

**Boulevard** - Vol 25, No 1.

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Editor: Richard Burgin

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Address: PMB 325, 6614 Clayton Rd., Richmond Heights, MO 63117

What they publish: Fiction, CNF, and essays, mostly traditional.

Submission Guidelines: No word limit given. Submissions must be sent to the above address accompanied by an SASE, and no submissions are accepted between April 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>

Description of Publication: Nicely bound and formatted publication published through St. Louis University.

Prose Per Issue: 9 out of 28 pieces.

Prose Reviews:

*Hot Mess* by Brian Allen Carr is a plainspoken story in a domestic setting told in the first person. The narrator lives with his mother and brother Abe, and is friends with a boy, Jim, who he believes might be gay. Abe's face was severely burned by their father, who no longer lives with them, yet despite this affliction is an athletic, popular pyromaniac with several girlfriends. When the narrator asks Abe for advice about Jim, Abe gives him a bracelet to give to Jim, saying that if he wears a bracelet from a boy, he's queer. Jim wears the bracelet but tells everyone that the narrator gave it to him, thus fueling neighborhood suspicion that the narrator himself is gay. The narrator tries to disprove this by asking out several girls, who all refuse him. The narrator attempts to burn his face so as to resemble his brother. Jim comes to his house and the two go for a walk.

Several unrelated scenes, such as an imaginary sight of a running Abe, break the narrative. They appear to bolster the impression of the narrator as an outsider, but otherwise have an unclear function. The knife is pointed back and forth when the narrator asks for his brother for advice about the bracelet's effect, but it only obfuscates the accusations the brothers throw at each other. Despite this, the story feels highly personal and will keep you reading.

*The Gold Dust Twins* by Gloria Vanderbilt is a plainspoken story in a domestic setting, told in the third person. Daisy and Sally, who used to be good friends until Daisy stole Sally's boyfriend Terry, meet after several years apart at a New York café. They endeavor to catch up and rekindle their friendship until the topic of Terry comes up, and then they disintegrate into subtle insults. They part because Sally is going to pick up Terry, while Daisy was under the

impression she no longer knew him. Though they promise to stay in touch, they never see each other again.

Vanderbilt is present throughout. She initially explains that Sally has always been jealous of Daisy for a variety of reasons, Terry included, and it's her voice that concludes, "Sally gets into a taxi and rolls down the window...but Daisy doesn't look back and they never see each other again." The action mostly occurs through dialogue, but every now and then Vanderbilt notes a gesture, such as a reach for a hand that turns into a wave for more chardonnay, that effectively signals the fractured relationship.

Rating: 2. All contributors have accomplishments of some renown listed—the first piece in the magazine is by Joyce Carol Oates. There is, however, a contest for emerging writers advertised in the beginning of the magazine.