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2015 Literary Review (no. 28)

Sigma Tau Delta

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Sigma Tau Delta
Presents
The Whittier College
Literary Review

Number 28

April 2015

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2015

Number 28
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Whittier, California

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The Upsilon/Jessamyn West Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta

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Foreword

Dear Reader,

It has been an honor and a pleasure to produce this 28th edition of the *Literary Review*. This book has been nurtured by an unprecedented amount of support from Sigma Tau Delta members, administrative offices, and faculty. I owe a great deal of this encouragement to the prestige of the Literary Reviews that came before this one. I am very proud to have orchestrated a book that lives up to the lineage of our annual publication.

The *Literary Review* is hosted by The Upsilon/Jessamyn West Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honors Society. Established by Jessamyn West over ninety years ago as the English Appreciation Society, the academic club was later adopted by Sigma Tau Delta, thus making us an internationally recognized society. For twenty-eight years, $\Sigma\tau\Delta$ members have produced this publication as a testament to the amazing communicators at Whittier and as a reminder that the poet, indeed, is someone to fear.

This book wouldn't be in your hands right now if it weren't for the imaginations and articulations of our contributors, whose work we are proud to be showcasing. In these pages, you will find experiments in sound, color, characters, and juxtapositions, both in the written pieces and the art gallery. These works exemplify the creative and insightful intellect demonstrated every day by Whittier College students.

The 2015 edition of the *Literary Review* hailed innovations that I hope will become a tradition for the publication. We were able to create a webpage in the Whittier.edu domain that outlined the submission guidelines and will one day display digital copies of the past and future *Literary Reviews*. Sigma Tau Delta also partnered with the *Quaker Campus* in compiling the manuscript. Lastly, we received sponsorships from the LEAP Office, the Dean of Faculty, the Office of Communications, and the Office of Advancement, whose endorsements greatly contributed to our launch party.

We hope you enjoy reading *The Literary Review 2015*. We're certain you will find many metaphorical gems to treasure while perusing these pages. Keep the names of our contributors in mind, for perhaps you will see their names again on a future bookshelf.

Sincerely,
Samantha Woehl
Editor-in-Chief

Department Contest Winners and Honorable Mentions

Annual Scholarly Writing Prize

First Place

Derek Blankenship
“O Thus She Stood”

Second Place

Karri Davis
“Embracing the Apocalypse”

Annual Poetry and Prose Writing Prize

Poetry

First Place

Shirley Thao
“A Bridge”

Second Place

Matthew Burkhardt
“Our Devices”

Third Place

Hallie Gayle
“The Harvest”

Prose

First Place

Leandro Fefer
“Gwine To Run All Day”

Second Place

Derek Blankenship
“Noworld”

Honorable Mentions

Nikolai Barkats
“I Have Met a Grey Old Man
Called Time”

Dana Christensen
“Upon Thy Brow”

Aidee Campa
“Sincerity”

Jose Real
“Creation”

POETRY



Sometimes

By Rebecca Briggs Baker

Sometimes I wake up
back bent, arms asleep
and not even the gorgeous sun-kissed
morning air can rouse me from
dream-stained sheets —

Some mornings
the tart nickel taste of nightmares
poisons my tongue —

And then sometimes,
Sometimes —

I wake up and the Sandman's taken pity
no store bought pick-me-up necessary —
all the world's
diamond ecstasy
aches beneath my skin —

They say I have a nice smile —
Sometimes.

The Jumper on First Street

By Rebecca Briggs Baker

“The Jumper on First Street”

I brushed against a stranger’s soul today —
He hadn’t let his soul dry.

Near the tracks hollow-eyed
His soul dripping wet on the pavement.

I like to imagine he was having an adventure.

He shook out his soul, the dazzling diamond droplets spraying against my coat
—

I looked at him, and he at me —

And the crowd, the stink, the pizza, the leather briefcases, the laughter —
screeching, all the people screaming —

He was gone, the train halted, his story left unfinished except —

Now with me written in —

A dreamer girl at the lonely station,
a stranger, a soul on her cheek.

I Have Met a Grey Old Man Called Time

By Nikolai Barkats

I have met a grey old man called Time.
I have seen the place where Time began.
I can recount his tale to you in rhyme —
a world where Time was a much younger man.

He sees both Life and Death pass as he walks,
footsteps measured in centuries and sand.

There are men who try to keep him with their clocks,
then wonder where he's gone at their life's end.
He presses on knowing that if he stops,
the Four Horsemen will ride around the bend.

And so Time leaves the world behind to rot.
then walks until it starts to live again.

Valentine's Day

By Nikolai Barkats

Like flies to a frog, I'd reach out and catch them.
But once they've been swallowed, I find I regret them.

Eight arms and six eyes, ensnared in the net, when —
I've come to find it's best not to upset them.

What creeps in the night, as raw as red venison?
with tooth, foot, claw, and fangs to protect them?

I've scrubbed my brain twice, and drank all my medicine.
Like stains on a wall, it's hard to forget them.

The Bearcat might sleep, or guard his investments —
but each purchase he makes, he finds he regrets them.

The Day the Fish-People Fried

By Nikolai Barkats

Gleefully, I've come to say —
“Gallou-Galluck is here to stay!”
He trumped the Sporloks in the lake,
and plans to slither through this way!

Gallou-Galluck is here to stay!
He's crooed his craw, he's baked a cake,
and plans to slither through this way.
“Jish foosh shaystes really great!”

He's crooed his craw, he's baked a cake.
With mouths all full of food they'll say:
“Jish foosh shaystes really great!”
So ring the drums and bang the gates!

With mouths all full of food they'll say:
“He trumped the Sporloks in the lake!”
So ring the drums and bang the gates!
He's trumped the Sporloks in the lake!

Sincerity

By Aidee Campa

I've seen you before
in the earnest eyes of a child,
in the reflection of the mirror.

I've heard you before
in the gentle words of the Bible,
in the silence of realization.

I've felt you before
in the cold etchings of stone,
in the ever changing slide of water.

You are Sincerity,
dearest of friends,
closest of companions.

You are with me in my dreams,
but I know your twin, too,
your other half.

Candid is too gentle for her,
Earnest too sweet.
No, her name is Truth
and she walks beside you.

She is harsh and at times cruel,
lacking in your finesse.
She is in the harsh glare of fluorescent lights
and in the dispassionate gaze of the sun.

She is Truth,
she is your complement.
Sincerity, Truth,
teach me your honesty.

Upon Thy Brow

By Dana Christensen

I am the crumpled piece of paper forever in your pocket,
being washed a thousand times over,
the rumble low of the hum and piercing chill of water rushing in.
I tatter and fray, start to shred along the edge,
but I will always be whole for you.
Legible and coherent, ready to read, eager to educate, I stand at the ready.
Call upon me, for I have knowledge. I will share with you all I know of life and
love.
This heart of mine belongs to you.
Left in its place is a muscle of veins and blood, pumping and pushing to keep
me here.
What is missing is the meaning, the power; the true identity is no longer there.
It is tucked away inside the small fold of your ribs.
The small, little pocket of safety, I entrust it to you.
Your smile is all I ask for in return.
Keep my truth, for now it is yours; it is of you and for you.
My heart has a new beat for it is wired to you and your body.
I am simply housing it here with me for the time being.

February 24, 2015

Chilled and Flamed

By Dana Christensen

Snow falling briskly tiptoes 'round
the jaded skirt of tattered trees.
The brash cold chill enlivens smoke.
O, dance! Your smirk entices love.
O, my sweet prince, for me play light!

Smell of wood and pastry tart,
warmth engulfs, a spark is struck.
My love, do take me whole and true.

The plunge is deep but fear is gone,
for I am yours, and you are mine.
Entangled limbs, the fire peaks.
Tunnel down, a wave of cool
only after voyage new.

Unwrapped and chilled, you linger touch.
Caress my thighs, entrust your hands.
We lapse upon our brink of lust.

Daily Life

By Dana Christensen

Gather gather gather. . . mmm, the sweetness of yellow, so soft, so true, yet sturdy. Chip chip, away. Little slivers of the sun come falling down. Soft landings, small shavings. Smash and melt. So durable yet so delicate. Chiplings of flower petals. Cascading the white, cold tiles. Walls of insanity. Brave the horror. Whkiss. Yes, warm. Soothing of water. Warmth walking down, tip-toeing the plains and hills. No mountains. Would be nice. Not on own, too much. But other, yes. That would be nice. Small, very small valley. Pool for ants. Forest interrupts swimming. Entangled, lost. Many nights a voyage. Hunger, cold, exhaustion. Journey too long, hope seems bleak. At last! Light! Freedom from the woods. Only to find the limp, sad dragon. Cold and lonely. Not to be. Noise and creaks.



Tink tink tink. The warmth of red aglow high above the heads of the masses. Heat used by the birds on their way to high homes. Blink. Click. Time now, my turn? Rude red cars rushing, whizzing past, black blurs taking no heed. Yellows smearing into the passing greens of grass, brown trunks steadfast as whites and blues buzz by, not stopping for the red glow. Green! Green green green, that's all they see. Yellow is just a lighter shade of green. Red? No, not here. Little white man. They don't listen. Green is all they see, no man in the corner, above their heads. Just their turn. Better make haste if one is to get across. Hip hop frog. Bounce bounce bounce, along the little moving logs. Hop from grey cement, dash along the white line, don't fall into the black abyss, death is sure to follow there. Half way. Almost there! But how can one make it half way? If the goal is the other side, one must first make it half of that distance. And then half that distance still. Before one can reach that half way mark, a previous half must first be made. The end result is hopeless. Endless, there is no way to move forward. Stuck. All are stuck in the impossible feat of trying to move forward, trying to just make it half way. Never made, never done, never reached.

Smoke. Thick, opaque, clotting. Grey whispering matter, light on the air, still choking. A hold on you, ahold on those around. Coughs are made clear, no hint

taken though. Still the smoke hangs there, in cold morning dew, smearing the air with the dinge that is sure cancer. Death is all that is in store for you good sir, why not put its butt in itself? End it all now, save the trees, they cough and choke as well. Not just the mixed disease that is the human race. This is why we are all swine. Pigs! That's all, nothing more. The dirty underbelly of life. Grotesque and vile, smudged with murder and pain, sins of life. How can one be alive after such disgust? Tis the sad truth of our future. This is who we are. All should be appalled. Lulled. Sleep, come easily if you can.



Sweet, tingling in the nostrils, what is the smell? Butter and salt, mixed with vanilla and flour, sweet sugar stirred to make dough of love. Poke. Laughter follows, the softness and fondness of childhood memories come rushing. Flooding the brain with images of trees aglow with tiny little electrical lights on strings, shiny, boxes all wrapped and covered in the paper made for ripping. Little memories made into trinkets to hang here and there. A flash of the years in one sweep through the green. Warmth and sweet fill the air, orange and yellow, reds glowing and glimmering in the wall. Hanging large foot garments atop the bricks. Hot. Steam comes rising to the brim, small beads of wet gather there, on the lips and nose. Floating, bubbling, plump and squooshy. Little happy clouds, dense with heat, making spirits bright with the froth of small snow balls melting in the hot muddied waters.

To: Tagalog

By Samantha Cruz

The moment I enter my tita's house,
you wrap around me
thick, like the smoke coming from the kitchen
a too-warm, too-fragrant blanket
straight from the dryer

and as we sit down to an overflowing dinner table
you mix with the tepid air
your sharp, staccato ticks beat my eardrums
a symphony of racing metronomes
my heartbeat struggles to keep pace

heavily sprinkled with hoy and ay nako
you are in the food on my spoon
slither down my throat, dense and sickly sweet
I swallow hard with a wry smile
since anything else would be an insult.

My greatest regret
is not acquiring a taste for you —
you, mystery that I have given up on solving,
are woven into my genome
despite my body's continual rejection.

If I were to open my mouth
and let you fall from the tip of my tongue
a cheap imitation would roll onto my plate —
so I keep my pretty American mouth shut instead
as you sink me deeper into my tita's couch cushions.

Maybe Marriage Isn't So Bad

By Samantha Cruz

In kindergarten, I had my first boyfriend.
We'd compete to see who could swing higher
and when he tried to pick a flower for me,
I stuck my tongue out and ran to the sandbox.

In 6th grade, I'd kick True Tamplin in the shins
and make faces at the mention of "marriage"
damsels in distress made me snooze
as I imagined fighting off sea monsters instead.

Then, I met Him.
Then, I met ~~him~~.
And then, I met him.

He didn't rescue me from a high tower,
didn't stop me from wanting to battle dragons
instead he grabbed two swords, threw one at me
and we stepped into the cave together.

Not a Haiku

By Marika Fabndrich

The sunlight off a side car-mirror
on your cheek
at the drive-in on my side of town
in a time when hot dogs were just a nickel

What Will You Do, God, When I Die?

Leandro Fefer

Probably wake up and brush Your teeth.
Dental hygiene is important.
Maybe You will pause for a moment,
Taste the minty Aqua-Fresh,
With Arm-and-Hammer for extra whitening.

Maybe You will look out of the bathroom window.
Paused, between canine and molar

—Think of me—

Then continue with slight circular motions,
Not forgetting the backsides of Your lateral incisors.

On the day I die, God,
You will walk down to the bus stop.
Your eye will be caught
By the blushing leaves of fall
the willows, heavy with mourning.
You will smile at your handiwork
And hurry on.

You will have a lot of prayers to answer, God,
On the day I die.
But between prayers,
Answered like arbitrary emails.
Between a Yes,
To a Greek mother asking for her son's return from service,
And a No,
To an American firefighter needing help on rent

—You might think of me—

Between Yes,
To a Parisian prostitute's plea for salvation,
And No,
To a Detroit Deacon's request for remission from cancer.

During a five-minute break for coffee, black,
You might stumble upon

—The thought of my smile—

It will be an infinitely finite thought.
There will be so many things to do.
It will be a long day.
Every day is long for You.
Except the Sabbath,
The Sabbath is always too short.

When I die, God,
It will not be the Sabbath.
It will be a Wednesday.
I'm sure You will be busy.

What Will I Do, God, When You Die?

Leandro Fefer

And I'm on my knees
In front of my bed.
Like I am ten years old
And it's Christmas
But there are no gifts in sight.

I'll scour my house for proof of Your presence,
Like I'm ten years old,
Looking for presents.
I will wait all morning for You
to magically reveal Yourself
and say this was just a test of faith.

But when Your voice goes forever silent, God,
It will be like when I was ten years old
And Santa stopped coming to my house.
I will be the only one who notices.

The father will read a similar sermon to yesterday's,
Telling me to be good boy all year.
In his black robes,
Waving his hands like he always does,
Just like the day before.
Not realizing that God is dead.

Like my father read yesterday's news,
When I was 10 years old
In his homemade silk bathrobe,
With his favorite coffee cup named Chad.
On Christmas morning,
Not realizing,
That God was dead.

The Harvest

By Hallie Gayle

an old woman stands
in an autumn field

lemons fall from her apron
and she is caught found out

by an emptiness

thief kidnapper hoarder
sour days rain yellow from the belly's cradle

they split open on the dried-up ground
spoiled hearts stolen from the underworld

the woman looks up rinsing her eyes
with a harvest blue her hands

old moons stretch
their aged tough surface

she is coming undone

her dress spills at her feet
in a puddle of yellow

naked tired old woman
gray hair licked by the coming winter

she bends
for the wind a scarecrow

ready for rapture

Cheap Beer

By Savannah Guerrero

You want to think it's fun
and you want to find meaning.

In an abandoned truck hosting a party —
you want to be James Dean,
so you pop a cigarette like a lollipop
and lung cancer is knocking
asking if you'd like a brochure.

Kids you once sat next to in kindergarten
are standing by
getting high — Tommy
who cried for his mother
every day in kindergarten
is passed out next to a
smashed
red
cup.

You pass Tommy — you never knew Tommy —

and you drink
like you've been chosen
They say
"Finish it"

Like a priest giving wine
you want to believe it's just as holy,
but all you taste is sin.

Hell
What do you know about Jesus Christ?
Sundays are for sleeping comfortably.

You ask for more
like you can handle it
and your throat is another canyon tourist spot,
but you settle for cheap beer.

There is a girl who slithers near you,
so you go for another lollipop.
Another knock on your goddamn door.

You never knew such a girl
with magnetic fingertips.

She takes the cigarette
out of your mouth
to place it between her teeth
like its always been hers.

scraping it against her wisdom teeth
you feel stupid.

like the cigarette.
burning
deteriorating
hers.
You're a star
just about to burn out —

and you smile
like you can handle it
and you take a sip
of your cheap beer.

Let's Not Talk About It

By Savannah Guerrero

“There is a taint of death, a flavour of mortality in lies”
— Joseph Conrad Heart of Darkness

I don't talk about it
because words are better off
left alone in a corner
to suffocate into meaningless drivel.
Maybe words are better off
away from mouths to smother them,
like
I love you,
I miss you,
I'm sorry,
So when you and I decided to call it off,
we said we'd talk about it
I didn't want to talk about it
I don't want to deal with
mending malfunctioning memories
I don't
want to
talk about it
and that's why this is a poem

and not an essay
because I'm never good at explaining myself
I've never received a D on a poem —
No one questions poems
unless they're interested,
so don't worry
about me finding someone else

so fast —
no one has asked about my poetry
they don't question my metaphors
ambiguity —
is quite often praised here
so praise me —

From the start I never told my parents
you and I
had synchronizing hearts,
and how I've memorized your heartbeats
and made my own,
personal,
metronome.

I'm off beat —
but I can't talk about it
without realizing the death
in my own lies
tainted mortality
I've been drinking with Marlow —

I've lied to you
constantly
more of a tummy ache —
I vomited and
cleaning is so unnecessary
ambiguity —
praise me

Because my parents too
have trouble
talking about lives within themselves
like magic
They just expect me to believe
that the only way two people can get along
and raise a family from dirt
is if they don't see other,

if they don't talk about it.
So I apologize for not developing
words to suffocate
ambiguity —
praise me

You —
with dried blood in your fingernails —
a pen, ready to finally rip open my chest
after a repetition of
I love yous
I miss yous
and sorrys —

ask me who this new girl is
and if there's anything to smile about —
if her heart speaks similar beats
as yours,

It doesn't
but I don't want to talk about it.

Limit Free Dumb

By Bo Gould

Yea, it's true we are free to be numb, I guess.
Not feeling the strain, not trying the best.
Always looking after corporate interests,
Paranoid of the government taking each breath,
Fighting for 'rights;' for the wrongs of men,
For the 'right' to exploit all lands and all friends,
Defending "every word" of the Constitution. They're
Preserving the attitude the same as back then,
But what was that about the 3/5th amend?
So many adjustments, when will it end?
Enough putting faith in those laws that bend:
There is no need to search the legality when
Experience shows good again and again.

Limiting freedom is necessary to survive,
A limit to negative thoughts and vibes.
Limitation of choices, planned, and refined.
All natural boundaries soundly recognized.

There's limitless possibilities when they limit less,
Like allowing the choice to pollute or emit less.
Some limits don't need, like the borderline fence,
Restricting countries, from the East to the West.
But limit's a good thing, like hours before rest,
And law's a true need, like ease from direst,
Limits can bring peace, keeping cease-fires in check,
Limiting misdeeds, staying upfull and blessed.

Everything in nature, by the Law they abide,
Each with its reason, purpose, and pride,
Shame brought in by the opposite side,
Lawless infringement shattered and died.
With experimentation of super-collide,
Manipulating the laws to try and get by,
But there's nowhere to run; nowhere to hide,
When avarice and vice finally subside,
Brought order within given limit and sight.

Limiting freedom is required in these times,
A limit to those who commit high crimes,
A limit to those that transgress the lines,
Between not enough and too much, peace limit I mind.

Big Busy-ness

By Bo Gould

Wall Street system's severely stuck, so I'm calling on
A Genuine fire-bender bent on burning all the Bentleys
And boisterously benevolent because borrowed time's a blessing.
But they still stock buying, "trading," selling, and the betting:
Which monopoly legitimate, upstanding, or besetting?
And which ones come in and transfigure the whole setting?
Smaller craftsmen crumble to the big-money obsessing.
Outsourced, cheap employment chosen over progressing
Efficiency only seen through economic, literary smokescreen,
So power hungry businesses are steadily becoming
Like loggers losing the Amazonian Lion Monkey
Like the ancestral legacy of the railway in Kentucky.
Energy regimes and "resource" schemes; that consequence ugly,
But for the time the Earth is balanced, so I guess we're just all lucky
That the processes keep on going without any form of junk heap,
Like those in the front yards and garage of the CEOs and yuppies.
A heap of horsepower makes the air unnecessarily muggy,
As with the continuation of the Virginia Company.
Shackles and chains equals the tobacco industry,
Advantageously and abundantly exploiting the country,
Picked people to be part of profiteering puppetry
By those that should be in solitary reimagining
A world where the all-abiding law is equity.

People Watching

By Daniel Leewood

It truly is an incredible thing
To get a glimpse or a glitter of people's dreams.
They walk by with their companions, without fear or doubt,
Simply talking about what they want to talk about.
"Hella free coffee and cookies," they say
And how they want to change the world so the earth will stay.
They walk by with buds in their ears,
Spilling ideas from their mouths like waterfalls,
As if no one else can hear.
I wonder sometimes
If some people are real.
Their conversations are so detailed and vivid,
As if they practice it over and over, like the world's a stage for them to perform.
They get up, rehearse their lines, and take to the streets, doing what they were
trained to do.
Who is this mastermind that reveals to them the secrets of life?
Is the goal of life to listen to them and discover serenity?
How long would it take us?
To understand the world and all of its components would take more than a
lifetime.
Someday, I will go towards the light and get to see what's on the other side.
Maybe mine and someone else's world will collide
And before I step through, be filled with knowledge,
An infinite being of wisdom.

Trained by the genius of some higher power that plucks the melodic strings of
the universe.
I can spend eternity memorizing my parts and perfecting my character
And be observed by a similar silence. The spirit of curiosity. Sitting on a strong
wooden bench at The crossroads.
Wondering what he's thinking...

The Dance

By Travis Nishii

I think I'd like to go crazy now,
Dance till my feet bleed tar,
Until from my eyes no tears shall run,
My heart no scars shall mar.

Tonight, truly, I'll have my feet
Danced to bits, to the bits.
My shoes are black and white right now
I'll paint them red as bliss.

I'll dance until my sorrow's gone,
I'll dance on the world's sharp edge,
I'll spin a waltz, step One, Two, Three,
Be careful, there's no ledge.

Catharsis softly violent
A scream that makes no sound
To lose all links to the far bleak world
To go a sailor drowned.

Scent of iron on bloodied feet
The dancer's shoes are bright red.
His feet should be chopped off, right off!
The dancer, he falls dead.

A Bridge

By Shirley Thao

there are days where
 i want to take my
tongue straight out
 of my mouth

examine it for all its
grooves and wonder

how many centuries
 rest in each line to
form these vowels
 so foreign to my
 mothers and

 i wonder
 how can a home
rest so beautifully on
the tip of a tongue?

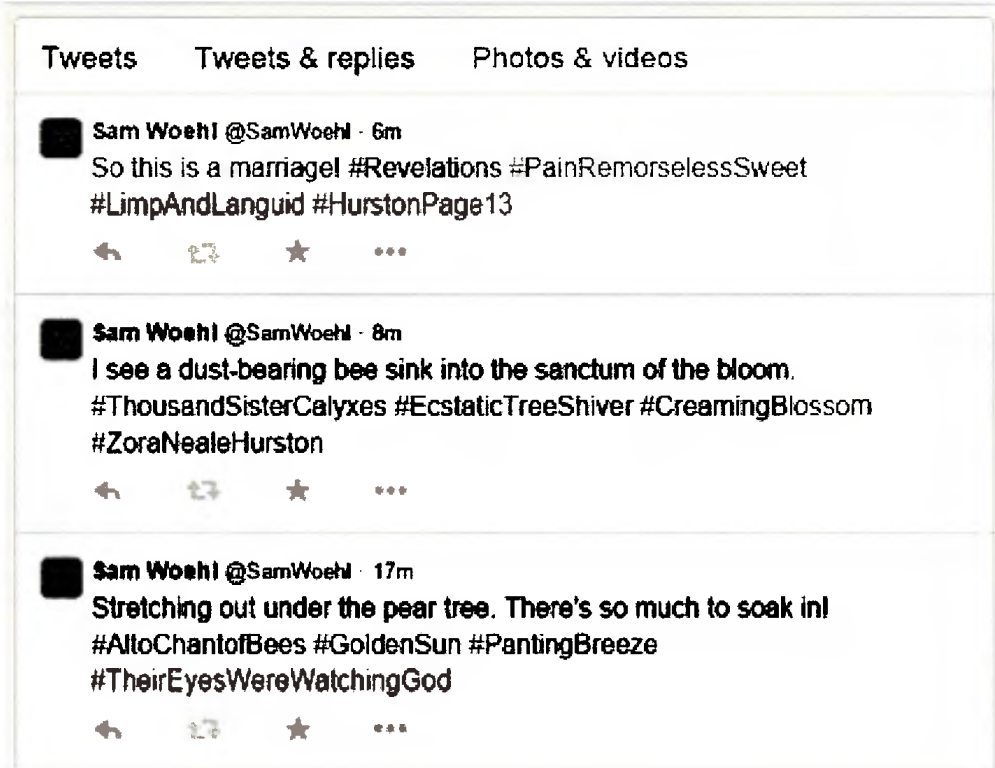
Insanity

By Lisa Tó

Where's your mind gone off to?
To pulling wings and heads from bodies?
To picking clean the vine's candelabra?
You graze the skies with a quilt of shadow
and a mosaic of water, of light,
of whispering flames.
Are you pleased when you're sad?
Your garden of history is filled with
veils of music made bloody and
the great abundance and variety of
stars and the moon raining blood.
Your breath starts back-flipping
and your laughter has grown venomous—
well, you hadn't discovered their meaning.
When will the blood begin to flow with words
so that it will reach the sea and you will finally
be able to wash the blood away?
Until then, the glow of the street lamps will bleed into your room,
and you will choose to ignore the sound of gravity.

@JanieCrawford

By Samantha Woehl



Passage from *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

“She was stretched on her back beneath the pear tree soaking in the alto chant of the visiting bees, the gold of the sun and the panting breath of the breeze when the inaudible voice of it all came to her. She saw a dust-bearing bee sink into the sanctum of a bloom; the thousand sister-calyxes arch to meet the love embrace and the ecstatic shiver of the tree from root to tiniest branch creaming in every blossom and frothing with delight. So this was a marriage! She had been summoned to behold a revelation. Then Janie felt a pain remorseless sweet that left her limp and languid” (Hurston 13).

The Baccalaureate

By Samantha Woehl

Losing gravity and eyes shut.
I'm standing alone on the tallest tier
of the concrete amphitheater.
My fresh foot hovers
above the next step.

The galaxy of sprites
Los Angeles
connects and unfolds its red streetlights
winking yellow
out from the bottom of Founder's Hill
with that perilous black current
between neon stars.
I'm safe in the deep pull of campus.

What will happen tomorrow
after we congregate here
and the professors,
our lords,
finish their solemn chant?

After those gold drops of light
burn down our candle wicks?
And warm wax solidifies
over our fingers like
raw white warts?

After the kindling rustle
of our robes is
hushed
in that purple night?

And we eye the threats
by nebulous billboards?

I know.

We will all exhale.

The wind will swish
through the green leaves.

We'll empty the halls
in slow degrees.
Gather on the margins
of Painter Street,
the thumb of the rock
nudging us into
orbit.

We'll float on that clumsy
grasp of space.
Its weightless fabric
spinning us with ease.

Back to my foot.
My knee is quaking
from holding balance.
My thigh bursts.
A lurch like black matter
crawling in my stomach.
My heel slaps on the next step.

I listen to
the Santa Ana winds,
howling and brass,
filled with pompous circumstance.

Sunday Morning

By Kaylyn Wold

I slept with the lights on because I didn't remember when
The room started spinning, and you didn't tuck me in.
The rain was pounding just like inside my head
And I've never felt as cold as I do in this bed.
I'm still trying to figure out why I had to walk home alone.
You slipped into the darkness, but your eyes still shone.

I shiver in my bed, and I am still drenched
In memories of you — your voice, your walk, your scent.
I listen out the window in case you change your mind,
But the silence is deafening, and the sun forgot to shine.
I'm still trying to figure out why I had to wake up alone.
You slipped into the darkness, but your eyes still shone.

Maybe I am the one who keeps on grasping,
Holding onto fading hope, although it is passing.
The music dies down and the bottles are all empty.
I don't want to go home, unless you're the one who takes me.
I can't understand why I couldn't let you know
Before you slipped into the darkness, I just wanted you alone.

But now I see the difference between you and me —
I'm a work-in progress, and you are poetry.

PROSE



Delicatessen

By Rebecca Briggs Baker

The girl sucked on her lower lip, and continued to stare. The delicatessen number counter was on 73. Her ticket stub said 29.

The deli man, ‘TONY’ was trying carefully to reach inside the deli display fridge. Instead, he accidentally smacked his face and knocked the ham off the shelf and into a fruit salad. The tall lady, with a face tighter than her jeans, didn’t flinch as a large strawberry catapulted and splattered against the glass. It was a spectacle that should have been funny, but no one laughed.

So the pair of wide eyes set behind thick frames peered harshly at the girl. The girl’s denim shorts could barely pass her standards, but it was all she had that was clean. And then there was the tattoo. A cobra, fangs extended, painted with such intensity and delicacy, it was just seconds from annihilating its prey. It was gorgeous, large enough to take over the base of her neck and the space between her shoulder blades. Vicious, sensual, hypnotic, it confused and unnerved everyone. And so they stared at her, not seeing strength, but something broken.

All she wanted was some nice potato salad for dinner. But since the Strawberry Incident, she had her doubts. The remains of that fateful berry had dropped into the potato salad. Peachy potato cream was littered with berry death. She silently chose yams. Then she’d cross the street and lounge in the park, before sneaking home. She’d wait long enough, so her uncle would leave and take yet-another-bimbo aunt to dinner without his niece. It was better that way. He hadn’t seen the cobra yet. It would bother him, the snake, and the girl wasn’t sure if she should bother him today. Not on the anniversary. The girl didn’t have the courage to break the silence. So why did he want to her opinion on a new aunt?

She glanced at her ticket again. 29. She set the basket down and walked away. She didn’t want to see if the lady would get her cheese. The girl didn’t want to sit alone in the park. She didn’t want to talk to her uncle on the phone. He had called nine times before leaving a voicemail, his tired voice demanding where she was and why she wasn’t home. She didn’t want to be the foreign lady, lost in translation. She didn’t want to be ‘TONY,’ the cause of a homicidal fruit spectacle. She didn’t want to be the old ladies, whose lifetimes of wisdom had only achieved rudeness and prejudice. The girl waited at the crosswalk, the busy beachfront

filled with tourists trying to make reservations at the classy restaurants. The girl, at last, her mind whirling, didn't want to be alone. She slipped into the restaurant, the swamped maître'd ogling her cobra as she whisked by him.

The girl saw her uncle, talking to his date. The woman had her back to the girl, giving her more courage. Both of them were impeccably dressed, set against the roaring ocean. The girl felt out of place, like she was swimming into someone else's dream. Her uncle's. But it was too late. He looked up, dropping his breadstick.

He stood quickly, hitting the table. He spluttered half formed questions. The girl squeezed her fists tighter, but the 29 ticket cut her skin. She interrupted her uncle.

Out of her chapped lips spilled equally chapped words. She faltered at first, her voice cracking; she hadn't spoken for days. But the words gained momentum, gathering force. She wasn't lost in translation. She wasn't judging. She wasn't weak. She wasn't hiding. And she wasn't alright, and her uncle didn't have to pretend to be. She told him it was okay to push away but not from her, okay to be lonely but not to drown in strangers. She blushed, and for the first time, looked at his date.

Simple, elegant makeup, brown hair framing a freckled face. Her eyes were wide and dark. Not like the others. The girl blushed and her words stopped. She dropped the 29 on the table.

Her uncle settled on introductions, "This is Natasha. From grad school. We go back."

The woman looked at the girl, "Hi Amanda. You can call me Nat. What you just said was very brave. Would you like to sit down?"

Educated, crisp, happy. The girl sat, hands clamped together. She looked at her knees. Her uncle brought girls, not much older than her. Natasha was different.

"I'm sorry, Amanda," her uncle broke the silence, "I was...I am...still so, well, lost, I didn't think of how you... I never wanted you to feel...alone." He paused, and the girl looked up at him slowly.

They looked at each other straight in the face for the first time in over a year.

"My brother was older, he was the family man. He had the wife, the job, and you. I needed time, but he was always ready. And then your mother and him get on a plane and—" His voice broke around those words.

Had he ever said it out loud?

Natasha spoke, quietly, "Are you cold, Amanda? You can wear my jacket."

Amanda realized Natasha sounded like her mother. Natasha handed her the

29. Amanda stared at it. Then she looked up at her uncle and smiled.
Amanda looked at Natasha, her natural beauty, her healthy, smiling face
Something caught her eye. Natasha's necklace was a snake with emerald eyes.
Amanda scratched the back of her neck. The cobra felt warm.

I Brush My Brain Every Night

By Rebecca Briggs Baker

I brush my brain every night. Out come the daydreams, glittering like sand, crushed colored glass. They smear the sink with lavender rings.

I scrub a lot around my memories, dabbing bleach on embarrassment, guilt, and shame. On the upside, I soothe joy, wonder and ebullience with cool salt water. It's not a precise process. Sometimes, I bleach the good and keep the bad. But it's okay as long as everything's clean.

The worries won't come out without flossing. Every fold, turned over and flossed between the ridges, crusty black bits clinking in the sink. It takes forever but everyone knows you can't sleep with worries on your mind.

When I'm finished I have a perfect, pink and purple brain, glistening with sparkling daydream dust. I sprinkle some sleep, and hurry to bed before it kicks in. I brush my brain every night. Out come the daydreams, and in comes the night.

Scooby the Deer

By Nicholas Berreras

[SCOOBY THE DEER walks to the center of the stage and stands, staring at the audience. He waits a moment before beginning to speak.]

SCOOBY: This bastard!

He thinks he can come into my home and shoot me! The nerve!

Here I was, minding my own business. Just taking a stroll through the woods – my home keep in mind. Then, as I am walking, I hear some footsteps. However, they don't sound like a deer's footsteps, crashing into the fallen autumn leaves. They sound off. Like someone who never really comes around these parts on a daily basis.

I, like any deer would, freeze up like a statue and pretend to be an inanimate object. If I'm lucky, I might be confused as one of those horrific trophy stuffed animals that people from Duck Dynasty would use as furniture. And I know what you may be thinking – what a dumbass I am. What if there is a threat lunging straight at me at a roadrunner-like pace? My counterpoint to that is, what is there is not? [Stares at audience in silence for a moment.] I don't want to be wasting energy running around these woods like a dumb blonde in a slasher movie. (And yes I know that reference because there is a cabin not too far from here that was playing that Halloween movie a few nights ago.) But, I digress.

As I was standing still, the footsteps were revealed to me as being the result of a human. A little boy to be exact.

Thus, I didn't think I was in any trouble. (That same cabin played some cartoons that depicted little children as friendly and adorable.)

So, I walked steadily closer to the boy. Taking each step with caution. Making sure he didn't have a boozed-up redneck of a father nearby. But, as I was getting closer, I realized the little boy didn't look like a little boy.

And as I was thinking this, that fucker pulled a gun out from behind his back and aimed it at me.

Now, the first thing I should have done was run the hell away. However, I was still in shock that the adorable and innocent little boy I thought he was turned out to be a mean little man... with a gun! And here I thought finding a unicorn or the Lock Ness Monster were the rarest things out there. Those get handily one-up'd by a midget hunter.

As I was in an understandable state of shock, that grown-ass dwarf shot me. He shot me!

Granted, it was a graze against my side. More like the quick peck on the cheek you'd give your aunt at Christmas. And it was funny seeing him fall back because of the recoil of the gun. But still, he SHOT me!

So, I reasonably stumbled back a few steps. Still in shock.

The little man was trying to roll himself back up as I tried registering what in the holy hell just happened.

Now, most deer would just run away. But I am not most deer. I do not cower and run away from every fucking thing. So, I did what any pissed off animal, like a lion or wolf, would have done. I charged the mother fucker!

I ran straight at him and stomped on him with my two front legs. That little man squealed like a piggy who's crying for his mama. So, I proceeded to do it again. And again. And again. I did it until that little turd rolled out of my reach and sprinted as far away from me as fast as he could.

Then, the deer in me rose to the surface as the wolf in me went to go take a siesta. I freaked out like no tomorrow. Which, in deer terms, means I ran like a bat out of hell.

And now I am here.

[Scooby the deer starts walking again. Now he is alongside a thin stream.]

SCOOBY: [INTERNALLY] I can't believe I was shot! Shot! I mean, blood isn't squirting out of me, but, this does not fall into my top ten fondest memories. [Scooby falls silent.]

Although, I did just kick a human's ass. Me, a deer, came out victorious against a human. Oh, I can't wait for Lucy and the rest to hear about this.

[Scooby comes across a cabin. It is two stories high. Made out of logs (with cement behind them). Scooby notices that the chimney is on, with a trail of smoke coming out of the top.]

SCOOBY: Hey, they are home!

[He walks over to the cabin and peers in through one of the windows.]

SCOOBY: [INTERNALLY] Hmph, I can't see anyone. The TV does not seem to be turned on.

[Scooby proceeds to go to every window and check if they are home. Just as he is about to come to the last window on the first floor, Lucy - a little girl (not a little woman) — walks outside the front door. She rubs her eyes and then notices Scooby.]

LUCY: SCOOBY!

[Lucy runs to Scooby and hugs him.]

SCOOBY: [INTERNALLY] This is how little people should act. Granted, I would like her to have named me after a famous deer and not a dog, but, this is still nice.

[Scooby places his head on top of Lucy's shoulder.]

LUCY: Oh no, Scooby, you're hurt!

SCOOBY: I'm fine. Just a little graze. Like those policemen in those gangster movies that have horrible aim. Well, technically, everyone in those movies has terrible aim. Man, you humans suck at shooting.

[It should be noted that when the deer talks, nothing is technically audible to humans. It's just noises a deer would usually make. (And yes, I'm aware that most people probably don't even know what a deer sounds like, but, use your imagination or Youtube it.) However, the audience can understand him and so can Lucy.]

LUCY: I know, those movies are unrealistic when they do that. But, Daddy seems to enjoy them a lot. So does Robbie. Although he always comments on the guys' physiques. Daddy doesn't do that. But, I don't mind. Their commentary is funny. Now come on, let's get you fixed.

[They both walk inside. Scooby waits in the family room – after checking if his feet are dirty. Lucy runs upstairs. Scooby meanders to the family room and to the remote control. He turns on the TV. Bambi starts to play.]

SCOOBY: Oh, God, no! This shit is too depressing! [He quickly changes the channel with his nose. He stops when The Heat comes on.]

SCOOBY: Sweet, love Sandy B!*

[Scooby proceeds to watch the movie.]

*= (Sandra Bullock)

Noworld

By Derek Blankenship

Yisan's Escape floated helplessly with one thin metal arm clutching an asteroid. The tether for Tarkin's suit drifted through space like a long, white serpent. Unfortunately, Tarkin's suit wasn't attached to it anymore. Gomez looked out the viewport.

Stars.

All he saw were stars. Numberless, as always, and with nothing to block the view. No asteroids. No planets. No ships. No anything. Nothing.

Except Tarkin's fucking tether.

He's out there, Gomez thought. Drifting through space. Spending his final hours looking at the universe that's going to end his life. Gomez knew better, though. Tarkin probably offed himself by then. Or maybe he didn't. Maybe he just took the biggest hit of his life, and enjoyed the view. Must've been one hell of a trip. Either way, Tarkin's just dust now. Sentient dust floating in the giant cracks between stars.

Fucking stars.

An endless field of them. The same universe Gomez had looked upon throughout his entire space-faring life. Yet this particular arrangement of them was utterly different than anything he had seen before. No life form would ever look upon the universe from where Gomez stood then, except for him. It might've been poetic, to some space-hippie like Tarkin, but Gomez didn't care for poetics. Gomez just wanted to go home.

"Captain Gomez, the fuel tanks are at 17% capacity," a female voice said. The voice was loud, sharp, and specific.

"Isn't that enough to get back? Let's go," Gomez said.

"I am afraid we cannot. I do not know which direction the asteroid field is." The voice hurt Gomez's ears.

"Could you lower the damn volume?" he asked.

"My apologies, Captain Gomez," she said, much quieter. "The loss of Issac has left me... unsettled."

Gomez sighed. He wished she wouldn't call him that. She didn't deserve it. She didn't know him. If only he were here... Tarkin was better at dealing with

her. He was better at all that computer ethics bullshit, but Gomez didn't understand. She was just a machine. She wasn't even a she, really. She was an it.

"Can't you look at your recording?" Gomez asked. "Study it. Find out where we are."

"I don't how much good I can do, Captain Gomez. But I will try," she said.

Gomez looked out the viewport, trying to see it in the way that Tarkin might, but he couldn't. He couldn't believe in a purpose for the abyss. All he could imagine, looking out at the stars, was Tarkin. Out there.

Alone.

Why the fuck was he out there? Gomez thought.

Then he turned away from the viewport. Looking outside made him feel like throwing up all over the glass just to block out the stars.

Gomez went to his cabin and lay on his bed, a spring mattress that looked out of place among the simple metal walls, desk, chair, and storage locker of his room. Beds weren't standard issue in mining frigates, because a corporation cruiser was always nearby. At least that's what they had told Gomez when he asked.

Some bullshit, he had thought, even then. Even before he was stranded in the ass-end of space, lying on his shitty vintage bed and waiting for an AI to save his life. He doubted she even cared about him. If Tarkin was there, maybe, but Tarkin was gone and Gomez half expected her to drain the oxygen supply and fly his corpse back to the field, claiming some bullshit about system failure.

He tried to sleep, but he couldn't. He kept thinking about Tarkin.

"Report," he said.

"I have a name, Captain Gomez," she said, with her voice raised so slightly that most people wouldn't recognize a change. Gomez did though.

So, he thought. I don't give a shit about your name.

"Linda," he said, "Can you please give me a report on the status of your calculations?"

"If I had one, then I'd give it to you, but I don't," Linda said, softly, as a patient mother would reason with an upset child. "These things take time. You'll have to wait, but I'll tell you when I'm done."

Gomez wanted to tell her she was a self-righteous bitch, but he stared at the ceiling instead. It was flat and grey without any little bumps of paint or point-less artistic adornment. Some employees opted to decorate the walls of their cabin, but Gomez did not. He enjoyed the simplicity and calm of his room. If he wanted excitement, he could talk to Tarkin.

Gomez got up and headed to the airlock. He suited up, attached a tether, and

opened the door. Space pulled at Gomez and all the air around him. Just as he exited the ship's hull, the tether yanked at his back, stopping him. He tried to ignore the blackness and the stars, instead focusing on Tarkin's tether. It was motionless now, like a giant white snake, frozen as it tried to slither out into the black abyss. It juttred into motion as Gomez yanked it in. When he reached the end, he saw that neither the tether nor the buckle at the end were broken or damaged in any way.

He frowned.

Fucking idiot, Gomez thought. Why does it have to be like this?

He gripped the tether hard and stared at the buckle. Anything to avoid the stars. Anything to avoid imagining what it must be like for Tarkin, with nothing else to look at but those damned white specks. With his free hand, Gomez grabbed his own suit's tether and pulled himself in, claspng the buckle of Tarkin's to the inside and unbuckling it from the outside of the airlock. He pushed a button and Tarkin's tether retracted. As he stared at the snake slithering back into its cage, Gomez tried to blame Tarkin, but he couldn't. He knew the entire time that Tarkin had undone the clasp, but he had just watched. And admired.

Not even Linda had noticed the small asteroid that hit their fuel tank.

As the last of the tether was reeled in, Gomez let go of the clasp, allowing it to click into the wall. Then he closed the airlock, removed his suit, and went back inside the main hallway of Yisan's Escape. The main hallway was the only hallway. Gomez walked down it and took the only door on the right. Other than the Captain's cabin, that side of the ship was devoted to storing fuel — some for the ship and some for the market. Although the breach from the collision had been fixed, their fuel stores were critically low. By chance, the unrefined fuel in the cargo bay survived the collision. As he entered his cabin, Gomez looked at a gauge labeled "Cargo Capacity." It reported 97% completion. They had been just about to finish before the emergency shut-off was activated.

Red Shoes

By Marika Fabndrich

Why do you always wear red shoes? Walter Moore asked me. The sunlight of March morning recess shone right into his green eyes. He squinted. A clever scrunched nose with a slap of freckles. I adjusted my position on the monkey bars to make him a spot of shade. My red shoes dangled above him swinging 1-2, 1-2. Because I want to, stupid.

Age is an important quality. When Walker was born I was already five months old (21 weeks). He could barely open his eyes when I was already rolling over and contemplating my first words. I remind myself of this fact a lot. Boys have a tendency to pretend they know better. I inch to the side letting my shadow leave his face again.

Unfazed. I know, but don't you like other colors too, Mia? His hands cup around his eyes. I wonder why he doesn't just leave me alone like the other kids. Well, he can't stay in that uncomfortable position forever. Maybe I like the color of the back of your head. He furrows his brow.

A game. How many pins can I poke him with before he pops. The kids here are all like party balloons. Colorful amusements on ribbons in the clasp of adult hands. Stinky plastic like the pricey mall toys in their suburban homes. Even if I could, I would not be one of them.

You're mean. I knew he was weak. I want to know why. He begins to climb up the rungs up to me. I don't know what to do; I thought he was done. Walter Moore, the smallest boy in school, the last kid I would expect to confront me. I cross my arms. He's wobbling on hands and knees to come closer. Five months makes a difference in balance. Maybe he'll fall. And it would be my fault again. It always is. A lion doesn't lose sleep over the opinion of sheep, I read once. Let them bleat at me or trample me into their manicured pastures. I won't let it get to me.

He doesn't fall. I'm a bit disappointed. He brushes the stray strawberry lock from his brow. A glint of perspiration. I'll bet his mother usually helps him up the monkey bars. I smirk. How satisfying it would be to drop myself to the ground and walk away just now that he has made it up here. The bell rings interrupting me. And I can't leave first. I glance up and see him sitting a bar away. Go to

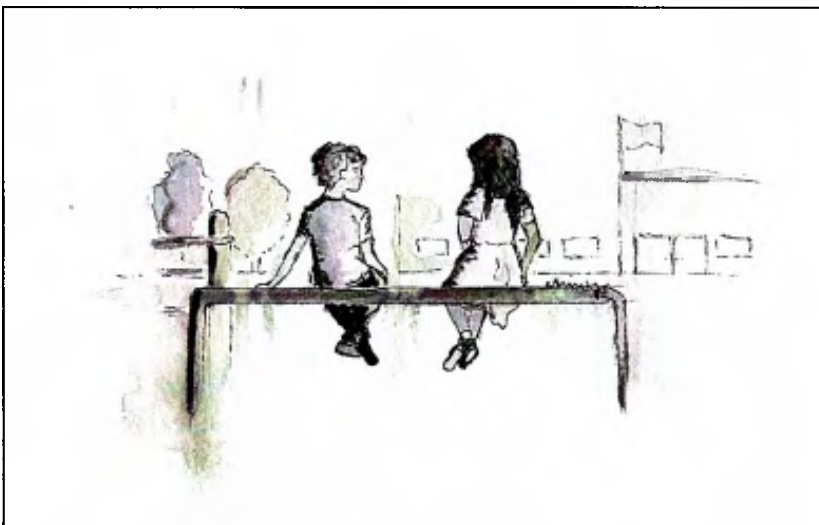
teacher, little plastic boy. Instead he seems to be making himself comfortable.

Children run to classrooms beneath us. The last sparks of conversation, a stray ball. The lone child clutching a hat to his head in the dash to the door. Silence. It's different on the playground when you're alone. My feet swing 1-2, 1-2. Nervously.

Mad Mia Rose and Little Walter Moore perched upon the steel rigging over the dark expanse of an asphalt ocean. The children looked at one another, each wondering what the other saw in the waves below. Perhaps Mia was thinking of the skipping rope which the girls hopped through. They turned their backs when she asked to play. A small book, torn from her hands and trampled as she sat alone on the steps. They didn't know her mother had saved pennies for a year to buy it for her. The teacher's savage words. Tramp. Mia held Betty's amputated pigtail in one hand, the scissors in the other. Defiant.

Perhaps Walter saw the ball barreling to him, a bloody nose and suppressed tears as the boys sauntered off laughing. The steps where he'd seen them take her book. Chicken legs that shook, and he hadn't been able to stand up and stop them. Never called to be on a team. Overlooked.

It began to rain. Fat drops falling. Plish-Plash. The hopscotch began to wash out. The rotten memories decomposed and trickled into the stream weaving through the cracks of the asphalt. They were smiling. The twinkle in their eyes mirrored by the other. A tremulous breath was audible as they each lifted a hand from the slippery bars for the other to hold. Let's never go back. We won't. Give me your red shoes, Mia and I will keep them dry in my coat. She slipped them off. They are the only one's you have, aren't they? Yes.



Gwine to Run All Day

By Leandro Fefer

That night your section of the family sets down by the freeway park on the north side of the hill. You pass around your magic potion and stare out over Lake Union through a space in the trees. The potion is like mildew and death, mixed with the syrupy sweet flavors of old Carlo's finest. You take it down with a grimace and Big Slug laughs. Tarzan and Big Slug don't drink any more gracefully than you do and Thumper actually has to hurl hers back up the first time she tries to stomach it. Soon the lake is dancing in a kaleidoscope of lights. The trees on either side become a moving and molding frame of melting nature, where bugs crawl from every hole to replenish the cycle of all living that has its center in the dancing lake. That water. You are thirsty. And that water is telescoping away from you through the trees that were a frame and become a long hallway of whirling leaves and chattering insects and dark, breathing moss that tries to soak up everything and crawl past the trees, over the grass, up your arms and legs to cover and engulf you completely until you no longer have stained and dirty overalls. You no longer have boots. You no longer have skin. You have moss. You are a part of the parched, yet supple framework that is everything that is not the dancing water, so the lights are the only living and sentient things any more. The lights that shine out from the other side of the lake, from homes and apartments, and the night clubs and bars along the water, where people are chained to living by their alarm clocks and their oil changes, and their spin cycles and care directions. And though you are only moss now, you are free. Free to be silent, to be present, to live by the dancing water. Gwine to run all night.

The silence is broken. It could be hours later. It could be minutes. The lake is still dancing, the trees are still melting. Thumper is sobbing. She has touched the abyss. She has come to the place of darkness where the eyes close and all that exists is the nothingness that stretches between all consciousnesses. Where the body is not moss, not human, but ultra human, a sack of blood, flesh, and bones only significant for how it interacts with the others. But others are only similar sacks, floating in a sea of nothing drifting away from her as her brain struggles to construct fragmented thoughts into a string of words to use as a life rope, to fling to the closest sack to draw him in, to create a significance. But in the nothing-

ness of this abyss the mind cannot formulate words. She is too far gone, so she sobs with her eyes screwed tight. No one wants to touch her. Human contact is as uncomfortable for everyone else as it is vital to her. But Big Slug's reassuring voice cuts through the darkness.

"It's not real, Thumper," he says. "It's just the drugs."

But it is real and she knows this beyond any other truth she has ever conceived. She has found true solitude and while she wishes it were not reality, while she wants nothing more than to believe it is just the drugs. She knows that it is the only real thing she has ever found. She is past the point of sobbing. Now she is just drifting. Farther and farther away from the dancing lake, the melting trees, the lights from the homes, bars, and nightclubs of people chained to objects and schedules. She is drifting farther and farther from the family. Like you did when you were 13 in the back of your friend's Chevy station wagon with the wood-panel siding. Back in Wenatchee. The night you realized that you would never be anything more than alone.

Thumper is alone now and the family sits and stares over the dancing lake. She will have to come to the brink of the abysses by herself. She will have to decide if she ever wants to come back. Soon she starts to shake. Her body becomes ripples and convulsions. Tarzan stands over her and yells her name. He slaps her face, hard. She opens her eyes and they are all pupil, all black, then they roll back and they are all white. She is at the jumping off point. Tarzan slaps her again, and the shaking stops. Her eyes open again. The family is gathered around her, looking down. Her eyes are all black, but she has come back.

"I'm scared," Thumper says.

"It's just the drugs," says Big Slug.

"No," says Thumper. "It's not."

But she has returned. She is shaken, she is different, she knows something now that can never be unknown, but she is back. Soon the lake stops dancing, and little by little the trees settle into solid forms. The moss falls from your body to be replaced by skin, dirty overalls, and Doc Martens. You lay on your back and look over at Thumper, she is huddled against Tarzan's chest. You wish it were your chest. The anxiety of the comedown starts to build in your stomach along with the sickness that shrooms always stir up. Someone passes you a pipe. You smoke. The tension lessens and you breathe deep. You breathe. Gwine to run all night.

The Outside

By Cristian Perez

“Citizens of the New United Nations please proceed down the spiral staircase and continue until you reach a scan checkpoint. Thank you,” a woman’s zealous voice repeated over and over through the sound amplifiers. Everyone carefully followed the directions as they made their way across the city’s acropolis. It was as if a storm of colors and shades were moving through the hall in the form of clothes, artifacts, and hair. Each individual felt a rush of fear as they neared a scan checkpoint; not only would blood have to be drawn, but their fate would be decided.

The rules were simple. If their DNA had evolved they could remain within the gates of the New United Nations; after all, they were the next step in evolution. If their DNA was outdated, a red light would flicker on and a scan monitor would be promptly dispatched to escort them to the outskirts of the city — to the outside. After being escorted out they would receive a satchel with small portions of synthetic food, “to be consumed with extreme frugality and care.” Then each outsider was left alone, to either survive or die. The system was frigid and cold, but it had worked for almost two centuries. The year was 2284, and it seemed almost impossible to think that business had ever been conducted otherwise. All of the citizens of the New United Nations laughed at the idea of several countries being present in one planet. To them it only made sense for all of the earth’s species to be bound by one sole government — one sole system.

“Citizens of the New United Nations please proceed down the spiral staircase and continue until you reach a scan checkpoint. Thank you.” Each time the words were repeated they appeared to echo in Katherina Z’s mind. Proceed down the spiral staircase, she repeated over and over in her head. Her long, brunette hair was in a high ponytail, her skin paler than ever, and her eyes shone blue like a deep, lustrous sea. She wore almost no makeup, except for the light coral-pink gloss on her lips. Her outfit was very simple in comparison to the garish outfits worn by everyone else, yet it was still cinematic and dark enough stand out. Both her blouse and skirt were black and low cut; it was as if strips of black velvet had fallen upon an ivory mannequin. Heads were turned in her

direction everywhere she went. She filled every room with an aura of nostalgia; everyone who knew her knew that she and her brother were orphans, as their parents had died on a mission to Venus in 2278. She was a beautiful girl with a sad fate.

She had undergone this process once before, as everyone was required to check their DNA's status at the age of eight. She still remembered the feeling of the three small needles on her forearm. However this time it was her brother's turn. Evan had reached the age of eight and thus was forced to join her. Perhaps that was the reason she was so nervous. She held on tightly to Evan's hand as he skidded along the narrow pathway of the staircase. His gray trench coat dragged on the floor behind him as they walked along. Katherina's heartbeat rose to a new level with each step they took. There were seventeen people ahead of them, which meant a wait of approximately ten minutes. Soon, there were only ten people ahead, then only five and suddenly only two.

"Just stick out your arm for them, okay?" she whispered to Evan with a false sense of confidence and happiness. His response was an innocent nod. As they arrived to the scan checkpoint, they were greeted with a cold smile from the scan monitor whose metallic clothes complimented her icy personality perfectly.

"Hello, my name is Lizandra; I will be your scan monitor today. Can I see your arm?" she asked. Again Evan responded without words and simply stuck out his arm the way Katherina had instructed him to do. Lizandra took his arm and placed it under the scanner. Her hands were cold and had a mechanical quality that couldn't quite be explained. She passed her finger over the transparent, hologram screen and the three needles descended. Suddenly Evan felt the three points puncture his forearm. Although it did take him by surprise, he did not react to it with more than a simple twitch. Then the three needles left Evan's forearm and he withdrew his arm. He turned to Katherina and she smiled warmly. Suddenly a red light lit up on the screen and made a small beeping noise.

"Evan Z, is it?" She smiled. "Please remain at this station until another scan monitor is dispatched to escort you out. Thank you," she said. Katherina's face lit up with confusion.

"Escort? What do you mean escort?"

"To the outside."

"What? No, something has to be wrong," said Katherina with a calm outrage.

"These things are very complex. Genes and alleles can skip a generation."

As Lizandra finished her sentence a tall man arrived to the scene. He wore an outfit identical to Lizandra's. Without hesitation he smiled to Evan and took a hold of his hand.

“My parents worked for the government! We're good people! You can't do thi— Stop! No! Something has to be wron—” suddenly, Katherina was struck by the man. Then without a single word he began to walk with Evan in one hand. Katherina continued to scream and even tried to run after them until she was stopped by three other scan monitors. They pulled her and administered a strong tranquilizer into her bloodstream. Slowly her cries became weak and she fell to the ground as Evan disappeared in the distance. The crowd looked on as spectators would at a cinema without really saying a word or feeling remorse.

OR

By Henry Webb

The starched gown smelled terrible. A distinct mixture of stagnant body odor and old folks home rose from the garment and invaded her nostrils. She squirmed in her bed thinking about who had worn it prior to her, what had been wrong with them? Why were they in the hospital? Had they stayed here long? But no matter how hard she tried, her mind always trailed back to a similar question. Had they died in this thing? ...Would she?

The old people smell was starting to make sense as she looked around at her fellow patients. She was the only person in Pre-Op who wasn't collecting social security and spending their winters in Naples. Her companions' ages frustrated her all the more, why her? She was only 22 and she hadn't done anything wrong. She never smoked, drank occasionally — only a glass of wine or two when she did — she ran four times a week, ate healthy. And look where it got her, stuck with people closer to the end than the beginning, waiting for her family doctor to take a fifty-fifty crack at not killing her while repairing a, as he put it, “2 cm opening on the inner side of the left ventricle caused from a birth defect.” She hadn't much listened after fifty-fifty chance of survival though, so it could have been the right ventricle or her liver for all she cared.

A nurse came by to change her IV to something else, and told her they would be moving to an OR in ten minutes. The anxiety was starting to build, 9 minutes. Her mind swirled, 8 minutes. She would never see her family again, 7 minutes. Doug and Abbey, mom and dad, 6 minutes. She would never walk Toby at Carter Park again, 5 minutes. She would never watch another movie, see another concert, read another book, 4 minutes. 22, 3 minutes. Too young, 2 minutes. The drugs kick in, 1 minute. A slight euphoria comes over her, nurses fade in and out of view over the next few moments prepping her. The gurney rattles as she is wheeled into a long hall. She is surprised to find a hand on her shoulder, her eyes take a long time to trail up the arm to find Doctor Solomon's smiling face beaming down at her, worry behind his eyes. He says some fuzzy words and she responds with her own fuzzy words, whatever it was it made him and his staff chuckle, she thinks, “I'll have to ask them what I said after.”

She is in the OR now, Solomon tells her to breathe deeply and not to worry.

She wonders what she has to worry about; thoughts of a broken heart play on the edge of her conscious.

A mask is fitted over her mouth; the room whispers, “count to ten.” One, two...she sinks to the bottom of a warm lake and the world is gone. “Music please.”

He stares down at her, remembering when, at 9, he had given her stitches for a 4 cm cut just above the left eye. The scar remained faded and pink; he was about to create another one. Bach rings in the background.

“Can you change that please?” He asks one of the nurses.

Boys in the Hood rings in the background. Solomon picks up a scalpel and stares down at Claire. 22. Too young.

Chronology of a Couple

By Siri Wilder

She was in front of the stove. The pot was steaming, giant hot clouds wafting towards her and fogging up her glasses. She hated having to take them off to clean them, so instead she scrubbed at them with the palms of her hands until they were reasonably clear—though irritatingly waterlogged.

She didn't hear the door open, or the soft tread of sneaky feet behind her. All she felt was the sudden presence of achingly tight arms around her waist, squeezing her until she gasped.

He twirled her around and pressed his cold nose to her hot one, and together they giggled and the pot was forgotten. She noticed, with an excited shiver, that he smelled of cologne and something smokey. He gave her bottom a surreptitious squeeze and was happy to find that it was plump and firm.

Behind them the pot boiled over, unnoticed.



When he got home she was not there. He waited a few moments. He checked upstairs, then his watch, then upstairs again. When she flew in, he was sitting in the kitchen, scrolling through his phone, and when he looked up his face turned into a beam and her eyes sparkled.

They kissed passionately that night, and he didn't leave until morning. Dinner was ordered from the Chinese place down the street, and her lateness was not mentioned.



She had stopped returning home before him on the days they ate and spent the night together (which were becoming more frequent). The absence was remedied when he was given a key in lieu of fetching the one cleverly hidden under the doormat. When she gave it to him they grinned and he stayed the next two nights.

He was happy. She was thrilled. He helped her cook and they flirted around a pot of pasta, which burned, but which they ate eagerly. He whisked her off her feet, the smell of her hair intoxicating him. She wondered to him whether she should get the cable turned off, because she could just look at him for hours. He winked.

They didn't get to bed until 3 o'clock in the morning, and woke excited to do the whole thing again.



He moved in the week after he gave her a shiny ring and three weeks after they had their first fight (they both cried—he stomped out—they didn't talk about it afterward, but dinner was microwaved in silence). After everything was settled he asked why they needed both couches and she agreed.

She asked him to make dinner while she disposed of her couch. He kissed her and when she left he searched for his pots and pans but they were lost, so he waited until she was back. The stove stayed cold. The bed did too.



After the wedding she got up early in the mornings and he stayed out until late at night but dinner was hot for him when he returned (and so was she). He asked for soups and roasts, and she clipped recipes and they ate pasta and cauliflower and kissed in between watching the door fearfully and waiting for the lights to be turned off.



They laughed until they cried when the test came out positive. The kitchen in the new house was never cold (and they were still in awe over the stove—almost in perfect condition, though it did run hot). Their kisses had more passion, though they didn't mention it, and his late nights became earlier, and she read aloud to him from baby books.

She was in the kitchen when he got back and he felt a rush of love that hurt. When she turned he couldn't stop himself from lifting her into his arms and she slapped his shoulder and looked at him through her eyelashes. She wondered the last time they flirted like this but before she could think further he was whispering sweet things while the lasagna burned.

She was craving fried chicken and he didn't want to wash the pot, which made her gag, so they tossed it and went out. They couldn't stop touching.



The baby cried every night and so did she. He yelled at first, then he cried, but recovered quickly and left. When he came back he apologized and while she yelled he rocked the baby gently even though he knew she couldn't sleep through the noise.

They used bottles after that, and though when he got up during the night he woke her, she just mumbled her love. He stood by the stove warming the milk, the baby quiet in the crook of his arm, and decided that they would all have dinner together the next day.



She burned the roast and he huffed out his nose but refused to comment. She felt ashamed, then angry, but the baby was old enough to pat her cheek and call her mama and she felt her anger dissipate. She sighed and put the baby in her playpen. Her sleeves rolled up, she went to work and the kitchen smelled not of burnt roast but of cooking pasta. She smiled to herself and called him, her voice betraying her excitement.

He didn't feel any such nostalgia, and told her that he was already at dinner-with a coworker, he added, and that he had to go. She put the phone down softly. Picked the baby up softly.

When she cried, tears spilling onto the baby's onesie, her sobs were harsh and hard.



She microwaved their dinner and brought it to him in the living room. He didn't look away from the TV and she didn't want him to. He felt the guilt, forcing him further into the chair, forcing his chin down. They didn't speak.

In bed that night they came to a quiet agreement and kissed, and slept on opposite sides of the bed. During the night they gravitated to each other and when the baby cried he brought her back with him.

Breakfast the next morning was tension-filled scrambled eggs. She said the burners felt stiff. He said that from then on they would use them more. She smiled.

She kissed him on the cheek when he left and he didn't show his disappointment. He cried on the way to work.



She got the call when the baby was stumbling her way around her nursery. She was mid-laugh when his voice came over the line, but she stopped to listen curiously to his direction.

When she and the baby appeared at the door to the kitchen he could see the similarities in their interested expressions. It made his heart ache and his smile waver, but he hiked it back up and took the baby, holding her close.

He looked at her nervously, gesturing to the grocery bags on the counter. "Pasta?" he asked. His voice wavered. Her mouth did not.

When she kissed him it was familiar and warm, and filled the whole kitchen.

ESSAYS



“O, Thus She Stood”: Faith in *The Winter’s Tale* and other Shakespeare Plays

By Derek Blankenship

Actors have names. Not just character names, but real names as well. After experiencing a production, as we rise from our chairs and exit the theatre, there are often many choices for what name to use when describing a particularly interesting character. We might know the player better than the character, or the character better than the player; sometimes we don’t really remember either and rely on a separate play or show or movie to fill the gap. For example, after watching Kenneth Branagh’s *Much Ado About Nothing*, one might say: “You know, the guy who plays Neo in *The Matrix*. I liked the way he gave his lines—it really opened up the meaning for me.” We often consider a good story as one that avoids such ambiguity; a good character is one who is clear, defined, and unforgettable, such as Captain Jack from *Pirates of the Caribbean*. However, rather than trying to avoid such complications of performance, Shakespeare instead embraces these theatrical limits in order to advance his goals. In this meta-drama approach, he challenges the faith of the audience in the theater, in himself as a playwright, and in art as a whole.

I have investigated this curiosity not only through written scholarship, but through performance as well, with particular emphasis placed on 5.3 of *The Winter’s Tale*. Interpretation through performance allows for unique discovery, in that the cast may attempt a particular reading of a scene or play, and afterward query the audience for their impressions. This multifaceted approach has revealed not a definitive, objective reading of the scene, but rather an ambiguous one. In fact, if a reader wishes to clear the ambiguity in favor of an absolute order of events, they indeed must “awake their faith” (95) as Paulina commands, because such a reading requires ignoring plot holes that exist no matter the interpretation.

Within scholarship, there is some diversity on the topic of faith in *The Winter’s Tale*. Richard Meek, in his essay “Ekphrasis in ‘The Rape of Lucrece’ and *The Winter’s Tale*,” relates the animation of Hermione to the stealing and selling of false goods by Autolycus, concluding that in both cases there is a deceiver — Paulina in the first, Autolycus in the second — who takes advantage of the listener’s faith to pass off a false narrative as reality. However, Scott Crider, in his

essay “Weeping in the Upper World: The Orphic Frame in 5.3 of *The Winter’s Tale* and the Archive of Poetry,” suggests that this reading of the play, which asserts Hermione’s resurrection to be a form of dramatic artifice, is not entirely supported by the play itself. Furthermore, Crider argues that the deceptive reading and the miraculous reading, which asserts that Hermione’s statue is magically animated, both possess fundamental plot holes, despite seeming to be plausible interpretations. Walter S. H. Lim, in his essay “Knowledge and Belief in *The Winter’s Tale*,” extends this uncertainty out to religious life, explaining the predicament an early modern English audience had when faced the resurrection of Hermione; that is, a conflict between idolatry and pure faith that mirrors timely conflicts between Catholic and Protestant sects. Additionally, Lim points out many instances in *Winter’s Tale* where the audience is challenged, but provided with no answers. This collection of criticism reveals the indefinite nature of the play, which asserts challenges of faith with little support and no confirmation.

In our production of 5.3, my company sought to embrace this inconsistency, choosing to brew uncertainty rather than provide clear answers for the audience. Through blocking, expressions, and props, our rendition attempted to bewilder the audience and leave them with an overwhelming sense of doubt: Was Hermione really there? As I brainstormed ideas for our performance, I kept getting stuck with that question myself. I assumed we had to make a choice of whether Hermione had been alive the entire time, or she had died, and that Paulina indeed uses “wicked powers” to bring her back to life (5.3.91). However, Amanda presented the idea that we put Hermione just offstage, thus forcing the audience to make their own decision about her authenticity. In our implementation of this idea, the surface of the scene clearly suggests a living, breathing Hermione. When the statue is revealed, the onlookers gasp in amazement; when it comes to life, my Leontes falls to his knees in awe. We speak, stare, and touch Hermione. She even responds when it is her part — not by a clever imitation from one of our limited cast, but with her own, unique voice (provided via recording by freelance actress Jewels Mesa). Although you cannot see her, Hermione is there.

Yet, there is the constant sense of doubt that relies heavily on our meta-interactions with the audience. Before the scene even begins, we make the audience clearly aware of our deception. In preparation, I instructed everyone on the edges of the room to gravitate closer to the back corner, which, of course, would make it harder to check if Hermione was “really there.” In my introduction, I pointed out every player and their part, and spoke of Hermione as a presence in the scene, but did not address an obvious issue: who would play her? With every other group having finished, and only five in our company, there was no clear

answer for the audience.

Leading up to Hermione's lines — which I would describe as the climax of our interpretation — we constantly probe the audience, and challenge their faith. My Leontes points directly at the statue when explaining how “thus she [Hermione] stood...As now it [the statue] now coldly stands” (34-6). When he calls forth Polixenes to view the statue, he looks directly at the audience when he asks “Would you not deem it breathed, and that those veins / Did verily bear blood?” (63-4), and when he suggests that “we are mocked with art” (68). Furthermore, when preparing her spell of resurrection, Paulina informs the audience that “It is required / You do awake your faith” (94-5). Finally, as the statue comes to life, Paulina instructs the audience: “You perceive she stirs” (104). Through these interactions, at every moment of doubt, we remind the audience that Hermione is, indeed, just outside the door, while also reminding them that there is no way she can be, and that this is all theatrical deception. But the viewer isn't allowed to comfortably understand this deception and move on. The questions linger, unanswered: There isn't anyone left to play her, is there? Did they get a friend? Will Leontes change to become her? But who will play Leontes? How will they complete the scene? She has to speak, but how will she speak? The voice of Hermione, played through a speaker connected by Bluetooth to my phone, only serves to partially alleviate this doubt.

Shakespeare's plays consistently warn against putting faith in narrative by showing the consequences that come with it; however, this is not an absolute assertion. For what do we gain from skepticism so deep that the characters of a story can never be real to us? We will not find enjoyment, nor will we find lessons. The emotions we feel for the characters and their plight are tools for our learning and interpretation, provided that we recognize — after the curtain has fallen — that these emotions are the result of a carefully crafted narrative. After all, the lesson to be wary of false narrative can come — effectively — in the form of deceptive narrative itself, as Shakespeare demonstrates. However, this lesson is only clear if the audience is capable of understanding what they see in the greater context of theater, of art, and of the human condition. By understanding Shakespeare in context, we stand to benefit both in the theater and beyond.

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My Preciousss

By Amanda Blazey

When a young child's eyes are opened wide to the world of books, it is often because a single character reaches out to them across the words and paragraphs and beckons them in. While words can create fantastical places and daring adventures, it is often the characters that appeal most to the reader. This is because they play into what is already in each and every reader: emotion, the very root of what makes someone human. The reader can see themselves in fictional characters: the heroic, the brave, the clever, and even the sad and the desolate. It is the bad, pitiful darkness within that is seen most strongly in the character of Gollum/Smeagol in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy by J. R. R. Tolkien. Tolkien creates a character that is simultaneously vile, slimy, and untrustworthy, yet worthy of our pity — as the character of Gandalf is quick to point out. What is so masterful about Tolkien is that he creates this complex character not just by Gollum's words and actions but how he says these words. Tolkien was well known as a linguist, creating his own language of Elfish for the trilogy. Thus, he has intentionally developed Gollum by utilizing a very specific register, pronunciations that rely heavily on [s], repetition of both syllables and words, and the pluralization of words, all of which changes dramatically when Gollum reverts to the Smeagol he was before he was possessed by the Ring.

Gollum immediately exudes what sort of creature he is, even if there were no physical description given of him. All that is needed is a look at his register when he talks. He is low, downtrodden upon. When Bilbo first comes across him, Gollum has literally been living in a cave for decades, driving himself mad; and this is reflected by his choice of words and expressions. Much of what he says revolves around his two primary sources of interest outside of the one Ring: food and water. These are probably the only two things he's seen in quite a long time except perhaps the occasional passing goblin, which also falls into the food category. Therefore one of the first things Gollum utters is, "Bless us and splash us, my precioussss! I guess it's a choice feast; at least a tasty morsel it'd make us, gollum!" (*The Hobbit*, 72). Gollum's expression for excitement is "splash us!" and the only ways for him to interpret Bilbo's presence is as something to eat. Everything is a

morsel or a feast. Even his riddles reflect this, as answers are the likes of “teeth! teeth! but we has only six!” (*The Hobbit*, 74) continuing his fascination with anything that belongs in his mouth. Similarly anything related to water come easily to him as he has been living in his own personal underground lake, but something like “eggsses” or anything above ground takes him far longer to recall, and even frustrates him. In general, his register is low and simple. Gollum defines things in the simplest black and white terms based on what he is familiar with, having lost more complex ideas due to his madness and isolation.

Tolkien also highlights mannerisms about Gollum that are low to the ground, animalist, and snake-like. This is best seen in Gollum's usage of long [s] sounds. This is not a new practice, as this goes back to *Milton's Paradise Lost*. Milton's Satan, once turned into a snake to tempt Eve into eating of the apple, hits [s]'s hard. When Satan first addresses the first lady, Eve, he says, “Wonder not, soverign mistress, if perhaps/ Thou canst, who art sole wonder, much less arm/ Thy looks, the heav'n of mildness, with disdain,” (Milton, ll. 532-534, emphasis mine). Gollum uses the same strong, “S-s-s-s-s,” sounds as Satan. One can see when Gollum hisses: “It must give us three guessseses, my preciouss, three guessseses” (*The Hobbit*, 78). Gollum is notoriously easy to imitate simply by exaggeratedly saying “my preciouss” while hunching over one's hands in a possessive manner. When done well, as Andy Serkis does in the films, this can be downright sinister. There is no denying that many dark, evil, or twisted characters in literature act or speak in a way that is snake-like, even Voldemort in *Harry Potter*, who has multiple other snake-like characteristics. The snake has been so ingrained in human culture as evil, since the days of the Bible, that it is both easy and successful to call upon these tropes. Ones which Tolkien would have known well as he uses such phrases as “he'll come creepsy and tricksy and catch us” (*The Hobbit*, 85) to evoke a serpent's way of speaking for Gollum.

The manner in which Gollum speaks is also characterized by a set of traits which could easily be seen as child-like, the first of which is his tendency to repeat syllabus or even whole words. When a child is in the midst of first language acquisition, they tend to take certain sounds in words and simply replicated them, a process called reduplication. This could end up changing the pronunciation of words, such as doggy, becoming [gagi] as they are anticipating the [g] sound that is coming. Words like “boo-boo” are associated with childhood for this very reason. When Gollum takes up reduplication, it is often of the [s] sounds previously discussed. Especially at the end of words. Eggs become “eggsses” and guesses to “guessseses,” perhaps because, for whatever reason, this is the sound he most anticipates. Of course, like the word “boo-boo,” Gollum often just repeats whole

words or phrases, doubling back multiple times, especially when he gets agitated or frightened. When Frodo and Sam tell Gollum where they want to go, to Mordor, his response is not linear, but constantly repeats the words of what he fears, “Ashes, ashes, and dust, and thirst there is; and pits, pits, pits, and Orcs, thousands of Orcses. Nice hobbits mustn’t go to -sss- those places.” (The Two Towers, 282). This seems to be a clear sign of the madness that drove Gollum to be who he is, and speak the way he does. This is because of the Ring’s influence, and perhaps the torture he had received in this horrid place. Either way, Gollum’s repetition is easily associated to that of a child, or one who has regressed to a child-like psyche, constantly repeating single words to express what he wants, or in this case does not want.

Gollum also displays a defining characteristic that, though not necessarily reminiscent of the way children speak, is very telling as to his specific type of madness. It is easy to see that Gollum almost exclusively speaks in the plural. Not “I” do not want fish. Rather, “we” want fish. Even more telling, “we wants fish”. Gollum has the tendency to pluralize everything, including verbs, creating his own sort of grammar. As Bilbo leaves Gollum without his Ring at the end of “Riddles in the Dark”, Gollum curses him saying, “We hates it, we hates it, we hates it for ever!” (*The Hobbit*, 87). Not only does this add to the prevalent [s] sound, but it allows for an even stronger emphasis on the plural. Gollum is never alone. Gollum has the Ring and Gollum has Smeagol, whose voice sticks around from the days before he found the ring and descended into the cave, and became Gollum. Thus, verbs get pluralized, his pronouns are plural, and nouns that are already plural often get an extra -s or -es.

With every word Gollum speaks, his dark past is revealed to the reader: a dark past of torture and mental and physical agony, some of which was self-inflicted by means of the Ring. Language can add immensely complex layers to a character and one only needs the linguistic tools to unpack them all.

The Question of Parentage in Telemakhos and Oedipus

By Katie Clendening

My mother says I am his son; I know not
surely. Who has known his own engendering?
I wish at least I had some happy man
as father, growing old in his own house —
but unknown death and silence are the fate
of him that, since you ask, they call my father. (I, 260).

This moment where Telemakhos questions the truth behind his parentage comes in the beginning of Homer's epic, as Athena approaches the prince disguised as Mentos. She knows the identity of this youth, yet still questions who he is and who his father is. It is a moment where the true plight of Odysseus' absence is revealed to the reader. Consequently, Athena must counter Telemakhos' questioning by asserting that "the gods decreed/no lack of honor in this generation:/such is the son Penelope bore in you" (I, 270). Telemakhos' admission to the disguised Athena introduces the prince's lack of identity that has been caused by his father's long absence. At this point, he is now an adult, while his father has been gone since he was a baby. The man who everyone insists fathered him exists almost entirely in the descriptions others can give of Odysseus. Consequently, Athena must convince Telemakhos that his father is true and may still be alive, insisting that he should "go abroad for news of [his] father" (I, 330). Telemakhos then emphasizes his lack of a father by admitting that Mentos (the disguise Athena uses) has acted like a father towards him; his complete lack of a father figure leads him to accept any supportive men as sources of identity.

Telemakhos is uncertain of true origins and consequently goes on a quest to uncover the truth about his father. The impact of this plot is to emphasize the obsession the ancient Greeks had with knowing who their fathers were. The lack of physical proof from the men versus the very physical proof of child birth in the women made the Greeks wary of who their fathers supposedly were. Such is the case with Telemakhos, who wonders if Odysseus truly is his father. With no proof other than the word of others, he must rely on faith to believe his father is truly Odysseus. Telemakhos' lack of a father leads to his absence of fatherly

guidance and reliance on others to fulfill this role as a father figure. Without his father physically there to rear him, there is always doubt for Telemakhos about his father's identity.

The Greek obsession with parentage is made clear by the many references to Telemakhos as "Odysseus' true son" as well as the references to Odysseus himself as "son of Laertes" (II, 10 & V, 220). However, both Telemakhos and Odysseus are able to confirm their true identities as children, and this is ultimately part of the reason they are successful at the end of *The Odyssey*. In contrast is Sophocles' *Oedipus*. The parentage of this king is essential in the play's tragedy, yet *Oedipus* never once questions that it could be false. He insists to his wife that "Polybus was [his] father, king of Corinth, / and Merope, the Dorian, my mother" and will not believe the prophet Teiresias' warnings about his parents. Contrasted to this is Telemakhos, who cannot believe anything about his father until he sees Odysseus in the flesh.

Both Telemakhos and *Oedipus* are raised in similar fatherless homes. The only difference is that Telemakhos is aware of his father's absence, while *Oedipus* is not. Both men are abandoned by their fathers for their people's sake. Additionally, both men have fathers who are separated from their sons for selfish reasons as well; Odysseus takes so long to return to his son because of his selfish desire to humiliate the *Kyklops*, while *Laius* sends his son away to protect his own life and current position as king. The difference between the characters is then their attitude towards their would-be fathers. While *Oedipus* unknowingly and arrogantly believes in a false father, Telemakhos doubts a true father. Consequently, one man, Telemakhos, becomes a comedic hero, while the other man, *Oedipus*, becomes a tragic hero.

Although both Telemakhos and *Oedipus* state incorrect beliefs in their father—Telemakhos doubts a true father, while *Oedipus* accepts a false one—there is evidence in *The Odyssey* and *Oedipus* that suggest both men subconsciously know the truth. As Telemakhos travels to discover his father's fate, he continues to speak of himself as Odysseus's son, while also hearing from many of his father's friends that he is like his father. However, even when Odysseus reveals himself to his son, Telemakhos questions his appearance. *Oedipus* similarly seems to know the truth about his father subconsciously. Unlike Telemakhos, he never refers to himself as Polybus' son, but instead declares that he is "Oedipus, whom all men call the Great" (*Oedipus the King*, 10). With so many characters in Greek literature referring to themselves in regards to their fathers, *Oedipus*' lack of reference to his father implies that perhaps he was not entirely ignorant of his father's identity. Nevertheless, *Oedipus* waits to follow this subconscious knowledge only until his

kingdom is falling to ruins and he has already committed the crime he sought so hard to prevent. This is the essential difference between Oedipus and Telemakhos; Oedipus does not seek out the truth of his father and lacks necessary doubt, while Telemakhos does not blindly accept what he is told.

There becomes a constant struggle between who is believed to be a person's father versus who is known to be a person's father. The works of *The Odyssey* and *Oedipus* seem to suggest that parentage, especially the identity of a person's father, is essential to defining character. It is also important to note that the Greeks acknowledged that there would never be absolute certainty when it came to fatherhood. Ultimately it seems clear that the ancient Greeks believed that the identity of one's father must be both acknowledged and doubted in order to be successful.

Embracing the Apocalypse

By Karri Davis

The post-war era of English history brought about an onslaught of criticism in the literary world in regards to the changing English character and the ambiguous concept of Englishness. Many works were written in an attempt to encompass this notion of change that either rejected or embraced the evolving national identity. They predominantly maintained within the realm of conventional realism, adopting the landscapes of the England with which their authors were best acquainted. However, a new trend of writing began to emerge that diverged from the present state of England and made inferences into its unknown future. Authors Angela Carter and J. G. Ballard strayed from the realism of the works before them to create their own futuristic universes of fiction and fantasy. While Carter's *Heroes and Villains* describes a post-nuclear world devastated by warfare and split between the classes of Professors and Barbarians, Ballard's *High-Rise* depicts a toxic environment in which the building itself becomes its own entity, granting the illusions of a false class structure to its willingly-influenced tenants, and resulting in perversity and corruption amongst its feuding floors. By using these apocalyptic settings and violent atmospheres, they both make a critique of the society in which they currently dwell, while also sending a foreboding message as to the fate of this society if certain modes of conduct are not altered. Their non-realistic portrayals of these communities give an exaggerated account of the consequences of the hierarchal nature of humanity and the danger of rising class systems, as well as the tendency of people to revert to the familiar, archaic patterns that cause them to regress to earlier stages of being. Together, these points lead to their open advocacy for change in modern society.

In *Heroes and Villains*, Carter immediately reveals the natural propensity of humankind to stratify itself by introducing the opposing forces of the Professors and the Barbarians. Priding themselves for their intellect, the Professors feel a sense of superiority over this class of individuals who choose raiding as a means of survival and the wilderness as their home, and thus barricade themselves in towers of metal and concrete. Dominika Oramus argues in a related essay:

The futility of the Professors' work — abstract research done in white concrete towers, editing what nobody would ever read — demonstrates

the arbitrariness of post-apocalyptic social roles. The caste of Professors, in wanting to be different than the irrational Barbarians, must devise artificial attributes of its individuality. (Oramus 120)

They have an innate desire to be better than others and conduct their lives based on this insecurity and superficial supremacy, despite how irrelevant these efforts are to their apocalyptic environment. However, the protagonist of the novel, Marianne, has always felt a sort of romantic enchantment by the Barbarians, breaking away from the beliefs of her own class. When one of the other children tries to coerce her into playing a game in which “the Soldiers are heroes but the Barbarians are villains,” Marianne responds, “I’m not playing” (Carter 2), refusing to give in to these adopted societal roles.

Indeed, upon escaping into the wilderness with one of the supposed heathens (Jewel), Marianne begins to lose sight of who the heroes and villains actually are, finding the Barbarians to be just as competent and regulated in their lifestyle as the Professors. While her nurse had always told her that “if you’re not a good little girl, the Barbarians will eat you” (Carter 2), she finds that the Barbarians hold the same myths and superstitions about the Professors. One little girl blames Marianne for her father’s death, explaining, “he dressed up and went away and he didn’t come back and the Professors had killed him and baked him and eaten him with salt” (Carter 35). Marianne explains to Jewel, “the Professors think you have reverted to beasthood,” as his kind are “a perfect illustration of the breakdown of social interaction and the death of social systems” (Carter 24), but she herself finds this to be untrue, as she “was interested to find evidence of a Barbarian snobbery” (Carter 40). Despite their inferior means, the Barbarians hold a social structure of their own and maintain a sense of order within their community. After seeing the situation through the eyes of the Barbarians, Marianne voices her confliction, reflecting, “when I was a little girl, we played heroes and villains but now I don’t know which is which anymore, nor who is who, and what can I trust if not appearances?” (Carter 125). Thus, “step by step, Marianne realizes that the entire distinction Professors\Barbarians is as false and naive as the children’s role-playing game called ‘Soldiers and Villains/’” (Oramus 122). The inefficiency of classes and labels becomes apparent when Marianne is given insight into both perspectives, revealing the need for change and a new classification within society.

A similar pattern of stratification arises within the pages of *High-Rise*, but without an opposing force to interfere with it, the tenants of the building all fall victim to the belligerent nature of the class system and are overcome by its strong grip around their lives. Though everyone living in the building is, in real

ity, of the same class and social standing, they begin to define themselves based upon the level on which they live, their sense of superiority and entitlement rising with the numbers of the floors that they occupy. They allow themselves to be entranced by the illusion that there is some difference amongst them, though it is not founded by their own reality:

By the usual financial and educational yardsticks they were probably closer to each other than the members of any conceivable social mix, with the same tastes and attitudes, fads and styles clearly reflected in the choice of automobiles in the parking lots that surrounded the high-rise, in the elegant but somehow standardized way in which they furnished their apartments, in the selection of sophisticated foods in the supermarket delicatessen, in the tones of their self confident voices. (Ballard 17)

Small privileges granted to the higher floors encourage their social ascension, like getting the closest parking spaces to the building and the luxury of high-speed elevators. Tenants on the lower floors indulge in this false perception as well, as discontented wives suggest “perhaps we could move to a higher floor” (Ballard 60), signifying the shared belief that an upward movement in the building would somehow mend their problems and raise their social station as well. While these middle-class citizens originally moved to the high-rise in an attempt to blend in and to escape the conflicts of class differences, they naturally recreate them in this environment. One of the tenants, Wilder, reflects that what angers him most about life in the high-rise is “the way in which an apparently homogeneous collection of high-income professional people had split into three distinct and hostile camps. The old social subdivisions, based on power, capital and self-interest, had reasserted themselves here as anywhere else” (Ballard 66). Similarly, in his review of the novel, Martin Amis argues that — in the “vertical city” that Ballard has created — “its residents observe conventional class and territorial demarcations (“upper”, “lower” and “middle” levels), showing resentment, expediency and disdain for their fellow citizens in much the same way as life is run in the outside world” (Amis 126). In trying to shelter themselves from the chaos and threats of outside life, the residents have only placed their insecurities in closer proximity to one another, enabling their alienating behavior. Amis notes, “after various piracies and beatings-up, the class system within the high-rise deteriorates as readily as the building itself, becoming a filthy warren of violent, apathetic or paranoid enclaves” (Amis 126). From this ensuing pandemonium, Ballard sends a derogatory message about the structure and division of society, implying the need for a change.

Identifying Empathy for Homeostatic and Metamorphic Characters in *Blood Meridian* and *The Road*

Craig Frantz

In the cold and austere literary worlds of Cormac McCarthy, violence runs rampant, unchecked, and for the most part, it is lauded as a way of survival. Throughout his career, McCarthy has taken readers on philosophical adventures with sadistic creations of mankind that commit acts ranging from murder and rape, all the way to necrophilia. While some may be horrified by these actions, many find these devilish monstrosities to be rather engrossing. McCarthyian Lydia Cooper finds these characters and their worlds particularly fascinating. As she asks, “are McCarthy’s novels merely nonempathetic depictions of inhumanity, capable only of showing readers what not to do, what not to be like?” (Cooper 3). This question is undeniably important because empathy is something that readers look for when absorbing a text. Can I connect with this character? How can I understand why a character is doing something? The answer: empathy.

In the words of the late philosopher Edith Stein, “all controversy over empathy is based on the implied assumption that foreign subjects and their experience are given to us” (Stein 4). Stein raises a practical and important question for literature: how can one connect and empathize with someone they’ve never met, let alone the character of a novel? This can be achieved, as Wolfgang Iser suggests, in “leaving behind the familiar world of his own experience,” so new interpretations become a possibility for readers (Iser, *The Reading Process* 300). Whether or not they have had experiences that mirror those of the characters, readers can still understand why the characters behave the way that they do. By readjusting their perceptions, readers can contemplate empathy without a biased perception. Although these views have proven useful in identifying, and ultimately, empathizing with characters in a novel, these methods have become increasingly popular for readers looking to identify or empathize with more popular, commercial, and likeable characters. For those who are openly violent and sadistic, anti-establishment, and adversely civil, we as readers have commonly referred to these characters as unworthy of empathy. Yet some of these are still human characters, and we are human as well.

So what? Why does this matter for the works of Cormac McCarthy? As Cooper elucidated, many of McCarthy’s characters raise the question of ethical

behaviors. *Child of God*'s Lester Ballard is a rapist and a necrophile, while Anthon Chigurh in *No Country for Old Men* is a soulless assassin. Neither of these characters should command reader empathy, and yet each does. While these two characters were written decades apart from each other, Cormac McCarthy continues to be interested in what it means for audiences to understand violent behavior and sadism.

When McCarthy released *Blood Meridian* or the *Evening Redness in the West* in 1985, the novel drew considerable attention for its gruesome depictions of racism, rape, murder, sodomy, and scalping. *Blood Meridian* tells the tale of the Kid, who joins the historical Glanton Gang. Throughout their time together, the gang travels across the US/Mexico borderlands murdering and scalping Apaches and Mexicans for profit. After a while, the business-side of the mission loses its purpose and instead, the men become enthralled with the act of killing in a world where any sadistic behavior is acceptable. While a narrative such as this fits in alongside McCarthy's older corpus, *Blood Meridian* marks a transition in the way that McCarthy asks his readers to contemplate empathy for his characters.

To understand *Blood Meridian*'s tilt, and the broad range of its scope, a consideration of McCarthy's latest work, *The Road* (2006), will also be present in this analysis. *The Road* garnered the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, but it was popularized by McCarthy's chilling depiction of a post-apocalyptic Earth that made readers consider what it means to be a human living in the twenty-first century. Discussing the two books side by side is necessary not only in understanding McCarthy's evolution as an author, but in deciphering his views on the troubles currently surrounding the human condition.

Cooper writes that "McCarthy's novels demonstrate a rather more-than-usually severe pessimism about humanity's general aptitude for inhumanity," and she is wholly in the right (Cooper 3). *Blood Meridian* is the epitome of McCarthy's vision of mankind: violent, bleak, individualistic, and sadistic. Even though the characters in the novel embody all of these traits, McCarthy still wishes for his readers to empathize with the characters so that they can understand why humanity is at a breaking point. While research in the field of *Blood Meridian* is vast, I have come to discover that discussions of empathy surrounding this specific text, as well as *The Road*, have been lacking. In addition, it seems scholars have neglected to consider the strong correlations between the two texts, given that both act as warnings to readers about the state of mankind.

A considerable amount of this paper will deal with the concept of empathy in relation to characters in *Blood Meridian* and *The Road*. Each novel places readers alongside characters that are struggling through survivalist situations. These

events serve as McCarthy asking the reader basic questions of what they would do to survive, or even if they understand what the character did in order to survive. In empathizing with a character, readers have to ask themselves whether or not the character can bring about change in the world. Survival and empathy are not the only factors at issue here. I previously mentioned that between *Blood Meridian* and *The Road*, that McCarthy is in a state of transition as a writer. This flux concerns his characters' shift from primitive human beings that desire only individualism to people who care about the concept of civilization, and what it means to live in a community of peace and order. Thus, I argue that *Blood Meridian* captures a state of homeostasis where violently disposed characters have a choice to progress forward into civilization and create a more prosperous living community for mankind. Yet when a single character chooses individuality instead of humanity, *The Road* depicts a world where the consequences of such a choice are laid bare, and the only way for mankind to begin again is through a metamorphosis of murder and destruction that eliminates past generations of sin. McCarthy positions his readers and their ability to empathize alongside these tribulations, asking them to decide whether or not humanity continues on a destructive and homeostatic route, or a brighter and metaphoric path.

How Should One Love: Christian Neo-Platonism and Love Poetry in the Renaissance

By Daniel Novak

During the Renaissance an entirely new way of understanding love and beauty evolved out of what once was “courtly love.” The problem of courtly love was that it was highly physical and inherently adulterous; arranged marriages also proved a problem for lovers who, although in love, could not likely marry each other. Baldassare Castiglione writes about this problem in *The Courtier*. The author quotes Peter Bembo, who addresses this problem by suggesting that to avoid the difficulties created by heartbreak and the frailty of physical love, “the Courtier by the help of reason must full and wholly call back again the coveting of the body to beauty alone” (*The Courtier*). By recalling how physical beauty can reflect beauty itself, a lover can “take his love for a stair... to climb up to another far higher than it... to have a sight of the heavenly beauty... the origin of all other beauty” (*The Courtier*). This stair is also referred to as the “Platonic ladder,” a way of understanding how physical beauty can lead one to contemplate on beauty found in the physical world, in nature, in the heavens, and, finally, in the divine world. This way of thinking, called Christian Neo-Platonism, encouraged lovers to both appreciate and look past earthly love in an effort to understand and achieve a greater recognition of divine love. Poets during the Renaissance, including Petrarch, Sidney, and Donne, developed their own interpretation of Neo-Platonic love, while Katherine Philips expands on the idea of love altogether, making it practical while retaining its nobility.

Francesco Petrarch, while writing *The Canzoniere*, chooses to reject the notion of a Platonic love ladder. He implies that all earthly love is sinful, and that one’s sole focus should be on the divine. This rejection of Platonic love is seen in his pleas with God to remove his love of Laura and to forgive him for his distraction. Petrarch makes Laura into a divine being through his descriptions of “her golden hair” and her eyes that are “brighter than the radiant west” (XC: Sonnet 69). Not only is the imagery Petrarch uses to describe Laura angelic, but the poet’s beloved walks “with angelic progress; when she [speaks], / Unearthly voices [sing] in unison” (XC: Sonnet 69). Petrarch submits himself to Laura’s physical beauty, and Laura becomes a religious figure. Therefore, earthly love, through obsession on a single physical image, can become religious. The poet, however, refuses to

recognize the validity of his earthly religion and condemns himself for being distracted from his true religion. He pleads with God throughout to save him from “wasted days” of fawning over Laura and to forgive him for his “long shameful yearning” (LXII: Sonnet 48). In Petrarch’s mind, there is no redemptive quality in earthly love; the Platonic ladder simply does not exist. Earthly love and beauty are only distractions from God’s greater love and beauty.

Although Petrarch appears to reject the Platonic ladder outright, he does concede to the idea of an earthly death leading to divine redemption, which, although a perversion of Christian Neo-Platonism, is nonetheless connected to it. Petrarch believes he is only reconciled to God after Laura’s death; however, it is not through mourning or intense introspection that he receives reclamation; it is simply the removal of earthly beauty that restores Petrarch’s relationship to God. After his beloved’s death, Petrarch returns to what he sees as his only true beloved, God: “ere I yet depart, / To Thee, All Highest, all my vows are turning. / Sad and remorseful for the years thus spent” (CCCLXIV: Sonnet 316). Interestingly, Petrarch fulfills his own proclamation about the morality of earthly love: by refusing to recognize any redeeming qualities about the “twenty-one long years” spent admiring Laura, and then the author’s time spent adoring Laura becomes a waste (CCCLXIV: Sonnet 316). Although he ignores Bembo’s advice about what one should do when loving from afar, he implies that he is led back to his devotion to God through Laura’s death. This idea is both Platonic and anti-Platonic, because it still recognizes the role of earthly love and beauty, although that beauty is only considered in a negative context. According to Petrarch, the only way earthly beauty can lead the observer to the divine is if the distraction is either removed or destroyed.

Maya Angelou and Self-Loathing

By Daniel Novak

In Maya Angelou's discussion of her anticipation of graduating from school, her statement of fear of dying "accidentally" is indicative of the themes of guilt and self-loathing that permeate *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*.

Angelou's skepticism over her new-found happiness surrounding her approaching graduation demonstrates how she feels undeserving of happiness in general. She explains that, in the midst of her anticipation, she "expect[s] to die, accidentally" and that only because of God's mercy is she allowed to experience graduation (Angelou 175). The idea of dying "accidentally" implies that Angelou is not only afraid of offending God, she also feels she is an inherently bad person. As a child, although Angelou aims to avoid sin, she feels that she inevitably commits sinful acts. For Angelou, sin is not absolute in the sense of avoiding offensive actions; it is absolute in the sense that she is sinful and that God can — and should — punish her for her continued existence.

Angelou's self-assigned guilt over her actions can be seen in how she reacts to her rapist's death. She makes the assumption that her "sinful" actions lead to the death of Mr. Freeman, declaring, "A man was dead because I lied" (86). Angelou then makes the assertion that Mr. Freeman dies because she speaks; therefore, Angelou believes that speaking is only sinful when she does it. She then forbids herself to speak; however, she does not assign blame onto her mother, her brother, or any other family member for continuing to speak (87). Angelou assigns this restriction to herself, revealing the theme of self-loathing that ties much of her autobiography together. When Angelou explains how she is afraid she will "die accidentally," she is referring to this event and her fear of committing her self-assigned sins. In a similar way, she accidentally leads to Mr. Freeman's death by lying, and is trying to avoid committing accidental sins throughout her life; nevertheless, her fear of committing an accidental sin displays her constant projection of guilt upon herself and her continual battle with self-condemnation.

Invisibility: Journey to Freedom in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*

By Helene Sparangis

Though everyone enjoys the social aspects of life, there are times when the evil in the world becomes a burden on the pleasures people seek in the world. For these reasons, people tend to hide themselves from the cruel reality and live in isolation. Many times we fail to recognize the fact that individuality, even when in isolation, may be beneficial to a person. Some people choose to live in social isolation in order to discover who they are as a person without the judgment of others. Some have a negative experience in a highly social environment and need their time alone. Others simply enjoy their time in isolation as they do not have to endure societal pressures.

The reasons why an individual may decide to live the majority of their lives in isolation varies from person to person. It may be an introverted personality, a traumatizing past experience, or being forced into exclusion. Throughout literature in history, there seems to be a group of people that are considered the outsiders and experience social isolation or exclusion. From Nathaniel Hawthorne's Hester Prynne, shamed and exiled by society for committing adultery in *The Scarlet Letter*, to Mark Twain's runaway's forbidden friendship in *Huckleberry Finn*, exclusion seems to be a recurring theme.

My research is focused on social isolation and self-exclusion within individuals, particularly focusing on Ralph Waldo Ellison's novel *Invisible Man*. Ellison's novel portrays the narrator's reasons for isolation as a young African-American living in 1930's Harlem. The narrator is constantly dealing with oppression because of his race. He provides detailed descriptions of what it is like to be an African-American living in Harlem during the time of segregation. The narrator in Ellison's work writes his story from the perspective of living in self-exclusion, and the novel portrays his life experiences leading up to this point.

Many people find themselves living in isolation or exclusion in contemporary, American society. What are the reasons for people to live in a socially isolating and excluding environment? Sometimes the individual makes a choice to live in isolation because of distressing personal reasons. In Ralph Waldo Ellison's novel *Invisible Man*, his isolated main character asks, "Why should a man deliberately plunge outside of history and peddle an obscenity... Why should he choose to

disarm himself, give up his voice and leave the only organization offering him a chance to 'define' himself?" (438). Ellison's main character never reveals his identity to the reader, adding to his invisibility. The nameless narrator undergoes hardships living in New York City's Harlem in a time of segregated America. Throughout Ellison's novel, the narrator deals with white racists, power-hungry bosses, and the constant feeling of exclusion in a segregated Harlem. He finds himself being excluded because he is African-American, but he also feels isolated from his own people as well. He lives in isolation with the hope to find himself without the outside judgment.

Sara Blair portrays Ellison in her article, "Ellison, Photography, and the Origins of Invisibility," as an "image-maker [which] affords him a certain cultural authority, and what we might well call invisibility: a mode of open self-concealment" (61). Ellison's narrator lives in an "open self-concealment," yet he is actually surrounded by the greater bustling metropolis of Harlem (Blair 61). Due to the fact that the narrator feels excluded from society in Harlem, he chooses to live in an "open self-concealment" by isolating himself in a public environment.

Wit in Late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Literature

By Helene Sparangis

According to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, "wit is treated as the ability to make apt comparisons, and also used as 'well-bred insolence'" (Preminger 897). Especially in the earlier seventeenth century, wit "was identified with the ability to discover brilliant, paradoxical, and far-fetched figures" (Preminger 897). Wit in the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century is usually contrived to produce a shock of comic surprise. Wit is not only humorous, but is used to describe an underlying truth. However, according to Anne Wharton, wit and humor are often mistaken for one another. Anne Wharton's poem, "Wit's Abuse," is focused on how very few people properly use "wit" correctly. Wit, in essence, actually conveys a truth. Wharton and Dryden use wit to castigate works with lack of wit, while Pope uses wit to discuss human life more broadly. Humor can be witty, but is not always considered so and wit can be funny, but is not always used as comedy. All three writers use wit to discuss genuine moral truths in the greater world.

Although Anne Wharton's works were not as widely known as Dryden's or Pope's, she is criticized as a female writer in the late seventeenth century. In her article, "Women's Wit," Erna Kelly discusses how female writers were criticized greatly, and because of that, male writers were supporters of many female writers (43). According to Kelly, "Women poets... at times... abandoned or avoided problematic genres. Anne Bradstreet for example, abandoned both the formal elegy and the epic. They wanted to discuss the conventions of a problematic genre but applied them to an unproblematic topic or in a manner that circumvented 'uncomfortable' implications" (45). Women during the late seventeenth century sought ways to express what they truly believed in a subtle manner. Therefore, they would refer to wit to seek underlying truths in matters to expose their thoughts to the rest of society, discreetly. Kelly argues that women, therefore, wrote witty poems that often included some hostility, and that "female poets used wit to prove the unfairness of this reception as well as to lessen the likelihood of future attacks" (46). Female writers in the late seventeenth century were still living in a time of limited freedom and lived with fear of directly expressing their feelings. It is intriguing to see how writers such as Wharton use different techniques of writing, such as wit, to convey the messages they would like to portray

to society. Though Wharton was a female writer in the late seventeenth century, her arguments on the use of wit are seen utilized by male writers of that era as well.

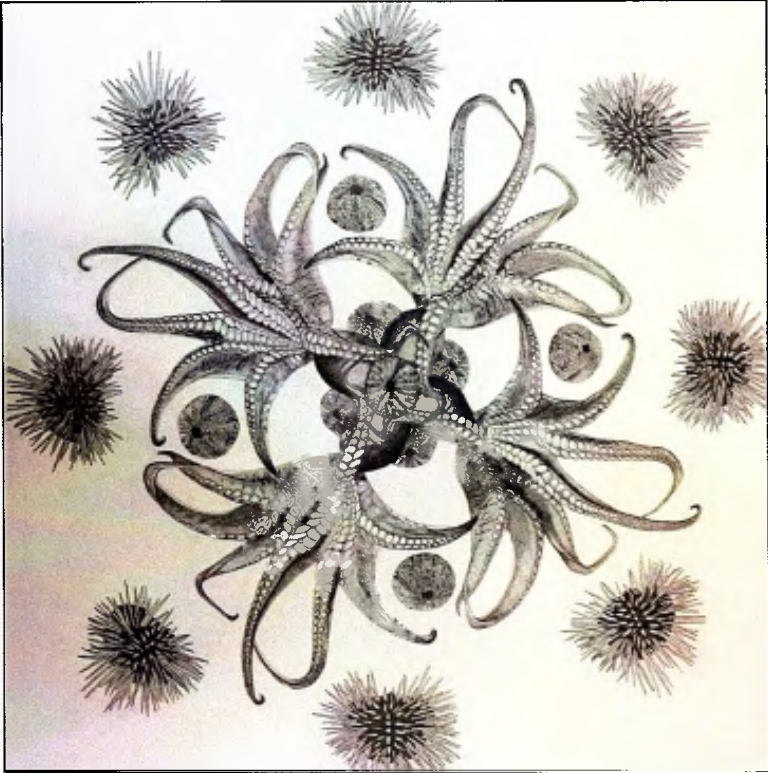
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GALLERY



Amanda Casey
Untitled
Paper & Gouache



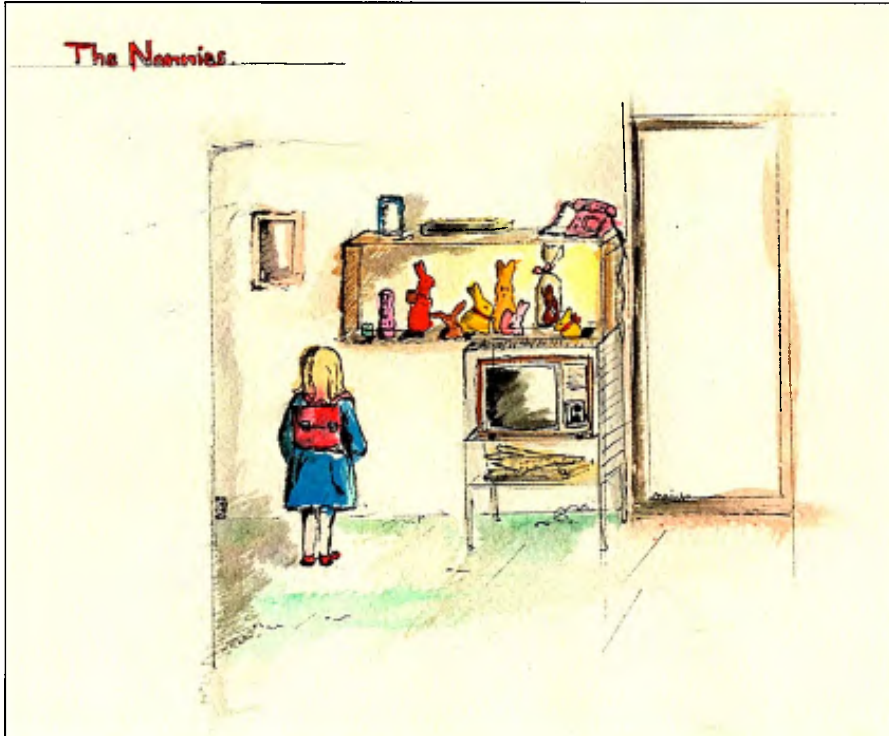
Karri Davis
Octopus Garden
Graphite Pencil



Karri Davis
Larger Than Life
Pastel

Marika Fahndrich
Right: Epidemic
Below: The Nannies

Pen and Watercolor





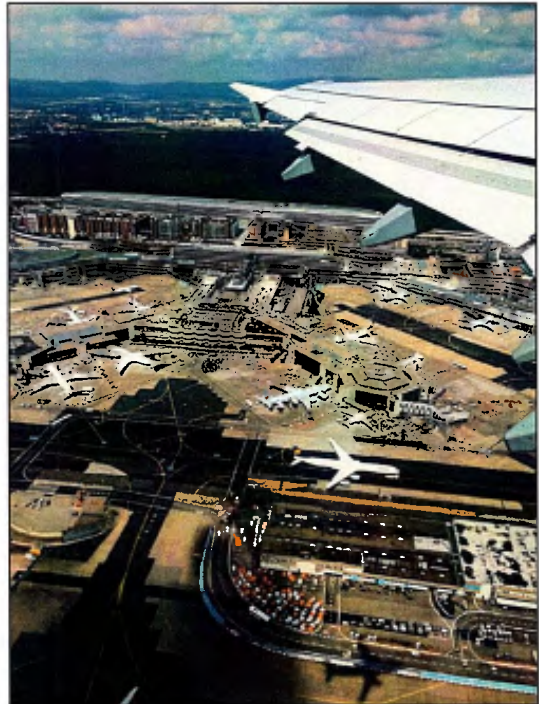
Alexander Hackworth
Left: Pushing
Boundaries
Below: That's Marbles

Photography





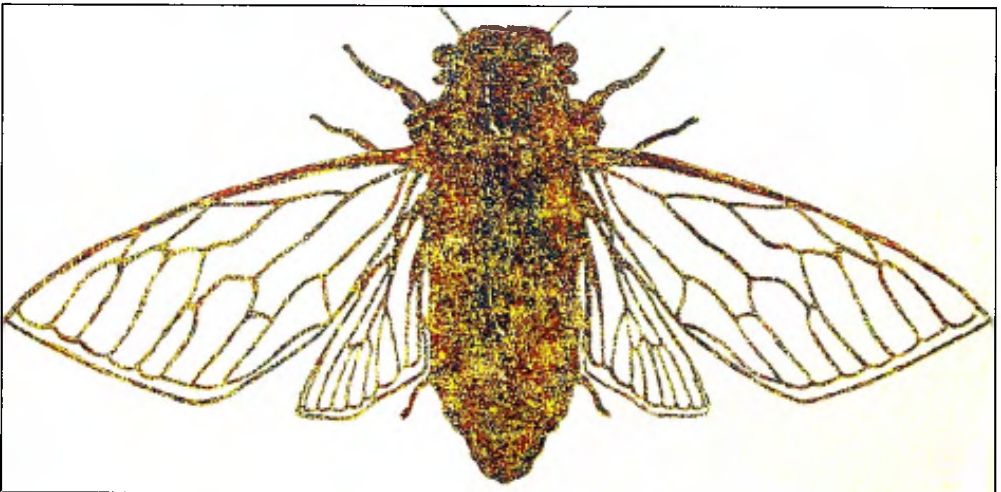
Alexander Hackworth
A Painting's Worth
1,000 Words
Photography



Alexander Hackworth
In the Aeroplane
Photography



Robert Kondo
Left: Stag
Below: Cicada
Acrylic Paint on
Primed Wooden
Canvas





Olivia Likens
Tell Me What
the Rain Knows
Ink Pen and Watercolor

Katrina Locsin
JanTerm Recess
Photography





Left: Maricruz
Argueta
Mexican Stud
Graphite Pencil and
Colored Pencils

Below: Emma
Sakuda
Homeless
Micron Ink





Above: Cecilia Scott
Mist
Photography

Below: Cecilia Scott
Weathered
Photography





Above: Cecilia Scott
Flowers
Photography

Below: Cecilia Scott
Reflections
Photography



Brooke Showalter
Megan and Brooke
Oil Paint on Canvas



Brooke Showalter
John Showalter
Oil Paint on Canvas

Biographies

Maricruz Argueta

Maricruz Argueta is a sophomore double majoring in Kinesiology and Spanish. Having no artistic background, Ms. Argueta uses art as an escape from technology.

Rebecca Briggs Baker

Rebecca Briggs Baker is a senior and thinks writing is pretty cool.

Nikolai Barkats

Nikolai Barkats was born in Washington DC and raised by his television. His influences include Bugs Bunny, Dave Chapelle, and Kevin Smith. He really loves Kevin Smith. Kevin, if you're reading this... he loves you.

Nicholas Barreras

Second year student; Major: English (Emphasis on Creative Writing); Minor: Film; Born and raised in West Covina, CA; Pursuing filmmaker — particularly with screenwriting; Love storytelling; have Mexican/ Spanish blood running through me.

Derek Blankenship:

A self-proclaimed renaissance man, Derek strives to embody the ideal of liberal education both in and outside of the classroom. While pursuing a double major in English and Chinese and a minor in Scientific Computing, he has: initiated two classes of freshman into our community as a peer mentor; worked on the *Quaker Campus* staff as a copy editor, writer, photographer, photos editor, and web administrator; and served the Artorian Order of the Knights of Pendragon as Duke of the fictional lands of Warwick, among other things. Derek has recently returned from a study abroad trip to Beijing, China, and is hoping to be employed in Southern California during the summer before completing his final year at Whittier College.

Amanda Blazey:

Amanda Blazey is a junior at Whittier College, currently studying abroad in Florence, Italy at the Lorenzo De Medici School. She is an English major with a Studio Art minor, and she is (well, was when she was on campus) the Arts and Entertainment editor of *The Quaker Campus*.

Aidee Campa

Aidee Campa is a sophomore, majoring in English and minoring in political science. She loves to read, write, hike, and eat chocolate, especially dark chocolate. She is the oldest of three sisters, and plans to become a civil rights attorney.

Amanda Casey

Amanda Casey is currently a sophomore in the Whittier Scholars Program with a Studio Art minor. She is creating a major that focuses on the media's role on the social constructions of gender in politics. She is a very visual person so the reason that she chose her major and minor was in order to analyze what goes behind an image and why it's significant.

Dana Christensen

Dana is a sophomore English major with an emphasis in Creative Writing. She minors in Religious Studies and also ran for the Cross Country team on campus. She has played soccer for fourteen years and also loves painting and drawing. Her favorite food is mashed potatoes, or potatoes in any form, really. She dreams of writing and illustrating children's books when she graduates. She loves dogs and hopes to live in Ireland one day.

Katie Clendening

Katie Clendening is a sophomore English major. She hails from Long Beach, Ca. Her love of literature began when she first read the Harry Potter series when she was six. She hopes in the future to work in Environmental Law and possibly politics. However, if she could she would simply read books all day.

Samantha Cruz

Samantha Cruz is a sophomore, majoring in English with a minor in Art History. She was born in San Diego and grew up in Huntington Beach. Samantha is the only child of Filipino immigrants, and grew up surrounded by a huge and loving, albeit loud, extended family. A voracious reader from the start, her literary interests range anywhere from Austen novels to Philip K. Dick sci-fi

adventures. Her hard work as a student has translated to being on the Dean's List every semester. Samantha is also dedicated to her two jobs: one working at the front desk of the East Whittier YMCA and the other as a tutor for The Literacy Guild, a tutoring facility teaching reading and writing skills. At the end of the day, Samantha is a curious and passionate individual who values a good book, a hot cup of tea, and a friend to share them both.

Karri Davis

Karri Davis is a Senior with a double major in English and Theater with an emphasis in Performance and a minor in Studio Art. She wrote the essay "Embracing the Apocalypse" in the Contemporary British Literature class. She loves painting and drawing, using mediums such as oil and acrylic paint, graphite, ink and pastels.

Leandro Fefer

Leandro Fefer is from Seattle, Washington. He draws much inspiration for his prose from his home town. Leandro is majoring in "multi-media communications" with a focus on creative writing. He enjoys rock climbing in his spare time.

Craig Frantz

Craig Frantz is a senior majoring in English with an emphasis in Creative Writing, as well as a minor in Film Studies. As the author of four feature-length films, he wishes to pursue a career in screenwriting following his studies at Whittier College. As a child, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving gave him nightmares, but he still read it every night.

Hallie Gayle

Hallie Gayle is graduating this year with an English major and a minor in Japanese and Psychology. After college she plans to travel and write.

Bo Gould

After spending 22 year in California, four of which were at Whittier, Bo has developed a deep interest in environmental issues and value systems. Bo has written many works of poetry and social commentary — dealing with topics ranging from ethics and spirituality, to social corruption and science. He enjoys writing, being outdoors, and spending time with his lovely wife, Brianna. Bo hopes to enter into a career in environmental consulting and resource management.

Savannah Guerrero:

Savannah is a freshman who enjoys playing music and writing. She is a first generation Hispanic who lacks the ability to speak Spanish. She does, however, communicate in other ways such as music and writing. She enjoys constant movement and the flow of the world, despite her constant battle to fully understand it. She is currently in the Whittier Scholars program, working on building a major that is focused on neuroscience and music. She has been playing music since she was a young girl of nine, and has been writing since her freshman year of high school. She feels that when she creates music and arrange words together to create emotions, she is allowing herself to exist through the mist.

Alex Hackworth

Alex Hackworth is an aspiring cinematographer and photographer who recently returned from a semester abroad in Prague, where he studied film production at the FAMU film academy. When Alex isn't making movies, he's making music, scuba diving, or planning his "accidental" run-in with Peter Jackson in New Zealand.

Robert Kondo

Robert is in the Whittier Scholars Program, with a self-designed major, and is an aspiring professor of art and Japanese culture. His reduced paintings are based on his experiences traveling in Japan. He constructs his own wooden canvases and then proceeds to prime, paint, and sand the image he wants to convey.

Daniel Leewood

Daniel is a freshman and commuter from Chino Hills. He has a passion for music and has been writing poetry for about a year. He enjoys writing about different situations that he experiences in everyday life by breaking down their complexities and looking at them from a different perspective.

Olivia Likens

Olivia is a senior majoring in biochemistry. She enjoys drawing and painting in her spare time.

Katrina Locsin

Katrina is a sophomore biology major studying to become a radiologist.

Marika Fahndrich

Marika Fahndrich is a freshman studying pre-physical therapy. Aside from her studies, she enjoys painting, writing and dancing in her free time and draws inspiration from her surroundings and strong ties to her hometown of Seattle. Abandoning the constraints of traditional literary styles and writing instead in unapologetic, abrupt prose, Marika considers her writings non-traditional short stories, or fragments, a term borrowed from quirky yet renowned writer Lydia Davis. In both her writing and visual art she hopes to express the tender moments of everyday life.

Travis Nishii

Travis is a sophomore, originally from Hawaii, but he is hoping to study abroad in Wales next year. Fun Fact about Travis: currently his favorite book is *The Goblin Emperor* by Catherine Addison, and his favorite book series is *The Queen's Thief* series by Megan Whalen Turner.

Daniel Novak

Daniel Novak is a sophomore English major, currently residing in La Habra Heights, California. He is involved in several extracurricular activities, including Whittier College Rugby and coaching high school football. He has grown to love English as a subject and hopes his interests in writing will develop into a successful career.

Cristian Perez

Cristian Perez is a Freshmen, double majoring in English and Theatre. His biggest passions lie with creative writing, theatre, activism, and political science. After receiving his degree, he hopes to pursue a Ph.D. in Theatre Performance. In his free time, Cristian loves to write, travel, and watch films. He dedicates all of his works to his biggest inspirations: Iliana, Joshua, and Mom.

José Real

José is a junior working on his writing career. He works as a gazette writer at the Whittier Museum. He is a sound technician at Poet Entertainment and a Youth Leader in an afterschool program. He believes that everyone's story should be told and he has met a few characters throughout his life. He wasn't born in the best environment, but he believes that you have to take life as it comes and enjoy what you have. That's why he loves going out, seeing places, experiences new things, and enjoying what life has to offer. He loves watching and playing sports,

making films, fighting, and watching movies (especially 80's romcoms, because who doesn't love a good old love story?)

Emma Sakuda

Emma is a Child Development major, minoring in Studio Art at Whittier College. She hopes to one day help children with developmental, behavioral, and emotional disabilities by using the therapeutic effects of art.

Cecilia Scott

Cecilia is a sophomore majoring in English with a minor in Child Development. In both her writing and her art, she draws from her family and her passion for literature. She incorporates her experiences from the many places she has called home, including Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne, and now Altadena, California where she lives with her family.

Brooke Showalter

Brooke Showalter is a Whittier Scholars senior, following a studio art track. She primarily works in oil paint, but she also has an interest in photography and digital arts.

Helene Sparangis

Helene is currently in her senior year at Whittier College. She has been lucky enough to have the opportunity in learning about a wide variety of writing styles across time periods in her years as an undergraduate English major. She can honestly say that her interest has grown in the history of literature immensely. From writing poetry, to screenwriting, to simply perfecting her writing through essays, she is now able to experiment with writing much more than in the past.

Lisa Tô

Lisa is currently a sophomore. She is majoring in English with an emphasis in Creative Writing and minoring in Chinese and Philosophy. She spends much of her time writing fantasy stories and poems, reading science fiction and fantasy novels, and drawing. Lisa is currently working at the *Quaker Campus* Newspaper and at Broadoaks Elementary. She hopes to become a published author someday. She is from Orange County, California and enjoys visiting the SoCal beaches frequently.

Henry Webb

Henry Neville Webb is a sophomore English major. He originates from Needham, Massachusetts. He is primarily interested in early British and American literature, specifically the romantic period of both groups. In his writing, he generally looks at characters in dire circumstances with melancholy outlooks on the world and their future.

Kaylyn Wold:

Kaylyn Wold is a senior and current Editor in Chief of the *Quaker Campus*. She is majoring in English with an emphasis in creative writing, and minoring in Theatre. She writes in a variety of genres, but favors poetry and songwriting, which she has been doing for 10 years.

Samantha Woehl

Sam has been studying creative writing since attending high school at Marin School of the Arts. Her most recent publication is a poem in *Monsterverse: Poems Human and Inhuman* from Everyman's Library Pocket Books. She has also been featured in UCLA's *Westwind: Creative Journal for the Arts* and she was a top ten winner of the Creative Communications poetry contest. In May, she will be graduating with a Whittier Scholars degree in Narratology and a minor in English. In her free time, she loves to rock-climb, slackline, and practice improv.

Siri Wilder

Siri is a sophomore psychology student with a passion for writing. She transferred to Whittier from an engineering school in New York. And one day, she'd like to be a hermit.

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Last, but not least, you the reader! Thank you for picking up a copy.

Thank you all.

"Fruit of my seed,
O my unnameable children.
Know then that I loved you from afore-time,
Clear speakers, naked in the sun, untrammelled."

Erza Pound