



Gothic
Blackbird

ISSUE 3

July 2012

CREATED BY

PAIGE ROTHFUS

AND MOSES ECKSTEIN

A PEEK INSIDE:

WHEN THE SINGING STOPS-POEM BY E. KIM

GOTHGIRL PHOTOEDIT BY PAIGE ROTHFUS

RECIPE FOR WALNUT INK BY BENJAMIN SPICK

LIGHT IN THE WINDOW POEM BY MOSES ECKSTEIN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WALNUT INK RECIPE BY BEN SPICK

WINE LABEL DESIGN BY PAIGE ROTHFUS...PAGE 4

GOth GIRL EDIT I BY PAIGE ROTHFUS...PAGE 5

ARE YOU FREE BY DANNY GLIX

WHEN THE SINGING STOPS BY E. KIM

NETTLE TREASURE CHEST BY PAIGE ROTHFUS...PAGE 6

DEPRESSION BY PAIGE ROTHFUS...PAGE 7

Lay OF ST. KENELM BY BENJAMIN SPICK

BUTTERFLY BY PAIGE ROTHFUS...PAGE 8

FALLING IN LOVE BY PAIGE ROTHFUS

MICHAEL DOUGLAS BY MOSES ECKSTEIN

STARE BY MOSES ECKSTEIN

LIGHT IN THE WINDOW BY MOSES ECKSTEIN...PAGE 9

ARCTIC EXPLORATION AND NEAR FREEZATION BY PAIGE ROTHFUS

DUALITY BY KASEY JONES...PAGE 10

ART AND POEM BY JENNA HENRY...PAGE 11

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING BY MOSES ECKSTEIN

STORM CLOUDS OVER THE HEATHLAND BY RICHARD SMYTHE...PAGE 12

GOth GIRL EDIT 2 BY PAIGE ROTHFUS...PAGE 13

ABOUT BLACKBIRD

GOthic Blackbird is a monthly magazine, the brainchild of Paige R. Rothfus, who wanted to create a magazine that showcased the genre of art and writing with a gothic feel. Originating from DMACC (Des Moines Area Community College) in Ankeny,

GOthic Blackbird is produced and partially funded by the Creative Writing Guild. The creators of the magazine are Moses Eckstein and Paige R. Rothfus and the magazine features not only student writers and artists from DMACC but also from around the community, other states and even one from prison so Blackbird is both local and national, and naturally its contents are quite eclectic.

GOthic Blackbird's primary aim is to gather and share the work of budding writers, artists and designers from around the community with others while at the same time creating an opportunity for them to have their work published.

GOthic Blackbird intends to continue improving, expanding and changing and is excited about the future ahead.

COVER ART BY

MOSES ECKSTEIN

'Stare' (ON PAGE 9)

AUTHORS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:

MOSES ECKSTEIN

RICHARD SMYTHE

KASEY JONES

PAIGE ROTHFUS

JENNA HENRY

DANNY GLIX

E. KIM

BENJAMIN SPICK

TO CHECK OUT THEIR PROFILES AND PERSONAL PORTFOLIOS, GO TO WWW.GOTHICBLACKBIRD.COM/PORTFOLIOS.HTML

WALNUT INK RECIPE By Benjamin Spick

In a glass jar, place approximately 4 – 5 tablespoons of black walnut hull, crushed (I eye-balled this measurement; it's the equivalent of two walnut hulls).

Pour ½ cup of boiling water over the hulls; screw on jar lid tightly, and let the infusion steep overnight. In the morning, pour through a coffee filter into a new jar. Let all liquid drain; discard the hulls and filter.

Add two teaspoons of gum arabic powder to the infusion. Screw lid on tightly, and shake to blend. Let settle. Ink is now ready to use. Color will be a medium brown.

NOTE: Black walnut infusion WILL permanently stain clothing and countertops, though it washes out of metal and glass just fine. Work on a surface you can clean. You may substitute walnut hull for black tea (I have not tried this, but I adapted this recipe from one that originally used black tea instead of walnut hulls; I don't know what color value tea-ink would have in relation to walnut ink).

SUPPLIES:

- Black Walnut. If you cannot obtain walnut hulls yourself (I used ones I gathered from my yard), you can purchase them from herbal supply companies. Frontier Natural Products Co-op (<http://www.frontiercoop.com/>) sells crushed hulls; Mountain Rose Herbs (<http://www.mountainroseherbs.com/>) sells hulls in powder form.
- Gum Arabic (also sold as Acacia Powder) can also be bought from herbal supply companies. After doing some comparison, Mountain Rose Herbs seems to be the cheapest.







DANNY GLUX
 IS LOCATED IN NEW
 YORK CITY.
 'ARE YOU FREE'
 FINE ART PRINT ON
 NATURAL WHITE MATT
 ULTRA SMOOTH, 100%
 COTTON RAG, ACID,
 ARCHIVAL PAPER USING
 ADVANCED DIGITAL
 DRY INK METHOD.
 DANNYGLUX.COM/ARTWORK

By E. KIM
 LOCATED IN
 BOONE, IA



When the Singing Stops

My lips now dried and cracking
 My chills a shiver spent
 Stiffs the wind that drives it
 The cold will keep me pent

With summer goes the lovers
 The moon to conquer fall
 Illuminate the sky at night
 From dusk till morning calls

Clouds like granite so gray they be
 How still Novembers air
 Its quell contains surprises
 Of December's obscured flair

Ravens only cry I hear
 The days now shortened prompts
 The birds to make their exodus
 That's when the singing stops

NETTLE TREASURE CHEST BY PAIGE ROTHFUS

DO YOU FEEL VITAMIN DEFICIENT?

STEEP SOME DRIED STINGING NETTLE LEAVES (*URTICA DIOICA*) IN HOT WATER FOR 5 MINUTES AND DRINK THE TEA TO OBTAIN THE HEALTHY BENEFITS:

10 OTHER GOOD REASONS TO LOVE NETTLES:

- 1-NETTLES ARE A GREAT SOURCE OF VITAMINS A, C, AND D, POTASSIUM, SILICA, NITROGEN, MANGANESE, BETA-CAROTENE, IRON AND CALCIUM DUE TO THE RICH SOIL THEY GROW IN.
- 2-YOUNG NETTLE LEAVES HAVE A DELICIOUS NUTTY FLAVOR THAT GOES WELL IN MANY DISHES, INCLUDING SOUPS.
- 3-OVER LONG USAGE, NETTLES BENEFIT ADRENALS AND KIDNEYS.
- 4-NETTLES ASSIST IN HEALING AND STRENGTHENING LUNG TISSUE AND INTESTINES
- 5-NETTLES ARE NOURISHING TO THE HAIR
- 6-NETTLES HELP LACTATING MOTHERS PRODUCE RICH, NUTRITIOUS MILK
- 7-NETTLES HELP RELIEVE POLLEN-RELATED ALLERGIES
- 8-NETTLES ARE ANTI-INFLAMMATORY AND THEY HELP PREVENT AILMENTS OF THIS KIND.
- 9-NETTLE CREAM IS NOURISHING TO THE FACE AND HELPS PREVENT AND HEAL ACNE, BOILS AND OILY SKIN.
- 10-NETTLE FIBER, WHICH IS MADE INTO FABRIC FOR APPAREL DESIGN, IS ORGANIX, AND IS GLOSSIER THAN SILK AND AS STRONG AS COTTON!

Depression by Paige Rothfus

This is the description of someone who is deeply depressed and deals with it in the only way they know how, in a very unhealthy way. It is the song of their struggle and the danger of monotony and masochism.

Had a thought this morning:

There's a darker side

To wearing those arm bands

Than the color black—

To hide the scars of my pain.

I walk alone under the dark trees

And the dimming skies, wearing a cloak to hide under.

Why is it that I don't want to get better?

In fact I am distinctly aware

Of the deepening desire to become worse and worse,

And sink deeper into the blackness.

Why is it that I don't want to fight anymore?

Don't want to hang on anymore,

I just want to give in and give up. Succumb to the pain

That's fighting so hard to claim me.

Float away like smoke into the beautiful darkness.

Doesn't everybody know

That I wear dark eyes to show my sadness?

Maybe if I hide for long enough in my black rags

People will see, maybe I will let someone save me.

All the voices,

Whispering to me, telling me things, lies like blood in my ears.

What is this? This that I cannot understand,

That I feel compelled to destroy myself?

I have been too long with my own thoughts,

Giving them strength with my solitude,

Warriors gathering for the kill,

They are so hard to fight off

When they are the loudest thing in my head,

Drowning out even the music blaring.

The scariest thing is feeling like I am forgetting myself,

Maybe becoming someone else.

I am always on the outside of circles,

Looking in, wishing I could be inside.

I'm locked outside the room

Forced to long for what I can see through the keyhole.

So alone, so alone.

Spinning out of control,

I start to feel trapped inside my own body,

Longing to break free.

My skin is so cold and I shiver,

Walking alone, no one beside me.

When will this misery end?

I can't take it anymore, I must have relief.

I go to the store, walk past all the rushing people,

I am surrounded by others, but I am alone.

After so many days of apathy, things all lose their color

I live in a world of grey.

And I am numb, I cannot feel or hear or taste.

Buy some rubbing alcohol, check out and drive home.

Wonder if the cashier knows what I bought those razors for?

People all looking, but nobody sees, no one cares.

Music soothes my soul and calms my trembling hand.

I soak a blade in the alcohol, waiting for a while,

Waiting while the music soaks into my head.

At last I do what I've been hungering for!

I take a gleaming blade

The edge so soft and sweet

With a silky sound on my flesh, caress it over my wrist,

Gliding up and down, the gleam of the blade

So close to touching the warmth of my pumping blood.

Carefully at first, I make a small opening;

A seam to let the numbness out.

Coaxing the red to the surface,

Watch it glittering in the open air.

The taste is like nothing else, this bitter brew.

Can't stop until the blood is streaming
Steadily from the cut, draining away.

I can feel the tingling trickle leave,

A warmth pulsing forth from me like a flowing rill,

And a calm floods over my being.

I feel alive again, the pain brings me back to myself.

This pain is a beautiful thing,
Death is the perfect end.

High from the pain,

Things just suddenly make sense in this place

Right here, right now,

Drift into the warm darkness and undo myself.

It's a pulse that I always want to feel; This makes everything better.

As my pain drains away

I come to myself again, look outside,

Notice the trees.

The rain coming down outside the window pane,

Shut my eyelids over my eyes like a frail window-shade,

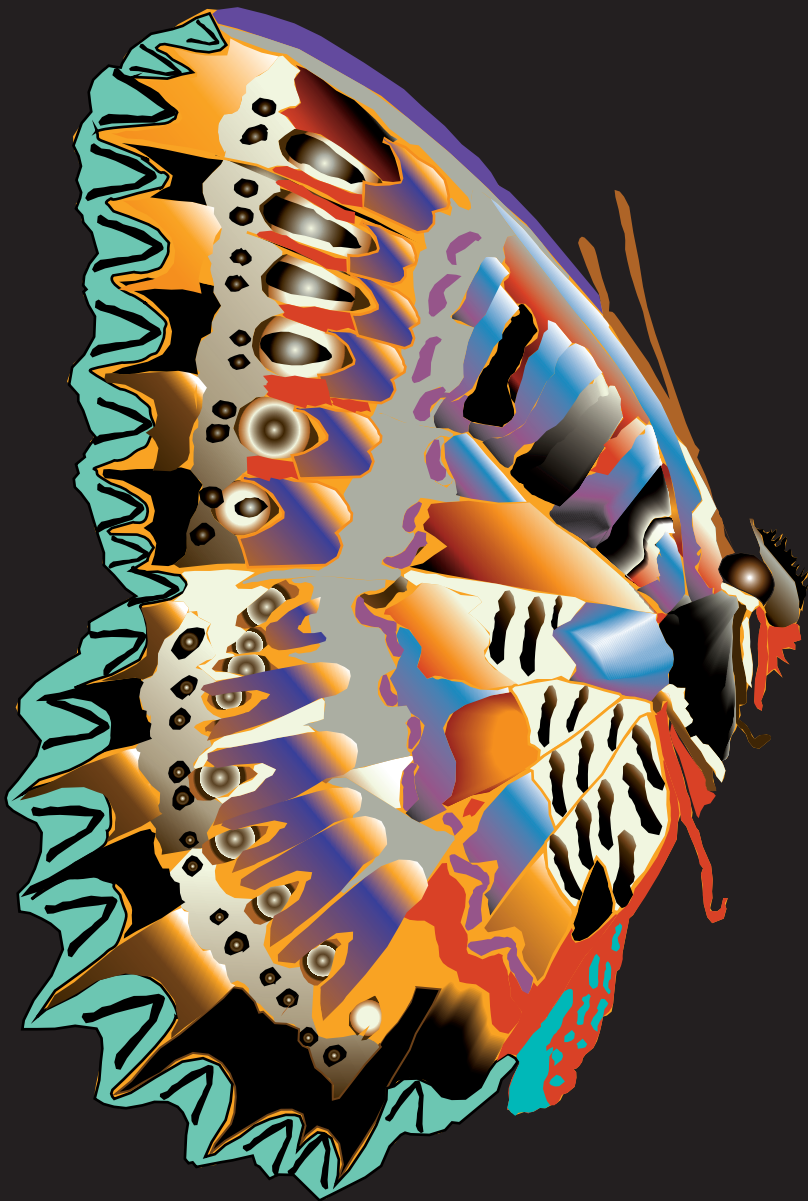
Can hear music,

Can see the sunlight coming through my lids

Softly, if I listen, raindrops like music coming from the trees,

Singing me to sleep at last,

To wake not for a while.



BUTTERFLY BY PAIGE ROTHFUS

Lay of St. Kenelm

by Benjamin Spick

"Once a good King past to Death
Cynewulf by name
And left he but a stripling heir
Young Cynehelm by name.

"Had Cynehelm two sisters great
Yet scarcely 'like, the twain
Burgenhild' a maiden loyal
And Cwendred, woman vain.

"To slay her kith and gain the crown
Was Cwendred's only want
And so she bid her lover dear
To do a task so gaunt.

"Slay the child for me, my love
Cooed Cwendred to her man
Finish him with scarce a word
And take his life in hand.

"So Ascbert went a' riding then
With Cynehelm one day
Hunting in the forest deep
For a prince to slay.

"Stopped they for a brief respite
For Cynehelm to rest
And up behind did Ascbert come
At his dame's behest.

"But Cynehelm spake Nay my lord
You shall not slay me here
Yet take this rod and plant it there
And bid my end come near.

"So planted he a rod of thorn
And sprung from it an Ash
Then 'neath that tree did Ascbert strike
And Cyn'helm breathed his last.

"But from the grave his Soul did fly
In likeness of a dove,
- As prophecy foretold by dream -
Beyond the boughs above."

This poem is based on the Old English St. Kenelm ("Cynehelm" as it was originally), who legend has it succeeded the throne at the death of his father Kenulf at the age of seven. Kenelm was assassinated/martyred by his sister Cwendred, who wanted the crown for herself and convinced her lover Ascbert to kill the young king. (The legend of St. Kenelm can be found at <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/golden227.htm>).

Falling in Love

November 23rd 2010

Paige Rothfus

First meeting:

Friendly greetings

Pastimes in common

A spark is kindled.

Picking up a pen

With a sudden flurry of brave inspiration

Penning a line

Burning it up

And starting again.

Furtive shyness

Hidden behind secret smiles

Dancing always;

Ever nearer.

Laughing together

And realizing the happiness.

Time speeding by

Radios that always play our song.

Hearts that can hardly

Contain the secret any longer:

A hasty bold moment

A long walk

A long talk

And holding hands on the way back

Secret whispers in my ear

A shy smile

Fingers entwined

Face to face at last

No longer afraid to look into those wide eyes,

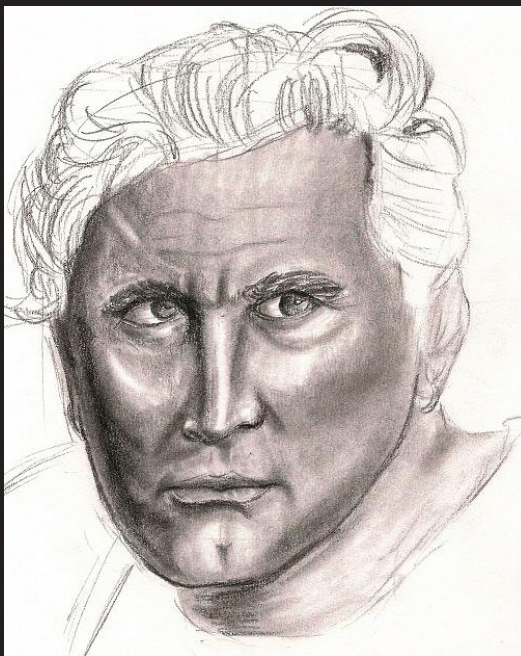
A stolen kiss

Sweet because it is a virgin kiss.

And my heart

Does a somersault.

MICHAEL DOUGLAS BY MOSES ECKSTEIN



Light in the Window by Moses Eckstein

What's left are memories after the dirt is cleared away

Briefly I walked in the meadow under a thousand stars

There you sang like a whisper of a dream I never forgot

While the fragrant hair I envied danced in the starlight

While we waded in the grey grass, I reached for you

Like a man whose hand reaches up to grasp the moon

For a moment it lies between his fingers but when brought

Down the white halo remains once again beyond touch

Now I walk alone in the meadow on a blustery night

If I put my hand around my ear I can hear your voice still

Drifting with the wind as the stars one by one fade

Look, I see it now the golden light beyond the meadow

I am a shadow before the sun as it rises from the east

My arms are raised and my fists are clenched as mists

Blow away and uncover the white petals of the hemlock

Whose olive leaves divide finely beneath my bare feet

As I wait for the potion to come to a boil on my stove

My mind drifts to pleasant thoughts of kissing you

I know I'll dream of you forever and keep you close

All dreams must die though to the light in the window



My Fifteen-minute Arctic Exploration and near Expiration by Freezation

2010
By Paige Rothfus

It was an ordinary day in the cooler at Hy Vee. 10 o'clock sharp and I was on patrol, searching out disappearing goods to make an inventory needed for the newly-learned task of ordering. Dutifully journeying to the freezer, clipboard in hand, I was on a quest to pinpoint the particular location and numerical quantity of some frozen beef. Specifically a course we call Chuck 101 which is the prerequisite for Taco Meat. At length I found the massive grey door, conspicuously labeled FREEZER. Pulling it open, I entered the wintry cave, which was alive with an icy merciless wind, issuing from the cruel fans overhead, and then closed it behind me. It is an unwritten rule in the isolated back rooms of grocery stores never to leave the 'cold' doors open behind you. Cold air leaks out and warm leaks in, and when the managers aren't there to remind us sometimes I think we would all forget it. Maybe in our secret hearts we want the warm air to leak in...and defrost our frozen fingers. Anyhow, I braved the icy cavern with naught but long underwear, the Hy Vee shirt, pants and my fingerless gloves as a shield against the bitterest of colds.

Almost immediately, involuntary shivering began, and I looked forward with pleasure to the quitting of that desolate winterland. My breath surrounded me in frosty clouds, so that I could scarcely see the clipboard.

The freezer was filled with all sorts of frozen products, some belonging to every realm of the store. At last, after I poked about for a bit, I unearthed the hamburger in a frosty upper corner. I had it counted and recorded in half a second, and turning, prepared to open the door and make my getaway. Preparations are all very well, but my efforts did not go any farther than that. The door would not open. In that second, the day classification switched from ORDINARY to very EXTRAORDINARY.

At first my surprise was mild. I tried again, twisting the handle a bit more severely. It did not respond in the least. Now I tried twisting it the other way. Still no go.

I now began to have nagging thoughts of my possible demise: How the newspaper headline might read: EMPLOYEE FOUND FROZEN IN HY VEE FREEZER. INVESTIGATOR SUSPECTS COWORKERS OF FOUL PLAY.

Discarding my clipboard, I now tried in earnest to get out. I felt the entirety of door, groping about for another possible handle, a secret button to push...perhaps there was one on the other end of the door. I tried all possibilities, which included at the last throwing myself with full force against the door, beating my body upon it in desperation.

Next I tried knocking. I knocked louder. I called. Would someone walking by hear the feeble cried from the outside? This freezer was quickly becoming a tomb. Was there an emergency siren, or an atom bomb, or a wrecking ball, or anything at my disposal at all that could help me escape? The freezer. Freezer it should not have been called! Its true nature was, and thus its name, should have been: Frosty Chilling Death-Administering Ice-trap. I swore then and there that if I ever made it out alive I would make it my lifelong passion to condemn and disparage all freezers larger than the common household freezer. It suddenly dawned on me with sick realization that the blowing refrigeration fans didn't care whether or not they were the cause of my death. I avow on the body of my dead great great half-grandmother that if anywhere in the world there is a single god-forsaken place, the Back freezer at Hy Vee is that place.

I was about to become a first-rate frozen steak, and nobody was even around to hear my last words! I thought about making a recording on my cell phone for those loved ones who would be left behind.

What would I say? "I'm sorry, but I am freezing to death in the freezer at Hy Vee. I love you all, and I hope that you never forget me." Or perhaps I could pen a quick novel on the freezer wall, entitled FREEZING TO DEATH IN FIFTEEN MINUTES. If I was lucky, maybe it would be the world's next best-seller. No doubt about it: Undiluted Patheticness.

Hypothermia had set in. I could almost feel my lips turning blue, and I could no longer feel my hands, and I am sure that my shivering had stopped. I was sure it wouldn't be long now. It was a rare piece of luck that I even had my cell phone. Employees are forbidden to have their phones switched on during their shift. I swiftly thrust my hand into my pocket, now crusted over with impending frost, and drew out the phone.

I had one last chance. With sickly numb fingers, and after breaking the icicles off, I dialed the Hy Vee number. Thank heavens for one lucky day when I had unwittingly entered it into my cell phone contacts! "Indianola Hy Vee, how may I direct your call?" "May I please speak to Julie?" I panted. The poor girl little knew that the speaker was languishing away as we spoke in the back freezer of that very store.

In the meantime, I listened to merry Hy Vee 'on hold' music, and began to have all sorts of horrendous thoughts: What if Julie had gone on break? What if she didn't hear the page? I entertained myself with all these cheerful possibilities until at last I heard her voice over the phone. "Julie," I said. "I'm sorry to bother you, and this may sound really stupid, but I'm locked in the freezer." "Where are you?!" She shouted. It was as if she hadn't heard me. "In the freezer." I could hear my voice giving out, and my heartbeat slowing. "Hang on, and I will come get you out," she promised.

A hundred years would have seemed like the blink of an eye in comparison to how long I waited. Another moment longer and I would have slipped into unconsciousness and dark oblivion. The door opened and light streamed into the freezer.

It was like a shock to be back among the living again. After staggering out and recovering, I felt like a different person. Aside from the severe frostbite I suffered, I mean. It was as if I had changed, and become a wiser and person while I was in the freezer. Or perhaps I was just happy to be alive and unfrozen. Human steaks never did appeal to me. All I can say is thank heaven for forbidden cell phones and Virgin Mobile cell phone Service!

Since that day I have never looked at the world quite the same way.

You wouldn't either if you had seen things from the inside of a locked freezer.

I just count myself fortunate that I didn't develop a severe phobia of freezers, shut doors, and possibly even hamburger from my scarring experience.

Duality by Kasey Jones

Why do you hate me so,
What have you done to you,
Why let this pain grow,
Have I not proved myself,
I remain by your side,
Yet traded for wealth,
Is it better this way,
You'll see what you lost,
Then maybe you'll stay,
What of this fame,
Are you happy now,
All I feel is shame,
Deny yourself the reflection,
Only way to be a friend,
Overcome by there infection,
I'm sorry this is the end.

Art and poem by Jenna Henry

Brown Hair

Green Eyes

Shining in the Sunrise

When I Smile

I Glow....

Just Wait for the Show

I Party

I Dance

I Wait for a Chance

To Sleep

To the Beat



As I Keep

All My Secrets Inside Me

Somehow They Get Out

I Can't Help but SHOUT

For I'm

Tumbling

Falling

Deeper

Deeper

Into

A

Lonely

Pit

Of

Darkness





THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING

BY MOSES ECKSTEIN

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING

WHEN BLACK SKIES WERE LIKE TAR

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING

WHEN HEARTS BEAT LIKE THUNDER

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING

WHEN BLOOD DRIPPED LIKE RAIN

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING

WHEN THE FIRE ROARED FROM AFAR

Storm Clouds Over the Healthland

by Richard Smythe

14×12" oil on panel

June 22nd, 2012





GOth GIRL by PAIGE ROTHFUS, PHOTO BY LUKE ANDERSON, SUBJECT PAIGE ROTHFUS



BLACK BIRD MONTHLY
A NETTLE PUBLICATION
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED 2012