

THE AFFAIR

by

Rick Dirks

English Senior

It happens more frequently now than before.
Psychologists say I'm at my peak.
At first I never want to get involved,
But her attention
And then the lack of it
Prompts attraction
And then attachment.
One night isn't enough
When I can have many,
Especially if we don't grow tired
Of each other.
After a month or two
And a couple of guilty confessions,
We decide to become temporarily
Exclusive.
We seldom sleep alone;
Separation hurts in only minutes.
We giggle and get rug burns
From wrestling on carpets.
We steal flowers from public parks
And borrow clunking automobiles
To flee the city
And seclude ourselves in silent muddy streams.
We think we know each other
And even use the word "love"
Like we know what it means.
Then summer comes.

I go home with her and meet her mother,
Who makes us sleep in separate rooms
And wakes us up for church on Sunday.
My loneliness begins
Before she drives me to the interstate,
Where I hitchhike home.
I feel the end
As she turns her truck around.
The on ramp up to the highway
Looms like a flat elongated image of her face.
It takes me home to a letter from her.
Communication meekly replaces faces.
After two weeks,
Telephone calls and vogue stationery
Trickle to a distant halt.
I don't care;
She doesn't care,
And it's over.
Next year we'll meet accidentally,
Unexpectedly.
She'll smile and remember me,
Then ask me how I'm doing.
I'll tell her.
Then we'll quietly walk away,
Restricting future conversations
To sheepish shrugs
And quiet disconcerted "Hi's."