

# The Messenger

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Volume 2012  
Issue 1 *The Messenger*, Spring 2012

Article 34

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Spring 2012

## olive branch

Betty Holloway

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### Recommended Citation

Holloway, Betty (2012) "olive branch," *The Messenger*: Vol. 2012: Iss. 1, Article 34.

Available at: <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/messenger/vol2012/iss1/34>

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OLIVE

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BRANCH

*By Betty Holloway*

the word hangs  
in the air like a traveling  
feather, burning  
slowly. Part of  
you, part of me lost  
in smoke. Soft edges  
singed, each fleck  
smoldering and  
falling: lost to

ash. But the interior  
remains a charred  
frame. It dangles  
in limbo above our  
faces. Too close, it lingers  
on our wet cheeks and in  
the corners of our

eyes. Every mouthful  
of smoke, burn of  
our tongues, sweep of our  
noses. And I can  
see myself in yours. And you  
can see yourself

in mine. And you  
are here. And I am  
here. But we are  
not here  
together.