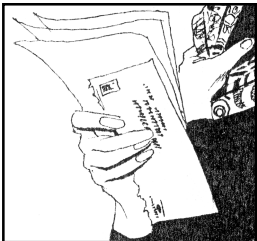
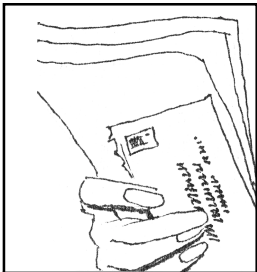


Ultimate Lost Kisses #11
“Her: Age 34”

story & words:
Brian John Mitchell
artwork:
Dave Sim



The news comes
to me in the mail.



It's a letter from my son.



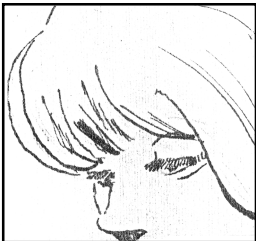
I'd forgotten I had a son.



At least as much as
any woman can forget
having a child.



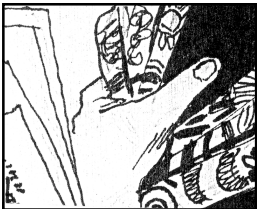
I'm not even sure if I
can call him my son.



I haven't seen him since
the day he was born.



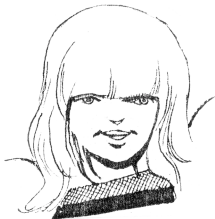
I was in high school.



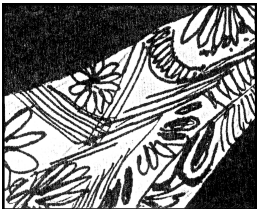
At least I had the sense
to realize I couldn't
handle being a mother.



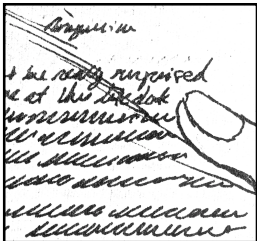
That was more than
half my life ago.



Now I'm married with
a five year-old daughter.



So the letter from
my son feels like
an acid flashback.



Not only is my
son eighteen.

UNITED STATES FEDERAL
CORRECTION FACILITY

A UNIT OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS

Prisoner
must be ready to go

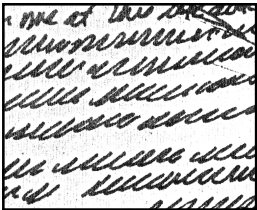
He's in prison.

D STATES
CORRECTION F

1 1111 00 1111

Arrested

On death row for
killing a man.



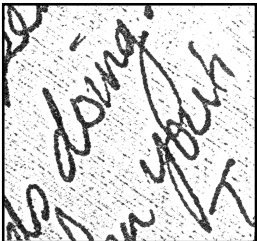
The letter is just
factual, not accusatory
or even confessional.

you to come to A
ke you owe me a
y around but I
see. Why? Well
it just seems like
"soda doing." I

He wants me to
come meet him.

it just feels
"needs doing."
or when you
eat. I

It's an eight-hour
drive away.



& something I
know I have to do.



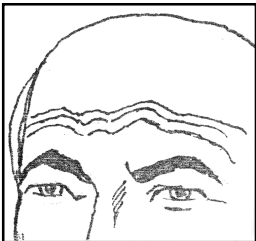
Which means I have
to tell my husband.



He doesn't know
about my son.



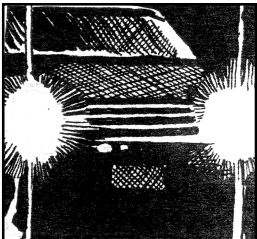
After all, I met him
ten years after my
son was born.



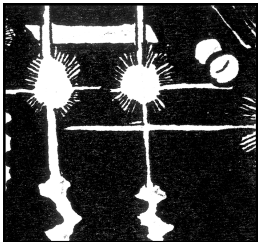
He's as understanding
as he is confused.



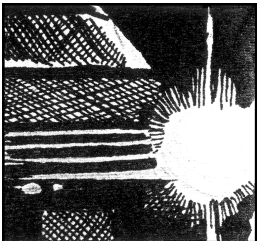
In the end he gives me
his blessing to go.



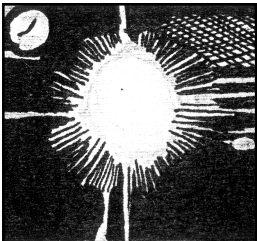
Which is good since I
was going anyway.



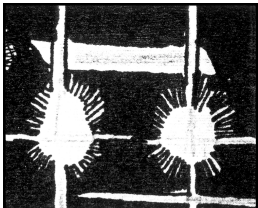
During the drive I
don't play the radio.



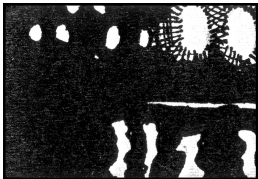
I just try to collect
my thoughts.



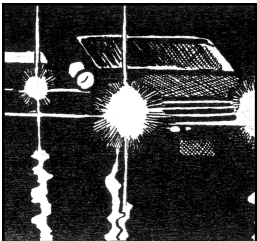
Trying to figure out if
I'm sixteen or thirty-four.



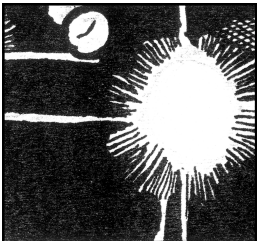
Wondering what I
could have done
differently in my life.



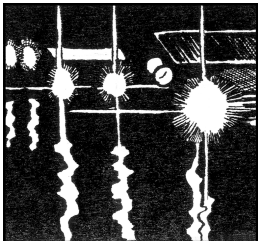
Maybe if I'd kept my
son he would have
forced me to have more
direction in my life.



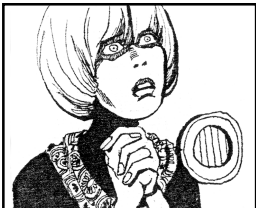
Forced me to act
more responsibly.



Maybe he'd be in college
instead of prison.



I finally pull into the
prison near Lucasville.



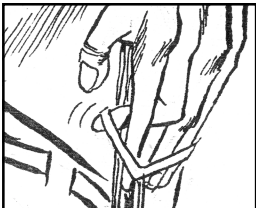
The first thing I say to
my son is, “I don’t
know what to call you.”



He just says, “Yeah, I know what you mean.”



He's so secure & self-assured that he feels like the parent instead of me.



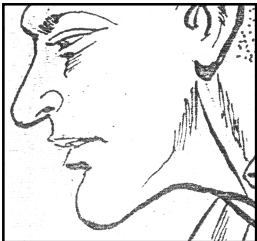
“I was scared you’d find out about me from some investigative reporter.”



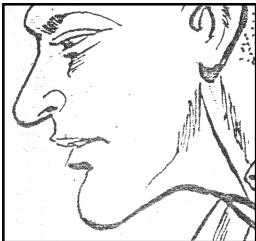
“I wanted you to know
I’m not a bad person &
this isn’t your fault.”



“Killing the man I did
was the right thing to do.”



“I did it planning
to die for it.”



“That’s why I haven’t
filed for any appeals.”



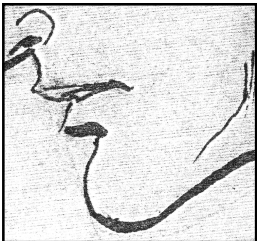
“My sister didn’t
have as good of a
start in life as me.”



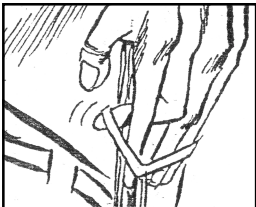
“The guy was her
ex-step-father & he
used to molest her.”



“For whatever reason
she went to confront
him alone.”



“He beat the crap out
of her & raped her.”



“She had some lame
cover story she told
our parents.”



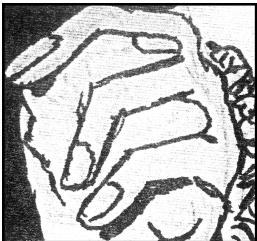
“But she’d told me
where she was going.”



“I knew what happened.”



“I also knew the police
wouldn’t do anything
substantial.”



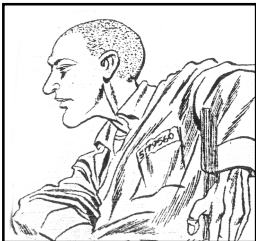
“So I went over there
with my buck knife.”



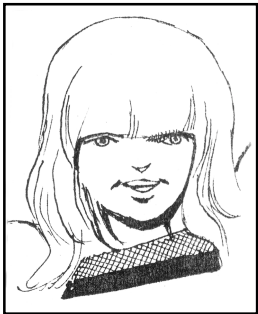
“I stabbed him
fifty or sixty times.”



“I called 911 when I
was sure he was dead.”



“I did the right
thing, didn’t I?”





“Yes. I can’t imagine
a better thing a
man could do.”



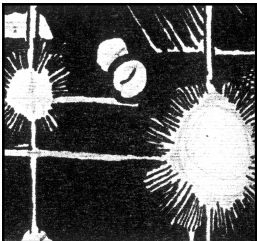
“I wish I could save you.”



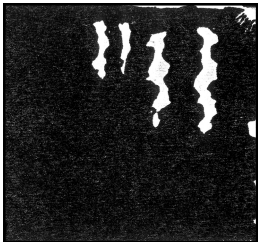
“It’s okay, I don’t
need saving.”



“Thank you for coming.”



The trip home is even
longer than the way up.



I stop three times along
the way to throw up.



I'm powerless.



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