

# October

*by* Linda Hanley Finigan

It's Halloween again, the season when my mother died. White handkerchief spirits dangle from front porches, cardboard skeletons and green-eyed ghouls grin back at me from suburban windows. My mother would have enjoyed the irony. We always believed in ghosts. The butterflies returned the week before she died, orange Monarch wings shimmering at the window, feasting on cosmos and zinnias still left in the garden. I feared they'd lingered too long, those last remaining stragglers. How would they survive the long flight to Mexico? In the week before my mother was gone, without warning, without a word or a goodbye, I worried that the butterflies would die.

