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TYGR 2015: Student Art and Literary Magazine

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TYCGR

2014-2015

ART AND LITERARY MAGAZINE

TYGR 2014 - 2015

STUDENT ART AND LITERARY MAGAZINE

The Department of English and Modern Languages
The Department of Art and Digital Media

OLIVET NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

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Letter from the Editor

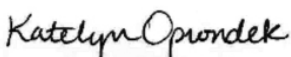
Origins.

The theme of this year's Tygr magazine is one of new beginnings. The pieces included in this year's edition all have some connection to the theme, but more importantly, this magazine is a revitalization of Tygr as a whole. The staff thought that introducing a theme added to the continuity of this year's magazine and gave direction to authors and artists while communicating our vision for the end product that you now hold in your hand.

Tygr staff has worked to make this magazine the best it could possibly be. From piece selection to design, every aspect of this magazine has been carefully considered and crafted. I could not have completed this project by myself—I want to express my gratitude to my assistant editor, BrittLee Cadle; the layout editor, Stephanie Linquist; her team of photographers and copyright personnel; and Professors Forrestal, Kirk, and Greiner, the faculty advisors, without whom we would have had no direction. I also want to thank our faculty and student readers who evaluated each piece in this collection. This publication would not be the same without the hard work that they put into it.

We are so excited to bring you a high-caliber collection of literature and art. Please enjoy the following works created by Olivet students. Thank you for supporting the abundance of creativity at Olivet by picking up this magazine. We hope you enjoy this year's edition of Tygr and that you find your own inspiration while exploring the creativity of others.

Blessings,



Katelyn Oprondek

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THE TYGER

WILLIAM BLAKE

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

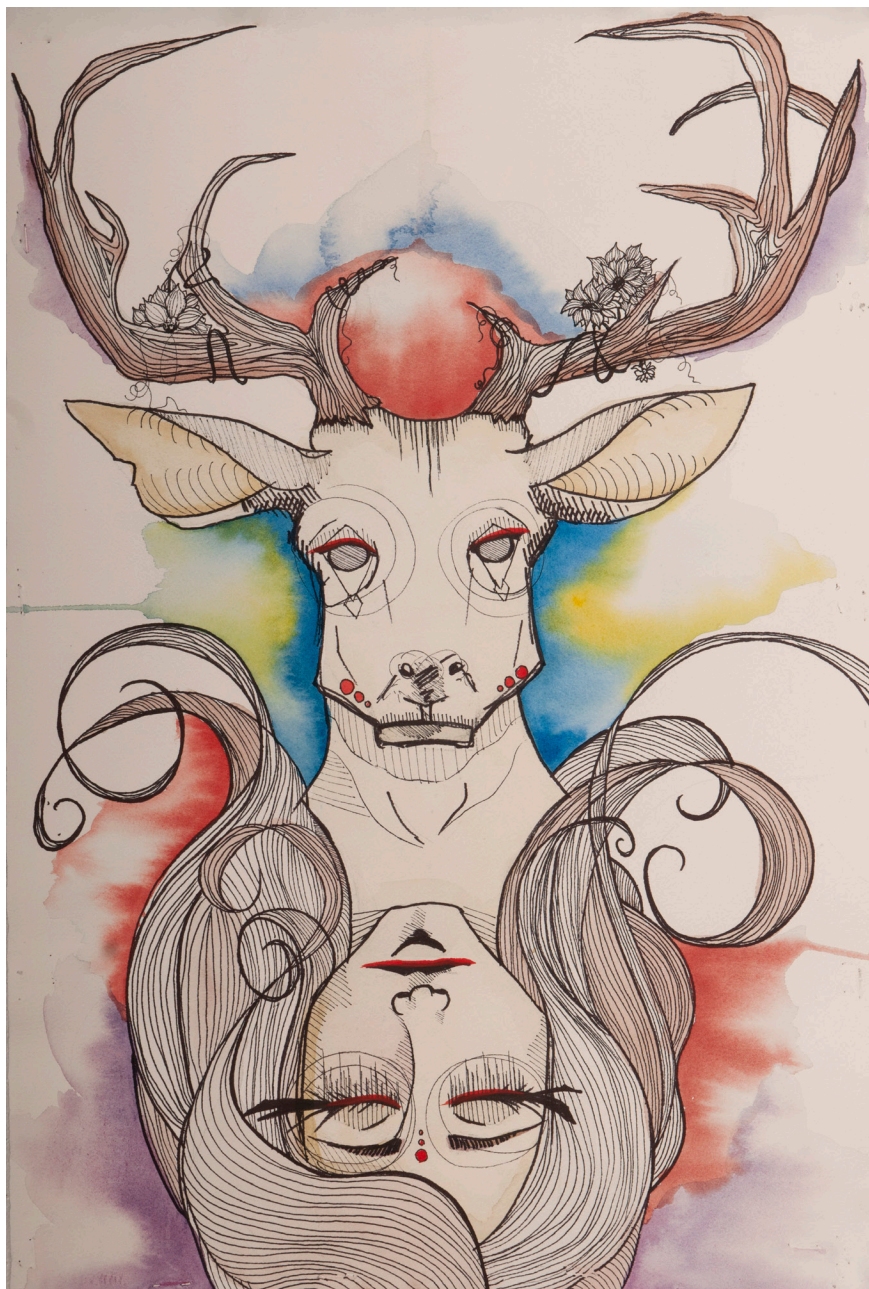
In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare sieze the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?



"Animalistic Nature" by Natily L. Meyers

The Clock

L. M. Patton

The clock's ticking face stared at him, as if mocking the time that he had spent here. Frank hated being mocked. He would not stand for it. Tick tock. The chatter of his wife was endless.

Linda, stop talking, Frank thought to himself—nothing happened. Sometimes it worked, as if she could sense his annoyance at her. The faint ticking of the clock found its way back into his thoughts again. Tick tock. Frank stood and walked over to the wall where the clock hung, took it off the wall, and was about to throw it onto the ground when he heard Linda's voice.

"Frank? Frank! What are you doing? For goodness sake, that was a wedding present they got!"

"Well it wasn't from us," said Frank, annoyed that his plans had been interrupted. His mission had been unsuccessful and that was not something Frank could accept. This was only a setback; the clock would fall to him.

"Come sit back down honey," Linda said patting the dark leather sofa next to her. Grumbling something about a clock, Frank went and took a seat next to his wife. *What could possibly be taking so long in the kitchen*, Frank thought to himself, *It was only coffee, it wasn't anything that required any skill*. He did not want to be there. Why did they have to visit his new daughter in-law? His family never visited him and Linda after they got married and they were just fine. Linda and he had visited his son the first time he got married and look how well that marriage turned out. A waste of a perfectly good afternoon of football time is what this was. No need to waste his time on something that was probably only temporary. If he was as old as they said he was getting then he should be able to do whatever he wanted to do—not sitting waiting to listen to his wife prattle on with his son and his second wife. His time should be his own.

"Mom! Dad! We are so glad you could come visit us!" said their son as he entered the room with his new wife. He was carrying the coffee tray. Both their faces were tanned and glowing with post-wedding bliss. *A honeymoon*, Frank thought, *I took Linda to see the world's largest bison monument and she liked it. None of this Caribbean shit*.

"Hello mom, dad, I'm so glad you could come and see our new home!" said his son's wife.

"Frank. You can call me Frank," he said as he watched the smile waiver a bit from his daughter in laws face.

“Well you can call me mom!” Linda jumped in, “I am just thrilled to have another woman in the family! Frank isn’t one for social manners,” she said, glaring at her husband. But Frank didn’t notice. He was too busy glaring at the clock on the wall. Its hand had barely moved since he got there he felt. They had been there for forever. Linda had wanted a beautiful cuckoo clock when they first got married, to hang on their wall in the living room, “A decorative family piece” Linda had called it. Frank had shot that down right away. No ticking in his house. “Tell us all about the honeymoon,” Frank heard his wife ask, but he had no interest in the sun. The clock was still mocking him. Tick tock mock. Rubbing it in his face at how old he had gotten, how slow time was moving right now, even though it felt like eternity, but would speed up the minute they left. He hated the reminder of his age. People thought him incapable because he was getting older. *All of them idiots. I can still do more than all of them put together.*

“We swam in the ocean every day; we even swam with dolphins on our last day! They just swam right up to us, it was amazing,” said his daughter-in-law. Frank grunted; dolphins weren’t of any importance. They were just slippery little bastards in the ocean. Linda placed her hand on



"It's Almost December" by Brianna Rose

her husband's arm, but he didn't notice. What really mattered was that the clock was still ticking. Everyone else kept talking, but Frank could only hear the sound of the clock. They tried to show him pictures of the blue water, unique animals, and their luxurious hotel on some new sort of technology, but Frank didn't care about it.

After what felt like a lifetime, they stood up to leave. Frank rejoiced. Linda hugged her new daughter-in law, kissed her cheek and did the same to their son. Frank grunted, shook his son's hand, and gave a nod to his new daughter in-law. Frank knew his wife's eyes were piercing the back of his head, but he was ready to leave the brand new home.

The drive home was silent. He ignored Linda the whole way home, something about being rude, starting a family, behavior, and needing to.... He didn't quite catch the last part.

When they finally got home he sat in his worn, green chair, turned on the football game, and tried to get the thought of the ticking clock out of his head. And then he could hear it. As if it was in the room with him. That clock and its ticking, the silence interrupting, mind haunting noise that he couldn't get out of his head. When all of the sudden He noticed that Linda had hung up something on the wall. It was the cuckoo clock, the one he would never let her have.

"Linda!" Frank called for his wife, "What is this? We didn't agree to this...this thing!"

"Oh Frank, calm down. It is just a clock. It fits so perfectly in that spot and I never know what time it is in this room. You know I always like knowing what time it is."

"Well I don't. Take it down," Frank demanded.

"I will not," Linda said, "and neither will you. That's final Frank, leave it be."

Tick tock. Frank's face turned red. He got up out of his chair and walked toward the stairs, passing Linda as she sat reading at the kitchen table. Once at the stairs Frank started to stomp. He would let Linda know who was in charge, *No ticking in my house*. He walked into the bedroom and swung open his gun cabinet, and grabbed his shotgun. *Clocks hanging in my living room*, Frank fumed. It would not do in his house. Still stomping, Frank went back down the stairs. He turned to use his body as a shield so that Linda would not see the gun. He loaded in the shells, cocked the gun, and aimed it at the clock. Tick tock, tick tock, ti—



"Duplicite" by Anna Floyd



"Corvus" by Vittoria Miulli

Divulgence

Hot
thoughts
seeping
from beneath
my scab of a smile,
lips peeled apart by pulsating aches.

Now I fear they will soak into your ears,
the gauze you offer,
until thin white fibers sag,
sticky and dribbling slime
that crusts on your slow-swelling chest.

Erin M. Stephens



“Forgotten Hope” by Row Gebre

Fore

BrittLee Cadle

I hear them change your name,
The scratch of the pen on parchment
That signifies you have left the Old World behind,
And hear you repeat it over
To learn your own last name.

I pick up the gun
You borrowed from your father
To fight in that gray uniform,
To rid the land of enemies in blue
Whom you used to climb trees with as boys.

I search the coal mines -
Breathe in that fresh dust -
To wipe it from
Your chiseled cheekbones,
Damp with sweat and rainwater.

I hide behind your hot stove
And I watch you smooth the graying hair
Of my Cherokee grandfather,
Who shields stories from his white children
And leaves those records lost.

I am there, living with you,
As I find the stories that say
You made me.
Yesterday, you suffered,
But today, we thrive.

Silence

I awaken to a world where the melody has died.
Abandoned spirit by my voice has been wronged.
I don't know who I am. My identity's lost
for it was entangled in steel knots to my song.

The tunes I now hear are not beauty,
but taunting, cruel insults and jeers.
Reminders of a gift which I once did possess
merely feed growing darkness and fear:

fear that if ever I'm mended at all,
my voice will not hold the same ring,
that my dearest companion on hills and through valleys
might appear as a stranger when I sing.

As I stumble around, I marvel at how
my strong dance has morphed into a crawl.
The beat spurred me on as I twirled from above
but ceased when it witnessed my fall.

Will anyone take this deaf, broken, lost mess
and teach her again the right notes?
My dance lead to nowhere, my voice failed the test
when performing the songs which *I* wrote.

Just when I choose to give up hope of rescue-
there's no ground left I've not yet trod-
it's then I hear whisper a sweet, gentle breeze:
"Be still, and know that I am God."

Music

"Composure" by Megan Lingle



The Dream of Lillian

Paul A. Davison II

He clicked open his pen, looking at me with concentrated eyes. His dark suit lay perfectly on his body, the blackness of his hair revealed grey streaks on the sides. I could faintly make out the phone ringing outside the door at the reception desk. I tried to swallow, but it kept getting stuck in my throat. I looked down at the sleeve of my cardigan, playing with the loose string hanging off. I glanced into my psychologists eyes.

“Are you sure this is going to help?”

He closed his eyes nodding, “Yes. Hypnosis is a very successful method most psychologists use.”

I let out all the air from my lungs as he sat there looking at me. Sitting up, I tried to find a comfortable position on the cold leathery chair. The thought of being hypnotized worried me, but I had to know what this dream meant. There are parts I remembered, but I knew there were more things in the dark waiting to be revealed.

I reached my hand into my pocket, feeling the indentation on the keychain I know so well. Lillian.

“Ok, I’m ready.”

He smiled at me, “Very well. If you would please lay down.”

He motioned towards the black chaise lounge on the other side of the room. I slowly walked over and rested my body on the long couch. I felt my weight sink into the cushions, caressing my entire body. I looked up, seeming to lose my surrounding in the bleach white ceiling. I could hear the doctor’s footsteps make their way to the chair sitting across from me. I heard it slide against the wooden floor as he sat down.

“Ok Stephanie, are you comfortable?”

I took in a deep breath, watching my stomach rise then deflate.

“Yes.”

“The reason you may be having these repeated dreams could be the cause of something traumatic that has happened to you in the past. Some believe that dreams are your mind using short term memories to create long term memories.”

I said nothing, I just laid there. I could feel my heart racing in my chest. “The hypnosis is going to help you dig deeper into your mind. Help you remember things that your mind has let you forget.”

I could hear the fan circulating air through the room. I lay there



“Ekklesia” by Mary E. Bass

quietly listening to the rhythm of the wind blowing back and forth. I felt his eyes on me, realizing he was waiting for a response. I turned my head towards him, “Yes, Doctor. I understand.”

His leg was crossed over as he sat, pulling out a small metronome from a bag sitting in front of his feet. He set it on the small table standing on the side of his chair. He flicked the rod and it starting ticking, keeping rhythm. I concentrated on the beat, closing my eyes as I tried to calm my body.

“Alright Stephanie, focus on the metronome. Listen to the smoothness of my voice as I speak.”

I did what he said. I noticed my body relaxing.

“Now as I count down from three, you will go deeper and deeper into your mind. By the time I reach one, you will fall asleep. When the time comes to wake you, I will count to three. Are you ready?”

I breathed through my nose, “Yes Doctor.”

“Alright.”

I shifted my body, concentrating on the metronome and his voice.
“3. Focus on the center of your forehead.”
“2. You are slowly fading out of this world.”
“And 1. You are now in a deep sleep, waiting to be awakened.”

I looked around the field; there was wheat surrounding the entire plane for miles on end. Looking up at the sky, there was a beautiful mixture of pink and blue as the sun was starting to set. I walked through the wheat, and a few feet ahead of me I saw a clearing. There was an open field, a perfect sphere of vibrant green grass. Right in the center, I saw a baby in a stroller.

The child’s face lit up as it saw me; I couldn’t help but smile at it. Seeing the baby’s soft skin gleam in the sunset and its rosy cheeks showing me a toothless grin just made my heart sink. I stepped forward trying to approach the stroller, but before I could go five feet, flames erupted around the child. “No!” The baby began to wail. I turned around seeing if there was anything I could use to put out the fire. Behind me I saw a pond, laying next to it was a rustic bucket. I sprinted over, my heart racing as I slammed the bucket into the pond, bringing it back out as water poured onto my legs. I vigorously threw the water into the flames, but it didn’t have any effect.

“I got you, it’s going to be okay!”

Running back to the pond I heard crows screeching from above. I looked up and there were dozens of them. They swooped down towards the baby with vicious eyes. Some made it through the flames and started pecking at the child.

“No! Leave her alone!”

I filled the bucket up again with water, hoping that when I threw it, it would scare off the birds. As I ran back to the fiery ring, my foot sank into the ground. The grass had turned to mud, and as I tried to break free, my body started to sink into the earth. I looked over, the birds were still hurting the baby. “No, you stay away from her!” With my last effort I threw the bucket at the crows. They stopped and looked at me, all at once they left the baby and started flying in my direction. Just as they were about to attack, my body sank through the ground, taking me away from the destruction.

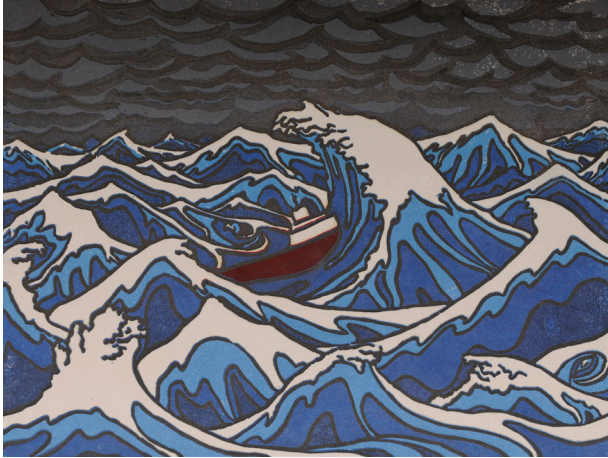
I sat in a dark room; everywhere I looked was complete darkness. I turned around, and in front of me floated a red balloon shining bright in the center. It bobbed up and down, looking very eerie in the darkness. I got to my feet, slowly walking towards it. My breath was shaky, heart racing. But as I got closer, my body started to feel warm and had an overwhelming sensation of love. I was inches away from the balloon. I reached out to grab it, but just before I could, it popped. "AHHH!" Excruciating pain pierced my stomach as if someone were punching it repeatedly. I hit the ground hard, screaming in agony; feeling the blood flow under me from between my legs. Tears ran down my face, the love and the warmth that I had felt was gone. Weeping on the floor, I felt a bright light. Looking ahead, I saw the baby that was in the stroller sitting on the floor staring at me. It gave me its toothless grin, and right before my eyes, the baby transformed into a dove and flew into the bright lights that appeared in the sky. Tears kept making their way down my face, but the feeling of love and hope suddenly took hold of my heart. "Don't worry," a voice said. "She's with me, watching over you."

I wept, "Lord, protect my baby."

1....

2.....

3.....



"The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald" by Krista Postell

Comfort Zone

You hear the hiss like a snake
As the tire pops
You manage to slow down the car
The brake all the way to the floor
As if your thoughts screaming loudly inside your skull,
Will be enough to change the situation

Stepping out of the car
Realizing that you are all alone
The forest seems inviting
Those tall red, gold and brown hued giants
Seemingly calling your name

Taking that first step, it hits you
What you have been waiting for
Has been right there all along
Just waiting for you

Alex Strand

Passing Through

Ashes to ashes.
Dust to dust.
Life to death.
Passing,
breathing one moment,
still the next.
My heart is human;
I may rejoice.
My heart is human;
I may mourn.
And mourn I must,
when her final breaths
are spent,
and when her soul
takes its tired leave
of this world.

Justine Von Arb



"Jenna in Lewes, Delaware" by Luke A. Wright

A Strong and Prosperous Nation (흥익인간)

Fear and hunger drove the girl into the cold streets,
Stumbling past slumped forms who had succumbed to the same hunger
That tore at her insides like a rabid beast.
She told herself the gaunt man in the alley to her left was sleeping,
Not rotting.
Breath quick and halting,
Her fingers shook through her tangled mass of ebony hair,
Narrow eyes widening at the revolting stench
Hanging in the air.
She slunk down the streets,
Searching for an easy target.
There.
A food cart,
Casting a warm glow onto the dark street.
Salvation.
She slipped her hand up and over,
Searching for even a scrap of food.
A hand clamped down on her wrist.
The girl flinched,
Awaiting the harsh slap of flesh on flesh,
But none came.
The woman offered food and shelter,
Speaking in conspiratorial tones of escape,
Of friends across the border who could offer sanctuary -
Freedom.
China.
The girl fled her country,
But the woman's friends greeted her with rough hands,
Threats,
Curses.
She'd been sold.
Like a lump of meat she was handed over
To a chubby Chinese man who barked orders
She could not understand,
Threw punches
She could not deflect,
And with greedy, clammy fingers

Unbuttoned her top,
And took with it her remaining innocence.
It was hell,
But a lesser hell;
She was fed,
Had work,
And with time, a daughter.
Years limped by,
Filled with fear and backbreaking work,
But anything was better than the coal mines she once knew
And the mere ten percent given to her of unjust dues.
She was not happy
But she was safe - until they found her,
Dragged her back,
Locked her away in a labor camp.
She was once again trapped in her personal hell
A slave in her native country,
Nothing more than an ox strapped to a cart,
Expected to pull and pull
Until the work, hunger, or cold killed her.
Determination and desperation to find her daughter won
She escaped her prison,
Returned to the chubby Chinese man
And welcomed the welts left by his belt.
More years crawled by and hope came again,
News of help,
Of escape.
Wary, but desperate that her daughter grow up
Safe,
Loved,
Fear-free.
She searched for these angels -
For human beings so kind as to risk their lives for a stranger
Couldn't exist -
Found them,
And ran.
At twenty-five years old,
Daughter in tow,
She finally found her freedom.

Christina Norwood

"The Forest Electric" by Taylor Cole



Slivers of the Past

Haley Hatalla

Barefoot, my feet skip from
The sun-warmed wooden deck
To the cool concrete cinder steps
To the spiky grass that slips through my toes.

Where the plywood playground once stood,
Complete with rope ladder, yellow slide, and monkey bars,
My eyes now see straight through to the
Tall white fence behind it. A pile of broken beams

Is all that's left behind, shoved aside.
I cross the length of the yard,
Directing my steps to the pile of lumber,
And pick up a scrap of wooden monkey bar.

With one hand I toss it to the far side
Of the pile and grab another splinter of playground.
It flies from my hand, but a piece stays with me.
I watch the red run down my pulsating palm.

At twenty-five years old,
Daughter in tow,
She finally found her freedom.

You are
imperfect
PERMANENTLY
— & —
INEVITABLY
blamed
and you are beautiful.

“You Are” by Sue-Lyn Dorrrough

William stands in a gray uniform
That matches the color of his eyes
And unblinking yields a tarnished gun.
He holds back his younger brother
From the flesh-bone stream and the land
That now grows a stinking red.

The flag waves over the infantry. Red
And white stripes, parallel, uniform
Beg to bless the dying land
And nourish it with crying eyes.
The cannons blast and a man screams, "Brother!"
He doesn't wait to save the gun.

William cries on his father's gun
And prays to not drown in shades of red.
He surges against his blue-clad brother
And bullets shred the cursed uniform.
William glimpses the gasping, screaming eyes.
The cadaver thuds upon the land.

God casts the bodies on the land
And thunder booms like a celestial gun.
He sobs and covers His aching eyes
As the sunrise stains the clouds blood red
To match the bloodsoaked uniform
As brother turns on brother.

William catches a young gray brother,
Tackles him onto the land,
Falling out of their uniform
Line to avoid a Yankee's glinting gun
And the bullet, raging burning red.
William catches the child's eyes

And closes quick the lifeless eyes
Of the newly souless brother.
A sea of bubbling, swirling red
Sucks him deep into the land.
William clasps the grieving gun
And stuffs it into his uniform.

William stands by his brother in a gray uniform,
Eyes crying on his father's gun,
Praying not to rot upon the red land.



“Byenvini Lape” by Levi Himes



“Blind” by Tatiana Liana Diaz



“Dren” by Elizabeth Jenkins

Watching My Hero Learn to Fly

My little bug, my angel.

Yellow skin, bruised-looking eyes, so skinny—
a steroid monster, a bald little head,
sleeping with a stethoscope instead of a teddy.

Cancer life.

Playing ball with her anesthesiologist
and peekaboo with her nurses.

Pushing baby doll strollers down hospital hallways
and taking rides on IV poles.

“Blood in her tummy,”

“No tubies!”

“No doctor!”

“Don’t touch me!”

“Please leave me alone!”

It’s so much harder to console a toddler
when her monsters
are real.

Walking at eight months old,
once dark and prominent eyebrows,
a handful of beautiful, slightly curly, chocolate brown hair
tied up in an orange ribbon.

The memories are hitting me hard—
but hope always hits a little harder.

The nights are so much darker—
but the sun shines much more brightly.

The cold bites harder—
but the breeze feels like butterflies.

There is so much confusion—
but so much to be thankful for.

I am so lucky to be her mom.
I am so lucky that she's still here.
She still laughs,
plays,
fights with her sister,
has tea parties in the bathtub,
gives amazing hugs,
loves her blanket with all her might.

She is stronger than the monsters.

Cancer can't steal
personality,
hope,
happiness.
It's like trying to paint the sun black.

A superhero,
A warrior.
Sometimes, as you tumble over the edge,
terrified of what's about to happen,
You fly.
And man,
can my Babygirl fly.

Lauren Alyse Kasler



“Renew” by Maria Anderson

“Beach Day” by Joy Katenkamp



Sentience

Megan Mattila

It's the end of the war.

Historians will disagree, citing the one billion more to die, the years of restoration and reparation to follow. In fact, they will say, the war never ended. Does the Wall still stand? Do the old prejudices and beliefs still exist among the populous?

There is truth in this. But the soldiers, the people, know another. The war may have ended some years and days after that date. But this was their New Beginning.



Wheat stands dead in the field, nibbled on by creatures of the wild until the frost came some months back. The soldiers' footsteps are not the only noise. The wind blows, whistling among the trees and slamming into tin roofs nailed over empty houses. Squirrels chitter and northern birds call out. But these are small noises, more familiar to the soldiers now than the noise of the home country. It is because of this that they catch the laughter carried by the wind.

The soldiers climb the barren hill over which the laughter flows.

The sky is dark above them, starless and moonless, friendless to the soldiers whose people worship distant deities. It is yet another reason to chase the laughter.

The sight they come upon is familiar but not. Children, cheeks hollowed and sharp, run barefoot on the frosted ground, dodging kicks to grab the rag ball. Elders walk in the distance towards hills of goats, and young men and women, too old to play and too young to fight, tend to fires.

There are not enough people for the village, certainly not enough to harvest the wheat that stands dead behind them. The war has taken many, too many to support the people and land.

The people are strangers to the soldiers. They have too few limbs and not enough eyes, ten fingers where there should be fourteen. Their look of hunger is familiar. The soldiers come escaping mad Kings and power-hungry Emperors. Their families starve while they fight for land and freedom.

It is for this they take off their packs and walk towards the children.

A boy is the first to spot them. He freezes, eyes wide, and the soldiers remember their own fears, the lines of marching men who tore them from their mothers, masked faces becoming their nightmares. The soldiers stop, several handspans between them. They kneel and remove their masks.

All the children stare now. None scream or run. One girl moves forward, reaching out with an earthy hand to touch a soldier's face. It is the color of new growth, a contrast to his four blue eyes. The soldier's skin is clammy and slimy. The girl yelps in surprise and stumbles backwards, the other children taking her arms to keep her from falling.

The soldier reaches into his pack and holds out a piece of bread. Beside him, the other soldiers do the same, some taking out roots or vegetables, others honey comb and fruit. The children dart forward cautiously, braver in the sight of food but still unwilling to trust the visitors.

A young one, barely able to toddle, steadies himself on a soldier. He smiles a toothless grin and the soldier gives him a piece of cheese.

Some children call the elders back from the goats. Older children come forward and the soldiers give them food as well. Several elders bring out carcasses and put them on the fires to cook.

A soldier gives a young boy a mouth harp. The visitor demonstrates how to play it and a grandmother, recognizing the tune, sings the words.



Others join in.

The soldiers are convinced to stay with gestures. The people grow braver and a young woman takes turns showing the soldiers their dances, adjusting to their extra limbs and growing used to their clammy skin.

The soldiers leave as the girls bring out their hair ribbons. Night has fallen but still the larders yield more meat, the barrels more of the poison that the visitors spit out to the laughter of the elders. The moon is high now, and full, the stars scattered across the sky like freckles. The soldiers are silent, holding their helmets with disdain.

They had been told they were hunting animals, driving out the vermin from their new home. Their kind are many, hungry for land and power. The poor among them hunger for food and water, medicine and shelter. The soldiers were told the worlds they visited were filled with beasts of no intelligence. None among them had been wholly convinced, but they had allowed the lies. It was for the best, they had thought. The strange creatures had so much on their world, and they had so little.

They could no longer believe this comfort. And they knew they could not allow the others to believe this either.



History did not record this day. Only the soldiers and the villagers remember. A feast commemorates the day, dancing and sharing with the strangers among them. An excuse, say the anthropologists. An explanation for their unusually good crop the year when there was none to be had. But the people know the truth. That was the end of the war. That was the beginning of a New Era.

“The Ties That Bind” by Mary E. Bass

But Sometimes I Speak

Words must be my favorite food.
I swallow them all the time.
Even when I'm not hungry,
or maybe especially then.

Sometimes they go down like milk:
smooth, creamy, and cool,
tasting better in the silence.

Sometimes they go down like coals:
hot, rigid, and dry,
making my thoughts scream in protest.
Sometimes I get full of them.
That's when I bite my tongue
and I begin to choke.

Sometimes I get sick because of them.
That's when I vomit them onto your lap
and you are left to deal with them.

Sometimes I can't hold them back any longer.
That's when you can stick a fork in them,
because I'm done.

Brenda Jones



"Self-Portrait with a Blooming Maw" by Monica Stamper

Overwhelmed

Lindsay Miller

When I look up
and gaze into the
infinitely mysterious
abyss of the
universe,
I always wonder
why God created
so much —
so much that is
unknown to us,
that is
incomprehensibly
large,
so much that
will never be
seen by our
flawed human eyes.

There is endless
beauty throughout
the cosmos
that we will never
enjoy —
grandeur that will never
be known.
Then, I realize
that we were made
to be a minute
portion of an endless
expanse of majesty —
a mere blot on the
canvas of overwhelming
power.

Sometimes,
in the midst of our
busy, ambitious,
endlessly-striving world,
we need to look
up into the
heavens and feel
very,
very
small.



"Corpus Christi Celebration"
by Madison Caise



Dandelions

Gretchen Elliott

It is a warm summer day. We, my daughter and I, have gone out to a large expansive meadow because she wants to pick flowers. Flowers are her favorite—daffodils, daisies, and dandelions. Especially dandelions because her mother and I tried to explain to her that dandelions were not actually flowers. She is as persistent as those weeds she seems to love. I chuckle to myself, as I watch Elaine pick up a white puffy dandelion to make a wish. She loves dandelions so much that her mother and I began calling her ‘Dani,’ but her name is Elaine after her grandmother. I watch as Elaine wanders up and down the hill, picking flowers and weeds alike. I sit on the hood of my car. I have never been much for nature, but it was Elaine and her mother’s favorite. I hadn’t figured out how to tell... Elaine who is five---

“Daddy! Daddy look! Do you think Mommy will like my pretty flowers?” Elaine asks as she barrels up to me. Years ago, when I had just recently started dating her mother, we went to a concert and she bought a t-shirt. Elaine fell in love with that shirt, so her mother made it into a dress. I don’t want to tell her because I am not sure she will understand. “Daddy!” I finally realize what she is trying to show me. She is climbing up on the hood of our old beat up station wagon, daisies in one hand and dandelions in the other. I pull her into a hug as we sit on the station wagon looking at the open field.

“So, what’d you get?” I ask, and smile... because she doesn’t know. She returns my fake smile, with a blindly genuine smile. And then immediately she drops all the flowers on the hood so I can look at them. There is an array of yellows, whites, and greens clashing with the dark blue hood. She begins picking them up one by one, closely examining them.

“Which one?” Elaine sings as she holds out a daisy missing a couple petals and a yellow dandelion. I give her a funny look; she returns it by smushing her cheeks with her hands. I crack a smile.

“Why?” I ask, even though I think I already know. Elaine pauses for a second. “Elaine, what for?” She turns to me, with a thoughtful face.

“Well...” she begins. My heart beats faster, because I have been avoiding this question for at least a week. “I wanna know...” she pauses, “...which flower Mommy will like?” I hold my breath... trying to think of something to say. “I miss Mommy...” Elaine says as she pokes at me. I instinctively pull her into a hug.

“I know Dani.” I whisper as I kiss the top of her head.

“Can we, pleeeeeease... go see Mommy?” Dani begins. “I be really good... I promise!” Dani whispers as she holds out her little pinky finger to make a pinky swear—something she learned from her mother as the most unbreakable promise. Finally after what seems like hours, but was only a couple seconds, I say, almost in a whisper, “Your mother is gone...” and it just hangs in the air.

Dani looks at me with her large brown eyes, so much like her mother’s. She looks like she is trying to understand. Then she gets that determined look in her eyes. Dani wiggles off my lap and starts sorting through her pile of previously forgotten flowers. She brings out two white dandelions.

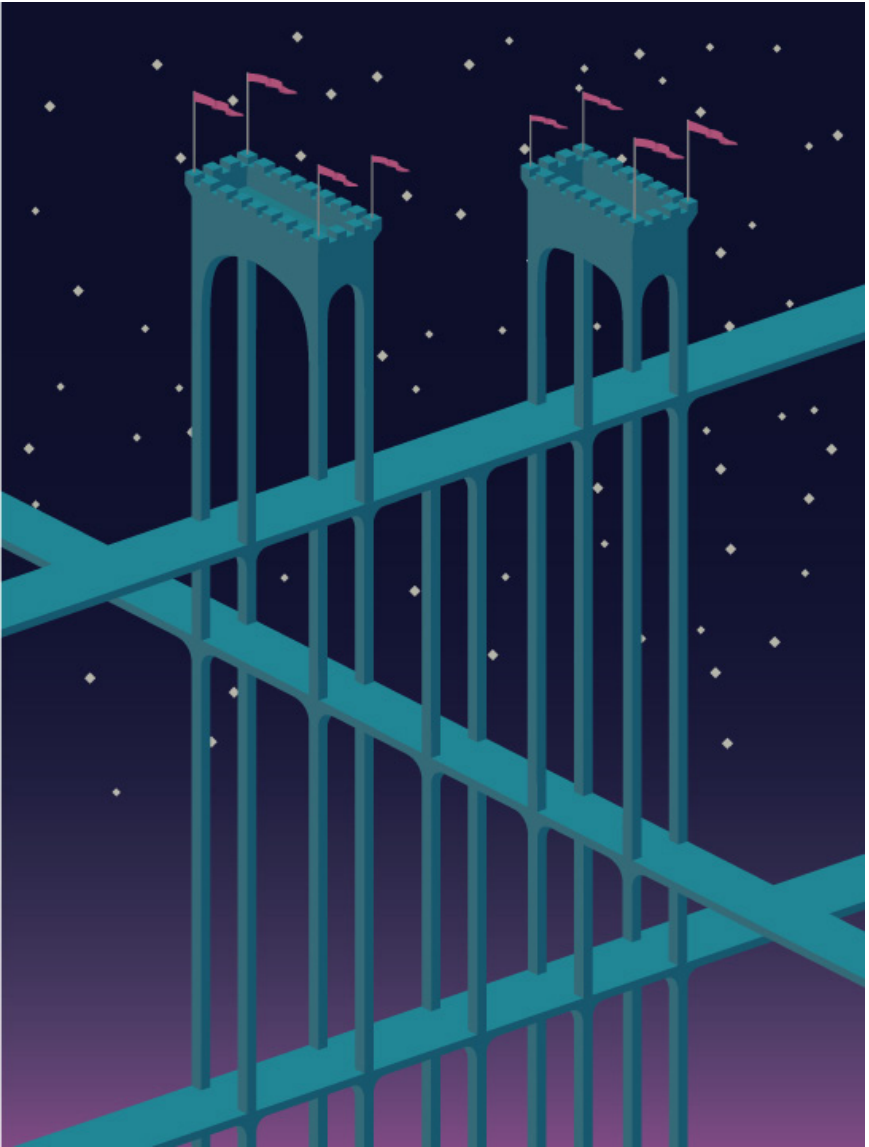
“Make a wish.” Dani whispers as she holds one up to my face. I try to push the dandelion away because she is trying to shove it up my nose.

“What should I wish for?” I ask, unsure of what Dani is wanting. Her mother was always better at this sort of thing. Dani gives me a thoughtful smile and says,

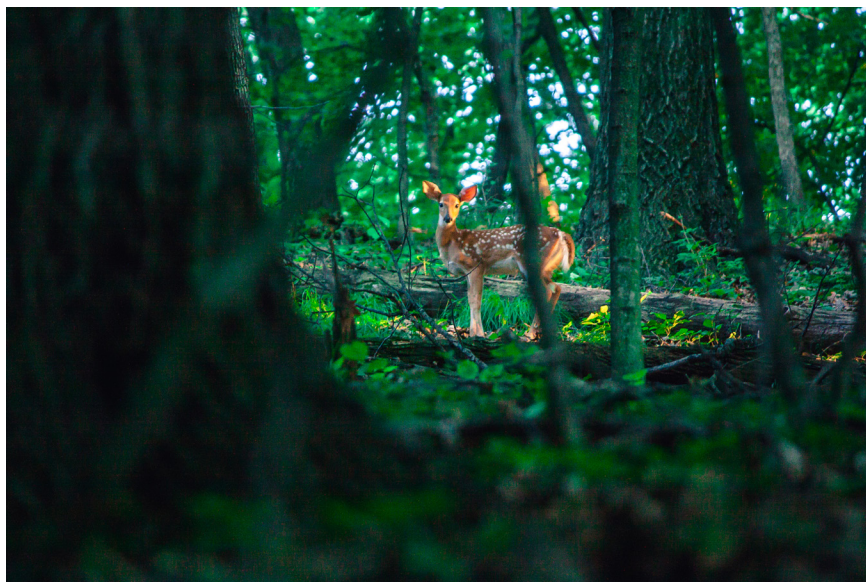
“For Mommy to come back.”



“Study of Aunt Lula” by Lori Leach



“Castle Halls” by Paul Matthews



“Flora and Fauna” by Taylor Cole

Wonder

How vast are the heavens?
Magnificent distance floating above our heads,
whole worlds represented by pinpricks of light
spread like a blanket around the earth.

The light of a hundred billion bodies
hanging suspended around us,
a reminder of our temporality.

We look up in wonder at
a sky bright even in the darkness.

Katelyn Oprondek

Item #378

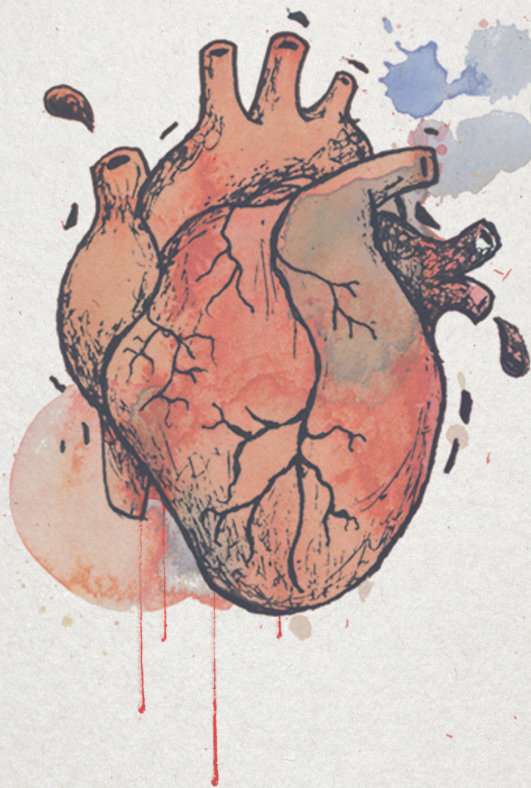
Elizabeth Chapman

On the steel shelf
The product lays
Consumers read aloud
The 16 digit universal code
Its identity revealed- naked and bare
Ready to be picked apart
By the owner of the hour
For the measly bid
Of a thousand dollars

Behind the steel bars
The flesh is displayed
Consumers debate the price
Of the universal corpse code
The captive's identity is striped- naked and bare
Forced to be taken apart
By the customer of the hour
For the set amount
Of only four dollars more

Sold!
Her body belongs to another
The owner of just an hour
So they can have
The pleasure of her material
Now item #379

"Watercolor Heart" by Eva M. Winters



Connect-The-Dots

Brenda Jones

I	cannot draw a decent shape, can't even draw a line between the	I
Only	thing I've ever known and the thing that I have ever	Only
Wanted	in my life. I know I something solid, something	Wanted
To	hold on with all my might and even when I would	To
Draw	a silly smile on your arm or you'd a new dream about the life	Build
You	wanted for yourself, we knew strong was drawing far too	Something
Close	and we would have to face the world without each other.	Real
To	know what it is that lies today and tomorrow for you and	Between
Me	means that between the two of I had to draw a connection.	Us

I did the best I could.
Now we shall see if it will last.

