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Dusty Dreams

Alma Barnes

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DUSTY DREAMS

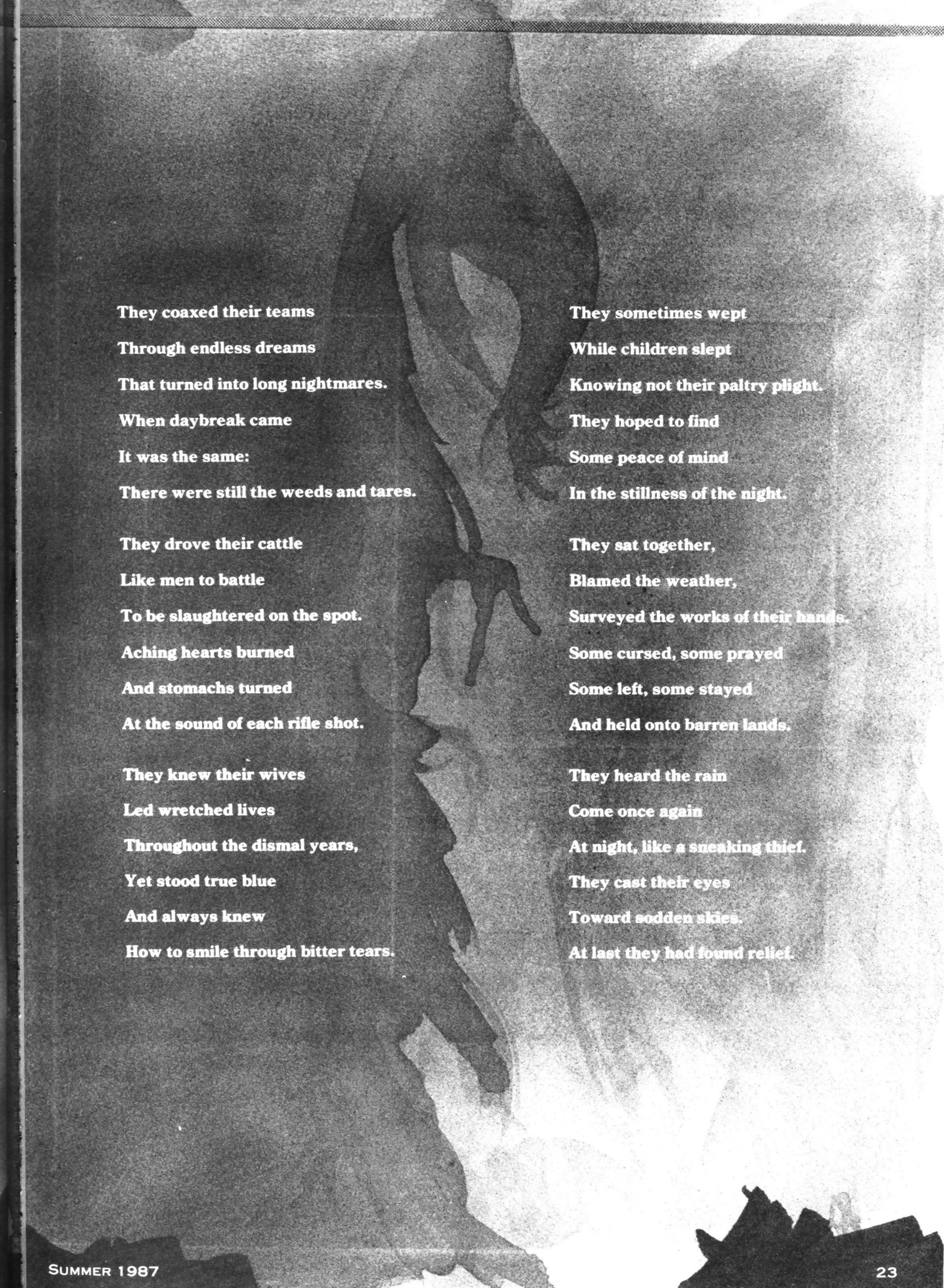
By Alma Barnes

They scanned the skies
Through squinted eyes,
Buried deep in leather faces.
They looked for rain
To come again,
But still there were no traces.

They fought the dust
And cracked the crust
Of their once-fertile soil.
They planted seed
And knew the need
Of hope and sweat and toil.

They tossed and turned
As their crops burned
In the fields, by night and day.
They worked and tried
And sometimes cried
For help to come their way.

Alma Barnes, an active member of the Tulsa Nightwriters, is a formidable opponent in writing-contest competition. "Dusty Dreams" is Barnes' first work in WESTVIEW.



They coaxed their teams
Through endless dreams
That turned into long nightmares.
When daybreak came
It was the same:
There were still the weeds and tares.

They drove their cattle
Like men to battle
To be slaughtered on the spot.
Aching hearts burned
And stomachs turned
At the sound of each rifle shot.

They knew their wives
Led wretched lives
Throughout the dismal years,
Yet stood true blue
And always knew
How to smile through bitter tears.

They sometimes wept
While children slept
Knowing not their paltry plight.
They hoped to find
Some peace of mind
In the stillness of the night.

They sat together,
Blamed the weather,
Surveyed the works of their hands.
Some cursed, some prayed
Some left, some stayed
And held onto barren lands.

They heard the rain
Come once again
At night, like a sneaking thief.
They cast their eyes
Toward sodden skies.
At last they had found relief.