whistled and he nearly jumped up from his seat.



She did everything with one hand, hardly taking her eyes off him. When she placed the mug of tea on the table, she said, "Have you eaten anything?"

"No."

"You drink that. I'll feed you, but first I got to be able to put this thing down."

"I won't do nothing."

"If you had done nothing, you wouldn't be in that prison." She opened the shed door, reached around the jamb and took something that rattled off a hook. It was a chain, the kind used for towing, coiled up like rope. She unlocked and removed the padlock, then put the chain on the kitchen floor by his feet. "Now, you wrap that around your middle a couple times, then run it round that radiator foot." Putting the padlock on the table, she said, "Then lock it."

He chained himself to the radiator, then picked up the mug. The heat from the tea stung his fingers.

She leaned the rifle in the corner by the stove and began to make him some eggs. Three scrambled eggs, with dark rye toast. When she wasn't watching him she listened to him; he was quiet and he hardly moved. When he finished drinking one mug of tea, she made him another.

She sat down across the table and watched him eat. There were acne scars on his neck, and his nose reminded her of boxers who have had the cartilage removed. She was surprised that he ate so slowly, that he didn't just eat like a dog. But he seemed to have trouble swallowing.

"Been so long since I ate," he said, when he was half way through the eggs, "my stomach hurts. But

they're good. They just go down hard." He glanced out the window frequently, toward the driveway, and she could see when it registered in his eyes. He tried to conceal it, but the next time he looked at her he was shy, like a child with a secret.

She lit another cigarette. Looking out the window a moment she looked at the snow where the drive was—the banks were over six feet high, and there were at least two feet of new snow in the drive. "My plowman came night before last," she said, "but it's been coming down so fast he can't get up the hill now. It's been like this all winter."

"Last year after we set the record for snow," he said, pushing away his empty plate, "we all thought this year couldn't be so bad."

"It's worse," she said. "We're more than twenty feet ahead of last year. At this pace they say we might get three-hundred inches."

One corner of his lips tucked in, creating a dimple. "My friend Bing's right. Says all people do outside is talk about the weather." He picked up the pack of cigarettes on the table and tapped one out. "You can't get out of here and the police can't get in. How you going to get me back?"

"That's what you want, right?"

"I stay out there any longer, I'm dead." He touched the cut beneath his eye a moment. "I know what you're saying. Guys inside tell you about other escapees, how they walk away, then give themselves up because of the woods and the

weather. I didn't believe them."

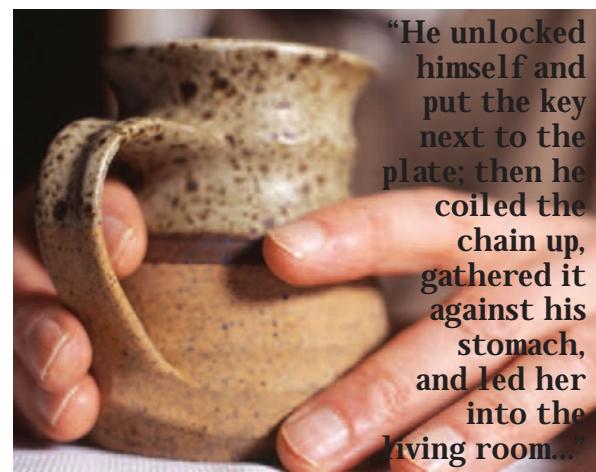
"You're not from the U. P."

"No, I'm from below the bridge—little town outside Mackinaw City. We get plenty of snow, but three hundred inches? Always heard about winters up here, but you just don't believe it. You think they got to be lying. But they weren't, I know that now."

She went to the sink, soaked a washcloth, and gave it to him. "You better clean that cut."

He daubed at his face, wincing and only smearing dirt. "It's fine."

"Right." She came around the table and took the washcloth from him. "Hold still." She put one hand on the back of his head and cleaned the cut. He stared up at her and didn't move, though when she touched the wound she could feel the muscles in his neck tighten as he



**"He unlocked himself and put the key next to the plate; then he coiled the chain up, gathered it against his stomach, and led her into the living room..."**

tried to pull his head back against her hand. "How'd you do this?"

"Saw some coyotes on a ridge. Maybe they were wolves? I don't know. But they weren't no dogs. Then I tripped over a downed tree under the snow."

When she was finished she looked at the wound a moment before letting go of his skull. His clothes

smelled bad and his hair was wet and dirty. "Where'd you think you were going?" she said as she went back to the sink to rinse out the washcloth.

"Dunno. Into Marquette and steal a car. I thought the snow would keep them from finding me. Got lost instead."

"Yes, you did" She turned and leaned against the sink, drying her hands on a towel. He smoked and gazed out at the snow. "You been in long?"

"Two years, seven months, three days."

"Why?"

"Assault." He drew on his cigarette, then crushed it out on his plate. "Had a girlfriend in Mackinaw City. Say I raped and beat her."

"Did you?"

"Sort of."

"How long you in for."

"Eight. Now, when I go back, I don't know what I'll get." He turned his head from the window. "What happened to you?"

"Car accident. My husband and daughter were killed."

"I'm sorry."

"Are you?"

"Yes, I am."

She went to the phone on the wall and picked up the receiver. There was no dial tone. She hung up.

He was watching her. "Dead?"

"I'll try again in a while."

He leaned back in the chair and the chains rattled. "So you live way out here alone?"

"Harold and I built this house together, when we were your age. It was about all I had afterwards."

He glanced toward the door to the living room. "There's a smell—it's not the smoke, but something else."

She noticed that a puddle of water had formed around his boots. She

picked up the rifle and put the padlock key on the table. "Come in here and take those wet things off."

He unlocked himself and put the key next to the plate; then he coiled the chain up, gathered it against his stomach, and led her into the living room, which opened on to a large studio with skylights. He looked at the shelves of clay sculpture and pottery, the wheel, the work benches, the kiln. "You can smell it way out there in the woods." He bent over and began unlacing his boots. "What if that phone doesn't come back?"

"We can always walk down to the store on the county road."

"How far is it?"

"A ways."

"Walk?"

"You ever wear snowshoes?"

"No."

"We could ski out, if you'd rather."

"The snowshoes'll be fine."

She stepped into the bedroom to get him some wool socks. When she looked up at the bureau mirror she saw that he was asleep on the couch, cradling the chains on his stomach.

When he awoke he lay beneath a wool blanket on the couch. His feet stuck out the other end; she had put wool socks on him while he slept and his toes were slightly numb but warm. "I thought I'd never feel my feet again."

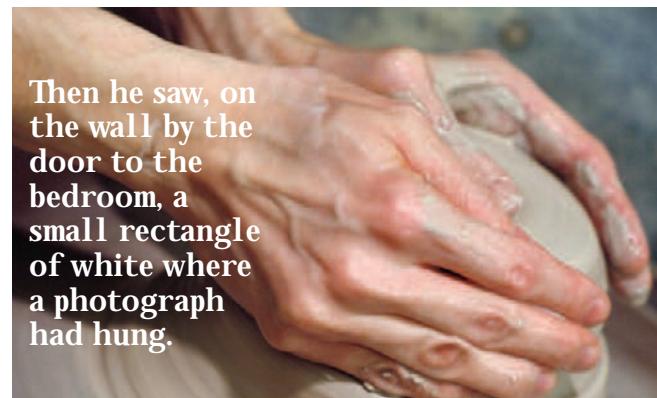
She was sitting across the living room, the rifle resting against the arm of the stuffed chair. "You stayed out

there much longer and you wouldn't have."

"I tried not to think about the cold, but it's all you think about. Same as being inside, really."

"What do you think about, inside?"

He gazed at the ceiling a long time, then he smiled. "I know what most of the guys would say."



Then he saw, on the wall by the door to the bedroom, a small rectangle of white where a photograph had hung.

"I do too."

He turned his head on the armrest of the couch. She had put on a green sweater that made her breasts seem full. He couldn't take his eyes off them. When he raised his eyes to her face she watched him with an even stare. He realized she was accustomed to men looking at her that way, that it was something she had endured for a long time. It appeared to bore her.

"Bing, he reads a lot and he tells me stuff. Says he has a theory: if you think about how some people have it worse, you won't find your situation so bad."

"Not a bad theory," she said.

"What's he read?"

"All sorts of stuff. Lot of history. Tells me about battles and conquerors. Lately we've been into tortures. Bing found a whole book just on torture techniques. The Inquisition, Ivan The Terrible, Vlad The Impaler."

"Wasn't he the one Dracula's based on?"

"That's right," he said, staring at the ceiling again. "As a boy he had been a hostage of some sultan in Constantinople. So later, when he's this fierce military leader he scares the hell out of his opponents because he impales his captors. He used a long, thin needle—greases it, then shoves it up... until it comes out their mouth. Did it in a way that it would take days to die. He'd do thousands of people at a time and stick them in the ground outside his camp to ward off the enemy. Thousands on a skewer."

He looked at her. She was staring very hard at him, and her cheeks seemed flushed. "And Bing thinks it takes your mind off prison?"

"Yeah, but it only works for while. You actually have to concentrate on that sort of thing and it gets old. Out there in the woods, it didn't work at all. I tried to think of everything, believe me, but I was just too cold."

"So much for theories."

He couldn't tell by her voice whether she was making a joke or being serious. When he looked at her he couldn't tell either; her eyes were just as steady as when she'd first opened the shed door.

"When you came outside with the rifle and pointed it at me, what would you have done if I had, you know, tried something?"

"What would you have tried?"

"Take the gun away."

She turned her head and looked into her pottery studio. "I'm not sure. Suppose you had gotten the gun from me, what would you do?"

"Unload it."

She continued to stare at her shelves of pots, so long that he began to wonder if she'd heard him. "Well, you didn't, and I didn't, and it stays loaded." She looked at him. "Don't lose sight of that fact."

"I'm not dangerous or anything."

"Not now you aren't."

They didn't talk for a while. He stared at the ceiling. What he had thought were shadows he realized was smoke residue from the kiln. The wall and ceiling surfaces all had faint smudges built up around the slightest raised edge, whether it was a small imperfection in the wall, along the edge of molding, or around a light switch plate. It gave flat surfaces relief as though someone had carefully taken a pencil and shaded everything.

first using the side of the lead point, then smearing the gray with a moist fingertip. Then he saw, on the wall by the door to the bedroom, a small rectangle of white where a photograph had hung. His eyes were good and he could even see the small black hole where the nail had been driven into the wall. It was like her life here: a white rectangle surrounded by not so white, two shades so close you don't notice the difference right away.

"You try the phone again?" he asked.

"Twice while you were asleep," she said. "Still out."

"What are we going to do?"

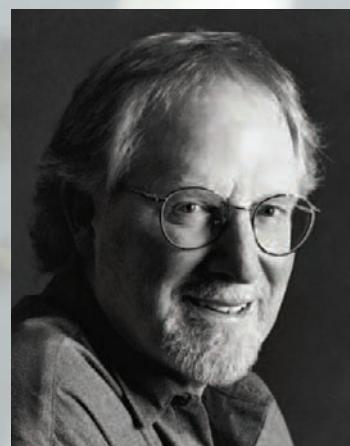
"You feel like you could walk out there again?" she asked. "This time properly dressed and with snowshoes."

"I'm not in any hurry to get back.  
I suppose you're not."

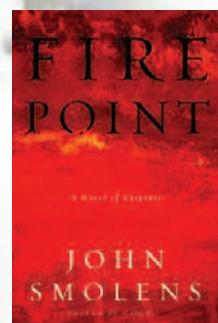
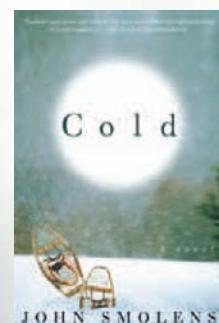
"It's nice here. Warm. I see why you stayed after—I see why you live here."

"We have to go soon if we're to get out before dark." ■

(An excerpt from *Cold*, published by Shaye Areheart Books, New York.)



John Smolens is an NMU English professor and has been director of Northern's master of fine arts in creative writing program. In addition to *Cold*, his other recent novels include *The Invisible World* and *Fire Point* (named one of the best books by a Michigan author in 2005 by *The Detroit Free Press*). His new novel, *'01*, will be published next year. *My One and Only Bomb Shelter* is a collection of his short stories. Visit [www.johnsmolens.com](http://www.johnsmolens.com).





# IN THE GREAT GREEN ROOM

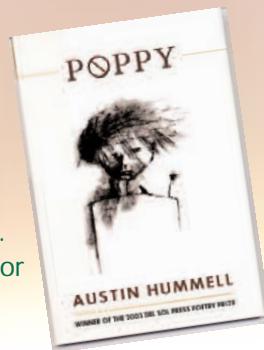
by Austin Hummell

Think how our voices slow and octaves fall  
when we read to the sleepy, how lazily  
we grope for the page when it runs out of words,  
how we pinch off its corner as if rubbing  
granules of salt into a soup we haven't yet  
decided to trust. How the turning stalls  
the sport of cows, the sleep of bears, and our faith  
in rhyme as it leaps, slantwise, from room to moon.

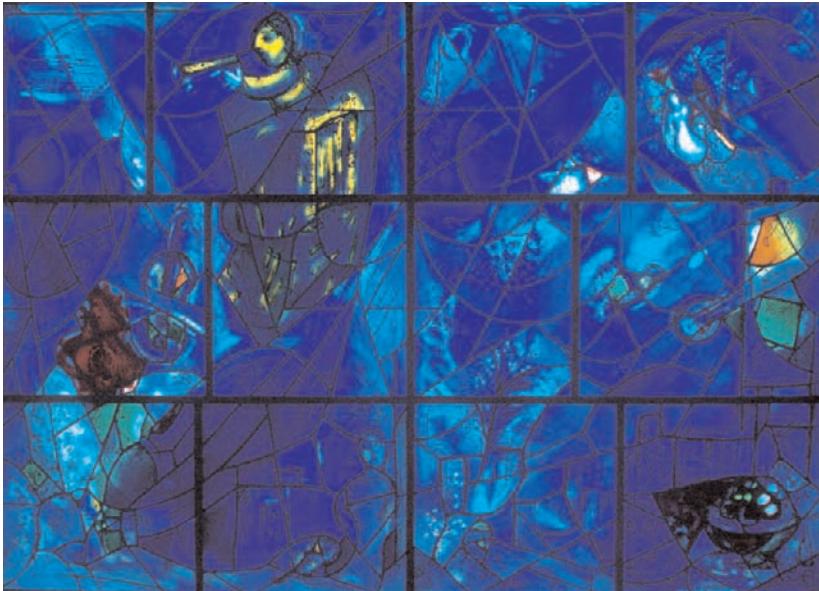
Night wants a rhythm slowed by pages as much  
as a lamp does, but the lamp wants a book open  
to the grin of a mouse. The hands, they prefer  
the symmetry of mittens stiffened by fire.  
The mind understands the need to goodnight  
a room made alive by a child's mind,  
a world a window barely frames, stars and all.

In the legend of paint, green is a secondary color,  
like the room after the room your mother  
burped you into. Pitch is what swallows light,  
and the baby girl panting into a monitor  
is who swallows her mother most of all.  
*Goodnight saddlecar, goodnight milk. Good riddance  
to hats and beef jerky and shoes. Goodnight mail  
and tissue and hair. Goodnight things the room has  
to tear. Goodnight dumplings and thumbs and mirror  
and god. Goodnight my ma, my face, my oh.  
Goodnight yellow bird. Goodnight no.*

Austin Hummell says he's tired of tea parties, but loves his daughter. His books are *Poppy* and *The Fugitive Kind*. He is an associate professor of English at NMU and is poetry editor of *Passages North*. Hummell won the prestigious national Del Sol Press Poetry Prize in 2003.



Marc Chagall, French, b. Belarus, 1887-1985, America Windows, 1977, stained glass, 244 x 978 cm (overall), a gift of Marc Chagall, the City of Chicago, and the Auxiliary Board of The Art Institute of Chicago, commemorating the American Bicentennial in memory of Mayor Richard J. Daley, 1977.938, The Art Institute of Chicago. Photography © The Art Institute of Chicago. (Detail.)



“But perhaps my art is the art of a lunatic,  
I thought, mere glittering quicksilver,  
a blue soul breaking in upon my pictures.”

—Marc Chagall

# BlueSouls

by Miriam Moeller '00 BA, '02 MA, '05 MFA

Fanny finds Chagall's windows in the Chicago art museum unsettling. The swimming pool blue glass gives her chills that crawl up her neck and down into her chest. She hates how the blue changes the light in the otherwise white room. Chagall named them “The America Windows” and dedicated them to this country. Fanny doesn't think America should be blue—fire truck red maybe, or candy green.

This Sunday in early April is rainy and windy. Fanny's black-blue hair is still wet and her polka dot umbrella hangs, dripping water, from her right arm. She places her raincoat and the umbrella on one of the white, hard benches in front of the Chagall windows and walks away into the next room where the Impressionists hang in thick, golden frames. On the south side are five paintings by Monet portraying a stack of wheat at different times of the day. In front of the paintings sits an old man in a trench coat, his head hung on his chest. He slumps to the left as he falls asleep and pulls himself back up

as he tries to stay awake in front of the Monets. Fanny sits down next to him and takes an egg out of her pocket.

“Here,” she says. “Have this. You need protein.” She holds the perfectly white egg in front of him. He opens his eyes and looks surprised, then smiles. His wrinkled hand welcomes the egg, holds it up against the fluorescent light and puts it back down. He says: “Do you like the Chagall today?”

“Nope,” she says. “Still don't like the blue.” She looks at the stack of wheat in front of her. “What about you? Why do you fall asleep in front of the Monets?”

“The colors need life,” he says.

He doesn't look at her and throws the egg against the painting. The smacking sound of the egg hitting the stack of wheat echoes back from the high ceiling. The slimy transparent egg white and yolk run down the canvas like discolored blood.

“It looks better now,” she says.

“I'm ready,” the old man says. Fanny takes him by the hand and together they leave the building. Outside, the rain has ceased and people walk up and down the street: business men and women, tourists, rich people and poor ones, old, young, small, tall, fat and thin. A golden, freshly carved key falls on the cement in front of the old man's feet. The old woman who dropped the key doesn't notice her loss. The key glints in the sun peering above the skyscrapers, blinking when the old man cocks his head from side to side. He bends over and picks it up. Fanny watches him as he starts walking after the woman.

“Fanny, no tea today,” he

shouts. He waves the key to the old woman's heart in the air to show Fanny. "My destiny," he says.

The old woman makes a grocery list in her mind as she walks to the Red Line Subway station on State Street. Eggs. She needs white eggs to make a pound cake, and carrots for the wild rabbits in the park. She'll also need wood glue to fix the broken leg of her neighbor's coffee table. While house-sitting, the old woman decided to sit on the coffee table, which was set perfectly in the middle of the room, to see if her neighbor's copy of Monet's "Stack of Wheat" was also set in the exact middle of the dark-red wall. As she stared at the painting, the left leg of the coffee table gave in and dropped her on the carpeted floor.

Just as she tries to reassure herself that the golden key to her neighbor's house is still positioned in the back of her pants pocket, the old man taps her on the shoulder. She turns around and sees the man she will marry next month. He has pictured her like this in his dream: grey hair in a bun, raggedy wool coat, short with rosy blush on her cheeks. They embrace without words. Then they walk together, talk, fix the broken coffee table and throw an egg against the neighbor's Monet. The old man sings blue music for the old woman. Outside the rain starts again. This time its drops are full of light.

Fanny thinks "blue soul" when she re-enters the museum to get her raincoat and umbrella, left in front of the Chagall. That's what the Chagall feels like, a blue soul—not lemon yellow or happy

orange. As she walks through the crowded entrance hall of the museum, down the long hallway filled with ancient bronze and ceramic vases and coins, she notices a young Korean girl in a red dress and black Mary-Janes. Fanny follows the girl into the Surrealist's room where she stops in front of Dali's "Burning Giraffe." The girl lifts the thumb and index fingers of both hands and frames the painting as if taking a picture with a camera. She takes a step closer, then a step backwards and to the side. She nods satisfactorily and pushes down her left index finger. "Click-zip-hum," she says.

"How about a picture of you and the giraffe?" Fanny asks. The girl turns around and carefully examines Fanny's slim appearance, then smiles.

She turns around and sees the man she will marry next month. He has pictured her like this in his dream: grey hair in a bun, raggedy wool coat, short with rosy blush on her cheeks.

"That would be extraordinary, Mrs. . . ?" the girl asks.

"Fanny, and you are . . . ?"

"I'm Joyleen Mao-Tom, daughter of the great San Mao-Tom."

"It's an honor to meet you, Joyleen," Fanny bows in front of her, then takes the camera from Joyleen.

"A little to the left, please," Fanny says. "Yes, yes, smile." Joyleen holds her head high; her face is

serious and artful.

"Click-zip-hum," Fanny says.

"Thank you," Joyleen says. "It was a pleasure to meet you, Miss Fanny, but I fear I have to meet the crown prince of Thailand at three o'clock and it is nearly quarter to." She bows and quickly runs into the Renaissance room.

"Wait," Fanny yells, "Your camera."

"Keep it," Joyleen yells back. "You'll need it."

Fanny puts the camera in her pocket and walks to Chagall's window. All three benches are empty. No people occupy them and her rain gear is gone. She addresses the African-American man in uniform nearby. "Excuse me; have you seen my umbrella and coat?"

"Polka dot? Black coat?"

"Yes," she says. "That's mine."

"I'm sorry, Ma'am, haven't seen it."

"Oh," she says. When the man turns his back to her, Fanny sits down on the middle bench. She looks at the white floor that has turned an electric blue. She notices a tiny trail of sand among the dust and invisible foot prints. She gets up and follows the trail into the back of the museum, past the Egyptian statues and Greek pillars, past the back entrance where a blonde-haired lady checks museum tickets. The trail winds and is sometimes washed out by tourists' feet, until it stops in front of the coat check. She looks up. A young man stands with his back to Fanny, sorting adult rain coats and children's coats in greens and pinks. Paolo is an art student who likes coat checks. The multitude of coats inspires him to paint. A lady's burgundy silk robe reminds him of a wine glass in a bathtub

Marc Chagall, French, b. Belarus, 1887-1985, America Windows, 1977, stained glass, 244 x 978 cm (overall), a gift of Marc Chagall, the City of Chicago, and the Auxiliary Board of The Art Institute of Chicago, commemorating the American Bicentennial in memory of Mayor Richard J. Daley, 1977.938, The Art Institute of Chicago. Photography © The Art Institute of Chicago. (Detail.)



filled with violins. A man's fake fur coat makes him think of purple monkeys playing Beethoven's "Für Elise" at the piano.

"Hello?" Fanny asks. "Hello?"

Paolo turns around and Fanny is blinded by the man's cobalt eyes.

"You followed the sand trail," he says. "You don't pay attention to the blue."

"It's troubling," she said. "It doesn't fit."

"You must look at it from a different angle."

"I stood on the bench once."

"No, not that angle. Come," he walks around the counter. He wears blue jeans and two different kinds of shoes; on his left foot is a brown slipper, on his right a flip-flop.

"Why?" Fanny points at his shoes.

"Balance," he says. "This morning one was hot and one was cold. Now, they are both comfortable."

Paolo takes Fanny's small hand into his tanned hand. Fanny can't stop looking at his eyes. Then she notices two little blue paper birds in his curly black hair. She reaches up

to them, pulls one out and smells it. It smells like rain.

"You are my balance," she says.

"I know," he says and tucks the paper bird behind her ear.

In front of the Chagall, Paolo covers Fanny's eyes and walks her to the windows. He stands behind her, laying one of her hands on the blue glass.

"What do you feel?"

"Endlessness," Fanny says. "A heartbeat?"

Paolo takes his hand from her

eyes. "What do you see?"

Fanny walks backwards and takes in all three sections of the window. The blue doesn't seem stagnant anymore. It seems to move in waves, like a calm ocean. Paolo points to the objects on the glass.

"A candle holder with seven arms," Fanny says.

"Religion," Paolo says.

"Happy people, one upside down."

"Liberty."

"A circle with houses, a person in the middle."

"Culture."

Fanny turns around. Paolo's eyes have changed to indigo. Fanny sees a whale swimming in them.

"Thank you," she says.

**N**ext Sunday, Fanny, Paolo, and the old couple stand in front of Chagall's window. "How do you like 'em today?" the old man asks.

"Balanced," she says. Fanny takes Joyleen's camera out of her pocket and looks through the finder at the windows. She hits the trigger: "Click-zip-hum." ■

Miriam Moeller, who recently graduated from Northern with an MFA in creative writing, says, "What inspires me are details and moods. This piece in particular was inspired by a key that I found on Michigan Avenue in Chicago and that I successfully returned to its owner, my boredom with Monet's stacks of wheat and of course by my fascination with the Chagall windows.

"Currently I do most of my writing as a reporter for the local newspaper in Marquette, while I write fiction in my spare time. In the future I hope to publish my collection of short stories and teach writing at a small college where the snow is plenty and the people are kind."



Andy Gregg '93 BEA

as a reporter for the local newspaper in Marquette, while I write fiction in my spare time. In the future I hope to publish my collection of short stories and teach writing at a small college where the snow is plenty and the people are kind."

# The North Wind

NMU student newspaper still blowing strong after 87 years

by Matt Schneider '04 BA, '06 MA

The corkboard where the galley is hung is empty on a Wednesday afternoon apart from two notes from former editors who have moved on.

Later in the evening, large sheets of paper with pages-in-progress from each section of *The North Wind* will line the board with red ink marking mistakes and suggestions as the students in charge of Northern Michigan University's independent student newspaper scramble to put it to bed by early Thursday morning, at which time PDF files will be put on a disc and taken over to *The Mining Journal*, where the paper will be printed.

*The North Wind* moniker has been a staple at NMU since 1972, though a student newspaper has been a part of the campus since 1919, when a group of students founded an alternative to *The Quill*, which covered elementary school news. The first issue of the *Northern Normal News (NNN)* was published January 15, 1919 and featured nine obituaries. Some were of current students; others, alumni. Several died of pneumonia, which was sweeping the Upper Peninsula at the time. Others died in horrifically mundane accidents. Another died while fighting in Russia in what is now called World War I.

Almost 90 years later, *The North Wind* still sadly contains news of student deaths: two this year by drowning; two by auto accidents. *The North Wind* has covered anti-war protests; today's opinion



columns frequently feature references to the Bush administration's war in Iraq; a recent issue features a Northern student who lost his legs over there.

For the current editorial staff, these kinds of stories are unusual. In 1919, they were typical. For most of its history, the newspaper was funded by the university, until 1972, when issues over editorial oversight became an issue and the newspaper deemed it necessary to become independent of the university administration.

Gerald Waite became adviser to the *The North Wind* in 1976 and helped establish a board of directors to oversee the operations of the paper. "We were really careful about the stance we took to ensure independence," Waite said. "That doesn't mean there wasn't pressure, of course, from different sources to do this or do that. I can remember

being asked to speak with the president about this or that, but he was wise enough to never insist that we do this or that." The courts have made it clear that student newspapers are independent, but financial independence for *The North Wind* was another concern.

Waite said that the Student Activity Fee was originally set up primarily to help fund *The North Wind*, and selling ad space helped.

"Another thing we did, I hope, is to develop professionalism of the staff generally," Waite said. "Obviously, as a student newspaper, it's a matter of education, to make them understand the freedoms and responsibilities of writing about university affairs."

"It should be the newspaper of record for the campus," said Cate Terwilliger, the current adviser to *The North Wind*. "It's designed to be a source that students and faculty

can look to for news of what's happening, things to know about entertainment, sports, everything we commonly look to newspapers for. And it should serve as a training ground for people interested in writing journalism."

The paper did not start out as a campus record. Much of the news covered in various incarnations of the paper was alumni and community news, like *Northern Horizons* does now. The early *Northern Normal News* incorporated alumni updates, marriages, and new jobs. Overseas soldiers wrote in letters from the front. As late as the 1940s, prose and poetry were included in the paper.

While the style and nature of reporting has changed over the years, the stories remain similar. Front-page articles include graduation classes, coming speakers and shows, the opening and closing of new buildings, and student involvement with the community.

Kim Slotterback-Hoyum, the editor-in-chief for the spring 2005 semester, said that one of the most important contributions *The North Wind* has made to the campus recently is its ongoing coverage of the Writing Proficiency Exam, which was eliminated earlier this previous school year. She loves her job, and views the role of the paper as important to the campus.

"My job is very high stress, but I really enjoy the challenges that come with being on a weekly paper with a staff of student journalists. I think it's one of the most exciting things you could be doing on campus," she said.

As technology improves, the circulation has grown to more than 6,000. The paper is printed weekly

(as opposed to the monthly *NNN*), and much more work is done in-house. Waite said that the printing press the paper had just bought when he came on board was exponentially slower than the Macintosh computers being installed when he left.

These days, editors curse the computer network crashing and the electronic printer running out of toner, putting them hours behind—hours that were a routine part of the process when type had to be lined and pasted up by hand.

Thursday mornings when the paper is delivered around town and on campus, the student writers and editors are either staggering to class in a caffeinated haze or sleeping off visions of

mismatched page jumps and misplaced commas that dominated their thoughts at 3 a.m. that very morning.

The paper has certainly been revolutionized over the last century, but the work that goes into it is as much a piece of Northern's ongoing history and its students' lives as it was when a young soldier wrote from Europe while on kitchen patrol to say how much he missed the sight of a Northern girl. ■

(Until his graduation this spring, author Matt Schneider wrote movie reviews and was the opinions editor for *The North Wind*.)



## Journeys in Fine Writing: *Passages North*

*Passages North*, NMU's literary magazine, has been growing in size and scope since its inception in 1979. Surprisingly, it is not an entirely homegrown publication, having been founded for and published by the Bay Area Writers' Guild in Escanaba, then in Kalamazoo, before

finally landing at Northern in the '90s. Currently, *Passages North* publishes fiction, poetry, essays, interviews, and other morsels of art and literature. It's funded in part by the NMU Foundation's "Friends of Passages North" and through subscriptions.

At *Passages North*, students are the primary editors and staff, getting hands-on experience with what it takes to publish a literary journal in print and on the Internet ([www.myweb.nmu.edu/~passages](http://www.myweb.nmu.edu/~passages)) and to see first-hand the evaluation process that aspiring writers are under when they submit their work.

Current managing editor Jen Howard said *PN* has grown from a regional magazine to a journal with a larger scope. "What I really think is exciting about *PN* is how its reputation is growing in the world of literary journals."

—M.S.

# Good Books

In addition to hefty textbooks and a hearty helping of the classics, here's a sampling of what NMU students are reading for class.

*A Child Called "It"*—Dave Pelzer  
*A Clockwork Orange*—Anthony Burgess  
*A Human Being Died That Night*—Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela  
*A Long Way from Chicago*—Richard Peck  
*A Walk Across America*—Peter Jenkins  
*American Primitive*—Mary Oliver  
*Angel at My Table*—Janet Frame  
*Angels and Demons*—Dan Brown  
*Angels in America*—Tony Kushner  
*The Art of Truth*—Bill Roorbach  
*The Barking*—Ingeborg Bachmann  
*The Beat Book*—Anne Waldman, Ed.  
*Because of Winn-Dixie*—Kate DiCamillo  
*The Bell Jar*—Sylvia Plath  
*Best Spiritual Writing 2001*—Philip Zaleski, Ed.  
*The Birchbark House*—Louise Erdrich  
*Black Elk Speaks*—John G. Neihardt  
*Bless Me, Ultima*—Rudolfo Anaya  
*The Blue Angel*—Josef von Sternberg  
*The Bookseller of Kabul*—Asne Seierstad  
*Burmese Days*—George Orwell  
*Catch 22*—Joseph Heller  
*The Color of Water*—James McBride  
*The Corrections*—Jonathan Franzen  
*Couldn't Keep it to Myself*—Wally Lamb  
*Country of My Skull*—Antjie Krog  
*Cracking India*—Bapsi Sidhwa  
*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*—Mark Haddon  
*Cut*—Patricia McCormick  
*Dakota*—Kathleen Norris  
*Darkness Visible*—William Styron  
*Day and Night Pieces in the Black Manner II*—Barbara Frischmuth  
*The Death of Vishnu*—Manil Suri  
*Desperate Characters*—Paula Fox  
*The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*—Tom Wolfe  
*Esperanza Rising*—Pam Munoz Ryan  
*Essays of E. B. White*—E. B. White  
*The Example of Paula*—Elfriede Jelinek

*The Face of Fear*—Dean Koontz  
*Fight Club*—Chuck Palahniuk  
*First Person Plural*—Cameron West  
*The Five People You Meet in Heaven*—Mitch Albom  
*Freakonomics*—Steven Levitt  
*Freedom from Fear*—Aung San Su Kyi  
*From the Land of Green Ghosts*—Pascal Khoo Thwe  
*Galileo*—Bertolt Brecht  
*Gertrude and Claudius*—John Updike  
*Ghostwritten*—David Mitchell  
*The Glass Palace*—Amitav Ghosh  
*The God Particle*—Dick Teresi, Leon Lederman  
*God's Grace*—Bernard Malamud  
*Gods of Small Things*—Arundhati Roy  
*The Good Earth*—Pearl S. Buck  
*Happy Birthday, Turk!*—Jakob Arjouni  
*Harp of Burma*—Michio Takeyama  
*Hibakusha: Survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki*—Gaynor Sekimori  
*Home and the World*—Rabindranath Tagore  
*House of the Scorpion*—Nancy Farmer  
*Hunt to Kill*—Dave and Lynn Distel  
*I Know This Much is True*—Wally Lamb  
*In the Penal Colony*—Frank Kafka  
*Irrawady Tango*—Wendy Law-Yone  
*Ishmael*—Daniel Quinn  
*Islands, Universe, Home*—Gretel Ehrlich  
*It's Not About the Bike*—Lance Armstrong  
*Jasmine*—Bharati Mukherjee  
*The John McPhee Reader*—John McPhee  
*The Joy Luck Club*—Amy Tan  
*Kaffir Boy*—Mark Mathabane  
*Kaspar Hauser*—Anselm von Feuerbach  
*The Land of Charm and Cruelty*—Stan Sesser  
*Left Behind*—Tim LaHaye  
*Lieutenant Gustl*—Arthur Schnitzler  
*Life is Not All Ha Ha Hee Hee*—Meera Syal  
*The Life of Pi*—Yann Martel  
*Love Medicine*—Louise Erdrich  
*The Lovely Bones*—Alice Sebold  
*Lucky*—Alice Sebold  
*Lula*—Toni Morrison  
*Mere Christianity*—C. S. Lewis  
*Midnight Children*—Salman Rushdie  
*Mists of Avalon*—Marion Zimmer Bradley  
*Mont Saint Michel and Chartres*—Henry Adams  
*Motibas Tatoo*—Mira Kamdar  
*Mr. Ives' Christmas*—Oscar Hijuelos  
*The Negotiator*—Frederick Forsyth  
*Night*—Elie Wiesel  
*Odd Girl Out*—Rachel Simmons  
*On the Road*—Jack Kerouac  
*Outside the Law*—Franz Kafka  
*Passage to India*—E. M. Forster  
*The Perks of Being a Wallflower*—Stephen Chbosky  
*Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*—Annie Dillard  
*The Practice of the Wild*—Gary Snyder  
*Project Mulberry*—Linda Sue Park  
*The Quiet Room*—Lori Schiller and Amanda Bennett  
*The Reader*—Bernhard Schlink  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*—Tom Stoppard  
*Sand County Almanac*—Aldo Leopold  
*She's Come Undone*—Wally Lamb  
*Slaughterhouse-Five*—Kurt Vonnegut  
*Slouching Towards Bethlehem*—Joan Didion  
*Smack*—Melvin Burgess  
*The Solace of Open Spaces*—Gretel Ehrlich  
*Speak*—Laurie Halse Anderson  
*Still Alive*—Ruth Kluger  
*Suzanne's Diary for Nicholas*—James Patterson  
*The Sweater Letter*—Dave Distal  
*The Tale of Despereaux*—Kate DiCamillo  
*Tao Te Ching*—Lao-tzu  
*Terror in the Name of God*—Jessica Stern  
*The Thanatos Syndrome*—Walker Percy  
*The Thief Lord*—Cornelia Funke  
*Time's Arrow*—Martin Amis  
*Tonio Kroger*—Thomas Mann  
*Twilight Over Burma*—Inge Sargent  
*Two Sisters*—Sophie La Roche  
*Waiting for God*—Simone Weil  
*Waiting for the Barbarians*—J.M. Coetzee  
*The Watsons Go to Birmingham*—Christopher Paul Curtis  
*Ways of Dying*—Zakes Mda  
*The Well*—Mildred Taylor  
*White Oleander*—Janet Fitch  
*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*—Edward Albee  
*Wicked*—Gregory Maguire  
*Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*—Shunryu Suzuki