

COVER DESIGN BY LEXI HUDSON



THE LAMP POST

A Magazine for the Arts

MONTREAT COLLEGE

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Meet the Editors



Faculty Advisor

Dr. Kimberly Angle has been the advisor/professor for the Montreat magazine of literature and the arts most of her 12 years here. She has been blessed again and again by the writing, art, and creative spirit of Montreat students, and she is super excited about this inaugural issue of *The Lamp Post* marking a new "chapter" of our magazine.

Faculty Advisor

Dr. Elizabeth Juckett has been teaching English at Montreat for two years and is delighted to be part of the inaugural issue of *The Lamp Post*. As an avid reader and art lover, Dr. Juckett appreciates the wonderful creativity and hard work showcased in this magazine.



Marketing and Distribution



Darah DeWalt is a senior majoring in English with a concentration in creative writing. She is from Charlotte, North Carolina, and plays for the Montreat basketball team.

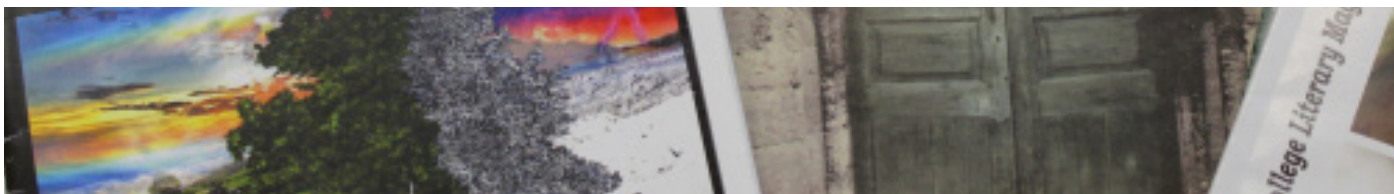


Anastasia Howland has had an affinity for reading even before she was able to read by herself, not going to sleep unless there was a pile of books on her bed. She's enjoyed writing just as long & photography since she was 13. Most of all, she seeks to read, write & use photography to honor Jesus Christ.



Public Relations, Communications

Emily Williams is a sophomore studying English with a creative writing concentration. She has been writing ever since she learned how to and enjoys creating novels and poetry.





Layout and Design, Communications

Emily Wells is a junior at Montreat pursuing a degree in communications with a minor in English. When not in school she enjoys reading, writing, hiking, playing tennis, and good food. She loves seeing people use their God-given gifts to create amazing things.



Layout and Design, Branding, and Photography

Morgan Hooks is a sophomore communications major with a journalism concentration who's never without her camera. She collects vintage *National Geographic* magazines, which she drew a lot of inspiration from when designing the magazine's layout & logo.

Concept and Design



Madelyn Hambrick is a junior pursuing a degree in English with a concentration in professional writing. She is a member of Montreat College Women's Soccer Team and loves Jesus, her family, and any and every dog.

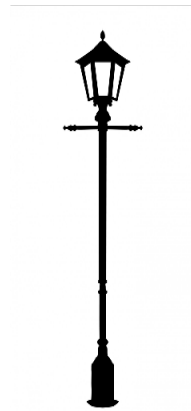


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Angie's Tale, Chapter One, Zero and a Half

By Ian Galey

Once upon a summer day, the fields were wide, the sky was gray. And Angie sat atop the porch railing wondering what she could do; but she was failing.

"How dare you, sky?" The sky did not respond but continued to frown at her. "Oh sky, what should I do?" Angie sighed. "Won't you give me back the sun? At least give me back the sun . . ." Nature seemed to mourn with her. Flowers drooped, the leaves of the trees did not flutter in the wind (alas, there was no wind), and the grass lacked its natural spring.

There was some commotion in the house behind her, and Angie deftly sprang from the railing onto the lawn and moved behind a bush. Of course, when I say behind a bush I mean it in relation to the house door. If one were to look at Angie's home from the road, one would see a nice yard, some trees, a plastered walkway, some common landscaping bushes and flowers, and Angie huddled in front of a bush. All the same, Angie made it just in time not to be noticed by a tall woman and a teenage boy who walked out the door unto the porch.

"What—should we do?" the boy asked.

The tall woman took a moment and replied quietly, "I don't know."

"But . . . What about Angie? She needs to be told. We need to find her."

"Oh give her some peace. She doesn't need to see the world for what it is just yet. Let her have a

few more precious moments."

"I don't think we should wait. You know how Angie is; if she finds we've been keeping something from her we'll lose her even more. We need to come together now that—"

"I know what needs to be done just give me a moment for goodness' sake," the tall woman retorted. Tears filled her eyes threatening to break upon her cheeks.

The boy, gently, "I'll tell her, Mom." Exactly two sobs burst from the woman and she embraced her son.

"You are so strong, James. We'll need you, both of us." She pulled away. "Go find her, would you?"

"Yes, Mom." He gave her a quick kiss on the cheek and came down the single step into the walkway. But Angie was already gone from her hiding place having heard quite enough and knowing a good deal more than either James or his mom suspected. James had a good sense about him and proceeded toward the back of the house in search of Angie.

He knew she would be in one of two places: either the treehouse in the backyard, a common place for her to play and think and read, or high up in a tree where she once found a comfortable seat of branches. From her seat she had an effective view of the entire backyard, part of the road, and several rooms of the house. This was her secret hideout, where she would go when upset or stricken with the silliness of adults with all their intense problems, anxiety, and seriousness. In her mind they just seemed to worry about everything all the time, and they never smiled

except when the neighbors came over. But even Angie knew those smiles were a mask. In fact, she knew it better than most.

She watched James proceed across the yard to the treehouse. James was indeed proceeding and not walking. When people have important or serious things to say, they always seem to proceed towards their subject. Leastways Angie thought so. James climbed up the ladder, looked in the treehouse, and then came back down; he walked off somewhere behind Angie, but she cared little of where he might go. She had things to think about.

Why did Mom want to spare her? Why couldn't she tell Angie herself what was going on? Of course she would leave it for James to sort out. Angie did think it peculiar though that her mom had cried however brief. She had not seen her do that in a long while nor had she seen anyone cry so strangely with explosions of sobs and tears that ended as fast as they had started. When Angie cried, she cried freely and never needed to suppress her tears. Yet, a part of Angie became uneasy at what her mother's tears might have meant. She pushed the thought away; adults would never make sense to her. But deep inside Angie knew what had happened. She had suspected it the moment she perched herself on the porch railing. Indeed, even the young do not stay young for long.

"There you are."

Angie started and looked down. Her brother was just a few branches below her climbing up. "How did you find me?"

"I've known about your little hideout for a while. I just haven't

ever had to bother you here.”

Angie’s disappointment that someone knew of her sanctuary in the tree glossed her face. “Oh.”

“Come on, Angie. I’m the only one, I promise.” He sat across from her; both were adept climbers. “Angie. There’s something I need to—”

“You shouldn’t let her boss you around like that.” Angie was never one to beat around the bush. Though she was quite practiced at sidestepping the bush altogether by carefully choosing a different one to plow through.

James, mildly surprised, “She didn’t boss me. I told her I would do it as you apparently heard. I volunteered, you know, ‘cause she’s—”

“You volunteered because Mom can’t deal with me. Which doesn’t seem like volunteering to me.” Angie gave her statement exactly three seconds to carry out its effect. Then, “She’s manipulating you.”

“Angie Louise! You have no idea what you’re talking about.”

Angie made a sound in her throat, “Ugh, don’t call me that!”

“Angie why do you expect me to respect you if you show no respect for Mom?”

“Because that’s what good boys do.”

That bit James a little, but he shook it off and tried to get to the point: “Angie, there’s something I need to tell you.”

“Besides, my problems with Mom never used to make you choose her side.”

“What are you talking about?”

“You used to be kind to me even if I wasn’t to Mom. Now you’re

just trying to teach me something like she’s always been trying to do.”

“Angie, we are all on the same side. Now listen.”

“I don’t want to listen.”

“Angie—”

“I don’t want to know!”

A wretched silence grew between them. Angie was looking away, but James kept his eyes fixed on her trying to see into her mind. “You know already, don’t you?” he asked.

“I don’t know anything,” she refuted still looking away.

“Don’t run from this, Angie. We need to stick together.”

“Afraid you might lose me?”

James stared hard at her. “Yes. I fear that every day.”

Another short silence followed, but this time it was filled with sorrow and not resentment.

Angie replied softly, “Mom has always tried to protect me from the world, to keep me safe. She says she does it because she loves me. But I already know the world, the little world we live in, and still she pretends like I can’t know, like it’s too much for me. If she really loves me, she would try to understand me. But she doesn’t, so she sends you. And now that,” Angie paused for a second collecting herself, “And now that dad’s dead, there are exactly zero people in the world who know me—who love me.”

Now James was looking away. “Angie,” he cleared his throat, “you know . . . Mom would always . . . I can only speak for myself when I say this, but I am trying to understand you, and I think I do a little bit. And there

aren’t zero people in the world who love you, because I do, and I am here, trying my best. I still love you even if I don’t understand everything about you.”

Angie stopped a few tears with her hands and looked at her brother. “Zero and a half then,” she said with a small smile.

The Exceptional Harvey Hooper

By JO

Matildy believed in the exceptionality of Harvey Hooper. Living in the house fifteen feet and three inches away from the Ruperts, and fifteen feet, three inches away from the Alexanders, Harvey knew his place in life. He was, as he enjoyed explaining to each of his many close friends he met around town, a firmly planted specimen of ideal manhood: just enough stomach to look as if his words held some weight, a bristly mustache to hide any femininity around his mouth, and a decently swathed combover to hide the overabundance of masculinity that causes baldness. Harvey had once heard that baldness was caused by a plethora of testosterone, and he felt he didn’t want the less manly in his community to feel themselves of lesser masculine value, so he did what he could to hide the bald spot. However, it was, Matildy felt, truly a sign of his overwhelming exceptionality. If others in the world felt it to be in anyway negative, surely that was a sign of their own inferiority complexes.

As she sat at her library desk Matildy had observed the regularity of Harvey’s visits, and the

of course, but Matildy noticed. Matildy noticed a great many things about Harvey. She had read in a book once that opposites attract, and ever since had known she ought to feel greatly attracted to Harvey. Therefore, she was. Even if he was a little short, and sometimes stroked his orange mustache like one strokes a ginger cat, Matildy knew that no man would be more masculine than her Harvey. He had a bald spot, after all. And not that she ever called him 'her' Harvey out loud. But she knew, in her secret heart of hearts, that he undoubtedly was, and had convinced that entire Ladies Bridge Club of the same.

Mrs. Bertha Alexander thought it was ridiculous, really, how Matildy threw herself at that sweet little man. Ever since her Robert died, she could never look upon another again. But Harvey was simply too beautiful a soul to go to plain old Matildy, who worked in the library. If Robert Alexander III had not stolen her heart forever, Mrs. Alexander believed she maybe would have given Harvey a chance. But, poor man, her Robert was unrivaled in her adoration, and Harvey Hooper would never know Mrs. Alexander's tuna fish casserole. She had only made it for her husband; it seemed to intimate of a thing to share with just anyone. One's best casserole, Mrs. Alexander believed, was the window to your very soul. And no one except Robert Alexander III was going to see into Mrs. Alexander's glorious soul. Unbeknownst to Mrs. Alexander, her tuna casserole had been sampled by many. The dearly departed Robert Alexander III had given his entire office a taste of Mrs. Alexander's intimate soul. He did

not like tuna casserole. This is not to say one way or another how we liked his wife's soul, and since he is dead we are left to slander and conjecture as we will.

Back in the happy, golden years of Robert Alexander III's life, his twenties, he had a magnificent pair of bush-like sideburns. As with most men, there were specific things that Robert Alexander III could look back on as pre-Mrs. Alexander and post-Mrs. Alexander. And his sideburns, circa 1969, were one of those. They were really very luscious. As he lay down each night he could feel them bristle underneath his cheek, and he always found it comforting; it was as if there was always another present there with him, wherever he might go. Perhaps that is the reason he never felt lonely in his singleness. Who could, with such faithful companions?

However, all the simpering young ladies at Grace, Only Grace Baptist Church felt Robert Alexander III's singleness; they felt it deeply. Brenda Beasley sat in front of the minister. If anyone, specifically named Mr. Robert Alexander III, was paying attention, he would have to peer around Brenda's large, overly coifed, overly blond hair. Susan Anderson, Marge Lysander, Angie Scott, Stephanie Tanner, and Edna Carver all flanked the sides of the church beneath the windows; Robert Alexander III was known for giving his attention during the service to each window, semi-impartially. Between all these women existed a sort of competitive comradery; they understood the unspoken rules of this game and played accordingly. Two women, though, were not accepted into this

odd community. Matildy, having just recently gotten a degree from the nearby college, was too bookish for a man to notice, in their honest opinion.

Men, they thought, appreciate women who admire their brilliance; Matildy simply saw the world for what it was, and therefore didn't quite understand her role as supporter to man. Not that she was argumentative, the single women agreed amongst themselves, it was just that she was more likely to converse on Freud and Tolstoy, providing a conversational match instead of a subject to be enlightened. The more of men's own opinions and minds they can impart upon a willing subject the more likable that subject is, everyone knew. So Matildy was no competition, and therefore a wallflower both to the female community and the male in question, Robert Alexander III. However, there was another woman. The Other Woman, as she was collectively called by the women of Grace, Only Grace Baptist Church. Her name was Bertha and she didn't play fair. She trespassed against the rules of feminine pursuit and was therefore an outlaw. Not only did she arrive late to service regularly, toting a smelly tuna casserole in her wake, but resolutely placed herself snuggly at Robert Alexander III's side week after week. Not that he noticed; his robust sideburns provided a sort of spiritual blinders to his mind's eye. It is rather hard to be improperly distracted by a woman if the section in your soul labeled, 'Idolatry', is entirely filled with sideburns of the 1969 variety.

However, love is like a disease; no matter how objectionable it

sounds, the comparison holds truer than any whimsical fluff. Love is like a disease, and the oftener you are around someone the more likely you are to catch it. You may assume yourself untouched and feel no different. In fact, you may escape unscathed for a while. But without fail, an insidious germ lobs itself into your healthy person. Within a bit you might feel odd, but perhaps it's just an off day. Within a bit and a few, you swallow experimentally; is that a bit of soreness that you feel? Then, once a bit and a few has passed, you realize that you've been hopelessly infected and must either visit the doctor or succumb to imminent death. And since doctors have received an almost universal bad rap, wedding bells appear on almost every horizon.

Robert Alexander III heard these death tolls the day that Bertha didn't arrive to church. He was a creature of habit, and Bertha had become habitual. Perhaps he felt what most men feel if they had been missing the front half of their beards and only had sideburns; in short, he felt bereft. It was an ache in the nebulous area between his neck and belly button, and it was uncomfortable. So the next Sunday, while Bertha flounced into church as a single woman smelling slightly of tuna, she floated out as an engaged woman, still smelling of tuna. Mirandy's discomfort reached the point of indigestion; she did not attend the wedding.

There are certain individuals in life who seem to perpetually receive the short end of the stick. The long end of the stick, for the ladies of Grace, Only Grace Baptist Church, would have been the love and devotion of Robert Alexander

III. And Matildy had wanted the same, but Bertha had robbed her of the opportunity. And being a fairly traditional woman until recently, Matildy thought it against her principles to act straightforwardly concerning her love interests. The man, after all, was supposed to pursue the woman. Now, she was determined to avoid that mistake with Harvey and make him aware of the enormity of her devotion. So she told the Ladies Bridge Club, a collection of women well known for their gossiping abilities. And Bertha felt it was time to take matters into her own hands; Matildy was going too far.

Wearing her best cheetah print vest and bearing a particularly noxious batch of tuna casserole, Bertha marched towards the library. It was fitting, she thought, that the last battle had been fought at the Lord's altar and lost, so now Matildy had seen fit to bring the battle to the altar of pagan learning. But Bertha Alexander was a veteran, and unfazed. Through the slightly smudged library doors she marched, past the sign that requested quietness, and past the sign that commanded there to be no food or drink. All's fair in love and war, Bertha firmly believed, and this was decidedly both.

One thing that Bertha had not counted on, however, was that Matildy was, first and foremost, a librarian. While Harvey sat, orange and comfortable in the magazine section, Matildy rose to her rather unremarkable full height and apprehended Bertha.

"This is a library, and that is a tuna casserole" she said. Matildy's sagging chest rose and

fell with righteous indignation; Bertha knew she was altogether aware of the significance of the tuna casserole. Bertha then puckered her lips and arched a penciled eyebrow. "Indeed it is," she said, then leaned closer, "I did it once, I'll do it again" she hissed, feeling a hot flash burn her neck bright red. Adrenaline rushes always brought the annoying things on. "Darn it all, here" she said, shoving the casserole into Matildy's hands and flapping her shirt frantically, but discreetly. Matildy simply held the casserole, acknowledging the unspoken truce. Then, the unspeakable happened. Harvey Hooper, unbeknownst to the both of them, traversed the battleground of aging library carpet and stood at their elbows.

"Is that tuna casserole in the library?" his voice was filled with something, but neither combatant could determine what. Matildy had a brief wish that it was her tuna casserole, and a slightly longer wish she had the courage to claim it as hers anyway. But Bertha beat her to the punch, as usual, "It's mine!" she said, grabbing back the casserole. The old indigestion seemed to be returning to Matildy's stomach. "It is," she sighed. Defeat was inevitable. The tuna casserole was imbued with Cupid's arrow, chopped up and disguised as celery, and the death tolls of love were sounding.

But they were not sounding for Bertha, oddly enough. Harvey Hooper, much like Robert Alexander III and everyone else we might know, hated Bertha's tuna casserole. Furthermore, he rather liked Matildy. While Robert Alexander III had been blinded by his sideburns, either age or the thinning of hair that accompanied it had left Harvey's

heart rather available. So as he sat, week after week, he observed Matildy. She was rather exceptional, he thought. Her precision in scanning library materials was unparalleled, the way her glasses perched so elegantly on her longish nose, her wrinkling skin that sat upon her like delicate crepe paper; in short, Harvey noticed quite a lot about Matildy. And just now he noticed the distaste with which she handed back the tuna casserole. "Thank God!" he said, and Matildy left the library that with a date on Saturday.

The Birds on the Walls

By Lillian Queen

I dreamed the other night of a room; a room dressed in light dusty blue with birds that lived on the walls. It was a lonely kind of place, though not in a bad way. The light shone in from the tall narrow windows that extended up to the ceiling. There was little furniture to speak of, only a straight-backed chair, an ivory piano, and the piano stool. The only sign of life in the room was a bouquet of hydrangeas that rested on top of two books which lay on the seat of the chair. The flowers were still very much alive, and since they were not in water, I could only believe that someone must have placed them there recently. Though why they would do so, in a room so uninhabited as this, was unclear to me. As I stood in the room I listened; at first there was nothing to be heard, all of the usual sounds of clocks ticking, or the creaking noises that old houses make as the foundation settles, were absent. But as I held my breath, I began to notice the

sound of what could only have been water or perhaps wind, off far in the distance. After a few moments more there was a train whistle.

Remembering the years, I spent laying in my bed at home listening for the sound of that train, always sure that, if the rest of the world were quiet enough, I would hear it. I walked over to the window. At first, I took care to balance on my toes that my shoes might not click as they hit the floor. Soon though, I realized that I was barefoot. As I drew aside the long chiffon curtains, my eyes were flooded with a most overwhelming light, for a moment I was blind. As my eyes adjusted, however, I realized that what I had believed to be sunlight pouring into the room actually came from the moon. It was massive that night, fifty times bigger than usual or perhaps it was fifty times closer. The world outside was lit up most unusually; it was certainly as bright as the sun, but where the sun would have lit up the shadows, the moon only intensified them, sending the world further into contrast.

I stood on a balcony or perhaps it was the top of a stone wall and watched as the scene before me changed. The forest that had been central to my vision fell into the ground as if it were a wax sculpture melting into a candle. As it collapsed, the train came rushing through. To my horror, I found myself in the middle of its path. I jumped, though I do not recall making a conscious decision to do so. Stepping out into the air only to find myself underwater. The idea of breathing did not occur to me so I cannot say whether it was truly water or not, but it felt like water.

I let the current move around me, floating around, trying to decide what to do next. The moonlight shimmered through the matter that surrounded me, and all was quiet once again. It was peaceful and somewhat lonely, though still not a bad kind of lonely, it was different from the loneliness I had felt in the room. I thought to myself that I could stay forever, floating through the water, with nothing in particular to do. I had just about decided never to leave when I realized that, to let myself go on floating in the water forever and ever with no purpose, though it may seem like a pleasant time, be a terrible waste of time. What would become of my ambitions and my dreams? Was I ready to let them slip away from me just like that?

After a few minutes of fear at what might have become of me, I began to search for the surface. As it was my dream and air did not seem to have any place there, I could not merely float to the top. It occurred to me, slowly, over several minutes, how very odd it was that I was unable to find the place where the sky met the waves. I swam and swam and swam and eventually discovered that the longer I swam, the darker it became. I could not see anything around me but then, as I reached forward my hand broke the surface of the water. As air became a reality once again for my lungs to breath in, I realized that it was a relief. Upon further inspection, I noticed that the reason the water had become so dark was that it was no longer water. Somewhere in the progression of my dream, it had become green ink. I was contemplating the predicament I had found myself in and what was best to do.

For, while ink is excellent in its way, I cannot say that it is altogether agreeable to find oneself stuck in a bottle of it. Luckily for me, though unluckily for the person responsible, I soon spilled out. They had unintentionally knocked the ink bottle over, and I tumbled out onto the page. It was a lovely page, top quality paper to be sure. It had beautiful swirling looping words written all over it.

As I stood up and began to walk up and down the page, reading the words, I was astonished to see little green footprints. ‘What an odd thing,’ I thought, ‘that someone should draw little footprints all over this beautiful page.’ It troubled me, so I hopped down and found myself back in the water. Although this time it was a glass of water, not the ocean. I was poured out of that as well, and once I dried off, I spent many hours walking across the wood floors of the dusty blue room with the birds on the walls, waiting to wake up.

The Fairy Ring

By Christian Young

It was a cold spring morning when little Essie awoke and found her home suspended in the dream-like stupor that often greets those earlybirds that wake when the sky is still orange. The yellow Sunday sunlight shone through the windows, highlighting every piece of minute dust suspended in the unnaturally warm air as Essie made her way downstairs, reaching up to grab the banister to make sure she didn’t fall—there did seem to be more dust than usual, didn’t there? Her parents were nowhere to be

found, which, for some reason, didn’t upset Essie as much as it should have. Instead, she revelled in the newfound freedom that is rarely afforded five-year-olds. She cleverly undid the “childproof” lock on the front door and flung it open with the dramatic flair of an aged Broadway star, facing the open world like everything was hers for the taking. With that attitude, she could have probably done anything she wanted; if she had wished to fly, the very air itself would have likely propelled her into the sky’s loose embrace. But, being the young child that she was, Essie was content to go play in the forest unsupervised.

Essie did not have the natural animal affinity which all animated princesses seem to share; birds, insects, and all manner of forest creatures fled upon her footfalls. Every now and then she would hear the rustling of a rabbit which was oblivious to the approaching danger but, upon her next step, would look up at her: ears alert, eyes strangely piercing, it would freeze in place until she moved, and when she did (for movement was inevitable for a child with little self-control) it would disappear quicker than Essie could cry “Wait!” at the top of her lungs. It never occurred to her that such noisy disturbances might perhaps be the cause of her isolation, but even if it did, it wouldn’t have stopped the determined little child from trying to befriend every miscellaneous organism as they scampered off.

It was in the midst of the great green expanse that Essie discovered the curiosity that was to occupy the remainder of

her day: a small toadstool, a mix of brown and tan, which would have gone unnoticed but for the fact that it was just big enough to cause a girl of Essie’s diminutive stature to stumble and fall as she pranced through the forest. The fact that there was a mushroom in a forest was not the fact that piqued Essie’s immature interest: it was the second toadstool, right beside the first, and the third next to the second, that caused her to turn her head and see a line of resplendent golden-brown mushrooms leading off to her right. The trail curved slightly to Essie’s left, as if tracing an invisible circle through the maze-like canopy of trees and underbrush—though Essie, being the oblivious five-year-old that she was, barely could comprehend a circle beyond being the easiest thing to draw with a crayon; regardless, to a child, such a phenomenon would seem as obvious a path as a yellow brick road, and so Essie set out on the first real adventure of her life.

Essie followed the trail for as long as her imagination could hold out, for as she was wearily treading along the toadstool trail her mind was picturing the pot of gold at the end of this particular rainbow: perhaps it led to a small colony of fairies, as the old legends of these circles would so emotionally argue to be the truth, or maybe it was a waterfall where mermaids lured wandering travelers to a perpetual life underwater, or, once upon a time, a unicorn strode through these woods and the mushrooms grew in its magical footprints. The possibilities seemed endless, which only disappointed Essie more when the path appeared to end at the corner of a

large cyclone fence, marked “Private Property—No Trespassing” in large, red, emphatic lettering. Essie knew the property well enough; everyone in the town spoke of the old wizard Vincentio’s place, and how the recluse never let anyone know what he was doing inside his private kingdom. The children feared it, the gossips loved it, but nobody went near it: the fear of the unknown did more to keep people out than the rather ineffective fencing. The butterflies in Essie’s stomach were especially agitated by the girl’s proximity to the property, yet, in a display of rare courage, Essie’s curiosity outweighed her fear, and she approached the corner of the foreboding metal construct which had been the cause of so many childish fantasies at night.

Essie was delighted to see that the path of toadstools continued past the corner of Vincentio’s property in a gentle arc—but she also noticed that the fence, having made a ninety degree angle in the corner as fences do, continued in the same direction as the mushrooms. In a feat of mathematical instinct for her infant mind, Essie concluded that the fairy ring probably circled around and met the fence at another corner, and so decided to follow the fence instead, hoping it would prove itself a shortcut to her destination. Instead of a magical unicorn, Essie was rewarded with a gate in the fence, and an unlocked one at that; and as orange sunlight cast its rays through the foliage, Essie could see that the ever-present dust which was possessing her small town of Asteria was even thicker inside the wizard’s mystical retreat. Essie’s natural curiosity, combined with

the present opportunity, got the best of her common sense, and she ventured inside the forbidden part of the forest.

She did not make it far: sickly-looking but fierce dogs, chained to stakes in a circle not fifty feet inside the fence made up Essie’s greeting party, but it was the marvellous aberration ahead that made the trembling youth stop dead in her tracks. Presently, a man with an unkempt black beard and a lab coat appeared from behind a tree and wordlessly escorted Essie back to the gate. After he locked the gate behind her, he called out, startling the child.

“Little girl, you do best tuh f’git what ya seen here, an’ don’ come back agin.”

Essie didn’t need to be told, and it was easy to chalk up the image of the hundred-foot, golden-brown, dust-spewing mushroom to the disturbing machinations of an intense nightmare.

Light Slowly Creeps In

By Chloe Sayles

Light slowly creeps in while I lay here in this bed. Pain. Pain is all I feel. My body aches all over with no discernable source. It almost seems as though my body is fighting against itself.

I try to cry out, I try to scream, but no sound leaves my mouth. I grasp onto every bit of darkness that surrounds me. The light creeps closer. It’s been what feels like hours and not one person has come to see. All the people I thought once loved me have abandoned me. The darkness continues to grow smaller. Beep. Beep. Beep.

That is the only noise that I hear in the little bit of darkness that I have left. “Don’t leave me!” I cry.

As the light starts to consume the space around me, I feel comforted, a feeling that I had never known. Continuing to be alone, I give in and creep towards the light that I had once so desperately hidden from. As I start making my way into the light, I feel a warmth throughout my body. A tingling feeling passes through me as I look down at my now clean, bright, flowing clothes.

I cover my eyes as I continue stumbling towards the shining light. I pause, looking back towards the darkness which sends a beckoning finger towards me inviting me back to the safety of the darkness.

I almost turn back to the place where I had been hidden for so long. Glancing back at the light, I again limp towards the light, ignoring the temptations the darkness sends to me. It is a hard, uphill battle trying to fully leave the darkness behind. “Please don’t leave me.” The darkness moans. Clawing at my legs, the darkness tries to pull me back into the dark abyss that once had been my home, but was no longer.

Shaking, I finally drag myself fully out of the darkness. I stand up trying to catch my bearings in the blinding light. The first thing that I see is a bright figure that stands there in the light with arms open wide.

“Welcome my daughter.”

Short Story from Underworks

By Elizabeth Beary

She stepped onto the platform, the wood creaked under every step. She felt a sea of eyes watching her as she moved to the center of the platform. A gentle breeze blew against her face, before her the noose swayed back and forth slightly.

Sarah raised her eyes to the balcony in front of her, there stood the Emperor; His face was stern, his demeanor was cold like death.

The emperor leaned against the balcony's railing, "Are you still willing to throw away your future? You had everything." The emperor had disgust in his voice.

The young lady dropped her gaze from the emperor and focused on the crowd. She noticed there was a mixture of expressions among the people. Most were an expression of sympathetic guilt by faces she recognized well. Some others malicious blood-thirsty smirks, from those who hated her. These had been people she lived with, ate with, and trained with. She was only sixteen years old, but she could tell the difference between right and wrong. She had seen great evil and was no longer able of standing aside while it happened before her eyes. She also experienced unspeakable good and everlasting hope. It was this hope that gave her the nerve to stand before this crowd, it was for this hope that she would even give her life. For maybe, just maybe; someone would see the same hope and change this world for good.

With resolve in her heart she turned her gaze back to the emperor, and spoke,

"Your Grace, my life began two-thousand years ago. When my King died a criminal's death for the sake of me His servant. After being

dead, my King arose from His death three days later. Because He died, I live. Because He lives now, even though I die, I will live."

The emperor shook his head disappointed and scornful. His raised his right arm and gave the signal of death to the executioner. The man came from behind placing the noose around her neck, the rope was rough around her soft skin. There was a stir in the crowd, some women gasped, children hid their faces. She took a deep breath the executioner pulled the lever. For a moment she felt weightless, Sarah felt the strangle of the noose, a sudden pain on the right side of her head, screams. Then everything was black....

Hours had passed by, they had come back to the hid-out with Sarah narrowly escaping the Destroyers that pursued them. Gearwinder's report was that she was alive, only unconscious after her head hit the platform from the noose being cut. The rescue went according to plan, the scouts caused a disturbance in the crowd large enough to distract those nearby and get the attention of the guards. Meanwhile, Illusion was waiting for the signal from me to throw his dagger and cut Sarah free. The rescue worked, Sarah is safe, but, what now? Thought Max, the lives of every person he was in-charge of, including Sarah, was at stake.

Hereafter

— By Benjamin Basham

The torches have still not been lit; no one has even checked

on us in who knows how long, and the torches were dark long before that. Rats in a sewer; would you show much affection for rats in a sewer? At least they still remember to feed us, although even food arrives less and less frequently. Not that it matters; pigs eat better. Death will just as likely come with the food as without it.

Someone is fumbling at the lock. Ah, yes; that is what sound sounds like. I had forgotten. The great iron door is opening— I cannot see! Blasted torch is too bright.

"How do you fare?" I heard a man smirk. Indeed, he audibly smirked. I cannot place the voice, but it sounds proud and secure in its pride. He is down nearer the door, next to the cell of the only other prisoner.

"Better than I deserve," I heard my fellow captive croak. I inched open my eyes, just barely catching a glimpse of the scene before the light slammed them shut. The visitor was royally attired with enough gold to purchase a castle adorning his robes, every nail carefully trimmed and his hair veritably shining; he stank of cleanliness. The other prisoner was lying in the cell's muck, much of it likely his own, the torchlight unable to touch his grimy face. He might have been smiling, but I think that was a trick of the light.

"Indeed," the visitor said. "We should have placed you in less comfortable lodging."

The voice and attire clicked in my mind: it was the king himself, come to taunt his little rodents. I should have guessed earlier. You could hear it in the way he walked: with just enough force to squash any insects in his path but not

enough to leave any stain on his boots.

"You still have time," the king said. "I am not without mercy. Renounce your king."

"Can a man renounce himself?" the prisoner replied.

"Bah! Do you style yourself a king now?" The king laughed, his vigorous booming voice filling the prison. It was frightening; I have not heard laughter in years. "You have two days. Remember: I hold your future happiness in my hand. Choose wisely."

The king is gone. I can see again (not that darkness is much of a sight), and it is silent once more. I have come to like the silence. When it is silent, you cannot hear creeping and crawling things, nor the dry rustle of Death's cloak as he anxiously waits to harvest another soul.

Then a sound shook the air, rattling the bars and setting my teeth on edge. I leapt to my feet, wheeling about, breath coming in short gasps. Was a man having his soul painstakingly torn apart? I finally remembered what blasted my ears: someone was singing.

"Are you mad?" I demanded of the prisoner (for no one else is alive in this slice of hell) once I dredged how to speak out of my memory.

"That depends on what you define as 'mad,'" he replied, and dare I say it, he sounded cheerful. Cheerful, sitting in the remains of last week's meal and who knows how many others.

"A man in love is mad, and aye, I am a man in love," the prisoner continued. "A man who would give his life for another is mad, and I have done that too; it is why I am

here."

A half-formed philosopher. Lovely.

"How can you sing in this place?" I said, waving my hand at the surroundings, too dark to notice any waving hands in.

"When a man has a song in his heart, he must sing."

"That almost makes you sound happy to be here. You cannot be that, I know; even madmen have limits."

"If I cannot be happy, all the better to sing, to remind myself what happiness once was like."

"Fool!" I cried, collapsing back on the floor to return to my living death. "Even memories of happiness die here. Your search is futile."

And though he did not sing again, I could hear him humming.

The thunder of a turning key awakened me. Someone was at the door again. I closed my eyes, but still felt the glare of the torch assaulting my eyelids.

"My friend," the arrival said; it was the king again.

"We are not friends," the prisoner said, an unexpected steel in his tone.

"Perhaps not," the king allowed. "That would imply that we were on equal footing."

"Indeed," the reply came. "I would never dare stoop to be as low as you."

I opened my eyes just slightly. You would have thought the king's face chiseled from diamond it was so rigid. A young, handsome face, though it did not look so much now, frozen in rage that it was.

"Renounce him," the king

commanded, leaning in close to the bars, his sharp whisper slicing through the stale air. "My mercy stretches thin, but you still have this chance."

"For a man to deny whom he serves, he must first give up his integrity, then his loyalty, and by then he has lost himself, renounced himself," the prisoner replied, creaking to his feet and standing just across from the king. "And why would you want a man who no longer knew who he was?"

The king scoffed and stepped away, waving dismissively at the prisoner.

"You have one more day. You will have freedom and a good life if you but abandon him."

The iron door swung shut behind the king, taking with it the light, the warmth, the sound, and my vain hope for food. Well, maybe not the sound; the other prisoner was humming again. All this precious silence for so long now destroyed by this madman; it was almost like the king's visits were giving him a sort of strength. That was it: his mind had finally broken, which is now why he sang away the quiet.

"Why do you not reject this king?" I said. "You are dead anyway if you do not, and he probably thinks you are already lost."

He laughed, actually laughed, as if this was the most ridiculous thing he had ever heard.

"Can a man renounce himself?" he echoed. "You heard my explanation."

"Then hear mine a second time," I spat. "You. Are. Dead. If you accept the king's mercy, you can at least live!"

He chuckled, and I heard

him shuffle near the side of his cell closest to mine.

"Some men live for yesterday, hopelessly lost in what has already happened and will never again be. You, my friend, live for today, every instant hoping that Death will stay his hand a little longer. The king lives for tomorrow, always grasping, always wanting, never at peace." He paused, as if his next statement deserved a prelude of that precious silence. Indeed, when he spoke, the dust and years of the prison seemed to fall from his voice. "But I live for hereafter. I live for seeing my king once again, no matter how long the wait, no matter in which life."

I snorted. What was it with this man? Such happiness in his voice; I was correct. His wits are befuddled.

"Well, keep living in your little dream world. Oh, wait," and I allowed myself something akin to a laugh, "Even that will not be possible because you are going to die soon. Your 'hereafter' matters little in the face of Death."

"And Death matters little in the face of Eternity," the prisoner replied.

Lost. Lost in his fantasy. I would give him no more satisfaction in indulging such madness, and so turned away into the silence.

I wish they had brought food. I think I would not hunger if they did, but I am not sure. Starvation is more a state of being now; I am alive, I am hungry. There is little difference between the two.

I am waiting now. Waiting for the breaking of the silence with that turning key. Waiting for the banishing of the darkness by that

burning torch. Waiting for time to start again.

The thunder of the lock once again heralded the coming king. I braved the torchlight this time, squinting against the blaze. The king stood before the other prisoner's cell, as radiant as the flame, the filth of the prison seemingly scattering from him in deference. He almost shone; the sun come to earth. I scooted further into my cell, afraid his light might touch me.

"You know why I am here. It would be folly to refuse me."

"I believe that the folly lies in you returning to me with the same demand and expecting a different response," the prisoner replied, sitting at the back of the cell where the king's light could not reach.

"You have no hope for tomorrow except my proposal," the king said, his tone a peculiar mixture of astonishment and amusement. I did not blame the king, but he had not yet come to the revelation that I had: the man had not only lost his freedom, but also his wits.

"Then I have no hope for living past this day."

The king stood there, mouth open in bewilderment. I just shook my head.

"Then you will not know tomorrow's dawn," the king snarled. "The failing of the day will take your spirit with it."

The door closed with a thud and darkness was once more my world. It would have been quiet too, but the prisoner was humming again. No more, no more! I wanted to shout. He is the least sensible person I have ever met,

and he is interrupting the silence.

"Have some respect for the one of us who is sane," I called from where I lie. "It is just not wholesome to hum in this place."

"Not wholesome?" he replied. "How not? What a better place to hum, to remind it that it has no power over me."

"No power!" I exclaimed as I struggled to my feet, a wasting stomach attempting to drag me back down. "Then command those bars to bend and break! Order that door to open! Do you know the name of iron in such a way that you are not truly imprisoned? Do you think this false?" I slapped my hand against one of the bars.

"If I was limited to but flesh and bone, then indeed I would be powerless," he replied. "But you are once again thinking only of today."

"And at the end of 'today,' you will be dead. Do you not understand? You will be gone, your body dust, the memory of you soon forgotten."

"Yet when I die I will be at peace, for I have no fear of death. Can the same be said for you?"

I harrumphed and slumped back to the floor, my legs unable to uphold me any longer.

"You fear becoming a part of yesterday," the prisoner continued. "Because you only live for today, you are terrified of Death, of it destroying you. But why should I fear him? Death is a creature of tomorrow that comes to today to place all in yesterday, but I live for hereafter; he has no sway there."

We wait in the darkness, his insufferable humming grating at my ears, his remarks stabbing at my spirit. I can hear Death pacing in the shadows; why can that blasted

prisoner not keep quiet! I need the silence back. I need that timeless peace again.

Finally, the iron door scraped across the floor. The king passed into the room like a ray from the sun, torchlight enveloping him. To my horror, he glanced across the cells and to me, his light casting itself across my fallen form.

"There is another down here," the king said, mildly surprised. "Who are you?"

I did not respond. I could not. A name is something I have not had for a long time; I am just a rat in a sewer.

"Well, I suppose it is best to wrap up all loose ends," the king said when I remained silent.

And before I quite knew what was happening, I found myself outside in front of a crowd. I could see for the sun; its rays speared through my closed lids, lancing my head with agony. The sound, I could hear sound everywhere! The flames of the sun's gaze warmed my flesh. I can see, I can hear, I can feel! I hate it! Just take me back to the prison; I need the darkness and silence back.

The king is saying something about the prisoner, who has been led up to the pyre. They will burn you; smile now when that same smile is melting off your face.

They set the wood alight. I force open my eyes to witness this spectacle. The prisoner's eyes are clenched shut, pain chiseled into his face. The fire is at his feet. Then somehow he found the strength to open his eyes, and they are clear and free. And he begins to sing. The song, the same tune as that which he had hummed, soared up to the clouds and back down to the

earth. In it were mixed the chords of pain now assailing him, but they only enriched the music. Though I had not been able to stand his humming in the prison and little more could tolerate his singing now, his expression, glistening with joy and pain, filled me with wonder. As I listened, I realized he was singing the praises of his king.

The fires consumed him, ending his song. Now I am led to my own pyre. The king is saying something about me; either he found my crime listed in some old papers or he is making it all up. I cannot remember what actually happened anyway and it hardly matters now.

As I am bound to the central post, I look across to the still burning pyre of the other prisoner, now freed.

The way he had so willingly gone to his doom for that king of his; it is something to marvel at. A man in love indeed. Perhaps he was not so insane, or perhaps he was, but in a way that was truly enviable. I can only hope that, though it be in the next life, I might find a king to whom I could be so loyal.

The heat of fire is creeping up my legs. I hardly notice it; I suppose all the sun and sound has dulled me to it. Besides, how could it compare to the pain of living? All these people watching me die, they are all slowly burning. One day even the king will die, and what will his grasping, his power, amount to then?

The flames are now at my thighs. I am not screaming; it must be strange to see. Of course, they did just witness a man sing his way into oblivion.

And as I remember that song, I find myself to be humming.

Masterthief: An Account from Montreat's Dungeons & Dragons Club

By Ryder Van Dyke

"HURRY! GET THAT
MAN!"

Let me pause there. If I told you how many times I have heard that in my life, you wouldn't trust me. Because it's a lot. Well, to be fair I haven't always been referred to as a man. I've heard: "SOME-BODY GRAB THAT BOY", "STOP THAT TEENAGE HOOLIGAN", "GET THAT SMALL THIEVING CHILD." There has been more that I feel simply would not be appropriate to list. Safe to say, choice language has been applied to my being before.

I haven't always been like this, you know... a dashing thief of the night. I haven't always been an expert burgling scoundrel. I actually used to be quite bad at it.

I am constantly asked, "Why do you steal from the rich?" and well it's quite obvious, isn't it?

I need the money.

How else will I buy lock picks? Do you know how much it costs to bribe a guard? And don't even get me started on the going rates for a good quality hood and cloak. The modern thief economy is in the gutter! I do what I can to get by doing what I love in an extremely lavish manner. Really, I'm a hero. You're welcome.

The real reason you're asking all of this is to learn how I got where I am today. Let me tell you my story. A legend of great intrigue, humor, and most of all: adventure!

But no good story begins

from the beginning, that would be absurd. I'll continue about 12/27th of the way through the tale...

The rooftops were my safe zone. If I could get on top of a building, I could get away. I could sink into the darkness of the night sky, up and out of sight of the common citizen. I could disappear in almost any circumstance.

Unfortunately, it was a bright sunny morning in the city of Markon and the guards were breathing down my neck.

But I was on the rooftops! My safe zone. Nobody could touch me up here! I was a king of the roofs. An emperor of the shingles. Not one guard could run faster than me while I was in my element. Nobody was so daring, so brave.

They grabbed me.

I know, I am as shocked as you.

We wrestled for a few seconds until I was able to pull out from under their firm hold. Skillfully, I tumbled down one side and fell on top of the wooden stall of a nearby vendor in the merchant square.

Calculated.

The stall crumbled underneath my might, breaking my fall. Apples and pears rolled off into the crowd as I stood up. For some reason, the merchant was furious.

First of all, it was his fault for picking a cover made of tan-colored canvas, it blended into the street! What kind of idiot would...wait, my lawyer told me not to talk about that until court. Never mind, back to the story.

I jumped up from the carnage of splintered wood and fruit, and dashed into the gathered crowd. Nobody was brave enough

to even attempt to catch me! They feared what would happen, of course. Actually, most smiled and some even giggled out of glee!

They clearly recognized who I was, they know my work. They respected, as they should, the freedom that I represent. They were glad to see me escape the guards in a cunning act of bravery. They were probably even glad to see me crush the business of a capitalist fruit farmer. Truly, I was a hero of the people!

As I made my way through the crowd, I looked behind me to see the two guards that were chasing me jump down into the market. Fools. They must have forgotten that the crowds were my element.

I have a lot of elements.

Lowering my head, I hastily made my way towards the nearest alleyway. To the edge of the crowd, I noticed a small chubby child looking up at me with a half-eaten cookie in his hand and chocolate stains all over his face. Before slipping into the alley, I rustled his curly blonde hair and snatched the cookie from him. One day, he will tell his grandchildren of the day The Master thief of Markon stole his baked good. Really, it was a service to him.

Munching on the cookie, I crouched behind a barrel in the alleyway and looked into the chaos of the market. I could see the scarlet plumes of the guard's helmets look around in confusion. They would never find me in that chaos. Once again, I had successfully evaded capture. Even better, I had acquired my treasure.

The Blackshire Family was an ancient house of silver-tongued

housing entrepreneurs. They established a monopoly on inn's within the city and are responsible for putting many smaller family businesses out of work. Their Matron was Sandra Blackshire, a cold hearted woman that would steal candy from a baby.

What a terrible woman.

Anyway, it was rumored that they had a rare magical stone capable of transforming pebbles into solid gold. My palate wet when I overheard this, I knew I had to have it.

I smirked and reached down for my satchel. But it wasn't there. A cold shiver went over my whole body as I looked fervently around, helplessly.

In fact, I wasn't only missing my satchel. I was STILL wearing the pink satin dress. All covered in dirt and apple mush, I was still pulling it off. Fabulous.

I looked around the alleyway for the satchel, where could I have lost it? This was supposed to be my retirement, an end to a life of petty stealing. I needed to change. With the money I would get from this rock, I could buy a ship and a crew. We could roam the ocean! We could see the world! I didn't want to be the Master Thief of Markon anymore. I needed to change from those thieving ways.

I wanted to be the Master Pirate of the Argurian Seas! A life outside of crime.

I had to find this rock.

I hoped it wasn't in the crowd, the rock could have fallen out, or worse... stolen. Peeking over the barrels, I peered into the ordered chaos that is the market square. The excitement had died down and vendors began calling

out their goods again.

Scanning the road, I saw it. Ten feet from the destroyed fruit stall where the pot-bellied merchant was waving his fist at a couple of kids that were stealing the fallen apples.

Amateurs.

I stood, fixed the strap on my dress, and made my way back into the crowd. Back into my element. I kept my eye out for guards as I made a beeline towards the satchel. People walked in front of me occasionally making me lose sight of it, but nothing could stop me in my element. Nothing. I was always confident while in my element.

I lost sight of it for a second and freaked out, questioning my life choices.

There it was! Kicked by a passerby but not much further away. Speeding up, I gained distance and pushed one or two people in my way.

I am the Master Thief of Markon, I do what I please.

Coming up to it, I bent down and grabbed it quickly before it was kicked again. Slinging the strap over my shoulder, I checked inside to make sure the stone was there. Underneath a pile of lock picks, two fake mustaches, and a twig, I saw it. The emerald stone, not much larger than an egg, glinted up at me. As if it was smiling back at me. I'll never forget that magical wink.

"Mommy? Why is that man wearing a dress?"

I looked up, and suddenly became very conscious of the fact that I was standing alone with a circle of onlookers watching me. The question came from the curly

haired child from only moments ago. He was holding a woman's hand with his finger pointed at me. Before I could say anything, I heard the pot-bellied merchant yell out, "Wait, a man in a dress? That's him! GUARDS!!"

Through the crowd of onlookers, two guards emerged and grabbed me roughly.

"Are you serious? How did that kid see me? I have such a high Stealth skill!" - Tyler

"You rolled a natural one Tyler, On a twenty-side die, that's literally the worst number you could have rolled." - Dungeon Master

"He's right Tyler, you rolled terribly. Also you're a man wearing a dress in the middle of a market, how did you not expect to be noticed." - Mario

"I thought Markon was diverse and open to that sort of thing. Besides, I'm the Master Thief of Markon!" - Tyler

"You're level two." - Dungeon Master

If you'd like to make stories like this one with your friends, join the Dungeons & Dragons club here at Montreat College! There are many more whacky tales to be told.

— NONFICTION —

A Cacophony That Lacks

By JO

My World isn't still. It hums and breathes, a constant stir of motion and life. Even our pond, its surface glasslike, vibrates underneath with the patterns and rhythms of a teeming society. There is no lack of intentionality, either, if

stillness is defined as a languid lack of purpose. Each duck thrusts its webbed foot in response to some natural programming, reacting to the information it has received with mechanical determination. The air entering my lungs retains such density of movement I feel as though my chest ought to combust from the strain of the foreign activity inside. But within this symphony of energy, all is quiet, even if perhaps not physically so.

If My World had a soul, it would be a soul that didn't reflect. It wouldn't anticipate or regret, but instead would simply move, an unanchorable force. It wouldn't love, either, or feel much of anything, I think. It wouldn't feel pain or anxiety, hurt or be hurt. And yet, My World lacks so much, just as my soul's imitation of quietness lacks, a halfhearted attempt at an unfeeling nature. My World's stillness has taught me this much: I would rather be hurried and anxious than lose one ounce of feeling that my humanity affords me. Perhaps excitement and wonder are a soul's cocaine, and I a hopeless addict. This even seems plausible given the amount of rationalizing I feel called to give in defense of activity and noise.

However, it seems more likely still to find both myself and My World short an ingredient, an ingredient that would relegate us both to the limited, the unarrived, the awkward stage of not-yet-become. Given a name, this ingredient might be called peace. Something My World, with its unconquerable force, cannot feel. Something that I, with my wild influxes of emotion, cannot force. Peace.

Lake Susan

By Micah Matheson

Color is all around me. Not just the color we see, but the color we can hear, can touch, can smell. A warm colorful day in the middle of February, God has given us. I love coming to this place. It is a place where my soul can rest. A place where the thoughts about my busy, student-athlete life can go unheard. A place where my mind can become clear. The water becomes a million ripples. The wind controls the water if it was her own. The wind paints a picture on the glass canvas of lake Susan. Her breeze gently passes my face as if she was she was trying to kiss me. Trying to give me her blessing. The trees around her bow down to worship lake Susan and her never ending beauty. The leaves and branches sway in the wind, singing praises to this masterpiece created by man, who was created by God! Amen!

SONG LYRICS

It's Gonna Be Okay

By Caleb Jones, Peter Buchwald

Verse

Hey God, I got this burden on my heart,
and it's tearing me apart inside.
Oh why? Does it come from foolish pride?
Is it selfishness inside my soul?

Chorus

Please someone say it's gonna be okay
before I lose hope.
There's nothing to feel here--
I'm just trying to be real here.

God, I want to hear you say,
"It's gonna be okay."

Verse

I find when I take this path I make,
I'm on a mountain of mistakes and pain.
Oh why? Why do I forget the truth?
All things that you say and do for me?

Chorus

Please someone say it's gonna be okay
before I lose hope.
There's nothing to feel here--
I'm just trying to be real here.
God I want to hear you say,
"It's gonna be okay."

— SPOKEN WORD —

White Marble

By Kayla Trotter

How can it be

Your skin is marble
The way you stand makes the whole world sparkle
I never would've known you were a statue
Now all I can do is marvel

Your stance has so much confidence
Your flow drapes like a toga
You're not scared of anything
A back and forth kind of elegance

Your face is unshakeable
The sunlight clings to your shadows
You're not stone cold at all

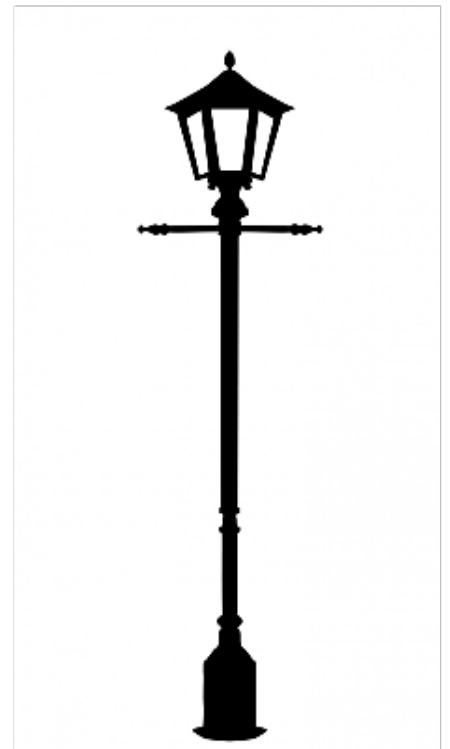
The way you control it is unbelievable

Your voice carries like a melody
You welcome nature on your shoulders
Birds, go to you not to defecate, but to sing
The words you speak are full of integrity

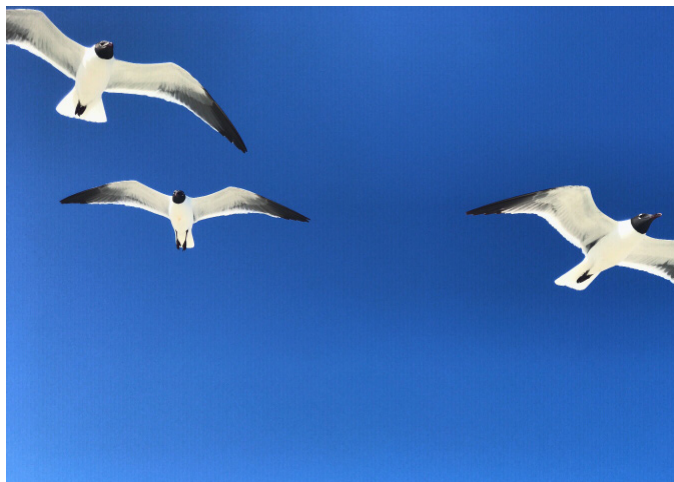
There was no way I could tell
There were no signs or symbols
You were just you
In all this you were quell

But how can it be

I think back to when I met you
All I can think was that you looked familiar
I'm begging you to help a fellow gargoye
How do you live this life and live it beautifully



PHOTOGRAPHY



Photography by Madelyn Hambrick



Photography by Lily Queen



A Florida Sunset



The Prominse

Dome of the Rock



PHOTOGRAPHY

Autumn



Resurrection



A Fairyland



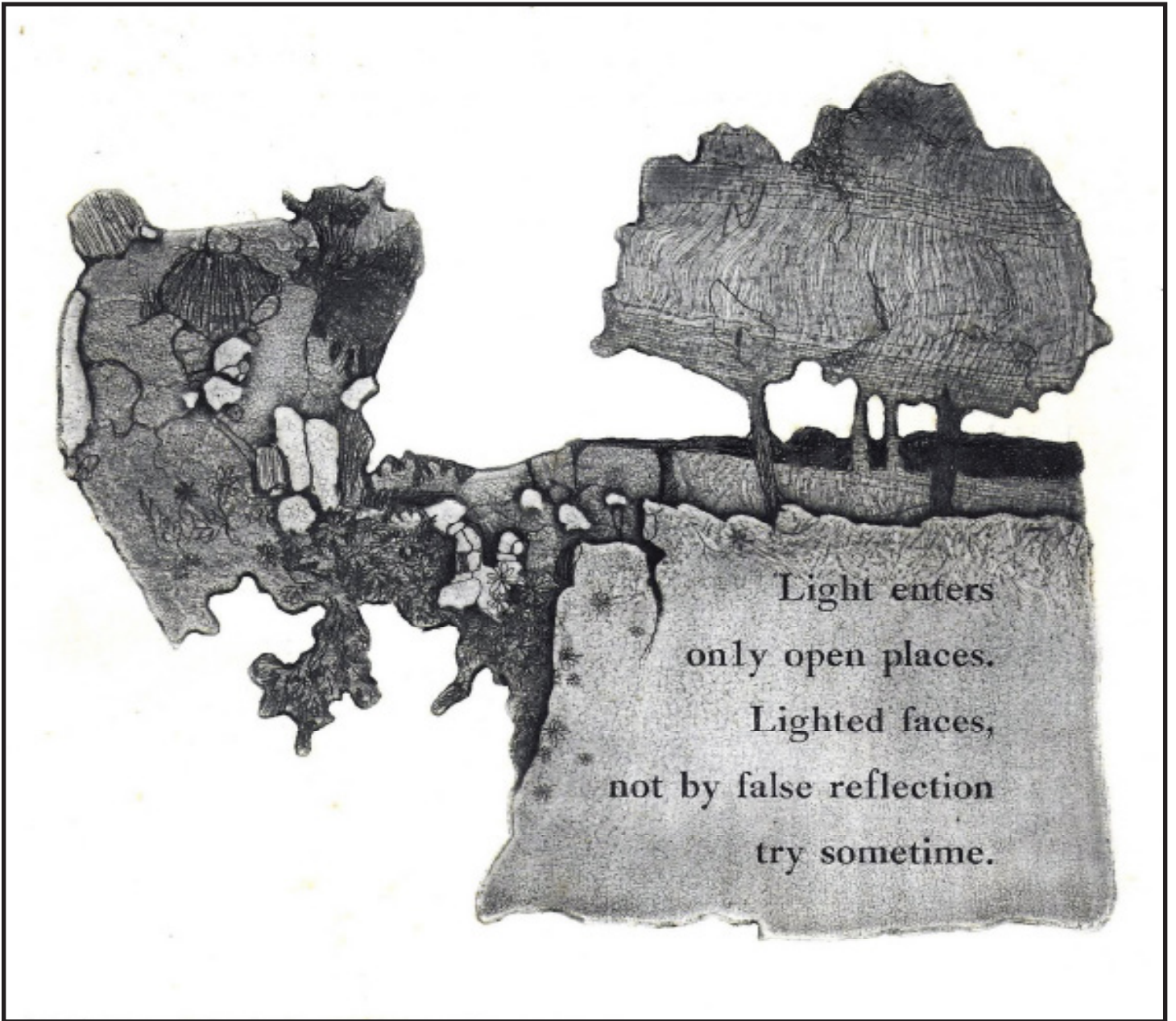
Photography by Anastasia Howland

Untitled



Photography by Madelyn Hambrick

Not By False Reflection



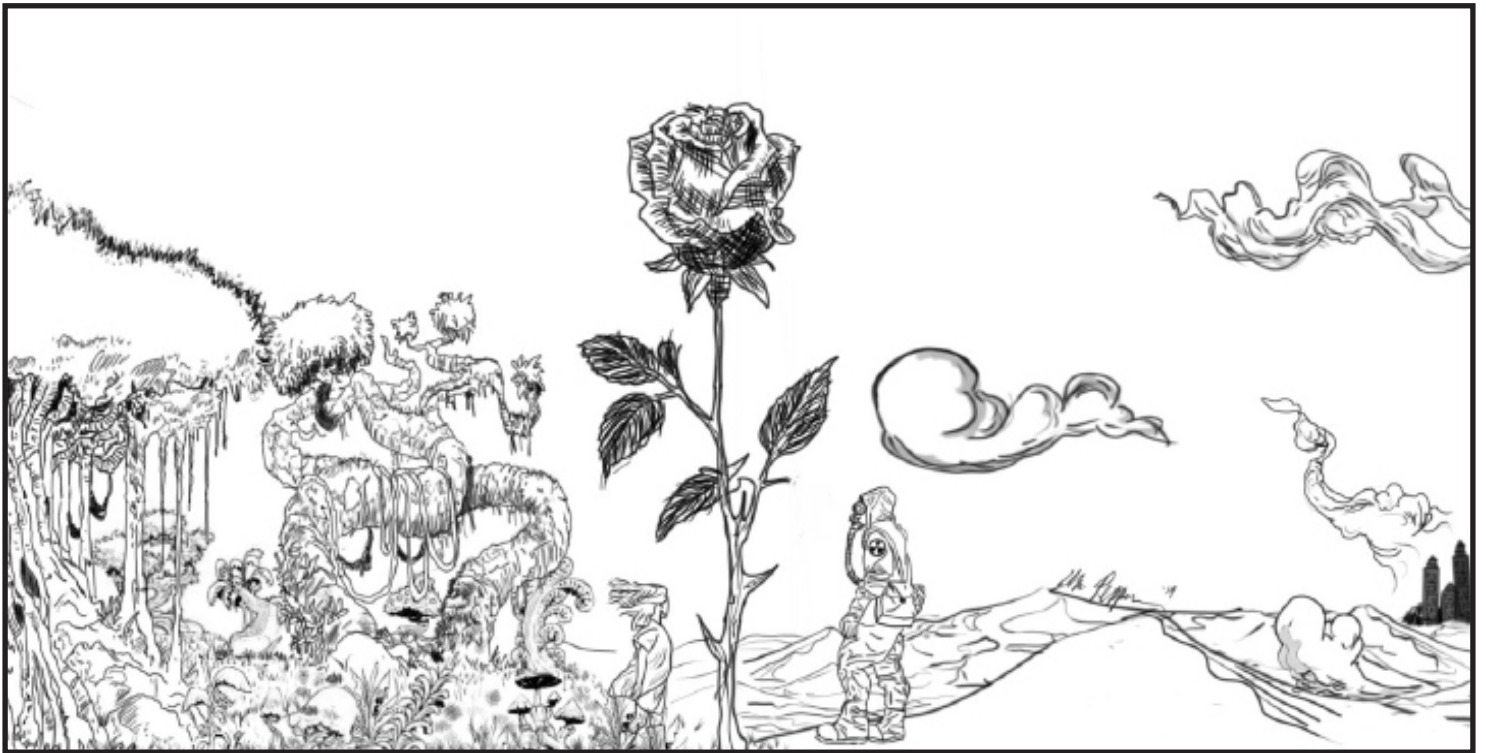
Artwork by Jim "the art guy"

Flaming Creation of Human



Artwork by Benjamin Jakobowski

Mi Rosa de la Paz

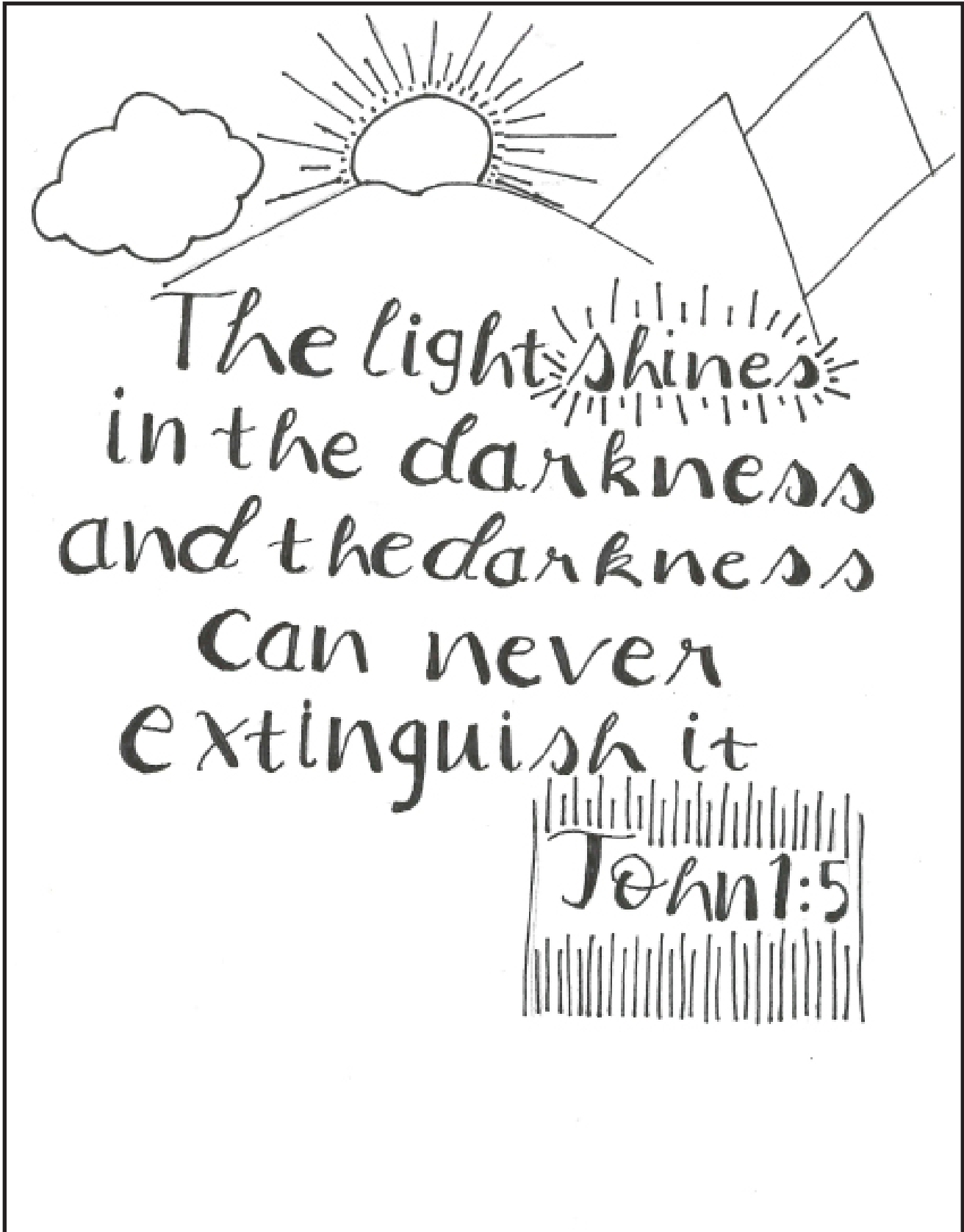


Artwork by Ella Pepper

Dark Light



Artwork by Danyelle Joli



Artwork by Savannah Jackson

Why Did This War Not End All Wars

By Ian Galey

O Life, it came and went and was,
Autumn followed summer as it always
does.

Some powers rose and others fell
And all that seemed not well was well.
For no one thought what was not well
Would ever be a swift bombshell.
So thought I during the clear, clear
chime
Of church bells till I served my time.

But after the war, the faces I saw
Were not of friends or faces of awe
Who hoped and prayed and stayed at
home,
But faces of brothers and faces of bone
The ones who fought and took a stand,
Shredded to pieces in No Man's Land.

What, I pray you, what was the purpose
of this?

To show the world we could live in the
piss?

While some of us managed to survive,
We broke the psyche of man
Staring in the eyes of the dead, alive.
What God would leave the one to see
Colossal death and then live free?
It is a travesty.

If war is war and it must be
Let all lie dead: life is not free.
A world within a world of war
Is not a world worth living for.

So what is life, what is this life?
What shall we do with all this strife?
Who answers for the silent dead?
The ones that ail that are not fed?
Life! Why must thou be so cruel
To force us through this rotting drool?
What meaning, what force, what ounce
of will
Shall let our cups with water fill?
If none are saved when war is done,
Then who shall save us from the sun?
The sun that looks by day upon
This living, lifeless life: a con!

What shall we do what shall we say?
This world holds nothing but decay.
Then stamp it out and let it die!

There is no meaning in the sky.
Ships can't sail and birds can't fly.
Let us take the eye for eye.
Yet . . .
Where is the joy, the once we had?
Was life really all that bad
Before the pride, the hell, the pain?
Was there nothing but naught to gain?

Dispense with the pleasantries of the
past.
We live in the here and the now.
Those memories from long ago become
more ancient

With each falling tear, those wild inces-
tuous falling tears
That multiply the more they come.
Alas the joy that now is past: perhaps
we lost the fine-tuned art

Of self-devotion and self-promotion.
The self for now might do us good.
Those inner workings shall produce
Some rest, some solitary solitude.
My hands I trust: they brought me
through

The war and the sludge and the wire.
Perhaps I can make my way alone.
Come, let us make our ways alone.
The endless turning of the earth, the
ever-occurring rounding sun
Will not remember me or you or us.
And if God can't remember us either,
then let us remember ourselves.
The world, we cannot change it, let us
change ourselves.

The earth, we cannot rule it, let us rule
ourselves.
I live because I choose.

And life means because I will it.
And significance in life exists because
I live it.

I am my own god, and upon the
utterance of my name all of man shall
tremble not.

For a god is deaf. The noise and peals of
the outerness mean nothing at all.
The law of my life is within my hands,
the agents of my soul.

Do I have a soul? Surely I do.
The life force of life ever exists.
But do I exist beyond this body of flesh
and bones? Surely I do.
But whence shall I depart when this
body turns to earth?
To the earth; it must be there, I know it
is. Surely I do.
But will they mourn? Surely they will.
I did, for my lost brothers.
But why would they mourn? Why did I
mourn?

It was a travesty.
Yes, it was. Surely it was.
There were none to help it, none to stop
it, none to abort it.

But here am I, to condemn it.
If God will not condemn it, I will.
If the apathetic God elects to do noth-
ing,
If he chooses to hide his face (hide it in
shame I might add),
Then I will choose to show my face,
and to abhor the massacres,
To despise the slaughter of fathers of
fathers of fathers.

If men cannot end war, who can?
Surely God cannot.

Upon this anthem, I will build my
church.

The sound of which shall ring with the
cry of the dead,
And I, upon the pedestal, shall cry with
the dead:

Why O God?

Where are you?

Why do you do nothing?

And silence will answer me.

And he who hears a word beyond
silence, him too shall I condemn.
None have the ground to stand against
me, for I have built my house on solid
ground,

And he who is not where my house is,
he falters and he falls amidst the shift-
ing sands.

But how do you know?

What?

And silence answered me:

(And the first words I did not understand, but the second were clear as the sun.)
I am right here.
I have already done everything,
do not fear.

Furtive now I gave a backward glance;
It could not be, there wasn't any chance.
I know my standard because
I made it so.
None of this nor none of that can show
This God of gods can surely
never know
This stark and bleeding world that
cannot grow.
I broke the silence and gave a
raucous shout:
My standard is the norm of all
mankind;
Get from me God you are not on
my side.
The sons of men unite to thwart
your plan,
Then silence answered: take thou heart,
I am the son of man.
And in that moment, there in
shining light,
Silence walked and gave itself without
a fight.

I know so little but I now know more
Of the treasures of my life before.
Joy cannot be joy until we understand
The mighty works of our
Creator's hand.
Thus my anthem I proclaim to you
The Son of Man is making all things
new.

A Pair of Souls

By JO

Forgetful

If a soul has forgotten how to speak
Or perhaps how to listen, too,
What is it that helps it think
The way it used so well to do?
It isn't that its ceased to be
In the body we're so used to seeing
It's just that it's lost its touch
Its lost that nice, belonging feeling.

ts lost that nice, belonging feeling.
Is your soul simply your own,
And therefore better in this state?
Or were we made to interfere
In each other's soul estates?
If my soul were to make a sound
Is yours meant to hear?
Or was it an accident of fate
That one time we were near.
Now, I know, this all has changed,
So different from before,
But the question must be framed:

Were you made to see my soul
As it wanders by your own?
Were you made to hear
My soul's small sounds, its dreams
And thoughts, and everything?
I think not. Because there you are
And here am I.
Two souls that have forgotten how
To speak.

Between You and Me

How does one meet a soul, or tell
anew,
Each time we greet, the depths that
draw the line
Betwixt both you and me? Perhaps the
true,
Perhaps the face behind all veils that
lie
As protective niceties. Hello, say
Painted mouths, authenticity too
bright
A blinding light upon the shadowed
grey
Of our enlightened and postmodern
sight.

Hello, I repeat, an embodied soul
Standing here before you. Both you
and I
Stand across our chasm of souls un-
told.
This may be, but if it weren't I would
sigh
And then begin.

My soul is of course an average height
But most days dreams of standing tall
And reaching, capturing the out of

sight.
My soul thinks it's honest, but when
the Fall
Makes an appearance, that silly thing
lies
And says it hadn't heard. It's so sur-
prised.

This soul I've got sometimes gets lost
and tired,
Finding rest a thing far-fetched and
fleeting.
The phantom feet I walk upon get
mired
In the sludge of worry, till darkly
dreaming
I turn and see a lifted cross to bear
Up all this heavy, burdened, soul sick
care.

Hello, I say, again this one last time.
No veil, no painted mask, but here
instead,
Chasm bridged, crossed, I greet your
soul with mine.

Good Morning

By Jeremiah Bryan

"Good Morning," said I;
Good Morning, to you
Oh darling I hold dear
For God has given a new day
With coffee to drink and birds to
hear.

Put down that addiction
That holds you slave
To satanic rats who let you dig
Your decorated grave.

Walk with me in nature
With the morning sun,
The morning breeze,
Watching the flowers capitalize on
bees.

Embrace God-given language
Instead of a man-made platform
To tell me that you love me.
Darling, oh how I long for you
To awake and fight this
Total tyrannical, technological storm.

The Seasons

By Benjamin Basham

Spring

The frosty crone, her raiment white,
Has fled with all her frozen blight,
The virtued maid, with flaming
sword,
Has purged her from the green,
spring world.

The grassied blades are thrust back
up,
Young saplings from the ground
erupt,
The trees display their leafy shields,
And force the winter frosts to yield.

The trees gain strength, uphold the
air,
The land soon turns to summer's fare,
Golden rains embrace the land,
And clear birdsong the season's band.

Summer

The willow maid, her raiment green,
Has danced to growing lands unseen,
The mother bold, with sheaf of gold,
Has pulled the world into her fold.

The trees stand strong as mountains
high,
Warm breezes through the air do fly,

The land is sown with fields replete,
As young and grown come near to
meet.

The trees, they bend 'neath greying
skies,
The wind is full of aging sighs,
The trees now paint their leafy
shields,
As men hone hoe to go to fields.

Autumn

The mother kind, her raiment gold,
Has locked the gates on summer's
fold,
The stooping gran, with hoe of grey,
Has hid the summer suns away.

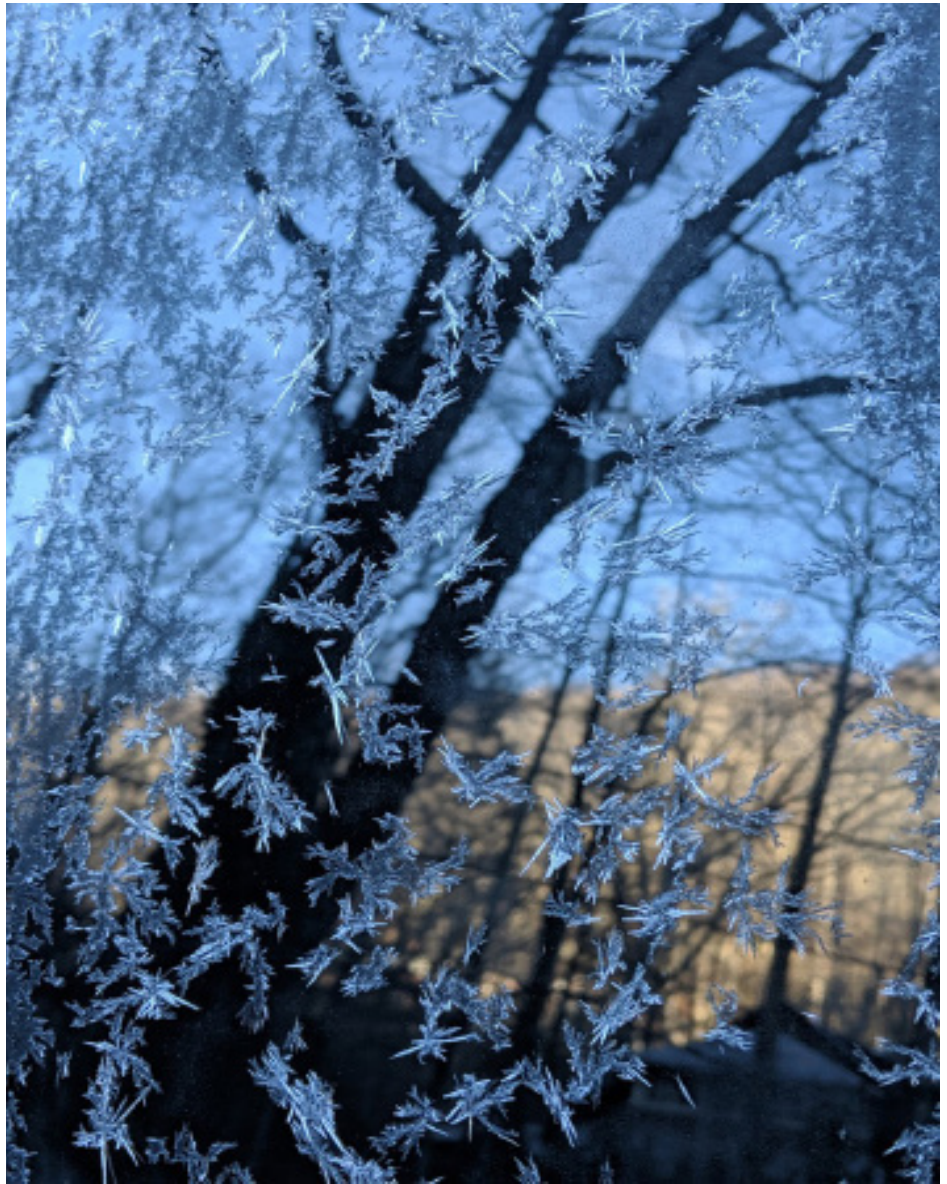
The fields unearth a mine of grain,
The land is drunk with autumn rain,
The calming winds have been set free,
And wave the grass for all to see.

The trees resign their coloured shields,
The soil greys on stagnant meals,
Starving wolves bite at the sky,
And cattle, maples, children, die.

Winter

The gentle gran, her raiment
brown,
Cannot in any land be found,
The wretched crone, with claws of
ice,
Has gripped all with a deathly
vice.

PHOTOGRAPHY



Reflection

By Cailin Warner

The Soul of Beauty

By Ian Galey

I thought to write a poem
 But not an ordinary one
 One of colors like the fall
 One of infants learning to crawl
 A poem of hope
 Of timeless thought
 As lively as the spring
 As precious as the dawn

But instead I found no words at all
 That could paint the colors of the fall

No story that I ever could tell
 Could capture an infant's cry as well

No sky of dawn, no sunset fair
 Can be so caught with writing flair

No season near, no season far
 Can tell of an exploding star

Beauty unique is solely so
 Other beauties it cannot show

Nor inform that astounding sight
 Uniqueness thrives in its own right

Beauty cannot help one see
 The other beauty in a tree

Only when the beauties contrast
 Uniqueness is exposed at last

The soul of beauty then is this
 Not even beauty captures bliss

For the soul of beauty is a rose
 Its petals glory in no prose

But only in a poor man's sight
 Which lasts no longer than the night

Strings of beauty on the mind do pull
 For beauty's soul is beautiful

The Wandering of Anselm

By Joshua Holbrook

A little bit of background: This poem came about from a challenge from one of the members of my writing group, the LitWits. We were challenged to write a poem with only words with Germanic origins – no Latin, no Greek. I wrote this, but slipped in one non-germanic word just for fun.

Mighty Anselm, King of Alton in the West
 Robbed of his maiden, Aisling, the faire and blest
 By the fell Bowmen from the Walds of the East
 They took her, most lovely, of women not the least

But Anselm the Great left his kingdom for his bride
 Aisling, heart-stopped, his queen, lover and pride
 He struck out eastward, alone wand'ring
 With the blessing of Domhall, King above all Kings

But Drake, Archon of Bowmen, though to waylay
 Anselm in his coming, to slay him if he may
 He sent Everard, the boar great and grim, to slay him if he might
 He came to him in minter, 'midst the hoarfrost in the night

The boar took many blows
 His tusks halted not their drive
 But Anselm fighting yet
 Struck the boar, and Lo! he died.

The winter tarried longer
 And to Ardenstadt came the King in snowy din
 He answered Durward's riddles
 And the strongman let him in

When winter's melt came, he struck out again
 And made great haste for Fenton waste, as the Spring brought her rain
 The hateful muck of Fenton Bog up to his sword's hilt came
 And the folk of Fenton wouldn't take him in, so on he trod again

At long last he came to the Wald where the Bowmen made their home
 But the Bowmen would not face Anselm, though he was alone
 They set a snare, and Anselm fell – a hole in the Earth!
 And there bemoaned his wretched life – he and Aisling ne'r to know mirth

But in the Dark o'er his sobbing he heard a wat'ry pang
 He lit a fire and at his feet He found a Grotolm's fang
 And lo, he raised his awestruck eyes, saw many the piebald wurm
 He gazed around, behold they were where'e'er the fireslight burned

Fifty of them gazes at Anselm as he drew his trusty blade
 Twenty ran forth to their deaths as Anselm each unmade
 The Grotolmeister, King of them all, writhe up to make him his feed
 But Alton's king dropped his sword, tamed the wurm and made it his steed!

Up he came, up from the crag, the evil olm made new
 Fire spritzed from his mouth, and Anselm Drake slew
 The Bowmen scattered and in their burg Anselm found his bride
 They wandered thence back to Alton, mighty Anselm Aisling's guide.

Where It's Dim

By Kayla Trotter

I want to be somewhere where it's dark
Where it's dim
Where God can't see all my sin

Where the light won't burn me again

I want to be surrounded by neon lights
Where it's dim
Where our smiles are the sunshine that
we seek

Where the light won't make me weak

I want to be muted by the loud slowed
music
Where it's dim
Where we dance and forget all our
strife

Where the light won't affect my life

I want to die slowly under covers
Where it's dim
Where love says it really loves me

Where the light'll never see

I want to forget and never remember
Where it's dim
Where I can become anything

But it will won't it?

Restless days
Restful nights
My heart cries for help
Because nothing feels right
But everything else does

The Blue Cord

By Ian Galey

In a hallway of learning at three in
the day
With the vacuum all ready and cord
under way,
All twisting and turning straight down
through the hall
Through the passage of learning right
up to the wall.

In the sight of the cord the small chil-
dren would gasp
Traversing the hallway became a
great task.
With attention and focus to each
every stride
The attempt would be prompted and
always denied.

In a school-place of learning they never
were bored
But they also could never not step on
that cord.

Permanent Ink

By Jeremiah Bryan

Elegantly with a quill,
Records scrape the clean paper.
A scratch, one stroke, one drip.
How many words can you make
With one single dip?

A word is grand,
But a sentence is grander.
I bid thee write for grace
And disregard words of slander.

A reminder: Permanent Ink

Dries quickly, like a thin meander.
Before you write, it's best to think
And write with candid candor.

Ocean Eyes

By Anonymous

ocean eyes//
staring at me through the great abyss//
of time and space and everything that
exists//
what great feat brought us to this?//
what circumstance of hell must we have
missed?// oh travel onward towards the
blue// know that the future is nothing
new// you were made to be that sea//
and me?//
merely a sailor lost in the wake//
tossing and turning looking for sanity's
sake//
you churn- a benevolent force//
and I am set on this path- to let nature
take it's
course//
wading through your waters looking
for home
in the end//
and you tossing about wishful I'll start

PHOTOGRAPHY



Untitled

By Lily Queen

my journey homeward again//
 you know it's only you that my soul
 searches for//
 you know my heart longs for
 nothing more//
 I look for that beacon of light in the dark
 of the sea//
 But you- yes you- send your waves
 rolling back to me//
 And there we are! crashing
 and shaking//
 Wondering if this love affair is the others
 for the taking//
 you know what's best and I'll follow
 what's right//
 gently leading me to those ocean eyes
 each night//

Light Brown Eyes

By Alexaya McKelvey

his eyes are rain-soaked branches after
 stormy weather,
 ceasing their constant beating in the
 turbulent night
 with cultivated elegance once again,
 destined to be still only
 for a moment.
 they are cavernous, deeply filled to the
 brim with
 swirling iridescence that make me blush,
 my cheeks taking on peony petals for the
 millionth time.
 it seems those eyelashes, those raven
 feathers that
 frame his mahogany gaze, reach up to
 graze each
 constellation that he catches with his
 calloused fingertips.
 each time he surveys the room, my blue-
 bird eyes flutter,
 hoping he will notice the thrilling chase
 that my heart
 has taken to catch his.
 that bronze and chestnut glance puts the
 sun itself to shame.
 I never knew light could be found in
 sepia chasms.

The Blue Walls

By Lillian Queen

PHOTOGRAPHY



A Floridian Sunset Part 2

By Anastasia Howland

It almost glows in the sunlight
 Ever blue, ever bright
 The gaudy shade the unholy color
 I'd give my right arm for something
 far duller
 It is not the lovely blue of a bird
 It is the kind that if it were heard
 Would sound like your crazy Aunt
 Anne shrieking incorrect words
 Oh why are you there you awful
 blue thing
 Such nightmares and frustration you
 always do bring
 Any other color but you I'd prefer
 Out of this room I do hope to trans-
 fer
 Who painted you onto the forbidden
 walls
 Of my tiny old dorm with the tiny
 old halls
 I cannot paint over you without a fine
 But you're bluer than the blue on the
 western coastline
 An unnatural color you are to be sure
 I do not see the appeal, the allure

Perhaps it was simply a joke
 For when I first saw you, on my gum I
 did choke
 You're peeling and flaking ever so much
 Much like my grandpa's old
 storybook hutch

**Blued In Layers
 (at sunset)**

By Jacob Goins

Tracing the Sun's path down
 Where tree fringe becomes the moun-
 tain's crown
 Ablaze and glorious for a time,
 'Til the sun ducks nimbly to resign;
 I cast all thought aside.

Blued in layers lie the mounts,
 Bluer as the sun sidles out;
 I sidle up to the day's end,
 Dirtied to be cleaned again,
 By mercy only breathing in.

Be thou my rest, my peace
 In my waking hours, in my sleep,
 My first thought even in drowse,
 Repose from scrutiny and plough;
 Abide within me now.

Big Oak



Artwork by Jim "the art guy"

Twilight of Language

By Christian Young

Imagine a light, so bright that it
 Makes evrything else pale in
 comparison;
 And now imagine a hand,
 slowly moving,
 Going towards the bulb of the light,
 And, without pausing to see its err,
 Yanks the light from its socket.

The world is shrouded in darkness again.
 Helpless to see, the hand flails wildly;
 Grounded, it tries to find the unfindable
 Instrument, while grinding it ever still
 Like a thoughtless child.

Arriving at last at a facsimile of lan-
 guage, Rebuilt by that murderous hand,
 Intellect trembles: language's light
 had died,
 Killed by those who used it to see.

Behold the Man

By Ian Galey

Behold the man upon the
 sordid cross.
 The blood, the sweat, the dirt that crusts
 Christos.
 The man who as a child did sing
 and play;
 The one who weeps and begs yet kneels
 to pray:
 Take this cup away from me, O Lord,
 Another way for man to be restored.
 Must it be that Son of Man is killed?
 Yet not as I will but as you
 have willed.
 At last come see the savior, Christ, the
 man,
 The one who bears Almighty's sovereign
 plan.
 His heart it beats and bleeds and stops
 for you.
 Behold, the Christ is making all things
 new.

Pharisee Heresy

By Jeremiah Bryan

Fast, yes,
 But not too quick.
 As giving your offerings
 Should hurt, like a prick.
 Be not as the Pharisees,
 Who are self-righteous by deeds,
 But rather work humbly,
 As not to be consumed by greed.
 "But I hath gathered all my wealth
 By myself, just ask the court!"
 Then, Love thy neighbor as thyself,
 Of that I do retort.

Tilted

By Jacob Goins

The winter sun
 with a sleepy eye,
 looks at us as we pass by.
 --Blinks, flickers
 through flitting pale trees;
 --In silence watches my van and me.
 We hurtle on
 everything but still
 everything but silent;
 We go where I will.
 We don't like to wait;
 We prefer instead to roam,
 for waiting means holding
 to a will that's not our own.
 The sun seems tilted,
 with a stretched and dimmer burn,
 but perhaps he's no different,
 perhaps we're the ones who've turned.
 The winter sun
 with his sleepy eye,
 though angled, still stares
 from the same path through his sky.

Smells Like Teen Spirit

By Liam Munholand

The Year 2005
 Passes through my mind
 As Sky High flashes before my
 eyes

Instantly I
 daydream of
 glorified teen angst,
 high school chivalry,
 the coming of age story
 and mellow drama
 mentalities

I enthrall myself
 with Bowling for Soup,
 They Might Be Giants,
 Flashlight Brown
 and The Click Five

Classic covers
 Eagerly
 Fueling inner desires
 For perks
 of college
 wanted
 days

'Higher' Greek Life,
 Finer things,
 Secret meetings,
 Place diversity

Life was trickier
 in my teens
 Nothing mattered more to me
 than larger-than-life realities

Beneath present routines,
 these feelings arise,
 calling me back
 into the realm
 of awkward social cues and limit-
 ed policies.

A Found Poem

By Nathan Ellison

“Are these the shadows of the things that Will be,
or are they shadows of things that May be, only?”

Scrooge crept towards it, trembling as he went; and following the finger, read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name,
EBENEZER SCROOGE.

“I am not the man I was.
I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.”

He was so fluttered and so glowing with his good intentions, that his broken voice would scarcely answer to his call.

“I am as light as a feather,
I am as happy as an angel”,

He had never dreamed that any walk could give him so much happiness

“I am as merry as a school boy,
I am as giddy as a drunken man”,

He went to church, and walked about the streets, and found that everything could yield him pleasure.

The Spirit's Song

By Liam Munholand

As inspired by the beautiful song between God and man, which continuously plays in the foreground of my mind, my days, and my relationships. This is the song of Christ, the Spirit's divine interpretation of His beauty and grace.

I am reminded by the listening of playlists

Created with her curves in mind, closing around the dips,

Loosening my groove and swinging my hips.

It is then that the shadows of her instrumental façade

Root themselves within,

Explicitly expressing the undying request

Of playing along, alone...

Oh me, oh my,

These lips they tight, blowing wind round reed,

Hear the sound fly, hear it drive.

When I leave something meaningful behind,

My mind instantaneously

Fills with eager regrets,

As anxiousness incurs, the question:

Simply why?

What more is to be expected?

Which thoughts should I deny?

No matter the direction

I play what He gives me

A product of the prodigal

It is in the air where he resides.

In my soul, in my eyes,

I reap the sound. In my playing mind,

Listening to the Lord's favor,

His passages of might, with every last breath I fight.

Not with fists, but in the art of heart,

The art of the Lord's song.

When I play those notes, tis so sweet the sound.

That I am humbly thankful for this heavenly exchange

Between Spirit and I.

I have nothing to hide, because the Father's love

Is deeper and sweeter than anything of mine,

His melodies are rich and friendly.

His notes capture my utmost admiration,

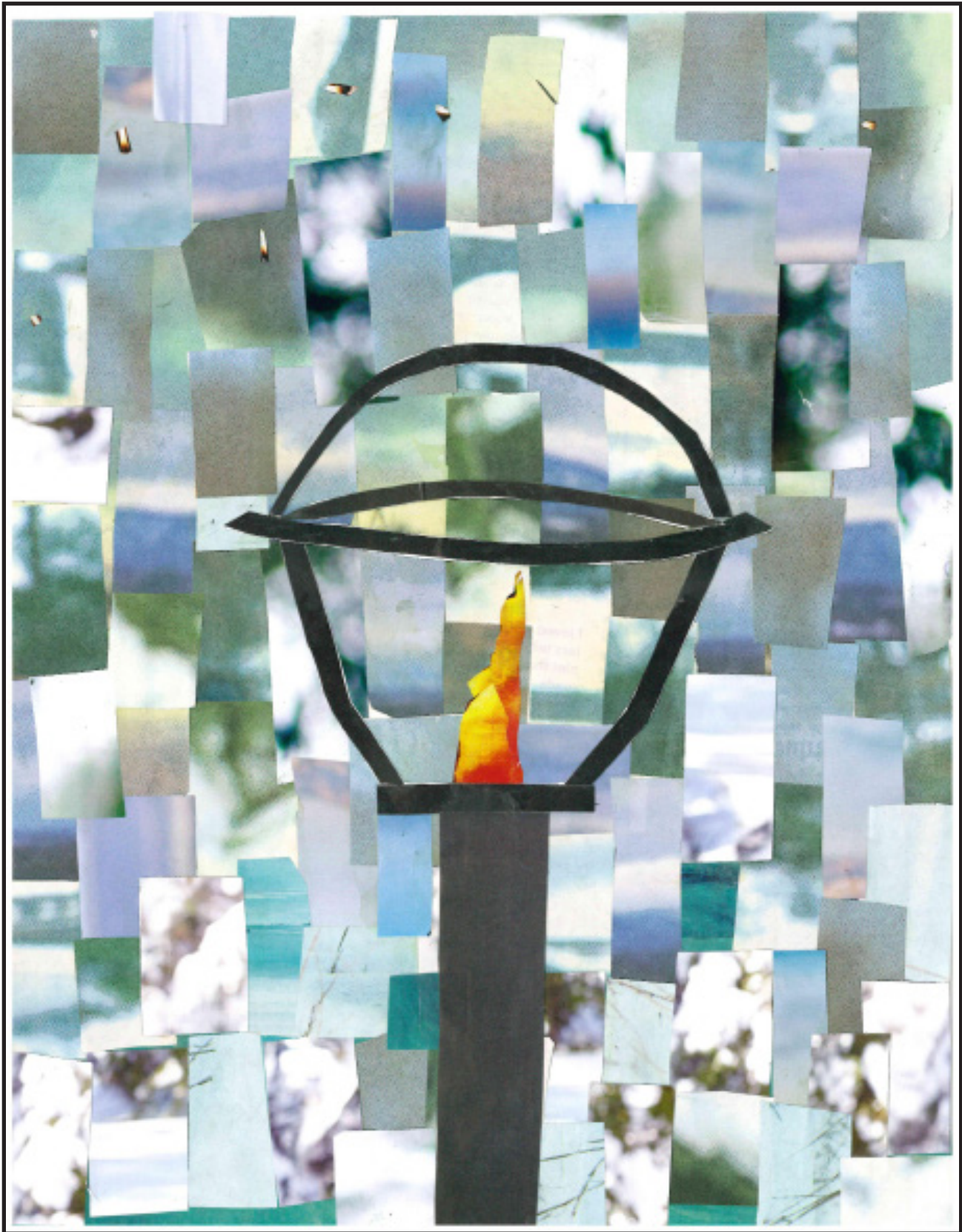
The yearning to be in His presence

– day and night – night and day.

In every season it is his song that I play,

The Spirit's voice.

A Well Lit Place



Artwork by Noah Cleveland and Lauren Cannon

A Rose

By Gabriela Arias

If there is one thing that you are
Then you are a rose
Beautifully you bloomed
So quietly
So graceful
Yet how easily you withered

You attracted those around you with
your
intoxicating fragrance
Though you were beautiful and drew
everyone towards you
Your thorns didn't allow anyone to get
too
close
Making you dangerous
They were only allowed to admire

Time passed and you couldn't stand to
be
separated from others anymore
So you dethroned yourself so you could
become part of the world

A rose living so gorgeously on this
Earth,
Adding elegance to wherever you went
Too fast
Did your petals fall

No matter how exhilarating and
alluring you
were
It could not protect you from the cruel
and
uncaring world
The moment you allowed others into
your
heart
You shriveled up and fell to this Earth

This is how you were to my eyes
It is why I must bear your loss.

The Lamp Post: Letter From The Editors

Once known as *The Q*, the Montreat College Literary Magazine has arrived on campus bearing a new name and a new image but pursuing the same goal: to allow Montreat College students, faculty, and alumni to showcase their creative abilities. The creation of *The Lamp Post* was brought about by the united and persistent efforts of every member on our editorial team—it has been great working together and gaining valuable experience in communications, public relations, advertising, conceptualization, graphic design, event planning, submission collection, submission review, writing, copy editing, and time management.

A symphony of gratitude must be bestowed upon Kimberly Angle and Elizabeth Juckett, whose fearless and wise leadership throughout the semester has brought forth an excellent result that we can all take pride in.

Finally, the creation of *The Lamp Post* would not have been possible without YOU—the readers, the thinkers, the encouragers, the creators, the photographers, and the artists. *The Lamp Post* believes that we are made in the image of the Creator, and it has been an honor to witness our Montreat community participate in the ongoing work of creation this semester. In this issue of *The Lamp Post*, we have displayed art, photography, poetry, fiction, and nonfiction drawn from the minds of our own students, faculty, and alumni, and we believe that each piece reveals something unique about Montreat College. We are blessed to have the ability to showcase these talents—to bring this bit of light into the world.

Blessings,

The Lamp Post Editorial Team



Montreat Gate Lamp



Artwork by Eric Reed Jr.

The Lamp Post Statement of Purpose and Editorial Policies:

The Lamp Post is an interdisciplinary undergraduate arts journal--created, designed, and published by and for Montreat students, alumni, staff, faculty, and supporters. At The Lamp Post, we believe that art comes from within and potentially creates response, reaction, inquiry, and discourse. We do not limit the definition of art; instead, we believe "we are the clay, and You our potter; All of us are the work of Your hand" (Is. 64:8).

The Lamp Post is published annually in hardcopy and/or electronically with special issues appearing selectively.

Editorial Policies: The Lamp Post accepts submissions via email: thelamppost@montreat.edu. Upon receipt of submission, the submission will be reviewed by members of the editorial staff and faculty advisors. The Lamp Post reserves the right to edit texts received; however, substantial changes are made in consultation with the author. Montreat College administration gives final approval before publication.

Authors and artists retain copyright and publishing rights to all submissions without restrictions.

There is no limit to the length of submissions but shorter (1-2 page) textual submissions are preferred. Visual art submissions should be sent as attachments to an email with the artist's contact information present.

Selection Criteria: The Lamp Post considers submissions of artistic merit in any publishable form. After review, submissions will fall under three categories: Accept Without Revision; Accept Pending Revision; or Decline. The Editorial Board of The Lamp Post reserves the right to summarily decline works that unnecessarily glorify violence, promote any variant of prejudice, contain illicit content, or do not represent the academic standards of Montreat College.

