

2021 EDITION



THE LAMP POST

REFLECTIONS



IN THIS EDITION

FICTION ~ PAGE 8

IN INFINITUM

In the twenty-second century, mankind developed faster-than-light travel through eventspace, finally allowing exploration of previously-unknown regions of space.

KNIGHTS OF ASHEVILLIA

A murder might have been witnessed, but the unfortunate hero doesn't know when, where, why, or even if a murder occurred at all—to the utter joy of the investigators.

NO GOOD DEED

A successful lawyer meets with an unusual client who's being sued, and provides very specific and applicable legal advice ...to the chagrin of the unassuming client.

SURE AS THE WOODTHRUSH SINGS

Two sisters visit an old, grandfatherly store owner as their family prepares to move, and hear bittersweet stories from the childhood of their parents.

POETRY ~ PAGE 32

"Anarcho-Capitalist Creed"

"Black Mountain Suite"

"Bone and Blood"

"Fairy Girls"

"flowers in her hair"

"great blue yonder"

"Haiku"

"Home."

"How to Write Poetry"

"In the Tall Green Grass"

"It is not for me..."

"Lies"

"Ode to the Toasted Cheese Crackers"

"Rats"

"Shell-Shock"

"The Poet's Lament"

"To a Dead Soldier of the Korean War"

"To Know a Heart"

"Where I Am From"

"Where is Everybody?"

VISUAL ART ~ PAGE 27

Photography by:

Lily Queen

Hannah Thompson

Fine Art by:

Zoe Evans

Charlie Frye

Ashley Ruppard

NONFICTION ~ PAGE 16

YOUR REFLECTION

A heartfelt letter from a student to the most important woman in her life, born out of introspection and appreciation.

A VALENTINE TO MONTREAT

A creative prose piece, addressing the author's favorite elements of campus life through the lens of a lover's emotions.

RECONCILING

Brief but uplifting, this piece explores the complexities of human emotions and interactions of all kinds.

MONTREAT VIGNETTES

The author brings to life her experiences at Montreat through a series of short, interconnected narrations.

THAT TIME I BECAME AWARE I WAS A WHITE MAN

Montreat students will experience a glimpse of post-undergraduate life with this narrative prose piece.

SCIENCE, TRUTH, AND DEEPER MAGIC

This lengthy and informed argument attempts to broker peace between mainstream science and Christianity.

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MEET THE STAFF



DR. KIMBERLY ANGLE
FACULTY ADVISOR

I'm very excited about the positive impact that *The Lamp Post* has had on Montreat's campus these past three years. More students are writing and submitting as well as attending Open Mic events. Dr. Juckett and I are continually impressed with the dedicated passion and commitment to excellence displayed by our *Lamp Post* editors.



DR. ELIZABETH JUCKETT
CO-FACULTY ADVISOR

Along with Dr. Kimberly Angle, Dr. Elizabeth Juckett serves as an advising professor to *The Lamp Post* 2021 team. She is delighted to be working for a third year with the talented editors, artists, and writers at Montreat College, who regularly inspire her.

CHRISTIAN YOUNG
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Christian is a junior and a Communications major with an emphasis in Public Relations at Montreat College. He's honored to be returning to the *Lamp Post* staff as Editor-in-Chief of the 2021 edition, in addition to leading the layout and design team.



CAPRICE COFFEY
FICTION, POETRY

Caprice is a junior and an English major with a concentration in Creative Writing. She is passionate about writing stories, especially fantasy, and hopes to turn that passion into a career. She also enjoys reading and drawing. She is very excited to be an editor of the 2021 edition of *The Lamp Post*.

ZOE EVANS
VISUAL ART, POETRY

Zoe is a sophomore English Major with a concentration in Professional Writing. She enjoys experimenting in different art mediums and working collaboratively with her two sisters on their novel. She is excited to join the *Lamp Post* staff of 2021 as a Poetry and Visual Arts editor.



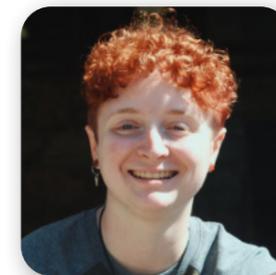
PETER FARR
POETRY, LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Peter is an English and Bible major inspired by his love for words, poetry, and art. When he isn't editing for *The Lamp Post*, he's usually outside, painting, or reading.



CHARLIE FRYE
FICTION, NONFICTION

In addition to being a fiction and creative nonfiction editor for *The Lamp Post*, Charlie Frye is an English and Creative Writing major graduating from Montreat in spring 21. Charlie is very passionate about writing but also enjoys reading a good book, drawing, or catching up on a TV show.



MORGAN HOOKS
PHOTOGRAPHY, LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Morgan Hooks is a senior communications major with a concentration in journalism. Hooks could gush for hours about alliteration, layouts, and landscapes—all elements that she is able to incorporate into this issue of *The Lamp Post* as one of the designers and through her position as Editor in Chief of the campus newspaper, *The Whetstone*.



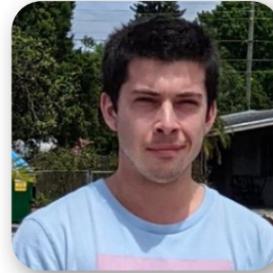
ANNA RAJAGOPAL
FICTION, NONFICTION

A fiction editor for the 2021 *Lamp Post* and a senior and an English major with a concentration in Creative Writing, Anna Rajagopal is inspired by her love of country, her Catholic faith, and World War II history. When she isn't busy studying, she enjoys adding another installment to her series involving a German-Jewish dynasty living in America.



BENJAMIN SCHMIDT
LAYOUT AND DESIGN, PROOFREADING

Ben Schmidt is a communication major with a concentration in journalism. In my free time I enjoy the outdoors, running/biking, hanging out with friends and playing video games.



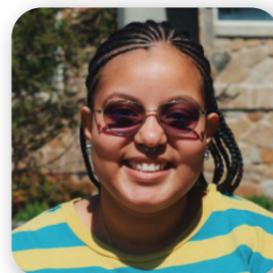
EMILY WILLIAMS
POETRY, LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Emily Williams is finishing her senior year and Creative Writing degree with her third time working on *The Lamp Post*. She can often be found working on her creative writing projects and poetry, both of which she hopes to publish some day soon.



RUKIYA WYLIE
NONFICTION, VISUAL ART

RuKiya is a junior majoring in Communications with a concentration in Journalism. Her favorite thing about working with *The Lamp Post* is getting the opportunity to read students and faculties beautiful work.



EDITOR'S PREFACE

Every edition of *The Lamp Post* strives for two things: The first is to be visually and thematically distinct from past editions, and it is safe to say that the 2021 issue meets that criteria. It features more than sixty creative submissions from Montreat students, alumni, and faculty, all revolving around a common theme—"reflections". Some of the pieces may provoke your curiosity, and others your imagination, but it is my hope that you will *enjoy* all of them.

The second thing for which we strive is to be a publication on par with literary journals across college and university campuses nationwide, in order to bring critical acclaim to both Montreat College and *The Lamp Post* itself, which would allow us to broaden the size and scope of our publication. The first step on this path is quality, which is why I must thank the *Lamp Post* editors for their tireless efforts in producing what I believe to be our finest edition yet. Our staff this year is the largest and most experienced in recent history, and this issue would not have been possible without them. It is an unpaid (and usually thankless) position, and I'd like them to get the credit they deserve.

But without further ado, please—enjoy the 2021 edition of *The Lamp Post*.

CHRISTIAN YOUNG
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

PHOTO CREDITS

Cover: Photo by Hannah Thompson, edited; reused on page 7.

Lamp post graphic from svgsilh.com/image/1649143.html.

"The Lamp Post" graphic by Christian Young.

Front matter: photo from www.all-hd-wallpapers.com/wallpaper/nature/gone-fishin-/229133, edited.

Fiction: photos by Hannah Thompson, pages 9, 10, and 14.

"Stalk", *ibid.*, page 15.

Nonfiction: *ibid.*, pages 17, 22-23, 26.

"Snow Place Like Montreat", *ibid.*, page 19, edited.

Visual Art, left-right, top-bottom:

page 28: "Ello Luv", *ibid.*; untitled painting by Ashley Ruppard; "Bibliophantom" by Hannah Thompson; "Mary?", *ibid.*; down: photo, *ibid.*, "Colors of the Soul" by Ashley Ruppard; "Tiny Planets" by Hannah Thompson; "After Hours", *ibid.*; "Snow Place Like Montreat", *ibid.*

page 29: "Oxford's Crown" by Lillian Queen; "Apple Picking", *ibid.*; "Crash" by Zoe Evans; "Look At That Over There" by Hannah Thompson; untitled painting by Ashley Ruppard; "Austin's Power" by Hannah Thompson; "But Where's Your Heart?" by Charlie Frye.

page 30: "August Flower" by Lillian Queen, edited; "McAfree" by Hannah Thompson; photo, *ibid.*; "BadAsh", *ibid.*; "Closer Than Appears", *ibid.*; "Cowboy Up", *ibid.*; down: "Stalk", *ibid.*; "Make An Assessment", *ibid.*

Poetry: *ibid.*, pages 32, 36, and 37.

"Spaghetti", *ibid.*, page 33.

Back matter: "The Lamp Post" logo graphic by Christian Young.

page 38: photo by Hannah Thompson.

FICTION

IN INFINITUM
BY WALKER LILES

"Emptiness which is conceptually liable to be mistaken for sheer nothingness is in fact the reservoir of infinite possibilities." — D.T. Suzuki

[Check] Analysis of recovered loggings relayed from the *Armstrong*—first manned space vessel to engage in eventspace travel. Loggings recovered 08-05-2200: one year, one month, twelve days after the ship's departure. Entries include the status reports of the *Armstrong's* progress and discoveries in an unknown region of space, following the relay signal of Test Shuttle 242. Entries logged by Captain Felix W. Norman, beginning:

Log 1: Log date: 06-23-2199, time: 06:15 (in the morning). First login of Felix W. Norman, appointed Captain of the *Armstrong*. Today marks the day when mankind finally reaches the supposedly unfathomable regions of space beyond our solar system. Upon introductions and other interactions with each of my crewmembers, the general attitude seems to be quelled excitement and curiosity as to what we might discover in this unknown region of space. Though I disagree with the logic of everyone's enthusiasm, it is...understandable. At least morale is high, and that should hopefully ensure that everyone is at his sharpest as we analyze this unknown region of space for whatever new discoveries we might uncover, although most of the quadrantal scans will be thanks to the highly advanced space-surveillance technology installed in the *Armstrong*, the best-constructed ship for space travel that money could buy. The Digital Interface (DI) will likely be more useful than the crewmembers; its programming is as superior as the *Armstrong's* in space-integrity. No doubt this ship will be most efficient for this mission, but I doubt its efficiency will even surface anything important. But I suppose we will know absolutely in twelve hours and forty-five minutes; logging out. [logging ends]

Log 2: Log date: 06-23-2199, time: 15:30. Second login of Felix W. Norman, appointed Captain of the *Armstrong*. We are three hours and thirty minutes away from launch; we will be the first people in history to traverse potentially millions of lightyears of space. The realization of this has apparently increased the excitement of my crew. Personally, while I suppose the behavior is understandable, I find the anticipation to be quite nonsensical. Over the billions of light

years we have observed and analyzed, we have not once discovered a habitable planet or any sign of life; even if there are no calculations as to how far this test shuttle has traveled, what is the likelihood of finding anything different? I might just be a naval captain chosen from my peers to keep this crew in line, to make sure our progress is logged, and thereby confirm the efficiency of this advanced ship, but I majored in science for a reason, and that's to affirm what I have always suspected: for all the significance that the lives of human beings, including myself, are believed to possess, in the end we are just a single cell in the miniscule speck of life, that evolved on this pebble of a planet that sits somewhere in this infinite ocean we call our universe. While we are undoubtedly complex in our molecular makeup, that complexity seems quite pointless in comparison to this vast, seemingly endless void. More relevantly, with all the facts given, the most beneficial outcome is that we will be able to confirm this truth of our lonely existence in the universe: it will be objective and undeniable. If anything else, we might find another planet with traversable conditions like that of Mars or our moon, so that we might have an alternative means of mining resources. Once we have completed our eventspace jump within the next three hours, we will deploy an appendant vessel to probe the nearest planet, assuming there even is a planet near; logging out. [logging ends]

Log 3: *static* Log date...Log date! 06-24-2199, time: 01:03. Third login of Felix W. Norman, captain of the *Armstrong*. It has been six hours and three minutes since the eventspace launch, and progress has been...unexpectedly hectic. The eventspace jump was near-instantaneous, but once we exited, we ran into some...turbulence: an asteroid belt. It was so unexpected and immediate we almost did not react in time. The crew's evasive measures were excellent, and we escaped the belt with no critical damage—perhaps a few scratches—but nothing drastic! ...Two things really perplex me about this incident. First of all: our arrival should have been in the exact coordinates of the test shuttle, but if that is true, then how could the test shuttle have possibly evaded the asteroids well enough to still be intact to even send out a signal? It could not have had such reliable evasion programming: its primary systems were to travel in eventspace and relay a trace-signal of its coordinates. Is it possible retracing the coordinates was that off-point? Was the test shuttle that lucky? No, it could not have been...its evasive systems. ...*sigh*. Secondly: the ship's sensory systems were completely chaotic; I suspect they must have received some damage during the evasion. According to the sensors, organic signatures were skyrocketing from every direction. It cannot be possible for there to be any form of life living out in those asteroids,

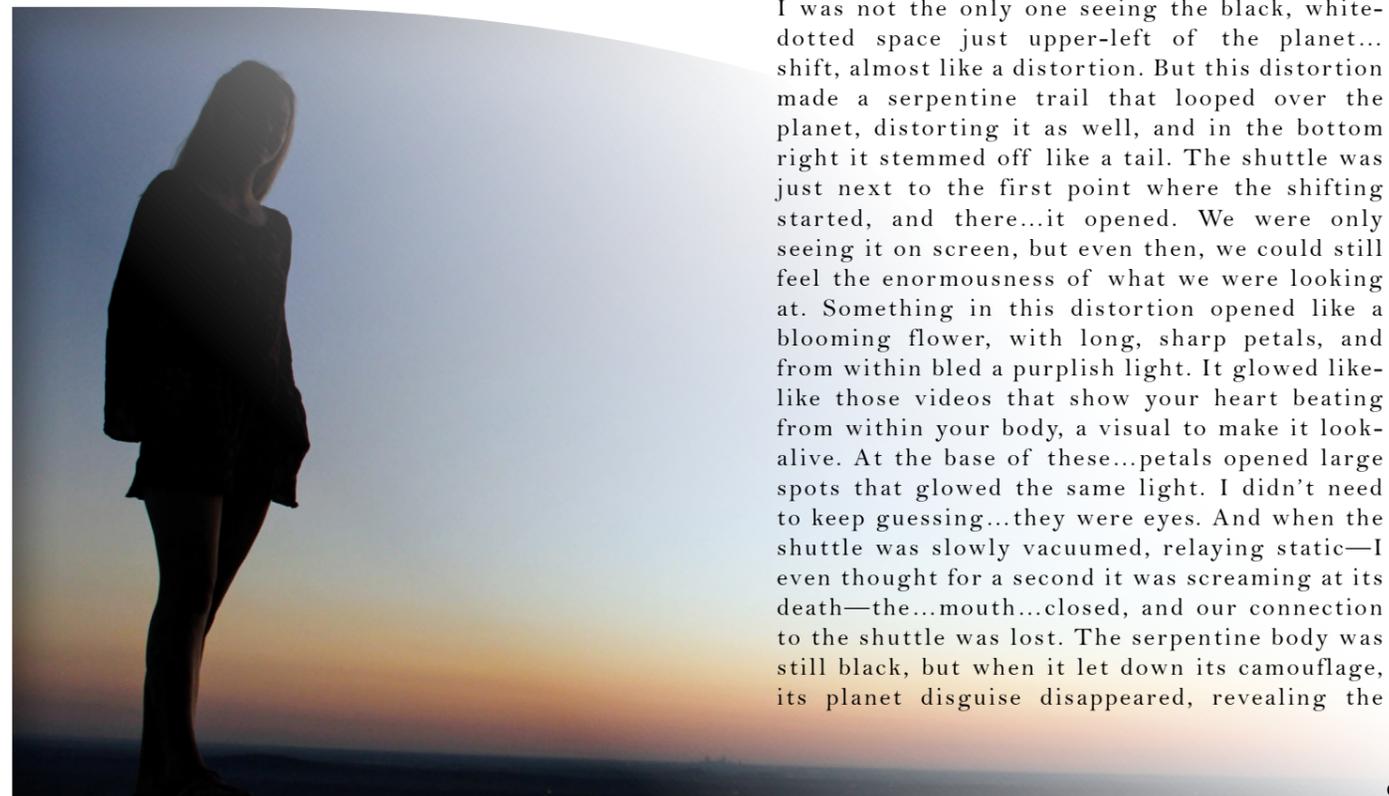
it simply cannot be. Despite these more likely reasons, Mr. Terrance, head of systems-monitoring division, emphasizes that the organic signatures showed up on the sensors as soon as we arrived, before we collided with anything. Regardless of his record, I will not encourage his apparent miscalculations and further encourage the crew's fantasies. So, obviously I dismissed his claims and ordered a shutdown of the sensory systems for full diagnostics. It should be a few hours until they are complete. In the meantime, we have already deployed the *Armstrong's* appendant scout shuttle to follow the relay signal. Apparently it is currently in the orbit of a nearby gas giant. I will confirm our progress after the diagnostics are complete and we have a more thorough understanding of what is going on. ...There is nothing out here, there cannot be...logging out! [logging ends]

Log 4: *long static* Log date... 06/...04/2199, time 7 AM—I mean—oh, forget it! This is the fourth logging of Felix W. Norman, captain of the *Armstrong*! *heavy breathing eventually followed by sigh* We...we got a response from the independent vessel. The DI...it could not ...it did not transmit any scans of magnetic frequencies from the planet, there were none being emitted, it could not have, there...was no planet. We were eventually able to pull up a visual. It zoomed in enough for the view of the planet to take up a quarter of the screen. It really looked like a regular terrestrial planet. How irregular could it be...? It was a zoomed visual, at our distance, but the ship's sensors should have been able to pick up the planet as well. But it didn't. ...instead, another signature was picked up. I—knew. I

don't know how but I somehow knew before Mr. Alberts confirmed, shuddering: it was an organic signature. Weak from our distance, but readings kept rising. It was not strong enough for us to make out any shape, no matter how much the readings increased, and nothing seemed to show up on the screen. I actually looked around at my crew, like I was expecting one of them to have an answer. I could barely see their faces from where I was. From what I could see, they were frozen on the screen, enough to tell me they were all either very confused or very terrified.

Why were they scared? Just hours ago, we—they were brimming with excitement. But now they were all frozen, like they were waiting to see a ghost pop out. It felt like an eternity that we watched. "What the hell is out there?!" I wanted to shout, not at my crew but I suppose at whatever living thing was somehow in view, that we could not see—could we have even guessed?! And I guess it answered: there was a flux on the sensors. Whatever was out there was moving. All of us—and I knew all of us—were fixed on the screen, scanning thoroughly for something to move, for something to visibly approach us. It was only then that I noticed the other shuttle. I sighed after having thought for a moment that it was the organic signature. But then I froze when I realized something was very wrong. On the screen the shuttle was just a little larger than a speck, but according to the signals relayed from the shuttle, it should have been right next to the planet...that should not have been possible. At that distance, it should have been impossible to distinguish from either the planet or empty space. Finally, we could all see what was moving...

At first, I thought it was blurring, but the gasps from some of the other crewmen confirmed I was not the only one seeing the black, white-dotted space just upper-left of the planet...shift, almost like a distortion. But this distortion made a serpentine trail that looped over the planet, distorting it as well, and in the bottom right it stemmed off like a tail. The shuttle was just next to the first point where the shifting started, and there...it opened. We were only seeing it on screen, but even then, we could still feel the enormity of what we were looking at. Something in this distortion opened like a blooming flower, with long, sharp petals, and from within bled a purplish light. It glowed like those videos that show your heart beating from within your body, a visual to make it look-alive. At the base of these...petals opened large spots that glowed the same light. I didn't need to keep guessing...they were eyes. And when the shuttle was slowly vacuumed, relaying static—I even thought for a second it was screaming at its death—the...mouth...closed, and our connection to the shuttle was lost. The serpentine body was still black, but when it let down its camouflage, its planet disguise disappeared, revealing the



gargantuan worm in its terrifying entirety...
[logging ends]

Final Log: ...the crew has unanimously agreed to return to their quarters while we...wait... for our eventspace signal to be reached. The... life form...has made no further movements... presumably it is part of the reason for the test shuttle's disappearance, but how it made it through the aster-...

What else is there to say? ...I was wrong...I was so abjectly wrong. Ha...hahaha...of course I was! In an infinite universe, infinite in time, infinite in evolution! ...infinite in possibilities.... What was I thinking, expecting to find nothing out here? Who on Earth would know what is out here, in infinitum?! *sigh...*

Over time, the scans provided us an expansive visual of not just...the worm, but also what we assumed was an asteroid belt that we first ventured through. I don't think I need to confirm those scans. The belt was only one very small strand of decaying material from, what looked like from a great distance to be a partial rib cage...30 times the size of the worm. There being no calculation of time in this region of the universe, it's possible some years...millennia passed after the test shuttle was sent, long before this other ginormous organism died. Further scans reveal even more organic signatures from beyond the bones. I did not order to bring up a visual, I don't think I could have at this point. I... myself...have decided to remain in my quarters, until something reaches us. This is Captain Felix W. Norman, log— ...goodbye.

KNIGHTS OF ASHEVILLIA BY JOSHUA HOLBROOK

CHAPTER 4 of an untitled manuscript I've been working on for a few years. We find our main character, JACK DARBY, convalescing after an unfortunate run-in while on a hike in the Linville Gorge. He finds himself approached by the old, grizzled Detective Dave.

Jack managed to stave off unconsciousness for the duration of the quarter-hour drive to the hospital. The group of three twenty-somethings that picked him up seemed concerned about Jack's wellbeing, but not particularly astounded by Jack's story. They'd been out chasing salamanders into the late night and by their own account had come across other, just as strange scenarios in their exploits. Jack was dropped off at the hospital in Marion and fell into blessed sleep as soon as he fell into the bed—the hike, the rain, the sprain, the bee stings, and the mental anguish of it all—conspired to drain his strength thoroughly.

When Jack awoke there was a man sitting at the end of his bed. He was the skinny, old,

sinewy type with the leathery skin of one raised outdoors in the South. He'd been staring at Jack with a notepad in his lap and rose to shake his hand.

"Mr. Darby, I'm Detective Dave O'Driscoll from the Marion P.D. You can call me Detective Dave."

Jack nodded in recognition as Detective Dave continued:

"They tell me you saw a murder."

"Yes sir," Jack fumbled, "Possibly."

Detective Dave's visage of crotchety disdain for the world in general settled on Jack.

"Possibly, Mr. Darby?"

"Well sir, I passed out before the murder was actually committed."

"You...passed out?" Dave's incredulity made Jack remarkably self-conscious.

Jack swallowed. "Well, yes..."

Detective Dave exhaled. "Mr. Darby, were you using any illegal narcotics?"

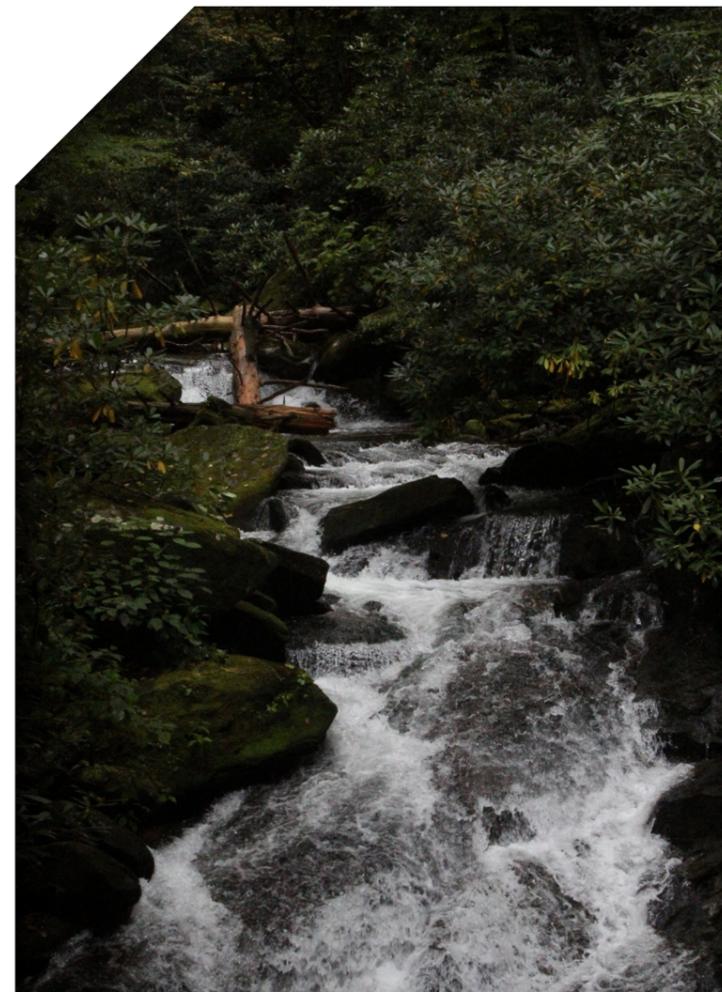
"What?" He was still trying to stave off the grogginess from the past day. "No! No, no, no—you don't understand. I was stung by yellow jackets."

"Yellow jackets?"

"Yes sir."

There was a moment of silence as Dave's eyes bore dumbly in Jack's direction.

"You know what?" said the detective as he looked down at his notepad, "I've gotten a little ahead of myself. Why don't you tell me the whole story from the beginning?"



• • •
Detective Dave seemed distracted by his notepad, biting his lower lip and shaking his head near-imperceptibly.

"So..." he finally said, followed by several seconds of quiet reflection.

"...If I may review your story: you were hiking in the Linville Gorge when you came across some wild fruit—"

"Mulberries."

"...Mulberries. In your, uh, mulberry picking, you disturbed a hive of yellow jackets, which you are highly allergic to, and proceeded to get stung multiple times while trying to run away. While you were running, you sprained your ankle and slipped into unconsciousness. Am I on point so far, Mr. Darby?"

"Yes sir. Although, I honestly didn't know I was allergic till I passed out. But then again, I've never been stung by that many before."

"Okay. And this was approximately what time?"

"I'm not exactly sure—but probably middle afternoon, two or three maybe?"

"Okay, two or three...you then woke up some undetermined time later—after it was dark—only to see a group of about-a-dozen naked hippies standing around a bonfire and doing some sort of witchcraft ritual—a satanic song-and-dance?"

"I..." Jack knew this would all sound ridiculous, he just hadn't realized how ridiculous. "I don't know if it was witchcraft per say, except that they were praying to Gaia—the Greek Earth goddess—"

"You're familiar with Greek Earth goddesses, Mr. Darby?"

"Yes. I mean, not intimately. I'm a professor. We teach Greek mythology as a part of our humanities curriculum."

"Okay..." began Detective Dave again. "...so they were performing this ritual and the ringleader starts telling them that one of them is a traitor, and the next thing you know, the whole group is beating up on a male individual, who may or may not have died, and by your own admission the whole situation could have been a hallucination from your bee stings. You woke up later to find the whole naked pagan dance party gone, with a torrential rain heavy enough to wipe away any evidence of them having been there."

Silence filled the room.

"Am I missing anything, Mr. Darby?"

Jack exhaled in deep, trying to wrack his brain for some forgotten part of the story that would make him sound more convincing. Unfortunately, that did not happen.

"Yes—The Brown Mountain Lights!"

"The Brown Mountain...Lights?"

"Yes," said Jack, "I saw them – they saw them during their ritual."

Detective Dave put his notebook down on the small table to his side.

"Mr. Darby, are you sure you weren't using

any drugs?"

Jack's legalistic approach to English got the better of him. "Well, I was smoking a pipe."

Another moment of silence.

"What kind of pipe, Mr. Darby?"

"A churchwarden."

"What?"

"You know, one of those long pipes."

"No...I mean, what was in the pipe, Mr. Darby?"

"Just tobacco, sir."

Dave rubbed his temples with his left hand, covering his face in the process.

"Ok, Mr. Darby. So—mulberries, yellow jackets, naked hippies, Brown Mountain Lights, a maybe-murder and a tobacco pipe. Am I missing anything?"

"No, sir, I think that's it."

"Huh..." was all that came out of Detective Dave's vacant face for several seconds.

"Ok, Mr. Darby. You haven't really given us much to go on, but we'll be in touch if anything turns up."

"Thank you, sir."

And with that, Detective Dave was gone, mumbling to himself on the way out, asking himself why it couldn't be just another respectable meth lab explosion.

NO GOOD DEED BY CHRISTIAN YOUNG

Charlie was a lawyer. It had surprised his parents when he said that he wanted to go to law school after college and even more so when the now-prestigious Brown, Fineman & Gregg had hired him, even though they were only a small regional law firm at the time. They were surprised not because Charlie's personality was incompatible with his chosen profession—far from it, actually—but rather because of his name. When, after a long night in the hospital, Carl and Dena had settled on "Charlie" as the name of their firstborn son, they were imagining he'd grow up to be a famous baseball shortstop at best, though they would've been happy with just about anything. "Charlie" just didn't seem to be the name of someone in a serious career; it was too informal, too immature, too kid-sounding. His partners apparently agreed, since the given name on his business card was "Charles," even though that was not his actual name; as a practitioner of property law, Charlie had to present himself as respectably as possible if he wanted his clients to take him seriously.

"I've got another one for you, Chuck," his partner said, gently dropping a thick manila folder onto Charlie's already-overflowing desk. "Class-action, trespassing and property damage. Right up your alley."

"Who's the defendant?"

"Some guy. Claims he's a celebrity. Goes by

‘Nick,’ and only ‘Nick,’ but says he has a stage name that you’d recognize. Wouldn’t tell anybody over the phone, only his attorney.”

“What, like Sia?”

“That’s the idea, yeah.”

“Fine. I’ll get in contact with him after the Smith case wraps up.”

“Sorry, Chuck, but you’d better get started on this one right away. They weren’t able to settle, and it goes to court in a month.”

“So soon? Why is he only getting in touch with us now?”

His partner sighed and sat down; Charlie had more questions than he thought.

“Well, he initially didn’t want a lawyer. He truly did want to settle with the plaintiffs out-of-court, but apparently they would have only been satisfied with a massive amount of money or with him withdrawing from the public eye, and shutting down his family business.”

“And he didn’t want to pay them off? That’s a new one.”

“He told them that his entire business is a charity, and that he doesn’t make any money off of it whatsoever. He’s a real man’s-man type, likes living off the grid in the wilderness up north, that sort of thing. From what I could gather, the only way he interacts with the outside world at all is through this charity his family’s been running.”

“Then what are the plaintiffs hoping to get from the judge, if the defendant doesn’t have anything to give them?”

“I think they’re going to force him to shut down his charity, but we’ll see. They haven’t exactly made their intentions clear.”

“And there’s been no discovery so far?”

“Poor guy didn’t even know to ask.”

Discovery is the process by which the two parties of a legal proceeding share evidence with each other, ostensibly to promote a fair trial—making sure that neither side can hide evidence that would help, or harm, the other, and so giving the other side time to plan for it—but which is now more commonly used in pretrial settlements. After all, why spend months of time and mountains of money going to trial when your opposition is likely to win? As with many elements of the legal system, however, it has been transformed from a tool originally designed to protect the natural rights of man into a machine of productivity.

Charlie set up an appointment with “Nick” for the following day; they were going to need all the time in the world in order to gain some measure of preparation for the trial. There was evidence that needed to be reviewed, statements that needed to be corroborated, witnesses that needed to be prepared for cross-examination... the life of a lawyer was rarely lazy. But before any of that, Charlie had to understand the basic facts of the case, which required that he meet with the defendant himself.

Nick was an elderly man, though he didn’t act like one: he was energetic in his movements, and Charlie noted with surprise that his offered handshake was returned with an uncharacteristic strength and vigor.

“That’s quite the grip you’ve got there, Mr. Nick,” said Charlie. “Is it alright if I call you Mr. Nick?”

“Please, just Nick,” he replied. “And that’s the product of seventy years’ hard labor with my own two hands. You won’t find another handshake like that in the whole wide world!”

“I don’t doubt that’s true, Nick. So, I understand you’re being sued for trespassing and property damage?”

“Yes, that’s correct.”

“By whom?” Charlie asked, flipping through papers in his manila folder. “I don’t have any specific names here, or even how they’re related to you.”

“Oh, they’re just people who don’t like what I do,” he said. “I don’t really *know* any of them, but I’d like to if I ever get the chance.”

“No, Nick, I don’t think you would like to know them. They’re trying to get your charity shut down.”

“Well, yes, there is that, but everyone occasionally does something that they don’t really mean to do. It’s part of being human, after all.”

“You’re giving them too much credit. Can you tell me what it is, exactly, that your charity does? The arguments we can make vary greatly, depending on the nature of your work.”

“I give gifts to kids over the holidays. I do my best to make sure that every child has something, no matter who they are or where they live.”

“You leave presents for children? Like Santa Claus?”

“Ah, yes! I see you’ve heard of me.”

“I thought you said your name was just ‘Nick.’ No last name?”

“It is, but professionally I go by Nicholas Klaus.”

“If I might ask, Mr. Klaus—”

“No, no, *Klaus* with a K. And, please, call me Nick.”

“—Mr. *Klaus*, why are you, of all people, being sued?”

“Well, my charity is only active for one day every year, but on that day we work a full twenty-four hours. Me and my team fly around the world synchronous with the rotation of the Earth so that we only deliver presents at night. As you can imagine, it’s quite a lot of stress on my reindeer, since they don’t have any breaks and have to switch out every six hours to eat. I’m pretty sure that the people in the class-action suit are just upset that my reindeer have a habit of leaving... *presents*... of their own.”

Charlie, who had been taking notes on the back of his folder as Nick Klaus was talking, finished his sentence with a forceful period and

laid the folder on the table in front of him.

“You don’t really have a strong case, Mr. Klaus,” he said. “I’d highly advise a settlement, as you aren’t likely to win if this case goes to court.”

“Why?” the old man asked. “I haven’t done anything wrong, have I?”

“It’s not a matter of moral ‘right’ and ‘wrong,’ Mr. Klaus, it’s a matter of permission. The charge against you, as I read here, contains two counts: willful trespass on behalf of a domesticated animal or animals, and minor property damage caused by said animal. You’ve just admitted to me that your reindeer act like every other pet, having a need to consume and subsequently excrete food, which is grounds enough for the property damage charge. No judge will hold you to a lesser standard than any other pet owner.”

“But my reindeer aren’t my pets! They’re my family!”

“How you define your relationship with your domesticated animals does not change the fact that you are responsible for cleaning up after them; or, alternatively, ensuring that they do not cause a mess on other people’s property in the first place. Which brings me back to the first point, as the fact that your reindeer defecated on private property is evidence of trespassing under the element of unauthorized entry: have you ever entered a contract with any legal entity requesting services rendered?”

“...I’m sorry?” Nicholas Klaus’s energetic demeanor was beginning to look less so.

“Well, unless you have some form of expressly-given permission—written or verbal, though written generally holds up better in court,” Charlie continued, “any sort of entry, whether by you or by your pets, counts as an unauthorized entry onto private property. The way I see it, there’s no way I can skew this in order to present you as being the bearer of lawfully-given permission to enter, and even if we could somehow win this case as it’s being presented, there’s a high chance that you would be faced with criminal charges as a result.”

“Criminal charges? For what? Bringing peace and happiness to the world?”

“Bringing peace and happiness to the world without a permit, yes,” replied Charlie. “You’ll most likely be detained on charges of trespassing on multiple counts as a result of this, not including operation of an international undocumented import-export business that’s disguised as a ‘charity’; frankly, I’m surprised you haven’t been arrested already, as you’re probably the most successful smuggler in all of history.”

“You’ve got to be kidding me!” said Nick, frustratedly slamming his hands on the table as Charlie leaned back in his chair. “I go through all this trouble to make children happy—children!—and you’re saying that I could go to jail for it?”

“And that’s probably the best-case scenario,”

said Charlie the lawyer. “In the worst-case scenario, your actions could amount to a medium-scale international incident, as various countries fight over your extradition rights in order to try you by their own laws.”

“Why would they do that?” Nick sat with his head in his hands, too consumed by despair at his current unintentional predicament to be able to process all of this information.

“You’re joking, right?” Charlie let out a small chuckle before reining in his desire to laugh. “You illegally entered every country on Earth. Not only will they all want to find out exactly how you evaded their border security measures, but the more militant and nationalistic ones will want to know exactly what you did while you were in their country. Ever heard of North Korea? China? Russia? For all they know, you could be giving their children anti-Communist propaganda. *Actually*...”

“Please, you’ve got to help me. I don’t know what I’m going to do.”

“...I may have an idea that could get you out of the class-action suit without a settlement, but you’d also most likely have to stop delivering presents to children on Christmas Eve. It could save your life, however. Do you want to hear it?”

“Yes, please! I’ll do anything to make sure this doesn’t become an international incident.”

“Also, before I proceed, I should mention that you will be billed for my time. Our current rate is two hundred per hour, so please see the receptionist on your way out to set up a payment plan, since I understand you probably can’t pay the whole amount up front...”

Charlie was tired on his way back to his apartment that day, and since he and his wife rarely talked about their jobs when they were at home, he didn’t think about Nick’s case until it made the headlines in the *Times* a couple weeks later.

“I guess I should thank you,” his wife said during dinner, passing him the tablet with the article pulled up. “You wouldn’t believe how much work I’ve received since this aired.”

Charlie examined the sensationalist headline: “Santa Seeks Asylum After Assassination Threats,” and let out a small “hmm” in response.

“I almost need therapy myself, except I never really believed in Santa to begin with,” she said, watching Charlie enjoy his Chinese takeout. “I’m glad to see he’s lived up to my expectations.”

“You ever wonder why we can’t have nice things?” asked Charlie, glancing up from the heavily-exaggerated but not untrue article beneath that title.

“Because of lawyers like you?”

“No, because people like him don’t think about what they’re doing.”

“I think it’s because of lawyers like you.”

“Fair enough.”



SURE AS THE WOODTHRUSH SINGS
BY ZOE EVANS

I will miss this little town. It's hard to believe that in a short few months, we'll be well on our way to somewhere dry, flat, and dusty. I'm not sure I'm ready. "Libby!" hollers Ma from the washroom. I hear her shoes hit that one loose floorboard as she leans over to carry her voice farther. "Can you take Louisa and go to Lawrence's? I need a little more flour. Half a pound'll do." I sigh. Louisa is only three. I am fifteen. I try not to get short with her. I know she's doing as best as any little one can. Jacob is much better at keeping his temper when she runs around wild. He's only thirteen, but he's as calm and as wise as Pa. Same green eyes, too. The color of dried rosemary leaves with flecks of red-brown.

I help Louisa ease on her shoes, and we start down the wooded path that leads from behind the farmhouse to the town proper. Under our feet crunch the layer of pine needles and oak leaves that hushes other noise. I like pine needles for that reason. You can hear the animals better when there's not so much racket from the twigs and sweet gumballs being crushed beneath heavy feet.

I feel Louisa's little hand grip my thumb tight as she bumbles next to me. "Sissy," she says after having been quiet for quite some time.

"You hear that? What's his name?" She means the birds rustling in the pine branches, the loudest of them a clear note pattern. Recently, she's been fascinated by watching sparrows and

mourning doves bobble around eating the bits of corn we leave out after shucking. She reminds me of a little chickadee, hyperactive and determined despite her size.

"Oh, him? Listen close, Lou, that's one of the prettiest birds you ever did hear. His name's Mr. Woodthrush," I say, stopping to kneel down to her level. I watch her clear blue eyes reflect the overcast summer sky as they flit back and forth, observing the treetops for the fabled bird. The woodthrush is chirruping somewhere in the deep jade green. It's a little melody. *Chee-do-bee-dee... thrush.*

It's like somewhere he's got his hands shoved in his pockets and he's strolling barefoot on the grass, hoping for a pretty young girl to happen to be around to hear him. I feel a pull at my heart, knowing there will be no song as beautiful as the woodthrush on the road.

"I like him," Louisa rasps. She hasn't quite figured out how to whisper yet. I laugh.

"Lou, did you learn how to whisper in a sawmill? Hush up now, you'll scare him!" She laughs at me though she does not understand my joke. We are almost at the clearing.

Lawrence's is an old general store. It has been here for as long as I can remember, and from what I've heard, from when anyone remembers. The planks of the outside are stained with years of sun, smoke, and rain. It leans a little. The owner, Mr. Lawrence, is a widowed old man with many a story to tell. Louisa complains of dirt in her sock, and we have to stop only a short way off. She digs her stubby fingers into the darning I just finished, and I wince. I hope that God can grant me patience with my sister as we take the long journey west. She will only get wigglier in a stuffy old wagon.

When we get up to the steps, Louisa grabs my fingers tighter and grips her skirts near to her chest as she hops up, up, up to the top. I smile. Suddenly, I am struck by the memory of doing the very same when I was her age. Those steps seemed insurmountable, near as high as my waistline at three. "Good job, Lou!" I say, to let her know I recognize the importance of her feat.

I push the warped, noisy door open to Lawrence's. Louisa's and my shoes clunk heavily on the floor that I know is hollowed out underneath for resting the sweet potatoes. The deep smell of coffee beans, oak, and sawdust is comforting. If scents could have color, this one would be somewhere between red clay and fresh coffee grounds.

From the back porch, I hear a slight creaking and I know Mr. Lawrence has gotten up from his rocking chair. He shuffles in and Louisa's face lights up. "Mr. Lawrence!" she cries, and rushes to grab his knees, the only part her short stature can reach. Mr. Lawrence chuckles with a raspy dryness that shows his age.

"Welllll," he drawls. "If it ain't little Lou. How are you, junebug?" His tall, bent stature

straightens slightly for his faded blue eyes to meet mine. "And how are you, Miss Libby? Doin' alright?" I smile. Mr. Lawrence loves children, and has known each of us for our whole lives. In a way, he is like my grandfather.

"I'm doing just fine, Mr. Lawrence, thank you. I hope you're doing well."

He makes a dismissive sound and swats his spotted hand. "Ah, Miss Libby, when you're as old as me, doin' well has a different meanin'."

I smile, but only to be polite. I don't like to think of his age.

"Can I get you ladies somethin'? I know you all's preparin for that big trip of yours," Mr. Lawrence says, shuffling behind the wooden register.

"Yes," I reply. "Ma needs a half pound of flour."

Louisa pipes up from her squatting position on the floor where she has been inspecting a dead ant. "Ma says she's gonna make us biscuits to take! I get to wrap 'em in the cloth. She promised." Mr. Lawrence smiles.

"That right? You make sure to wrap them biscuits tight now, Lou. Don't want 'em to go rattlin' all round that wagon. You might have to go eatin' your supper bouncin' around, all shook up." Mr. Lawrence wobbles and crosses his eyes. "Whoa-oh-oh! My butter peas! Whoa now, pass me that plate!" Louisa giggles uncontrollably, and Mr. Lawrence nearly glows, seeing her response. His leathery cheeks crinkle in more ways than I thought possible, and his laugh sounds like ancient music.

As Mr. Lawrence fills the paper bag with the flour, I am reminded of all the times he has done the same. I even remember when I was first allowed to come to the store alone. The memory makes my throat close with sadness. I push it away, but the effort requires me to pinch the skin between my thumb and forefinger so I have a little spark of pain to think about. I shake my head. "Mr. Lawrence," I begin, resting my elbows on the register. "Do you remember when my parents were my age?" Even though his face is half-turned to me, I can see his eyes close slightly in a smile.

"Why, Miss Libby, of course! I remember when they's born, too." Louisa's attention is piqued. She can't reach to where I am, so I pick her little frame up and place her on top of the counter. We both know we are in for a story.

Mr. Lawrence pats the bag a few times on the countertop, and begins. "See, your ma and pa I knowed for a long, long time. Saw 'em born, saw em runnin' around not bigger'n a grasshopper and with twice the strength. Now you girls know that I sell helpful things, foodstuffs and the like. But I also have this big round barrel. Got it filled with licorice pieces." Louisa interrupts.

"Mr. Lawrence, can I have some licorice?" I swat her arm lightly.

"Don't be rude, Lou. After, maybe. Mr.

Lawrence is speaking."

He makes the same dismissive grunt. "Ah, she ain't hurtin' nothin,' Miss Libby. When your ma and pa's her age they'd do the same. When they's little, Maria and Abe would come 'round, faces all flush cause they'd been runnin' out in all that heat with the children. Couldn't get one without the other, no sir. They was inseparable. They'd come in, pennies pinched in their little fingers and they'd ask me for some of that licorice. Course, I always gave 'em a little extra. Never hurt." Mr. Lawrence winked at me. "I saw 'em get older, get all gangly-like, get them goggly-eyes for each other, and get sweet on each other. Made me smile every week in service. Preacher'd be talkin' and talkin' and talkin,' neither one of 'em paid any mind. They's too busy lookin' 'cross the church at each other. Real sweet. I remember bein' that young, bein' sweet on my wife." Something about his face changed, and I felt the same pang in my heart that I had on the trail.

"Their weddin' was real nice, wildflowers everywhere on this big long table in the barn. There was them little Benjamin buttons, bluer'n October sky. They got some of them money plants for good luck and even yella mums. She looked like a right angel in her dress, positively glowin'. I heard she made it herself. Abe practically split his face in two with that grin. Weren't long after they got married that they had their first little girl. Bright young thing, hated bein' picked up and loved her parents more than the world itself. That," Mr. Lawrence reaches under the cabinet and pulls out a little bag, "and licorice pieces."

Louisa claps her hands and receives her piece with glee. Mr. Lawrence's weathered hands close over mine, and I roll the candy in the divot of my palm. I don't eat it yet. I can't. My throat burns and it feels as though a tomato stake has been driven under my ribcage. My soul aches. "Mr. Lawrence," I say, and my voice tremors despite my best efforts. The licorice rolls around faster, and I can't bring myself to lift my eyes. "Thank you for taking care of us. I'm going to miss this place, but I'll miss you most of all."

"Oh, Miss Libby," his tone is so quiet, so filled with joy and sorrow. His fingers brush my hair back from my face. I have to look. His blue eyes, seemingly made of time itself, take me in and fill with tears. Mine gush in response. I pull Louisa to the other side of the counter and together we embrace the man who makes our town feel like home. "Girls," he says, voice muffled by my shoulder, "I love you, sure as the woodthrush sings."

YOUR REFLECTION

BY LEYNA GOULD

"You are my very most favorite Leyna Keely Gould in the whole wide world."

A writing dedicated to the most important woman in my life.

You carried me through your best and worst days. Even when I made you sick to your stomach you could not wait to meet me. Finally came the day. March 9th, 2002, Kirkland, Washington in Evergreen Medical center. The first time you held me. Do you remember that moment? Was I everything you expected? I might not have realized it then, but from that moment on I knew you were my protector forever. I am growing older and older now, but I am still your little girl. You have these characteristics that no one can compare to, not even the little girl you created.

Your smile illuminates the room, your personality makes everyone happy, your humor comes out of nowhere, and in the best ways if I might add! You are the independent woman that I aspire to be. I try to reflect you. Through thick and thin you never give up on anyone. When relationships get bumpy, you fix them. You have one of the biggest hearts that I have ever known. You are my rock; anytime I need an ear, or a shoulder to cry on you are there. I am in college now. I made it. I am living my dream of playing softball in college. You were right, of course, that all I had to do was pray and wait, and my opportunity is finally here. Being two and a half hours away does not stop you from being the best. You write letters to me because you know I like "the olden days" when people interacted with each other through personal letters or face to face, even though we have phones. You work your tail off with two jobs for me to achieve my goal here at college. You have always been my number one supporter, but you already knew that I was in your thoughts at age seventeen. Isn't that right? I hope I am everything you dreamed of and prayed for. You are one of the most important people for me to impress.

I want to be a reflection of you. You are the most selfless person I know. You have sacrificed everything to make sure my little

brother and I have everything we need. You have provided me with a loving branch of family that I can always count on. I know if I ever fall you will be there to pick me right back up. Now that I am growing older, I am respecting you even more day by day. You inspire people, you inspire me. My favorite part about our relationship is the fact that we can be serious, goofy, and frustrated at each other, but I will always know you love me the same. My favorite part about you is your love for others, even the polar bears! When you love someone, you show them just how much.

• • •

I want to be a reflection of you. Do you remember my first bully? I do. I remember days and nights full of crying because I did not look like the "normal" athlete. I remember how self-degrading I was towards myself because I thought I was not good enough. I remember the night that I got called fat by a teammate written on a napkin during a team dinner. A few years later I remember a grown man telling his players that they were never going to get around me because of how big I am. A little further down the line I remember a D1 college softball coach telling me I am a good ball player, but I need to lose weight. Now in college, freshmen boys judged me based on circulated words throughout a team. During these difficult times I believed them. I believed I was not good enough. I remember wanting to give up on everything, but you would not let me. Through those tough times you would be on the other side of the phone or hugging me tightly telling me not to believe them. You would tell me how unique I am. You would reassure me on my talent as a softball player. You would sit me down and tell me all these uplifting words. You made me believe that I am a smart, kind, beautiful woman. You remind me of that on the clock twenty-four seven. The best advice you ever gave was to, "kill them with kindness." Thanks to you I am a collegiate athlete. Thanks to you, I am learning to love myself for who I am. Thanks to you I am growing my confidence day by day. Thanks to you, I believe that I am a talented, smart, independent, and beautiful woman. You raised me to be that woman. The most recent thing you do that I love about you is the devotions you send me over text. You remind me every day to worship the Lord and remember and respect his creation. The devotions inspire me as much as you do. Because of you I am living the best life possible.

I want to be a reflection of you. I want to be this powerful woman, that can fight like crazy and love just as hard. I want to build a family as strong as you. I want to show to the world the amazing woman you are. I want to show the world this woman that has fought for me by my side and will always be my protector. Thanks

to you, I know my place in this world. Thanks to you, I have a sense of what a kind, smart, beautiful, courageous, talented mother I should be to my kids one day. The best part about you is that I have the opportunity to be just like you. You have taught me so many lessons in life, even when I thought you were just mad at me. You have taught me to never give up on myself. Luckily, I got your looks too! You have and continue to make such an impact on my life, and I cannot thank you enough for being the woman you are. Mom, you are my very most favorite momma in the whole wide world.

I love you,
Leyna

A VALENTINE TO MONTREAT

BY STEPHANIE PETIT

In the middle of nature, surrounded by woods, a small and cozy place became my new Valentine. Fifteen miles east of Asheville, deep in the mountains near Black Mountain, a beautiful, secluded village with around 800 residents, Montreat can be found. Just like when you fall in love with someone, just the sound of his voice will make you smile for no reason. The same happens to me when I open my eyes and view the lovely landscape.

Of course, the first dates were rather awkward and cold. Arriving from a lush and green country, I'd never been to a place with short, freezing days and slippery slopes full of snow. I needed to learn how to deal with my Valentine's days: some soft, cotton clothes, gloves, hats, and wool socks were the key to start becoming closer and feel comfortable when getting together. Therefore, when the wind's gusts hugged me, I was more prepared to receive the embrace. Now I'm learning to dress like an onion, adding layer

upon layer so that I can enjoy the long, starry, dark nights that resemble a Picasso painting.

As the days went by and our love grew, like a couple learning more about each other, this area changed its palette like a chameleon changes color. Like the chameleon, the four seasons changed, from the dark-brown woods during winter, to the snow-white covered trees and rooftops, to the light blue warmth of sunny days. I'm so excited to spend time with my Valentine, much like a kid running to open his favorite gift. As I go out of my door, my hands warmed by a thermos of coffee, I begin walking slowly, so my time outside will last. This passion makes me feel alive and thankful, having the opportunity to develop my life in a space full of evergreens, where silence reigns. This sweet partner gives me energy and motivates me to work hard and build my future rock by rock like the buildings on campus.

In Argentina, Valentine's Day is a day for lovers to express their affection with greetings, Valentine's cards filled with hearts, roses, swans and doves and special dinner dates. So, this year I am willing to spend the whole day with my new Valentine; I will start the day filling my backpack with sandwiches, fruits, and drinks to be ready for a hike.

The dawned cool and sunny, so I headed out, enjoying the soothing power of nature and escaping from the daily grind until I arrived at Lake Susan where the wooden bench was waiting for me. While resting my legs, I eat my sandwich—crispy chicken with caramelized onion and a bit of strawberry flavor for a burst of sweetness in my mouth. With my eyes lost in the beauty of the lake covered with leaves, I discover almost-hidden reflection of the sun and movement of the breeze on the face of the waters—the binding of two powerful elements recreating diamonds that sparkle on the lake



ripples. As if they knew about San Valentine's day and the charm of love, three tiny ducklings peek out from the reeds. My Valentine, your sunny face today was a pleasing sight!

Our farewell is arriving, the sunset will begin to appear, the sun will hide below the horizon and the sky will turn red, the last gasp of beauty before the death of the day. As lovers do when they are together, I will hope that this passion will last forever. But, as in all relationships, I know there will be marvelous days in which I think only of you as well as gloomy days in which I let my selfishness and "busy-ness" rob me of your presence. But, today, at the last of the sunset, I celebrate knowing that whatever storms may come, we will be together—sweet Montreat—for these precious years.

RECONCILING

BY CARSON YATES

There will be joy in the nights and soreness in the mornings. I have seen smiles become blank in the reality of unfulfilled expectations. This will be the proving ground for how true you can be, how clear you can see. You'll never know yourself entirely until life explains it to you in four letter words or through the lonely nights in retrospect. You may never have the right words till you want to take them back. This will be your time. I learned from investing in the wrong people, only to see the right ones still asking me to come home. Hard as it may be, we were built for this. We were built to feel the pain of rejection, to know the disappointment of an "I love you" become an "I hate you." Furthermore, we are programmed to build from ground zero, to grow out of ashes like wildflowers after forest fires. You are more than your downfalls, and you will be remembered for your windfalls. This will be your time, for you all will stand taller than your shortcomings.

MONTREAT VIGNETTES

BY ANNA RAJAGOPAL

I sat on the trunk of a fallen tree near the path up to Lookout Mountain and worried about my Philosophy exam that was fast approaching. I had held off studying for my philosophy class in the interests of time, and now realized that I had made a significant mistake. I could not concentrate on the stillness of nature around me, and even less on writing about it. I glanced down in my distress—and saw a fuzzy yellow caterpillar crawling along the top of the trunk towards me as if entering my story. I had never seen an insect of its appearance before. The tufts of yellow fur covering its body caused it to resemble a tiny ferret wheel brush, and the tan pattern down its back reminded me of a

rattlesnake's tail. White and brown tassels of hair, as smooth as horsehair or my Sheltie's coat, stuck out from its head and rear, with two brown whiskers extending over its shiny black, bead-like head, so that it looked like an Indian with a headdress or a miniature male deer.

I thought I would set my pen in front of it, to see how it would react to the intrusion of this man-made novelty into its organic world. Instead, I ended up hitting the caterpillar on its head with my pen. It immediately turned into itself, like a human flinching from a blow, and lay perfectly still. I was filled with chagrin and regret. I hadn't meant to hurt it. I was deeply aware of the injustice in the reality of a creature happily living its life and then unexpectedly injured and maybe even killed by something that didn't need to happen. A college student is supposed to be curious, but curiosity can sometimes have dangerous consequences. I jotted down the incident as another mistake I had made at Montreat College.

But as soon as I finished writing, the caterpillar seemed to come back to life. It straightened its head out, all its whiskers quivering, then turned surprisingly gracefully and began crawling in the direction it had come. Before it had passed me completely, however, it raised its front half towards me as though sniffing, trying to figure out what I was, curious.

Later I learned that it was just as well the caterpillar behaved as it did, when I read an article by Michigan State University about the Banded Tussock moth, which I had labeled my brief companion. According to the article, the tassels and fur on the Banded Tussock caterpillar are filled with venom, a defense mechanism.

Friday, I scored a 100 on the exam.

The mountains behind Howerton Hall rise softly before me with the rolling gentleness of Tennessee as I sit on the bench in front of Gaither Hall. It is late September, but the hills still only show spots of rose and yellow and tan in their overall swath of green, like the first attempts of a novice painter. In fact, with the flecks of pink and yellow on the mountainside, the view looks more like spring than fall. The sky is a clear light blue, not the signature dark blue of an "October sky." A plane flying above the highest slope resembles a tiny flying fish swimming through a clear blue ocean. I watch as it disappears behind the ridge. The mountains appear adolescent and innocent in their efforts, as if they are trying to be mature. Like me.

Even though I am a Junior in college, I feel as though I am only making faint efforts to be mature. I am young and naïve. I yearn for full flourishing and color. Maybe I have to believe that it will come, that the mountains will, by late October, be a sea of deep red and gold and orange. They are doing their best. And I am doing my best. That's all anyone can do, as Ruby

Mae tells Christy in one of my favorite movie series, about a girl who leaves her privileged home in Asheville to teach in the mountains of Tennessee. In one of the episodes, the fall colors didn't come to "the cove" because, like us, the mountain folks had late rains that kept everything green.

Behind me, I hear the happy voices of children on the same playground my mom used to bring me to when she paid visits to my dad, who was a professor at Montreat College. I never thought then that I would one day be a student here. Granted, the last thing on a four-year-old's mind is college. (Even though child psychologists say that death, which is an even later event, is.) I wonder how I can still feel so young, not even that much older.

I gaze back at the mountains in their neophyte colors, so full of promise and hope. I smile as I remember a friend, who read the book, telling me that Christy attended Montreat.

Black iron bars. Through them, I can see the lake, wide and blue and free, yet nevertheless capturing in its shining face the yellow and auburn of the fall trees, as well as the chateau-like stone and wood structure on the opposite bank, on the side of freedom. The potted red flowers hanging from its generous porches remind me of Switzerland, where, if I were a twelve-year-old boy named David escaping from a concentration camp in Eastern Europe, I would know I was safe. In the place where I am, I don't feel very safe. Signs affixed to the bars around me warn "NO HAMMOCKING IN THE GAZEBO" and "NO FISHING ALONG THE DAM." This is the place of rules and confinement. Hammocking and fishing are leisure activities, done in liberty. Of course they wouldn't be allowed in this enclosure. The bars themselves are fixed solidly into the stone walls and look unmovable. I feel closed in. Should a college student feel like a prisoner? Sometimes, after an exam that turned out not to be so frightening as I had expected, or a good grade on a paper, it's as if I am flying. But I am a bird on a very short string, and I am

always quickly jerked back down. My string is weighted down by a pile of books and projects, and I wonder if I will ever escape them—if, in fact, I am supposed to escape them.

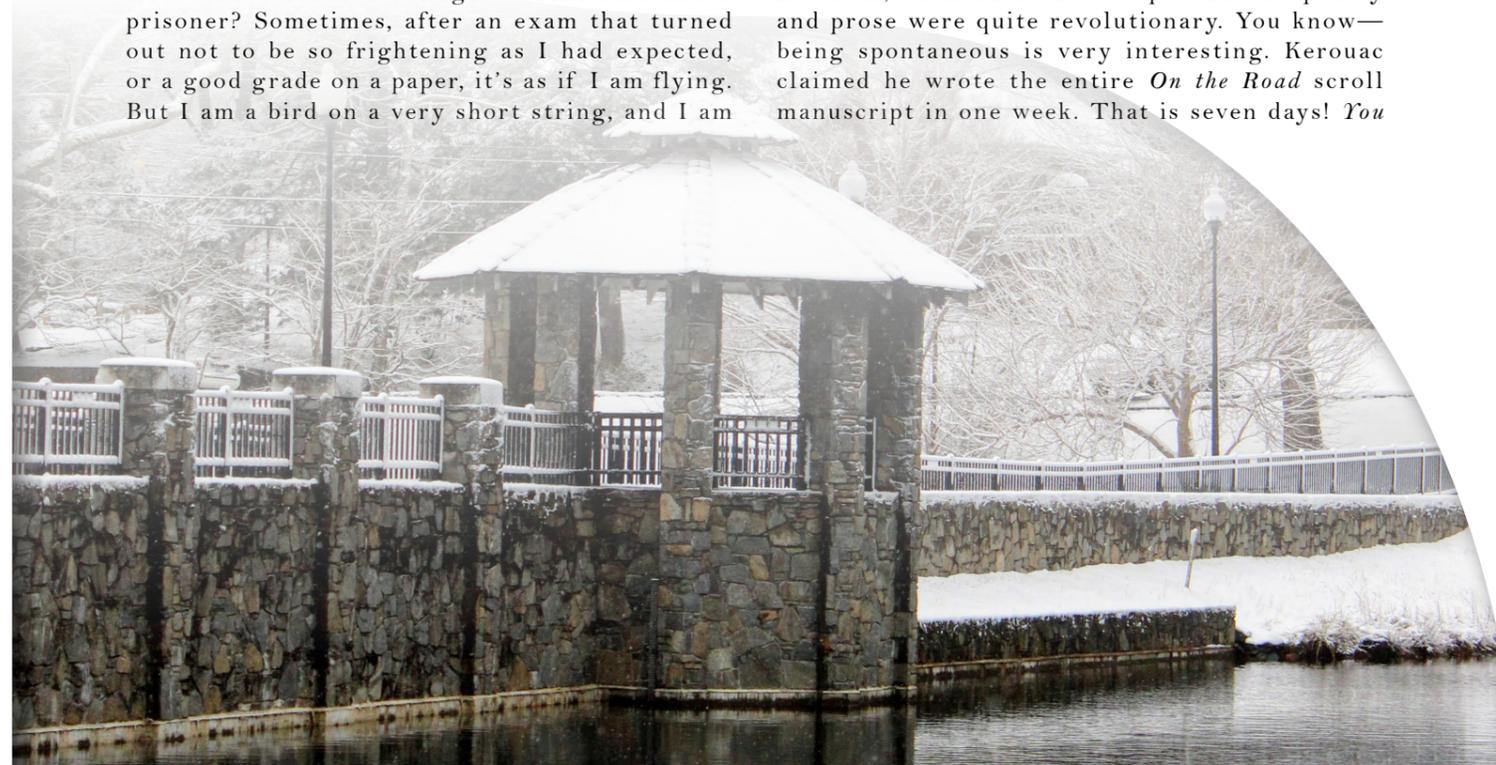
The water on the surface of the lake circles outward like the eternal ripples caused by the tossing of a stone. I ponder the fact that everything that is happening to me is part of those ripples in my life that will end in eternity. God threw the stone, and His reasons must be good ones, since, unlike us, He doesn't act thoughtlessly. The metal door in one of the stone legs of the chateau, near where the boats are kept, gleams in the sunlight, like the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. In this moment, it winks at me: a reassurance of hope. I can escape.

All I have to do is walk out of this gazebo and around to the other side of the lake.

THAT TIME I BECAME AWARE I WAS A WHITE MAN

BY NATHAN KING

Here I am again. One Master's degree later. *Why are you doing this to yourself again?* Well—I love interacting with students, giving instruction, and my BA is literature based. *Your BA is in Creative Writing.* Well—yes, however, I studied the classics. They made us take those literature courses. You know—the Epic of Gilgamesh, The Odyssey and such, Beowulf, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Donne, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Dickinson. You know after all that I got real interested in the Beat poets and such. In terms of American literature, you know—Hawthorne, Emerson, Whitman—then straight to the Beats—Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Ferlinghetti. Those Beats were on to something there. *You mean they were on drugs?* Well... yes—they were often using drugs. However, their ideas about spontaneous poetry and prose were quite revolutionary. You know—being spontaneous is very interesting. Kerouac claimed he wrote the entire *On the Road* scroll manuscript in one week. That is seven days! *You*



know that novel was heavily edited. Also, Kerouac was pretty much taking the equivalent of speed when he wrote that novel. Well—yes. However, I do not understand why you wish to remind me of such things. *You are in another Master's program.* Ah. Yes. I am. MA in English here I come!

See, I have completed the introductory course, African Literature, Native American Literature, and the World Literature course. That World Literature course is REQUIRED. *Your concentration is in Multicultural and Transnational Literature... of course it is.* Well... gosh darn it, why must you be so obvious. *You are the one who decided to go back to graduate school—to get a 2nd Master's degree.* I already told you why I am doing this. I love teaching. Being a librarian is great. I learned a lot getting that Library Science degree. You know, how serving people is inherent to my calling in life. Very relatable to my Christian faith. I just want to teach... Seeing people improve in their writing is very rewarding. Also, Cohen was just born. Doesn't it make sense? ...Oh, I see. For some reason, this does not make sense to you. *You are staring at an email from Dr. Bardill. She says your choice of Thomas Mannarino for the author/novel research project is inadequate. You were questioning why you are doing this. Remember?* Yes. The email is quite clear. Dr. Bardill states, "Your choice for the author/novel research project is not acceptable. This class is about intersections of identity. I have asked that you choose an author/novel whose intersections of identity are different than yours. Please reach out to me if you have questions." *You are still staring at the email.*

I should send an email. *Yes, you should.* Ok. Here we go:

Dr. Bardill,

Thank you so much for your email. I thought my selection of Thomas Mannarino was acceptable because he wrote an unpublished novel in 2nd person about being a non-heterosexual Christian. I've expressed my desire to study Christian authors in these assignments where we can choose the author. Can you please explain why my choice is unacceptable?

Thank you!

Me

Fantastic email. Are you being sarcastic? *You just sent that.* What is wrong with it? *Dr. Bardill will have to explain.* Wow. That was fast. She already responded. *She's keen.* She does use that word a lot. *Only keen people use the word keen.* Yes. I agree. *Do you even know what that word means?* Of course I do. *You are staring at her email again.* I still do not understand what the issue is. *Try reading the email One. More. Time.* All it says is that "we should meet virtually to discuss the assignment. I want to make sure you understand. Are you available on Tuesday at 1:30 pm?" *Are you available?* Well, yes... I am available, but it will be awkward speaking to her at work. *You are available.*

It is 1:25 pm on Tuesday. Yes. Don't you see what I've had to deal with today? Cohen has been fussy all day. Lily hasn't slept. She keeps texting me about how anxious she is while I'm at work. How many people have needed me to reset the printer for them? I haven't even gotten to what my boss actually asked me to do. You know what it's like. *It is 1:26 pm on Tuesday.* Yes. Dr. Bardill. *You should connect early.* Fine. Ok. Open Skype. *You have to put in your password.* Fine. What is the password for this account? *You are the one who made it. Better click "Forgot Password."* Wait, I think I remember it now. Ah. Yes. Ok. Wait. She is already calling me.

"Hello, Dr. Bardill. Thank you for speaking with me."

"Hi Nate, of course. I wanted to make sure you understood the assignment."

"Yes, I think I am having some trouble with that."

"I'm also concerned you are missing the point of the assignment and some of the things we learned about in Native American Literature. These concepts are essential to understanding Multicultural and Transnational Literature." *She is smiling at you.* Why is she smiling if she is concerned? *Dr. Bardill is nice.* Well, she does not seem to like much of what I have submitted. *She just told you she believes you do not understand the assignment or what you are studying.*

"Dr. Bardill, I apologize. I feel a little in-over-my-head here."

"Nate, let's focus on this assignment. I've asked that you choose a writer and novel that **do not** have any similarities to your own intersections of identity. You chose a white male writer. Do you see what I am taking issue with?" *You are not saying anything.* I think I see what she is saying.

"So, I need to choose someone who is not a white male?"

Dr. Bardill smiles, "Yes, Nate."

"Oh... ok. That makes sense." *You still don't know what she is getting at.*

Dr. Bardill curls her brow, "Are you sure it makes sense? When I first started pushing back against your discussion board posts where you were applying Western concepts of beauty and gender to indigenous peoples, I thought you were becoming keen to what issues I was taking with in your posts. Now, I'm not so certain."

"To be honest... I'm having a hard time understanding where and what conversations I can contribute to." *You seriously just said that?* Yes, I said it.

"Nate... please tell me what you have learned in the program so far." *She seriously just asked you that.* She did. She asked me.

"Well—I have learned that European colonization of the world has had a serious effect on Multicultural and Transnational Literatures. I've learned that the colonizers—while oppressing indigenous people—in turn

—oppressed themselves, becoming uncivilized in their pursuit of civilization often under the auspices of Divine Intervention. I've learned that Western culture has had serious detrimental impacts to indigenous people across the globe. While these methods of colonization differed from each other in that the British, French, and Spanish et cetera each had specialized methods of colonization—the results are often the same. Both the colonized and colonizer become brutalized. America used its own set of methods to colonize the indigenous people of America. I've also learned I'm the only white male in the program."

Dr. Bardill remains silent for a moment. Then she says, "Yes, *you are* a white male."

"I am."

"What does that say about your identity?" Dr. Bardill asks. I feel my skin crawling. *Your skin is crawling.*

"Whether I like it or not... I represent colonization and oppression to other people?" I say as if asking a question.

"Yes."

"Dr. Bardill, what does that mean?"

"It means you must be aware of what your identity represents to other people. Especially those who do not look like or believe like you do."

I do not know how to respond. *You are a white man.* I am. White man. "But I haven't oppressed anyone. I truly do my best to love everyone," I manage to say.

"This is about who you are very much. As a white male, you represent the highest point of white privilege. How you deal with that is your prerogative. It is not enough to simply attempt to love everyone. You must understand what it means to be a white male. I think you do," Dr. Bardill paused. "However, I think you are having a hard time accepting what it means." *You are totally having a hard time.*

"Dr. Bardill, will you please assign me an author and novel for this assignment?"

"I can do that—but are you understanding my point?"

"My identity...as a white male...is part of the problem?" I say grasping for her point.

"To a degree. As far as I know, you aren't actively oppressing people. However, as a white male you actively represent oppression to many people. Is what I am saying making sense?"

I think it is, "Yes."

"Thank you, Nate. I think you should do some research on Pauli Murray as they were non-binary and were very active in the Episcopal Church. I know those intersections of identity are interesting to you."

"Thank you, Dr. Bardill. I will start doing research." My hands and forehead perspire.

"Do you better understand the assignment?"

"Yes, thank you."

"Let me know if you have any questions."

Here I am again. On the precipice of my future. *You are a white man.* Yes. *Your skin is crawling.* White men are a big problem. I am part of the problem. *You represent the problem. You do not have to be the problem.* I do not have to be the problem. It will take me the rest of my life to really understand this. *Yes.* I should write a poem about this. *Perhaps you should.*

I, white man.

A pathetic attempt at a poem by Nathan King
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I—

white man...

It is I;

Flesh of a pale moonlight,

Dust and rib of Adam,

Womb of Eve,

It is I;

Who symbolize

Distrust, hatred, disgusts—

The worst kind of oppression, marginalization;

My white male skin

Fraught with minor freckles

Gains me a condition regarding

Basic understanding of my naive and
privileged

Position.

This racial proposition

Established by those a feared

Of cultural integration

Makes an ass out of you and me...

Isn't it time

That, I—

Fumbling and bamboozled white man

Take into consideration

That pigmentation is God's intention,

That oppression and marginalization...

White man's conflagration upon

Humanity, nature, and now machinations

Is really

A colonial representation

That is now capitalization?

SCIENCE, TRUTH, AND DEEPER MAGIC BY JOSHUA HOLBROOK

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A chapter from a book I've been working on, Christ Among Robots, or, Going to the Lions (for the Right Reasons), a book directed at non-Christians (but you all can read it too!) to talk about Christianity. The common plea throughout the book is "Hate Christianity if you wish, but please, hate it for what it actually is and not what you perceive it to be (nor for the foolish things that Christians might do/say)."

Suggested Listening: "That was a crazy game of poker," O.A.R.

One of the big points of contention, we are told, between Christianity and the non-Christian world is its relationship with science. For many, science is seen as the realm of cold hard facts, religion—and Christianity as the dominant religion in the west—is seen as the realm of feelings and speculation about imaginary things. In this narrative, scientists are the collected and wise sages, the Christians are the foolish old kooks who took their childhood fairy tales a little too seriously^[1].

The root of this conflict, as I am able to see it, is a problem of definitions, as it often is. Christianity is labeled as a “faith” and the people who subscribe to it are said to “have faith.” I will not dispute the fact that faith is a central part of the Christian message; but the faith of the Bible is not the same warm, fuzzy, ignorantly hopeful sensation that many think it is. It is a faith based on history, based on merit. Again and again, the authors of the Bible give us the reason why we are to trust in Christ: he claimed to be God and as proof he performed miracles publicly in an ancient metropolis, he died and rose from the dead appearing to hundreds of eyewitnesses^[2]. We are to have faith in Him because he has given us a reason to have faith.

Of course, the Bible is a confusing book, so misunderstandings are bound to happen. One biblical writer comments: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (note: Hebrews 11:1).” This, at first glance, seems to be an admission of the willful ignorance of Christianity—we tell adherents that they must have faith and believe in something which is without evidence to pad our pockets and subjugate the masses^[3]. The problem is, saying something is unseen is not the same as saying it is believed without evidence. There are plenty of unseen things well known to science that are still legitimate and, more importantly, real. In some cases you need special equipment to observe them: microbial life, for instance. In other cases, you only have faith in their existence by the effect they have on things external to themselves: the gravitational pull of a hypothesized planet, the mathematical proof of a physical law, the entire concept of energy. The Christian faith claims that one must have special equipment^[4] and must also affirm their own faith by things external to themselves^[5]. Even in everyday life, we are heavily influenced by things unseen and even immaterial: love determines and binds many of our associations, but few except strict materialists would chalk the whole concept of love up to ‘just chemicals.’

The relationship between science and Christianity hasn’t always been a troubled one. In fact, it is out of Christianity that science emerged – Christians, under the assumption

that the universe was ultimately reasonable. To the foolish mentality that says that Christianity is bad for science, Newton^[6], Pasteur^[7], Kepler^[8], Kelvin^[9] and Collins^[10] give a unified testimony: it’s simply not true.

Understanding science’s place

Again, as with many things, much of the conflict between science and Christianity comes from the realm of nebulous definitions. Science is seen by many (legions of scientists included) as a competing religion—complete with its own orthodox doctrines and religious zealots. And when it’s put in those terms, who wouldn’t want to be part of the Religion of Science? Its benefits to our everyday life are manifold and apparent. But the problem is, science isn’t a religion^[11]—it is a method. Science is a way to systematically figure out truth—and even in this realm, it is incapable of telling us everything about truth. In reality, the only truth on which science is able to lay claim are those truths which are observable and quantifiable, that is, things we can detect, count and measure.

It was with this knowledge in mind that Stephen Gould proposed the model of Non-Overlapping Magisteria, or NOMA^[12]. This is a model that states that religion and science have different realms, different circles of influence, and these realms do not overlap with one another. So what Gould terms a religious truth (God is love) and a scientific truth (water is polar) can both be true but never interact with one another in a meaningful way. This, according to Gould, is because each has its own magisterium, it’s own realm of influence or teaching authority.

There are, indeed, different realms of truth—science is the domain of observable, repeatable truth; but one could also look at history—the realm of truth that includes the past. One could add mathematical truth, psychological truth and moral/spiritual truth to this mix, among others. Each of these realms is discrete from one another. For instance, one could take a figure that lies firmly in the realm of historical truth: say, King Henry VIII. It is outside of the scientific realm of truth to be able to say much about his existence - it is neither observable, because he is dead; nor is it repeatable.^[13] Despite being scientifically untestable, though, few would discount the truth of Henry’s existence.

This is how NOMA is typically explained, but my primary contention is that these different magisteria are not non-overlapping—there always is some overlap between the realms of truth. In our previous example, for instance, you cannot scientifically prove^[14] King Henry’s existence, but you may be able to analyze historical artifacts from his reign or perhaps get a sample of his DNA—and if

we are to believe the historians, he left plenty of DNA, fathering a number of legitimate and illegitimate children.

Or we could examine the overlap between the magisteria of scientific and moral/spiritual truth: one important area of overlap would be doing science ethically. There are many things we can do using the scientific method—but only by encroachment of moral truth can we determine if we should do them. Scientific truth unfettered from moral truth gives us the stuff of Mengele, MK-Ultra, mustard gas and atom bombs.

So, there is some overlap between the magisteria—perhaps an Olympic Rings-like Venn diagram where each area of truth approaches, and even overlaps a bit with each other area. NOMA is incomplete, so I subscribe to a more robust model—marginally overlapping magisteria (MOM).

All this to say: science is not the only way to derive truth, but instead is the way to derive *quantifiable*—observable, repeatable—truth. If this is true then science is a poor method to assess other truths, for instance the miraculous claims of the Bible. These claims are mostly out of science’s realm and firmly in the realm of historical and spiritual truth. It is when we realize that science does not possess a stranglehold on all truth—that is, when we reject the religion of science—that we are able to acknowledge other areas as no less true. I am a scientist, and I believe in the resurrection, I believe that God can and does instantaneously heal the sick, and I believe in any one of the hundreds of other miracles in the Bible. This is not a contradiction of truth, and neither is it a contradiction of science since the miraculous falls, mostly, outside its realm.

I say mostly, but there is overlap: it is conceivable (indeed it has happened) that one could conduct a scientific study of those who claim to have undergone miraculous healings. But even here, the overlap is only slight: if miraculous healings are really carried out by supernatural beings (God, angels, demons, etc.) then their will(s) dictate the repeatability of the experiment. So the results could be observable, but not repeatable in the scientific sense. In the words of C. S. Lewis, God “...is not a tame lion...”

To acknowledge that God and other less-powerful supernatural beings cannot be manipulated is in contrast to primitive religions that were in actuality much closer to the Religion of Science than they are to Christianity. In many ancient religions, getting what you desired from the gods was only a matter of finding out how to manipulate them in the same way scientists manipulate the natural world. Instead of an experiment, you might do this through an incantation, an invocation of the deity’s name, or eye of

newt and toe of toad. Or, you might drink wine in hopes of a good harvest and partake in temple prostitutes to petition the gods for fertility—which perhaps explains why paganism was so popular in ancient times. To the pagan religions, the supernatural was an extension of the natural world and you could manipulate it with the right tools. It was observable and repeatable. Christianity firmly repudiates this by telling of a God whose will cannot be bent to our own. A God who, when asked for his name (maybe for use in a manipulative invocation), gives an ostensibly unpronounceable jumble of near-vowels^[15]—we’re still unsure today if the name of the God of the Bible is correctly given as ‘Jehovah,’ ‘Yahweh,’ a pronunciation of each of the Hebrew letters (YHWH), or some other elocution.

He is not observable, unless he wants to be; His actions are not repeatable without Him willing it—it is He that rules over all of the magisteria of truth. In Christ, a Truth greater than history, morality, and even science in all her glory, has arrived. In the MOM model, each magisterium is set firmly into an overarching medium, a substrate that is the bedrock of truth. Christians believe this bedrock has a name: Jesus Christ.

Although the different magisteria do, indeed, overlap; they do not collide. We could consider them as national political boundaries (the magisteria) on hard geography (truth itself)—two nations may share or dispute a border region, but that border region cannot have both mountains and beaches in the same place at the same time. In like manner, each magisterium of truth cannot contradict the others, because they are all truth. Therefore, if there is an apparent conflict between the two - as occasionally apparently happens between science and Christianity - we must assume that the proponents of one (or possibly both) are mistaken. Often, figuring out which magisterium is untrue depends on an individual’s convictions - they may say “Science and Christianity disagree here, and Christianity must be wrong because science is the domain of facts, and Christianity is the domain of juvenile fantasies.” Conversely, a Christian may say “Christianity is right because all those scientists are a bunch of liars.” In both cases this is a poor way to tackle the problem - if the MOM model is correct, then any contradiction between science and Christianity should only be superficial and not bedrock truth.

The God through the gaps

Christianity and science do overlap, and a good many Christians are also scientists; but there are a number of unfortunate pitfalls that Christians stumble into when making supposedly science-based appeals for the

Christian faith. One of these is the belief that if something cannot be easily explained by modern scientific means, it must therefore be miraculous in nature. This case has been termed the God of the Gaps argument. The biggest problem with this argument, common as it is among well-meaning Christians, is that if the reasoning is followed to its logical conclusion then God shrinks with our growing understanding. As the gaps in our understanding grow ever smaller, so does God.

This is, of course, untrue. Our increase in understanding of the physical processes of the universe, the laws of nature, does not shrink God's size or power. He does not need our science, the suns in a trillion star systems are His. But it is also untrue that we should assume that everything we cannot explain must be an elaborate and explicit miracle. Make no mistake: I believe the whole universe we see was the result of some miraculous interference, and I believe that miraculous events above and beyond the scope of nature happened in the past and continue to happen into the present. But I also don't believe it is helpful to assume a miraculous intervention to everything that cannot yet be explained.

So, instead of a simplistic God of the Gaps, I believe that God often works through the laws of nature to accomplish His purposes. If this is true, then we would expect to see a universe that may be mechanistically explained by the laws of nature, but these laws alone would be woefully unsatisfying^[16]. Put this another way: suppose I were to publish a book that purported to explain *exactly* how Shakespeare wrote his most brilliant works. A book wherein the reader could learn and, in no time at all, be writing works of equal brilliance to *Hamlet* or *MacBeth*. So, you buy this book and begin reading. You read a wonderfully written synopsis - page after page detailing the whole process:

Multipolar neurons fire in the brain

Efferent neurons carry signals to the neuromuscular junctions of the muscles of Billy's hands

Muscle myofibrils contract, causing the hand to move around the pen

The pen writes, "There are more things in heaven and on earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy..."

Needless to say, the reader would be rightfully unsatisfied with such an answer. We want to know the creativity and intention that infused Shakespeare's muscle movement and neural activity. But this is exactly what happens when someone is satiated with the mere mechanistic answer given to us by science. It's

an answer, yes, and in its way a correct one. But it's not complete—the most important thing is left out, even if the most important thing seems a trifle from science's perspective. There is no ever-shrinking 'God of the Gaps,' but if you look closely you will see the God through the Gaps—and even in the explanations!^[17]

Weeding out distractions

To many of my readers all of this will seem just a distraction from the main point: why are so many Christians so glaringly antiscience? To propose that Christianity is theoretically compatible with science means little if Christianity practically breeds antiscience progeny. I think I have already well established that many Christians do accept science as a valid means of deriving truth, and in fact are often at the head of their field, but what of the other ones? They do exist: Christians who deny basic scientific facts. But it is always best to avoid dealing in generalities, so the question is how, specifically, are Christians seen as antiscience? I have found that most headbutting in the early 21st century between Christians and science comes with two issues: evolution and climate change.

But in addressing these issues individually, I'm going to go against my own advice and deal with some generalities with Christians and science. As the reader is well aware, in any one group there will be a spectrum of mental ability—there will be some that are extraordinarily intelligent and insightful on one end of the spectrum, and those that are extraordinarily simple minded on the other, then most of the population will be somewhere in the middle. This is what we call a 'normal distribution' with a hump in the middle, tapering off to either side. This distribution exists among Christians, among secularists, among Muslims—anyone. Among Christians, the lower end of the distribution will mostly be expected to tow the party line in regard to any scientific issue that is over their head. So, if a simple Christian hears his pastor toting climate denial or flat earthism or whatever the case may be; chances are they will believe and tout that opinion on the authority of the pastor. On the other hand, if a secular humanist of below-average intelligence is unable to grasp a given scientific concept (and honestly, most individuals don't grasp climate change or evolution), they will also tow the party line, believing and espousing whatever their teacher or the news told them. So in the end, both groups have simple folk^[18], but only the Christian simpletons stand out like a sore thumb to the rest of the world. Both groups believe on authority, not critical thinking; the difference is that a camera crew will find the Christian and put them behind a microphone. All this to say, you don't know how

many simpletons are on your own side because of the simple, blinding fact that they agree with you.

Even still, of course, there is an antiscience element in Christianity, and I don't believe such a position is helpful to the goals of Christianity (making disciples of all nations), or to modern society as a whole. That's where I need your help, dear reader. Don't write Christians off for unscientific beliefs. Many Christians are antiscience solely because they see science as part of a larger battle. They don't hold science dear (or don't think they do), so they have no problem sacrificing the whole pursuit for amorphous concepts like 'the moral majority' or the defeat of liberalism. This is foolishness, through and through, but you can help by extracting the religion, politics and morality of 'Science' from science as it actually is: a method of arriving at truths about the physical universe. It takes a good and wise person to disentangle scientific truth from the thorny branches of politics and philosophy.

Unfortunately, many Christians are interested in nothing more than 'scoring points' for their side. It is wrong, but it's typical tribalism. We all do it: I know little about cars, but I'll still stick up for Toyotas as the best car there is because it's all I've ever driven. I encourage Christians and non-Christians alike to be open minded and resist tribalism at the expense of truth. Does that sound strange coming from a Christian? Open-mindedness is not a trait typically applied to Christians in popular culture. Being open-minded means being willing to actually listen to an opposing viewpoint - and even accepting that viewpoint if we find it to be true. Being open minded does not mean to accept the viewpoints of others uncritically. I have heard lots of opinions, some of them more convincing than others, but ultimately I find the Christianity of the Bible to be the most holistically satisfying, spiritually and intellectually. It was, after all, Christ who instructed us that the Truth will set us free.

But on to the two big specifics. First, we come to evolutionary theory. This issue is more difficult to tackle than climate change because evolution offers what many see as an alternate view of the events that are chronicled in the Bible. Because of this, I cannot condemn or criticise any Christian who sees the Bible as advocating for a direct, special creation of all the universe and life in it. But then, of course, as a scientist I know that evolutionary theory is embedded as deep as bedrock into nearly every field of modern biological science. Evolutionary theory is a model that is extremely useful in making sense of the data we are given from the physical universe, so from a scientific viewpoint I cannot condemn this model. So, we are left with a temporary apparent contradiction between the two that will not be resolved

in the pages of this book; but whatever the answer I know it will be neither antiscience nor antichrist. There are a variety of positions permissible from a Christian point of view—from Young Earth Creationism to Theistic Evolution, and to whoever takes any given position, I only hope it is well reasoned and honest from all magisteria of truth.

Finally, we come to climate change. This, to me, is an odd one. Many Christians do not believe in climate change, but as far as I've ever heard this is not an issue of Christian doctrine but instead the unholy matrimony of Christianity with power—or as we call it in our day, politics. To many (mistaken) Christians, to be a Christian is to be a republican. To be a republican is to be pro-business. To be pro-business is (ostensibly) to plug up one's ears to science^[19]. So, through convoluted pathways, many Christians are also climate change deniers—but, again, this is not something that's necessarily Christian. The idea of global warming is, truthfully, very much in line with what I would expect from Scripture: over and over again in the Bible God uses the weather and climate to get his point across. A drought may be a wake-up call to his people to get right with Him (1 Kings 17). A storm may be a manifestation of his presence (Job 38). We now live in a big, connected global economy where regional droughts or floods simply do not bring God's people to their knees. Climate change might. So, climate change deniers may be more common among Christians than among the general populace—I again ask my readers for help in educating my brethren on this matter without condescending to them. I ask that as we work for peace on our side, the non-Christian reader might work for peace on their own side.

FOOTNOTES:

^[1] I am under the suspicion that we should, in fact, take childhood fairy tales a little more seriously, but that's another matter entirely.

^[2] 1 Corinthians 15

^[3] If that is the point, I am doing a terrible job at Christianity.

^[4] A common refrain in the Bible states "he who has an ear, let him hear,"

^[5] Matthew 7:15-20, "you will recognize them by their fruits..."

^[6] Regarded by some as the father of modern science. You know him for gravity and calculus, and I'm sure he's sorry about the latter. He was also a very devout Christian.

^[7] The father of the field of microbiology and the reason your milk doesn't kill you. Also a devout Christian.

^[8] An astronomer and the discoverer of the Laws of Planetary Motion. Also a devout Christian.

^[9] One of the fathers of modern physics,

he figured out the coldest temperature possible in the universe and had a temperature measurement system named after him. Also a devout Christian.

[10] The head of the human genome project, the project to completely map out human DNA. A devout buddhist. Just kidding, he's a Christian too.

[11] Although there is a religion that bears the same name

[12] Gould, S. J. 1999. *Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion and the Fullness of Life*

[13] Until someone comes up with a decent time machine. I'm looking at you Toyota...

[14] If you want to go farther down the rabbit hole of science philosophy, you can't actually prove anything with science—you can only fail to disprove.

[15] Exodus 3:13-15

[16] I realize that with this whole section, it is difficult to not come across as a Deist - one who believes in God as a watchmaker who can then let it continue on its own forever. That is not my position, but instead it is that we should not be so quick to assume the miraculous because of our ignorance on the facts of the case.

[17] Ultimately, though, I believe that there are indeed some real gaps in our scientific knowledge that will never be bridged. They are Marianas Trenches—even more, bottomless pits, wherein God acts much more explicitly than the laws of nature He often uses. Even if the distance across these gaps shrinks—and indeed, even if some of them are closed completely by science, this only means that I (or others) have either misjudged the location of these bottomless pits, or there is a synergistic supernatural-and-natural effect occurring (see, for example, human consciousness, which seems obvious to me is a hybrid of a spiritual being through the filter of a physical brain.)

[18] I hope the use of the term 'simple' here is non-offensive, as I don't think it's negative, certainly not morally at least, to be simple or uneducated; although I believe we should all take the opportunity to be educated when we are given the chance for the sake of the common good.

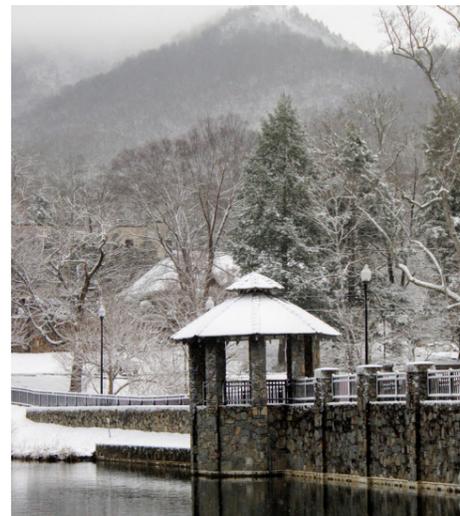
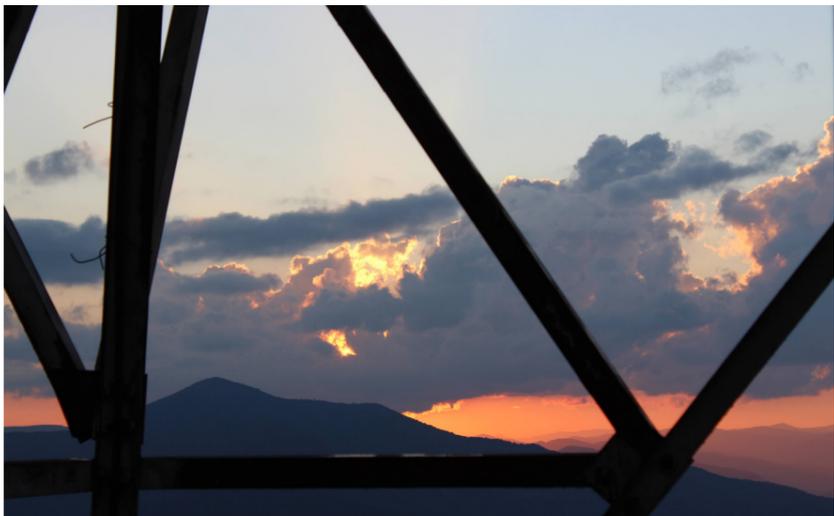
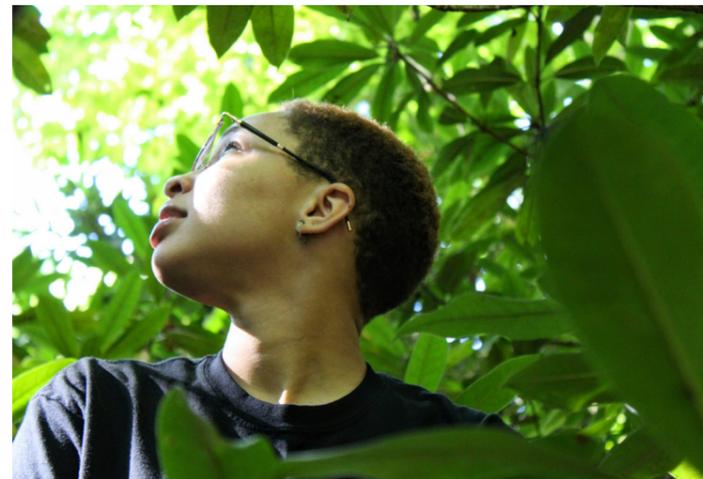
[19] Of course, I don't believe this is the case. Rising sea levels and warming temperatures are ultimately bad for most businesses, in the long run.

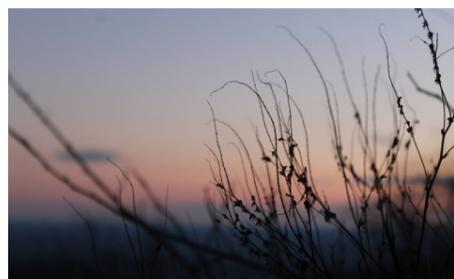
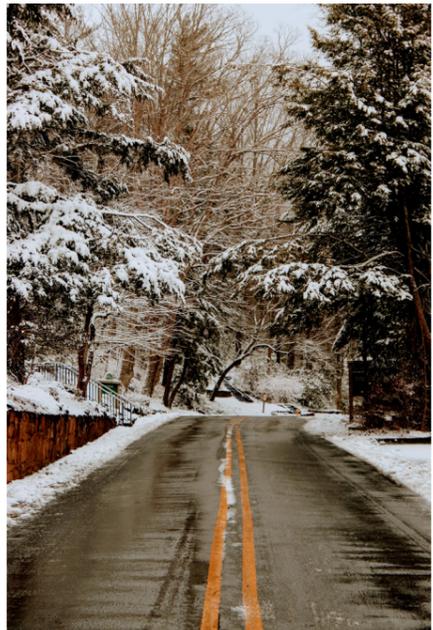


VISUAL ART



"Grit" by Zoe Evans





"Bridge To Tomorrow" by Hannah Thompson



ANARCHO-CAPITALIST CREED
JEREMIAH BRYAN

That land is your land,
This land is my land.
You stay on your land,
I'll stay on my land.
Do not cross here
Without permission.
This land is private property!

BLACK MOUNTAIN SUITE
PROLOGUE BY DON KING

Oak fronds,
Delicate golden bracelets of spring,
Decorate the forest floor,
As I pass among the trees.

I hear a wind harp
Playing in my mind;
Its sounds aren't sharp,
Its strings I can't find.

I hear its music at every turn
As I hike the rocky path;
Its airy tune drifts my way,
Quieting the outer world's wrath.

The song it plays quickens my soul,
Reminding me of past delight;
I glance to find it, left and right,
But see mine's a futile toil.

Just as I think it out of reach,
I'm transported beyond the breach---

I stand with the poet and wonder if it's heaven
or hell—
I stand with the poet and remember the Wye—
I stand with the poet and hear the Aeolian
lyre—
I stand with the poet and feel the west wind
rush by—
I stand with the poet and fly up with the
nightingale—
I stand with the poet and sail again with
Ulysses—

BONE AND BLOOD
CHARLIE FRYE

In the darkness of the mind,
A single thought is there to find.
Darkness, darkness, so dull, so deep,
So here it lays me down to sleep.
The shards are scattered everywhere,
Bone and blood, layer upon layer.
And yet it echoes, through woods so dark,
It speaks in red to make its mark.
So listen closely, its words are true:
Pay no mind to blood left behind you.

FAIRY GIRLS
ALEXAYA MCKELVEY

your dress is made of whispers,
flowers given and taken from the backyard.
an endless supply of lip-gloss and secrets,
a fairy taller than a sunflower.
sorrow seeps from your fingertips when you
play,
play the cello, the piano, the Beatles Rock Band
Guitar.
sad girl plus sad girl equals happiness when
glitter is involved.
you made autumn quiver with your beauty,
dancing under the Big Dipper
with bare feet and elegant hands.
quiet now, and I can still hear the ticking of the
clock in your living room,
staring at the ceiling that shifted under the
weight of magic and melancholy.
we made potions, witches of the morning sun
bending the world to our will,
at least while we sat in your hammock.
the dead and the lost couldn't find us there,
swinging and wildly laughing while the hinges
creaked dangerously.
let's name the trees again, draw on each other's
skin
the words that made us warm in the numbness
of heartbreak.
little girls grown up now, but my sadness
always seems to bring me back to your
ethereal house, your caramel cheeks, your
sparkles and twirling dresses.

FLOWERS IN HER HAIR
EMILY ADAIR

you picked me a flower
and told me I was beautiful
you tucked it behind my ear
and another behind yours.

I kept that flower
pressed between the pages of a book
about love and
being honest with ourselves

it stayed on the bottom
of my stack
condensing
drying
becoming a memory

until all I had of you
were some memories
of the time you kissed me
after putting a flower
in my hair.

GREAT BLUE YONDER
MORGAN HOOKS

My heart yearns itself
for a split second of serenity.
I daydream of the vast, open pastures
with the calves grazing above the wildflowers.

I see myself with the windows down,
my Sharpie-stained converse dangling outside
of the car,
as we drive into a horizon of blue hues
and corn stalks glowing golden.

I see myself tripping over rocks and twigs,
winding through the makeshift paths of brush.
I arrive as the two of them splash into the
water,
wagging their tails against the creek bed with
content.

I see myself under the stars,
nestled in the bed of Dad's rusted pickup truck.
You sit with a mason jar tight in your grasp,
waiting for the next firefly to ignite.

I see Mom working through the garden,
the brim of her hat poking above the sunflower
stems.
Our cat waltzes down the rows,
helping in her own way.

My heart yearns itself
for homemade cornbread,
games of catch out behind the barn,
and how your hug was always the warmest.

I see myself and, for a moment,
I'm home in the great blue yonder.

HAIKU
ANNA RAJAGOPAL

The swift brown water
flows onward eternally
made pure by the rocks

One tree on the lawn
A junior, slender green beech
Looks toward "Keep Off Ice"

Outside my window
A red rose is dying well
As it fades upright

Dark, stinging water
My father swoops me under
Again and again

HOME.
MORGAN HOOKS

I.
"If home isn't a place,
What is it to you?"
It's two eyes
And the thump thump thump of a heartbeat ...
"Of whose?"
My own.

a series of love letters to myself

POETRY



II.
Self love feels foreign, something intangible,
unable to own.
It's a feeling deep down, but a feeling that I
can't place.

I don't wish to spend my days as someone whose
envy is directed at another's reflection, at you.
A jealousy so rigid, a shaking heartbeat,
that it wells tears in my eyes.

III.
The bird chirp signals a new day and I open my
eyes,
seeing the sun shine through the window panes
on my own.

In the stillness, I am made aware of my own
heartbeat.
I feel grounded in my bed, in the safety of my
own place,
and I remember that I am capable of surviving
today, as much as you.

IV.
Sometimes I try to put myself in the shoes of
someone whose
perspective of me includes the dimples in my
smile and the twinkle in my eyes.
Despite all the flaws and cracks that we see in
our skin, you
never know who sees you as a work of art all
its own.

So next time I feel as I am floating, out of
place,
I will remember that there is beauty in me,
down to my heartbeat.

V.
I'm wearing that new denim skirt, and
something shifts. Is it my heartbeat?
As I pass the aux cord to my friend in the
backseat, whose
music taste always transports the beat down car
to another era, another place,
I feel empowered to take on the world in front
of my eyes.

Not yet capable of running into the horizon on
my own,
but I feel stronger than ever in the front seat
with you.

VI.
I don't know what to tell you,
other than that I didn't wake up one day, with
one skip of my heartbeat,
and decide to accept myself as I am, to feel
comfortable as a person all my own.
When I my first thought when I glanced in the
mirror, wasn't whose
outfit was stylish or whose makeup was
spotless, but that my eyes
were glimmering, my smile was big, and my
confidence filled the place.

I remember those wise words that you said -
that home isn't a place.
It's two eyes and the thump thump thump of a

heartbeat.
And when I asked whose, you said "your own."
And I believed it.

HOW TO WRITE POETRY KIMBERLY ANGLE

To tell the truth, there is no telling,
except, at first, I think it's more
about doing nothing well
and allowing blank spaces
than having anything to say.

Try throwing away your watches and clocks
and pick full hours instead. All the while
take note of the time kept
in the curve of waning moons and
the flutterings of things with wings.

I suspect poetry's got mostly to do
with the moment you wake at 4 am
to find the world has surrendered itself
to unexpected snow
and you step out into a December newly
unknown
until the taste of cold and star-sparked
darkness
is declared on your tongue.

Certainly study other languages, memorize
the alphabet of January trees, especially
the equivalent to y and all the formulas
for fractions and long division necessary
in reaching for the sun. Find the sum
of our common or, the now of nouns, and how
the French word for bird is more fitting
than your own.

Become acquainted with both grief and joy.
Make mystery, your story.
Remark how question marks are fitted exactly
to the curve of your ear. Notice the corner
of your eye where the falling leaf lingers
just beyond the list of things to do. Learn how
we can't
hold more than 7 thoughts in our minds at once
and,
yet, every 7 years, the headline states,
all the cells in our body have grown anew.

Lie down in green pastures and peer
through a dolphin's eye just above the rim
until you can read the runes on beetles' backs
and decipher rosy odes crying inside rounded
stones
and finally understand how worms have more to
do
with waxing moons and our bones with
butterfly wings
than we can fathom.

Then simply open the inkwell of a midnight sky

and proclaim to the spreading page of a new
day's dawn
how you, at last, are ready to begin.

IN THE TALL GREEN GRASS LILLY QUEEN

Eight years old, he lay in the tall green grass
And by and by a girl walked past
She twirled and danced and did not see
The little boy laying 'neath the tree
He gazed at her and smiled at her laugh
Then propped himself up with his walking staff
"Don't leave yet, pray, what's your name?" he
cried

"Rosalind Moore." Came airy her reply
The two became friends and that was just that
But seven years later, Rosalind wore a new
feather hat

Fifteen years old, he lay in the tall green grass
And by and by Rosalind Moore floated past
All done up in a fancy new kind of way
No longer was she the little girl who loved to
play

She knew that he was watching now you see
So, she assumed an air of ridged propriety
"Don't leave yet, pray, what's your name?" cried
he

"Don't you know me, old friend?" she asked
prettily
"How can I know you when you have changed
so?"

So, the two became strangers, hardly nodding
hello

Twenty-three years old, he lay in the tall green
grass

And by and by a lovely woman floated past
Her laugh he knew as well as his own and her
smile
Seemed now to say, "I think, perhaps, I will sit
a while."

He was no longer disgusted by her lace and her
pearls

And she'd grown out of wearing pink bows in
her curls

"Don't leave yet, pray, tell me your name." He
said

"You know my name." Rosalind replied shaking
her head

"I know of your old one, but won't you now
take mine instead?"

IT IS NOT FOR ME... LUKE LEVONIUS

It is not for me, though
I, in desperation, reach up to grasp it
I breathe it in briefly, only
To exhale it with so many useless particles
It is not for me to be, even
As others seem to be, it

Is not for them, though
They with illusory faces tell me otherwise
But by the grace of God, I am what I am
Is that not enough?

LIES GABRIELA ARIAS

The more I look into the mirror, the less I see.
"You have beautiful eyes"
Lies
"You have such a lovely smile"
Lies
"You look gorgeous in this outfit"
Lies

With each lie I hear, the more I begin to
disappear into the mirror.
Each day I find myself drowning as I gaze into
eyes that are similar to mine.

My reflection is now more of a ghost. A horrid
apparition that haunts me from every
reflective surface.
She mocks me during those moments I believe
the lies.

Lies
Lies
Lies...
Why does she say that they're lies?
Surely if more than one person is saying it,
then it must be the truth.
"Even large groups of people can believe in the
same lie."
Truth...

I long to see what others claim to see.
Where is this beautiful girl you say you know?
Why does she hide her face in the mirror?
Why is it all that I see are stretch marks, scars,
acne, blemishes, and tears?

Will I one day be allowed to meet her?
Will my mirror be exorcised, freed from that
ghost who haunts me?

Lies
Lies
Lies
Lies

Will I see the truth that hides beneath the lies
that she tells me?
Will her voice be silenced so that I may finally
appreciate my beauty?

Or like a siren singing to the foolish sailors
who listen to her song, will she lure me to
my demise?

Lies.

**ODE TO THE TOASTED CHEESE
CRACKERS
CAPRICE COFFEY**

A sunny day of play
Has left my stomach rumbling
It's well past lunch
But not quite dinner
We ask for snacks
Papaw knows just what to do
Out of the cabinet,
A box of simple saltines
Out of the fridge,
A marigold glow of cheddar cheese
A knife too sharp for children
Creates slices like heavenly sidewalk
Carefully placed on
Salty squares
Into the oven!
We watch the cheese
Bubble and melt
Over the sides in an uneven fashion
Ding!
Goes the timer
And out of the oven
The perfect savory snack
Made with love
From Papaw

**RATS
LUKE LEVONIUS**

I have always feared rats;
Those disease-ridden pests.
They scurry and hide in darkened places,
Peering from tunnels with flea-bitten faces.
The rat takes flight at man's protest;
Avoiding too the claws of cats.

I spend my worst days locked away;
I eat my meals on my own time.
I really want to be alone;
Or only talk to others though a phone.
I am the victim of my own crime;
Fear sends me into disarray

I wonder if the rat would choose to be
As reserved if we did not hate him so.
Would he come out into the light?
Or would he still hide out of fright?
Does he like his life? I don't know
Who feared first: the rat or me?

**SHELL-SHOCK
LUKE LEVONIUS**

When I look into those eyes I see
The tortured life. Agony in the flash of whites
Dread in a crooked smile. That half-uncertain
Gaze reads boredom. Empty of thoughts.
Desperate draws from a clenched Briar pipe

Rations of tobacco, whisky, rum.
Balm for the soul, calm for the mind.
Distraction from that din. Cacophony
Of mortar blast and Maxim's bite
Retreat, testudo, into that
Shell you wear, pan
On your head, blood in your hair
Over the top? No more. At least,
Not today. One foot in the trench,
The other in the grave.

**THE POET'S LAMENT
EMILY WILLIAMS**

Has anyone ever written poetry about you, my
dear?
You are the most poetic thing to have ever
Taken a breath of the eternally lasting air,
To have graced the infinite darkness
With your divine luster,
To have been touched by the sun
Since God said "let there be light."
So why is every poem not titled with your
name?
Why is every stanza not about your porcelain
skin
And the curvature of your spine,
A figure at which Solomon would have
stammered
And at which I would write ten thousand songs?
Why does every line not praise
Your velvety tongue and cardamom voice
Which the wind carries through the boughs
Of the trees to make them blossom?
Why is every rhyme not half as smooth as the
tight curls
Which fall against your neck
Or your rosy lips behind drunk on love
murmurs
Which cascade down my throat like dark red
wine?
Where are all the poems about you, my dear,
Or will I have to write them all myself?
Ten thousand songs is not so many
If they are all about you.

**TO A DEAD SOLDIER OF
THE KOREAN WAR
ANNA RAJAGOPAL**

I still don't know how I lost you.
My mentor told me you were like
a wounded hawk, a mockingbird
I had to let fly free, sometime.

But still I wonder//
we were young lovers then
and didn't know what a toll
the patriotism of two could take,
you leaving and me letting you go.
We didn't know it that day
on the beach when you found
a piece of driftwood//
we put it in the sailboat,
a symbol of life and death.

Sometimes I wonder
what life would be like
if fate had played us otherwise.
Maybe I wouldn't be as I am now,
still wondering why I ever let you go.

**TO KNOW A HEART
CHRISTIAN YOUNG**

Oh, turn your head to look at me, a treat
as ever eyes did meet—and meeting, find
another glance in kind, before they part
to tear a beating heart from chest forsook.
Hide not your face in books, their pleasure fleet,
nor boredom ever greet with self-made binds
that entertain, but blind your worthy heart
to ev'ry of mine art, those evil crooks.
Forego the mask that took your smile sweet,
that longing gaze defeat'd and left behind
in ashes of your mind to me impart'd;
I wish I never start'd, nor heart mistook.
But if your love be shook and so inclined
to meet in whole my heart, be not unkind.

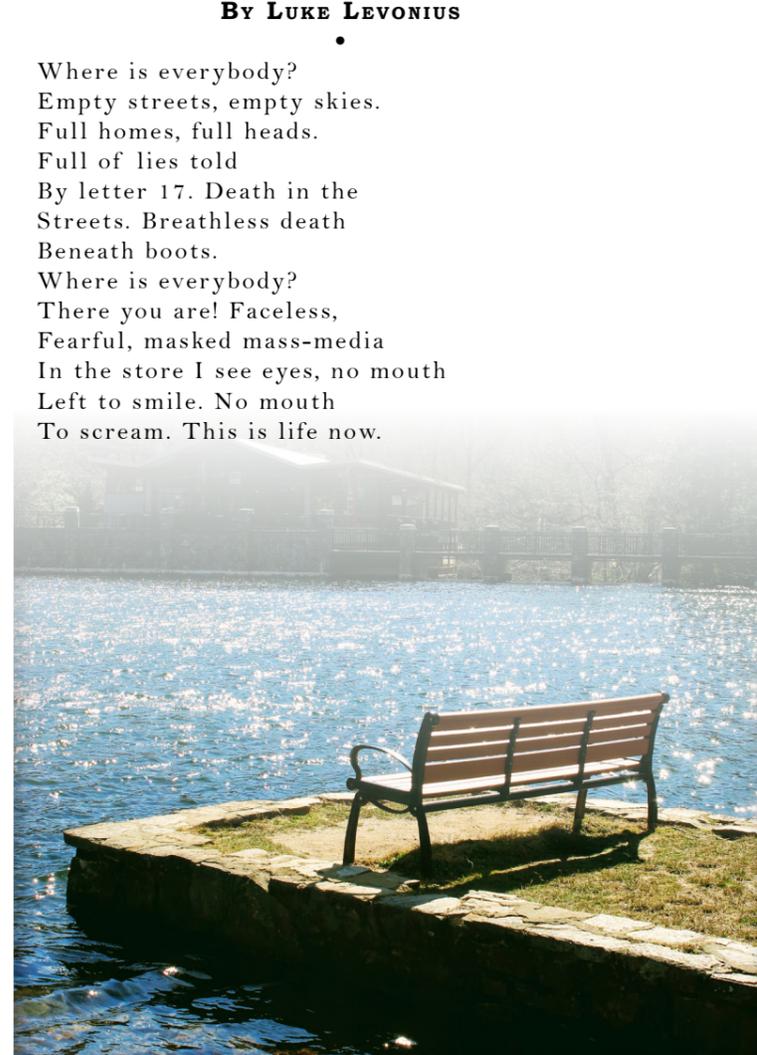
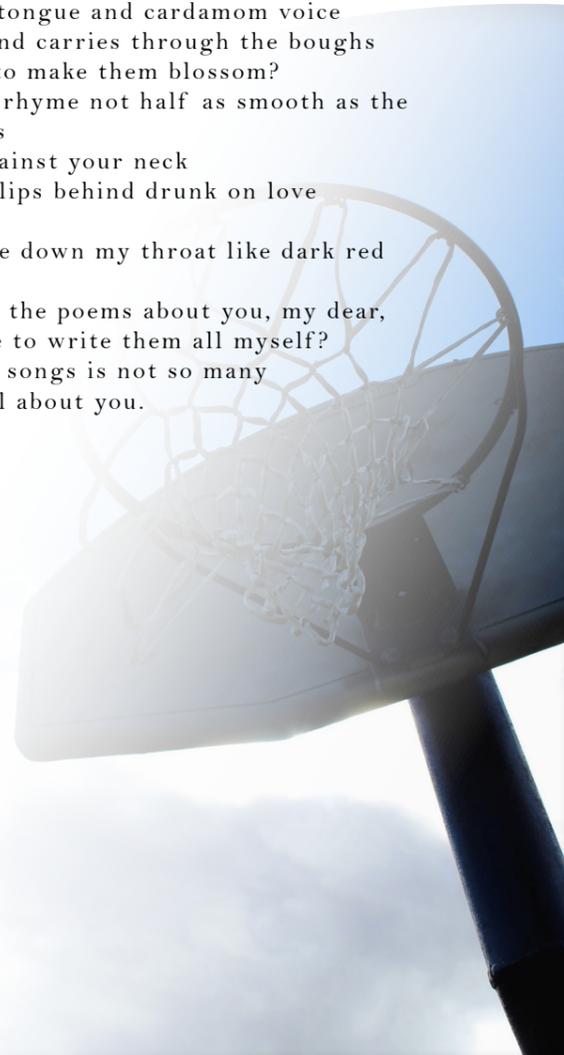
**WHERE I AM FROM
OR
LIFTING FROM GEORGE ELLA LYON
ANNA RAJAGOPAL**

I am from fabric in three colors:
red, white, and blue,
from the Pledge of Allegiance my mother
recited at a time when it wasn't the thing,
from the green card my father used to come to
America, leaving behind him the land of the
Taj Mahal and Hollywood spelled with a B.
I am from polo ponies and cricket bats, besan
halwa and Tandoori chicken, and a phone
line in my grandfather's office that my
father said was a hotline to the president.
I am from chestnuts strewn across the quiet

floor of a Bavarian woods, rich enough to
go into a Black Forest cake, the telegram,
swastika-branded, giving four girls and a
boy huddled on a ship reason to hope.
I am from feldgrau and military green, cousins
across two continents who never stopped
fighting for what they believed in
(and I wonder why I want to stop fighting now),
like the American pilot lying dead on his
parents' Munich lawn.
I am from stained-glass windows in Bamberg am
Main, in Ulm, and in Cincinnati, Ohio.
I am from aching blue mountains covered by
mist, stone walls and white swans, and the
green turf off of Lake Bombazine, where I
played in a St Joan of Arc haircut beside a
Lassie all my own.
I am from Introibo ad altare Dei with gold-
edged vestments and clouds of incense,
St Anthony above the altar, a honey-sweet
host, and a child's heart thumping in a dark
confessional box, about to be stilled.
I am from Mt Mitchell and Biltmore and Gone
with the Wind.
And I am from the heavy prison doors I tried to
open in North Korea, too late.
I am part of all that came before me, but so
much more is now a part of me.
And I need to go back to the Pledge.

**WHERE IS EVERYBODY?
BY LUKE LEVONIUS**

Where is everybody?
Empty streets, empty skies.
Full homes, full heads.
Full of lies told
By letter 17. Death in the
Streets. Breathless death
Beneath boots.
Where is everybody?
There you are! Faceless,
Fearful, masked mass-media
In the store I see eyes, no mouth
Left to smile. No mouth
To scream. This is life now.





TO THE READERS OF *THE LAMP POST*:

At this same time, one year ago, the world was beginning to adjust to a brand new set of circumstances. Amidst some confusion, we managed to get the 2020 edition out on time, and the theme of “unmasked” proved to be ironically, and somberly, prescient of our new reality. This year’s theme of “reflections” was inspired by the many months of social isolation we endured prior to our return to Montreat in the fall of 2020, and our many talented contributors certainly rose to the occasion. Without the many Montreat students, alumni, and faculty who submitted creative works, literary magazines like *The Lamp Post* would never be possible—and, with this in mind, the editorial staff of *The Lamp Post* would like to extend their gratitude and appreciation towards the writers, photographers, painters, and poets who helped make this edition a reality. We have been blessed to work with them, and we hope we have done their works justice.

Even in these uncertain times, *The Lamp Post* continues to pursue its goal of providing a showcase for the creative abilities of Montreat College students, alumni, and faculty, and only after we received as wide a range of submissions as we did can we say for certain that this goal was met. Unfortunately, we couldn’t accept every work of art which was submitted, but the fact that we received so many is a testament to the creativity of the Montreat community.

Many thanks must also be given to our faculty advisors—Dr. Kimberly Angle and Dr. Elizabeth Juckett, without whom *The Lamp Post* would not exist at all, and whose guidance has proven to be invaluable once again.

The editorial staff is proud to present this issue as our finest yet, and it is our continued goal that this can be said of every new edition of *The Lamp Post*; and, with the help of our creatively talented Montreat community, we’re positive that we will be able to meet this goal again next year. Thank you for reflecting with us, and we hope that we were able to provide you with a reason to visit us again sometime.

With prayers for a future worth the wait,

THE LAMP POST EDITORIAL STAFF

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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).

EDITORIAL POLICIES

The Lamp Post accepts submissions via email at thelamppost@montreat.edu. Upon receipt of a piece, 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 original creator. Montreat College administration gives final approval before publication.

Creators retain copyright and publishing rights to all submissions without restrictions.

There is no limit to the length of submissions, but shorter (two pages or less) 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 into one of three categories: Acceptance Without Revision, Acceptance Pending Revision, or Decline to Accept. 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.

Opinions presented herein are those of the student authors and editors, and do not necessarily represent or reflect the views of the Montreat College administration, faculty, or staff.



