

# ***Journal of Ordinary Thought*** **We Wait** **Spring 2004**

Writing from the Hall and Rogers Park Branch Libraries; [Deborah's Place](#) and the [Inspiration Café](#).

Photography by John Brooks.



## **WE WAIT**

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*The Journal of Ordinary Thought*  
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## **LOOKING FOR GREENS** **Nancy Thomas**

One day I decided I wanted to eat something healthy and I thought greens would be perfect because they were healthy for cleaning negative particles out of my body. So I started on a horrible journey from one store to the next, about eight stores to be exact. I went from California and Jackson past Pulaski and Madison. I was getting very angry. I couldn't understand why there weren't any fresh vegetables in these stores. Was it because it was a predominantly Black area, or was it because the

community didn't care enough to demand that the stores supply the essential goods they needed?

I couldn't believe it. I finally did get the greens from a very dumpy and very smelly little store right off Pulaski. This is a shame, I thought. I came from a community where you could get fresh vegetables at almost every corner store, and it was predominantly Black. The question arose in my mind again: Why? What's the difference?

## **WAITING** **Mayi Ojisua**

Dark silver paint of blood  
smears left over from  
a soldier's footsteps  
mothers wait for bodybags.

In the desert  
the boogeyman rages  
feeds on a camel  
left over

This is the dream  
of a "great" nation  
children wait

brothers are waiting  
for bodybags

why they kill and die  
lost letters are told  
sisters wait for body counts

The flag is wrapped round the waist  
to prove a point

Matter dies, freedom dies  
we wait for bodybags

## THE TRUCK HAIKU

Vanessa Ellis

The look on your face  
Flaming like your cherished truck  
Stalled on Lake Shore Drive

“It’s just a gas leak,  
Even a moron could fix.”  
Of course you’ve repaired

But I smell the gas  
While we’re driving down the street  
Trailing smoke behind

“Oh, the smell will leave.”  
“It’s a little thing,” you say.  
I’m so paranoid

But then you yell, “Jump!”  
Leap out of the moving truck  
While it is in flames

Your accomplishment  
The skill you just knew you had  
As fixer of cars

Admit when you’re licked  
As flames engulfing your truck  
Illustrate for you

A good mechanic  
Is exactly what you need  
I’ll help you find one

Oh, but wait a sec  
You’re the one who has no ride  
Better luck next truck

O.K. I’ll shut up  
I’ll wipe the grin off my face  
With your bruised ego

## UP AND DOWN

Tasha Johnson

I feel like I am going up and down, up and down like a roller coaster. Up and down like an escalator. Up and down like my weight. One day I am confident and happy. The next I am close to tears. Another day I am goal-oriented and running around the place. The day after that I stay in bed. I am fed up with feeling like a freak and acting like one as well. I wish that I could be normal like everyone else so I would not have to take lithium, Risperdal, and other psychiatric medications so I can be sane.

But I know that I have no alternative, so I have to try to realize that this is forever and I will have to take some kind of medication on a permanent basis in order to survive.

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