



tablet  
fall 2006  
syncretism



# statement

'Syncretism' describes the merging of beliefs, groups, or traditions. Often, the word denotes one religion's integration of elements from another. In this capacity, syncretism seems nearly impossible to achieve. One might expect that religion, characteristically insular and dogmatic, would be especially resistant to alien influence. Yet be it covert (Yoruban Orishas taking on the guises of Catholic Saints in Cuban Santería) or overt (the fusion of Shintoism and Japanese Buddhism), our collective history is rife with instances of syncretism. This is a simple testament that even our most coveted and contentious beliefs about reality may find harmony with those of foreign origin.



Jerone Hsu

Sherrie Hui

# info

Visit us at: [www.columbia.edu/cu/tablet](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/tablet)  
Direct all queries and submissions to  
[columbiatablet@gmail.com](mailto:columbiatablet@gmail.com)

# table of contents

Abhijit Nagaraj - Tender	4
Lisa Danaczko - Bronx, 2003	5
Karen Leung - Kindergarten	6
Rachel Lindsay - Untitled	7
Hannah Assadi - The Lover	8
Jenny Lam - Duende	9
Sara Marie Davis - Sitting Along the Bed's Edge	10
Alisa Brem - In-sight	11
Sherrie Hui - Ant	12
Abby Rosebrock - Sweet Williams in the Evening	13
Dianna Ng - The Aroma of Apple Green Tea Between Us	14
Jennifer Cheung - Lurk	15
Elena Megalos - Lilly	16
Lexi Tsien-Shiang - Untitled	17
Phyllis Ma - Untitled	18
Dan Haley - Yellowstone	19
Swetha Regunathan - The Dig	23
Duygu Demir - Untitled	24
Jerone Hsu - Flies and Dust	25
outside front/back cover: Fish Market - Jerone Hsu + Taiwanese Rust - Jerone Hsu	
inside front/back cover: Third Set - Marlow Davis + Sleeping Crocodiles - Jennifer Cheung	
bio illustration: Nonth Inking - Lexi Tsien-Shiang medium: ink on found art	

# staff list

## Editors-in-Chief

Jerone Hsu  
Sherrie Hui

## Associate Literary Editor

Jessica Ling

## Associate Art Editor

Elena Megalos

## Layout Editor

Daniel Taeyoung Lee

## Art Staff

Marlow Davis  
Nancy Xu  
Shelly Zhu

## Literary Staff

Danaya Almenares-Mesa  
Shayne Barr  
Marlow Davis  
Rachel Karp  
Crystal Kim  
Daniel Taeyoung Lee  
Xiomara Maldonado  
Elena Megalos  
Abhi Nagaraj  
Nancy Xu  
Shelly Zhu

## Business/Events

Eleanor Kam  
Jessica Ruiz  
Lawrence Sulak  
Nancy Xu  
David Zhou  
Shelly Zhu

## Webmaster

Matt Nguyen

## And Special Thanks...

Lauri Straney.

## Tender

There is a something-watt light bulb, and it is coughing.

If there was a window, and if you were closely watching, this  
flickering, you would think  
you were looking at a silent film in a deserted theater.

She is a something-years-old woman on a squeaky bed  
and she is watching an old movie.

It is about a round-bellied tribe that roasts and sacrifices souls in  
a big fire pit.

She is eating butter popcorn from a bag, which  
she microwaved the wrong side up. She drops fat crumbs every-  
where,  
and the bag is nearly hollow. It retains its shape, though.

I'm a little boy squatting outside her door, on a bearded  
foot rug. A few hours before, she left a microwavable soul  
on the elevator, by accident I think, and I try to  
squeeze it under her door, so she can have it.

I know she's always looking for it when she's getting ready for  
work  
in the morning.

**Abhijit Nagaraj**



Lisa Danaczko  
"Bronx, 2003"  
Digital print

## Kindergarten

Give me this crippled diction,

oh *dog* oh *spoon* oh *fat*  
in the wide-ruled pages  
under scowling lights;  
it's all so consumptive, I later learn  
when I know what consumption is  
(that nicer name for TB, tee-bee:  
letters naked of periods and  
abbreviated like a life)  
all so sick, that all my absurdities  
are so far reduced  
in an immigrant tongue

three months in this country,  
and I cannot yet speak.

it's enough to drive one to Whitmaniacal frenzy  
but I am calm  
as a comatose girl receiving her first kiss  
it is only in my rib-caged lung that clots  
that resentful old thing, Anger  
(besides, six is much too young for Whitman;  
best to keep such desire hidden from young eyes  
at least until they learn about compound words  
- like 'homoeroticism')

My teacher has a combover.  
There is no Cantonese equivalent for 'combover.'

I am not monosyllabic, no,  
but blind as a riddle halved  
before the answer:  
that state of blindness that slips between the lips:  
There is a region of inquiry  
breathing in my mouth; it has swollen past the class-  
room walls, and  
has taken my doubtful brow for a bride,  
mute and wrinkled, lovely like a question.

An inquiring couple, they will call themselves;  
they will honeymoon as hungry  
rumrunners of the tongue;  
pirates, pirating not to steal but  
to gaze upon  
the busty figurehead, which promises  
ecstatic literate days  
of questions answered.  
(did the quick red fox indeed jump over the lazy  
brown dog?  
does Mickey know about this?)

so: speak all your mouthfuls  
of fluent bathmatted dreams,  
and hopes hammered in a liquid measure,  
or speak  
at all.

Give me this crippled diction,  
and make it walk

(After all, English as a Second Language  
is no language at all.)

**Karen Leung**



Rachel Lindsay  
"Untitled"  
Collage

## The Lover

“Be my lover between two wars waged in the mirror.”-Mahmoud Darwish

“What if I told you that you and I—we—are a story of two lovers?” *And what if I told you that I—I am the desert, with no boundaries, only horizon.* “...and that I ran from death for so long only to find you here tonight, and write the story of our love.” *And that the moon hangs heavy in the swaying dunes of my eyelids, with a betrayal to tell.* “...but that death has caught up with me and learned the language of our fairy tale.” *Or that my night had already infected the players of your plot, and also, the travelers lost in my sands.* “I seek only to love, or perhaps only to see you fall.” *And I seek to melt you in the heat of the sun by morn’.* “What if I win?” *What if you lose, My love?* Then I too will again be the desert, but lost between two mounts that at dusk resemble the lavender embrace of lovers, and at dawn twist into the crimson howls of two enemies at war. *Then we will have to divine some water so that their passion won’t burn up the memory of your dreams-* “Or the indigo mirror of the sky.” *Yes, or the indigo mirror of the sky. Yet the desert always wonders, whether the water is really water or nothing but a mirage.* But don’t forget, love, that the lover always believes the story endures the desert and the mirages of the desert and also that tonight I’m tired, and feel as though I’ve been wandering through your solitude for too long.

Hannah Assadi



Jenny Lam  
“Duende”  
Digital photo

### **Sitting Along the Bed's Edge**

Licking the windows shut like letters  
Nibbling the corners with care  
She paused in the drawing room to consider  
A bear, rearing.

Note her yellow palms and tender thighs  
Note her bewildered hair and face.

She thinks of crabs and oysters.  
She strokes a paperweight.  
Did you know, said the paperweight  
That octopodes have keen eyesight and three hearts?  
Can be taught to master mazes, and also to open jars?

Oh? said she.  
For me,  
I need  
to feel an impetus  
the arch of your foot on my spine; it moors me.

**Sara Marie Davis**



Alisa Brem  
"In-sight"  
Oil on board

## Ant

I saw a trail of them filing neatly, cadet-style up the side of the kitchen counter.

I knew I had to annihilate them all and leave no trace of evidence, not a single arthropodic body to tell the story, for David would surely try to pin this on my bowl of yogurt left by the sink. We were at a point in the relationship where anything, even ants, could be used as ammo in our thrice-weekly, 5-hour throw-downs—later followed by 5-hour sessions of equally furious make-up sex.

He was deathly opposed to every type of household insect, barring the house centipede, which he Googled and happily discovered preyed on mosquitoes, his sworn enemy. Two days after we moved in, some flies found their way into the apartment through a slim gap between the wall and the window screen. He hunted them down one by one with a rolled up *Business 2.0* and afterwards grinned at me as if expecting a Medal of Honor. “I really got them, didn’t I?” I tried to share his enthusiasm, truly I did.

He liked to provoke me by saying that after he made his first billion, he would fund the eradication of mosquitoes. Having endured two semesters of brain hemorrhage-inducing Environmental Science, I interjected that it is generally not a good idea to exterminate an entire species. We argued. “You know you’re saying that you want millions of African children to die of malaria, in order to save a few mosquitoes.” Right, exactly. We liked to argue.

I sought the right moment to pounce, to put a dent in the black dotted line marching up to the sink and blooming into a swarm near the remnants of my honey-whipped

yogurt. I had seen ants once or twice before around our little nest painted two shades tackier than Tiffany’s blue. I had hoped they stood as isolated incidents, one on the arm of the cream-colored sofa, another milling about the scattering of ballpoint pens on the side table. But alas, access to our ancient first floor walk-up proved only too easy, and there was dirt and grass aplenty in the neighboring miniature courtyard for spawning inveterate insects.

I tore a paper towel from the metal overhead rack and looked away slightly as I dispatched a dozen or so into the afterlife. They began to scatter a bit, suddenly aware of the quilted, white doomsday device rapidly descending again and again, until only placid dark spots remained, with no sign of movement. Of all the household insects, I had always dreaded ants the most, because they never came in one or two or even ten, always hundreds and hundreds. And they were so systematic and cooperative; they always left a trail that could be followed by their comrades. Ants penetrated a home swiftly and efficiently.

The case of our Hell’s Kitchen subplot was no exception. They returned a few days after the yogurt incident, crawling from a large pore in the grout of the bathroom tile right back up to the original scene of destruction. Although David and I never fought specifically over the ants, we never lacked for minor artillery to launch into heavy fire. Once as we were in the midst of a smoldering silence, after keys had been flung and the door slammed so hard that the dead bolt dangled from one nail, I could have sworn I was bitten by something, and even though I could not find the tiny creature, I knew it was there.

Sherrie Hui

## The Aroma of Apple Green Tea Between Us

I find myself at Saint's Alp on a stool too small for me.  
I am talking with my friend Sol,  
which means either sun,  
or pine tree,  
depending on the tongue he's screwed on for the day.  
Silence crackles through the crumbs of conversation  
between the finger-sized spring rolls and dumplings small  
enough to eat from a bamboo toothpick,  
the remnants of which I brush off the pleats  
of my woolen winter skirt,  
apt for the weather,  
the skirt I wear even though every time I do  
my legs turn pink.

It is the tea that ties us,  
as we sip from our porcelain cups, heavy in our palms.  
Surrounding us are wisps of *mai dan!* and *yeet luk cha!*  
that seep into our conversation about Li-Young Lee.  
The warmth down our throats as we drink,  
smoothes away our worries, as we talk about this city  
in which we love.

Dianna Ng

### **Sweet Williams in the Evening**

She plans to buy two handsome dogs and name  
The first one Dante so the second can  
Be Brontë. Oh, how nicely that works out,  
She muses, wondering if she'll find a man  
To tell her that he can't resist her wit  
In trivial domestic matters like  
The christening of dogs; to laugh aloud  
If she should trip across a cobblestone  
And curse the heels she knows not why she bought.  
I'll name him after you, she tells the soft  
Bouquet of purple flowers, rimmed with white  
And small as buttons, purchased yesterday  
With dollar bills her father mails each week  
To make her lonely bedside bloom with love.

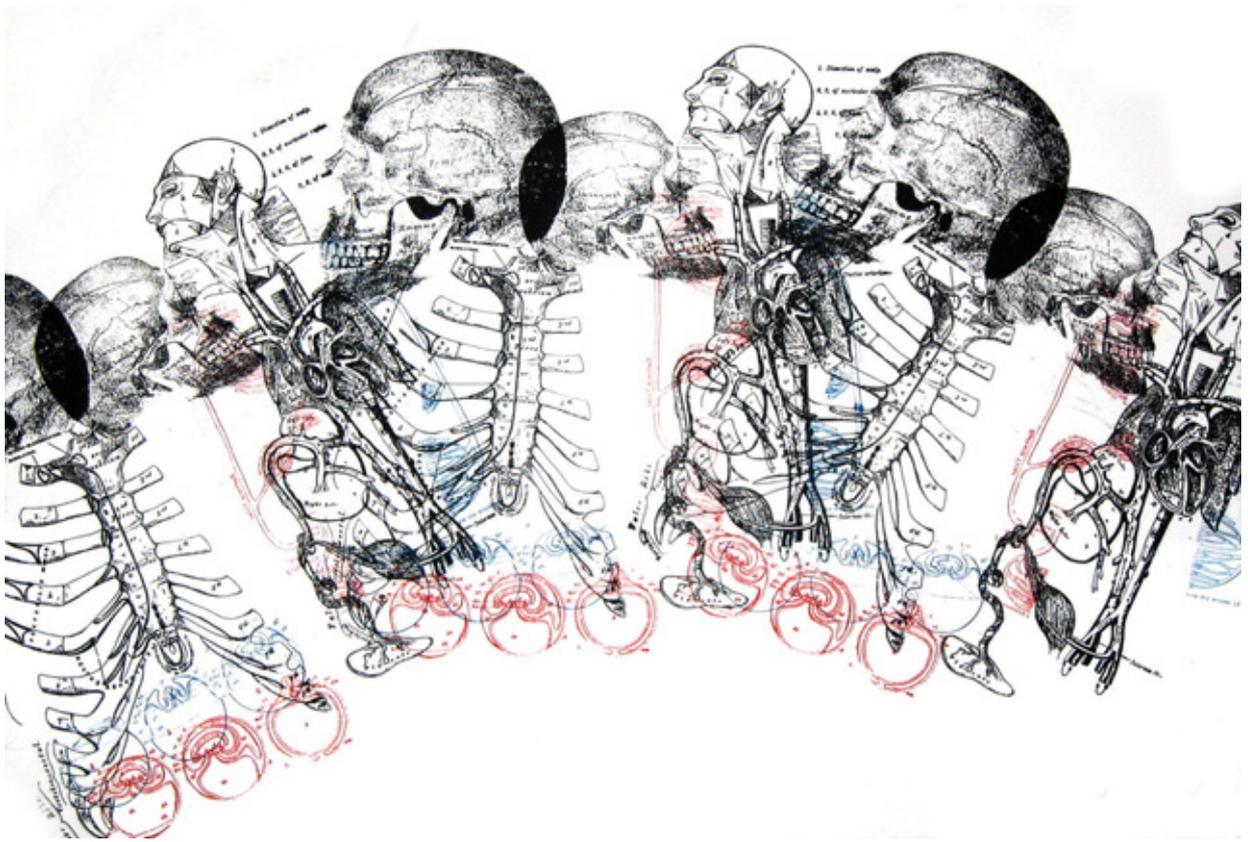
**Abby Rosebrock**



Jennifer Cheung  
"Lurk"  
Digital photo



Elena Megalos  
“Lilly”  
Acrylic and ink on wood



Lexi Tsien-Shiang  
"Untitled"  
Silkscreen print



Phyllis Ma  
"Untitled"

Acrylic and oil on canvas

The plane ride was long, took Matt over the Dakotas and the Midwest. Apparently, there's a big stretch in the middle of the country that's just all dirt or something. Matt thought it must have been "the Badlands" he'd heard so much about in his American Literature class. Salt Lake City was full of men in suits and ties and healthy blonde girls with huge tits. Matt began to read his D.H. Lawrence more affectedly, hoping to attract the Mormon girls. Then, he relented, drawing the conclusion that Mormon girls probably don't read all that much and likely hold a standard of attractiveness different from that which prevails on Ivy League campuses.

As the bus wove its way through the mountains and geysers, deep into Yellowstone National Park, Matt looked up and saw sky everywhere, sky like he'd never seen before and he couldn't help wondering whether he should have taken that internship with *Time Out New York* after all. To be fair, he didn't know much about park ranging and really didn't like animals or nature. He'd never been camping and just the thought of smiling, perky outdoorsy people made him feel tired and bored, homesick for book stores and overpriced cocktails.

But, Matt was on a mission. He'd told everyone he went out West because it was the opportunity of a lifetime. In reality, he had signed up for spite. He'd wanted to put as much distance between him and his ex-girlfriend as possible. Matt and Brenda had decided to "take a break" toward the end of freshman year, somewhere around March. At least, that's what Matt had told everyone. In reality, "taking a break" was a euphemism for "my girlfriend dumped me and is now dabbling in lesbianism." 3,000 miles sounded good. Actually, it sounded great. It had made Brenda cry and that was really all that mattered. While she was going to spend her summer at home in her suburban New Jersey town, Matt was heading out West and was going to do big, Kerouackian things, things full of "Great Knowing" and "Historical Courage," things that involve capital letters, mainly. Also, Matt was going to fuck cowgirls. He hadn't been laid once since Brenda dumped him and he was going to fuck some cowgirls.

"So, do you know what you're going to be doing here?" asked Matt, speaking to the girl dozing off next to him on the bus.

"What?" she asked, coming to. "Oh...um, what?"

"I mean, for a job, do you know what you're doing here?"

"Oh, Food and Dining. I'm a waitress. What about you?"

"I'm a park ranger."

"Really? Wow, you must have been in the military or law enforcement?"

"No, why?" asked Matt.

"I think you need to if you're a ranger," said the girl. "Lemme see

your papers?"

Matt fumbled with the wrinkled documents in his coat pocket and puzzled himself over the capitals and block lettering and abbreviations before handing it over to the girl.

"It says you're a janitor."

"No, no, I'm a park ranger."

"No JA-435 GRANT," said the girl. "That means you're a janitor in Grant Village. I did that last year. You clean the lodges and make the beds."

"There must have been some type of...I swear I thought the website said....a janitor?"

"Yeah."

Matt took the papers back and crumpled them into his pocket.

"I see you've got a guitar there," said Matt.

"Yeah, do you play?"

"No..."

Matt looked down into his hands and realized he was wringing the shit out of *Women in Love*.

"This is a good book," said Matt. "Have you ever read D.H. Lawrence?"

"Maybe some of his plays."

Matt dragged himself into the employee pub. He had missed dinner that night; his boss had been yelling at him, telling him he was making the beds all wrong and cheating on the bathrooms, not wiping up the hair stuck in the drains. They were strict about the alcohol policy in the pub, so he had already loaded up on Kentucky Gold Whiskey in his cabin before walking in. The combination of the altitude, the empty stomach, and the 96 proof alcohol had him talking louder and walking clumsier than usual.

He looked over toward the pool table and saw that girl from the cabin across the way.

Her name was Kelly and she was in housekeeping. She definitely looked a lot better without the yellow rubber gloves and the red company polo shirt, her hair let out, blonde and chin length, tight tank top and rich tan skin. She was definitely a cowgirl and it had already been two weeks. Two weeks and Matt hadn't gotten any. Of course, it didn't help matters that Yellowstone was practically a penal colony. Not only was Kelly one of the only halfway decent-looking girls walking around, she was also one of the *only* girls walking around, barring the tourists' daughters and wives, all of whom Matt, by this point, had little to no scruples about sleeping with, employee regulations and statutory rape laws aside.

"Hey, this's a lot better than work, right?" asked Matt.

"Um, yeah, definitely," she said, watching the pool game.

"I'm Matt."

"I'm Kelly," not even looking at him, eyes glued to the balls bouncing around.

"Hey Kel, watch this," one of the guy's shouted from the pool table. He scratched the ball hard, sending it flying at her. Kelly shrieked and got out of the way. Matt was still trying to figure out what was going on when the 6 ball caught him in the cheek.

"Fuck!" Matt shouted, doubling back against the wall. The pain was sharp and he knew that when he sobered up it was going to hurt a lot. He held his cheek gently but firmly, as though it threatened to fall off of his face.

"Whoa!" said the guy who shot the ball, adjusting his baseball cap and grinning. The other guys standing around watching the game were chuckling or all out laughing, one of them hanging onto the pool table for support.

"I'm awfully sorry there, man," said the shooter. "I was aiming for Kelly there."

"You asshole," said Kelly, pronouncing 'asshole' as though it were 'crazy, loveable guy'. She walked up to him and pointed a finger in his chest and arched her eyebrows.

"Dude, seriously, that was my fucking face you hit," said Matt, watching as Kelly giggled in the shooter's arms. He was tickling her.

"Oh, what?" the shooter asked, looking up from Kelly.

"My face, man. My face," said Matt.

"Oh, I'm really sorry man, I thought you were OK. Ball just kind of got away from me, you know?" and he went back to tickling Kelly.

"Noooo, stop, Paul, that's too much, nooooo," said Kelly, her voice fading as Matt approached the bar.

Matt nursed a water for a long time, holding his cheek and he could still smell the ammonia on him from all the bathrooms he had cleaned. He watched Kelly fawn all over the shooter, Paul, laughing, staring at him, eye contact, flashing her big bright smile every so often. He thought about his ex-girlfriend, Brenda, about the poetry she'd write, all the fucking books she'd read on theory and aesthetics and wondered if Kelly had read a single book over the past year. Paul didn't look too literate either, with his Guinness t-shirt and that tin of chewing tobacco bulging from his back pocket.

Matt was debating about whether to go back to the table when he saw Tyler walking toward him from across the pub. Matt had met Tyler before, didn't remember his name but knew he was friendly, albeit in a dopey kind of way. He came from Nebraska and had mentioned something about wanting to be a pilot. To Matt, this was in the same league as wanting to be a racecar driver or the emcee at the annual Hillbilly Ball; just not a practical life-goal. But, Tyler did have one thing to recommend him: he was always dancing with those two Spanish girls. Wide Hispanic hips, hot Hispanic asses giggling around the pub, tight small, little latin tits and so what if one of them was this side of hefty? None of Matt's

friends were here and damn if he wasn't horny...and Spanish? Come on. There's not an upper-middle class boy in New York who doesn't want to bang one of those long-nailed, angry hotties that stay on the train after 116<sup>th</sup>. With this in mind, Matt smiled and nodded in Tyler's direction, trying to think of stuff to talk about. Tyler liked planes; that was something. Matt saw *Top Gun*—maybe they could talk about that. Matt kept smiling even though his cheek hurt from the 6 ball.

"Hey Matt, what's going on?" Tyler asked.

"Hey.....man" said Matt.

"You don't remember my name, do you?"

"Um...well actually..." and Tyler was right. Matt *had* forgotten Tyler's name. Beyond that, he'd actually forgotten that he'd forgotten Tyler's name. But he remembered Tyler wanted to be a pilot. Spanish girls! Focus!

"Don't worry about it, I'm Tyler" and Tyler extended his hand. "There's so many people working here. I think I must have met one hundred people in the last two weeks."

"Yeah, it's, um...it's hard. You're a waiter, right?"

"It's not as good as you think. The people here really don't tip well."

"Don't worry, I don't clean their rooms well. Only rarely do I even give them new sheets. Just retuck the old ones."

"Really? That's...well, that's really pretty awful. I wouldn't want to sleep in one of your rooms."

"Hey, I mean, if they gave us more time, or maybe even paid me a little over the absolute minim—"

"Looks like you took a pretty hard hit there," Tyler said.

"Wha—oh, yeah. I guess I did."

"Don't worry, Paul's a real jerk. He got kicked out of the Navy for using meth."

"Meth...like methadone?"

"No, meth like the stuff that makes you stay up for days straight trying to claw your eyes out."

"So I lost out to a meth user?" Matt asked.

"Looks like it," Tyler said, whistling. "Hey man, you want to get out of here? I wanted to head on down to that geyser at Mirror Point; it's supposed to be beautiful."

Matt ran his eyes across the pub. Kelly and Paul were making out against the pinball machine and the only other woman in sight was wearing a Nascar t-shirt and missing her front teeth. *Street Fighter II* kept flashing broken, advising the customer to seek out technical assistance.

"Yeah, sure, I'll go." Matt said. "Might as well get out into the park a little, long as I'm here." And maybe later there'd be Spanish girls.

Tyler's red Chevy barreled down the road, clocking eighty and barely holding together. When Tyler suggested that they put on some country music, Matt took a swig of whiskey and agreed, thinking the occasion called for some Johnny Cash or Hank Williams, hard-living songs about men leaving their women behind and ending up in Folsom prison.

Instead, Tyler slipped a Shania Twain CD into the stereo. Bobbing his head with the hooks and strumming on the steering wheel, Tyler asked Matt, "So, what are you studying man?"

"Philosophy mostly. I'm doing a little writing too. I'm really a writer."

"Wow, I could tell you were all deep. Do you write books?"

"Um, well, I mean, I could. I will one day."

"I would totally read anything you write," said Tyler, looking over at Matt and smiling. "Sorry, I'm a little drunk." Tyler said, scrunching up his nose.

They'd been walking for almost a mile when they realized that it was too dark outside to see the geyser. It *was* dark; dark like Matt had never seen, no lights for tens of miles in every direction. Just the moon.

"I can't believe it!" said Matt, dropping the nearly empty Yellowstone brand whiskey bottle to the dirt. "Of course we can't see the damn geyser, it's pitch black out here."

"Yeah, I know, it's really creepy. I think I heard something rustling in the bush over there. They say there's grizzlies around this part of--"

"This is like the allegory of the cave! Out here, man, you can really see. Kierkegaard said you have to take a leap of faith and you know what? I think that Kierkegaard was really full of it. Just fucking full of it, man."

"Matt, I'm serious, there's something in that bush."

The bush shook and an elk stepped out of it, leaves nestled in its horns. Matt heard those horns referred to as a rack. Probably read it in one of those hunting magazines in his Italian barber's shop.

"Those horns there are its rack. You can tell how old a moose is from how many horns it's got."

"That's not a moose; it's an elk." Tyler said.

"It's the same thing for elks. Trust me."

"You know what, I'm happy I met you, Matt, you seem like a real open-minded type of guy. Let's lie down and look at the stars, I bet you never saw stars like these in New York."

Matt hadn't. There were stars everywhere, criss-crossing the black, more than you could ever count, more than he had even been able to see on those clear nights in his ex-girlfriend's suburban New Jersey town. Matt missed Brenda. He was over her, sure of it, but he'd give anything for one good night with her again, holding her, feel her breath on his neck, tweak her nipples and make barnyard noises until she told him to stop, but then he'd just keep going anyways and Tyler's suddenly leaning against him. Matt could feel Tyler's body pressed up against his and now it all made sense. The Shania Twain, the compliments about his writing, the whole goddamn trip down to look at the stars or the geyser or whatever they came here to see. *This is something I'd ask a girl to do. I'd ask her if she wants to check out a geyser with me when it's pitch black out and I know we're going to wind up looking at the stars together*, thought Matt.

Matt braced for the overture, readying himself for everything between a face nuzzle and a sudden goosing. *I just hope this homo doesn't try to fucking snuggle; it's been a long day and I really don't think I could handle*

*that*, thought Matt.

Matt felt Tyler's hand stroke his cheek, softly, slowly and he began to grimace, wanting to stop Tyler but knowing that the minute he turned his head away from the night sky he'd be face to face with a horny, excited young man.

"Now, listen, I know you must think I'm a pretty cool guy," said Matt as he grabbed Tyler's wrist, arresting the stroking. "I mean, there probably aren't too many people from your part of the country who—"

And Tyler's free hand was suddenly all over Matt's crotch, cupping his balls, grasping at his cock, massaging and firm.

"Hey!" shouted Matt, pulling backward. But Tyler's hand followed him, almost never leaving his Matt's crotch. Matt shot his hand downward and batted Tyler's away.

Matt eyed Tyler cautiously, like he would an opponent in a class discussion. In his mind he was going over arguments, wanting to prove decisively how right he was in...*wait a minute!* thought Matt. *This isn't a discussion, this guy's trying to fuck me! What if I'd done the same thing to a girl? I'd be featured in my very own "Take Back the Night" story. Or registered in some database!*

"Look dude, you're lucky I'm a civil kind of guy," said Matt, beginning to stand up, wobbling a little. "We all make mistakes but—"

"Oh, shut the fuck up, man," said Tyler.

"What?"

"Listen, back there in the bar, I saw how much you wanted Kelly. Don't tell me you're not still a little horny."

"Well, yeah, but horny for women, I'm not gay or anything..."

"Do you see a lot of women around here, Matt?"

"Dude, I can *find* women, OK? I mean, I go to Columbia. I think I can figure out how to get laid."

"Oh yeah, who are you going to fuck? Toothless Anne? Or maybe that retarded girl who works in the foodline?"

"Listen, it's not for you to worry who I'm fucking, because...well, I fuck a lot. I get my share. I mean, you don't read as much Nietzsche as I do and not get laid, you know what I'm saying?"

"Get laid? An hour ago you told me you hadn't gotten any since your girlfriend dumped you five months ago!"

"I did?"

"Yeah, Matt."

"Aw, fuck," said Matt, throwing his head back.

"It's OK," said Tyler.

"Nah, it's not OK. I was in the airport, in Salt Lake, and these fucking blonde girls, man...huge tits...huge."

"That doesn't really interest me a ton."

"Oh yeah, I guess it wouldn't, would it? It's just, I mean...there's no women out here, none!"

"More or less the point I'm trying to get across to you, Mr. Empty Bottle."

"Yeah, yeah...well just cool it, Tyler. I'm not going to suck your

dick or anything.”

“No Matt, I’ll suck yours.”

“Um...well, thanks but, and I usually don’t say this in response to blowjobs offered—”

“Matt, you’re kidding yourself; you’re hard as can be.”

“What do you mean?”

“Your dick. It’s not soft anymore. You’re hard.”

Matt looked down. He was. He couldn’t believe he hadn’t noticed it. He remembered reading that there was some type of sixth sense at work telling you what the rest of your body was doing. It was how you were able to touch your fingers together behind your back on the first try. You couldn’t see them but you knew where they were. Apparently, this sixth sense didn’t extend to the cock because, unbeknownst to him, Matt was indeed pitching a tent in his jeans, not fully erect but not soft either, still aroused from Tyler’s fumbblings. Actually, fumbblings wasn’t the right word for it. Tyler’d known just what to do. Matt conjured up visions of Tyler standing in some Nebraska parking lot, tight t-shirt, cars pulling up. A hustler...just like Neal Cassidy.

“So, what do you want to do about that?” asked Tyler, standing up.

“Um...” and this was indeed foreign ground. A blowjob, a free blowjob and Matt didn’t want it. Or, at least he told himself he didn’t want it. But? Free stuff is good. And blowjobs, well, blowjobs are pretty fucking awesome too. And...and this is too serious to even joke about. It’s not, *‘Ha ha! Here’s a gay man that wants to blow me. Oh, what a silly situation we’re in.’* No, when your dick hasn’t felt the caress of a human orifice in the last few months or so and there’s a hot mouth sitting right in front of you, a hot waiting, eager mouth...well, that’s a serious situation.

“First off, you’re not going to tell anyone about this?” Matt asked, his dick dribbling. He ran his eyes over Tyler, scratched his chin: soft skin, blonde locks...penis...but, almost, in the right kind of light...and would it even matter? Tyler’s so much smaller, obviously the more feminine of the two. And it’s not like Matt would be blowing *him*. Matt knew what he was considering wasn’t totally straight but...was it really *totally* gay? Maybe only *kind of* gay. Gay than kissing another guy? Gay than being a vegetarian? Matt loved red meat; he had that going for him.

“How do you think I score with straight guys? By telling all their friends about it afterwards?”

“Fair enough. Um...yeah, alright. I’m on board with this. Do you want me to—um, I mean, how should I?” asked Matt, fumbling with his belt buckle.

“Let me take care of that,” said Tyler, crawling over to Matt and delicately unclasping his—

“Wait! Just...don’t, for a second, I’ve got to think.” Matt said, arresting Tyler’s hand and suddenly understanding the import of his actions. He’ll never be able to say he’s never been blown by another guy. For the rest of his life, he’ll never be one of those guys who can walk down the street, humming along and thinking, *‘Yep. Only cunt for me! Whatever happens, at least I never did any gay shit. Gotta count for something!’*

“Matt, those Spanish girls I’m friends with...they’re horny. I’ll hook you up with them.”

“You will? I mean, well, you mean...they will?”

“Matt, we’re all trying to have a good time here. Me, you, Kelly, Paul, Salma and Rita. It’s the summer. Fucking enjoy it.”

“Well, I...I’ve heard enough. I’m hard and...yeah, come on, man.” Matt said, reaching down with his hands, pulling Tyler’s face in.

Tyler took the bait and before Matt knew it Tyler was unclasping Matt’s belt, unzipping his jeans. Tyler’s fist tightened around Matt’s cock and it grew and stiffened in his hand. That mop of blonde hair, green eyes looking up and the tip disappeared into Tyler’s mouth. Tyler got into a rhythm and Matt closed his eyes.

Matt was afraid to touch Tyler. He was afraid he might hit him. Or worse, maybe he’d start caressing him. Matt thought about his friends at school, the jokes they’d tell, and Matt would always sneak in a few. He was a writer majoring in Philosophy and thus already had two strikes against him. He had to make the third at-bat count and always would, coming up with some clever innuendos about pickles and theater majors. Tyler was slurping up and down, swirling his tongue and Matt began to think about his father. Matt didn’t like to think about his father during heterosexual blowjobs and he really really didn’t want to think about him now. He would probably disapprove, his son, the boy he’d played catch with and introduced to pro-wrestling, being sucked off by another man. Of course, Matt would counter that Tyler was so much smaller and less masculine, it was almost like he was being blown by Brenda, only...not really...only, Tyler had a penis and...well, blowjobs with Brenda just never felt this fucking good.

It was really good. Matt hadn’t been blown in months, not since he and Brenda had broken up. And even back then, it was nothing like this. Not just back and forth, up and down but there was something ineffable about this blowjob. An extra little “Hey there”, some real personality. And then it hit him: Tyler really liked sucking dick. Brenda did it, but Tyler *liked* it.

Matt grimaced and wanted to pull out. He placed his hands on Tyler’s head, lightly, soft hair against his palms and told himself, *just one more second...one more...a little more*. After a while, Matt gave up and began to stroke Tyler’s tangled blonde locks. He breathed in sharply, exhaled slow and drew it all back in, sharp short breaths. The night sky really was amazing, stars everywhere, not at all like the city or Brenda’s backyard. This was different. It was cold out here and geysers were everywhere, the ground literally bubbling underneath. Bubbling, rising, fermenting and Matt could feel that tingly sensation coming on, riding through his legs, traveling up his shaft and he grabbed on tighter to Tyler’s head, pushing hard and pulling himself deeper, deeper and further in, in so far he couldn’t get out.

## The Dig

We come to hear this harmony on the table,  
this clanging to our digressing,  
this old rhythm of psychological defeat  
we call conversations over dinner in a half-fancy,  
half-schmancy restaurant.

(The Lydians first used coins the way we use words,  
as currency in exchange for services, or goods,  
and somewhere in time as considered  
by the congealing of a split pea soup,  
they became inflated, deflated, and too much everywhere,  
sent things crashing,  
like emotions and markets.)

“Fine, we won’t speak of this anymore.”  
Might I remind you that I saved Eastern civilization  
with a few archeological discoveries in the attic,  
some music,  
with some unknown words?  
If only you were more inquisitive.

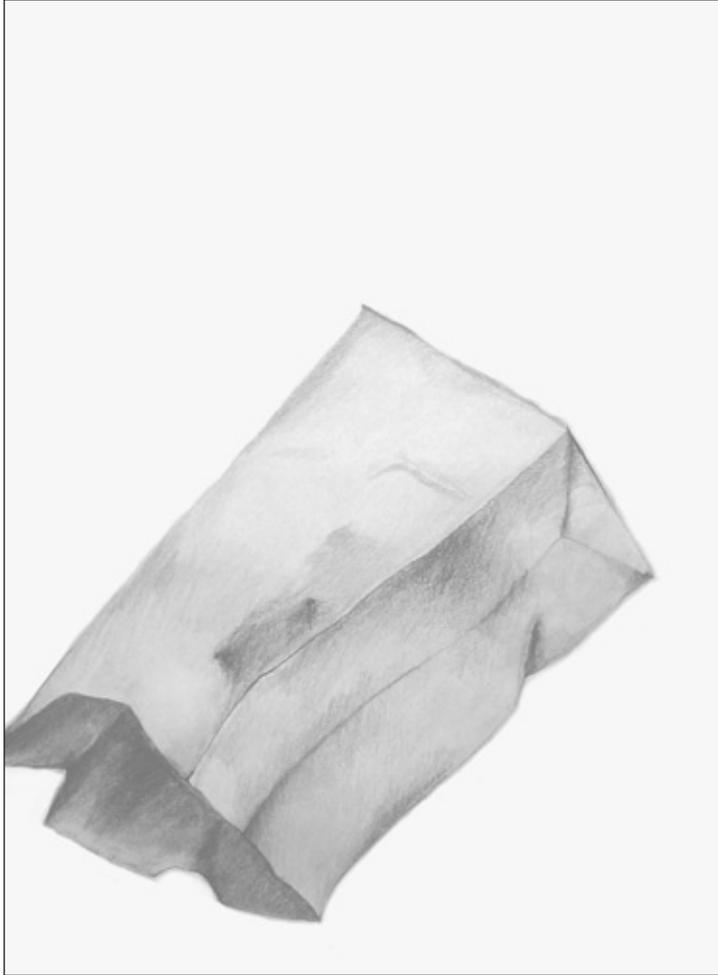
And if you could know how:

I listen so attentively to your sheet music every night,  
your feet tussling with layers of plaid,  
and I dig to reach the other side of the world,  
where I make a remarkable find—  
your foot in your mouth  
(I read about astrolabes in the Age of Discovery-  
the discovery of you as a sleeping body ).

A wet towel shows signs of your gash;  
it smells the way water does after it’s been made love to.

Speaking of fossils,  
I came to excavate this snapshot,  
this lacquer to my blur,  
this demolition we call memory.

Swetha Regunathan



Duygu Demir  
“Untitled”  
Drawing

## Flies and Dust

the TV tells him  
there are

children  
(with only flies and dust to adorn their faint frames, their faint faces)  
starving.

people  
(amidst those flies and that dust, they cleave cavernous wounds that glisten through the shifting haze)  
killing.

everyday.

all the time.

even as he sits,  
in  
cathode mode.

right now,

he is looking for something  
a newspaper will do! (on it, more starving and more killing)  
he swats, misses, swats, misses, swats,  
misses.  
the TV looks on, its dimming gaze capturing  
the settling particles.

**Jerone Hsu**

# tablet bios

**Hannah Assadi** is a junior in Columbia College majoring in Middle Eastern Studies.

**Alisa Brem** is a junior at Columbia College majoring in Architecture and American History. In 1997 she began studying classical realism at Schuler's School of Fine Arts in Baltimore, Maryland and continues to study there under Andy Schuler Guerrin. She has also studied at The Florence Academy of Art and The Art Student's League of New York.

**Jennifer Cheung** was born in Los Angeles but also considers herself from Hong Kong. Her spark of photographic inspiration came when her father put a Canon automatic in her hands during a trip to Japan. He has barely forgiven her for the number of roles she subsequently used up.

**Lisa Danaczko**, a first-year at Columbia College, was born and raised in Houston, Texas. She has been photographing for four years, striving to capture the majestic elements of urban landscapes.

**Marlow Davis** was born in Washington, D.C. and, whilst a wee lad, he lived in Jakarta, Indonesia. His favorite color is yellow and he thinks that Madlib is a genius.

**Sara Davis** is a junior majoring in English from Northern California!

A native of Istanbul, **Duygu Demir** is a junior at Columbia College. She prefers drawing to painting, and likes Almodovar movies.

**Dan Haley**, CC '08, is an imaginative young man with a sweet-tooth for literary success. He often likens himself to Elvis Presley, saying, "I'm really just like Elvis Presley." Call him on it, though; Dan doesn't even play guitar.

**Jerone Hsu** can be found feeding his turtle Eshu or eating fish eyeballs.

**Sherrie Hui** thinks Jess and Elena are great. Jerone and Dan are okay, too.

**Jenny Lam** is a sophomore in the College and is planning to major in Visual Arts while concentrating in the Creative Writing program. She likes to speak in German.

**Karen Leung**, CC '10, has very little dignity.

**Rachel Lindsay** is a sophomore in Columbia College hoping to double major in Visual Arts and American Studies. Art has been an important part of her life since she could hold a pencil, and she is happy to be able to share her sensibility with her fellow Columbians. Rachel is currently working on a campus muraling project, Identity Murals.

**Phyllis Ma**, CC '09 is a visual art history major. She likes to paint food.

**Elena Megalos...**

**Abhijit Nagaraj** came downstream from the mountains. He is an eater of bread.

**Dianna Ng** is majoring in Biology with a concentration in English. She likes jokes about grammar, corduroy pants with black socks, fuji apples, freckles on shoulders, and as always, elephants named Ele.

**Swetha Regunathan** (CC '07) is a flustered English major. She hopes to work further on her writing after college, in tandem with the pursuit of rent-stabilized housing.

**Margie Abigail Rosebrock**, Abby to her friends, grew up in Summerville, a small town near Charleston, South Carolina. She studies Comparative Literature and Writing at Columbia, and her father is her hero.

The fanny pack pusha is back. Since the last issue **Lexi Tsien-Shiang** has acquired such aliases as minja nurtle chump norris, and babygangsta. She has too much love to give for her own good. She has set out in search of L.A. Gear lights sneakers for grown-ups.



LSAT GRE MCAT GMAT



**THE ALPHA METHOD**

Leading the Way in Test Prep

- Higher score guaranteed
- Learn from a 99<sup>th</sup> percentile scorer
- Learn proven methods created by Harvard graduates

**[www.TheAlphaMethod.com](http://www.TheAlphaMethod.com)**

**646-468-0915**

**[Score\\_Higher@TheAlphaMethod.com](mailto:Score_Higher@TheAlphaMethod.com)**

LSAT GRE MCAT GMAT

The Big Taste of Texas in  
a New York  
Minute!



Lots of Low Carb  
& Healthy Dishes

Fast Delivery  
(212) 665-9800

Hours: 11 am - Midnight 7 Days A Week

2581 Broadway, NYC 10025 @ 97th St.

Fax: 665-3868

\$10 Minimum Order Up to 10 Blocks  
\$15 & Up Over 10 Blocks  
Delivery & Packaging Charge - 7%

CATERING FOR ANY OCCASION  
GREAT VALUE!  
SHORT NOTICE OK!

Order Online

www.Texasrotisserie.com

or at

www.Campusfood.com

Credit Cards Accepted

**CHEF SPECIALS**

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Balsamic & Pesto in Pink Sauce	10.99
Served w/ salad	
Lamb Shank	10.99
Served w/ rice & green salad	
Chicken Pot Pie	10.99
w/ sweet potato topping, served w/ salad	
* Chicken Kebab	10.99
Served w/ rice & salad	
* Savorfish Kebab	11.99
Served w/ rice & salad	
Stuffed Chicken Breast w/ Mozzarella Cheese	
& Broccoli (Served w/ 2 side items)	10.99
Vegetable Lasagna	9.99
Served w/ green salad	
Meat Loaf (Turkey / Beef)	10.99
Served w/ two side items	
Chili Con Carne	8.99
Topped w/ scallops & cheese, served w/ rice	
Seafood Soup	5.99
Shrimp, clams & salmon	

**GRILLED CHICKEN STRIPS**

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Steamed Vegetables	10.99
* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Pasta Salad	10.99
* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Caesar Salad	10.99
* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Tomato & Cucumber Salad	10.99
* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ House Salad	10.99
* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ 2 Side Items	10.99
* Grilled Chicken Strips Over Pasta w/ Marinara Sauce	10.99

**SALADS**

* Grilled Chicken Strips w/ Any Salad	10.99
* Vegetarian Platter	6.50
Any 2 side items (pick items listed)	
* House Salad (Lg)	5.25
* Caesar Salad (Lg)	5.25

**DRESSINGS**

Golden Italian, Blue Cheese, French, Ranch, Balsamic Vinaigrette, Oil & Vinegar, Honey Mustard, Thousand Island, Low Fat Carbon Mango (Extra Charge for Extra Dressings)

**GREAT DESSERTS**

We Have Selected a Unique Assortment of Desserts. Prepared by the Best Bakeries Serving NYC. Guaranteed to Please your palate.

Dessert of the Week (Ask)	
Turtle Cheese Cake	3.99
Chocolate Chip Cake	3.99
Carrot Cake	3.99
Apple Crumb Pie	3.35
Pecan Pie	3.35
Jumbo Brownies	2.35
Rice Pudding	2.85
Ice Cream (Vanilla, Mint Chocolate Chip, Strawberry)	2.85

(We Sell White Cakes and Pies)

**REGULAR SIDE ITEMS**

<b>POTATOES</b>	On.	Lg
Real Mashed Potatoes	2.35	4.25
Baked Potatoes	2.35	---
Seasoned Fries	2.35	4.25
Garlic Parsley Potatoes	2.35	4.25
Whipped Sweet Potatoes	2.35	2.25
Sweet Potato Fries	2.35	4.25

<b>VEGETABLES</b>		
* Fresh Steamed Vegetables	2.35	4.25
* Steamed Broccoli	2.35	4.25
* Green Beans Almondine	2.35	4.25
* Steamed Baby Carrot	2.35	---
Corn on the Cob	2.35	---
Loose Corn	2.35	4.25
* Collard Greens	2.35	4.25

<b>SALADS</b>		
* Caesar Salad	2.35	5.25
Cole Slaw	2.35	4.25
Potato Salad	2.35	4.25
Pasta Salad	2.35	4.25
* Tomato & Cucumber Salad	2.35	4.25
Fresh Melon Cup	2.35	---
* Green Salad	2.35	---

<b>MORE SIDES</b>		
Rice (Yellow)	2.35	4.25
Honey Baked Beans	2.35	4.25
Sweet Plantain	2.35	4.25
Corn Bread	0.85	---
Cinnamon Raisin Apples	2.35	4.25
Cranberry Creation	2.35	4.25
Stuffing	2.35	4.25
Fried Okra	2.35	4.25
Macaroni & Cheese	2.35	4.25

**SPECIAL SIDE ITEMS**

Creamed Spinach	2.99	5.99
Avocado Slices	2.99	---

**BEVERAGES**

Pink Lemonade	1.10
Mixed (Ice Tea & Lemonade)	1.10
Fresh Brewed Iced Tea	1.10
Can Soda	1.10
Bottle Soda 20 oz.	1.60
Snapple	1.60
Stewart's Root Beer	1.60
Mistic	1.60
Juices (Cranberry, Apple)	1.60
Orange Juice	1.60
Milk 16 oz.	1.60
Water	1.10 - 1.60
2 Liter Soda	3.25

**SMOOTHIES**

Strawberry	3.75
Mango	3.75
Pina Colada	3.75

**APPETIZERS**

(Add Any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Chicken Fingers	(8) 6.50 (10) 12.99
Buffalo Wings	(10) 6.50 (20) 12.99
Onion Rings (9)	4.99
Mozzarella Sticks (9)	4.99
Jalapeno Poppers (9)	5.50
Tapioca (9)	5.50
Fried Jumbo Shrimp (9)	6.25
Chili Cheese Fries	5.99

**SOUPS & CHILI CON CARNE**

Served w/ Corn Bread

(Add Any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Chicken Gumbo (Louisiana Style)	4.75
Chicken Vegetable	4.75
Soup of the Day	4.75
Chili Con Carne & Cheese, served w. rice	8.99
Tomato & scallops & cheese, served w. rice	5.99
Seafood Soup	5.99
Shrimp, clams & salmon	

**FRESH SEAFOOD**

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

* Baked Salmon (12 oz) (served w/ 2 side items)	12.50
Salmon & Pasta in a Pink Sauce	10.99
Served w/ rice	
* Savorfish Kebab	11.99
Served w/ rice & salad	
Seafood Soup	5.99
Shrimp, clams & salmon	

**FRIED SEAFOOD PLATTERS**

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Jumbo Shrimp (9)	11.99
Cod Fish Fillet (3)	10.99
Crab Meat Cake (3)	10.99
Seafood Combo (6)	11.99

(Fried to Perfection in Canola / Soybean Oil)

**BURRITOS**

Served on a Fresh Flour Tortilla w/ Rice, Black Beans, Mexican Salsa, Cheddar Cheese

(Add any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Grilled Chicken Burrito	6.99
Beef Burrito	6.99
Rotisserie Chicken Burrito	6.99
Steak Burrito	7.50
Chicken Fingers Burrito	5.99

**WRAPS**

Served on a Fresh Flour Tortilla

Grilled Chicken Wrap w/ lettuce & tomato, Italian Dressing	6.99
Grilled Chicken Caesar Wrap w/ Romano cheese & Caesar dressing	5.99
Veggie Burger Wrap w/ lettuce, tomato & avocado, Italian Dressing	5.99
w/ lettuce, tomato & avocado, Italian Dressing	5.99
Turkey Burger Wrap w/ lettuce, tomato & avocado, Italian Dressing	5.99
Bar-B-Q Beef Wrap w/ yellow rice	5.99
Bar-B-Q Chicken Wrap w/ yellow rice	5.99
Salmon Wrap w/ tartar sauce	6.99
w/ romaine lettuce, tomato & romano cheese	
Bar-B-Que Pulled Pork w/ yellow rice	5.99

(Add any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

**TEXAS CARVER PLATTER**

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

* Carved Turkey	10.99
* Carved Brisket of Beef	10.99
Meat Loaf (Turkey / Beef)	10.99
* Grilled NY Shell Steak (12 oz)	14.99
Bar-B-Que Pulled Pork	10.99

**ROTISSERIE CHICKEN**

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Quarter Chicken Platter (dark meat)	6.50
* Quarter Chicken Platter (white meat)	7.50
Half Chicken Platter	9.50
Whole Chicken Feast (serves 2-3)	17.99
Whole Chicken (no side items)	9.99

**FRIED CHICKEN**

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

2 Pieces Platter	6.50
3 Pieces Platter	7.75
8 Pieces Bucket Feast (serves 2-3)	17.99
8 Pieces Bucket (no side items)	9.99
Chicken Fingers Platter	9.50

**BAR-B-Q BABY BACK RIBS**

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Half Rack Platter	12.99
Full Rack Platter	19.99
Full Rack Feast (serves 2-3)	22.99
Full Rack (with no side item)	16.75

**CHICKEN & RIBS COMBINATION**

Served w/ 2 Reg. Side Items Plus Corn Bread

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Half Rib & Quarter Chicken Platter	15.99
Half Rib & 2 pcs. Fried Chicken Platter	15.99
Full Rack & Half Chicken Feast (serves 2)	28.99

**CHAR-GRILLED BURGERS**

Served w/ Seasoned Fries, Lettuce, Tomato & Pickles

(Add 1 More Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Turkey Burger Deluxe (single / double)	5.50 / 6.99
Veggie Burger Deluxe (single / double)	5.50 / 6.99
Salmon Burger (single / double)	5.50 / 6.99
* Beef Burger Deluxe (10 oz.)	7.99
Add Cheese/Fried Onion/Bacon/Mushroom	75/75/25/1.25

**HERO SANDWICHES**

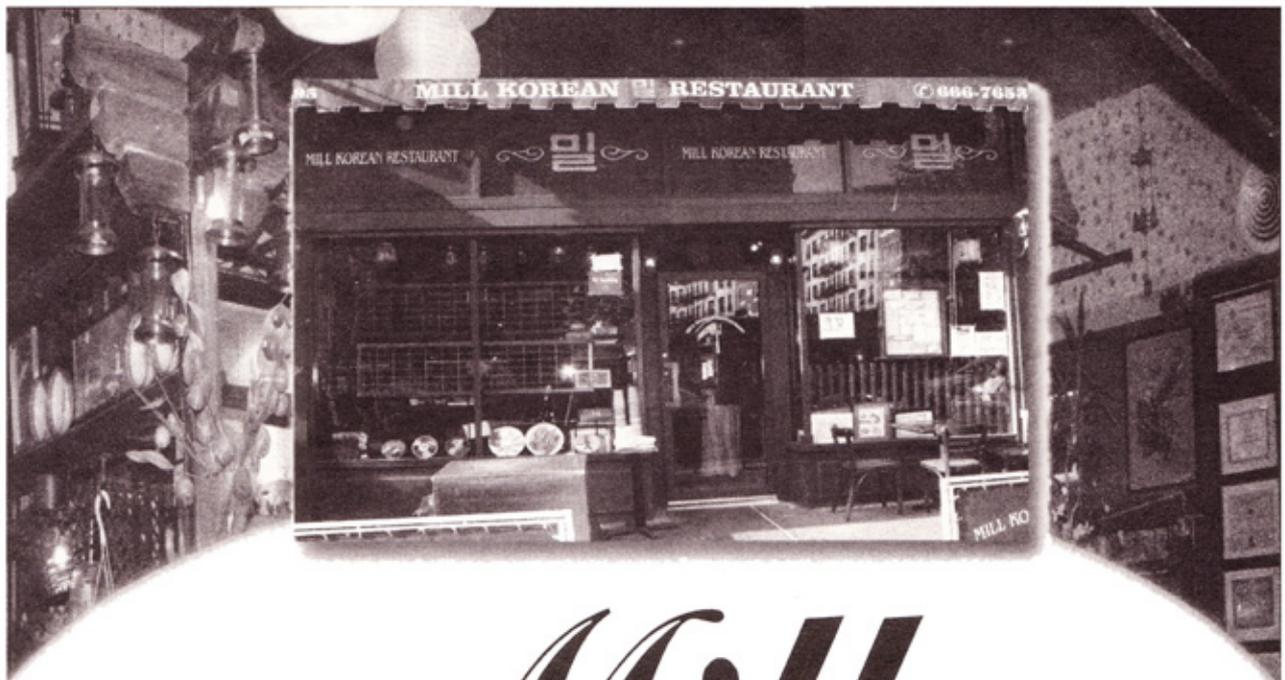
(Add any Reg. Side Item for \$1.75)

Grilled Chicken Strips	7.25
Pilly Chicken	7.25
Carved Turkey	7.75
Brisket of Beef	7.75
Fish Fillet	6.25
Crab Meat Cake	6.25
Bar-B-Que Beef	7.75
Bar-B-Que Chicken	6.25
Pilly Steak	7.50
Bar-B-Que Pulled Pork	6.25

31 SIDE DISHES



Thank you for choosing  
one of the Top Rotisseries in NYC!  
\* **LOW CARB DISHES**  
Please call to check current status



# *Mill*

## KOREAN RESTAURANT

2895 Broadway (113th St.)  
New York, NY 10025

**212-666-7653**

Our menu includes both Vegetarian  
and Hot & Spicy specialties!



This issue of Tablet was  
brought to you in part by



*the silk road foundation*

Connecting cultures since 1996.



[www.silkroadfoundation.org](http://www.silkroadfoundation.org)

