

MAP TO THE STARS

By Adrian Matejka

A Schwinn-ride away: Eagledale Plaza. Shopping strip of busted walkways, crooked parking spaces nicked like the lines on the sides of somebody's mom-barbered head. Anchored by the Piccadilly Disco, where a shootout was guaranteed every weekend, those gun claps: coughing stars shot from sideways guns shiny enough to light the way for anyone willing to keep a head up long enough to see. Not me. I bought the Star Map Shirt for 15¢ at the Value Village next to the Piccadilly during the daytime. The shirt was polyester with flyaway collars, outlined in the forgotten astronomies of disco. The shirt's washed-out points of light: arranged in horse & hero shapes & I rocked it in places neither horse nor hero hung out. Polyester is made from Polyethylene & catches fire easily like wings near a thrift store sun. Polyethylene, used in shampoo bottles, gun cases, & those grocery sacks skidding like upended stars across the parking lot. There are more kinds of stars in this universe than salt granules on drive-thru fries. Too many stars, lessening & swelling with each pedal pump away from the Value Village as the electric billboard above flashes first one DUI attorney, then another who speaks Spanish so the sky above is constantly chattering, like the biggest disco ball ever.