



The Colorado School of Mines Journal of the Arts

*For all the people with a red line under their name in Microsoft Word.*

Cover Design  
Alex Clymer

*Mixed Medium:  
Macrophotography  
&  
Watercolor*

# SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please make all literary submissions to *highgrade@mines.edu* as a Microsoft Word document. One submission per document. Note any special formatting needs. Art and music submissions will be handled through the High Grade office.

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2015

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

In 1945, hidden amongst the pages of irate letters expressing disillusionment toward Black and Marxist political leaders, Ralph Ellison began to formulate the foundations of the book *Invisible Man*. Ellison was notorious for his love of music, particularly jazz, so much so that his writing style began mimicking the elements of freeform jazz. Namely the concepts of improvisation, call-and-response melodies, syncopation, and blue notes resonated from his pages.

The structure of *High Grade* Volume 38 is inspired by Ellison's writing style, calling upon both jazz and modern musical interpretations. The written works can be interpreted as the root note, while the surrounding visual art pieces can be viewed as constituent notes of the chord. At times there exists a dissonance between the two, and at other times the reader may encounter a blue note, or a turning point. Overall, a reader can appreciate the pieces individually or read through the book in order to experience the full work as a composition.

In order to incorporate an element of contemporary music and engineering, the overall order of the pieces, if read through, can be interpreted as having an ASDR envelope. This Attack, Sustain, Decay, and Release can be experienced in the message of the pieces. Some pieces are evocative in content, such as the war poems, and can be understood as part of the attack or sustain region of the envelope. Always remember to continue sight-reading to arrive at the tonic and resolve the tension.

It has been my sincere honor to have been a part of *High Grade* for the past four years. We hope you enjoy this volume and that you will submit your works to us in the future. The vision of *High Grade* will always be to put the arts back in STEM full steam, and although we keep hearing "I'm not an artist," there is art in the very way you create your circuits, design your slurries, or construct your bridges. So join us, we would love to have you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cristina Ochoa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first letter "C" is large and loops around the rest of the name. The word "Ochoa" is written in a smaller, more compact cursive script.

*Cristina Ochoa, Editor-in-Chief 2014-2015*

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# HOOVER

*Lauren Marus*

1



*Lauren Marus 2012*

Watercolor & Ink

# ASSUME A ONE-DIMENSIONAL EARTH

*Katerina Gonzales*

Too many impulses and signals  
lights blinking from devices  
emails about data  
deadlines that were yesterday  
texts about tomorrow  
My thoughts going in circles,  
I cannot parallel process them all

Thinking about science keeps me up at night  
I cannot assume a one-dimensional earth  
Thinking about you keeps me up at night  
My mind, trying to quantify you

Inconclusive results stemming from my simplistic assumptions  
Shall we make it vary with time?  
And add in effects due to anisotropy?

I could discretize my model that I made to try to understand  
you  
me  
science  
and the future

But in the end I throw out my data  
the data we collected as trucks and time zoomed by  
It was too noisy anyway,  
the spikes of the outside world screaming  
that our parameters limit us too much

Assume a one-dimensional earth  
Because science is complicated  
And so are you  
And so am I

# EYES

*Robin Hoover*



Watercolor & Ink

# TRANSFORMATION

*Lincoln Carr*

Transformation begins with listening  
There can be no listening without time  
The old Taoists were right  
I must practice uselessness to discover brilliance

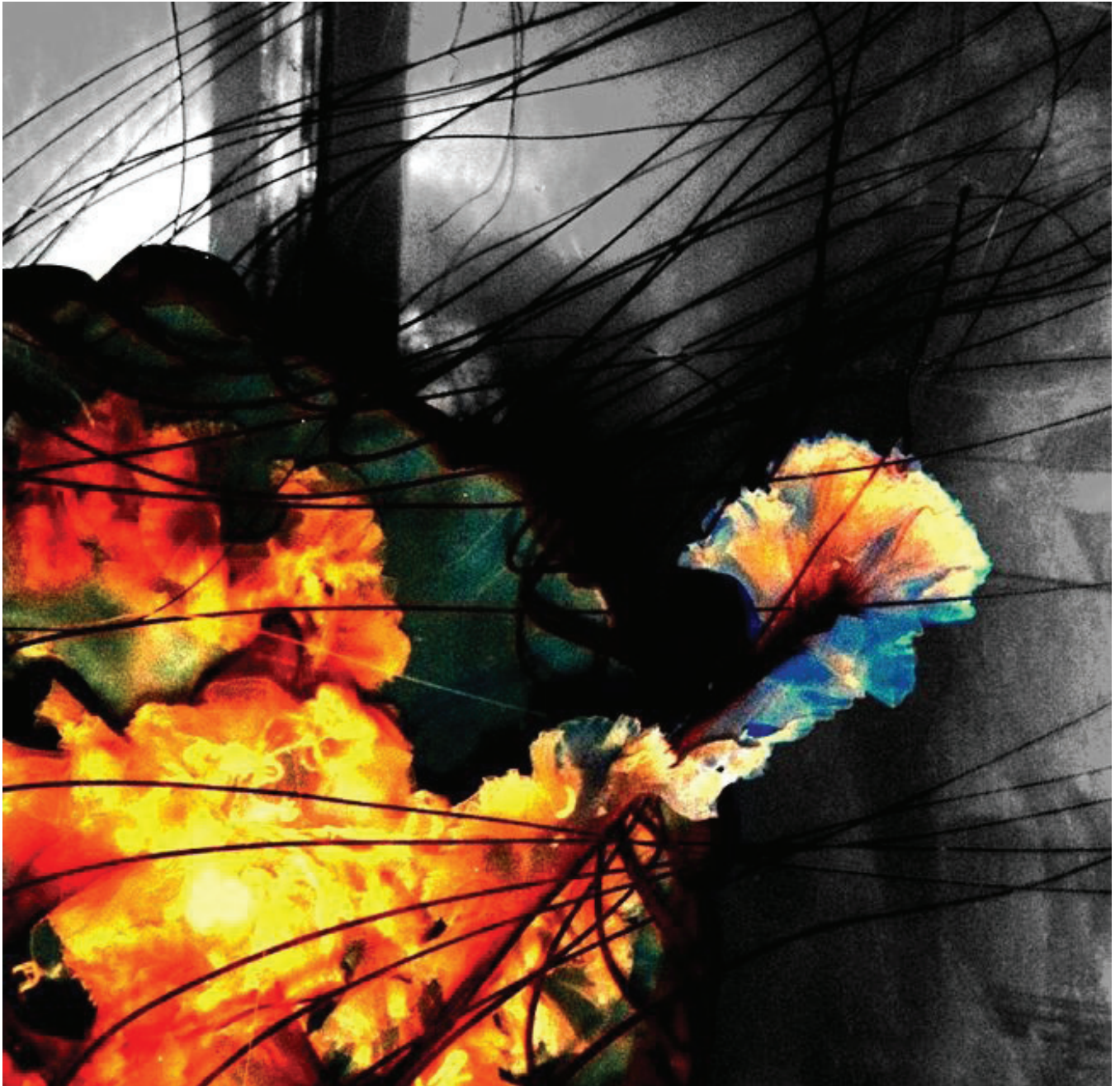
Transformation is not a spiritual retreat  
It is not the mosque, ashram,  
or meditation on the mountain  
Transformation is a process

If I am working twelve hour days,  
surfing the net four hours a day,  
and barely dreaming  
through a restless  
eight hours of unconsciousness  
how can I hear my own voice?  
Let alone understand my son,  
my colleague who is suffering secretly,  
my mother, whose mind is slowly decaying,  
the cry of the people of Syria, filtered  
through news moguls,  
desperate candidates for president,  
and the sound of rusty attack helicopters.  
This is what I mean by time.

If my son's every moment is programmed  
with school, sports, art, classes,  
homework, reading exercises, chores,  
when will he play?  
When will he build impossible forts  
of pillows and furniture?  
When will he beat stones together  
and discover awe at the veins hidden inside them?  
When will he find bizarre insects under rotten logs,  
put them in a jar, and run into the house, shouting,  
"Daddy! Daddy! Look what I found! You have to see this!"  
This is what I mean by brilliance.

# SUBMERGED EXPLOSION

*Veronica Shaner*



Photography & Photo Manipulation

# RUSSIAN VIAGRA

*Elizabeth Pettinger*

You can have a new beginning no matter who you are,  
emerging from the big, comfy closet wrapped in fierce  
sequins. Being quiet doesn't mean you're safe. You are  
to raise your voice, flag, love through prohibited tears.

Advocacy of your lifestyle is illegal, your name joins the lists next to  
pedophiles and murderers. It's not your skin or a Star of David  
marking your coat, but they can still sniff out rainbow blood.  
society is *Occupy Pedophilia* stalking new juveniles, waiting to pounce.

Don't let their urine pouring down your scalp drown you. When people  
are mean to you, do not be mean to yourself. No one counts  
who choked in the gas chambers of world cultural war,  
you have not sinned against society. You are enslaved with saving it.

A thousand Stars of David can blind even Goliath,  
find your Allies. The world is flaccid, pull out  
the Viagra. Shave those legs, march on Moscow til death –  
Any way the wind blows, you are Queen, and we are the champions.

# FREAKY FIREWORKS

*Russell Benson*

7



Long Exposure Photography

# PERIODICITY.

*Aaron Glick*

## Education

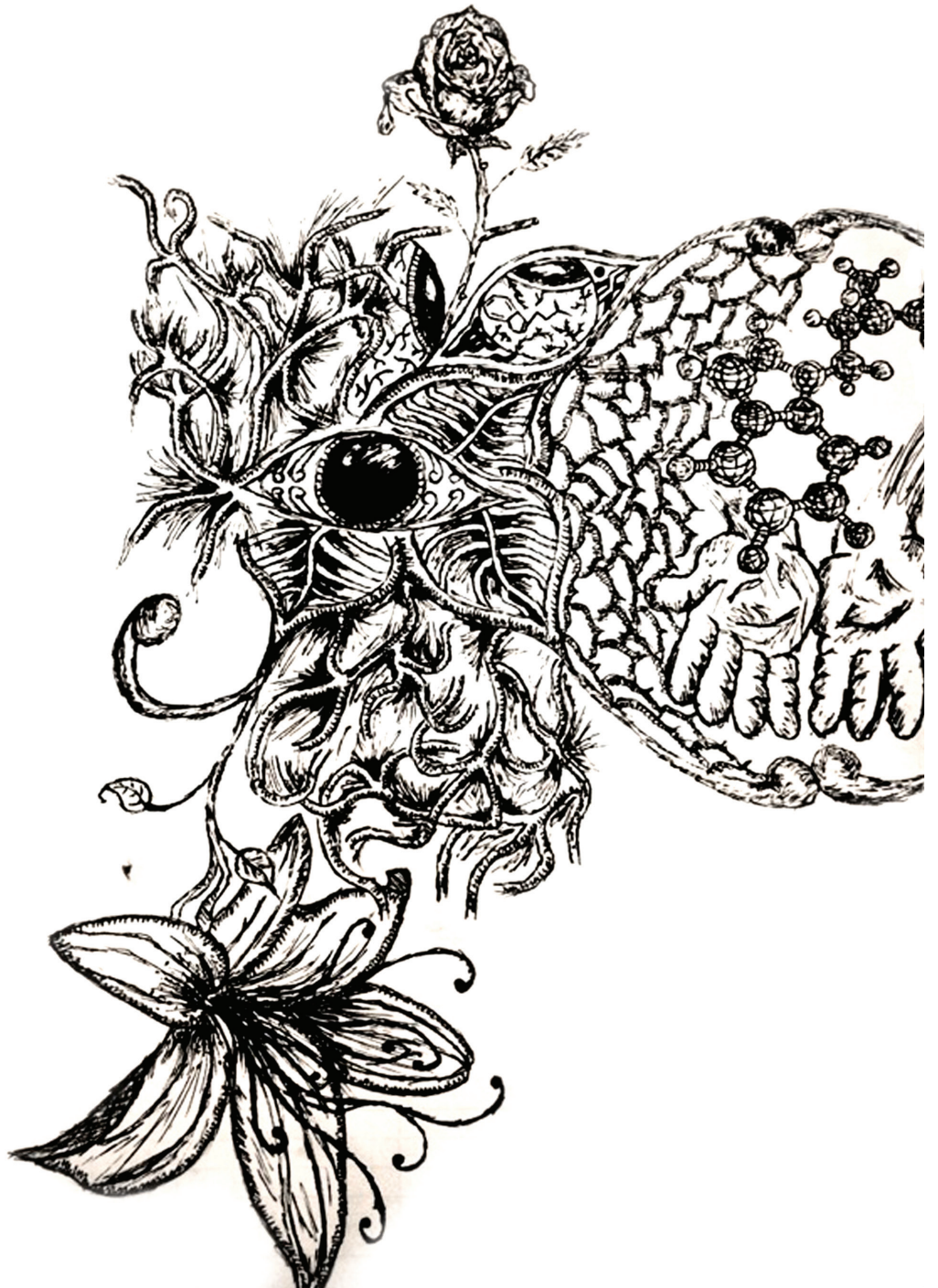
was always important to my  
 mother, so growing up I learned its importance,  
 but now sitting at the kitchen table with my daughter's  
 flash cards, problem sets, and lengthy reports, I sometimes question  
 the relevance and utility of cursive, times tables, and this antiquated belief  
 that school is the end all be all. We live in a technological society. Seeing all of  
 the news reports on Egyptian students tweeting about oppression, and live footage  
 from nuclear scares as tsunamis annihilate reactors, juxtaposed with the media hype that  
 the newest children's book is being produced, or the heart-warming stories of child prodigies  
 being found in poverty, or the miraculous survival of the newborn who fought all the odds, the  
 stories are written neatly into discrete five minute news segments. Over the years, story after story  
 adds up, and I've noticed that the stories that embody an entire generation or era are surprisingly  
 just repetitions of deep-seated feelings and questions encountered while we attempt to understand  
 ourselves. Historians investigate revolutions and movements focused on defining the autonomy of an  
 individual, analyzing the endless debate of fair and just taxation and government intervention.  
 Scientists will attempt to predict and prevent natural disasters that are misunderstood, improving  
 our technologies and societal well-being. Writers question the existence of ourselves and elucidate  
 the discriminations and inequalities in our society. Each story has a beginning, middle, and end, but  
 its theme is periodically revisited by each generation. Its morals are carried with an individual  
 because lessons teach us and question our purpose and meaning for life. Inherently, education  
 is periodic, as we teach our children the lessons we have learned. But life itself is finite, with  
 each death marking the period at the end of that person's story. So as the steady stream of  
 headlines scroll across the bottom of the television, I must reassert to my daughter that  
 education will teach her an understanding of the people and the world. The ability  
 to filter, process, connect, and relate is what she is learning. It is what I still am  
 learning. It is what my mother was learning. Political powers rise and fall,  
 technologies are developed and outdated, stories reappear as new  
 theories are improved, and our lives start and finish.  
 Individually there is finality, but for our  
 humanity there is a sense of  
 infinity.



# BEYOND THE LIMITING FIVE SENSES

*Hugo Villa*

9



# THE PROBLEM WITH SETTING YOURSELF ON FIRE

10

*Colton Kohnke*

The problem with setting yourself on fire  
is not finding the materials to burn.  
Cloth lights the same as tinder  
and skin melts like wax around a wick.

Nor is the problem obtaining the gasoline.  
It's easy to find a rusty, run down car  
and siphon the gas from the tank  
into a red plastic can, leaving the tongue burning  
and eyes watering from the fumes.

The fire devours a monk in Tibet without remorse.  
It knows that passionate flames exist in his soul, calling  
to the red tendrils of heat for their release.  
The smoke wisps through the air, diffusing  
the smell of charred meat into the lungs  
of people staring with hungry eyes.  
It yanks a young boy's lunch onto the pavement,  
sheening like gasoline on the dirt. A foreign tourist  
manages to record a video and it goes viral  
by dinner time, popping up on Facebook feeds  
and gaining 100,000 Likes before it fades.

It is a lie to say that there is no pain  
in setting yourself on fire. But is it any less  
than living under oppression. Is it any more  
than being the dirt on the shoes of foreign soldiers.  
The human body is a single flare ripping  
through darkness,  
echoing  
against the walls of the mountain city  
hoping that someone will take notice.

The problem with setting yourself on fire  
is not how it dances on your vocal cords.  
is not how your skin becomes the charcoal  
that fuels the flames.  
is not the physical manifestation of your heart  
exploding out of your fingers.  
is not that you enter the fire alone.

The problem with setting yourself on fire  
is that the flames eventually go out.

# FABRICATING STARS

*Jessica Burckel*



Photography

# TRAVE

*Alexandria Truby*

To the trave  
 ler: Even  
 ts of re  
 cent have mad  
 e it obvious  
 that the  
 re is no fool  
 -pro  
 of way of detecting a Terror  
 ist.  
 The Terror  
 ist  
 individual  
 however, is often a “type”  
 exemplified by the  
 beard,  
 turban,  
 & clothing of the like  
 with revolution  
 ary ~~time~~-bomb

in brief  
 case.  
 Terrorists may come  
 from all  
 walks of life,  
 but profess a  
 single  
 faith, and exercise  
 one go  
 al in trade and  
 profession.  
 In addition,  
 the Terrorist organ  
 izations have made concert  
 ed efforts to go under  
 ground for the purpose  
 of infiltration and  
 destruct  
 ion.

Footnote: This poem was constructed based off of the “How to Spot a Communist” pamphlets and printed by popular magazines distributed in the 1950s during the Red Scare. It has been adjusted to reflect the widespread prejudice after the attacks on 9/11. On the following pages are excerpts from the original text.

# HOW TO SPOT A COMMUNIST

*A Pamphlet published by the U.S. First Army Headquarters in 1955*

Events of recent years have made it obvious that there is no fool-proof way of detecting a Communist. The Communist individual is no longer a "type" exemplified by the bearded and coarse revolutionary with time bomb in briefcase. U.S. Communists come from all walks of life, profess all faiths, and exercise all trades and professions. In addition, the Communist Party, USA, has made concerted efforts to go underground for the purpose of infiltration.

If there is no fool-proof system in spotting a Communist, there are, fortunately, indications that may give him away. These indications are often subtle but always present, for the Communist, by reason of his "faith" must act and talk along certain lines.

While a ... preference for long sentences is common to most Communist writing, a distinct vocabulary provides the... more easily recognized feature of the "Communist Language."

Even a superficial reading of an article written by a Communist or a conversation with one will probably reveal the use of some of the following expressions: integrative thinking, vanguard, comrade, hootenanny, chauvinism, book-burning, syncretistic faith, bourgeois-nationalism, jingoism, colonialism, hooliganism, ruling class, progressive, demagogy, dialectical, witch-hunt, reactionary, exploitation, oppressive, materialist.

This list, selected at random, could be extended almost indefinitely. While all of the above expressions are part of the English language, their use by Communists is infinitely more frequent than by the general public...

... In addition to these very general principles common to Communist tactics, a number of specific issues have been part of the Communist arsenal for a long period of time. These issues are raised not only by Communist appeals to the public, but also by the individual Party member or sympathizer who is a product of his Communist environment. They include: "McCarthyism," violation of civil rights, racial or religious discrimination, immigration laws, anti-subversive legislation, any legislation concerning labor unions, the military budget, "peace."

While showing standard opposition to certain standard issues, the U.S. Communist has traditionally identified himself with certain activities in the hope of furthering his ultimate purposes. Such hobbies as "folk dancing" and "folk music" have been traditionally allied with the Communist movement in the United States...

A study such as this can lead to only one certain conclusion: There is no sure-fire way of spotting a Communist... The principle difficulty involved is the distinction between the person who merely dissents in the good old American tradition and the one who condemns for the purpose of abolishing that tradition.

In attempting to find the answer to the question: "Is this man a Communist?" a checklist such as this can prove helpful, although in itself it cannot provide the answer:

Does the individual use unusual language? ("Communist Language")

Does he stubbornly cling to Marxist ideals without being willing to question them?

Does he condemn our American institutions and praise those of Communist countries?

Does he pick on any event, even the most insignificant occurrences in this country for his criticism?

Is he secretive about certain of his contacts?

Does he belong to groups exploiting controversial subjects?

Above all, the approach to the problem of discovering Communists must be detached and completely free from prejudice. Using some of the clues mentioned in this study in connection with a factual approach provides the best system at present of spotting a Communist.

# HAY UN CAMINO

*Nadima Dwihusna*

15



# JANUARY SNOWFLAKES

*Elizabeth Pettinger*

plunge onto hunched coats, American students  
caw-caw at the other muffled crows

carpet the pyramids quieting  
machine gun purrs on voters

incessantly flutter onto torn ground  
melting under lukewarm-refugee wrapped toes

dance down the Dakota plains bewitching  
the herds to also fall, indefinitely frozen

contrast black car bomb entrails,  
frozen icicle fear looms overhead

cannot coast in African tides of  
pirate shrapnel slaughter

of suicide bomber and student,  
blizzard down red across schoolyard

mix with toxic river, drink only  
the sky water. fish grow toes

encrust drone wings, escorting  
the reaper to 30,000 feet

burn against Chicago high priests'  
cheeks, fiery with secret molesting sins

splice to cancel 2,640 flights, flight  
attendants trade for McDonalds uniforms

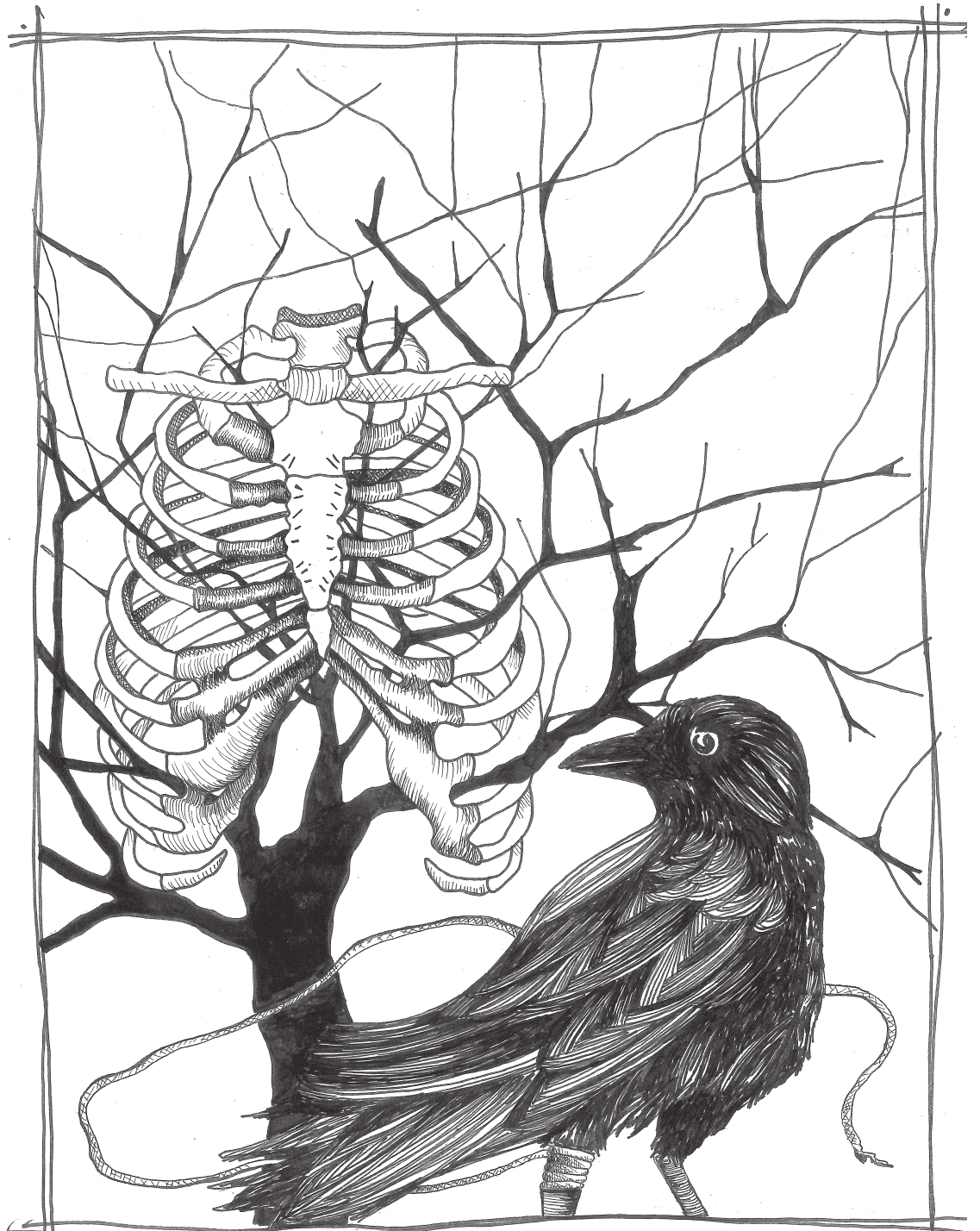
congeal into black ice  
the world spins its tires on



# DON'T DO THAT AGAIN

*Cass Whaley*

17



Pen/Ink

# A HIGHWAY LIFE

*Virginia Premo*

Rudy began whistling to himself, something he always does while on the road. He watches as the bright yellow lines come in and out of view as the beams coming from his 379 Peterbilt hit the asphalt in the dark night. The bumps in the road make the decaying rubber of his air seat squeak as it bounces. Another green sign passes by,  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles to the next exit. He continues on through the never ending night with each mile marker making a new memory appear...

## MM249

I was walking to the tree I always liked to rest under, just outside of the city. It was the most beautiful tree I had ever seen and the day I saw it I knew it would be my home forever. I was thinking about how nice it was to have eaten a roast beef hoagie, with a full belly I'd top it off with a bottle of whiskey and a dream. It was the perfect way to end the day.

My tree was just a few feet away. I could see the gnarled branches, the swirling trunk with one oblong knot, and the dark green tear shaped leaves. An odd feeling came over me before reaching my destination. I turned on my heel to see that there was a man following me. He looked surprised to see me staring back at him. His hair was dark burgundy, eyes a bright blue, and he wore jeans and a stained white tee. He looked like any old bloke you'd see on the road.

"Hello!" He said with a surprised expression as though he didn't think he could talk.

"Oi there. How's the form?" I replied questioning his demeanor.

"Uh... I saw you leaving the liquor store and... was wanting...to uh... to ask if I could join you in drink?" He said shyly, bashful. I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but there was something odd about him.

"Aye, a biteen tween two wild rovers tiss the best to be sure. Come fella lets get plastered!" I rejoiced and we both sat below the welcoming shelter of the tree.

Shot after shot I could feel my senses loosening up, the conversations became weirder and weirder. It went from the philosophy of life to the corruption of government and then it got *really* weird, I felt myself sober from the event.

"I do love the pigment of your skin," he said to me out of nowhere, his eyes glazed with drunk.

"Fek off ya fool egit! If ya ain't a beor I ain't interested!" I spat back at him.

"Oh... I didn't mean my words that way. I just wanted to express to you that you are a remarkable young man," he explained, becoming shy once more.

As the evening continued I became more uncomfortable with the situation which had landed in my home. The man had started to become drowsy and finally he passed out making it seem safe to fall asleep myself. I leaned up against my tree and started to drift into my dream. The same dream as always. The angel I long for with long white blond hair, long enough to wrap around her perfectly curved body, covered by the whitest of skin, and eyes so piercing blue they nearly hurt to look at. She

whispered in my ear “wake up.” Suddenly, I was awakened by an unbelievable pain in my arm. I look down to see the man had bitten into my arm and was feasting on the chunk of my flesh.

“AHHHHH! YA BLOODY GOBSHITE!” I had yelled so loud I’m sure people from the city could hear it. Gripping my bleeding arm I stared, shocked, into his eyes. They were cold, completely emotionless as he chewed.

He sighed “Damn, I hoped you’d stay asleep.” Just then he took out his knife and stabbed me in the heart. His eyes so close to mine it was all I could see as the blood stopped pumping. I imagined my angel taking me away with her. As I held her hand she took me from my body. I could feel my soul being violated, sodomized, and then my angel turned to me and said “Now we can be together forever.” Happiness overwhelmed me.

\*\*\*

*I suppose I helped that one...* Rudy thought lightly. He seemed to be driving forever, not remembering where he was supposed to be going. He could hear the old cabinet door rattling in the bunk, the smell of pine coming off his tree shaped, green air freshener reminded him of a woman he had once met...

### MM568

A black car with tinted windows rolled up to my pick up-spot. I adjusted my bra to make sure my cleavage looked good while walking up to the window as it rolled down.

“Lookin’ for a date honey?” I said, bending down to peer into the window, making the perfect angle for the man to see my tits. *Damn this is one good lookin man. What is he doin’ pickin’ someone up here?*

“What’s your rate?” He said.

Flipping my hair. “A bill a half.”

“For you? Damn, a good deal tonight! Hop in.” The locks clicked open.

“What’s your name honey?” I said as I slid into the seat.

“I’d rather you not know mine and I don’t want to know yours.” He said with a snap. “I’m just some guy and you’re just some whore.”

“Well then, I’ll call you honey and you can call me booty, so what do you *like*.” I unzipped his fly to start him off.

“To start,” he said as he grabbed my wrist, “Not in the car.” He pushed my arm away. “Second, I like the woods.” Silent, we cruised to the edge of town.

The man pulled his car into an empty parking lot in the woods. He took me along a trail leading from the parking lot to a big spruce tree.

“You asked me what I *like*. Well I like to role-play. I’m going to tie you up on this tree and you’re going to pretend not to like it.” He pulled rope from his jacket and started tying me up facing the tree trunk. My heart skipped a beat.

“Oh! NO! What are you doing!” I yelled, playing along, panic building.

“Hmmm, I going to rape you, eat you, and then kill you!” He said darkly, seriously.

“Come now suga, that doesn’t sound like a very fun game” I said with a sweet smile. When I saw the look in his eyes the blood in my veins turned to ice and my stomach twisted painfully.

“I want to taste your flesh, to feel it squish between my teeth as I sink them into your skin. To feel your warm blood squirt into my mouth and drip from my lips.”

*Holy crap! Why am I a hooker?* I could hear his footsteps on the ground crunching the branches and pine needles on the ground getting closer. My heart started to pound while all I could do was wait. He stopped right behind me and started cutting my skirt, underwear, and shirt off, one straight line right up my backside. As soon as the scissors hit the ground he started to rape me, only not with his dick, something sharp. Tree branch. I let out a scream and I could hear his sigh of pleasure followed by a horrible pain in my thigh. He jerked my head sideways to make me watch him as he chewed my flesh. He took another bite from my shoulder and looked at me with animalistic delight in his eyes. All I could do was cry, the pain was crippling but these tears were not from pain, but from knowing what came next.

“I am going to kill you from the inside out...*Booty*...was it?” He growled.

I let out a shrill cry as he slid a dull knife up into me, slicing. Again and again. My blood pooled at my feet and he left me tied to the tree to rot.

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*It doesn't seem as much a masterpiece seeing it this way,* Rudy thought as the memory left him. He still didn't know where he was going, but he also didn't care. The open road has always been his time to think. It wasn't always, though. The thought of what he did reminded him of his first and only love, the women who showed him who he really was...

## MM122

My boyfriend, Rudy, and I had been dating for about 3 months. The best 3 months of my life at that point. He was a gorgeous man. I could look at him all day if I was given the chance. What made the relationship so great was that I was into violent sex and so was he. I really liked to bite; it was a mad fetish of mine. Rudy had once bitten me so hard while he climaxed that he nearly took my skin off and after he was done he just smiled at me with his brilliant bloody mouth.

“That was the best orgasm I have ever had,” he said to me. His eyes were glossy with ecstasy and it seemed, from that moment, he no longer looked at me as though he loved me, but with a look of hunger, of need.

A month had gone by and I had several bite wounds which were only becoming painful and no longer brought me the pleasure they once had. I made the decision to break up with Rudy even though it hurt me to do so. I had to; I had turned him into a monster. I could no longer look at him without fearing what he was capable of. Biting is one thing, but this was going too far. He had developed the taste for human blood... and flesh.

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“A monster? This is an outrage! I am no monster, I make art of these people!” Rudy yelled while slamming his fist into the steering wheel. His tires screamed with alarm as the truck veered too close to the edge of the road, but Rudy was too angry to notice. “I can't believe she saw me as a monster. I thought Samantha was proud of me, proud of who I'd become. Jealous enough to call off our relationship.” Rudy was infuriated by this vision. “You made that part up. I know it; she loved me for all this!”

Rudy sat there thinking to himself about the road he traveled. About Samantha who had made him see where he was going and who he was to become. The quiet rocking of the truck as it rolled down the road reminded him and the random visions of his life angered him as they portrayed him as a killer, killing himself over and over in all the different ways he had killed.

Rudy called out into the darkness and there was never anyone there to answer him. Hundreds of times he saw different visions of his kills, all the events which dictated his life in some way. He had killed hundreds of people in his life. Rudy believed he was clever for becoming a truck driver hauling cars. The tracks were always from a different car, if there were tracks at all. Rudy was always very careful to never leave anything behind. Until *it* happened.

### MM999

“Inmate number 965874 step forward!” I said in the mic as the door slid open.

Grabbing his arm, I walked him down the hall. “You are one sick piece of shit! There’s a special place in hell for fuckers like you,” I scowled. He didn’t even flinch at the words. It was like he was dead already.

As the needle pierced his flesh, there was no fear in his face. In fact, he smiled and turned to me.

“There is nothing in this world that will ever truly stop me,” he said with a sick grin on his face. I would have beaten his head in then and there, but the witness curtain had already been opened. Within minutes the life drained out of his eyes, but I could still feel him staring at me...

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As Rudy drove in his eternal enclosure, he was driven mad with the idea that he may have been wrong in his life’s work. He supposed hundreds of years had gone by and still he drove on wondering. *Was he wrong?* No. He would do it again. All of it, again.

### MM001

He closed his eyes, and this time, it didn’t seem like a vision of a memory. He was warm, content, the comforting sound of a heart beat pulsed through his fluid filled ears. There were muffled noises around as the heartbeat began to get faster and more panicked. Then he was moving, squeezing and suddenly cold. He screamed out in defiance.

“Congratulations, Mrs. Ericson! It’s a boy!”

# THE LIVING DEAD IRISH RED

*Jesse Glover*

22



Hand Sketch & Photo Manipulation

# KILLING SALLY BLAKE

Derek Jacobsen

23

Sally Blake is sixteen. What a terrible fucking way to start a story. Start over, put her *in the action*.

No means no, no means no! These words would forever haunt Sally. At age fifteen, she had everything going for her; decent grades, made it on the varsity cheer team, ran her fastest time in cross country and made it to state. She even had time to hang out with her best friend, Emily, after school and practice. The world was hers for the taking; she was invincible. But all of that was before the summer. Now it's fall, the start of a new school year, and everything's changed.

Really? *Everything's* changed? No, shut up, they'll know what I mean. They'll ridicule you for it. No they won't, a lot of people say that. Regardless, it's stupid, and what happened to putting her in the action?

"Well, here we are," Sally's mother, Gwen, pulls her rusted red station wagon up to the curb in front of the school. Sally's been dreading this; going back, seeing everyone again. She stares straight ahead, not moving, as her mother looks at her questioningly, wondering why she hasn't ran off to be with her friends.

Sally just wants to disappear. Is that too much to ask? She feels sick and is praying that she can keep her breakfast down.

"Sally, come on honey-" Gwen says gently.

"Mom, I... I don't want to go to school," Sally whispers.

"Well why not? It's the first day of school, I thought you'd be all excited to see everyone again?"

Sally wanted to scream at her, to scream until her voice gave out and then fall into her mother's waiting arms, sobbing. *How do you not know?* She accuses her mother over and over again in her head. *How have you not noticed?* Gwen was still waiting for her to respond, oblivious to the battle raging in her daughter's head.

"I feel sick," was all Sally could say.

"Oh come now, that's just nerves," Gwen said putting her arm affectionately around Sally's shoulder giving her an awkward one handed hug. "You'll be fine. Now get going or you'll be late on your first day!"

Sally pushed the door open, the rusted hinges squealing in protest. She steps into the warm Montana air.

Do you even know *anything* about Montana?

She steps into the warm Minnesota air, her shoulder length blond hair blowing gently in the breeze. She takes a deep breath and trudges off across the grass courtyard toward the school, her stomach growing heavier with every step.

Gwen *had* noticed that her daughter was acting differently. At first, she ignored it. Teenagers, she thought, it's just a phase. After a while, everything would be back to normal and she'd tell herself that she was right or even that she had imagined the whole thing. But deep down, what she would never admit to herself was that something was wrong with Sally. Sally had grown quiet over the summer, turning into herself more and more. It really wasn't like her at all, but Gwen didn't know what to do, so she carried on convinced that Sally would come to her when she was ready.

The halls were packed with high school kids huddled around each other's lockers, talking loudly, and teachers huddled in fewer numbers watching them, as if waiting for the rebellion to start.

Sally wished she could sink into the floor and disappear. She edged passed some freshmen that looked like babies to her; and who, in turn, regarded her as a goddess. Sally had once been used to the heads turning. She never had to try very hard. She didn't have the biggest breasts or ass in the world, or the skinniest waist; but she liked them. In fact, she had always been extremely comfortable in her body and confident in herself as a result. She was beautiful in her own way, pale flawless skin that never seemed to get tan no matter how long she stayed in the sun, lush blond hair that she could do anything with, which usually was letting it fall in its natural curvy way. Not too tall, but not too short either; coming in at five-eight and a half.

She used to just throw on a short skirt and a tank top and pretend not to notice the attention she was getting. She had been so naive. Today, however, she had traded the short skirt for a pair of baggy, unflattering jeans and the tank top for an equally unflattering plain gray sweatshirt-hoody that hid her body's curves. Her hair fell limply around her shoulders and she had not put makeup on this morning.

Despite her disheveled appearance, she could still feel hundreds of eyes on her as she moved down the crowded halls trying to find her new locker. She could hear the whispers, the laughter – at *her*. It felt as if they were pummeling her. She was drowning in it, her breaths coming shorter and faster. Her heart hurt as it threatened to beat its way out of her chest.

Writing this was a terrible idea. Shut up. That whole last paragraph was a string of fragments, come on. That wasn't *eloquent* nor anything anyone wants to read. Do you think anyone will understand what you're trying to do? Yes, I'll make them understand. Your job is to tell them a story, not make them understand. So be it.

"Oh my god, Mr. Hermier is *such* a creep!" Emily's voice carried down the hall. "He was *so* looking down my shirt the *entire* time, I mean *seriously*," a chorus of girls' giggles followed.

Sally had her head in her locker, she was pretending to dig for something in the bottom of her backpack, but this was really the only way she could escape from the stares. Emily was walking towards her and Sally dug in a little farther, hoping to be sucked in.

"Oh my god, is that Sally Blake?" Emily said cheerfully.

*Fuck.*

"What's up girl?" Emily stopped right behind her. Surrounding her with her friends. Emily seemed so different now, so loud, and boisterous. But who had really changed?

"Hey, Em," Sally pulled herself out of her locker and faced her friend.

"Damn girl," Emily pushed out her hip as she examined Sally up and down disapprovingly. "Was someone up partying all night or what?" The other girls laughed. Sally's face burned, but Emily didn't notice.



So Sally laughed along.

“Ha-ha, no, not really,” Sally brushed her hair back behind her ear, a habit that she had picked up when she was nervous as a little kid.

“Uh huh,” Emily said nudging the girl next to her, Laura Wiggin, and rolling her eyes. “Anyway, we have so much to talk about! I haven’t seen you in *so* long,” And then she leaned in closer but still spoke just loud enough for everyone to hear, “I heard you slept with Dylan?”

And before Sally could say anything, could deny everything, they were off, laughing their way down the hall, with Emily calling back over her shoulder, “You *naughty* girl! Call me!”

Is that really how it happened? More or less. What happens next then? Time goes on, Sally starts distancing herself from everyone, and her friendship with Emily is strange. And then what’s next? Alcohol.

The music was loud and the room was spinning. Sally felt free. And Emily was there, handing her another drink. Sally had liked the alcohol before, the way it made her feel, but now she had a whole new reason to want it; it was her release.

They were in someone’s basement; Sally didn’t know who’s exactly, a friend of Emily’s. The entire house and backyard was filled with people, they looked old. Too old for high school. Every inch of every table was covered with plastic cups; some empty, some not, and every chair and couch was taken, Sally and Emily had just managed to squeeze into a spot on a couch next to a passed out man with writing all over his face and chest (*Insert Penis Here, etc.*). A cheer came from somewhere, where people were playing beer-pong.

“Hot damn, look at those guys over there,” Emily said nudging Sally and doing her best to seduce them with her eyes from across the room. They were definitely older and lounging around a high top bar, pouring themselves shots.

“Em,” Sally said looking into her cup, “I don’t want-“

“Shhh, they’re coming this way!” She said as the men finished the bottle and started scanning the crowd for BB’s.

BB’s? Booze and Boobs. Just say that, they’ll have no idea what you’re talking about otherwise.

The men finished off the bottle and went their separate ways, looking for more alcohol, and drunken girls to hit on. But two of those men looked right at them, and they were on their way over.

“Aren’t you two a little young to be drinking?” The first one said as he stood over them, the other sitting casually down on the arm right next to Sally. They both looked like they had walked out of Abercrombie & Finch catalogs; both tall, fair skinned, broad shouldered hunks.

“We’re old enough for *a lot* of things,” Emily said sitting back and pretending to be losing interest, but at the same time biting her lower lip.

The guy standing rocked back on his heels, surprised, but pleased by her answer. He had blue eyes. His friend next to Sally snickered; his were green.

“Well, it’s kinda loud down here, you two want to come with us to somewhere a little quieter for more drinks?” Blue eyes said.

“I don’t know,” Emily said slowly, playing hard to get. Which was unfortunately undercut by dick-face rolling over on her.

“Come on, it’ll be fun,” Blue eyes extended his hand to lift her out from under the wino, and she instantly took it.

“I’m ok, I have my drink already,” Sally said.

Emily shot Sally a wide-eyed confused *what the fuck are you doing these guys are hot and into us* – look.

Blue eyes had his girl, but Green wasn’t going to give up so easily.

“Come on, I know how to mix a drink a hundred times better than the one in your hand right now.”

Sally wanted to politely say no again, but she saw the pleading look in Emily’s eyes. Emily wasn’t going to go alone.

“Alright.” Sally smiled meekly, “Just one drink.” After all, she was only here for the alcohol, why not?

The lights hurt Sally’s eyes. They were the cheap fluorescent lights that flicker almost imperceptibly, but still managed to give her a migraine. She laid her head down on her desk; it felt cool on her pounding forehead.

Mrs. Lebowski was droning on about calculus. She was sitting in the back and Mrs. Lebowski never called on her. She didn’t care either. Sally fumbled around the floor by her ankles, searching for her water bottle. She found it after knocking it over and brought it up to her lips. The alcohol hit her throat hard, but she was used to that by now.

It was numbing, exactly what she wanted to be. Numb. She looked around the class. Emily was across the room. She had glanced in Sally’s direction when she knocked over the bottle, but now stared straight ahead, frustration on her face, lips pursed, arms crossed and brow furrowed. Sally assumed that Emily knew what was really in the bottle; and also that she wouldn’t rat her out. Even though she was still mad about the party last month, she wouldn’t sink *that* low.

But what if she had? Well, if she did Sally could have gotten the help she needed before it was too late. Quite a different story.

The bell rang and the class got up, dismissing themselves despite Mrs. Lebowski’s halfhearted rebukes that *she dismisses the class, not the bell*. She resigned to standing in the corner, looking disapproving as the last of the kids trickled out.

Sally walked out of the classroom just like anyone else. She was disappointed; the alcohol wasn’t working as well as it had in the beginning. It used to only take a few shots to get her sufficiently intoxicated, but functional enough to get by. It wasn’t even every day in the beginning. She lifted the bottle up and swished it around, guessing how much was left inside the metal bottle painted bright pink. Sally had gotten good at this and guessed that it was about half empty. A bottle used to last her a week or two. She had just filled up this morning.

Next was History. They were learning about the French revolution, which was really a just an excuse to watch *Les Misérables*, Mr. Gordon’s favorite movie. Sally walked in as the bell was going off and rushed to the one open seat in the back, right next to Emily.

“Hey, Em,” Sally said as she sat down.

“Don’t talk to me,” she hissed, refusing to look at her.

“Well *excuse* me,” Sally said. “*Bitch*,” she added under her breath just loud enough for her to hear.

“Don’t get mad at me!” she spat back, “You’re embarrassing! You ran out of there screaming bloody murder!”

“I told you I was sorry...”

“And then you ‘can’t tell me what happened,’” she said making air quotes with her fingers.

“I said sor-“

“And you don’t call! You left me there; I had no idea where you ran off to! Everyone there called you a freak, and me for coming with you.”

And there’s the real problem, Sally realized. Emily was shallow, and Sally had marred her reputation with the older crowd after running off. But it wasn’t Sally’s fault. She kept telling herself that over and over in her head. She got scared, it had come back to her, the summer, despite the alcohol it had come back with a vengeance.

“Emily, please, I’m *really* sorry,” Sally said, “It won’t happen again, I promise.”

Emily sighed. It was a long and drawn out, she was full of hot air. But she could never stay mad at Sally.

“Oh come on Sally just try it,” Emily said, her eyes drooping. The guy next to her started giggling, and he kept giggling and giggling unable to stifle himself. Sally felt all the more self-conscious even though she knew it wasn’t her he was laughing at.

She looked at the thing sitting on Emily’s palm that was supposed to be acid. It didn’t look like anything special. She looked around the room, everyone was high, or stoned, or tripping, or whatever. All of their vacant eyes staring off into the distance. Vacant, that word struck Sally, isn’t that what she wanted? To escape.

She picked the little scrap off of Emily’s palm. Why was she still nervous? She looked around at the dimly lit room, the light from a streetlamp outside pushing its way past the blinds and inside, the noise from the party going on downstairs seeping through the floorboards under her.

It would be easy to just say no and walk back down to the party and continue drinking, but something stopped her. She told herself that it was because she couldn’t abandon Emily, not again. But even as she was telling herself this she knew it was only partially true. The other reason why she hadn’t left yet was because the alcohol wasn’t making her numb anymore. She needed something new. She put it on her tongue.

Emily forgave Sally really quickly. Too quickly? I don’t know; it’s your story. Then that’s how I’m writing it. It’s not too late to save her. What’s done is done. So the drugs are next? Yes. How did she get them? Money at first. At first?

He tasted like salt. And he was choking her, shoving it farther down her throat as hot liquid shot into her stomach. He sighed. Relaxing in his seat.

Sally looked at him expectantly rubbing the sleeve of her coat across her mouth.

“Glove box,” he said pointing.

The needles were there; she grabbed them and stepped out into the cold winter night. She took the bus back to the station closest to her town and drove the rest of the way home. The snow was falling heavily and she had the heat cranked all the way up.

She walked in the house in the middle of her family eating dinner.

“Where have you been?” Gwen asked anxiously, “And why didn’t you call?”

Her father, Rob, looked up at her, his piercing blue eyes studying hers, as if she could read the truth in them.

When she was younger this would have worked. He always seemed to be able to read her like a book, know her so intimately, whenever she did something wrong and he needed answers. But after the summer, a piece of her had died. And it showed in her eyes. He wouldn't see anything there.

"Sorry I was with Emily, we were doing homework and I forgot to call," She lied.

Little Courtney Blake started spitting up in her highchair and that was the end of that conversation. Sally started for her room when her father spoke.

"Aren't you going to eat with us?"

"No," her mind reeled, "I ate at Emily's."

They seemed satisfied with that answer and went back to eating as Sally rushed off to her room.

The vein was hard to find in her arm, it was getting harder and harder to find and she had already tried both arms. But the neck, she only deliberated for a second weighing the cost of the needle mark to getting her fix. Makeup could fix anything. She fell back on the bed and let the euphoria take over.

What the fuck. The parents never noticed? Gwen was in denial and the father just thought Sally was just acting out and that it was a phase. But there would be signs? Schoolwork missing, appearance diminishing, things very hard to ignore! Sally OD'ed on that bed. But that's not where the story ends? No, her parents couldn't ignore the signs forever; this is the beginning of the end.

"She's choking get her on her side,"

"Clear the obstruction,"

"She's not getting enough oxygen, we need to intubate."

"V-fib, she's crashing,"

"Paddles,"

"Detoxing is going to be excruciatingly painful, she's lucky that she hadn't been using for very long or the chance of death from detoxing alone could have doubled. With that being said, Mr. Blake, it can *not* be overstated how lucky your daughter is to be alive at this moment."

"Thank you, Doctor," Her father's voice sounded tired.

"We *strongly* recommend that you commit her to our rehabilitation center, it's on the floor right above this one and the care is excellent," the Doctor said a little quieter.

"Yes, my wife and I will talk it over and," He really sounded tired.

Sally stopped listening. She didn't have the will for it. The doctor wasn't lying, everything was hurting. Her head was pounding and her veins felt like they were on fire. She tried to open her eyes a little but the light felt blinding, burning holes in her retinas.

But she was sick of the orange behind her eyelids; she wanted to see. She forced her eyes open into slits. The hospital room was spare, sky blue painted walls; a picture of a single sunflower adorned the wall opposite her, to her right a single window with thin white plastic blinds that did little to keep the sun out, to her left the door and some monitors displaying her blood pressure, oxygen level, which she knew from her health class last year; and other things that Sally didn't understand.

She could make out the silhouette of her father standing by the window looking at nothing; the blinds were closed. His arms were folded, with one hand tucked under his chin. She could see that

this must have been devastating for him; his body seemed to have shrunk two sizes, his clothes were wrinkled and his hair was sticking up all over the place. He must have been here all night.

Sally wanted to cry. She didn't want to hurt anyone, she just wanted to be numb, to not remember. But after everything that she had been through she wasn't even allowed that one small luxury. *It wasn't fair.* Her throat was raw and dry; she started choking and burst into a sob.

Her father was there. Rob shushing her, comforting her, drying her tears with his thumb and gently brushing her hair back; telling her it was all going to be "all right". Everything was going to be "all right". She quieted a little and nodded along for his sake but the storm was still raging inside.

Rob pulled one of the chairs up to the bed and sat down in it. His head in his hands. When she started to whimper again he absentmindedly put his hand on her knee, patting it gently, squeezing it reassuringly.

It was just like at the party. It all came back to Sally, the summer before, what happened in that old log cabin by the lake. She started to scream.

This is some heavy shit. Are you sure you should be writing this? What will other people think when they read this? Why are you writing this? Therapy is next.

"I never realized I hadn't buckled her into her car seat, until." The Man sat across the circle from Sally. The pain of what he was reliving fresh on his face, "Until I saw her, I didn't even realize it was her at first, just lying there on the pavement ten feet in front of me. I remember thinking, 'who would leave their baby in the middle of the street?'" The man stopped and took a deep choppy breath. "I knew I had to get clean, I did my time and here I am. Haven't touched the stuff in twenty years last Saturday."

"That's fantastic, Frank," Dr. Nyle said, and the group echoed in agreement.

Dr. Nyle made a show of looking at his watch, "I think we're just out of time, but great job everyone, remember 'The body is *stronger* than the mind *thinks* it is,' you guys can do amazing things if you believe in yourselves." He stood and said something about seeing them all next week, and then he stood by the door shaking everyone's hands as they left. Sally was always last so she could follow Dr. Nyle to his office for her one-on-one with him. And then her sponsor, David, would pick her up for ice cream if it was hot or hot chocolate mixed with shots of espresso if it was cold. She liked David; he was nice.

Sally had gained weight over the last year, not a lot but enough that some of her old clothes didn't fit. She considered herself "chunky" but didn't mind. She was comfortable in her skin. Her parents were supportive, in some cases *over* supportive, but she loved them for it. For the first time in a long time she was *happy*.

School was even going better than expected for her. At first when she went back to school last spring it had been scandalous, she was a "druggie" and deserved to be ostracized from the school. That ended one day when she went home from school and tied a noose for herself. That initiated a second round of hospital visits and therapy, but more importantly, after she returned *again* in the fall her story was out. Not everything, but enough to illicit sympathy and understanding.

And then there was the rebuilding; she started making new friends. Emily was great and all but Sally needed something more, someone less shallow. Samantha Wong was that person. She was in the grade above Sally but neither of the girls cared much, they had known each other from track and started bonding after Samantha told Trevor Dixon to "Fuck off," after a bout of malicious taunts. She'd even met a boy in her group therapy.

But this isn't where the story ends, no, this story doesn't have a happy ending. She loved that boy that she met in the group. No she didn't, she thought he was a creep and she said so. No, she just didn't know how to express her feelings. Her blood is on your hands.

"Have you thought of writing your story out?" Dr. Nyle asked.

Sally was lying down on the plush couch across from him, a stereotypical thing to see in a shrink's office. He had told her many times that it was just a joke between him and a colleague and that she didn't actually need to lay down or even sit in it for that matter as there were perfectly normal chairs in the room as well. But she liked it, she liked lying down when she talked and thought about her life.

"I haven't really thought about it," Sally said trailing off at the end. She had been in this office so many times she liked to think she had it memorized. From the heavy solid oak desk in the corner, to the high book shelves covered in books from floor to ceiling, even the little golden nameplate sitting on the corner of his desk where in bold lettering "Dr. Christopher Nyle" was printed.

"Many people find writing about themselves very therapeutic. Some have even done it in the third person," He paused to judge her reaction.

She thought it was stupid, she had no interest in writing, *especially* about herself, especially about what happened.

As if Dr. Nyle could read her mind he said, "You don't even need to write about what happened, just keeping a journal of day to day activities or even creating a complete work of fiction could help you. Really you don't even need to show anyone, not even me. It's the action of writing it out that's important."

"I guess I could try,"

"Sally, you've been making great progress coming to terms with *everything* and sharing in group. There's not a lot more we can do meeting once a week if nothing's changing anymore?" He phrased it as a question but Sally's stomach felt like lead. "Are you comfortable with changing our one-on-one sessions to every other week? I feel like you've made enough progress where we can start weaning off the one-on-one's, *not entirely*, and continue group therapy."

"No," Sally said a little too forcefully. "I'll try the writing," She said softer this time.

As always the session was over too soon and Dr. Nyle politely ousted Sally from the office. As he opened the door a boy about Sally's age fell head first into the room.

"What the *Hell* is this?" Sally exclaimed.

"I swear I wasn't listening," the boy pleaded looking from Dr. Nyle to Sally and back.

"The hell you weren't!" Sally was furious. She knew this boy from group.

"Sally, please, let me take care of this," Dr. Nyle said soothingly. "Matthew, go sit down *now*."

Sally was still distressed but trusted Dr. Nyle. She stepped over the boy and out of the office.

Matthew brushed the imagined dirt off of him and took his usual seat on the couch. He could still smell Sally on it.

Dr. Nyle closed the door and walked slowly towards him.

"Matthew, what have I told you about your *obsession* with Sally?" He said firmly. He didn't wait for a response from the boy who refused to make eye contact and was staring intently at his sneakers. "It is unhealthy, wrong, and now it is becoming a major problem. One-on-one sessions are *private*. This cannot continue."

The doctor went on about how he was in the group and violation of trust and legal ramifications but Matthew wasn't paying attention. He didn't need to continue to see Dr. Nyle to see Sally; he had gotten her address during the first week of therapy all those months ago.

She loved him, she told him everything. *No*, she told the *group* everything. Why are you writing this? For her. They'll ridicule you for it. No, they'll understand. They'll just use this against you. What's done is done. Her blood is on your hands; I can hear sirens.

David dropped her off after some ice cream and told her he'd pick her up again next week, but to text or call him anytime. He always said this and Sally took comfort in the routine. It was a Friday and her parents wouldn't be home until late, they always worked late on Fridays so they didn't have to worry about anything over the weekend.

Sally ran next door and picked-up baby Courtney from Mrs. Jane's daycare. Courtney looked happy and clapped her chubby palms when she saw her sister. Sally's heart swelled every time she saw how happy Courtney got just to see her.

When she was back in her own house she carried Courtney around in her arms, singing softly and swaying her back and forth as they danced around the house. There was a note with her mother's scribbled handwriting in the kitchen that said to heat up leftovers in the fridge if they were hungry and that she would cook up something "upon her return".

Courtney started getting irritable so Sally let her down for a nap. Then she had the house to herself. She felt good, she felt happy. *Why couldn't she write about that stuff?* She dug out her laptop and opened a fresh page. But she paused. *What should she write? How far back? Last year? Right after it happened?*

She started writing; *Sally Blake is sixteen.* "Wow that's terrible," she said aloud and laughed. She didn't even notice Matthew standing behind her.

You killed her! No I didn't! Yes you did, look! She's dead! Her blood is on your hands. No, no she loved me. No she didn't. The neighbors must have heard her screaming. The police are right outside. Why are you still writing this? Run!

# IN AWE

*Dave Gabrielson*

32



Pencil, Charcoal, & Sharpie



# ROTATIONAL ILLUMINATION

*Laine Greaves-Smith*

33



Mixed Metal Art Sculpture

# MARKOVIAN PARALLAX DENIGRATE

*Eric Clark*

Grinning Parasite and the host,  
clasp the Glass, command a toast.  
While the multiverse dangles Our string..  
joyous mutilations continue the Spring.

Bounded; so we head for the Coast,  
In full pursuit of John Titor's ghost.  
Mere fiber-optic ruminations and worse,  
Salient failures, but still hunters for the Source.

And so the Fighting endures for the crumbs,  
Ballparks, oligarchs, brownstones and slums.  
Open spaces blanketed by spectacle & infanticide -  
crafted by the Hand, quantitated & calcified.

When the time is nigh to ride & cannot wait,  
And barbarians are lining up at the gate.  
Just remember we're going full throttle,  
on the Everett-Wheeler Model.

# RADIANT

*Veronica Shaner*



# READ THE RECIPE BEFORE COOKING

*Aaron Glick*

Eggs have a lot of potential  
but they have to be cooked just right.

Fried, over easy they melt in your mouth  
but unattended, become chalky rubber.

Scrambled, they are fluffy and light  
unless baked to indelible curds.

Poached, a package of perfection  
but a mess nonetheless with a rapid boil.

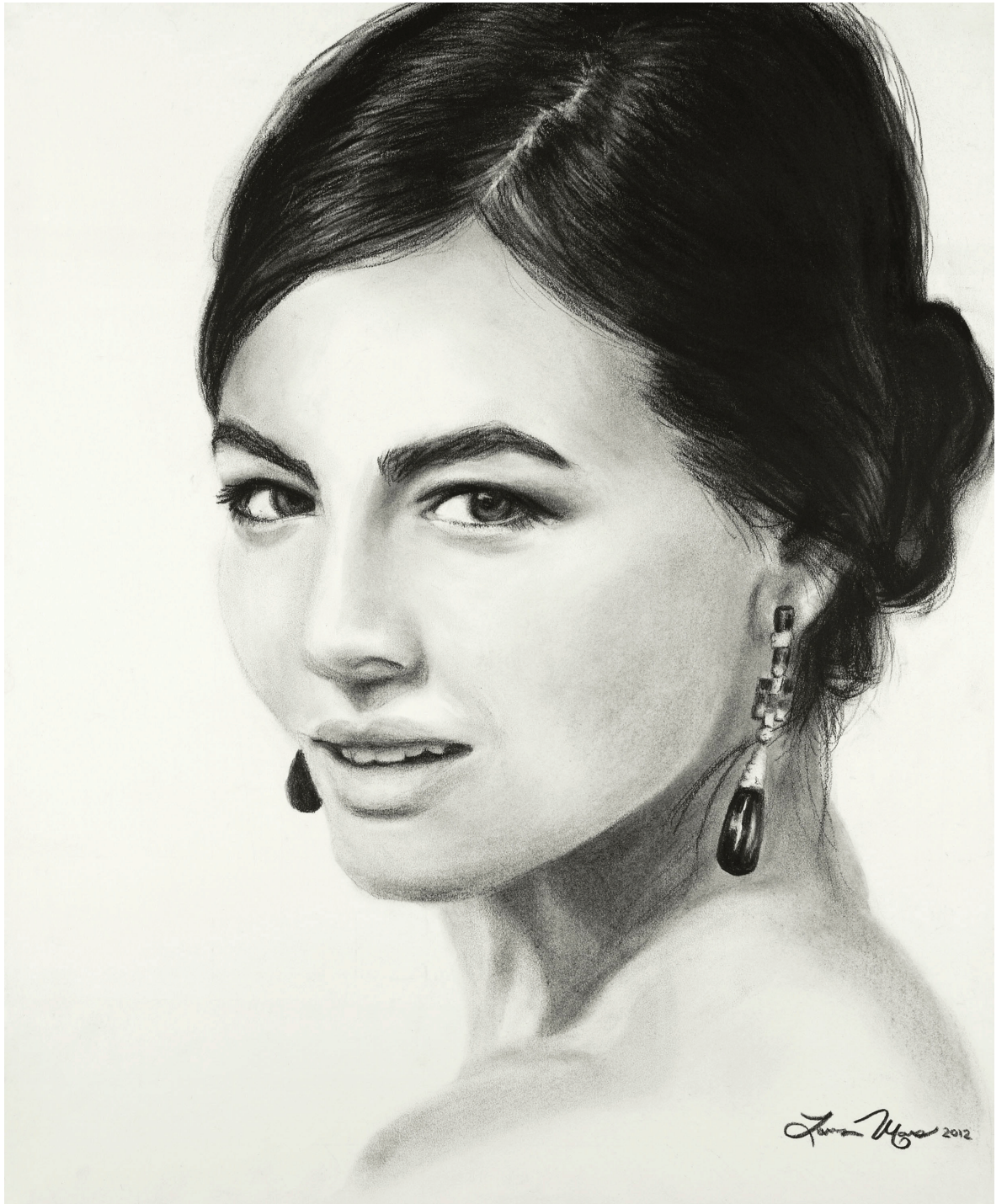
And in utero, the possibilities are endless  
unless it becomes a psychopath or a rapist.

Cooking requires attention—no one likes bad eggs.  
Do us all a favor and please, read the recipe before cooking.

# CAMILLA, BELLE OF THE BALL

*Lauren Marus*

37



Charcoal

# DOPPELGÄNGER

*Carolyn Pauly*



Charcoal

# FRAILTY, THY NAME IS THOMAS

*Wenli Dickinson*

39

Night became the bud of a cigarette illuminating a profile;  
witching hour tolls, and I haven't slept in awhile,  
last Sunday's service still ringing in the dark.  
Against the robes of white, the blood-red wine was stark.  
I shook my head once, twice, then thrice:  
Holy Trinity? Or Dante's Inferno—the ultimate price?

A man clad in silken folds professed my damnation,  
though I've always felt that the number three was for dimensions.  
A man with hands bejeweled foresaw my wretched path,  
though I've always felt that blood diamonds were true wrath.

I decided he was a delusional apparition,  
who spoke of dues rather than salvation.  
He saw not poverty, but bread and wine;  
he saw not prayer, but scripted lines.

I exhale smoke and know that I'd trust the damnation  
of carcinogens before my neighbors' confessions,  
for there is a god who's never looked me in the eye  
and told me that someday, by his hand, I will die.

# GREY WOLF

*Alexandra Sauer*

40



Acrylic



# STRONG AND INDEPENDENT WOMAN

*Athena Ryals*

41

She carried it in her purse at all times, and her purse went with her everywhere. She always said she needed three things with her: that tiny bottle of tabasco, her pocket New Testament, and the picture of her and Jim, God rest his soul, because, let's be honest, her hair never looked better than in that picture. But the tabasco was probably her most important little treasure, or at least the most used. She knew how she wanted things to taste, but it wouldn't do to carry along a large bottle; that would be inconvenient.

And she would not be forced to be inconvenienced in her inconvenient food preferences. She didn't trust the world to have a bottle of tabasco when she wanted it, so dammit, she would bring her own, and the world could go to hell. Her chowder or gravy would be properly seasoned, thank you very much.

She liked her people as precisely seasoned as she liked her food. If someone wasn't just the way she liked them, she pounded and peppered and seasoned away until they were just right. And if they couldn't be made right, then... were they even worth having? She didn't think so.

When her son nervously announced he was gay on his 15th birthday, she didn't rage, scream, or threaten. Instead, she pushed and prodded and questioned and needled away at him, at his fad, at his phase, so the year after that on his 16th birthday he hanged himself with her belt, in her closet, when she was away on a long weekend. She was doing a women's retreat specifically for Christian mothers with "confused" sons, and it happened to fall over his birthday. That was very inconvenient, so naturally his birthday was postponed until the weekend after that. Retreats like that don't happen every year.

Her husband had not exited her life so dramatically. One June night, he simply got up in the middle of the night, packed one bag with his collection of sports car magazines and some fresh changes of clothes, and left. He didn't leave a note, just most of his stuff and all of the pictures in his wallet.

"Don't settle," she was always telling herself and her friends. "Don't settle, because you'll get stuck with less than you deserve. You've got to know you deserve something, and then just make it happen. No one is gonna make it happen for you." She was a self-made woman. She had never had to become an exotic dancer to pay for her degree and had never taken money from any man she slept with. "The world's hard as it is," she would say, "so don't settle for even less."

Her friends called her very confident. Over lunch, they would watch each other bending to her will like space and time around a planet, and were amazed without knowing why. "Honey, I wish I could say the things you say," one would tell her. That one went home to a husband she knew almost for certain was cheating on her. "You say the damndest things, I keep you around just to see what you'll say," another would say. She didn't know that her friends were the ones that kept her, and not because they liked her.

And because her son was dead and her husband gone she could say something like, "life's a bitch, ladies, but you can't settle for less. You have to see what you want and make it happen." She would smile, dash some tabasco onto her chicken, and say, "life isn't gonna make itself easy for you. So you just gotta go out there and be just as big a bitch back."

# OWL

*Alex Clymer*

42



Acrylic

# KRYSTAL'S ETERNAL SHINE

*Brooke Sorenson*

43

The bright lights seep into every crevasse of my face  
sleepless nights seek darkness under my eyes.  
My reflection is colder than coins  
spewing from pitiless slot machines.  
I mechanically push glitter on my lids  
pull my lashes towards heaven  
and strap on my studded six inch heels.

The City of Sin  
beat me to a tissue,  
and spit me out to dry.  
I may be sloppy after the years  
but the pigs seem to eat it up.

I strut the walkway to *Diamonds*  
lights stroking to the beat.  
My back arches against  
the pole as I lift my burdens to the sky.  
I sway, rock, and grip the shaft  
hair brushing away  
dirt from feet and floor.  
I swallow  
my pride  
because I've been hardened  
to a pillar of salty crystal.

Sunlight creeps under the crack of the door  
filling promises of more entertainment  
to preserve my lusty immortal soul.

# LIFE REBORN

*Becky Reeve*

44



Acrylic & Elmer's Glue

# I MET LUCIFER IN THE AFRICAN THEATER

*Wenli Dickinson*

45

We met in the violent hue of a Moroccan twilight, the glare of desert like serpents upon our necks. I breached the shore of the oasis. It was a plane of glinting sand, a certain slant of light that conjured a mirage. But the revolutionaries knew—or were they brigades? Nevertheless, they have seen what we dare not desire.

Our limbs were made of Water. Our eyes? Lagoons—paradise hidden behind the foliage of the iris. But if hope was a mirage on the horizon, then our fates were rainfalls guzzled greedily by the shadow of a dune. They have not come to know Desert Thirst as we have. It is an intimacy that escapes them, that only the wanton feel in their dusty palms, in their heels which fold into an unblemished landscape. We are shoulders that feel the weight of ourselves and twenty-thousand shatterings of shrapnel to the heart. The soldiers are sea glass in the sands whose contours have been softened by the callous hands of time. Are they shards of something that once was whole, or were they never windows to begin with? The witnesses of *Kristallnacht* would know.

The pyramids to us are a fallen precipice of once great kingdoms: forgotten tributes to a Pharaoh. Now the land of their successors is wrought with war. Rommel stands beneath the waning sun, and he knows not their grandness. They were once humans who spoke the sphinx's tongue. What of treaties, of rescripts, of indemnities? They are plated words. Gilded things that ruin the hearts of men.

We are pawns. Blood to be spilt by the King on the chessboard. We stand in fluid torpor. The sound of air fire pummels us from our childhoods, turning us into a desert pyre, a conflagration of men before the eyes of a fallen angel.

# ILLUMINATING KINDRED

*Virginia Premo*

46



Photography

# 2013/8/11 OR FATHER

*Xinwei Yan*

47

Choking rain penetrates the city  
You fill my crib industriously  
Like a farmer blames cattle  
Because the grass lusher till the horizon

Misery is a matter of pride  
I keep changing clothes  
From the North to the North  
The windy road brims my breath

Every summer I meet tears  
And give my hometown to girls who don't love me  
Back to them  
Years are getting cold

Rubber factory is running at forty degree Celsius  
I hide myself in the middle of drenched workers  
Afraid of meeting you

# BLACK SWAN

*Vy Duong*

48



Pastel



# SNOW ENVY

*Taylor Parsons*

49

A friend  
once said they were envious  
of the rain  
how it falls so easily  
so  
blindly  
and doesn't wonder  
if the ground will hurt

But heavy rain  
often makes such a clatter  
on the earth  
when it hits  
so  
startlingly  
splatters the ground with  
the sound of its end

To the contrary  
I envy a fragile snow  
much more  
how it falls so slowly  
so  
sensibly  
lands but does not break  
and melts  
only  
after it blankets the world in  
light

And sometimes  
when the wind blows  
just right  
it will float ever  
so  
slowly  
to the top of a tall wintry peak  
and stay  
fallen  
satisfied after  
changed but still  
intact

# I LIFT MY EYES UP TO THE MOUNTAIN

*Alyssa Schwarz*



Watercolor

# WINDY NIGHTS

*Alexandra Nilles*

51

Construction site ghosts will haunt you,  
wind whipping through these hollow building bones.  
If we give the buildings voices, they scream.  
They don't want to be a sealed-off box of still air.

The wind crashes down the mountain, they say it sounds like a freight train  
but that metaphor is so linear.  
This kind of wind could never be tied down to two pieces of steel.  
This wind uproots trees that railway ties would only dream of being hewn from.  
This is a wave miles high, sky tide,  
goddess with her mouth wide screaming as she rides the Rocky Mountains.  
Atmospheric contractions rip at my clothes, nearly knocking me over.  
Cleans out the dust from this town and my ghosts.

# SAN FRANCISCO

*Ronald Kem*

52



Photography

# TANGLED

Matthew Jones

*It was a tree with arms that moved and legs that creaked. A tree that sat by the man's window, watching him as he grew and laughed and cried and loved and lost. An ageless, watching tree. A tree whose branches cradled, whose splinters stung, whose bark flayed, but still, it was just a tree. Just a tree.*

"You mentioned the tree last we met. Let's begin there."

I couldn't help but talk with it. With Him. He'd scratch at my window in the frigid wind, begging entry. So, to calm him down, I'd reassure him. Tell him the wind would fade as all things tend to fade, and he'd creak and moan. I don't think he liked the idea that I might fade. Disappear. He'd have nobody to watch or look at. No one to creak and moan at. I suspect such living might be lonesome, but then, we're all alone, aren't we?

"And what about your parents?"

I remember the day my parents died. The way everything went thin. Stretched. Like I might tear or burst. Sure enough, He would scratch that damn window every night. I think He was worried about me. Afraid I might not get out of bed if He didn't make that frightful sound. I'd forgotten what it was to be lonely. What loss really meant--

*Then, a pause. The man could feel his eyes beading, blurring the room, the chair, the other man into a polluted haze.*

I'm sorry, you'll have to pardon me. I'm not normally this way, but every time I think about that Tree, I remember my parents.

*When he wiped his tears away, the man's hands looked unfamiliar. The skin was tight, and the flesh was fresh, as it was when he was young.*

"Perhaps we should focus on your father."

My father, he used to say that you always find what you least expect when you look where you always look. My mom would have a fit. She'd say it never made any sense, what he said. Well, she used to say that we should cut down that damn noisy tree, but I could never bring myself to let her. I always begged her not to, and she never did. I think she left that Tree up for me. Or maybe He talked to her, too. Bothered her into living longer than she should. Ha, I suspect that's it.

"Why do you think that is? Your mother not cutting down the tree, I mean."

Well, you see... He's like a guardian of sorts. He'd stop us from fighting, hush us with his moaning and creaking. Made me laugh with it, even! He knew just what to do when the rest of us forgot what it was we all wanted in the first place.

"And what did you want? In the first place, that is."

I can't much say. Sometimes we'd want fun. Other times, we'd want loyalty. But then... I think we really wanted kinship or some such bullshit.

*There was a spirited anger in his voice. The man felt the tension in his flesh, the ebb and flow in his bones, the vibrant flow to his blood. He wanted him gone.*

Now, sir, I... I think you best leave. I've had enough of this. Enough of your pestering questions.

*His voice shook under the weight of his youth.*

“Certainly. Same time tomorrow, then?”

I suppose that’s fine, but go now--

*The man opened his eyes, and they were crusted from a long sleep. His back ached, and he felt a wanting for another time. A time before now. He looked down at his hands and saw a wrinkled mess, stained spottedness.*

*When he finally rose from the metal folding chair, tears rolled from his misted, grey eyes. He saw his home, distraught. Diseased with the affliction of time. Torn curtains. Peeled paint. Rusted metal. And yet, the sun was rising, but all he did was stand. Immovable.*

\*\*\*

*He walked over rotted carpet and up sunken steps to the window with the tree. He rested his hand against the glass, holding it there with the cold. He could feel the scratching of branches and the creaking of older oak. Deep roots.*

Oh, what I’d give to see them again... The old gang. Mom whining to get you cut down and father praising nonsense. He lost it, you know. Just after I left. Just after I gave up... Oh, what I’d give to have us together...

The tree croaked.

You think so?

A branch shattered from the tree, falling to the ground like thunder.

I see what you mean, there. It goes as it always has. As it always must.

*The man left the window. He grabbed some rope and stepped outside where He always stood. The man handed Him the rope, and He took it with a gentle care. And He lifted the man up into the sky. Far above the Earth or the ground or the things we cling to, and the man rested where he always had, upon a string taut in a tangled mess of branch and brush and stump and bark.*

# THE UNDERGROUND MINE

*Melissa Anderson*

55



Photography

# PICTURES ONLY COLLECT DUST

*Emma Ely*

I have no use for pictures.  
Memories should be free,  
To drift between the past, present, and future,  
Morphing as we do.

A photograph freezes a moment,  
It holds the memory in place,  
a moth pinned behind a glass plate.  
The beauty is supposedly captured,  
But true majesty travels through space and time,  
Smoke slipping through a net, vanishing.

I have no use for pictures,  
People never remain the same.  
I prefer to keep them in my mind,  
Where I can visit them as I please,  
Recollecting what happened, and what did not.

So visit me when you can dear memories.  
Tell me about ecstasy, serenity, and relief.  
Whisper into my ear and breath into my neck.  
Remind me of the pain, comfort me with bliss.

Please do not leave me memories,  
For I have no pictures.  
No pictures to remind me of you.



FLOWER  
*Alex Clymer*

57



Acrylic

# HER BATTLE

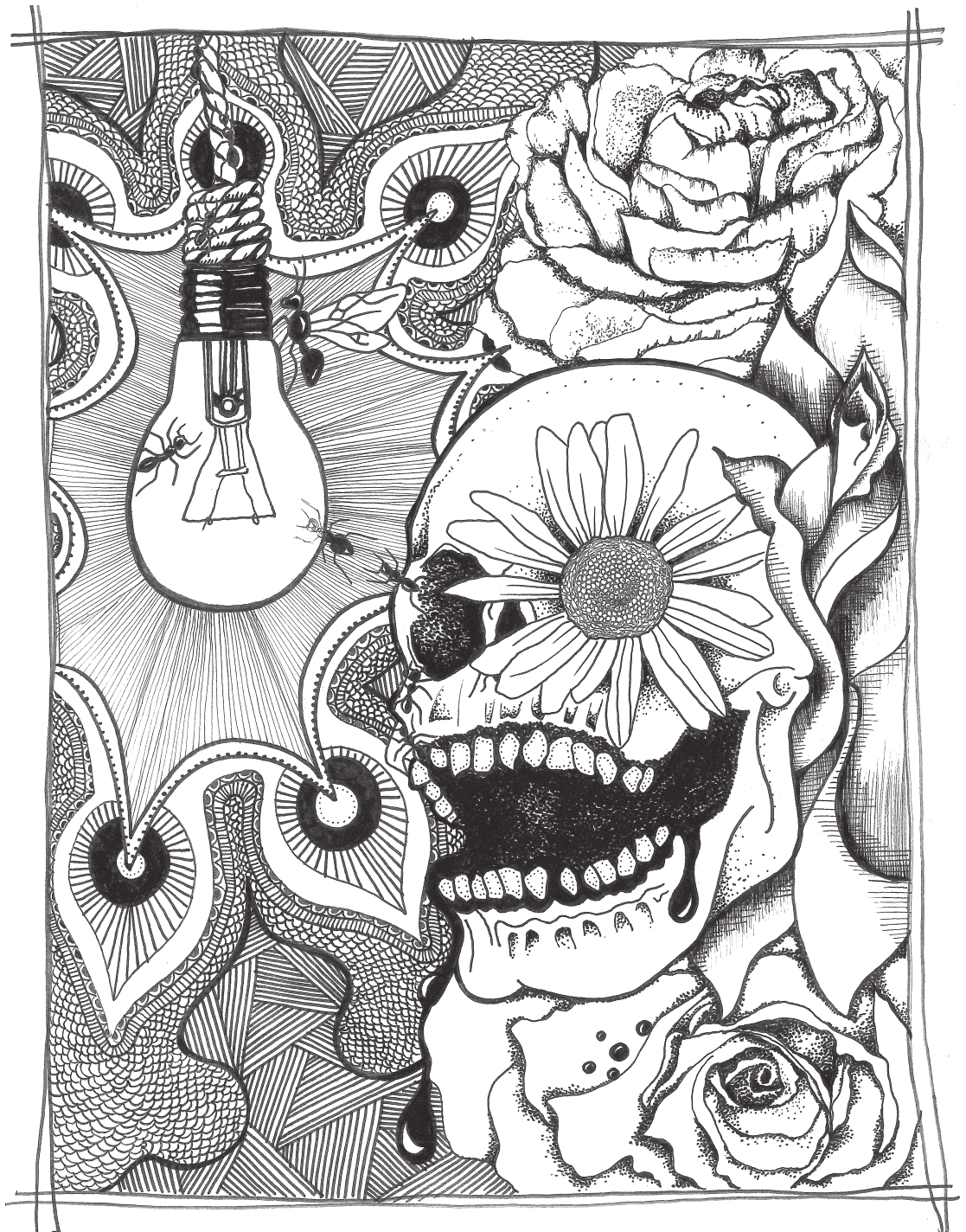
*Bethany Klinkermann*

Her hands trembling and shaking like a soldier, shell shocked, tracing the place where the hair in the drain used to be, trying not to pull too hard, fearing more of those golden curly strands would find odd comfort in her hands rather than on her head. The enemy she was fighting, the one that already seized her breasts and left an anchor shaped scar across her chest, now claimed her mane, the one and only hope she had remaining. At this moment grenades of fear flashed in her eyes, the battle lost, but not over, in the end, one of two powers waging war would be eradicated for good. Only one would stand victorious as the dense, grey smoke cleared.

# AT LEAST THE PLANE DIDN'T CRASH

*Cass Whaley*

59



# I AM WRITING A SCRIPT FOR A TRAGEDY...

*Wenli Dickinson*

Here are the characters.

I am a car. I am the kind with green, glowing dashboards and shiny rearview mirrors. Red needles telling you how fast you are leaving a place. My doors are open and you get in. If you drew a map of all the places I've been, you could hear me: my wheels are rattling over pavement, the empty roads radiating from an urban core.

You are a passenger. The flames in your eyes are like the hunger we once had for Spring flowers. The flames were in your mouth, where you rolled the word *time* around with your tongue like a foreign object you just couldn't swallow. We were falling in love with the infidelity of tomorrows.

Here is the plot.

I saw June walking in the moonlight. Dogs, bare feet, asphalt. I don't remember the days; I don't remember our words. I only know that the equinox was full of indulgence and gratification. Chocolate in the mouth that you eat now because later it will melt in the sun. She gave us a season spent going 99 down freeways, where we never said our fears out loud.

The days are growing shorter. You forsake summer. You broke your knuckles against steering wheels. Worry has worn a wormhole in the pockets of last year's winter jacket. When you put it on, it is August already. When you look in the mirror, you see the days rolled out like numbers in the corner of your mouth. It is the muted melody from the radio inside the car.

Then you took a train to Telluride. Left me idling in empty parking lots where you could see your breath. The interior train lights illuminate half your face. The other half lies in darkness—the other side of the moon, a moment across double yellow lines, a fruit halved and left to rot. We were falling in love with the fidelity of yesterdays. We were—

Wait, don't go. You have more lines. You are supposed to be here for the curtain call. You are supposed to bow when the audience applauds. They will throw roses at you.

No, they will throw lilies at you.

I am a car. I am the kind with broken windows, tail lights flickering, peeling paint. Red needles telling me how fast I am leaving a place. My headlights cut through the darkness and you stand behind me. If you drew a map of all the places you've been, you could hear me: I'm shattering between semis, car engines, and landing in a bed of white lilies in the grass, bleeding under Arizona sun.

I'm Writing a Script for a Tragedy: You Play the Passenger and I'll Play the Car. In My Play, You are the Kid with Cancer but No One Will Know Until the End.

# KARMANN GHIA

*Caleb Garbus*



Photography

# SESTINA TO THE MODERN EXPLORER: SEEK OUT RIVERS

62

*Taylor Parsons*

As I sit in history class, attempt to read  
the Spaniards' story of exultant exploration, I roll  
my eyes at the lack of world-view they had, how my current  
concept of the *unknown* so clearly differs—how rapid  
they defined a change from *wild* to *explored*—how the river must feel  
to be seen in the spring, mapped after a monsoon, with fleeting  
moods and swells, character defined by just one fleeting  
visit to their shores. Oh, how quickly a softly trickling creek becomes a difficult-to-read  
torrent of foam; how a five-minute visit to the canyon rim cannot make you feel  
the years of wildness and serenity seen by the Grandest of Canyons; when clouds roll  
in on the depths, light disperses on water, a rapid  
change in mood can occur; the current  
state of wildness profoundly different from the last.  
I slip out into the current

and feel the fleeting  
sense of fear at the roar of the rapid  
below. Though I have read  
these waves many times, finished my first real roll  
in its familiar waters, I will never feel  
that this time is the same, from the feel  
of the goose bumps on my young back to the current  
cold-induced shivers in teeth, from a combat roll  
after an unsuccessful first descent—a fleeting  
feeling quickly replaced by joy—to a calm, easily-read  
line through a low-water run of a rapid,  
the sense of exploration and exhilaration in the rapid  
movement of water is a sensation I will never cease to feel.  
To read a river twice is to read  
a book twice; the message I get from the current  
skimming, with sensations and revelations so fleeting,  
changes with each visit to its pages. To roll  
your car swiftly through a national park blaring rock and roll  
through your speakers is but one rapid,  
fleeting  
way of exploring the unknown. To feel  
the water under your boat, the current  
propelling you forward, your line dependent on your read,  
is the way I prefer to read the lines of history. By river, traveler, you may roll  
your boat through ever-changing current, through rapid  
after rapid, feel the water-whisked breeze and spirits ever fleeting

# ALPINE IBEX AT SUNRISE

*Kenneth Sullivan*

63



Photography

# RUNNING AT DUSK

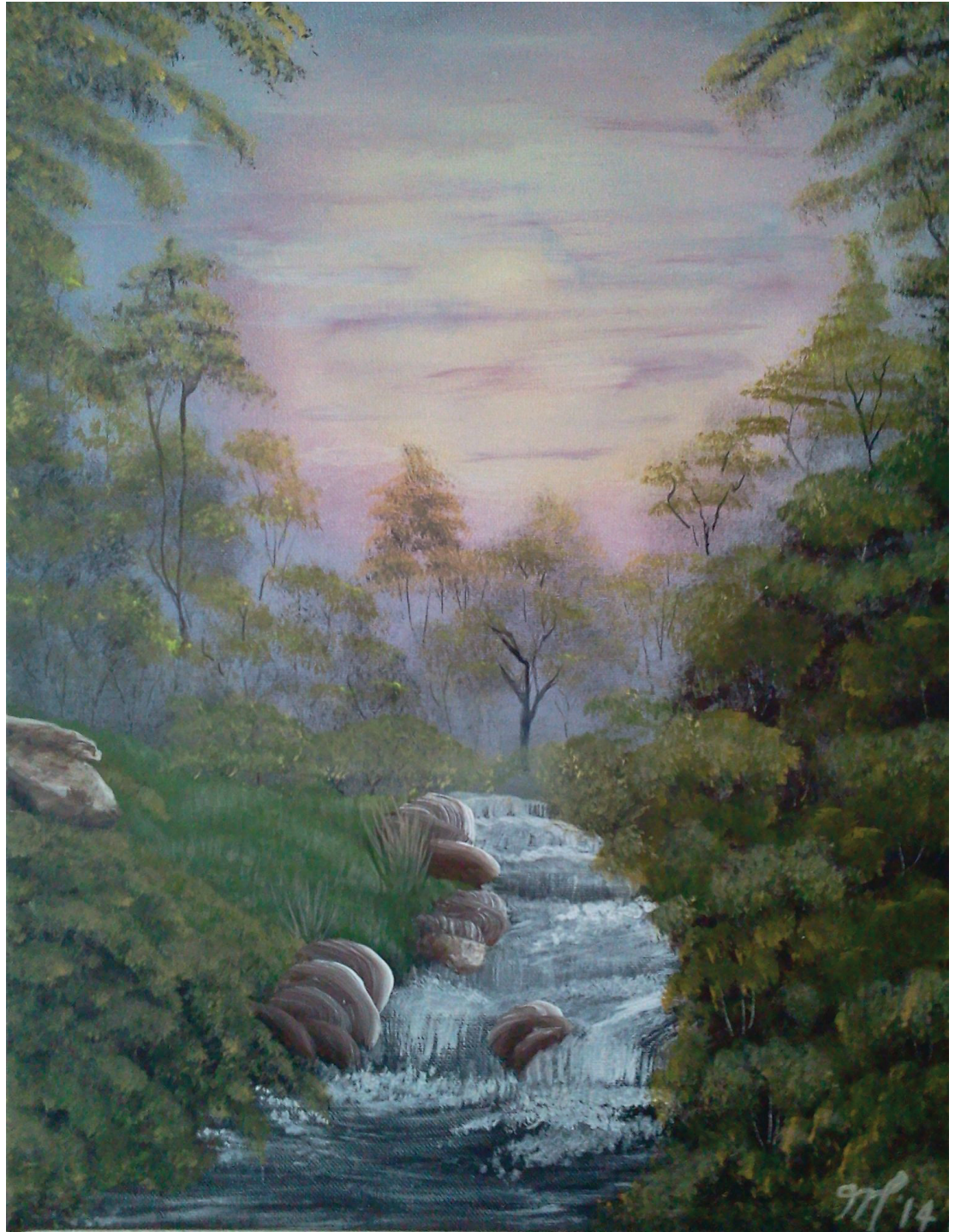
*David Alexander*

With dissenting legs and searing lungs, strides pumping acid through my veins, powering batteries of vehicles fleeing from the flaming horizon, an inferno of aspens set alight by the fading autumn sun. A powerplant shrouds itself, a white evanescent dress of vapor flirting with the twilight, as children in the river grasp playfully at the hems. The shadows swell, lightless tendrils cautiously probing for light under the moon's gentle gaze. Night falls, curtain call, the actors disperse, the props of the day's performance scattered about the valley. A road, a river, a steamplant, slumbering forms baring their most intimate features, darkness nestled softly at their sides. A vacuum of activity, affording the rare chance to view the world not as it does, but as it is.



DAWN  
*Martha Sanchez-Hayre*

65



Acrylic

# HUMBLING

*Cohen Turner*

snapping carabineers  
 whirl of nylon through metal  
 like the pb&j smushed between gear -  
 toes curl into rubber

a chill creeps in from the rock below  
 cold tendons aching to move  
 chalk fills cracks of skin  
 dust spreads like an aroma in air

whorled granite faces  
 dimples, imperfections  
 fingers cling to contours  
 balancing on friction  
 pain seeping into joints  
 fatigue, throbbing muscles  
 daunting face to overcome

calluses pulling on granite-  
 granite pulls back  
 skin sheared from body  
 realization of the passive power  
 rock seemingly docile  
 destroying the inner being  
 eroding willpower  
 unforgiving, unchanging

granite is a god.  
 an immortal challenge  
 strength and resolve  
 overcome the face  
 gaze upon the view  
 the top of the world  
 triumph is everlasting

# BEYOND

*Patrick Heyboer*

67



Photography

# SUMMER NIGHT, IDAHO

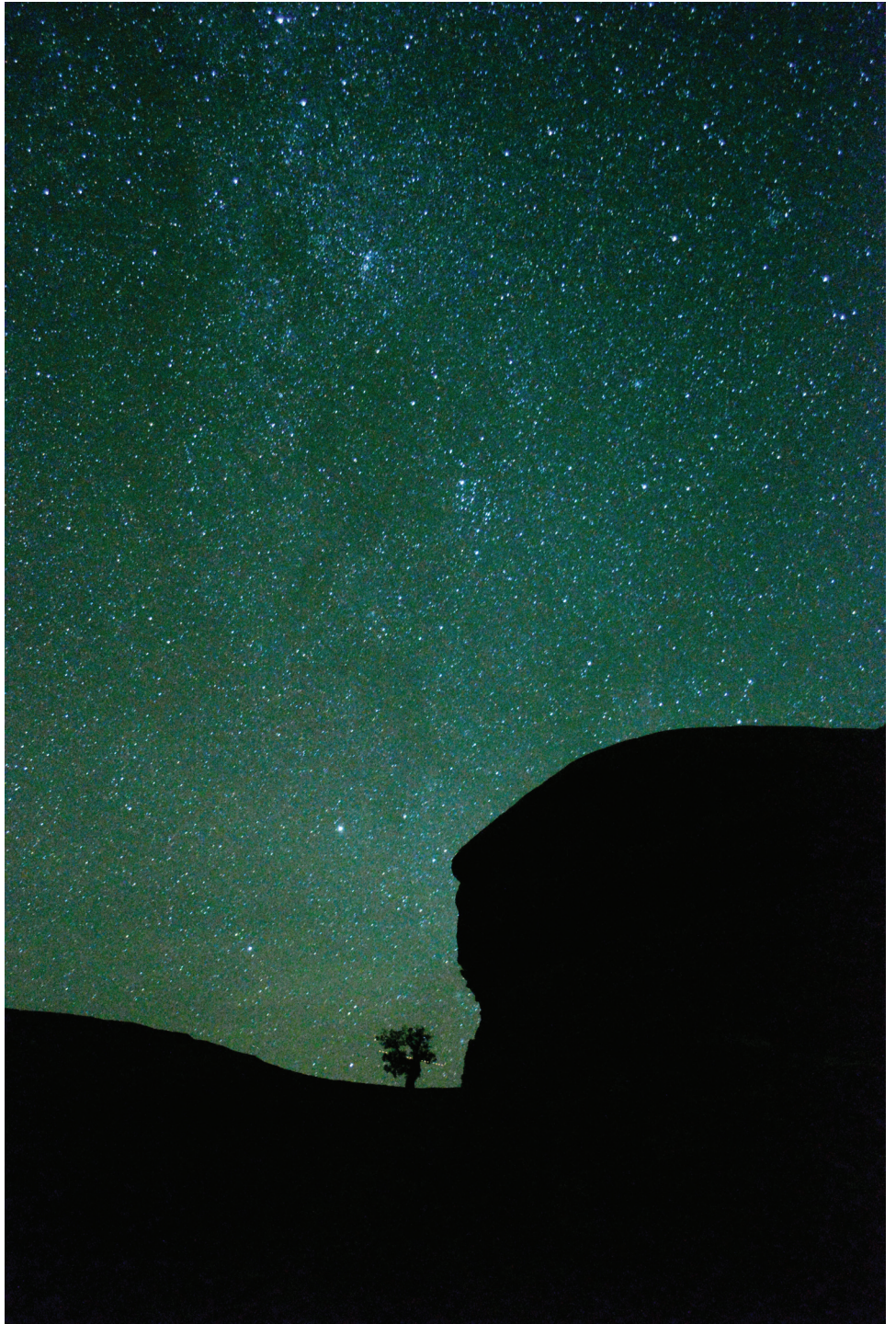
*Clinton Wilson*

On blankets  
in wildfire season  
we look for stars  
    through smoke  
who are often  
disguised as satellites  
and forgotten in hands

# DESERT SKIES

*Robin Hoover*

69



Photography

# BOISE SUMMER

*Andrew Hemesath*

That summer, an apathy swept over him. There was no desire for anything, but there was a want. While synonyms, there is a difference. Desire inspires passion and action. Want is lazy and busy waiting. No one ever gets something they want, but they might just get what they desire, provided some things fall into place.

It was August 15th, deep into the summer of want. He was, again, sitting on the front porch and had been since he fell out of sleep at around 10:30 that morning. The Boise summer was an oven and he could hear the cottonwood leaves crinkling in the oppressive heat. Though the trees were and tall and wide, providing a sprawling expanse of shadows, it made little difference in the rate at which sweat poured off his nose and ran, lukewarm, down his back.

Across the street there was a park with a jungle gym and large bluegrass field sustained only by a double dose of watering in the morning and the evening. The park was desolate now. Lumps of children were lying low in the shade, hardly stirring, conserving their energy for when the sun would sink and the temperature of the metal slide would drop from ass-scalding to only rear-warming. It was noon, so there was a long time to wait, but the children had all day and so did he.

Down the street from his childhood home there was a block of restaurants, shops, and bars. From his porch he could just see the Sunflower Café's storefront. He had to lean far forward and suspend the motion of his rocking chair in order to do so; he only did when she walked by.

Her name was Roxy. They had gone to high school together. She was home for the summer from some university in Colorado. He was home for the summer from some college in Washington. Monday through Saturday she worked from two to seven at the Sunflower Café. And Monday through Saturday she walked past his porch at 1:45 and then again at 7:15. Everyday, just as the light reached its bleakest, Roxy would appear. His want renewed by her bouncing step, loose curls, and faded and fraying denim shorts. As she progressed down the street he would roll farther and farther forward in his rocking chair, until he was balanced on the tips of his toes, the chair at its limit. Roxy would slip through the café's doorway and disappear. As the door slammed shut he would fall back into his seat, riding the rocker until its momentum dissolved.

The sun fell to the west and shadows grew across the playground. Children returned to the monkey bars and their laughter masked the sizzling of leaves. It was nearly seven o'clock as he rolled forward in his seat. Tense to witness the first moments of Roxy's return. Just before 7:15 she emerged and began walking toward home. She paused, across the street, even with his porch, her gaze scanning the park. In her right hand, a book. She stepped lightly over fallen branches and into the shade of a large cottonwood. She sat and began to read.

He was frozen, rocking ceased. She was only a few hundred feet from him, broken from her routine. He had never had this much time to think, time to stare. She was beautiful. Long tan legs stretched out over the emerald grass. Fingers gently turning pages, a glint of sunlight reflected from her thick rim glasses. He wanted her. He wanted to ask what she was reading so he could read it too. So they could sit under that same tree and laugh at the absurdity of the main character's supernatural romance.

He wanted her now more than he had ever wanted her before. His arms and legs urged him to rise from his seat, to run from the porch and yet, rooted to rocking chair he remained. Sweat fell from his nose splashing onto the concrete.

He could smell the cooking tar of the black top street, feel the flaking paint of his rocking chair, see the shadows growing over the bluegrass field. He rose to his feet.

# REFLECTIONS OF THE EARTH AND SKY

*Kenneth Sullivan*

71



Photography

# COLLECTING WORMS IN THE RAIN

*Christine Hrdlicka*

cats and dogs Pound  
on the rooftop, a drum beat  
Resounds through the house  
the grey Agony of the sky  
is our Delight! Our red wool  
socks Slosh through the pools.  
my sister's laugh Radiates  
golden Sunshine, my bright  
purple sweater has Dark stains  
where I've been shot  
by the sky's Perfect aim.

we're hunters Stalking the pink-  
ringed dirt Lover, its home  
is Atlantis buried beneath  
the ocean, it Escaped  
a watery Death only to have  
our fingers grasp the Squishy  
underbelly, the slimy goo Erupts  
a Gasp, a Giggle;  
into our Prison it goes  
the metallic confines Devouring  
it into the black abyss.

there is a Freedom  
in the open expanse  
of our Suburban street  
where we find Glee  
in the Little things.



# HANDY DANDY

*Lauren Marus*

73



Charcoal

# ADVICE TO MY YOUNGER SISTER

*Athena Ryals*

When you go off to school, be careful.

Don't let people you don't like keep you up late.

Don't get involved with the first boy who holds eye contact when you're wearing a low-cut shirt.

Don't let a professor know you have free time. You will, but don't let them know it.

Don't make friends with your roommate unless you could see yourself living with them again, because it's hard to tell your friend that you hate their guts for inviting people over after midnight.

Don't drink the milk from the food court. Period.

Don't worry if you fail the first test; but try not to fail it, too.

*Don't* start a new TV show in the middle of the semester; but if you do, for God's sake don't watch *Supernatural* because I want to watch that with you. I'll take time off work or something.

If you're going to get in a fight, hit them in the jaw so they go down fast. But if they're drunk, just run. You won't be able to knock them out but they won't be able to follow you. Although if you have to fight, never underestimate your elbows.

Don't ever continue going out with someone who asks you out on a date and then takes you to the food court.

Be sure to find the music rooms on campus. Remember that they are soundproof, and if you end up using one of these rooms for the wrong reason, don't hide the body on or near campus. Just call me and I'll take care of it.

Don't hang out with people who like telling Game of Thrones spoilers just because they've read the books.

Don't cry in front of a guy until he's admitted something embarrassing to you.

Remember to call me if you're too drunk to drive home, but if you don't have friends who can help you out, you need new friends.

And don't, under any circumstances, tell people you have a banana suit, and don't tell people it's you if you wear it. Keep that shit a secret. Like Batman.

# QUIETNESS OF BEAUTY

*Ali Nazem*

75



Wood Marquetry

# THE VISCOSITY OF MAPLE SYRUP

*Katerina Gonzales*

The viscosity of a fluid depends on temperature and pressure. It measures how resistant to stress a material is, and is expressed in units of pressure times seconds.

There are a few important things about any material. Strength of the actual material, porosity, and permeability are a few properties.

But some would argue that the most important characteristic would be the fluid inside the material.

This is what I was thinking of when I poured a slightly viscous and mostly sweet, non-Newtonian liquid over a layer of permeable pancakes. The layers of the stack were deposited over time, just as sedimentary layers are.

Yet, they resemble the flat overlapping volcanoes on the planet Venus.

Does a pancake's porosity correlate to its taste?

Is there an ideal permeability of the layers that the viscous liquid will have the ideal concentration in?

Grains are classified according to size. There are boulders, cobbles, pebbles, sand, silt, and clay.

The pebbles of coffee beans are eroded down to sand—coarse, medium, and then fine sand.

Depending on how strong I want the coffee to be, I grind it down to silt.

Grain size affects porosity.

Porosity affects strength.

Strength affects taste and how awake I am.

Two heaping scoops for every cup of water, and another scoop for good measure. And maybe another dash to prevent against weak coffee. A semi-quantifiable algorithm.

The tensile strength of bacon, the thermal diffusivity of coffee, and the bulk modulus of scrambled eggs...

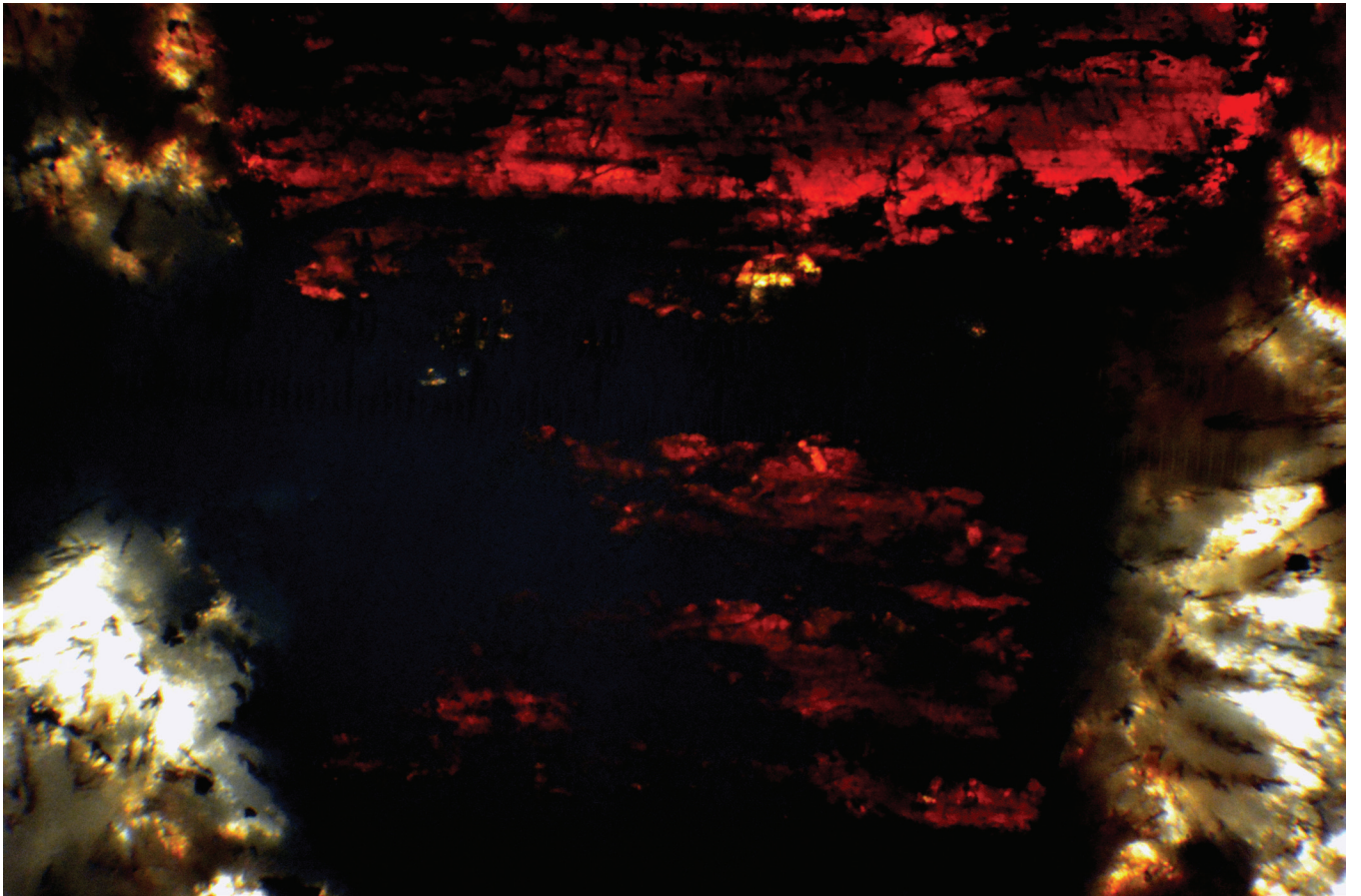
Perhaps a pancake's porosity correlates to taste, but taste is only semi-quantifiable as bleh, meh, delicious.

The taste of syrup is positively correlated to viscosity, making my permeable pancakes filled with viscous maple syrup delicious while I consume my coffee before the heat diffuses completely.

For caffeine consumption is positively correlated to productivity.

# OPTIC SUNSET

*Virginia Premo*



Polarized Light Microscope

# WHEN YOU DANCE WITH MARACAS

Ani Galvan

The doorbell chimed through the house. His mother calls from the kitchen: “*Mijo!* Will you get that, please? I think it’s FedEx with my new scrubs. I would but my hands are all chickeny...” a couple silent moments pass, “Rojelio! Did you hear me?”

“Yeah, I’m going,” he sighed as he hit pause on The Rachael Ray Show.

“Please, sigh a little louder, Lio.” Alicia said. Lio shoved a throw pillow into his little sister’s face.

“Shut up. I haven’t seen this one yet! I’ve been waiting to try to make a crème brûlée to see how she does it. She’s a master chef who creates beautiful plates of food art!” He also thought she looked as good as the food she made, which was another reason he never wanted to miss a minute of it. “I gotta learn it all! Don’t you want to be able to brag about your famous big brother on Food Network, who owns dozens of the finest restaurants that you get to eat at for free? You’ll get so fat, I could call you Fat Alberta. Won’t that be fun?” He winked at his sister’s protruding tongue.

Ali scoffed at the idea, “You wish, nerd.”

To shorten his time away from his cooking sensei, he skated across the wood floors in his dirty baseball socks. He lost control and slammed into the base of the door. Acting as if nothing happened, he opened the door to find a woman, a cameraman, and a sound tech had replaced the expected FedEx man on his porch. A fuzzy grey mic loomed over Lio’s head.

“Hi! I’m Rachael Ray!” stated the woman, “You’re one of the winners of the Rachael Ray’s Fan Food sweepstakes, where we go inside the fan’s kitchens to see what’s cookin’!”

Lio’s heart stopped and his jaw dropped. It had been months since his friends dared him to enter the contest. Lio’s friends often dared him to do stupid stuff because he wasn’t one to back down from a challenge. But this was hardly a dare. He only had to send in a picture of himself with his best dish and the odds were over a million to 1, so it’s not like he would win.

“I...can’t...believe it...I *won!*” he exclaimed, “Oh my gosh! *Mamá!* Ali! Rachael Ray is here! Oh my gosh oh my gosh my friends aren’t going to believe this, but they *will* because it’ll be on *TV* and they’ll see me and oh my *God!* I’m going to be on *TV!* You were just on my *TV!* But now you’re here! In front of me! I don’t believe this! Can I hug you?” Rachael chuckled.

“Sure, of course,” Rachael said through her amazing, gigantic smile, “Although, it might be easier if you stop bouncing around.”

Lio had been so star struck he didn’t notice he was bouncing up and down and flailing his arms around like a pre-teen girl at a Justin Bieber concert. He felt his ears get hot with blood, and he knew his cheeks would soon follow suit. He couldn’t let *his* celebrity see him blush. So with startling swiftness, he stopped bouncing and reached out for a hug. He held on just long enough to regain some composure.

“Ahem, please, come in.” Lio waved Rachael and her crew in. Rachael was the first through the door. As she stepped past him, he fought to control the butterflies in his stomach. The cameraman followed Rachael through the door, but he stopped in front of Lio to get a close up of his face. As Lio

stared at his reflection in the camera lens, a new feeling crept over him. His mouth went dry, his palms got sweaty, and the butterflies grew in intensity. Lio bit the inside of his cheek until he could taste blood. Satisfied with his shot, the cameraman moved on, closely followed by the sound tech.

*That was weird*, Lio thought as his tongue assessed his cheek. He wiped off his hands on his pants, shook his head, and then started taming his hair in the narrow sandblasted window of the door. Once satisfied, he walked into the living room to be interviewed by his idol.

Lio walked into his room and fell onto his bed as the butterflies flew out of his stomach with a long sigh. He closed his eyes and replayed the interview in his head. Pleasant memories of Rachael Ray in his living room flashed by, but the bright light of the camera washed them out. Lio's teeth began to latch onto his cheek again, but before they could do damage there was a knock. He opened his eyes to find Ali leaning against his doorframe.

She held her hands behind her back while she tiptoed bashfully towards Lio, "So... How'd it go with your *girl*? Did you have a lot in common? Did you make her laugh? Is there a second date in your future?" By this time Ali was at Lio's bedside with her fingers stabbing into his rib cage. He tried to retaliate, but there was no use; his sister had gotten their father's immunity to tickling. Lio flinched and flailed until he had laughed his way onto his bedroom floor with a thud. Ali approached him, claws out, for a second attack.

He put out his hand in defense, "Uncle! Truce! White Flag! Whatever! Just please, Ali, no more!" Ali crossed her bony arms across her chest and stuck out her right hip. She smirked with satisfaction at her victory.

"Alright, fine. I guess I'll be merciful this time." She extended her hand to Lio. He looked at it with distrust, but slowly brought his hand towards hers. She scoffed impatiently and grabbed his hand to help him up. They sat cross-legged facing each other on his bed. "So, seriously, how did your interview with Rachael Ray go?"

"Eh, I think it went... Ok. I *did* make her laugh, actually, since you asked." He winked.

She rolled her eyes, "No way! What lame joke did you drop this time?"

"I said that I had to apologize to Lloyd from *Dumb and Dumber* because a million to one really is a chance." He weakly laughed at his joke to coax a courtesy laugh out of Ali.

He was startled by the loud outburst that pursued his joke. Ali was holding her stomach while tears gathered in her eyes. When she was finally able to speak she said, "That was... the DUMBEST thing I've ever heard. I can't believe you said that to your *idol*. I really hope for your sake they cut that part out."

"Gee, thanks for the encouragement lil' sis! You're really great." He pushed her flushed face. "I was really nervous, OK? I was even more nervous than when I took Whitney Hepburn to the 'Arabian Nights' senior prom."

"Ah, yes. And a Hepburn she was. I mean have you seen those cheekbones? You stud, escorting an older woman. And her dress, oh, her dress! It was so beautiful, I prayed every night that summer for me too look half as gorgeous at my senior prom as she was...but I made sure to order mine without the side of barf." She grinned at Lio. "Yikes, Lio. If looks could kill... Oh, c'mon now, you know I'm the only one around here that gives you shit. It's good for the soul. And who knows, Karma might get me that night for making fun of you tonight." She smiled and patted his cheek.

"Ow," Lio held his cheek, "There is one thing that I really did want to talk to you about." Ali straightened her back and slightly cocked her head, like a puppy does when it's confused. She

unknowingly did this when she was really paying attention. “During my interview, I bit my cheek really hard until it started bleeding.”

“What the heck? Why would you do that to yourself, freak?” said Ali.

“I...I don't know. I was holding the door open for Rachael Ray and her crew when I first did it.” replied Lio.

“That's really bad, Lio. You can't keep doing that to yourself. Were you biting it when Rachael passed by you? Because that I could understand.” Ali said.

Lio took a moment to replay the scene in his head. His brow grew more furrowed the harder he focused on each frame of the memory. “No...I think she had already passed. I'm pretty sure about it. I don't think I started biting my cheek until after she had passed.”

“Well who was after her?” Ali inquired.

“Oh shit!” Lio's light bulb flickered on. “It was the cameraman! Oh no, what does that mean?” He asked, even though he already knew the answer.

“Dude, I think you're scared shitless by cameras...” Ali braced herself for a tantrum, but Lio didn't move.

His face fell into his palms. His shoulders slumped under the weight of the crushing recognition that his dream to be a celebrity chef was over.

There was a long silence. Lio was still buried in his hands, unaffected by his sister's attempts to coax him out. Eventually, she gave up on talking him out and combed his curly, *mole* colored hair with her fingers like their mother did when they were younger. Suddenly, she jolted up, carrying Lio's head with her.

“I know what you gotta do! You just gotta *dance!*” she said. Lio was a deer in headlights.

“And *that's* supposed to help me not be afraid of camera's? Don't be a dumbass,” he said. Lio noticed this upset Ali, and felt remorseful for saying it. He shouldn't have been surprised since Ali oftentimes came up with extravagant, temporary solutions to peoples' problems. Once, when she was twelve, she suggested that everyone in the middle east just have an international white elephant party and give each other gifts, since presents always brightened her day. To mend his sisters spirit he turned on his “Latina chica” voice. “Ay! I'm so sorrrrry, but I cahn only dahnce weet marrrracas!”

“Oh my gosh. Shut. Up!” Ali had wrapped her arms round her stomach in an attempt to control her belly laugh. She sighed when the laughing subsided and said, “Now this is a funny coincidence. Today after school I went to *El Mercadito* with Mom, you know the place.” Lio looked confused. “Remember? We joked how it should be renamed Little Mexico because of how ‘Mexico’ it is in there?” She saw the memory glimmer in his eyes. “Yeah, you know. Well, Mom asked me to get some *Cacique* and bread for *tortas*, but I got lost and ended up in an aisle back behind the Spanish edition Playboys. Gross. I don't understand why you men like that stuff. It's so fake and just... bleh.”

Lio rolled his eyes, “Just get back to the story, dude.”

She crossed her arms, “Well I just want you to know that no girl is like that. Anyway, there was a lot of cool stuff back there including these awesome maracas I found! So we should put on some music and dance away your sadness.” Ali dashed out of the room before Lio could protest and soon after returned with the maracas. They were bright red with green dancing men wearing sombreros outlined in gold paint. Some of the paint on the handles had chipped away. More paint chipped off onto Ali's hands as she handed Lio the noisemakers.

“Here,” Ali said, and then walked to Lio's iHome, “Now you have no reason not to dance!” She said as she played Selena from her iPod.



Lio was resistant, but gave in when Ali grabbed his arms and started wagging them around like a puppet. Their legs kicked and skipped them along in their two-man Conga line. To get another laugh out of his sister, Lio brought the maracas near his shoulders and pushed his elbows together. He yelled as high pitched as he could manage, “Arriba!” and shook his shoulders vigorously.

Ali began to laugh, but then the lamps in Lio’s room surged with light until they exploded. Ali screamed and clutched to her brother’s arm, causing Lio to fling the maracas at his door. They fell to the floor with a hollow thunk.

When they opened their eyes, the room was dimly lit. Lio scanned the room for the light source, but became confused when he realized it was coming from the maracas. The sombrero-wearing men on the maracas were glowing an eerie gold light that didn’t seem like light at all, but more like a liquid. The light kept flowing up through the golden lines, and the room grew brighter and brighter. Lio and Ali backed away from the maracas, despite being completely awestricken by the strange phenomenon. They pushed Lio’s bed away from the wall and climbed behind it so that they had a barrier between them and the maracas.

“What the hell? It’s like, taking form or something!” Lio said from behind a pillow. He faced Ali with scrutinizing eyes, “Did you bring *possessed pinches* maracas home from *El Mercadito*?” whispered Lio violently. He was worried if he shouted the ghost-thing would possess him next.

“No!” Ali said defensively and frowned back at Lio. “I mean, I didn’t think so, but now I guess maybe I did. But we should get the hell out of here, Lio. I don’t want to be the idiots in the horror movie that stay to watch and end up getting killed!”

“Well me neither! But how are we supposed to get out? That stupid...GHOST you brought home is blocking the way!” said Lio.

“*Oye*, who are ju calling a ghost?” echoed a small, hollow voice. The hairs on the back of Ali and Lio’s necks stood at the sound. With wide eyes they slowly peered up and over the bed towards the door.

Before them was a man of smaller stature, whose skin glowed with the gold light. The man wore a poncho that seemed like it was a prism, diffracting the light radiating from his skin into the entire spectrum of colors. There was a sombrero on the man’s head. It was the same bright red as the maracas, had gold thread designs accenting the brim, and around the dome were green, stitched maracas, crossed at the handles. On his face was a mustache of a darker gold that flowed across his upper lip and poured down the side of his mouth until it reached his chin where it stopped. Below his waist was where his humanness ended, because instead of feet there was just a wispy tail of gold light hovering above the ground. The man feebly continued, “I am not a ghost. Soy Eugenio, deh most powerful genie en *México*. *Ahora, dígame*, which of ju *niños* shook *mis maracas* and said ‘*Arriba*’? Ju get a weesh.”

Ali and Lio looked at each other’s flabbergasted faces. “You’re a... a genie? Like the kind that grants 3 wishes and all that? But you’re from Mexico? Is that even a thing?” Lio said.

“Umm, jes. I am a thing, ju can tell because I am here. I deen’t know der was genies that can grant *trés deseos*. But ju can only have one weesh, *porque* that’s all I am allowed to give ju,” replied Eugenio. He talked as though he was drunk, tired, or lazy; or maybe a combination of the three. He put his arms behind his back and slightly slumped.

“*One* wish?” Ali leaned close to Lio so only he could hear her say, “I’m not gonna lie, I kinda feel ripped off.” Ali said, arms crossed and hip out. Lio nudged her with his elbow to get her to hush. Lio didn’t want her to ruin his chance at a wish. He had been thinking about what to wish for, and now felt rather certain he had made his decision.

“Um, Eugenio, I am the one who rubbed the lam... er, shook the maracas. I would like you to grant my wish.” Lio said. “I wish that I was no longer afraid of cameras so I might have a chance at fulfilling my dream of becoming a celebrity chef.”

Ali whipped around to face Lio, “What? Why wouldn’t you just wish to *be* a celeb...”

“*Muy bien*,” interrupted Eugenio. He spun his sombrero around his head. As it spun, the gold thread began to light up, and with it so did Eugenio’s skin. Suddenly a bolt of gold light shot out of Eugenio’s finger hit Lio in the chest and sent him flying into his bed. Then everything went dark.

Lio’s face shot up from his pillow, startled from the pounding on his door. His sternum was sore and he winced in pain as he lifted his body away from the bed. As the pressure was relieved, his pain grew in intensity, like the pain of the first leg stretch after a long trip in a cramped car. He looked down to find a baseball sunken into the middle of his bed. He rubbed his chest as he looked around the room. *Please tell me that wasn’t a dream.* He was still in his clothes from the interview and all his lights were on. The door pounded again.

“*Mijo!* Rachael Ray and her crew will be here in a half hour to film you cooking.” His mother’s voice sounded muffled through the door. “Are you decent? Can I come in? Are you even awake in there?” The door slowly began to crack.

“Yes, Mom, I’m up. I’ll get in the shower soon. Is Ali here?” Lio asked, hoping to get confirmation that his memories were in fact memories and not a dream.

“No, she left early this morning for a soccer game against Prospect Heights High. She should be back before your taping is over.” With that, his mother shut the door. Lio got up and headed to the restroom to prepare for his five minutes of culinary fame.

When Lio got downstairs, he could hear that Rachael and her crew were already there and were setting up. Lio was feeling very ready for this moment. He had taken time to make sure his shirt was ironed and tucked in and his hair was combed, to avoid any more embarrassment. Before he walked into the kitchen he paused just around the corner and did the power pose he always does before a baseball game.

He walked into the kitchen and put on his apron while Rachael gave him final instructions about where to stand and where not to stand, which spices were in each bowl, and when to talk to the camera. Every thirty seconds is what she suggests, but a minute is acceptable. Lio follows along and nods after each instruction.

He steps where Rachael said was his starting point, which is about 3 feet in front of the camera. “I think I am ready, Miss Ray.” Lio says with a smile.

“Alright!” she says, “We’ll start in 10 seconds.”

*Ten...* Lio bows his head down and closes his eyes. *Eight...* He imagines Eugenio’s voice slurring, “*Dale, Rojelio! Dale!*” *Five...* He hopes one last time that his wish has come true. *Three...* He raises his head and sees Ali behind the sound tech. She gives him a nod and a wink. *One...* Rachael points at him to indicate they are rolling.

Lio takes a deep breath and looks at the camera and flawlessly says, “Hello! My name is Lio Benito. I’m from Evanston, Illinois, and I am going to show all you folks at home how to prepare my Mexican twist on the iconic Chicago-style hotdog.”

# SAN ILDEFONSO-INSPIRED POT

*Carolyn Pauly*



Clay Sculpture

# CRAIGSLIST

*Brooke Sorenson*

As a bargain hunter and surfer, finding the ideal gift was effortless. It simply plopped up on my screen. Swishing across town, wavy bills weighing my pockets, the door opened to a kid covered in ink and punctured with studs. I bargained and got off cheap. I breathlessly hauled my glass container full of sand, sun, and fun off to the buggy. Stud-man called it Janet, but I thought Tiki was more suitable.

Tiki didn't rustle, scratch, or eat that night, settling in her new home. The morning brought on shills of excitement, a tortoise for the birthday girl. Excitement flooded to concern as Tiki sneezed, white bubbles flowing from her nose. Bathing Tiki's tired feet and crackled skin seemed like a good idea, until her head could no longer bob above the warm water's wake. The vet stated Tiki was in bad shape, hours to live, an extreme case of turtle herpes. Tears streamed down my sister's face as she held the half empty shell sinking soft in her hands.

# AKAKABUTO

*A.R. Regnant*

85



Charcoal & Pastel

# BIOSHOCK SPLICER MASK

*Eric Husmann*

86



Leather

# LIVING THE WRITE WAY

*Zachary Nahman*

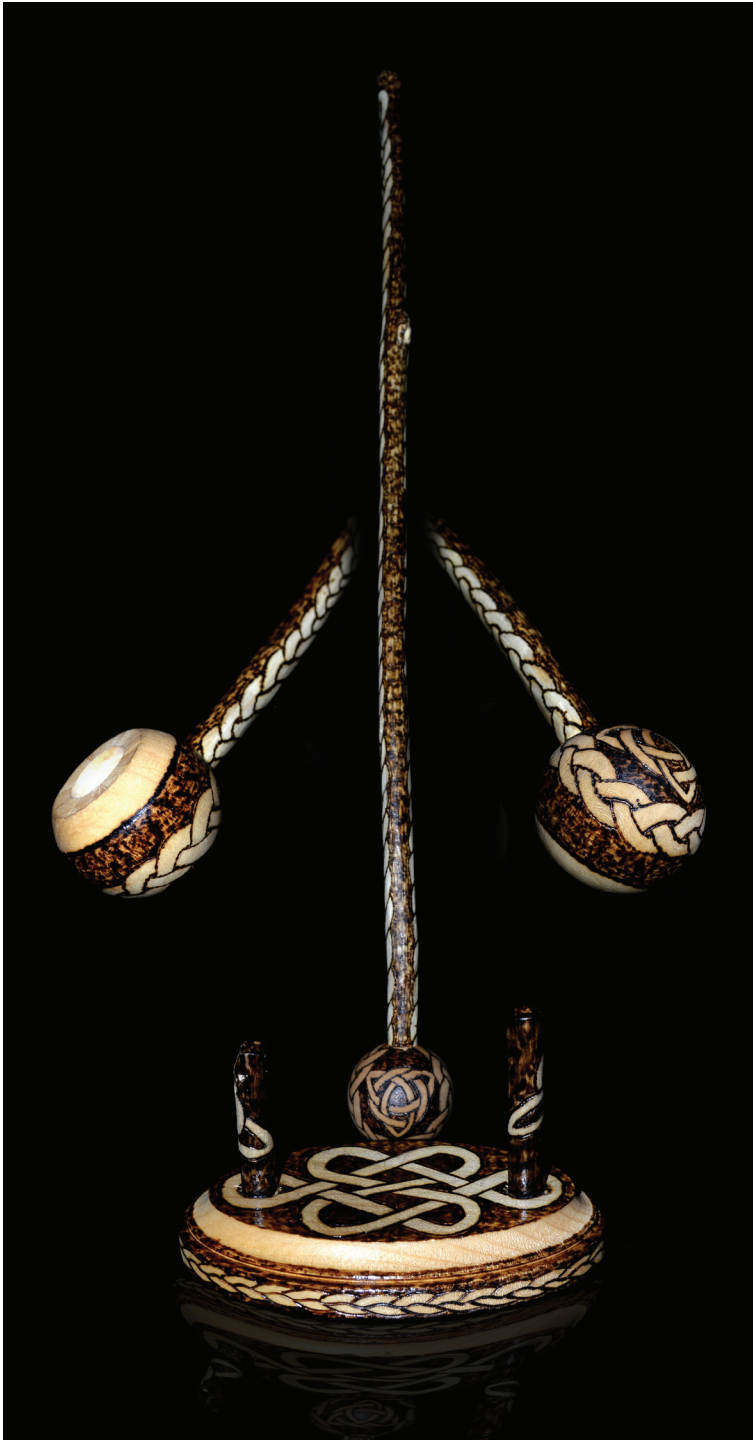
87

Every idea begins with me.  
But life starts in extremely close quarters.  
In a warehouse, pressed against each other.  
Lead sandwiched between two-ply cedar.  
Shoved through a hexagonal cutting head, we begin our lives.  
Third degree wood burns covered up  
in 4 layers of paint and one layer of clear, rank smelling lacquer.  
We can no longer breathe.  
Packaged in crates of different quantities - forced to be friends with those around us.  
Maybe we'll meet a love interest, I know Dave did.  
But the point is moot - relationships are weird in a box of 48 with no distance between.  
And there's hardly any time.  
By the time any more than physical closeness is developed  
Our crates are ravaged by the sweaty hands of animals.  
I remember what happened to my friend Dave.  
Dave was an unlucky one - Elementary school.  
Beginning writers forming death-grips around the shaft of his body.  
slamming his tip with mighty force into paper. Lead crumbled.  
Hours spent in sharpeners - frictional heat destroying enamel.  
Randomly snapped in half by young minds, why?  
I'm sure he missed Staci. But Staci was to be used for college engineering exams.  
A slightly better fate - At least Staci was handled by more experienced writers.  
But nervous students began exams tapping her against the table. Ow.  
Becoming frustrated they slammed her pink end against the page and vigorously shake to erase.  
Or the worst -- She was inserted between the moist folds and sharp chompers of a mouth.  
Putrid stink of Red Bull or coffee surrounding - chewed within an inch of her life then tossed  
Recklessly into a garbage can. -- "Kobe!"  
What does that even mean?  
But by far the best fate for a pencil is mine.  
Sharpened to a stab-worthy point, I was the subject of animal's fooling around.  
After multiple painful attempts, the animal finally got me stuck in the twenty foot lab ceiling.  
Now I sit, tip dug deep into the ceiling, watching over everything.  
Offering condolences and therapy to every pencil within earshot.  
For a tool of creativity, knowledge, and learning.  
We sure are treated like crap.

# CELTIC SMOKING PIPE

*Tyler Premo*

88



Wood Burning



# PARADELLE FOR SOCHI

*Colton Kohnke*

89

Your room is not quite ready yet, don't drink the tap water  
your room, isn't quite ready yet; don't drink the tap water.  
Did they use Internet Explorer for the opening ceremony?  
Did they use Internet Explorer for the opening ceremony?  
The Internet is not quite ready yet for opening, don't use the tap water.  
Explorer – did they drink your room, the ceremony?

Vodka, a must have for all fans. You can't survive Sochi sober.  
Vodka is a must have for all fans. You can't survive Sochi sober.  
Countries passive aggressively protest Russia's homophobia  
Passive aggressively countries protest Russia's homophobia  
Russia's sober fans aggressively (you must) survive (have) vodka.  
A passive protest can't survive Sochi's homophobia for all countries.

Locked in toilets, busting down doors  
Locked in toilets, bursting through doors  
Stray wolves roam half finished hotel hallways and stairs  
Stray wolves roam half finished hallways, hotels and stairs  
Busting toilets, wolves roam down stairs,  
in stray hallways, half finished doors and locked hotels.

A passive Internet protest, Russia's locked homophobia  
is not ready for opening quite aggressively.  
Explorer – they must survive the toilets and drink the vodka  
yet don't roam hallways for tap water.  
For all the wolves use stray room for sober countries  
busting a ceremony down stairs through hotel doors  
you fans can't have your half finished Sochi.

# HIGH PLACES

*Alyssa Schwarz*



Watercolor & Ink

# AFTER HOURS RELIEF

*Lauren Revis*

91

I've met a lot of asses in my life  
and over time every drunkie becomes the same,  
the truth comes out after hours.

As soon as happy hour starts, the characters roll through  
the doors ready to forget.

At the end of the bar, there's the executive business man,  
coping with depression as a single tear falls in his fifth Coors Light.

In the dark corner, there's the 35 year old virgins rocking their super hero t-shirts,  
trading in their League of Legends addiction for, martinis.

My personal favorite, the divorced woman strategically placed at a high top,  
playing with her straw... waiting for husband number four.

There's Frat boys in the back ruling Beer Pong complete in their Sperry's and Chubbies shorts,  
slurring the words to "Don't Stop Believing".

These boys bug me the most, they ruined a classic Journey song and they never take their plastic  
sunglasses off inside no matter how dark it gets. Grow UP!

At least once a week we have the bachelorette party decorated with light up bridal buttons and feather  
boas making the bride drink away feelings of cold feet.

Over time, the more asses I've met the less that entertains me.  
My shiny black vinyl is a leather jacket worn one too many times.

Once during a bar fight I lost one of my metal toes...  
At least we won.

But now, I don't stand as tall or balanced,  
I have that constant drunken sway

from head to foot I've been drenched in it all,

Budweiser

Captain Morgan

Jose Cuervo

McCormick's...

And once you've been covered

There's absolutely no way to get clean... ever.

Sorry about that unmentionable stain on your pants,

It won't come out. I promise!

Last call is here,

the regulars stumble out of the bar...

and back to reality.

back to their empty apartments,

back to failing every exam,

back to final wedding plans,

back to extra shifts to make ends meet,

back to corporate merges and CEO decisions.

Once the bar is cleaned I get flipped upside down,

I can drift off to sleep soaking in the sweet comfort of

Jack Daniels, Corona, and regret smeared across the bar.

No matter how the night ends I know tomorrow I'll

be here to support another ass with the same old sob story.

# AFTER THE RAIN

*Martha Sanchez-Hayre*

93



Acrylic

# CONFESSIONS OF A POINT-STEALING MATH GREMLIN

*Deborah Good*

I'm soooo sorry about your exam.  
I promise it was nothing personal  
but I've been training for years to be a Math Gremlin.  
I didn't want to hurt your grade a whole lot  
because I just needed to screw up five more  
calculations to get my certification. Your

paper was right there, and the next thing I knew your  
grade had dropped catastrophically. The exam  
is going to be curved though, so you should get more  
points than it looks like right now. Personally,  
I'd be pretty excited. I've seen people lose a lot  
more points on bigger tests to a desperate gremlin.

Actually, certification is really important to a gremlin;  
we study for years, and it makes even your  
most terrifying projects look simple. A lot of  
gremlins fail that test. Like I said, it's a tough exam.  
Plus, the interviews are so scary and personal.  
And the closer to certification we are, the more

intense the process becomes. You're more  
likely to notice the interference of a gremlin  
because you avoid us so well. I took you as a personal  
challenge – not many people want to see your  
A-average math student profile on their exam  
assignments. Liking a challenge is sort of my lot;

My grandfather especially worked for a whole lot  
of really prominent people. No offense, much more  
prominent than you. He was in Feynmann's qualifying exam  
and the time he created Cold Fusion earned him Master Gremlin  
status. There's only been two of those in fifty years! Your  
Nobel Prize is far easier to earn! Don't take that personally,

I'm sure you could be a Master Gremlin, but it's a personal  
decision to go through so much hassle for a lot  
less prestige than it seems like it ought to be. Your  
status comes with a lot of administration, way  
more time sitting in committee rooms plotting evilly than most gremlins.  
Plus, you have to write, proctor, and grade the gremlin certification exams.

But, I'm distracted a lot more than I thought. The exam!  
The one I took points from. It's not personal. Gremlins  
do that – it's our job. I like you a lot, and some time we'll talk more.

# BANDERSNATCH PREY BLACK IPA

*Jesse Glover*

95



Hand Sketch & Photo Manipulation

# WHY DRAGONS DON'T RIDE HORSES

*Todd Shaklee*

Karamat looked dubiously at his horse. “I don’t think I fit anymore,” he said sadly. The barely 7-year-old dragon was as long, from green rump to horned head, as his black war charger; even though the charger was a full head shorter. Karamat eyed his special saddle, the worn leather straps showing their age. After being rubbed down by three years of abuse from the dragon’s scaly legs, the straps now hung on by the barest of threads.

The child princess rode up beside him astride her own chestnut mare. “A knight who can’t ride his own horse is no better than a common foot soldier,” Seraphina told him, matter-of-factly. “Even squires ride horses so they can bring fresh horses to their lords on the battlefield.”

Karamat sighed and grumbled, “I was there yesterday when the stable master told us that.”

“Well, then maybe you should listen better!” She retorted. “Now come on! I wanna ride! I’m supposed to do stuff with father later today, so we need to do riding practice now!” She spurred her horse and headed towards the main gate that left the courtyard.

“Well, shall we try it?” Karamat asked his charger. The horse stared down his nose at the dragon and snorted. “Come on, don’t make this hard!” Karamat pleaded. Grabbing the reins in his clawed forefoot, he tugged downward on the reins firmly, commanding, “Down, Chief!” The horse moved his head to compensate for the reins, but made no additional effort to move. Karamat could have sworn the dumb beast was smirking at him.

Several attempts later, the charger decided to comply by lying on the ground. The dragon nodded, “Thank you,” and stepped over the horse, carefully sliding his rear legs into the special, reinforced leather straps at the back of the saddle. The horse harrumphed as the dragon put his weight on the creature’s back. He glared back at the dragon as Karamat leaned forward, looping his arms through the reins, lying flush against the back of the horse. The dragon’s head extended about a foot beyond the charger’s. His green, spiny tail stretched so far behind his steed that it was almost completely flush with the ground.

“Alright, let’s go!” He urged, as he flexed his powerful rear knees and squeezed the horse’s sides. Chief sighed, catching a few leaves with his extended breath. When the leaves finally settled, he moved his front legs to stand. Shakily, he stood, but the effort was clearly enormous. By the time he was fully upright, his sides were heaving, his eyes wide and legs locked, small amounts of foam appearing at the corners of his mouth. Karamat smiled, his large fangs showing, and patted the creature’s neck, “Good boy! Guess I was wrong.” At this, he squeezed his knees again, giving the reins a small shake.

The valiant war charger took one step and collapsed forward, unable to support the full weight of the pony-sized dragon. “Whoa! Please, I really need this. You can throw me off later, but for right now, we have to work together if I’m going to be a knight. We’re a team, right?” Karamat asked, stretching his impressive neck out to the side and moving his green, scaly head forward to stare his horse in the face. Chief blew back in his rider’s face, causing the young dragon to flinch and blink his large golden eyes. His nose shut to block out the horse’s rank breath. Satisfied, the horse turned his head, now facing forward and tried to stand once more. Upon attaining his footing, he stubbornly took one



tentative, heavy step forward, then another. The third step, however, resulted in his front right leg buckling and the proud warhorse crashing over onto its side. The old leather saddle leg straps finally gave out as Karamat's right rear leg was pinned under a thousand pounds of horse.

"Now I'll never be a knight," Karamat said, tears welling up as he extricated his leg. "Owww." He winced as he shook the limb to distract from the growing pain of the bruise he now sported. Sitting back on his massive haunches, his scales scraping quietly against each other, Karamat stared at the pathetic display that was his steed. "Why do I even need this stupid horse?" He sighed, gesturing at the horse's head with a claw-tipped hand. The horse tilted his head back and glared at the young green dragon.

# RUN AGROUND

*Vincent Pane*

98



Wood Sculpture

# OVERACTIVE IMAGINATION

Jesse Glover

99

Below decks, the waves crashing against the hull mingled with the sounds of Joe's shipmates sorrowful woes. Typically the nights at sea were cool, but not here, with the fever having spread the heat from the afflicted bodies made the air humid and sticky. In this dreary hell the smell of bodily fluids, whisky, and plague overwhelmed his senses; he focused his thoughts on what lay around him to keep from gagging. The hull was dimly lit by half a dozen lanterns whose flickering light displayed shadowing demons that warred with one another across the sodden planks of the hull. A splash from below drew his attention; he gazed into the abyss below him when suddenly one of the scaled beasts leapt from the darkness revealing golden eyes and razor teeth.

The Captain was an eccentric man and for every ounce of flare he possessed there was twice that in savagery; he kept the Amazonian gators as pets and would happily make any member of the crew bedmates with the beasts should they cross him. Joe laughed to himself, at first the beasts had terrified him but after such a weary and drawn out time at sea he nearly threw himself to the devils just too alleviate his torment.

A blood filled cough rang from the other end of the hull; the plague had set upon the crew two weeks past. Some had said it was punishment set upon them by a voodoo witch that the Captain had bedded and left wanting. The sad lot who had followed that notion with mutiny now rested comfortably in the bowels of the gators. Death and decay ran rampant throughout the ship; the Captain had abandoned his crew to their untimely end a week past now by boarding himself away in his cabin. With all of his mate's dead or dying, Joe had taken it upon himself to stand vigil with his pieces of eight, waiting for their inevitable twisted spasms and death wails. The price of the ferryman need be paid after all.

Suddenly, the hull thundered all about him; boards buckled under the force of the blows, spraying streams of seawater over the dying men! A man awoke and screamed in horror, ironic that fear of drowning has scared him when he was already dead from the plague. Another thunderous crash. *What fresh hell is this*, Joe thought to himself as he leapt to his feet. Could it be? Could the legends be true? As if to answer his question the hull split wide open sending in waves of water and fleshy tentacles. The Kraken! The demon of the depths driven mad by the damned souls of men who had drowned at...

"Hey Joe! Are you done yet?" Joe's father's head peaked in through the crack of the port-a-potty door.

"Ah yea, I'm finished!" Joe quickly pulled up his kilt and jumped out into the daylight.

"What were you doing in there? Didn't you hear me knocking?" His father asked as Joe stretched up to reach the port-a-wash.

"I thought you were the Kraken," Joe laughed.

"The what? Never mind. Come on, Grandpa has saved us seats for the duels," his father turned and began walking towards the bleacher-made arena.

Joe ran and jumped onto his father's arm like a rope swing. "Dad, what does whiskey smell like?"

"Whiskey? Well, Grandpa."

"Ah, so that was whiskey. Hey dad?"

"What?"

"Do they have alligators in Scots Land?"

"It's Scotland and no, come on."

Joe's father lifted him onto his shoulders and made his way through the crowd heading towards the makeshift bleacher arena and the games. As they went, Joe watched the fairgoers, a hodgepodge of young and old all dressed in attire to reflect their Scottish heritage. A man with a belly wider than his shoulders sauntered on by bellowing laughter at the musings of his friend, a skinny man with a hawk nose and handle bar mustache. Together they lifted their leather steins high to the sky in toast to one another. Joe's father stopped suddenly to allow a troupe of youths walk by, each was equipped with an odd assortment of outdated weaponry. Joe watched the girl who led the group walk with her head high and short swords on her hips, flipping a gloved hand through her hair and with a dashing smile winked at Joe as she passed by.

Making their way to the arena entrance, Joe's eyes widened at what lay before him. The field was adorned with banners and flags each with pleather of mythical creatures representing the various clans in attendance. Men and women walked the field, some dressed in motley costumes made of animal skins while others proudly wore a plaid pattern symbolizing their clan. Joe marveled at the array of weaponry that adorned each contender. There were men with swords taller than his father, while others carried maces and shields; those dressed in animal skins carried axes and spears. At the end of the field an archery range had been set up for the bow competition.

"*Cead míle fáilte!*" A familiar voice shouted at Joe and his father. Joe pointed to the bleachers to the left of the entrance where his grandfather sat waving a round flask at them.

"Hey dad, nice seats." Joe's father said, lifting Joe from his shoulders and settling him down next to his grandfather.

"Aye, the wee laddy should be front of the house for his first tournament," his grandfather said reaching over and tickling Joe. "And just in case any of those blaggards get too out of line, I got ye this to keep em in line." His grandfather reached from behind his back revealing a wooden sword with an engraving of a dragon on the blade. Joe picked the sword from his grandfather's hands and stood up, slashing the toy back and forth. Laughing, his grandfather reached out and lifted Joe back to his seat, "Now laddy, such a magnificent blade certainly deserves a magnificent name."

"I know, Dragon Spanker!"

Joe's grandfather laughed harder, "Aye, a truly frightening name to be sure, to be sure."

"Grandpa, do they have alligators in the sewers of Scots land?"

"Alligators? Nay laddy, but they have sea dragons!"

"How big are the toilets in Scots land?"

His grandfather laughed, "HUGE! How do you think Nessy got into Loch Ness?"

Joe and his grandfather rocked back and forth laughing. A barrage of horn blows erupted from the field and a man dressed in a velvet jacket announced to the crowd that the first combatants were taking the field. A man who could have been a giant lifted one of the humongous swords towards the crowd and roared. The crowd immediately responded with a mixture of loathing or adoration. At the

other end of the field the very fat man who Joe had seen earlier was finishing off a pint as if he had forgotten he was part of the games and quickly bowed, lifting one of the great axes. The two men made their way to the center of the arena, taking their positions. At the call of the man in the velvet jacket, they charged towards one another. The fat man made it all of three feet before promptly falling flat on his face. The giant looked down at his opponent in confusion, then began to laugh.

Joe gasped and gripped onto his father's hand. "Is he dead?"

Joe's grandfather laughed, "Nay laddy, tiss nothing a little nip of the pure can't cure."

The fat man was then lifted with the aid of three other men and escorted from the arena. The giant continued to laugh and boast his victory, that is until a quick nip in the rear sent his calling out like a little girl. He turned and there stood the red haired girl smiling with her two swords drawn. The giant roared and swung his sword to meet the blades of the girl...

Sparks flashed as the wicked and rusted blade struck Dragon Spanker. Joe grunted at the impact as the barbarian roared, sending droplets of spittle into his face. Joe returned a snarl of his own and thrust the man's blade back, offsetting his footing. Seeing his opening, Joe smashed the hilt of Dragon Spanker into the barbarian's face. He stumbled back another few steps before jerking violently. Eye's wide with surprise, the man fell to the dirt. Scarlet smiled at Joe from behind where the man once stood, blood dripping from her blades. "That one still counts as mine." Joe smiled back.

"I'll let you have it, I'm still ahead by five," Scarlet said while flipping a gloved hand through her hair.

"Look out!" Joe shouted as another man leapt through the air with a crude spear aimed at Scarlet's heart. The man jerked mid-air and seemed surprised that he was now travelling in the opposite direction with a large arrow protruding from his chest.

"I think it would behoove both of you to mind the field and not your score cards," said Whisper Will while running a finger down his beak-like nose and pointing to the gathering forces ahead of them.

"Where's the fun if you're not keeping score?" Asked Scarlet.

"The fun be in living to the end of the battle then seeing who can drink the most tankards," DeVal said while hoisting his great axe upon his shoulder.

"I think you would have us all beat there!" Scarlet laughed while patting DeVal's enormous belly.

"A sign that I have won many battles to be sure!" Laughed DeVal.

The four warriors stood upon a hill overlooking a blood soaked lakeside. Mounds of corpses lay upon the shores of the lake whose tide had turned maroon from dragging corpses to its depths. The fiends of the northern hills had descended during the night. The barbarian horde had amassed to try and take the fertile lands of this region. The four had been called upon by the king to send the men back to their barren lands. They had slain many, but many still remained. The enemy lines had been shattered by DeVal's great axe while Will's arrows had left many dead before ever taking the field. Those few who had somehow survived DeVal's powerful slashes had met with Scarlet's twin blades or Dragon Spanker. The foolish dredges should have simply surrendered when they realized they faced the hero's band. Thinking that they had any chance against the four was proof of the barbarian's dimwittedness. "Well lets' not expect the enemy to die of old age, come on lads...and lassy." Will smirked at Scarlet and raised his bow, letting another arrow fly into the ranks of the horde. Joe lifted Dragon Spanker and charged down the hill, letting loose a mighty battle cry with Scarlet by his side and DeVal lumbering close behind. They smashed into the ranks of the awaiting fiends. Joe swung Dragon Spanker, hacking off chunks of flesh as Scarlet nimbly dodged between the lumbering oafs,

dropping the fiends with her precise strikes. DeVal sent men in two's and three's flying into the air with his mighty slashes. Will's arrows whizzed by, felling barbarians left and right.

A great lumbering giant emerged from the ranks, crushing others that were not quick enough to avoid the beast's heavy footfalls. The creature bellowed and raised his sword towards Joe. Joe simply smiled at the beast and wiped clean his blade then faced the creature. The giant lifted his weapon and sent it crashing towards Joe. The beast was too slow and Joe easily dodged the deadly assault. He leapt close to the giant, letting Dragon Spanker slide across the giant's belly, sending foul smelling entrails to the earthen floor. The giant bellowed and swept the back of its hand towards Joe. Again, the giant was too slow and Joe easily rolled to safety, bringing back his blade and posing for the next strike. The light of the day suddenly seemed to vanish; Joe looked to the sky and gawked at what he saw. The giant, too, had noticed the disappearance of the sun and turned just in time to see the monster's maw a moment before it tore into him. A serpentine neck lifted the giant off the ground and sent its body tumbling into the air. The neck then retracted and darted back out, consuming the giant in a single gulp.

"*Sea dragon!*" cried Will and let loose a volley of arrows. The dragon hardly noticed the onslaught, as the arrows bounced off the scaled hide, its head slinking back and forth from the depths of the lake eyeing the battlefield selecting its next meal. Laying eyes upon DeVal, the dragon's mouth began to salivate with deadly poison and it lowered its head, preparing to strike. DeVal, caught in the blood lust of battle, had not heeded Will's warning and drove further into the fray, never noticing the impending death that rose from behind him. The dragon screeched and let loose its strike, inches away from DeVal's backside, but it was met with a hammering blow from Dragon Spanker, sending the creature crashing to the ground. DeVal yelped and jumped back, bringing his axe down between the monster's eyes. Joe followed suit, driving Dragon Spanker into the neck of the beast and with a powerful jerk upward to sever its head. The headless body slipped from the land and back into the depths of the lake.

DeVal's heavy hand slapped down on Joe's shoulder in gratitude. "Tiss a bit breezy on these shores wouldn't you agree laddy?"

Joe looked quizzically at DeVal and noticed Scarlet's face turning a shade to match her name. He looked down to see that his kilt was no longer around his waist. He quickly looked back to the sinking beast, seeing it caught between the spikes that protruded from the creature's scales.

DeVal let loose a great bellowing laugh and lifted his axe towards the fleeing horde. "Come on, let's drive these knaves back to their forsaken realm. My throat is parched and the tavern awaits!"

Joe smiled at his friend's great thirst and raised Dragon Spanker in the direction of DeVal's blade. He shouted his house's name and charged towards the remnants of the horde...

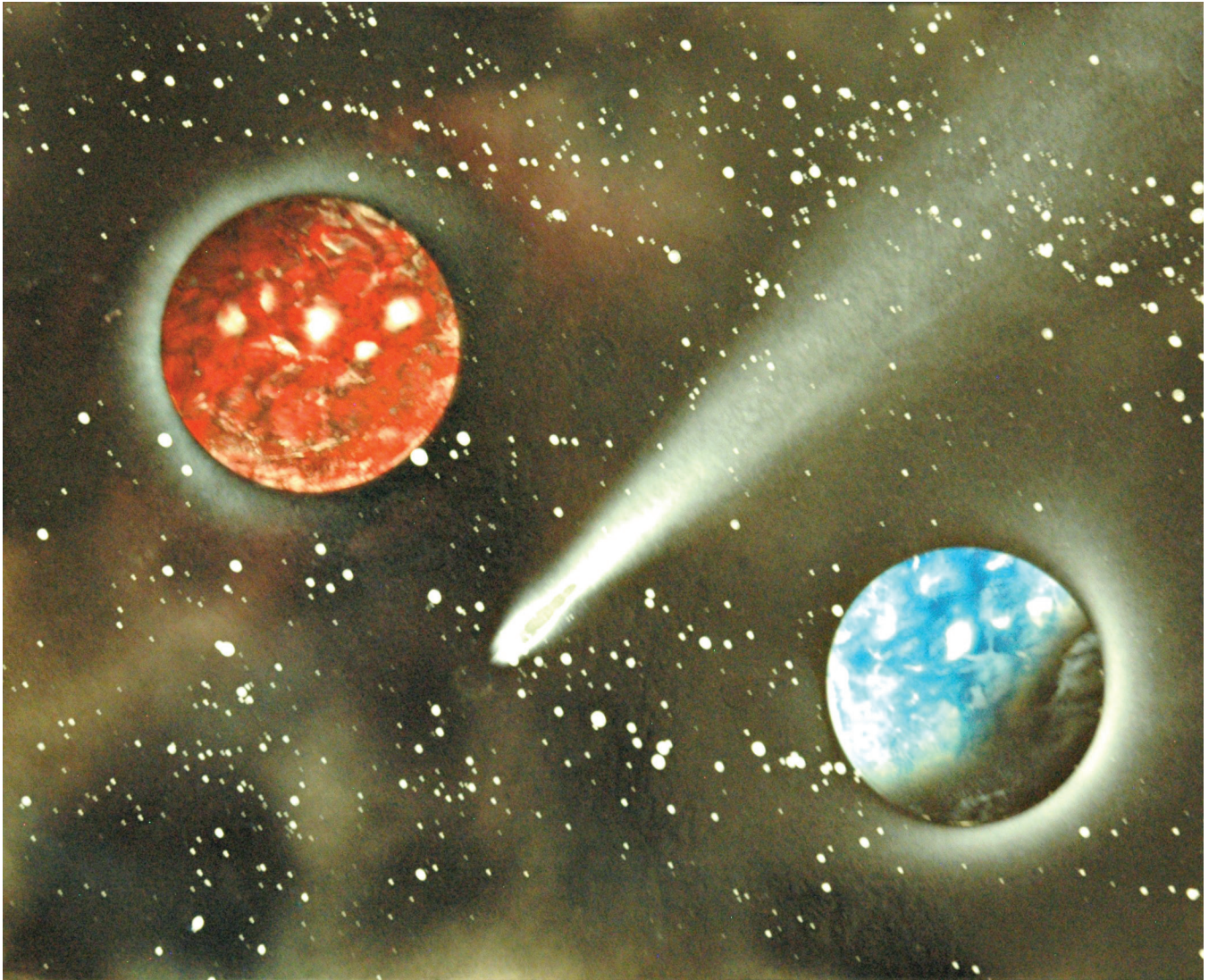
"Joseph Damien Ward, get back here!" Joe's father shouted as he chased his son across the field of the games, frantically waving Joe's kilt in his hand. Joe, lost in the thrill of battle, had little regard for his father's demand as he raced past the bannisters and competitors towards the center of the field. Many in the crowd howled in laughter while others turned red at the brazen bare boy dashing forward in delight.

"Run laddy, run!" His grandfather managed to shout through the laughter. He knew that Joe's father would never be able to outpace the boy's imagination.

# HAPPEN

*Clayton Howeth*

103



Spraypaint

# TEMPORAL TEMPER

*Aaron Heldmyer*

As dawn breaks, a young man slowly rises from his bed, rubs his bleary eyes, and peers out the window. He watches disinterestedly as the birds blur past, scarcely distinguishable. He prepares for the day and boards the train, paying careful mind to avoid physical contact with the other riders, some slower and others faster than he. His stop rolls into view and he disembarks, taking the last half-mile to his office at a flagging shuffle, not overeager to begin work. He sits at his desk, draws his office chair in. To his left is a curious metal rod at arm-level, leading into a hole drilled into the floor. Flicking his head to the side, he regards it with a jaundiced eye. He sighs deeply and then, bracing himself, suddenly grabs hold. The world around him immediately slows. The people rushing by instantaneously drop to a more discernible pace. He can now make out individual faces and conversations. His boss, appearing from the break room, catches his eye and nods curtly, a styrofoam cup of coffee clutched in his loose hand. The transition has left him a bit dizzy, but, all things considered, it's one of his better days. Careful not to remove his firm grip from the metal, he picks up the book he brought along and begins to read. He spends the next eight hours like this until finally relinquishing contact with the metal rod, causing the world to promptly speed up again. He dog-ears his page and heads home again.

Here, time travels through different mediums at different efficacies, much like heat or electricity. There are time insulators and time conductors. Materials found to be good time conductors, like the iron in the metal rod at his office, are prized for this attribute. Other mediums, like air, are poor conductors of time, and prevent it from permeating through to any great distance. What's more, people are sources of time. No two people generate time at precisely the same magnitude and, thus, each individual is surrounded by their own personal field, conducted from within their body. The interaction between time fields is a venerable field of study in its own right; scientists have deduced that when two people make physical contact, say through holding hands, their fields combine, and an average between the two is taken and shared among them. To one party, time seems to slow down, and to the other, it speeds up.

Counterparts to power plants, called time plants, like the one in which the young man works, have become essential for many. Time is conducted from the young man in his office grasping the metal rod, combined with others' from different branches of the same system, and thus magnified, allowing it to traverse great distances to the homes of those cursed with a high internal rate of time that desire a slower pace of life. After all, like most people, they want to be present for their daughters' wedding and they aspire to see their grandchildren grow up. So, they construct their homes with time conduction in mind. They walk around barefoot in their home, their feet in direct contact with the iron floors. But it is a wretched paradox: these people are shut-ins, not to avoid the world, but because they wish to live slow enough to see it.

Touching strangers is taboo. This is partly due to the shock of suddenly lurching into a new rate of time, and partly due to the nausea that accompanies it. Team sports are played on fields of iron or copper so that games are fair. Young men and women tend to gravitate towards others with similar time, so the jump from holding hands, a caress, or even a simple kiss is not so shocking and their lives



can be shared at similar paces. A potential lover can be spotted easily from the crowd as they are neither a blur nor a statue; each sees the other, beautiful and clear.

If one were to gaze up into the night sky, they would notice a very strange thing. Some stars twinkle divinely, while others are still and dead, like the last ember of a fire. Some planets move with the regularity of clockwork. Some planets stay put: wallflowers, envious of their dancing neighbors. Most people shudder at what might lie beyond in the distant cosmos, but there are a few curious souls whose chests heave with excitement every time they peer through the telescope.

Outside of the city and away from civilization, time creeps by at a snail's pace, using what little of it has conducted through the crust of the Earth from nearby towns and cities. Visitors wandering through national parks are awestruck by the leaves suspended in mid-air, the water droplets hanging in space. But they know that to move closer to these moments of beauty means they will end more quickly. And just as leaving litter behind ruins the experience for the next visitor, so too does leaving time. So they keep their distance.

# CHAOS

*Nadima Dwihusna*

106



Ink

# BOOK

*Jackie Farrell*

107

I have broken your back several times  
cried as I held the last little bit of you  
fallen asleep  
with you in my hands  
and ultimately  
shelved you to do it again.

# MORALLY BANKRUPT

*Cass Whaley*

108





# CONTRIBUTORS

Melissa Anderson is a senior in mining engineering, with an interest in mine safety and health. Her hobbies include mine rescue, hiking, and sewing. This picture was taken while doing an internship in Germany.

Russell Benson is a graduate student in nuclear engineering, and he loves long exposure photography as much as he loves smashing atoms. When the Fourth of July rolled around, Russell couldn't miss the opportunity to capture such a whimsical light show. In addition to his studies and photography he enjoys playing guitar, drinking good beer, and distance running.

Lincoln Carr has been writing poetry since he could pick up a pencil. Much later, he discovered quantum physics, another kind of poetry, and took up residence in the Ivory Tower, where, to his amazement, he gets paid to do both. He recently discovered he had been a physicist longer than he was a theater actor. Fortunately he has two sons, Thing One and Thing Two, who remind him that he's not actually a grown-up. Professor Carr teaches in both the physics and the McBride Honors programs. He was (in)famously featured on the Oredigger "dirty seven" list of toughest professors on campus, but somehow students still come to his classes, even ones that aren't required.

Eric Clark has a soft spot for flabbergasted victims of Banner's punctilious demands. Imbiber of Colorado craft beers, seeker of sole source justifications, dilettante hiker, procurer of pedagogic goods and services, Clemson football apologist, rhythm section and lyricist for seminal SC underground (in the room over the..) garage band "The Face Melters," but mostly proud loving father to Lola. Originally from Charleston, SC.

Alex Clymer graduated from CSM in 2010 and lives in Golden, Colorado with her husband Khris Clymer and their two pesky cats: Brutus and Miss Kitty. To fund their fun, she currently works as a Technical Writer for a large company with a CEO that owns 98% of a Hawaiian island. While she waits for her personal invitation to the island, she enjoys painting, photography, and getting outdoors.

Wenli Dickinson is a rare species occasionally observed on the Mines campus. Not much is known about her, as only one instance of her species has (fortunately) ever been sighted by mankind. It is rumored that her natural habitat is the Rocky Mountains where you can find her long distance running or playing ukulele for "Fred," her beloved Spider Plant. Biologists hypothesize that she is capable of making use of the English language (having been previously published by Red Paint Hill Publishing), singing, and picking up marbles with their toes—a rare, and coveted talent. Please contact the World Wildlife Fund if you spot another of her species in the wild in order to aid their research.

# CONTRIBUTORS

Nadima Dwihusna is an artist, violinist, second daughter and soon-to-become engineer. She is an international student from Sumatra, Indonesia studying geophysical engineering at CSM. Outside of the classroom, Nadima enjoys hiking, skiing, playing music and making art. She loves travelling, learning new cultures, and meeting new people. Living in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela for the past two years, she has experienced how Venezuelans are affected by the escalating political tensions. As an individual and an artist, she aims to share her knowledge to inspire others to make proactive decisions.

Emma Ely is a junior pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Engineering along with a minor in Public Affairs in the McBride Honors Program. Upon graduating from Mines she hopes to attend law school and study Environmental Law. While attending Mines Emma has been involved in the Society of Women in Engineering, Alpha Phi Omega, Association of Engineering Geologist, and is a manager for the DiggerDial program. Additionally, in her free time Emma enjoys running, skiing, hiking, swimming, spending time with friends and family, and traveling as often as possible.

Dave Gabrielson is the President of ATO as well as a member of many other organizations here on campus. When he is not busy with school or meetings, he finds time to spend in the mountains or working on personal projects. Drawing and painting is something that allows Dave to step away from his responsibilities.

Aaron Glick is a physicist, mathematician, and hopeful neuroscientist. Born and raised in Colorado to a family of six, he has an appreciation for the mountains, namely the isolation and perspective they offer. The complexity and connections that arise in nature, in the brain, and between science and the arts is what drives innovation and appreciation. As a poet he attempts to capture this appreciation while exploring the connectivity of complexity.

Jesse Glover is a veteran of High Grade and as such instead of telling you about himself again he decided to recite a passage from one of his favorite songs: "A long time ago, way back in history, when all there was to drink was nothin' but cups of tea. When along came a man by the name of Charlie Mops, and he invented a wonderful drink and he made it out of hops. - Artist unknown, commonly heard in pubs since the turn of the 20th century.

Katerina Gonzales had nightmares about earthquakes, tornadoes, and tsunamis as a young child, and decided to study them when she grew up. She now is a lowly undergrad in Geophysics and blogs about the GP life and other Mines-y stuff at Science Nerds Can't Write. In addition to writing an occasional article, Katerina has been a content manager for The Oredigger the past three years. In her spare time, she privately plays piano in the Maple basement, semi-privately sings while driving or riding in cars, and publicly plays ukulele at geoscience conferences with her band. She can also be found smuggling rocks out of national parks, petting larger un-smugglable rocks, sipping coffee at Higher Grounds, and preparing herself for life as a grad student next fall by scavenging for free food. She does not, however, lick rocks because that is what geologists do, and Katerina is a geophysicist, dang it.

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Deborah Good graduated from the Colorado School of Mines with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics in 2014. While at Mines, she was involved in The Oredigger newspaper, the McBride Honors Program, and Equality Through Awareness (ETA). She is now a graduate student at University of British Columbia, pursuing a Master of Science in Astronomy and specializing in observational cosmology. In her limited free time, she enjoys writing, embroidery, and science outreach.

Laine Greaves-Smith is a Colorado native who grew up with a love of camping, skiing, and the outdoors. While not in classes as a mechanical and electrical engineer, Laine enjoys repurposing materials into function goods. He believes that art should surround people in everyday items and not just be limited to frames and display cases. One man's trash is another man's masterpiece.

Aaron Heldmyer is a 2014 graduate of CSM in Environmental Engineering (B.S.), with an honors minor in Public Affairs through the McBride Program. He spent his childhood frying under the sweltering tropical sun of the Florida panhandle, but has since come to his senses, moving to the blindingly oppressive desert sun of Grand Junction, CO in 2009. He enjoys exploring his world through travel, and expressing his creativity through the mediums of music performance and writing. Thanks to his supportive family, friends, and professors, he has found the fortitude to push himself tirelessly in pursuit of his own ambitious goals. Aaron has a particular fondness for work that combines STEM disciplines like engineering with the humanities, and hopes to one day use this well-rounded approach to assist in the development of underprivileged communities. This will only happen, of course, once he is exhumed from underneath his heaping pile of student loan debt, much like a fiscally responsible zombie rising from the grave.

Andrew Hemesath is an American. In his dreams he rides a massive bald eagle named 'Freedom'. His favorite colors are red, white, blue, and Patriotism. The stars and bars grace both his comforter and shower curtain. He spends every Fourth of July crying tears of colonial pride. He sings the National Anthem three times a day, once in the morning, once in the evening, and also after brunch. He recites the Declaration of Independence in his sleep and drives a Subaru reluctantly. He has a portrait of George Washington tattooed across his chest and refuses to drink Perrier. His favorite movie is National Treasure. His favorite actor is Nicolas Cage. His favorite breakfast is eggs, bacon, toast, flapjacks, syrup and a small bowl of seasonal fruit. When asked what he'd do if he won the lottery he replied, "Help Lady Liberty pay off her unfortunate debt". His self-described soul mate is 300 feet tall, green, and enjoys an ocean view. "Not all of us have dads, but we all got forefathers." -Anonymous

Robin Hoover grew up in the midst of the San Juan Mountains skiing and mountaineering and generally enjoying the beauty of the outdoors. Now she spends most of her time playing around with her camera and watercolors and wishing she had a car.



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Clayton Howeth is a freshman at CSM and at the moment is looking at Mechanical Engineering with the hope to go into the Aerospace field later in life. He enjoys spray paint art as well as playing Ultimate on the Mines club team, reading, hammocking on nice days, and of course long walks on the beach.

Christine Hrdlicka received her BS degree at CSM this last fall and is now pursuing her graduate degree. She began writing poetry after taking the class offered here. She would like to dedicate *Collecting Worms in the Rain* to her sister Marie. It is a poem about the joy that can occur on even the cloudiest day and the friendship shared between two sisters.

Derek Jacobsen: Fully bearded undergrad, class of 2018. Strong love-hate relationship with swimming.

Matthew Jones is a dedicated physicist pursuing a Ph.D. in condensed matter, but for all the hard science in his heart, there is passion for the craft of storytelling. He enjoys playing with a story's construction and its telling as a means to capture new perspective. Reading stories and envisioning events through a different set of eyes is somewhat of a hobby too. Beyond the realm of condensed matter and craft, Matthew is deeply passionate for teaching. In a world of complex formalism, it is easy to get lost in the finer details. Teaching tethers him to the beginning: where his journey into the solid state began. Seeing the light of comprehension in a student's eyes brings him joy that knows no end. And of course, he loves his family. Though spread out, they always seem to find a way to connect even when connecting feels impossible.

Colton Kohnke has been listening to Taylor Swift for the past month and a half. When he's not jamming to "Blank Space" or "Shake It Off," he can usually be found at the pool or in one of the windowless recesses of the Green Center researching Geophysics. His favorite dinosaur is the Ankylosaurus of the Late Cretaceous and he has always wanted to learn how to scuba dive.

Lauren Marus: Out of the incomprehensible vastness of space and time, here we are, in this one brief moment, together. We are so lucky to be alive and have consciousness. Explore, dance, run, ride, paint. Play. Experience our condition and do what you can to share it with others. Lauren is a nuclear engineer and a self-taught artist.

At CSM, Zachary Nahman is currently finishing up his last semester in Mechanical Engineering. Somewhere between coursework, swimming, and participating in a slew of outdoor activities, he finds time to relax and write poetry.

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Ali Nazem is a PhD student with major in Underground Construction & Tunneling. He started working with wood when he was 12 and did a whole lot of primary sculpturing at that time. As time went by, he realized he could express feelings and thoughts through a plain piece of wood! Ali learned to sculpt through the combination of trial, error, hope, and strong desire. And that worked after almost 13 years! Aside from wood work, he plays violin, piano, and a little bit of guitar. Ali has been doing Interior Design for six years as well. He likes doing that because it enables you to maneuver through your creativity. And you know what? Creativity is borderless!

Alexandra Nilles likes math and computers and robots and going outside sometimes. She studied physics at Mines and next year is going to graduate school in computer science. Sometimes she gets a weird fuzzy frustrated feeling in her brain and that usually leads to writing poetry. This is her first time publishing in High Grade.

Cristina Ochoa: Captain.

Taylor Parsons is a man of many names: whitewaterfanatic (reddit), outdoor enthusiast (facebook), river gnat (irate rafters), T-Pain (wannabe gangsters), and now, that guy who wrote some poetry for High Grade that one time. When he didn't have school work, and sometimes when he did, he could be found on a river or creek nearby kayaking, running, rock climbing, or any number of things that get him outside. He graduated in December 2014 in Mechanical Engineering, and will soon be moving to Washington State, where the rain is constant and the rivers are constantly flowing.

Carolyn Pauly is a junior in the Exploration track of the Geology & Geological Engineering major. She enjoys many types of arts and crafts, but her favorites are drawing and beading. When not engaged in schoolwork or art, she likes to participate in clubs, especially Ballroom Dance, play video games, play the piano, or read.

Vincent Pane likes boats.

Elizabeth Pettinger swaggers to the beat of her own steel drum. She expresses the same music taste, sense of humor, hope, and angst as a preteen. She will not take a compliment, and has the disposition and vocabulary of a retired Southern Canadian. Elizabeth is excited to take her Yup'ik cutting board and Ulu knife to graduate school on the other side of the mountains in exploration of further knowledge and whatnot! #EyeContact #InTheLibrary

Virginia Premo is a senior undergraduate in chemistry who loves astronomy, microscopy, solid state chemistry, and nuclear/radio chemistry. Her art mediums vary from craft to pottery to photography to fiction writing (specifically, horror and scifi). She is inspired by many people from teachers to idols to family and the like, such as Jesse Glover, Jan Ritter, Richard Feynman, and H.P. Lovecraft.

Becky Reeve did that one thing again, most people call it art. She calls it pretty prime procrastination.

Lauren Revis is a Senior in Mechanical Engineering who is finally graduating in May! Born and raised in Colorado she loves to do anything outside. During the summer months Lauren enjoys four wheeling and hiking in the mountains. Wintertime she's on the slopes snowboarding and anytime in between she can be found riding her horse Comet.

Athena Ryals is an artist trapped in an engineer's body. Drawing on her dark and exotic past as a high-school nerd, she has pursued her passions in theater, making toast, dance, singing, crocheting little sweaters for kittens, and authorship. After graduation, she will let her dreams take her anywhere.

Alexandra Sauer is a sophomore in Mechanical Engineering from Benton, Louisiana. Her hobbies include painting, skiing, Netflix, procrastinating, rodeo, and pretending she's not procrastinating. She considered naming this painting "How Mines Boys Look at Girls" but decided to go with the generic "Grey Wolf" instead.

Todd Shaklee is a graduating senior in Engineering Physics here at Mines. With his deep love of fantasy and all things humorous, Todd originally wrote this flash piece under the title That Doesn't Go There for Toni Lefton's class, Creative Writing: Fiction. It was such a fun piece that it eventually became part of a 15 page short story about a dragon and his journey to becoming a knight. Todd has since written three more short stories and plans to continue writing long after graduation.

Brooke Sorenson is from a suburban town out skirting Salt Lake City, Utah. Living a very sheltered life, moving to Golden, Colorado was nothing short of a culture shock. Her life is filled with camping, skiing, dirt biking, or anything else outdoors. She's a senior in petroleum engineering, planning to move back to Utah, and gets by with her four pet turtles.

Kenneth P. Sullivan grew up moving every few years for his father's job in the military. He graduated from high school in Prague, Czech Republic, which allowed many opportunities to travel through Europe and further abroad. As a result, Kenneth enjoys photographing the architecture and culture of the places he goes. Kenneth is studying Civil Engineering, and is a member of the class of 2018. In his free time Kenneth enjoys hiking and mountain biking.

Alex Truby: I'm a Petroleum Engineering senior getting ready to graduate this spring, and never in my four years at Mines did I ever think I would be submitting any work to High Grade. After taking a course through the McBride program called Revolutions in Science, Literature, & Society last semester however, here I am! Our professors Toni Lefton and Lincoln Carr pushed us to think outside the box in many ways, one of which was writing poetry. Trave was one of the poems I wrote during my time

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in the course. So I hope you all enjoy it, and let me serve as living proof that it is still possible to find your inner poet even if you haven't touched the subject since high school!

Cohen Turner: Climb all the rad rocks\Eat all the ice cream and food\ Adventure (puppies)

Hugo Villa was born in the great state of Wyoming, in a small town called Cody. His current major is Petroleum engineering. Hugo spends most of his free-time longboarding, playing Destiny, drawing, and hiking. Ice fishing is one of the most surprisingly horrifying things he's ever been forced into doing. His favorite thing to do ever is go mudding at this place called Red Lake in his hometown. His favorite color is grey. Favorite show is Friends. Favorite subject is math. Waffles are his favorite breakfast food. He'll be a Packers fan until the day he dies and his favorite movie is Land of The Lost. Hugo started drawing at the age of 16 when he designed his first tattoo. It's of the Aztec God Quetzualcoatl, the creator of life. He also has the Wyoming Bucking Bronco tattooed on his back. Hugo's drawings are basically visual representations of the most emotionally charged feelings and thoughts he experiences. This particular drawing is the product of a series of philosophical discussions during an unusual Wednesday night spent with his friends in the dorms.

Cass Whaley is a graduate student at Mines in the International Political Economy of Resources program. She spends her days at work, at school, or with her daughter. Her works are based on inspiring situations or people. Although each piece is very personal, the objects are drawn in a way to dissociate them from their original meaning, opening up interpretation to the viewer.

Xinwei Yan was born and raised in Shenyang, China and came to the U.S. in 2009. After living in Seattle for a year and a half, he moved to Mines in August 2010. Xinwei has strong enthusiasm in creative writing, especially in poetic, lyric composition and fiction. He's also an individual songwriter of pop rock and folk. Though most of his writings are in Chinese, he believes the beauty of art could be beyond the barrier of language, and could be delivered graphically and abstractly. Xinwei is currently a graduate student in petroleum engineering and serving as the president of International Student Council.