

**A Continuing Education**  
An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

Tricia Winkler

Thesis Advisor:

Margaret Dimoplon

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Margaret Dimoplon", is written over a solid horizontal line.

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I began this thesis with one goal: to complete a short story to my satisfaction. Through the course of the semester, however, I learned that many authors are never truly satisfied with a work, even when it is considered 'complete' by his or her audience. The same is true in my case. I have found that another revision can always be done, that there is always something that could be changed to make the story better. Because of this, it is hard for me to consider my thesis a completed work; rather, it is one that is still in progress, and probably will be for many more years.

I am an English major and a journalism minor, so I've had the opportunity to explore a wide range of writing styles. What I found in my four years here is that the journalistic style of writing is easier, but that it leaves so much information out that the whole story is rarely told. Because of this, two of the stories, *To Forget and Forgive* and *Ten and Now* have a companion piece written journalistically. In comparing the two, I hope to illustrate how much of the emotional and personal factors are left out of the journalistic pieces.

The third story, *Don't Kill Amy*, was my 'fun' piece. I just started writing, and let the story go where it wanted. The title evolved from a discussion with my advisor, Ms. Dimoplou. Originally, the main character is killed in the end in a sick twist. However, Ms. Dimoplou suggested that I let her live, and we joked that the title should be *Don't Kill Amy*. I thought it was funny, so I kept it.

I chose to write short stories because I knew it would be a challenge. I found my assignments for journalism classes to be much easier than any assignment I had in my creative writing classes, so I knew (and still know) that fiction writing was an area in which I needed improvement. I can consider this thesis a cumulation of my years here because I learned from it, and that education will continue. The most important thing I

was taught in my studies at Ball State is that you should always try to learn, from yourself and from others. With this thesis, I can continue to learn from my writing.

Tricia Winkler

## Ten and Now

The best year of my life was when I was 10 years old. I could say a girl was mine but I didn't have to tend to her; I could get beat in basketball by my best friend and still play peacefully the next day; and I could still run to mom when things went wrong.

That year I was feeling fine. I was in fourth grade, a level I'd looked forward to for many reasons: first, our classroom was in the big wing of the building; second, we got to build a project for Indiana history class; and third, I got to start playing basketball.

In the third grade I had seen a high school basketball game when my older brother, Tony, took me, but he made fun of me for liking it. He thought it was a sissy game and that football would be a better choice.

"You've got to learn to be tough," he said. I don't know what he thought he was talking about because he wouldn't even play golf in high school because he was scared of getting hit by lightening. I guess he thought that since he was five years older he had to set me straight. I usually ignored Tony's mean streak unless he was beating up on me, because I always wanted to tag along with him and his friends. I was fascinated by the game and dreamed of being a star. By the time fourth grade arrived I knew that the local professional team was called the "Lasers" and I had a poster of one of my favorite players, Bill "Bully" Kaiser.

When I was 10, mom was still pretty cool. I didn't make her drop me off a block from school all the time, only on certain days, and I still let her bring cupcakes to class for my birthday.

One of the reasons I thought it was O.K. for her to do these things was because Shannon Mills let her mom drop her off in front of school and visit class. Shannon was the prettiest girl in my class and we were going together part of that year. I called her

sometimes but I felt really goofy about it, because her dumb sister always answered the phone.

“Hellooo! *Who* is this? It’s *Tom*? Tom Barner? And you want to talk to my sister? Just a minute, please,” she used to say in a sing-song voice. Then I would hear her say in the background, “Shannon and Tom, sittin’ in a tree, K-I-S-S-I-N-G.” We managed to ignore her.

I’m glad my sister Tina never knew about Shannon. Tina was two years older and always looking for a reason to tease me, and I sucked at rebuttals. The only one I knew that really bugged her was:

“Tina, Tina, is almost like Tiny;  
And that’s what your chest is like,  
All flat and shiny.”

I’m the first to admit that it was a pretty stupid rhyme, but it worked. In fact, it usually made her cry, which I kind of felt bad about afterwards, but not really. Mom always gave her something to make her feel better, and she forgot what I said in five minutes. She always was kind of shallow.

I was scared, and still a little grossed out, about kissing a girl. I had seen others stand at the line dividing the girls’ side from the boys’ side at recess and kiss, but it always drew a big crowd, something I dreaded. The couple would huddle at the far end of the playground, usually by the fence where they thought no one would notice them. However, a close friend of one or the other usually managed to attract a large gathering for the event. I can still remember seeing my classmates crane their necks to catch a glimpse. Because of all the people, however, I never actually saw anyone kiss. I still can’t figure out how they avoided getting caught by the playground monitor. I never did kiss Shannon, but I guess that was part of the low-maintenance plan. I phoned her every week, and she never complained that it wasn’t enough.

That was a good year, all right. My best friends at the time were the ones who

lived closest to me. After school each day I ran home, hugged mom, dodged my brother, and went outside until suppertime. After dinner I played until it got dark. We used to have races down the street and back, which I never won because I was short. I used to avoid my mom during the summer when I was out playing at night so she would forget about me and I could play past my "sunset" 8:00 curfew.

On Saturdays I woke up at seven so I could watch Bugs Bunny and the Superfriends before breakfast, which mom cheerfully poured from the cereal box. My goal was to be outside by nine so I wouldn't miss any prime play time. I ran out the front door without looking back until I heard mom's voice calling from a distance to check on my whereabouts. In reality my friends and I never went very far, but our imaginations took us around the world.

We went to the World Series at least once a week, and the Superbowl quite often, too. We had great fun as Star Wars characters, but we always fought over who got to play Darth Vader and Luke Skywalker. Nobody wanted to be a plain old stormtrooper. My mom donated a black helmet which was probably my dad's, now that I think about it, so I got to be Darth Vader most of the time.

I was secure when I was 10. Someone took care of me. I was happy, except for the times I didn't get what I wanted or I got a bad grade in school.

Now that I'm older--17--I'm amazed at what I got away with as far as relationships were concerned. Linda, my current "companion," reminds me constantly of her recommended daily allowance of affection. Apparently, I'm the only one qualified to fill that prescription.

"Tom," she said the other day, "when will I see you this week? I really don't feel like we've spent much quality time together lately. After six months I thought you'd want to see me more often."

I sighed loud and long, because I was trying to watch the basketball game while she whined on the phone.

“Well,” I said, “I told you that tonight I need some alone time. Maybe tomorrow or Thursday we could go to a movie or something. It just depends.”

She went on for a while, but I think she could tell she was beat. I will admit that after her initial objections she knows when to quit.

“I can’t believe you’re still dating Linda,” my friend Mike said to me the other day. “Has it been six months? For real? You must really like her, or else she’s really good.”

Now I have to admit that he had a valid point on both counts, but I couldn’t let myself be a slave to sex, at least in his eyes.

“No, she’s nice. I feel a little suffocated sometimes, but other times it’s worth some sacrifice.”

“Sacrifice?! Man, you used to never give up anything for a woman.”

“Well, I don’t give up that much. She wants to see me every friggin’ night, and expects to go out somewhere every time. I’m hoping she’ll cool off a little.

“On the other hand,” I continued, “it’s nice to have someone to talk to about stuff who really cares.”

I don’t think Mike really understood, but that’s O.K., because I don’t either.

Like the other day. I went with Linda to the mall, a big mistake, I’ll admit. She must have tried on a million pairs of jeans, and I swear they all looked the same.

“Don’t you think my butt looks big in these?” she asked.

“No bigger than in the other ones,” I replied. Well, she glared at me, stormed back into the dressing room, and would only speak to me monosyllabically the rest of the evening.

“I didn’t mean that you look fat,” I said on the way home. “I just meant that all the jeans looked the same.”

“Whatever,” she said.

“Do you want to stop and get something to eat?”

“Not really.”

“Do you like the jeans you bought?”

“They’re O.K.”

At that point I gave up. And I thought: whatever happened to just having fun, doing what you want, like it was in fourth grade?

With Shannon, I didn’t have to worry about offending her. And what about money? I can’t recall one instance where I felt pressured to go out and spend money on her, and “going together” did not mean that we actually went somewhere. When I was with Shannon on the playground, she knew that I liked her, or else I wouldn’t be there talking to her. Linda, on the other hand, seems to think that just because I want to go out with the guys one night a week, I don’t care about her.

I don’t remember Shannon ever saying, “You like them better than you like me. Aren’t I enough fun to be around? Why do you want to get all muddy in the field when you could be standing here talking to me and my giggly friends?” Football was an integral part of recess, just like hangin’ with the guys is necessary now.

And what about sex? I never even *kissed* Shannon, let alone had sex with her. Now it’s all complicated. Should I kiss her on the first date? Should I feel her up on the second date? And what about that third date? So many rules to deal with. And once you do get to the sex part, do you leave the lights on or off? There’s always the modesty factor to consider. What would she think if she saw that gigantic gut? Would she laugh, or just turn and run? I know I never worried about my figure when I was ten.

I’ll never forget one incident when I was ten. Shannon’s friend Laura thought she was better than me.

“I can beat you in the math race today,” she said. I took her challenge and won. Today I see myself responding differently.

“Just because you’re a man doesn’t mean you are better than me,” a woman says.



— And what's my response? Instead of saying, "better in what?", I calmly reply, "So? I never said I was better." I mean, obviously I would be a better dad and a better Romeo. Let her be a mom and Juliet. She can have it.

Cartoons were the best when I was ten. I remember reading "Marmaduke," and "Superman," and "Peanuts." It really pissed me off when Lucy pulled that football out from under Charlie Brown, and it still does. What was she trying to prove?

Now we have cartoons like "Cathy" which goes off on men all the time. Her poor boyfriend, Irving! All the guy wants to do is play a little golf, watch a little football, and drink a little beer, and she won't let him! No wonder he hasn't married the little psychopath yet!

Linda brought up the big topic last night. We were having a perfectly nice dinner when she started talking about having a more committed relationship.

— "I love you, Tom, and I think we could be really happy together," she said. "I know that you aren't really as selfish as you act."

"But what about money and space and privacy?" I wanted to know. "Shannon never minded when I needed my alone time."

"What? Who's Shannon?"

"Oh, a girlfriend long past. Don't worry about her. I doubt she even remembers my name. It was an early, low-maintenance relationship."

"Well, I require a little more maintenance, I guess. But I think it would be worth it to you if you gave it a chance. Just think about it, will you?"

— I have been thinking about it, a lot. I was my own person when I was ten. I prefer to find a girl like Shannon: devoted, friendly, and undemanding, and I think I may have found her. She's called Annie. She rarely whines, sits with me when I want company, and goes away when I need my alone time. She doesn't expect flowers, and has horrendous table manners, so we never eat out. Besides, restaurants don't allow dogs unless they're seeing-eye-dogs, and I'm not blind.

Companion Feature Story for *Ten and Now*

# Team Works Together to Make a Living

By Tricia Winkler

Indianapolis--They do everything together: they camp, sing, exercise and cook with each other on a regular basis, and they're not tired of each other yet.

This wouldn't seem unusual if the pair were married, but the two people here are mother and son, and a teenage son at that! Eighteen-year-old Tom Barnes and his mother Sarah spend all their free time together for a specific purpose: to perfect their routine.

If you can't place their names, you may soon recognize their faces from T.V. Lately, the two have made a place for themselves in commercials for products such as Whisk detergent and Gatorade, which are shown nationwide.

"We spend all our time together so we stay used to the other's rhythms and moods," Sarah said. "It becomes obvious if we're not in synch with each other during a reading."

The two only recently started working together in commercials, when they got their big break through a friend of the family.

"About a year ago my Uncle Bill was hanging out with our family when he noticed that me and mom were working together in the kitchen," Tom said. "He told us that he wished his wife and son got along as well as us, and that we seemed to be

synchronized or something.

“My uncle helps write ads for an agency and he mentioned us to someone. The next thing I knew we were reading commercial scripts.”

Their first commercial together was as mother and son for Whisk detergent. They appeared in the usual scenario, with the mom scolding the son for dirty football clothes and smelly socks, only to end up smiling when the clothes emerge cleaner than new.

“The situation felt very natural because I do Tom’s laundry all the time,” Sarah said.

“I felt kind of weird about it at first,” Tom said. “I had to say stuff a certain way, like I wouldn’t usually say it. But mom and I practiced and I got better, so I’m pretty used to it now.”

Although they were already close, the two feel they’ve gotten even nearer because of their new job.

“I’m really enjoying the increased time with Tom,” Sarah said. “We cook dinner together every night, we exercise to stay trim for T.V., and we still sing together in the church choir. I was afraid to have Tom grow up and become independent, but this experience makes me feel much better.”

And how does Sarah’s husband, Brad, feel about his wife and son’s success?

“Well, I don’t see them much, but they always spent a lot of time together anyway. I’m really proud of them both.”

Sarah and Tom said that plans are underway for more commercials. They couldn’t tell the names of the products that they’ll be advertising, but they suggested that their roles would probably be similar to their present ones.

Through all of this, Tom’s scholastic responsibilities have to be considered as well. He says he’s keeping up with his work, though.

“My teachers have been pretty understanding, and I’ve done extra work to keep

my grades up," Tom said. "I'll be graduating a couple of months, so I think I can keep up this schedule until then. Mom helps me out a lot, too."

"I do all I can to help him with his work," Sarah said. "I make sure the acting doesn't get in the way of school."

All this work seems to leave little time for social or extracurricular activities, but Tom said he doesn't mind.

"I don't feel ready to have a girlfriend or anything, and I get to go out with my friends at least once a week. It's not that bad at all."

Tricia Winkler

## To Forget and Forgive

The voices wouldn't stop. Tonya rolled around in her bed, her legs tangled in the sheets. A light sweat covered her body, and she was frowning.

"I can't choose," she mumbled, and turned her head, as if looking away from someone or something. It was one a.m. on Friday, December 14, and in five hours Tonya had to get up and meet her boyfriend. They had a two-hour drive ahead of them, and they wanted to get it over with.

"Decide!" the voices demanded. "Will it be a mistake for a mistake, or is this the best way?" Hands reached in from the darkness and grabbed at Tonya, each demanding something of her. "Responsibility, morality, integrity, honesty," the voices chanted. "God, sin, life," they yelled. "Choose!"

Tonya moaned softly. The creases in her forehead deepened, and her blond hair stuck to the sides of her face. "It's not fair, leave me alone," she said, and sent in her defense. Only one word was needed to dispel her tormenters.

*"Reality!"* Tonya screamed, and the voices ceased.

\* \* \* \*

Tonya and Mike walked into the office and hesitated. The only woman working at the time was about the same age as their own mothers, and she was reading *Guideposts*. An image of her own mother immediately came to Tonya's mind, and she tried to shake it off.

"Maybe it was a mistake to come here," Tonya whispered. "I just want this all to be impersonal and quick. She looks like she's ready to preach or something."

"Don't worry," Mike said. "She can't make you do anything you don't want to, and if she starts preaching, we'll just leave. I'll be here with you."

Tonya checked in and waited nervously.

“This is all probably just nerves,” she said to Mike. “They say your period can come late if you’re nervous about something, and it is finals week.”

“We can handle it either way, Tonya. We’ll find out in a few minutes if we have anything to worry about.”

Tonya’s name was called and she and submitted her urine sample to the nurse.

“O.K.,” the nurse said. “You can go to room one and wait. I’ll be with you in a minute with your results.”

So they waited. They made small talk, and fidgeted. When the nurse came in, they both looked up anxiously.

“Well,” the nurse said, “the results were positive.”

“Oh, no!” Tonya wailed, and hid her face in Mike’s shoulder. He sat silently and stared ahead.

“We have a video that we show all our patients, so watch this and I’ll be back in a few minutes,” the nurse said, and left. What appeared on the screen was much the same as the video Tonya saw in the eighth grade at her Catholic grade school.

“I can’t watch this,” Tonya said. “How can they do this to me when I haven’t even had time to absorb what’s happened? It’s not fair to make me watch this!” She put her face in her hands and cried.

“Here, we’ll turn it off,” Mike said. He put his arm around her. “Let’s leave before they start preaching. You don’t need this right now.”

They walked out of the office without a word to anyone.

\* \* \* \*

That night Tonya dreamed about her church. Her priest was giving his sermon, but Tonya was the only one there.

“Thou shalt not kill!” he preached, without looking at her. “To take a life, any life, is wrong. You will be guilty for the rest of your life, and you will rot in hell!” He said these things to her, but still he avoided Tonya’s eyes. She continued to watch him, and

suddenly he was not her priest anymore, but Mike's mom.

"You little slut!" she said. "How could you get my son into a situation like this? What right do you have to ruin his life? He didn't ask to have a baby or a wife right now. He's a good boy, and you've corrupted him! God will never forgive you for this. Your soul is doomed!"

Mike's mom faded away and hands appeared again, reaching and grabbing at Tonya, trying to cover her mouth and suffocate her. She struggled with the hands, and squirmed on her bed. When she thought she would never breathe again, her eyes flew open and she was awake.

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"I don't know what I feel," Tonya moaned. Tears sprang up in her brown eyes, and spilled over onto her cheeks. "I always thought that if this happened to me I could never get an abortion. When I was in eighth grade they made us watch a video that showed aborted fetuses, and I cried for them. It felt so bad to see a defenseless life just thrown away. I couldn't watch the whole video, and I cried the whole night afterwards." She stopped and wiped her eyes with a tissue, then wrapped herself in her quilt. She looked around her dorm room, and everywhere she looked she saw a reminder of who she was expected to be. School books lined her shelves, and her last report card hung on her bulletin board, full of A's and B's.

"But now," she continued in a quivering voice, "now I don't know. I mean, what about my family, what about my own future? I try to think of it this way: by sacrificing one life, which may or may not be a living human being at this point, I spare my family the pain of my mistake. My family is broke, and I sure don't have any money to raise a baby. Neither does Mike or his family. Our parents would die if they even knew we were having sex. Can you imagine what this would do to them?"

"I think you're doing the right thing," Tonya's roommate Michelle said. "You're right about your families and your future. I think that this will save a lot of people from

being unhappy for a long time, including the baby. No one wants to live where they're not wanted, and that's how it would be."

"I know," Tonya sighed, "but it's still hard."

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At six a.m. on December 14, Tonya woke feeling tired and irritable. At first she didn't remember what day it was, but her head soon cleared and she recalled the day's goal. She got out of bed slowly, reluctantly, and showered. She avoided making any noise so she wouldn't have to talk to Michelle before she left. Out of habit, Tonya grabbed her backpack on the way out. Halfway down the hall she realized what she had done, and took it back. She went downstairs to meet Mike, taking the back stairs to avoid anyone who might already be up. She felt dirty because she was sneaking around.

As they walked out to Mike's car, Tonya began to hope that maybe it wouldn't start. She held her breath as Mike turned the key, and when it started she felt deflated.

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They talked very little on the way there, and when they did they concentrated on small talk. It took them two hours to get to the clinic, but it seemed much shorter to Tonya.

"Are you O.K.?" Mike asked. "Is this still what you want?"

"Yeah, it is. I've thought about it a lot. We're doing the right thing. We're sparing our families a lot of pain and everyone will be happier this way. I just can't imagine that in nine months a baby would suddenly pop into my life and demand care and love. I could never provide all it would need."

"I'm glad we didn't have to fight about this," Mike said. He glanced over at her, and she saw his hands tighten on the steering wheel. "I didn't know what I would do if you wanted to have the baby. I couldn't just walk away from my responsibility, but I don't know if I could face it, either. Even if we gave it up for adoption we would have to



live knowing that somewhere our child exists. We would also have to live knowing that our parents don't respect us the way they used to, and that they don't trust us as much, either. To me, that's a really high price to pay for one mistake." He paused for a moment, staring straight ahead at the road. "I have to believe that God will forgive us."

"Well you didn't grow up in a Catholic environment like I did. I heard about it every day and what a horrible thing it is," Tonya said. She slumped down in her seat and crossed her arms as if she were cold. "But I have to believe this is best. No one needs to know except me, you, Michelle and God, and the only opinion that counts is God's. If I'm really doing what I think is best, like you said, than I hope you're also right about being forgiven. I think God would hate me more for worrying my family more than they already are. I can't make them suffer for something they had no control over. Let's just go and get this over with."

They remained mostly silent the rest of the trip. Mike tried to concentrate on his driving, but he remained tense. His jaw remained clenched the entire trip, and sooner than either of them expected, they were there.

"There it is on the left," Mike said, and he turned in.

"Thank God there's no protesters," Tonya said, and sat a little straighter.

"I thought about that," Mike said. "But I didn't want to make this trip any worse by thinking about the possibility. Look, there's one old lady handing out pamphlets. We'll just walk past her and ignore her. Don't look at her, O.K.?"

"Yeah, O.K." Tonya said, and they climbed out of the car. The sun was bright, something Tonya found almost ironic. As they walked towards the door, she couldn't help taking a peek at the elderly protester. What she saw brought tears to her eyes. One old woman stood there, defending what she believed. She wore a shaggy overcoat and held a pile of pamphlets in the crook of her thin arm. When they passed her, she spoke softly and politely, not at all like the protesters Tonya would have expected.

“Please reconsider,” the thin voice said. She held a pamphlet out to them. “Don’t take a defenseless life for your own selfishness. Please, just read this.” Tonya paused.

“No thanks,” Mike said quickly, and put his arm around Tonya. He pushed her towards the door to quicken her pace, and then they were out of earshot.

They stopped at the front desk to check in, and then they waited.

“Sign this, hold your finger up here, put your arm out, read this, wait here,” was all Tonya heard for two hours. She felt herself gradually reduced to insignificance by the procedures. Tonya watched the women who were still waiting. They looked nervous, but still relatively confident with their decision. The women who came out of the operating room, however, looked to Tonya as if they were sad and helpless. Their shoulders sagged and their head hung low. Some even leaned on a nurse as they left. This change depressed Tonya.

She picked up a magazine, then put it back down almost immediately. She became increasingly nervous, and tried to think about anything but her situation. She thought about baseball and Christmas break and her upcoming finals. They seemed so far removed from her now.

“Tonya Kimler?” a voice called. Tonya jumped at the voice, and slowly rose from her chair. She felt the other women’s eyes watching her as she walked across the floor, and she wondered what they were thinking about.

Thoughts of Christmas morning with her family and other happy times with them reassured her a bit, for after all, she was there to preserve that image. She tried to keep that in mind as she entered the operating room, tried to keep herself convinced that she was doing the right thing. But one by one her beautifully constructed images of a happy family faded away, and with them her conviction faded, too.

Companion News Story for *To Forget and Forgive*

# Protesters Gather at Indianapolis Clinic

By Tricia Winkler

Indianapolis--Thousands of pro-choice and pro-life advocates gathered at a downtown women's clinic to voice their opinions and respond to recent threats to the *Roe vs. Wade* decision. Pro-life demonstrators formed a human chain around the Indianapolis Women's Clinic to prevent women from entering, while pro-choice advocates scrambled to provide escorts for the patients through the blockade.

Pro-life demonstrators yelled "Murderer!" at women as they entered and left the building, and moved their bodies to make passage more difficult. Some protesters spit on the women as they left. Police arrested 35 people on charges of disturbing the peace and trespassing, and put up blockades as soon as the chain was broken.

Pro-choice demonstrators carried signs which advocated choice for women and freedom of their bodies. They remained behind the blockades, but a few rushed forward to confront a pro-life supporter. Face to face confrontations were frequent, and many resulted in scuffles or all-out fights. Two demonstrators had to be taken to Methodist Hospital to be treated for broken bones which resulted from the fights.

The recent demonstrations come as a result of the case in Philadelphia which threatens to overturn *Roe vs. Wade*. The case, *Miller vs. The State of Pennsylvania*, was brought to court last year by a man who claims his child was aborted without his knowledge or consent. Robert Miller's wife had the abortion, and he claims that if he had known his wife was pregnant, he would have stopped her from having it. His suit

claims the state was negligent when it ignored motions for a 24-hour waiting period before an abortion could be performed, as well as motions for spousal consent and parental consent for minors.

Abortion rights activists argue that these stipulations threaten a woman's freedom, namely her reproductive freedom.

"If women are forced to comply with these guidelines, it will become more and more likely that back-alley abortions will make a comeback," said Lesley Freeman, leader of the local Planned Parenthood. "By limiting a woman's choices, the government is advocating a return to a 1950's-style mentality."

Pro-life advocates contend that the measures will save thousands of lives each year by preventing abortions.

"We pray that the courts will realize the sanctity of human life and respect it," said Rev. William Morse, pastor of Our Lady of Grace church. "*Miller vs. The State of Pennsylvania* is an opportunity to make the country realize what a horrible mistake *Roe vs. Wade* really was. We hope that Robert Miller gets the chance to tell his story to everyone, to make them understand that he and his unborn child were cheated." The story of Robert Miller and his wife Teresa airs tonight at 9 p.m. on Channel 13.

In past years, Indianapolis has not been a hot spot for demonstrators, but recent gatherings in Buffalo and North Dakota have prompted similar uprisings throughout the country. Indianapolis police are prepared to deal with the situations as they arise.

"We have recently reviewed crowd control and riot procedures to insure that our officers are prepared to handle these situations," Police Chief Joseph McAtee said. "All rookies are trained in crowd maintenance and learn to use their riot gear sparingly, but effectively. We don't foresee any problems maintaining control."

One officer says he is caught a little off-guard by the demonstrations, though. "I always kept it in the back of my mind that riots were a thing of the '60s and '70s and the civil rights era," Officer Paul Hires said. "I guess I'm just not mentally prepared to

face a crowd the size of the one downtown and deal with it.”

Whether or not the police are ready to deal with the situation, protesters are forcing the issue. As the Philadelphia case continues, and even after a verdict is reached, both sides will continue to defend their rights and opinions. It is not likely that a quick or easy end to the debate soon be reached.

Tricia Winkler

## Don't Kill Amy

Amy elbowed her way through the restaurant crowd and looked around for her friends. Out of the corner of her eye she saw a hand waving, and she turned toward it. She saw Jill standing at a table, waving both arms in the air like a stranded person on a desert island. Amy cringed a little at Jill's theatrics, and noticed that she was perfectly groomed, as usual, for these Friday evening gatherings. Amy smiled, and walked towards her. Everyone else at the table smiled back as she approached.

"I didn't see you guys over here in the corner," Amy said. "I can't believe how many people are here today! I heard on the radio that they are having some kind of special, where you can get..."

"Yeah, the special is on the chicken today. You can get all you can eat for \$3.99," Jill cut in. "I think we should just buy one order so all of us can eat it."

Amy smiled. "Well, let me look and see if anything else sounds good first. How are you guys? I haven't talked to any of you since last Friday."

She directed her question to the rest of the table, which included Lisa, Mike, Matt and Mary. Amy was close friends with Jill and Lisa, but knew the others well also. Amy was the complete opposite of Jill and Lisa, who were both tall and thin. Amy was relatively short and a little overweight. Amy's two friends were also very assertive and opinionated.

Lisa answered Amy's question. "Well we've all got beer, so we're off to a good start!" said Lisa. "What took you so long to get here? We've been waiting for about 20 minutes."

"Well, my boss forgot to lock his door again before he left for the day, so I had to wait for security to..."

“Oh, did he go off and forget again?” Lisa asked. “He is the most forgetful person about that. It’s not very fair that you have to stay around and wait for security to lock up. I think you should complain.” Lisa flipped her hair back and put her nose up in the air as if she were the one inconvenienced.

“It’s not really a big deal,” Amy said. “It doesn’t happen very often. Besides, the extra money won’t kill me.”

“What are you guys talking about?” Matt asked, and scooted over closer to them. “Why were you so late Amy? We already ordered some of that all you can eat chicken, and your share is \$2 because Mike and Mary don’t want any. You can pay me back by buying me a beer.”

“Well, I’m not sure if I want chicken,” Amy replied. “I think I’d rather have a hamburger instead. Can’t you guys just split it among yourselves?” She looked at Matt expectantly.

“I’ll try to find someone else to go in on it,” Matt said. “But I don’t have enough money if you don’t want any.” He looked at Amy as if he expected her to go ahead and have chicken even though she didn’t want it.

“Let me think about it,” Amy said, but Matt had already turned to a new conversation. Amy looked across to Mike.

“What’s new?” she asked him. “I haven’t seen you for a couple weeks, have I?”

“No,” he said. He didn’t say anything more, and just looked down at his hands.

“Great,” Amy muttered to herself. Mike was in one of his moods where he didn’t talk to anyone. Amy hated trying to drag information out of him when he was like this.

She turned back to Lisa. “Did you finish your paper?” Amy asked.

“Yeah, it took me long enough, but it’s done,” Lisa said. “Did I tell you how I almost lost everything on my disk? I was just typing when the bomb symbol appeared out of nowhere. I called a computer guy over and I said, ‘What happened? What the hell’s going on with my disk? I have to get this done!’ I think I scared him a little. I was

— really pissed, especially when he told me I had to go to this other building and...”

Lisa’s voice droned on.

Amy pretended to listen. She had heard similar versions of this story from Lisa throughout the year, and she always recovered her material in the end. Amy wondered why Lisa never learned what the problem was so it wouldn’t happen again.

“You know, I’ve been pretty lucky with computers so far,” Amy said. “There was one time, though, when I lost everything ten minutes before my final paper was due.”

“Yeah, that’s awful when it happens,” Lisa said in a disinterested tone, and turned away. Lisa’s face became blank and her eyes glazed over when Amy started talking.

After Lisa cut her story off, Amy sat and listened to the other conversations for a while. Comments were directed at her, but no response time was allowed. She finished her beer and sandwich, said her good-byes and prepared to leave.

“Hey, don’t forget the \$2 you owe me for the chicken,” Matt said.

— “I didn’t eat any,” Amy said. “I thought you guys were going to split it.”

“Well, I thought you said you wanted chicken. That’s why we ordered it, because we thought you were going in on it.”

“I’ll have to pay you back in a few days,” Amy said in a resigned tone. “I’m out of money.”

“You can buy me a beer next week,” Matt said, and turned away.

Amy sighed, said good-bye again, and left. She walked home alone because it gave her time to think and it wasn’t dark out yet. She recalled the time she let her friend Mary talk her into road-tripping to Ohio for the weekend.

“We can stay with my friends on-campus, so all we have to pay for is gas and food,” Mary said. “It will be really cheap, I promise.”

— “O.K., as long as we don’t have to pay for a hotel. I can’t really afford it,” Amy replied. However, the night before they left, their accommodation plans fell through.

“We can’t stay with my friends now because one of their sisters is visiting,” said



Mary. "I still really want to go, though. I haven't seen them for quite a while, and they planned things for us to do. Come on, Amy. It'll still be fun, and we'll find a cheap hotel to stay in."

They ended up paying a total of \$60 for a room because all the cheap ones were booked for a local event. Amy never said anything because she hated conflicts and rationalized that Mary didn't know anything about the crowds that would be there.

Another time Amy let her boyfriend John talk her into taking country dancing lessons, even though she hated country music. "It will be a new experience for me," she told herself. She had hated every minute of the weekly lessons, and it was a month before John figured out that Amy wasn't enjoying herself.

She reached her house and went in. The pictures on the walls and her lack of closet space attested to her roommates' dominance of the house. Amy's belongings were mainly confined to her sparsely-decorated bedroom. She felt bad if she left things lying out in the living room for more than a day, but she didn't mind that her roommates' shoes continued to pile up around the couch.

There was a message on the machine from Jill. "Hey, Amy! Where did you go? I finished talking to Mike and looked up, and you were gone. Did you crawl out or something? Anyway, call my house later if you want to go out with us tonight. Bye."

"Maybe I'll just stay here tonight and practice being obnoxious like you," Amy said out loud to the voice on the machine, and erased the message.

\* \* \* \*

By the next week, Amy felt like she needed to be more assertive. She walked into the bar with more conviction than she normally did, and sat down to the usual greetings.

"Hi Amy," Jill said. "Did you ever get my message last Friday? We all went out dancing, and we thought you had said you were definitely going."

"I had some other things I had to do. Thanks for trying to get a hold of me,

though. I appreciate it. Maybe tonight we can all go out. I'd like to go to that new bar that just opened on..."

"Do you mean Aslan's Corner?" Mary said. "I heard it wasn't really that..."

"Let me finish, Mary," Amy said. "I never even told you what street it's on. You're right, it is Aslan's Corner. Have you heard bad things about it? Because I thought it looked kind of neat from the outside."

"I don't know," Lisa said. "I was just thinking about staying here tonight and drinking. I thought you and I had decided to do that, Amy. Don't you want to do that anymore?"

"I guess I don't remember talking about it," Amy said. "I don't really care what we do, but that new place is supposed to have a D.J. and mixed drinks, not just beer. I also heard they have a huge dance floor." Amy opened her mouth to tell more about the place, but before she could utter a syllable, Matt finished her description for her.

"Yeah, and it has tons of lights around it and the floor even lights up. It sounds like disco to me, but I guess it's been packed the last couple of nights." Amy clenched her hands and tried not to make her frustration obvious. When Matt was finished, she jumped back into the conversation.

"What I was going to say was that they have a reverse cover charge for the first 100 people, a dollar, and that they're giving away T-shirts tonight," Amy said. "I also heard that after 9:30 the cover charge goes up to \$4 and you have to..."

Jill cut in this time, pushing her chest forward over the table. "Don't you have to have at least two I.D.s? I heard that..."

"You have to have at least two picture I.D.s," Amy finished for her. She was trying to steer the conversation back her way.

"Like I was saying," Jill continued with a glance toward Amy, "they're really getting tough about that stuff."

"Well, what do you want to do?" Amy asked, and sighed. She sat back in her

chair.

"Hey Amy," Matt said. "Do you have that \$2 you owe me? I could use it tonight at the bars because I'm about broke."

"Matt, I never ate chicken last week," Amy said and sat forward. "I don't owe you \$2. Sorry."

"Well next time don't tell me you want chicken if you're not going to eat it," he responded, and stood up abruptly. "I'll be back in a minute," he said, pouting, and walked away.

Amy rolled her eyes and turned back to Lisa and Jill.

"So, what's it going to be tonight?"

"Well, we decided to just go to your house and drink for a while before we go anywhere. It's cheaper that way," Jill said, and fixed her lipstick in the reflection from the window.

"Whatever," Amy replied. Then she mumbled, "But I don't remember inviting you."

"What did you say?" Lisa asked.

"Nothing. I'm going home to clean up. Give me a call when you're coming over."

\* \* \* \*

As she entered the front door, she noticed that her roommates had left the lights on. She figured that Sally and Beth had been there and left already. They were from the same home town and had gone there for the weekend.

When Amy went into the kitchen, she saw the man standing at the open refrigerator. He was rummaging through the shelves, apparently looking for something to eat. He was much bigger than her 5'4" frame, at least 6'5" and 250 pounds and could easily overpower her. After a momentary paralysis, Amy wisely decided it would be best to leave before he noticed her. She took a small step

backwards, and then another. She didn't want to turn her back on him, for fear that he might catch her from behind before she had a chance to run. She had completed her fourth backwards step when he turned and spotted her.

"Hey!" he yelled. "What are you doing?"

Amy turned to run. As soon as she turned, though, he grabbed her arm tightly.

"You're not going anywhere," he said, and Amy was filled with disgust, fear, panic and indignation.

When he twisted her around she could smell his stale breath, and his eyes showed only anger. In his hand he held a gun, and it looked big and dangerous. She couldn't take her eyes off of it, and the effect was dizzying.

"What's your name?" the intruder asked as he pushed her into the living room. He breathed the words into her face. "Are you Amy, Sally or Beth? I brought your mail in for you, and it looks like you got a couple of bills. Don't you hate them?" He grinned at Amy, revealing yellow, crooked teeth. It intimidated her.

She felt as if she couldn't breathe, and she couldn't form the words to say her own name. Amy struggled to keep herself under control.

"Calm down," he said. "I just asked a simple question. Why don't you sit there on the couch? Maybe you can tell me your name then."

Amy obeyed him. It was her nature, after all. She sat on the edge of the couch, keeping her eyes on him. Her thoughts were frantic as she tried to remember what time her friends were coming. She searched her mind for a way out of the situation. She started to cry, but tried to conceal it from the intruder.

He walked over and put his arm around her. "What's wrong, don't you like me? I just want some of that lasagna you have in the refrigerator. Are you the cook around here?"

Amy shook her head no and continued to cry. This time she didn't try to control it. Her shoulders began to shake and she put her face in her hands.

“Hey, shut up!” the man said. “I just want some lasagna. Stop worrying and just do what I tell you, and everything will be fine. Now go in the kitchen and heat up some lasagna for me. And pour me some milk, too.” He grinned again and Amy couldn’t wait to increase the distance between them. After one step she felt the gun in her back.

“Don’t go near the back door,” he said. “I’ll hear it squeak if you open it.”

Her small hope was shattered, but she tried not to react. She calmly opened the refrigerator and got out the lasagna dish.

“How much do you want?” she asked in a sullen tone.

“This much,” he said, and marked off a large section with his finger. Amy dished it out and heated it up in the microwave. Then she got a glass out of the cabinet and filled it with milk. “You’ll have to carry the milk,” he said. “I got my hands full.”

They went back into the living room. “Come sit here beside me,” he said, and patted the couch next to him. “Let’s watch some T.V. while I enjoy my meal.” Amy began to feel less and less scared and more and more angry and impatient. Performing an every-day task like cooking had calmed her nerves a bit. This guy didn’t seem to have any purpose there except to eat lasagna and drink milk. She watched as he shoveled the food into his mouth and used his sleeve as a napkin. He was ugly, obnoxious, and seemed to have no purpose for bothering and threatening her in her own home. It was disgusting and she closed her eyes.

“Hey, wake up!” he said loudly. “You’re supposed to be keeping me company. I didn’t come here to eat alone.”

Amy felt her face turn red, and she tried to think of a way to keep the situation under control, but get rid of him, too. She remembered a conversation she had with John once when she was feeling frustrated about the response she got from people.

“Maybe you should try telling jokes or something,” he told her. “Everyone likes to hear a joke, as long as it’s good.”

Amy thought that maybe she could get on this guy's good side if she made him laugh. The problem was that she could never remember the jokes after she heard them. Finally, one came to mind.

"Do you want to hear a joke?" Amy asked. "I couldn't stop laughing when I first heard this one."

The guy turned from the T.V. to look at her. "It had better be good," he said. "Wait until a commercial, then you can tell me. It's at a good part right now."

Amy waited patiently for a commercial, trying to appear compliant and cooperative. When one came on, he turned back to her and gave the thumbs-up sign.

"Shoot," he said.

"O.K.," Amy said. "Ready?" He nodded.

"Three men walk into a bar. The fourth man gets smart and ducks."

Amy grinned and waited for his reaction. He just sat for a minute, rubbing his chin as if in deep thought. When he looked up, he frowned at Amy.

"You're trying to make me look stupid, aren't you? That's not really a joke, is it?"

"Sure it is," Amy said. "Listen." She held up her arm. "Pretend this is a bar, O.K? Now, three men walk into this bar." Amy banged her forehead against her arm to illustrate. "The fourth man ducks." Amy put her head under her arm. "Get it?"

"Yeah, I got it, but I think it's a pretty stupid joke. Don't tell me anymore." He turned back to the T.V. Amy realized at that point how dim the man really was. She knew that he probably still didn't get the joke, even after she illustrated for him. She tried to think of a way to take advantage of his stupidity.

"Is there a particular reason you're here?" Amy asked. "Did you plan to steal something, or were you just hungry?"

"I got my plans," he said.

"Well, could you get on with it, then? I have friends coming over and I need to get cleaned up before they get here."

He glared at her. Amy listened to the T.V. as Pat Sajak asked if there was a "K" in the puzzle. For a minute Amy was tempted to look over the intruder's shoulder and solve it, but she refrained. It was probably best to give this large angry man her full attention.

"You got people coming over?" he asked. "What time? You never said anything about no friends."

"They should be here any minute," Amy said. "We wanted to get an early start on our partying."

"Well you call them and tell them not to come," he said. "I don't want anyone here."

"Why not?" Amy asked. "Did someone tell you about my boyfriend? He's really nice, I promise. Just because he's been shot a couple of times doesn't make him a bad guy. But I guess he wouldn't really be bothered that much by your gun, would he? I understand that you're probably just scared. Don't worry, I'll call."

Amy watched as the intruder took in what she said. He seemed to realize that he had been insulted, because the creases in his forehead deepened.

"What do you mean, scared? I'm not scared of anyone. I just don't want a bunch of people here."

"Well I think it would be neat for my boyfriend to meet someone bigger and meaner than him," Amy said. "He's got an ego that's out of control, and you would be just the one to bring him down to size."

"I thought you said he wasn't mean," the intruder said.

"Well, he's not, really. He only gets upset when he sees me with other guys. I could just be talking to them, like I am to you, and he gets upset. I don't know what to do. Once he broke my friend's nose just because he shared his Calculus notes with me. I was really mad at him, but I sure feel safe with him. Come on, let him come over. A big guy like you could take him easily. Even without the gun." Amy paused. "Don't

you think you could do it?"

"Of course I could!" he said angrily, and got up to pace the room. He walked back and forth in front of Amy, hands clasped behind his back, head down. He paused and considered for a moment. "All right, let them come. But I'm warning you, don't try to scream and warn them before they get in the house, because I'll shoot."

"No problem," Amy said, and set about wondering how her friends could help her. As Amy thought, the man continued to pace. Back and forth he went for four or five minutes. He muttered to himself, and stopped periodically to stare out the window. He seemed to be watching for Amy's friends.

"When are they getting here?" he asked. "I thought they were on their way."

"Well, my friend Jill is always running late. She has to comb her hair about a million times and keep her lipstick fresh. Her efforts are always worth it, though." Amy looked up to see if he was having second thoughts. Apparently he wasn't, because he had gone back to pacing.

He stopped again and turned to Amy. "I'm giving your friends five minutes to get here, and then I'm leaving. I'm trying to do you a favor, you know, by cutting your boyfriend down, but I can only go so far. Go dish up the rest of that lasagna for me. It'll be a payback for the time I'm wasting."

Amy rushed to the kitchen and put the rest of the lasagna in a dish for him. She prayed that her friends wouldn't show up before he got tired of waiting. She took the dish into the living room. "Here you go," she said. "I'm sorry they're taking so long. You know, maybe you shouldn't worry about beating my boyfriend. I've been thinking about breaking up with him anyway, so it won't matter if he's mean or not. I know you've waited too long already, and you have a lot to do. I won't be mad if you need to go."

"Yeah, their five minutes is up. Sorry, but I'm leaving, and don't expect me to do any more favors for you. It's just a waste of my time." Amy held her breath while he



spoke, and watched as he edged towards the back door. Amy grew more excited with each step.

"Thanks for the lasagna," he said. "I hope you don't mind, but I'm going to keep the dish. See ya." And with that, he walked through the kitchen and out the back door. Amy rushed to close it behind him, and secured both locks. Then she ran to the front door to lock it, too. As she approached it, she saw a face appear in the window.

"Shit!" she said. "I thought I got rid of him." She reached for the phone to call the police, but as she did, she saw that the face was Matt. Her friends had arrived.

Amy opened the door triumphantly. She felt confidence flowing through her. She had tricked an intruder into leaving with only lasagna and a dish! How brilliant could one person be?

"You guys will never believe what just..." Amy said.

"Save it," Jill said, and walked past Amy into the living room. "We're thirsty. Start opening the beer." Amy paused for a moment before she spoke. She turned to Jill and smiled.

"Open it yourself, lazy-ass," Amy said, and sat down on the couch to watch the end of *Wheel of Fortune*.

The End