

"Mike, you're right in a way. I don't know what I want. But I do know what I don't want. I don't want this town and I don't want to be the wife of some Mountain Drive worker. I want something more than this. . . than here. I want to see more and do. . . do everything. I don't want to spend the rest of my life playing cards and getting drunk or high with your friends. I don't want to forever be watching TV at your parents' house or even. . . or even screwing around with you on some deadend road in the front seat of this shitty truck. I need. . . I don't know. . . something more. But you are wrong about one thing. I do know about love and that's why I can't let go of this. It's not so bad at school, but everytime I come home to see you. . . I've tried to say good-bye to you, but you won't let me and I guess I won't let myself. When I'm at school I close my eyes and you're there, but always when I open them you somehow slip away. When I'm here you never leave me. You're here too, and warm, and strong and. . . But I don't want this feeling for you and I don't want the memories. Don't **you** understand, Mike? Can't **you** understand? I need you and I love you, but I could never be really happy with you."

Staring straight ahead once more, he started up the truck and drove through town in silence. Finally, after stopping in front of her dark, large house, he turned to look at her.

"Dave and Jill asked us over for tomorrow night to watch "Arthur" on HBO. Do you want to go? If you don't want to decide right now, I'll come by the pool tomorrow after I get off work to find out. Okay?"

Without waiting for a reply, he reached across the seat and pulled her into his arms.

"Okay?" he whispered against her hair in a pleading voice.

A minute of silence and then a moment of decision faded away before she answered "okay" in quiet resignation.

Character Sketch: **Likable Character**

by Melinda Russell

His hair was wild, curling about in chaos down to his waist. Still, something about it fascinated me. I admired hair that was clean, lively and healthy looking. I knew he was outrageous, having hair like he did, but I could not help staring. His eyes romanced me in a silent brilliance. Their color was like that of a sparkling mountain lake. The color was clear, crisp and utterly blue. No one could doubt he had blue eyes, not blue-gray or blue-green.

I turned around, horrified by my own interest in him. Somehow he knew, and took pride in my affection. He moved to the table just in front of me and sat facing me. Three times he made a point of strolling by my table so I might have a full view of him. His build made me blush, so sleek, firm and perfect. He had the shape of an athlete with muscles molded with great care over his bones. Ah, such beauty Michelangelo never saw, or surely he would have sculpted a body like his. His body was a masterpiece of creation that any artist would pay a fortune to paint and sculpt.

My thoughts were transparent, I feared, so I quickly escaped to the next floor. He followed me. Even as I found a new seat in the business section, he sat down right across from me and winked. Frightened, I ran to the card catalogue and proceeded busily to search for books. He strutted up next to me. Just like a rooster in a barnyard full of hens, he stood next to me modeling himself.

"Excuse me, but what are you doing?" I politely asked him.

"I want to make sure you've seen everything." He turned wiggling his butt to me.

"Oh, really!" I gasped, escaping once more to the table.

"Yes, it's a hundred percent real. I could detail its ingredients if you like." He followed, just grinning away.

"That's quite alright."

"Okay, then, what's in yours?" He was actually looking at my build.

"Stop that!"

"That's not too hard. There's not much to look at, but it's quality, not quantity!"

"Oh, mother . . ." I grabbed my books, walking away.

"Actually I don't see her much anymore. You're a student here, huh?"

"No!"

"You've got to be. You've got the Catholic virgin walk." He was walking far enough behind me so he could watch me walk.

I stopped walking, totally frustrated by him.

"I'm busy," I said, "I've got no time for you."

"That's alright, I don't take much time. You name the time and I'll float in."

"Oh, mother!" I went downstairs and proceeded to search the shelves for a book.

"We must stop meeting so openly. What would our fathers say?"

He swung around from the end of the bookshelf and practically knocked me over. I dropped my books.

"Who are you?" I demanded.

"Mud to my parents, social rebel to history and a draft dodger to Johnson. To you, I could be just another phenomenon of the era to be researched. Interested?" He had incredible charisma.

"Certainly not."

"Then do you like the usual pick-up lines? Or does the fact that I've got your wallet convince you?" He held up my change purse.

"Hey."

"Ssh . . . You dropped your books. You play cat now." He vanished into the row of bookshelves.

I picked up my books, set them down at the desk, then went looking for him. Before I realized what had happened, he had trapped me against a book corner.

"Oh!"

"Did you know I'm in love with you?"

"Say what? My wallet, give it to me."

He held it up, teasing me, then dropped it into his pants.

"Don't think that'll stop me."

"I got on no underwear. I'm poor." He grinned. I backed away as much as I could.

"You, you hippies are just trouble. You touch me and I'll scream," I threatened.

"Personally, I don't use categories and actually as long as you don't laugh, I

don't mind. May I be original with you?" He was unbearably close. He kissed me.

"Okay, okay. I'll go out with you but, mind you, I'm a good girl."

"And I'm the knight in silver armor. Call me Lancelot. You like me, I can tell. I like you, too. We're perfect." He took my hand, leading me out.

"Wait! My books. . ."

"No trouble. . ."

He went to the desk, looked around, then jumped up on the desk. He kicked the books, pens, everything off the counter in a crazy dance. He jumped down wiping his hands. "Bill her."

"Why did you do that?"

"You just met the king of the anti-establishment . . . And love, too, makes me crazy." He took me by the waist, leading me out. I was hopelessly absorbed in his magnetic charm.

Today's Worries, Tomorrow's Dreams

by E. Lersch

Virginity is in my heart.
No dripping faucet today. The water is
turned off. My emotions are at a
stand still.

A man will never know the
hidden image behind
the mirror
A flower on the outside
An interior surrounded by eternity's
four walls No roof, nor bottom
just a key camouflaged in the design of
everyday living.

Depress shun is the major sin.
Is a thorn that pricks
the unhealed womb.

That social society graces are
just so proper
to step above them is a monstrous mountain of
rocks, one cannot help
but fall prey to the vultures who
circle the top of the
Mountain of innocence.

My knight in shining armor
is in a far away dream.
His horse grows anxious to lead the
way to the fallen mare.
But the bridge is out.