

The mendicant's quirky café

by Emily Macnaughton

Look through the window at Bailey's café. Consider the seedy interior, the broken-looking regulars, the lousy food and the bitter coffee. Before you turn away, see how the faded lady with the shaking hands holds her coffee mug like fine bone china, see the proud stance of the stone-faced man in the summer dress — listen for a minute. About you a story is being told.

LITERATURE
Bailey's Café
Gloria Naylor

Bailey's Café, American author Gloria Naylor's latest novel, is a run-down diner in post-war Brooklyn where the clientele "don't come for the food and they don't come for the atmosphere". They keep coming back because birds of a feather stick together and these wounded birds need a place to roost. They've had a long hard journey.

What goes on at the café is a many-

voiced jam session of storytelling; part parable, part blues tune. The narrator's song always compels, convinces and creates an atmosphere evoking the wisdom and the sorrow found within.

We hear of Miss Maple, the man in the dress, a black Ph.D. from Stanford on an unsuccessful pilgrimage across the States, searching for the job he rightfully deserves. Or Sadie, a delicate wino who turns ten-cent tricks to pay for her liquor. And Eve, the owner of the "boarding house" on the corner, where female tenants cater to men's basest desires, but take their payment in flowers. The narrative spans across the country and the world, incorporating into its roadmap America's popular mythology: Intergrated baseball becomes a metaphor for institutional racism, prostitutes and fortune-hunters are saints, bebop 45s become Bible stories.

The novel manipulates the most difficult subjects gracefully. Naylor describes scenes of racism, incest, alcoholism, and sexual abuse with hopeful realism. Her tone is never preachy or sentimental. As Bailey's Café's name-

less proprietor lucidly observes, "I don't believe that life is supposed to make you feel good, or make you feel miserable either. Life is just supposed to make you feel." The quest for feeling becomes the driving force of the tale.

Anyone who's heard the blues can tell you about the music's intense, rich emotion, that maelstrom whipped up every time some new singer bellows out the history of their pain. The music transforms shabby into magic, the singer becomes mystic, travelling beyond the banality of failure and tragedy with an objective singleness of purpose which never pities or congratulates once the voyage ends.

The novel's true beauty bursts forth from the author's genius for compassion. Naylor never judges, patronizes or glorifies for an instant. She only realizes what DaVinci's once advised his students: "Look into the stains of walls, or ashes of a fire, or mud or like places where you may find marvellous ideas". Not only does she find ideas but messages of love, courage and hope.

DOUBLE DEUCE

1560 hollis around the corner from maritime mall

Thursday & Friday september 9 & 10

OTTAWA'S FISHTALES

saturday september 11

novelty booth 21 + Al Tucker and his band No Action

Featuring former members of Blackpool, The glueTones + The Razorbacks

THE HALIFAX POP EXPLOSION

<p>WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 22 WASHINGTON D.C.'S VELOCITY GIRL & J A L E \$8 PLUMTREE \$10 STRAWBERRY \$10</p>	<p>THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 23 LOU BARLOW & ERIC'S TRIP \$8 OF SEBADOH & HARDSHIP POST \$10 QUAHOGS \$10</p>
<p>FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 24 MONTREAL'S BUBAISKULL \$10 DOUGHBOYS & TORONTO'S ONE FREE FALL \$12 LEONARD CONAN \$10</p>	<p>SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 25: ALL AGES 1-4 PM LOU BARLOW & SCARCE \$6 OF SEBADOH & MERGE \$8</p>
<p>SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 25 CALIFORNIA'S REDD KROSS & S C A R C E \$10 NEW YORK CITY'S CHETICAMP \$12 FREDRICKSON'S \$12 KAREN FOSTER \$10</p>	<p>SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 26 DALHOUSIE MAC INNIS ROOM 7PM. ALL AGES MONTREAL'S CALIFORNIA'S \$11 DOUGHBOYS & REDD KROSS \$13 WITH TRUSH HERMIT & HIP CLUB GROOVE</p>

TICKETS ON SALE WED. SEPT. 7 @ THE DEUCE, DAL SUB, & DISCHORD RECORDS CHARGE ACCEPTED AT DISCHORD RECORDS ORDERS UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

ALL SHOWS BEGIN 9:30 PM

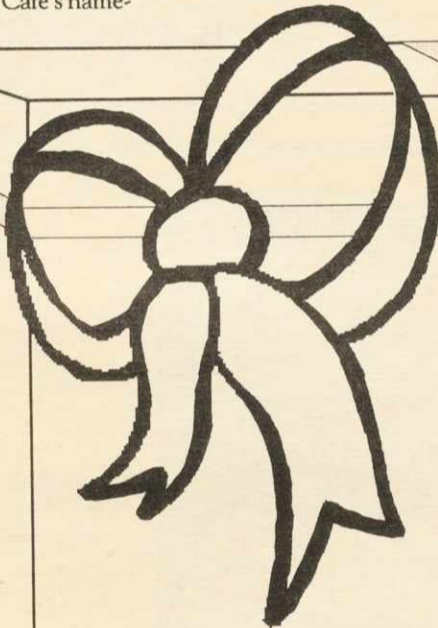
FESTIVAL PASS \$30

"The Gazette was the best thing about going to Dal"

unsolicited testimonial

True story? Or shameless hype? Ask for details.

Third floor, SUB. Monday, 4 pm is a good time.



494-2054
Main Floor
Student Union Building

*Limit one entry per purchase

CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY!



TRAVEL CUTS

Going Your Way!

Please present this coupon upon purchase of any airfare valued at \$200 or more by October 29, 1993. You will be eligible to win a Travel Cuts Gift Certificate valued up to \$200 for future travel. Merry Christmas from Travel Cuts!

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
PHONE # _____

Travel Company of the Canadian Federation of Students

FUTONS

THE FUTON STORE
1578 Argyle St.
Halifax, N.S.
425-6997

◇ THE LARGEST SELECTION IN TOWN ◇

