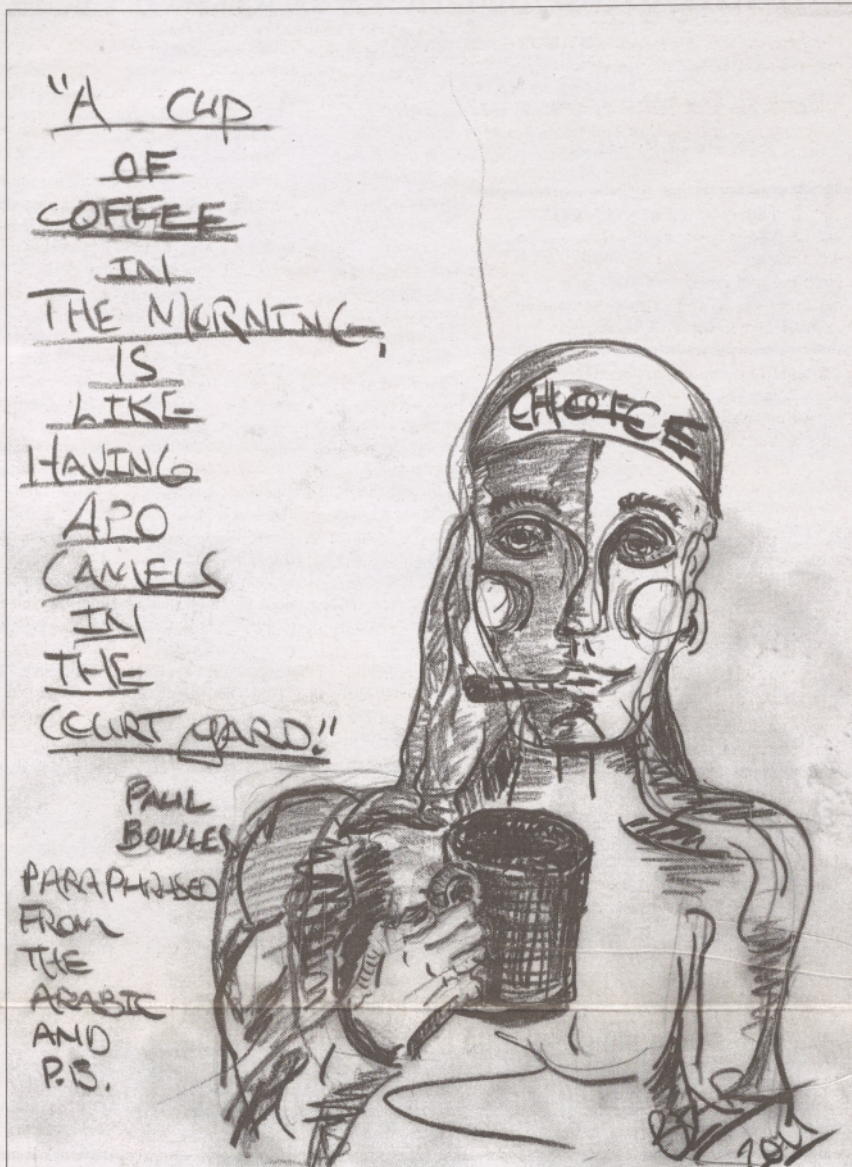


## red and blue lights

by John Thiemeyer

my transfer hadn't yet expired  
or at least the driver nodded me in  
behind me the two girls who'd been  
talking with their mothers, each friend pressing against  
the other as they jockeyed for chance to check in  
on a cell phone they shared  
conclusion: a routine  
they'd say 'I love you  
i luv u  
over and over  
like two serpents entwined  
two creatures syllibatingly beseechingly and lovingly  
at the moon  
canines perhaps, wolves perhaps  
but into a shared cellphone

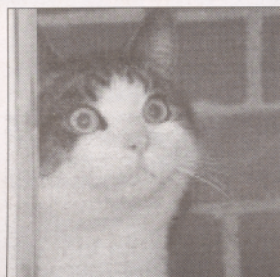
the one girl, the one with the wet bear clinging  
to her overstuffed  
backpack, had asked me for change  
I looked at her I suppose disapprovingly  
and was getting ready to say, 'I'm tapped already'  
when she said I need a nickel for the bus  
here's 5 pennies  
I told her forget the pennies and found myself  
near tears as I handed her the nickel  
we were standing in the rain, heavy but irregular  
drops enough to distract while at the same time propelling  
a person of whatever age into deeper thoughts  
the lights at night in downtown were the same  
you'd see reflected on rainy streets  
anywhere there was a nightlife, the sounds  
of traffic and subdued talk, the same  
but the 'i luv u i luv u' in that strange contorted  
valentine — that was rare.  
it echoed as we drove over the bridge  
I walked with it in the rain  
walked it like a dog on a leash.  
On the bus I sat in the disabled section  
and held on. I was the youngest of the crew  
a dog faced me. I wanted to steal the bandana.  
I was thinking, this being a moment, a rainy night,  
made for deep thinking: I could have walked  
it's just over the bridge. If the driver had said anything,  
I could of said something like, "my hip would really appreciate it  
if ..." and he probably would have let it go. He was clowning with  
another passenger when the red and blue lights flashed by. Their  
moment magnified by the rain on the windows  
They were headed behind us to the old Hatfield or the Stewart.  
"Another expiration date come due" I thought. A room opening up. Maybe  
for that fella who'd tapped me outside the convenience store earlier.



By Bear

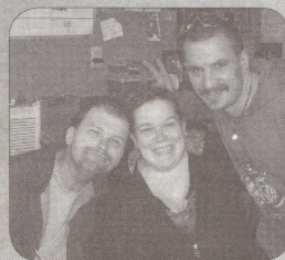
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